

HARD LIGHT CENTER OF AWAKENING TRANSCRIPTS

**Prana
SoHam
Four Bodies**

a talk given by

Mark Griffin

San Francisco • June 7, 2008

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Hard Light Center of Awakening

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The **Hard Light Center of Awakening** is an organization founded and directed by Mark Griffin as a forum for the study of spirituality and meditation. Mark Griffin is a Meditation Master who is firmly established in the advanced samadhi states — rare strands of consciousness that lead to remarkable perception and spiritual accomplishment.

The Center is made up of a broad assortment of people from all walks of life and all levels of accomplishment. Both newcomers and veterans continually inaugurate and deepen their practice through the very same format.

Thanks to the many people who have done transcription work for the Center over the years, and to those who continue to do so.

Special thanks to Cynthia Stevenson for her transcription of this Intensive.

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I would like to welcome everyone to the SoHam Intensive. Also, I'd like to thank the Brahmananda Ashram [in San Francisco] for hosting us. I'd like to take a little time to explain the basis of the terms of the Intensive.

My Guru was Swami Muktananda Paramahansa, you see him there in the picture looking very young and beautiful. Muktananda was a Siddha and thus his method of teaching was one of direct experience. The entire idea emerged from generating the opportunity for a person to step into their own awakened condition, which lies spontaneously, arising within you, waiting only to be realized and recognized.

This idea is the very essence of mysticism – mysticism being an approach of direct experience. It's not one of theory or abstraction, but wherein one gathers oneself up and steps directly into a condition of recognition of awakening. The ground to be cultivated and awakened is one's own life, one's own form, one's own being. And therefore, all the parts of one's self are involved in the awakening process. This is the essence of the Intensive and the entire idea of the SoHam.

First it should be said that the SoHam is a primordial vibration, a mantra, a sound, but different from other mantras, it is said to be ajapa japa. In other words, it is a mantra that spontaneously arises, a sound that spontaneously emerges and it is said to be particular to the human form. In other words, when consciousness moves freely and openly through the human form, the vibration, the throb of the SoHam, spontaneously arises.

The SoHam does not arise as one would repeat a mantra in one's mind or in one's mental voice or repeat it vocally, but the very movement of consciousness through the human form produces the throb of the SoHam, very much like a wind moving through a stand of trees produces a very powerful whooshing sound. It is a combination of form and consciousness that spontaneously emerges.

In the Yoga Tantra, the conception of the human form is not one of a single formation, but one of increasingly subtle assemblies of consciousness. Four essential bodies: the outermost being the physical body – one of matter, bone, flesh. The second body – the subtle physical body is the body wherein the life force, the prana shakti, moves.

I moved this beautiful drawing of the yogic form to the front of the room. (see the poster here: <http://www.hardlight.org/store/prana-bodies-p-773.html>). It is in the subtle physical body that there are three streams that move from the base of the spine to the crown of the head. The left and right channel are female and male energies. Ida on the left is female and red in color and pingala on the right is male and white in color. Through the center is the central nerve, sushumna.

It is on these three streams, these three rivers, that the six chakras, the six plexuses - assemblies of consciousness, appear. In the second body, the subtle physical body, there is one at the base of the spine, one at the pelvis in the region of the genitals, one at the naval, at the heart, the throat and the forehead. Each of these matrixes, wheels or chakras, has subtle streams of energy that roll off of them called nadis. They are 50 in number – four at the base of the spine, six at the second chakra in the pelvis, ten at the naval, twelve at the heart, sixteen at the throat and two at the forehead.

The lower five chakras assemble along the energies of elemental force - the earth element at the base of the spine; water element at the second chakra, the fire element at the naval, air at the heart and ether at the throat.

The forehead is the terminal point where the red and white energies rise up from the base of the spine, go over the crown of the head, come down over the forehead and go down over the bridge of the nose. This is of course the ajña chakra, the seat of the third eye, what is called bindu, which also has an echo at the back of the head.

At the very crown of the head is a maha chakra that is a thousand petals, a thousand fibers of light, and they bundle at the crown of the head and flow upward into the space of the crown of the head. There are other streams of force – 17 of primary number. Of the 17, these three are the most important and then there are lesser and lesser, up to some 72,000. It is inside these 72,000 nadis that the karmic assembly of the cause and effect of one's actions are stored.

It is in this content, this body of stored energy, that is the record of one's existence from the very beginning that one became separated from the great unity, the great singularity, and began existence as a separate perceiver and began to produce the complex matrix of identity of separation that is supported by the "I" consciousness of the ego, the list-making capacity of the intellect, the store house memory and mental content.

In the third body is the causal body, the mental body, or the body of mental formation, the assembly of "I". There are said to be many, many subtle planes of consciousness where awareness operates in uniquely enough fashion that they can be identified by their pattern of behavior, their pattern of vibration.

The three most familiar forces of mental formation are of course the three primal bases of the separate identity – the ego reflex of "I" consciousness, the intellectual reflex of the list-making capacity that orders the operation of the senses and supports the separate identity of the "I" consciousness. The whole idea of all of that information is stored in a storehouse that we know as memory. It is memory that produces the definition of the unique nature of separate identity.

Whenever someone asks who we are and how we are, the first thing we tend to do is we make a reference to our stream of experiences because we are shaped by our experiences and our identity is drawn from the compressed assembly of all those experiences that we call memory. They have analog in the subtle physical body as stored energy they call samskara. They're like bits and bites of data and they're stored in the 72,000 streams of the nadi. So there's a co-relationship between mental formation and the pranic life force which is in the second body.

It is this movement of samskara, which when we take as an entire conceptual basis, we call karma. It is the weights and balance of cause and effect. Karma. When you hear of spiritual practice generating an energy called purification, this is what is being purified. That stored data in the subtle body as you know also has a correlation in the physical body. We feel it as psycho-physical tension that is stored in the connecting tissues of the muscles, the architecture of the skeletal system, etc. where there are powerful psycho dynamic energies trapped in the tissues of the body. They're also stored in the subtle physical body as these bits and bites of data called samskara. Together between all of those energies, that energy is called karma. There is also the relationship to the storehouse memory.

The idea simply put is that the reason one doesn't arise realized and immediately recognize their inherent true spiritual nature is because of this body of karma – all these bits and bites of samskara that are assembled in these countless channels of wind in the left and right channel and the 50 fibers, which actually double in each site. Each of the 50 fibers, the 4, the 6, the 10, the 12, has a male and

female corollary, so there's said to be 100 fibers that flow from the base of the spine, from each of the chakras, throughout the physical body and subtle physical body.

It's important to understand that they all terminate in the brain. And we know that we have 6 chakras and there are 6 basic lobes in the brain and so there is an immediate corollary to this structure that flows from the base of the spine to the crown of the head and you see how the artist (pointing to diagram) has the two serpents there going up the left and right channel terminating in the left and right half of the brain.

If you were to turn the head sideways, the ida, pingala and sushumna go up the back and they hit this space right here at the base of the skull and as you know, when you see a picture of the brain, there is a series of fibers where you see white matter, gray matter and pink matter. And it's all white matter through the center of the brain. Right through to the third eye. The two basic glands of the pituitary and the pineal gland are right on that pathway.

And there's a very powerful dynamic in the process of the birth of a new body, the downloading of the new brain, because the brain is actually empty when you are first born and all of your karma hasn't really downloaded. Anybody that's seen a newborn baby – they're just unmarked, they're unstained and there's a process over the course of months and years where you feel their life force begin to attach to the body, download into the brain and you see the person start to emerge.

But it is this samskara inside the fibers of the six chakras, which are the 3, the 10, then the 17 and

then the 72,000 - it's just ever more refined and this movement of life force in the human form rides in and out of the body on the breath.

This is why the breath is the key to the meditation process. You walk into any meditation hall in any culture and any tradition and you say, "I want to learn how to meditate" and the first thing the meditation teacher will tell you to do is to sit down, still your mind, begin to breath deeply and normally and watch your breath.

What they want you to notice is something that is very important. Not only is the breath just a movement of gases inside and outside of the body, but the vitality of the life force, what we call life itself, prana shakti (the power of life), is attenuated to the breath and it moves in and out of the body with each breath.

The inward breath enters and descends, the outward breath rises and expands and inside each breath, there is a vibration, a throb of pure vitality that is the prana shakti, which is the first face of an energy of infinite power that is called the kundalini – the great force of creation.

The fourth body is the supra-causal body. The prefix 'supra' means before, 'causal' means consciousness. So supra-causal means before consciousness. The fourth body has the form of a single atom. It is a scintillating blue atom. This body is the body of universal consciousness. It is very subtle. It is difficult to see in the unawakened condition because in the physical body we have the waking state, the sleep with dream state, deep sleep state and we're always cycling between these three states. We're always moving from the waking state into the sleep with dream state, sleep

with dream into the deep sleep state, then back out. Deep sleep state, sleep with dream state, waking state. That's the path you take every night when you go to bed. You go from waking, sleep with dream, deep sleep, sleep with dream, waking and you move throughout this cycle every night.

All of these three states are attenuated to the conditioned body of the physical, subtle physical, and causal body. Those are the bodies that are in constant movement, constant transition. They are said to be transitory in nature.

One of the ideas behind the revelation of the fourth body, the fourth state is that it is a state of consciousness that is constant and the same at all times. It is Universal in its nature and it is the doorway to ever deeper consciousness. Think of it as the substrata behind the creation. It is the basis upon which the appearance of physical matter, which is of the envelope of matter, subtle physical which is of the nature of electricity, mental formation which is of the fabric of awareness, and causal which is a substrata, which pervades all three to equal extent. And it would be considered the basis upon which everything appears.

It's important to have an idea of this picture because how you're put together has everything to do with how you awaken. When you are in the waking state you are ruled by the awareness of the body, the awareness of the senses, the operation of the mind, the movement of the life force. You're aware of being alive. When you move into the sleep with dream state, something very dramatic happens. It's a very dramatic shift of consciousness. You're no longer aware of the body. You are no longer aware of the senses.

In dream you're only aware of the mind and the memory operation of the mind that is generated and activated in place by the life force. When you go into deep sleep, again there is a very profound shift of consciousness. It is the idea where the mind thinks of nothing at all. In REM sleep we see the activity of dream. There's lots of activity in the mind, in the brain. And one dreams, and you reproduce the data of the senses so we are aware of the memory of the senses, but the senses no longer operate. It's something very unique about the drama between waking state and deep sleep state. The waking state is a shared state. We plug into the vent of it through the senses, and we agree upon its format.

But when we go into the sleep with dream state, that is not a shared state. Only the dreamer experiences the dream. Yet the experience is as vivid if not more vivid than the waking state. It's extremely intense and can be as electrifying or terrifying or charming based on the emotional data that's being released in the dream. But it's very interesting because someone can be asleep in the room. And they can be surrounded by thirty or forty people in the waking state – and one person is in the sleep state. And even if their bodies are in the same room, their awareness is operating in two different realms of reality. The person that's in the dream state will not have any idea of who and what was going on in the room around them. And the people sitting watching the person dream, will not have any idea where they are in the dream. We'll see their body, but we won't see their awareness.

When we go into the deep sleep state the mind goes into a state of neutrality. It stays active, but it thinks of nothing. It's interesting. The mind thinks of nothing – no thing. This is the most restful of the

states and it is where the entire system rejuvenates and reboots. If we go through a situation where we have a rough week and just sleep very lightly we only get into sleep with dream state three or four nights in a row. By the third or fourth day we'll start to feel kind of frayed and kind of wired not getting into deep sleep state. But then finally you'll break through and you'll get into deep sleep state and you wake up and you'll feel very refreshed and you'll have a spontaneously positive outlook about life and the world.

And most people will live their entire lifetime going from one of these three states – waking, sleep with dream, deep sleep, sleep with dream, waking, over and over again not noticing that they are in a closed circuit. Every now and then they'll swing past a door that's on the deep inside structure of being, and that doorway is the fourth body. It's vibrating and present, and animates and pervades the three relative bodies and also the three relative states. But very few people have direct experience of it.

The sages, the Masters, in their wisdom, and with great simplicity, call it the fourth state, which is the state of direct recognition of the Universal nature of one's consciousness. It's present within you as you. Always has been, always will be, but unrecognized. It's a powerful idea. The reason it's unrecognized is because the constant nature of the phantasmagoria of the dazzling nature of the senses in the physical envelope, its operation in memory and the sleep with dream state and then the deep resting space of deep sleep state – and back. And the fact that it's such a drumbeat over and over again and – what happens? You forget it exists.

So the Siddhas simply say, "Great, you're doing

great as far as it goes, but you're forgetting one very important thing. You're forgetting the existence of the fourth state. You're forgetting the existence of the fourth body which is present and resonating within you as the Atman, as the Blue Pearl."

The idea being they want you to slow yourself down and train yourself to directly recognize, directly experience the fourth state. That's it. Simple. They say the one thing that operates the same in all four bodies is the life force. When the life force is operating at the physical body, it's the life force. It operates inside the physical body in the form of the electrical impulses that run the voluntary and involuntary systems that animate the brain.

Ninety percent of our entire experience of the waking state is dominated by the senses. When the prana shakti, the life force, goes into the subtle physical body where the envelope of the prana is the most dynamic – it's where the prana declares all its seats – it's still the prana. It operates differently because now it's operating in the subtle physical body which is life force that is moving up and down, riding in and out of the body on the breath, descending the in-breath, ascending on the out-breath. Every time the breath moves, the prana is riding as if the breath were a horse and the prana were a rider. Every time the breath moves, the prana moves.

And that gets us to the third body, the causal body. Prana shakti, the life force, is operating in the third body, the body of mind and mental formation. The three most familiar that we know of are the structure of ego, the list making capacity of the intellect, and the body, the store house of our memories – all of which are floating in a substance that we call mind essence, chitta. Even though it's in the causal

body, the universe of the mind rules how the prana operates. The prana is still the prana. It's still the life force. It's still the vitality. The vitality in the causal body of mental formation, the vitality of the prana, the life force in the electrical body of the subtle physical body, the vitality in the physical body animating the movement of the senses and the mind etc., it's always the prana. Again you can see the wisdom of the Masters saying, "Watch the breath." They tell you to watch the breath because they want you to notice that the vitality that gives you the effect, the experience of being alive, is moving on the breath – in and out of the body. They want you to pay attention to that, and to see it. It's a subtle vibration. You see it as a vibration, a throb.

And that leads us up to the potential for the realization and recognition of the fourth state. The vitality, the life force operates, emerges out of nowhere. It emerges out of consciousness itself, and appears as the body. It moves into the subtle physical body as the electrical impulse of the kundalini, and the life force. And it engages the incredible circuitry, the complex circuitry of the subtle body. It moves into the mind which is formless in nature. The mind doesn't have a form. The mind is mirror-like. It reflects what it comes into contact with.

Have you ever noticed when you're in a beautiful place, your mind goes to a beautiful place. When you are in a dark and scary place, your mind operates in a dark and scary way. When you're with a cheerful and positive person, your mind operates cheerfully. When you're with a negative person, your mind will tend to operate negatively. It tends to pick up on its reflections. You'll have the momentum of your own memory, your

own tendencies, but the mind is very powerfully influenced by what it comes into contact with. Which is why the Masters always advise, keep good company. Keep the company of the Holy Sangha – those fellow beings that are seeking enlightenment. You'll be carried along by their enthusiasm, and your enthusiasm will help them. And as you face the world there's a quality of inner-connectedness. You can never run from the world, but you can seek powerful allies.

So that brings us to the idea that the prana operates the same in the first three bodies. Well guess what? It operates the same in the supra-causal body – the fourth body, which merges back into consciousness. It's still the prana. It's vitality. The journey from consciousness to creation to consciousness, is a subtle one that if you begin to understand how the human form operates – how it's put together – so many working parts, – it's very complicated. As you awaken more and more to yourself, there's a kind of constant revelation of becoming familiar with the different layers of being.

Just this diagram, which is still only a fraction of all the working parts in the human form, looks pretty complicated even as it is, and what it represents. And over time you come into direct experience of what all of this represents. It's like a diagram. I mean it's funny. You have a TV. You take it out of the box. Take out the TV. Plug it in. Hit the on button. Look at the instructions. It's an entire diagram of everything in the television. Even after you read it, you don't understand it. There's only a few people that actually know how TVs work, but everybody watches them. Human form is much the same way. You have to pay attention to it to begin to understand it. And that's what meditation is about. It's simply about understanding the

underlying workings of your nature.

It is the movement of the prana that is your chariot, your vehicle, that spontaneously, without effort, carries you through these various sheaths of physical, subtle physical, causal and supra-causal, which are physical, electrical, mental and supra-mental. And even though they are layers of consciousness, they are not separate consciousnesses. They are the same, but consciousness operates uniquely in each of these levels of consciousness. And it's the ability to penetrate through the layers, and finally begin to directly apprehend the operations of the fourth body that makes the process of meditation useful. And this is what meditation is about.

When you come to the experience of the fourth body, that experience is the experience of God. When you have any kind of contact with the fourth body directly you feel you have come into contact with God. As you come closer and closer, that experience of the apprehension of God, becomes overwhelming and then there's a point where they blend and melt into each other and the individual identity is lost and absorbed by the universal identity, and the circle is finally completed. And the purpose of spiritual practice has been fulfilled. A new basis of identity is established by closing the circuit between the waking state and the fourth state. What is so interesting is that each of the states is so unique and separate from each other, they're almost like – each one takes place on a different planet. One is not even remotely like the other, yet they appear inside the single stream of a single human being.

One of the ideas of this kind of mysticism is that the sages try to simplify the teaching because of the wild phantasmagoria of the operation of the senses,

the intensity of the dream state, the drama of the deep sleep state. If you were to follow any one of them you could easily be knocked into a divergent pathway. Which is why I think it's very useful to think in terms of this relationship between the life force – the prana shakti – the infinite vitality of the kundalini, and the breath. And this is where the dynamic of the SoHam comes in.

The SoHam operates on two great energies. It is the great descending energy, and the great ascending energy. The idea of the SoHam comes from what you oftentimes hear in the Yoga Tantra as the polarity between Shiva and Shakti. The entire basis of the tantra is founded on this equilibrium of polarity. And the pathway of equilibrium are these three rivers that go from the base of the spine to the crown of the head. You should understand – this three and a half foot structure – that's the spiritual path. The spiritual path is not outside you. It is the illumination of every inch of that three foot pathway within you as attenuated to the spine, up through the brain and the dynamic of the SoHam.

The SoHam is the Shiva Shakti principle, or the yin and yang principle, female and male principle. The great ocean of consciousness which is said to be Shiva, and the infinite manifestation of creation which is said to be Shakti. They are not separate. They should be conceived of as the Sun and the rays of the Sun. There's no point where you can say, at this point Shiva is no longer valid and Shakti exists, or Shakti is not present and only Shiva exists. They so pervade each other, thoroughly. You have to understand that, because it is a paradox to think of two things as one thing, because it has two names. It has two words. It must be two things, but it's not. There is an appearance of separation based on

how perception occurs.

We've just thought about and examined the fact that perception is always changing. The experience of perception and the waking state is dominated by the senses. And we are all aware of that group mind. But the perception has a completely different nature when we are dreaming. We're still a perceiver and sometimes we have dreams of Hell. Sometimes we have dreams of paradise. Sometimes we have dreams where the advanced intuitive parts of our mind essence are operating and we have moments of great insight that are expressed in very powerful symbols in our dreams. It's a different kind of perception. When we move into the deep sleep state where we perceive nothing, the mind is present but there is no object. It's a different kind of perception.

One of the principles of the Yoga Tantra is very much like Quantum Mechanics, the idea that the perception of any object is changed by the very perception itself. The perception changes its nature. That's true. And that principle operates very deeply in the spiritual life. You learn to be vividly present in your perceptive stream at all times. What we notice is that most of the time we only have just a fragment of our attention operating. And we say, "Okay, well I really believe in the body and so I have ninety-eight percent of my attention on the body and the senses.

All of the subtle physical, and six chakras, and all of these nadis that flow off into eternity, and the 72,000 nadis, each of which have subtle vibrations of karma, which are operating like an atomic clock and the gravity of the nine planets in our solar system and as we move around the surface of the Earth and the gravity, and the nine planets and the

sun subtly changes the movements of all these subtle particles inside our system and this is the impact of the astrological model upon us – which is really like a giant clock. The dynamic of those subtle parts of space that are present inside the 72,000 nadis are subtly shifting as the gravitational force of our world system changes. And so the Masters say, “What we really need to do is get rid of all these little particles because as long as that’s happening, you’re never going to be able to see past it. There’s too much drama in the constant flow of change.”

The ancient way of awakening is one called Shaktipat where the Kundalini is generated and moved from a dormant condition into an active condition. And this causes the life force in the kundalini to go from its potential condition into a dynamic condition. And that means that every time the breath moves in and out of the body, the dynamic force of the life force acts like an ever-increasing purifying flame and it removes a little bit more of that samskaric and karmic data that’s stored as information inside the subtle physical body. It has a physical presence. It has a gravity. You can weigh it. You can also be eliminated by bringing it back into contact with the essence of the creation itself which is the prana, which is the kundalini. With each breath we have an extraordinary inward flowing force of pure vitality.

What changes its nature? Again it’s this idea of Quantum Mechanics. The quantum physics – the fact that the breath is conscious increases the power of that breath. The fact that you’re aware of the nature of the prana, and the nature of the kundalini present in the breath animates it – changes its nature and causes it to purify the system very much like flame purifies whatever it comes in contact with.

You notice that the great descending and great ascending forces are expressions of the Shiva and Shakti. You see this over and over again in the universe. It’s always these dynamic polarities that are seeking an equilibrium. You see the left and right channel seeking equilibrium in the central channel.

In the human form when the consciousness is moving in the left and right channel, the consciousness is externalized – the left side being the feminine side, the right side being the masculine side. When by the power of meditation you can move it into the central channel, the mind withdraws from the external universe and it merges into the Self. We hear that the kundalini exists at the base of the spine in the form of a coiled serpent and that is the kundalini in its most essential form. The kundalini means coiled serpent. And that exists at the base of the spine. When you generate the movement of the breath, the movement of the prana, it vibrates.

The kundalini stored at the base of the spine with the syllable So – that is the syllable of the creation at the base of the spine. The seat at the crown of the head, we often times hear about the kundalini rising up through the central nerve and the three rivers to merge with Shiva at the crown of the head. We see this incredible structure. We see these six seats going up to the forehead and then at the very crown over the head there’s this huge wheel – a thousand petals. That thousand petals is a bundle of fibers that go up through the spine, go up through the center of the brain, merge out the crown of the head at the brahmarandhra – the soft spot at the crown of the head, and go up into the space over the crown of the head. This space at the crown of the head vibrates with the syllable Ham. Ham is the vibrational syllable of Shiva.

And that is the syllable that represents the ocean of consciousness.

And so we see in this condition of polarity we have the envelope of the So at the base of the spine. The vibration of So gives rise to the appearance of the creation – infinite universes, the dynamic of worlds, and all of the relative assemblies of the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether. These three streams are the primary pathway of consciousness.

Now up here at the top we see this huge mandala and the two wings that represent the syllable Ham. We've been talking about the idea of the great descending and the great ascending force. And we see these energies in all the dynamics of creation. We see it also very powerfully in the human form. And we see it in every experience of the breath. When we breathe in, the breath goes in and down; it sinks. On the incoming breath, the Ham syllable at the crown of the head rides down through the center of the body, through the brain, through the throat, heart, belly, loins, into the base of the spine, and strikes the So syllable at the base of the spine. We see this energy. One of the pictures that is connected to the crown of the head is one of a deep lake. It's of the nature of dissolution. At the base of the spine, it's a coiled serpent. It's of the nature of explosive vibration.

On the physical side the breath descends. Remember that the prana is the same in all four bodies. The prana is riding inside the breath as a subtle throb, as a vibration. That is the Ham vibration moving down through the three rivers striking each of the plexuses, each of the chakras, animating them and as it strikes them, it purifies and radiates out through the hundred fibers that go throughout the entire body and all terminate in the

brain. As it hits the brain it purifies and awakens the brain mass.

As it strikes the base of the spine the So syllable is stimulated and the outward breath begins. And when we breathe out, it rises and expands. And thus the So syllable at the base of the spine and the Ham syllable at the crown of the head change place with each cycle. Every time Muktananda would talk about So-Ham he would always go like this, moving his hands up and down. It moves up and down simultaneously. It's important to remember. It's not sequential – you don't think like, "It's only moving down, it's only moving up." It's actually happening simultaneously. What's moving is your attention. Your attention is jumping from energy to energy.

The vibration of the SoHam is a great descending and ascending force that is of the nature of the ocean of consciousness and the ocean of universes of the creation simultaneously. What is the pathway? The three nerves ida, pingala and sushumna that go through the center of the body. What is the vessel? The vase of the human form – physical body, subtle physical body, causal body, supra-causal body. With each movement, with each throb, a little bit more of the content of the stored memory and cause and effect is removed. And that effect is like one of clouds being burned away by the sun revealing the true sky. This is the basis of the Intensive. The dynamic of awakening will be flowing through the breath. I'm defining the terms of how to place your attention to align with the force of awakening over these next six hours.

This kind of meditation is cumulative. You take twenty-one thousand breaths every day, but how many of those twenty-one thousand are conscious – where you are vividly aware of the vibration

of the prana, the vibration of the So and Ham in the descending and ascending breath? Maybe just a few, if any. This is just fundamental metaphysics of how consciousness is moving inside you. It happens one of two ways. It happens consciously or it happens unconsciously. The Masters say: “Make it happen consciously. You will see something. You will experience something. You will realize something true about yourself.”

Imagine just for one day you took twenty-one thousand fully conscious breaths. By the end of that day you would be a completely transformed person. You would not be even remotely the person that began that day. If the next ten breaths you take are fully conscious you’ll be completely different after ten breaths because this kind of breath acts like an opening and awakening. It goes into the innermost subtle spaces of being. This exact same impulse of energy that causes a bud that’s tightly bound to open as a flower. We can’t open it from the outside and tear it open. It’s just a mess. You have to send that impulse in and then it opens. This is what that’s about. It’s simple. It’s a fruit in your hand. If you understand it this process opens the physical body, opens the subtle physical body, and all of the plexuses – the various subtle streams of each of the chakras.

Each of the petals of each of the chakras all go from a bound and closed condition into an awakened and illuminated condition. As they begin to illuminate, that inner system begins to be infused with light, which is where the word illumination comes from. You begin to glow from the inside out. And each of the bodies experience the process of illumination through the ever expanding awakening of the kundalini, the inner vitality. As it begins to pick up force, the energy between the crown of the head

and the base of the spine begins to take on the nature of a Thunderbolt. Like a constant flow of electrical energy. The Zen Masters say, “If you can maintain the awakening breath with the constancy that a slate tile dropped at the surface of the ocean, descends towards the depths of the ocean without a single break, you’ll be completely enlightened in seven days.”

The best way to breath in this way, especially when you’re doing a meditation session like this, is to do a form of breathing called the Bellow’s Breath. It is called that because you treat your body and subtle body as a bellows. When you want to fill a body, when you charge a bellows, you pull it open. When you want to discharge it, you compress it. So thus when you want to breath in, you expand the diaphragm which opens the entire upper body and the breath comes rushing in. When you want to discharge the bellows, squeeze the diaphragm. Just like squeezing a bellows, pushing the breath up and out.

Everyone just take a minute to put your hand on your diaphragm. Breath in by pushing the diaphragm out. You wait a beat, and then breath out by squeezing the diaphragm. Just take a few breaths like that. Note how it feels. You feel a very powerful descending energy striking straight down through the center of the body from the crown of the head down through the heart, down into the base of the spine, the pelvis, the belly, to the heart. You’ll feel it as it strikes each of these chakras. Because the chakras are like centers of magnetism, you’ll feel the kundalini pool and move there. It’s also useful just to breath directly into the heart, maybe every third or fourth breath, because it’s exactly in the middle – three higher chakras and three lower chakras. It’s a very good

seat of equilibrium as your meditation settles ever more deeply into your system.

There's one last note that I need to describe to give you the basic picture of the Intensive. In the inward breath, it's the great descending force of the breath. The breath descends and the Ham, the vibration of the Ham, attenuates to the breath and the Ham descends. You'll feel it pool at each of these places. And your breath – you're breathing in, you're breathing in, you're breathing in. There's a point where you are no longer breathing in, but you are not yet breathing out. You're breathing out, you're breathing out, you're breathing out – the inward breath descends like water. The outward breath ascends like flame of a fire. You're breathing in, the breath moves. When the breath moves the prana moves.

Remember the prana is the same in the physical body, subtle physical body, mental body and the supra-causal body. You're breathing in, you're breathing in, you're breathing in and the energy will ride on the left and right channel generally and you'll feel them rising and falling and lots of different vibrations and throbs and speed. But you're no longer breathing in, you're not yet breathing out. There's a point where nothing is happening. The breath is not moving. The breath is still. Because the breath is still, the prana is still. Because the prana is still, the mind is still. And at that point it's an opportunity to move from the left and right channel into the central nerve, into the sushumna. It will happen naturally.

The main point I want to make is pay attention to the breath, going in as it descends, going out as it ascends and also in the space between the breaths where it is neither falling or rising. Press your attention into that place. Something very

important is happening there. Listen to the sound of the breath. You don't have to repeat the mantra. As you become subtly merged with it you'll see that the mantra is arising from a very deep place. It is said to be ajapa japa. It is the mantra that repeats itself. It is the essence of the Siddha path. And it generates spontaneous awakening of the totality of the human form and finally of the universal form. The gateway of which is the fourth body.

As I said with each breath and the impact of the SoHam, your being looks very much like an opening flower. And as that occurs you'll see more and more of the inner content of your own nature at these various levels of consciousness. Just be very fearless and attentive. Watch it as it unfolds. You'll notice that the impact of the SoHam meditation is cumulative. It will gain force with each cycle. It's very useful to stay very relaxed physically and mentally. Make gravity your friend because the energy of the kundalini has a strong electrical component. It's important to keep the spine straight. The pathway is from the crown of the head through the brain down through the spine.

What I'd like to do is to meditate with the SoHam for about twenty minutes. Everyone please prepare your seat. Everyone begin the cycling of the deep bellows breathing. Listen to the vibration of the SoHam.

We'll begin.

Meditation

The Buddha in his seminal teaching stated unbelievably eloquently, "That if this occurs, then

That arises. If this does not occur That does not arise.” This is the essential idea of the SoHam. The dynamic of production and cessation is completely present in the resolution of opposites that is inherent in the expression of the movement of the great descending and ascending light that expresses itself as the ocean of consciousness and the envelope of creation that are constantly in disequilibrium and equilibrium. Simply put, when the breath moves, the prana moves the vitality. When the prana moves the mind moves. When the mind moves, the creation comes into being. This is the production cycle.

When this occurs, that arises. But inherent in the nature of the descending and ascending – the vibration of So and Ham – this unstated point of equilibrium – the space between the breaths – that is neither becoming or dissolving. The breath is not in motion, the prana is not in motion, therefore the mind is not in motion and so we have – “If this does not occur, then That does not arise.” The space between the breaths where the mind stops. When the mind stops, the disequilibrium resolves and reality arises. It is the subtlest point of attention – like threading the eye of a needle. The movement of attention through production is called a Bhairava which is a cycle of production, maintenance and withdrawal. They arise simultaneously.

Now inherent in the idea of Bhairava is the concept of ideation. Out of nothing, something emerges. That something establishes and is maintained and out of that something it dissolves back into nothing. There is an implicit quality of existence according to the fact that this occurs and that arises. The Bhairava is the point at which one can grasp the entire concept of ideation in its totality, which is essentially defined by awareness of separation.

One produces that product, and implicit in that is the division of a singularity into two things – something that is and something that is not. Or the idea of a preference or prejudice of being attracted to one thing, and being adverse to another. If you see the operation of ideation, again you see this idea of polarity. This I am attracted to, this I am adverse to. And you see this idea of rising and falling. And inherent in that you see the idea of the division of an absolute singularity into multiplicity, which is the definition of ideation.

We’ve been dealing with the idea of the SoHam and as you’ve been following the resolution of So and Ham, you have certainly begun to notice that the resolution seems to move about somewhere inside the envelope of the four bodies. Sometimes it seems to be in the physical body and manifesting in the waking state. Sometimes it seems to be in the energy body and moving in the countless channels and playing in the magnetic fields of the chakras and currents. Or manifesting in the mental body as countless levels of formation and dissolution. And I’ve been deliberately moving the points of resolution into ever deeper points as a pointing out and also as a way of activation.

You see, shaktipat is the awakening impulse. It is the idea of awakening that occurs at the Universal level. And the Guru Shakti is the manifestation, the incarnation of that impulse. By coming into contact with the Guru Shakti at the deep and profound level of the SoHam, what previously is a potential in the form of the breath is then manifested in its awakening potential. Before shaktipat the breath is a productive cycle. With every breath more karma is generated. The activity of the senses are considered organs of action in the yoga tantra. The organ of sight and the organ of sound

are all avenues of activity to reach out and touch the apparent universe. But they're also organs of action at each level of the physical body, the subtle physical body and mental body.

In an unawakened condition the very act of being conscious and cycling the SoHam is productive of samskaric and karmic data. The dynamic of shaktipat – to say it simply – is a reset button. It's a form of Grace that causes the prana component, which is the kundalini, the first face of the kundalini, to move from its potential condition to its awakened condition and from that moment on the cycle of the breath and most essentially the cycle of breath in its conscious mode, your deliberate and mindful awareness of the SoHam. It's a reset and it reverses the productive cycle.

Once you get Shaktipat, all of the karma that has been wound on to your system since the beginning of this incarnation and quite literally countless incarnations and is stored in the mind as memory in the subtle physical body of samskara and karmic data begins to get unwound, de-spoiled, because when all is said and done it is the cessation cycle that is the path of mercy, the path of awakening. The only thing between you and the realization of your own nature is the karmic data that is stored on your system, and it is quite literally like a heavy fog. It can't be perceived. You can catch glimpses of the underlying Self but it's like a constant shifting fog bank. It's opening and closing so nothing is sustained.

So the nature of the Guru's Grace is to unwind the karma. And it's quite literally like just hitting reset and the state of karma spooling on to your being, on to your system. It starts to unspool. And while karma may seem as infinite, as numerous as the

sands of the Ganges, it is a finite amount. And it is only a matter of the intensity with which you wish to unspool that karma, which is a subtle expression of intention – the dynamic of spiritual practice, the Grace of the Guru, and the courage to go through the unspooling process. As I said at the beginning the Zen Masters say, "If you can unspool with the steadiness of a slate tile that sinks to the bottom of the ocean, you can get through the entire body of karma of countless lives in seven days." That means every breath is more conscious than the last from now until seven days.

You all heard the story of Bodhidharma, the famous Bodhisattva who sat in front of a stone wall for nine years. It took him nine years to unspool all his karma. When he stood up he was fully realized. You hear that number pretty frequently, nine to twelve years. But that's considering you have the skill and ability and intention of a perfect Bodhisattva. It's a standard to shoot for.

In this meditation I want to show you the idea of the Bhairava which is the cessation of ideation – the stopping of the awareness of separation of the difference between qualities. It arises from a condition called stopping the mind. The cessation cycle arises in the space between the breaths. Every time you breathe you skip from the in-breath to the out-breath. It's like you kind of jump across this little interval and you're aware of breathing in and you're aware of breathing out, but you're not aware of that moment when your breath stops and your mind stops. Why? Because nothing is going on. The fact is a lot is going on. So much is not going on it's profound. But we have attuned ourselves to watch the birdie. Our attention goes to what's in motion. It's a habit. And you have to retrain your mind.

It's like in art. If you make a sculpture, most people look at the object. When you're trained in sculpture, you learn to look at the space around the object. It's much more defining of what the object is. What's not there is far more informing. Music is the same thing. A melody is just a string of sounds. It's the space between the sounds that gives the sounds meaning. Same thing. The space between the breaths is where the action is and there is a dynamic of Bhairava. It's a cessation cycle where creation, maintenance, and withdrawal ceases.

I want to draw your attention to this because you'll feel there is a dramatic shift in how the meditation operates. And while the meditation arises press your attention into the space between the breaths – the cessation cycle. Again the Buddha says. "When this occurs That arises." It's the whole feast of "This" and "That", or "I am That". "If this does not occur then That does not arise." It's an unbelievably elegant phrase. Totally full of meaning.

So we'll be meditating for about an hour. Everyone please prepare your seat.

Stopping the mind is like looking through the looking glass. Seeing SoHam in reverse.

We will begin.

Meditation

So it is now time to generate the completion of the Intensive. The Intensive is designed to express the idea of awakening, to express the idea of enlightenment. The Intensive arises in a series of

stages where different dynamics of the awakening process are generated and demonstrated and transmitted. And they have an arch of initiation, generation, development and completion. The entire Intensive is an instrument to generate Shaktipat – the awakening impulse which is transmitted through exposure to the supra-conscious energies that are inherent within every person. It is very much a simple idea of demonstration and most essentially contact or touch.

As we all know, it is easiest to learn something by being in contact with someone who has an idea of the subject – to watch them express and demonstrate. The fastest way to learn to play the piano is to be in the room with somebody that knows how to play the piano, and listen to them and watch them. And you learn a thousand things that are not necessarily expressed in words. This is the idea of the Intensive. The idea of shaktipat being expressed in initiation and generation and completion stage. It is like a conversation about the process and dynamic of awakening. But not only is it in the language of verbal discourse, but it's also in an internal spiritual language that transmits itself instantaneously because underlying all external formation there is a deep unity, a singularity. Coming in contact, direct contact with the supra-conscious forms a connection to it. This is the idea of touch.

So in the completion stage it is a meditation that has within it the expression of the entire Intensive compressed into a meditation that is about ten or fifteen minutes long. At the end of which I'll be coming around and touching each of you to seal the shaktipat transmission. So everyone please prepare your seat. We'll begin.

Meditation

Today's Intensive has been a very powerful and irresistible unfailing expression of shaktipat. Shaktipat can not fail because it approaches through the pathway of reality itself. It is like a force of nature of the nature of awakening itself. The pathway of the shaktipat has been through the SoHam, which is to say the SoHam diksha is activated and empowered and from this point forward the conscious expression of SoHam in relationship to the breath will serve to accelerate the unraveling, the unspooling, of stored samskara and karma, which is what stands between you and your own realization.

The greater the yearning and the intensity of mindfulness that one has for enlightenment, the greater is the intensity of the unspooling process that will take place. Your life will begin to change in increasingly-accelerated ways. This is the positive benefit of shaktipat. It is useful to understand that this is happening so that one can maintain an equilibrium through the increasingly dynamic changes that follow.

This is a practice that can be generated in virtually any state. It can be generated in the waking state, as you move throughout your day and your busy lives. It can be generated in the dream state. You should also try to enter the fourth state at least once a day. Sit down and meditate. Give rise to the SoHam. Follow the breath in. Press your attention into the space between the breaths. It is very potent in relationship to all of the breath dynamics of your Hatha practice and it will kindle and increase the kundalini in your system.

I wish you all a life of Joy and Awakening. It has

been a pleasure sitting with you here today. And always remember, God dwells within you as you.

Thank you all. Good night.

