



Mantra Yoga/Japa

A Powerful Means For Energetic Expansion

By Swami Durgananda

Japa: translated means "Recitation". It is the recitation of a mantra under the direction of a Guru or spiritual teacher. A mantra is a single or group of words usually in the Sanskrit language, their subtle tones quieten the mind and the energetic vibration creates a force field which penetrates the subtle bodies. This results in a refining of the practitioner's vibration and has a profound cleansing effect on the mind. Mantra Yoga performed as Japa is an extremely powerful and quick means to attain the perfection required in Lineage Yoga.

The mind is a vast memory bank that from time to time requires detoxification. This cleansing process is done to release accumulated dross. This dross is in the form of mind chatter and negativity which is caught in the mind's lower (physical and subconscious) levels. Detoxification allows meditation and its effects to move within the mind's higher levels, therefore aiding the unhindered progress to Self Realisation.

Japa can be performed in various ways:

- Daily: "Nitya" Is a mantra that must be repeated for a certain period. Morning, performed on waking or during the time of bathing. At midday, before the midday meal often as an offering ritual prior to eating. In the evening, before retiring. Usually the Guru will give guidance and instruction for these Japa recitations to the yogi who is on a spiritual journey. The spiritual journey is called Sadhana and the practitioner is a Sadhaka, the most auspicious times for japa in this instance is 2pm. The mantra recitation and japa performed for the two hours between 2pm and 4pm are dedicated to the Guru which then creates a bond between pupil and teacher, where the pupil may use the vibration of the Guru to increase his/her own. The hours between 2am and 4am are the universal times of meditation. Here the connection required is between the pupil or Sadhaka and the vibration of the Cosmic Consciousness.
- Puja: "Naimittika." Repeating of the mantra on special occasions and holy days. Puja means to worship and can be performed for any chosen holy day or deity.
- Requesting: "Kamyā" Repeating the mantra for wishes or desires to be fulfilled. This form of Japa is often used in the East for the blessings of children, departed loved ones and for the curing of illnesses. Kamyā is often combined with austere rituals such as: fasting, or walking barefoot from one holy refuge to another.
- Forbidden: "Nishiddha." These are the mixing of mantras including the mantras given by unauthorized teachers or people. The rule is: only one mantra from one teacher. They also pertain to incorrectly repeated mantras and those mantras that are repeated in ignorance, which is: non understanding of the translation, or misunderstanding of the wording. The Guru or Spiritual teacher should explain what the mantra means in your mother tongue and check from time to time your repetitions.
- Penance: "Prayaschitta" I have never given this form of mantra but I do know that it is given for a Sadhaka who has disobeyed their vows.

- Unmoving: "Achala." This Japa is repeated whilst seated, often for many hours or even days. I have often observed this form of Japa not only in Indian Ashrams but also in the Middle East. Personally I do not feel it serves its purpose as an aid to Self Realisation as the practitioner loses discernment, one of the most important assets in the quest of Self Realisation.
- Moving: "Chala." This is an easy one as it is repeated whilst standing, sitting, lying, walking about or performing any activity. Repetition is inward and the lips must not move.
- Voiced: "Vachika." Repeated aloud. For example when the AUM chant is repeated or the MAHA MANTRA, giving the group of practitioners a combined lifting of vibration that is energetically very powerful. I have observed this Japa being performed by hundreds as a call and response and the whole air was alive with the vibration of this form of Mantra Japa.
- Whispered: "Upanshu." This form is repeated so that only the practitioner can hear and has a profound effect on the heart chakra.
- Mental: "Manasa." This mantra is never uttered aloud, but remains revolving in the mind and permeating the entire three states of consciousness. When this form of Japa is practiced, all other thoughts are released, a true purifying of the mind and subtle bodies, leaving only the mantra and its vibration to remain. It is said that here the mantra begins to personify and becomes a living force where it is able to connect and merge with the Cosmic Consciousness.
- Uninterrupted: "Akhanda." The mantra is repeated over and over for hours or days depending on the instructions given to the practitioner. In this instance the mantra to be repeated can often involve texts from the sacred books, or the names of every deity, sometimes the one hundred and eight names of a deity.
- Non-uttered: "Ajapa." With this mode of Japa the essence of the mantra is held and absorbed and thus imprinted on the practitioner's psyche or soul. This state is obtained through long and steady practice.
- Circumambulatory: "Padakshina." This form of Japa is repeated whilst performing three rotations around a temple, an altar, or holy statue.

Of course the mantras used in Japa recitation may be performed with the aid of a mala or rosary, but only an initiated master has the right to bestow the gift of these sacred syllables. Every care should be given that the mantra is compatible to the vibration of the recipient.

Swami Durgananda - Spiritual leader of Samata Yoga and gifted healer has been teaching yoga, meditation and philosophy around the world for over 40yrs. Swami has a profound understanding of the universe and the human condition through her articles and books she shares her knowledge with compassion and humour teaching us how to bring balance and harmony into our lives.

Visit <http://samatayoga.com.au> for more about Swami Durgananda and Samata Yoga.

