



Svaroopa® Vidya Ashram

October 2016 Contemplation:
Yoga & Spirituality #10

Becoming a Great Being

By Swami Nirmalananda & Rukmini Abbruzzi

You are in the process of becoming a Great Being, whether you realize it or not. Great Beings are lights unto the world, shining examples of the fullest potential of a human being. Whether you're a new yogi or a long-time practitioner, your yoga clears away the inner blockages blocking the light of your own Self as Consciousness itself. You are becoming the Divine light that you were always meant to be.

Every time you lengthen your tailbone, you have a taste of your own greatness and a harbinger of your future. When you sit back up after doing Slow Motion Dive (Magic 4 Pose #1), your long tail settles you more deeply into your seat. Your spine is deliciously lengthened upright. You're grounded and uplifted at the same time, an unusual combination, a hallmark of the *Svaroopa*® sciences. By landing more fully in your body, you are expanding more fully into your own Beingness. You are becoming embodied Consciousness.

You don't yet know and live and be the Consciousness that is your true identity; it's hidden within you. This is not your fault. The game is rigged. To become merely human, Consciousness took on "not-knowingness," like an amnesia about you really are. This creates a powerful momentum towards looking outside of yourself for happiness. You are propelled to using a small sense of identity to define yourself, even multiple identities: parent, partner, yogi, employee. You are busy-busy-busy, balancing these chopped up bits of yourself, while barely paying attention to your body most of the time.

Right now, take a breath. Become aware of your toes, all ten toes, all at the same time. Pause for a moment. Are you more in your body than you were a moment ago?

This works especially well when these words are familiar to you. Your yoga pivots the momentum, back in on itself — from outward to inward, propelling you into your body and preparing you for the inner awakening that is the gift of this lineage. The gift is called Shaktipat, sparking your inner light like one candle lights another. Shaktipat awakens you to the infinite splendor of Beingness that is your Self. Once you receive this initiation, you are on your way to embodying the brilliance of your light, and shining it through your body, mind and heart into the world.

Swami Nirmalananda says, "Shaktipat changed everything for me. I couldn't describe it, but I felt differently on the inside, like a boat that suddenly had a rudder. At a deep level I knew who I was, even though my mind had old patterns that would still sabotage me. Along with this inner knowing, I had a sense of direction, like a gyroscope, that always showed me the way up, in every situation and every relationship."

Living your Divinity has an undeniably positive effect on your family and friends, coworkers and neighbors. Yet it's not about how they see you. It's not even about your relationship with them. It's all about who **you** are, even while you are in relationship to them. It's about placing yourself in relationship to your Self, basing yourself in your deepest truth, in every moment of your life. The Shiva Sutras describes this:

tripad aady anu-praa.nanam — Shiva Sutras 3.38

While in any of the three states,
you should enliven yourself with the fourth state,
which is the primal condition of all three.¹

The "three states" are waking, dreaming and deep sleep. You cycle through these familiar states of mind day and night. The "fourth state" is named turiya (toor-ee-yah) in Sanskrit. It's a deeper state of awareness, deeper than your mind. It's the experience of your Self, which is also called "svaroopavidya," the experiential knowing of your own Beingness. It's like the water of which the ocean is made, found in

¹ rendered by Swami Nirmalananda

pristine stillness in the depths, yet the waves are made of the same water. Turiya is the primal condition, meaning it underlies and gives rise to the three states you experience on the surface.

This sutra describes how to live from that deeper level: by filling it into all three. You can enliven your waking, dreaming and even deep sleep with your own Self, never losing your Self. Whichever way the wind is blowing in your relationships, in your finances, in politics, your internal gyroscope always shows you up – toward your own Self. External circumstances do not define you, so they cannot sway you.

Rukmini shares:

“I had a glimpse of this after a retreat. When I returned home, I noticed that gas prices were not bothering me. It seems like a little thing but, before the retreat, rising gas prices really worried me. Since I drove past a gas station on the way to work each morning, tailbone tightening was nearly a daily occurrence. In the days following the retreat, I’d look at the numbers going up, but I had no fear. I was Shiva, and there was nothing that was not Shiva. Gas prices and oil corporations were Shiva, too.”

This means you don’t have to withdraw from the world in order to live in the bliss of consciousness. The ultimate state does not consign you to sitting in a corner with your eyes closed, immersed in meditation all day long. This common misconception leads many people to ignore what’s happening around them, withdrawing from family and work or even disengaging from the world. When you embody the fullness of your being, you spontaneously think more clearly, love more fully and act more effectively. You have more stamina. Self-Realized beings are some of the most active people in the world! And they are incredibly effective at what they do. This is practical spirituality.

If you are not experiencing the bliss of consciousness while you’re engaged in the world, the problem is that you’ve lost your Self. You can tell because you feel needy, greedy and grabby, or separate, scared and alone. All you need to do is to reinstate your inner state. Finding your Self requires turning your attention inward because your Self is inside you. Every time you do a practice to reinstate your state, you become progressively more saturated with Self. Until joy, happiness, love and bliss continuously arise from their inner source, which is your Self. Which is YOU. Now you are free from need, greed and fear because you are filled from the inside.

Perhaps you’re not there yet, at least not all the time. But you are closer to Self-Realization than ever before. The power of the *Svaroopa*[®] Sciences guarantees it. How do you know? Rukmini says, “You can look at someone who lives in the fourth state. Someone who lives a life dedicated to the practices, who is a living example of what they promise. That’s the Guru. The Guru is a Great Being, unwaveringly present in her own presence and empowered to awaken you to your own Divinity. She models embodied Consciousness. This is not so that you will look at her in awe, but so that you’ll see and know — if she can do it, you can do it. To be the Great Being that you have the potential to be, simply do more yoga.”

THIS IS AN ARTICLE IN A YEAR-LONG SERIES ON “YOGA & SPIRITUALITY,” OUR TEACHINGS THEME FOR 2016, CO-AUTHORED BY SWAMI NIRMALANANDA SARASWATI, VIDYADEVI STILLMAN AND RUKMINI ABBRUZZI.

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