

# Sahāj Mārga Yoga (Union through the Natural Path)

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Sahaj Marg translates to "The Natural Path." It is a natural, simple system of Raja Yoga meditation and spiritual practice that helps one realize the ultimate potential within oneself. Regular spiritual practice under capable guidance enables aspirants to progressively experience the sublime presence of the divine in their daily lives. The Sahaj Marg system is freely offered to seekers worldwide through the [Shri Ram Chandra Mission \(SRCM\)](#) under the guidance of current living Master, Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari (also known as "Chariji"), and is effectively practiced by individuals from all walks of life - diverse nationalities, religious backgrounds, and various social conditions.

From: <http://www.srcm.org/>

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A system of practical training in spirituality, Sahaj Marg emerged in the late 1800s. Through meticulous research, Shri Ram Chandra, also known as [Lalaji](#) by his family and peers ([masters of Sahaj Marg](#)), rediscovered the long-lost art of transmission of spiritual energy. From the early years of his life, [Lalaji](#) followed the promptings of his own inner need for spirituality . He recognized the natural birthright of every individual to develop to the ultimate level of human perfection, and he saw the need for a simple and effective system of spiritual development that could be universally practiced by any person.

From: <http://www.sahajmarg.org/sm/what-is-sahajmarg/tracing-roots> (Sahāj Mārg Rājā Yoga Foundation)

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Surrender in totality to the WILL OF THE SUPREME LIFE FORCE is the ORDER to which the Masters belong. They have no personal will whatsoever and their consciousness is controlled and maintained by the Pranic force. Such is the Order to which Lord Krishna, Lord Rama, Lord Buddha, Jesus Christ, Prophet Mohammad, Sri Ramchandra of Fatehgarh, and Sri Ramchandra of Shahjahanpur belong. It may be observed that there is a common thread running through all their spiritual life and teachings. Though we may mention these personalities and many more and show them as roots, the Spiritual Order is the most ancient and in fact Timeless. Thus we may say that Sri Ramchandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur is the Sanatana Purusha. His message and teaching is LIVING....

We say sit in any comfortable posture and maintain the same posture. Comfortable posture we take surely, but then we go on changing it incessantly. There is no control over the body. There is no discipline. We change our posture. Try to remain in the same posture. It is very difficult, but when you are asking for mergence, when you are asking for a goal where you will be totally balanced, to maintain balance is not a joke, you have to strive for it. Balance is a tough concept. Static balance of course we can have. We can sit somewhere. Even there we are prepared to, but our body is such it refuses to be balanced even at the static level. We are not doing any gymnastics here. We are not doing any hatha yoga. We don't do such things. To sit like this itself consistently for one hour becomes a big tedious problem for us. That

is the amount of indiscipline that has got into us. There must be discipline. This is foremost. Then if we meditate, it makes some sense. Meditation is always for seeking our oneness with Nature. We are trying to feel one with Nature. That is laya is it not? Oneness with God. This is what we are asking for. Our morning meditation should be for one hour for this reason, otherwise we will be disturbed. We will not be in a position to have our thought firm. In the beginning it is only at the 55th minute that we will be in a position to have some idea of what we have got to meditate up on. As we gradually progress it starts even at the first second. Progress enables us to meditate for one hour, though in the beginning people are asked to sit for one hour, we should know that our meditation is less than few minutes. Meditation usually will begin thinking about what we can do during the day? What are the other plans that we have got to do? What are our responsibilities? All these things come to us. The meditation is a must for one hour, if we want to control our thoughts. Later on once we learn to sit for one hour and meditate, it becomes easy for us to meditate for longer hours. Once we get absorbed in His thought, time passes off. I don't ask you to do that, but then that's what happens. Meditation is one aspect of it and the evening cleaning is another aspect. We have formed so many impressions in our heart. We have got various values in our mind. We have given certain people some positive marks and certain other people some negative marks. Several notions are carried by us and they are our own. It has nothing to do with others and the circumstances. The general question is, how is the day? It is beautiful. The day is always beautiful. It is warm. Either it is warm or hot or cold it will be according to its nature. We are not the persons to decide. It is as it is. We have to adjust to it. It dictates

circumstances. Nature doesn't accept our ways of doing things. It has got its own ways. Because it is the mother. The mother knows how to dictate and how to love. Both the things she knows better. We have unfortunately formed various impressions. All these thoughts keep haunting us. We have to clean ourselves. This cleaning is a must otherwise our mind will never be clean.

From: <http://www.sriramchandra.org/pam/pam.htm>

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In the late nineteenth century, [Lalaji](#) met a Sufi master. Together, they founded a syncretic teaching between Hinduism and Sufism, in northern India. In 1945, *(13 years after Lalaji's death...allegedly)* on posthumous orders by Lalaji *(and others, in dreams)*, [\(see Autobiography of Ram Chandra\)](#) Babuji founded the Shri Ram Chandra Mission and the Sahaj Marga method which spread gradually to the south of India, once it rid itself of its Sufi *(Islam)* references. After raising Rajagopalachari *(The current president of SRCM(California-1997))* on a pedestal, in 1982, Babuji, ill and aging, finally appoints his own son (Umesh Saxena) to succeed him. Immediately after his *(Babuji's)* death *(1983)*, Rajagopalachari attempts to place himself at the control of the Society *(SRCM Shahjahanpur-1945)* with the support of followers from the West, while supporters of the son of Babuji continue to develop the Sahaj Marg from its historical stronghold in northern India, at Shahjahanpur. In 1999, *(after having been refused the Presidency of SRCM (Shahjahanpur-1945), by its Board of Directors, and having re-registered the Shri Ram Chandra Mission) in San Luis Obispo, California, in 1997, and its research arm, the SMRTI in Austin, Texas)*

Rajagopalachari returns to celebrate the centenary of the birth of Babuji, inaugurating the lavish Manapakkam ashram, near Chennai. Strengthened by his troops of Western followers and the financial power they give him, he (*Chari*) returns in triumph to his country. But to succeed in this feat, he has generously adapted the Spiritual product of Babuji and exploited without limit the weaknesses of his troops. He has become an autocratic guru, but resistance is increasing ....

In the late nineteenth century, precisely in 1891, a young Brahmin named Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh , aka Lalaji, meets the master of a Sufi lineage ([Naqshbandiya Sufi Order](#)) in India. This encounter between a Hindu and a Muslim is not unique in this northern region of India, Uttar Pradesh, densely populated and heavily Muslim. Their friendship is much more surprising in this politically sensitive time when the inter-communal tensions are exacerbated.

From: <http://historyofsrcm.blogspot.com/>

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There is only one God and, naturally, there is only one way to reach Him. The people have given many names to that stage. A particular institution named “Shri Ram Chandra Mission” has given birth to a new denomination to reach Him, “Sahaj Marg”. “Sahaj” and “Marg” (path) are two separate words. According to my limited knowledge, the word “Sahaj” is synonymous of “Aatma” (soul or sensitivity), i.e. connected some thing to the “Spirituality “. It means some particular school of spirituality, other than ‘Ramchandra School of Spirituality’, Headquarter at Fatehgarh (U.P.), India. However, very recently, it has been registered as a trademark of ‘Shri Ram Chandra Mission’ ....

Rev. Laalaaji Maharaaj of Fatehgarh (UP) was the first non-Muslim Saint of “*Naqushbandia, Mujaddadadiya, and Mazahariya* system of Sufism. He having well connected “*nisbat*” (the subtlest Divine thread) with its ancestry through his Spiritual Master Hazrat Maulana Fazl Ahemad Khan Saahib Raipuri, Kaimganji which has a certain well defined handling. He was, of course, against the rituals (meaningless social customs), but not the theological-ceremonies like ;(1) the disciple- making ceremony called *Bay’t*- placing the palm of once hand on *the* (that) hand of his Spiritual- Master, merely to have been the sign of sealing an agreement of allegiance. When a man or woman repented of his sins and had made up his mind to lead a life of righteous- ness and piety he/she had to perform *Bay’t*. The spirit seems to be for men/women to have direct communion with God, through the whole chain of the Spiritual Masters, so much so that all the intermediaries whose existence having been acknowledged are lost sight of, in the communion of men/women with God. (2) *Ijazat/Khilafat*, are determined on the question of *Fana* and *Baqa*, etc.

The ‘Sahaj Marg’ is schism of the ‘Ramchandra School of Spirituality’, renamed as NaqshMuMRa, occurred because of its manner, style and the vocabulary of Sufism. The split in socio-spiritual sects is not a strange phenomenon. Many religions, after the demise of their founders, dwindled either into insignificance or into use to split into innumerable branches. Here also the divine will cause the spread of the whole ‘Society’ after Rev. Laalaaji Maharaaj, everywhere, through its numerous branches and under different leadership. In fact, the philosophy and tenets have not undergone any major changes at the hands of different leaders, except the ‘Shri Ram Chandra Mission’.

There is an emphasis upon the *living Guru*. The founders held that *Guru* of the time alone could reveal the inner secrets, remove doubts and thus lead to salvation. In course of time, the essential truth about

the “True Guru” was lost sight of and the faith degenerated into the cult of personality- worship.

From:

<http://sites.google.com/site/laalaaajinilayam/epitomeofsahajmarg>

**(Naqshbandiya Mujaddadia Mazahariya Ramchandriya, abbreviated as NaqshMuMRa)**

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The reality of ‘Muraakibah’ is that we wait to be connected with that Supreme Power or “zaat Paak”; our total concentration in Meditation is based on this much only.

The plain meaning of ‘Muraakibah’ is – ‘Awdhaan’ or keep a watch (as per Hindi Dictionary). Keep your inner self out of any doubt; physically- eye and cardiac eye should be in perfect harmony and in the same form. When this happens there is no need to close the eyes. But till we clearly understand the ‘omni presence’ state of God, we have to close our eyes and wait vehemently.

To understand the mystery of ‘Muraakibah’ clearly, two things must be understood very well; first, what is the mystery of duality, non duality (Dwet and Adwet) and second is what the omnipresent form of God is.

According to Sufi saints, internal purity and stability is a must. You can not achieve your aim till your heart is not pure. Instability of heart is one difficulty, which does not allow us to achieve our aim. If the mirror of your heart is not clean then how can you see clearly? The biggest hurdle is confusion. It means when there are two opposite thoughts in your mind, you remain confused and perturbed.

From: <http://sites.google.com/site/samaadhidhaam/themeditation>  
(The NaqshMuMRa School of Sprituality)

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In 1930, Guru Maharaj, Paramsant Dr. Chaturbhuj Sahay Ji, established Ramashram Satsang Mathura (RSM) (naming it after his Guru, [Lala Ji Maharaj, Paramsant Sri Ram Chandra Ji](#)) out of the northern Indian town of Mathura. As per the directive of his Guru, he propagated a [System of Meditation](#) adaptable by people of any religion, community or race. This system is especially suited for our busy and demanding lives in today's world. If we shape our lifestyles and mold our thought processes according to it, spiritual success can be achieved effortlessly. We can learn to live a peaceful life amidst the stress.

Our system of *Sadhana/Satsang* is a unique unification of *Karma* (duty), *Upasana* (devotion), and *Gyan* (knowledge). The core of this unification is achieved through *Dhyan* (meditation) every morning and evening for 15-20 minutes.

From: <http://www.ramashram.com/> (Ramashram Satsang Mathura)

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Sahaj Marg, or the "natural path," is an ancient spiritual teaching. This technique focuses on heart-centered meditation and is a simple practice which you can easily adapt. It requires no rituals or ceremonies. You need nothing more than the power of thought.

### Instructions:

1. Practice Sahaj Marg meditation in the early morning for at least one hour and complete the meditation before sunrise. As



**the sun sets, perform an evening cleansing meditation for at least 30 minutes, completing it as the sun goes down.**

- 2. Sit in a comfortable position with your eyes shut, and concentrate on your heart being filled with "Divine Light." Assume a position which is comfortable for you and where you can remain still for about an hour. Do not lie down to meditate, or you may fall asleep.**
- 3. Concentrate on filling your heart and mind with loving energy and healing light. As thoughts enter your mind, allow them to drift away and come back to your heart-centered meditation. In Sahaj Marg meditation, all thoughts come from within, and they linger only if you give them attention. If you allow your thoughts to fall away, they will become weak as your meditation becomes strong.**
- 4. Continue your meditation for about an hour, until the sun rises, and then prepare for your day with new-found energy.**
- 5. Finish each day with an evening Sahaj Marg meditation, sitting for about 30 minutes, as you allow the thoughts and stresses of the day to fall away while the sun sets.**

**From: [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_4454652\\_do-sahaj-marg-meditation.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_4454652_do-sahaj-marg-meditation.html) (*How to Do Sahaj Marg Meditation*, by an eHow Contributor)**

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**Samarth Guru Mahatma Sri Ramchandra Ji Maharaj (Pujiya Dada Guru) came to the planet earth in 1873. His ancestors used to live in**

**Bhogaon, Mainpuri, UP, India. His forefathers were very rich but by his time he left with little property.**

**His father was Toll Superintendent in Farukhabad. Pujya Dada Guru studied in Farukhabad. He had to leave the study and take the responsibility of the family after the death of his father. He started working in Farukhabad's collector's office.**

**Since birth he had interest in spirituality. His mother used to recite 'Ramayan' in the morning which he used to listen with great interest.**

**At the same period, there was a great Muslim saint in Farukhabad. He was secular in nature and had respect for all other religions. He used to say that God is in 'love' not in 'religion'. When Pujya Dada Guru was around 19 years old he got a chance of the company of the Great Muslim saint. The saint said "Come to me. I shall teach you spirituality. It belonged to Hindus but they no more has it. You learn it first and then spread it among others.". From that day he started going to the saint.**

**Long time passed and Pujya Dada Guru kept on visiting his Guru. One day both of them were taking an evening walk. His Guru asked him to turn back. He tried to turn and suddenly all his veils got pierced. He saw the God. He saw the actual form of the whole universe. He felt the working of super natural forces.**

**His Guru said 'Son be cautious this is the God'. That was the day when Guru blessed him with divine knowledge.**

**He used to remain calm in either sorrow or happiness. He never used to laugh loudly. During satsang he never used to sit on special mattress, couch or rug. He used to say that same arrangements to be made for everybody. He never used to take gifts from his followers or disciples and never considered others lower to himself. He was very**

kind and pure hearted with no difference between his words and actions. He was an ideal man.

A person loves only his children but he loved every creature. Everybody used to feel relieved and relaxed while meeting him. He did not do more talking and preferred keeping quiet. He had a glowing face and had sweet voice. He had knowledge of music too but seldom sing using musical instruments. Mostly he used to sing prayers during satsang. He had a very good knowledge of principles of every religion and sects.

His teaching was "Serve everybody without thinking of return and refrain from taking services from others.". He kept his own words. Five to ten seekers were always staying at his house and he used to provide food etc and not letting people to eat somewhere else. If somebody insisted for eating outside, he used to say "removal of duality is meeting God; if you have such feelings for me, then how will you proceed further. Remove such feelings. Whatever is mine is yours too and whatever is yours is mine too."

He kept on distributing spiritual knowledge to everybody without any reservation. He departed from this world in 14 August 1931 at the age of 59 years.

From: <http://www.ramashramsatsang.org/> (Yogäbhyäs)

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Pujya Dr. K.C.Vardachari was born at Munulapudi Agraharam, a small village near [Tiruchanoor](#) a temple town of Sri. Padmavathi Ammavaru on 14th August 1902, in the asterism of Moola and Vrschika Lagna. He had his early education at [Tirupati](#) and he moved to Madras for his collegiate education. He did his F.A. at [Christian College Madras](#). He participated in the Freedom movement for a span of few years and

later joined the B.A.(Hons) course at Christian College, Madras. He graduated with a B.A. (Hons) Degree, in 1926 securing Gold medal from the [University of Madras](#). In 1927 he worked as Research Scholar in the [Andhra University](#). During this period he wrote his first book [Metaphysics of Sri Ramanujas' Sri Bhashya](#). He took his Ph.D. from the University of Madras in the year 1932. His Ph.D was the first in Visistadvaita awarded by the University of Madras. After occupying several important positions he ended his active professional life with the Vivekananda Professorship on comparative religion, ethics and philosophy at the University of Madras in 1966.

He has written profusely on the Visistadvaita system of philosophy of Vedanta, Sri [Aurobindo](#) and later on the System of [Natural Path](#), the new system of Raja Yoga propounded by [SriRamchandrajai Maharaj of Shahjahanpur, U.P., India](#). [Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh](#) corresponded with him starting with the words "Salutations to the Atman" and thus recognizing his spiritual status.

In the man who leaves a deep impression on the history of his race we invariably find rare qualities besides those of the mere intellect. All those who knew Pujya Dr. K.C.Varadachari, had seen in him the perfection of Intellect and Intuition coupled with impeccable Character. Pujya Dr. K.C.Varadachari's compassion to other human beings in particular and all existence in general was something that every one wanted to acquire for himself. Pujya Dr. K.C. Vardachari was infectious and was carrying with him the seeds of Infinity wherever he went and many did acquire the symptoms of Divine Sickness due to separation from the Lord.

It is not all the certain that prizes of this world were got by him, perhaps he never bothered about it: but surely he got the gifts of the Beyond as was attested by Mahatma Sri Ramchandrajai Maharaj of Shahjahanpur. U.P. The curvatures he feared that were developing in the method that is propagated by the Great Master Sri Ramchandrajai

Maharaj, slowly turned out into a reality where the stress on the spiritual path was over taken by the philosophies of love and unmindfulness in meditation. He has condescended to the prayers of the earnest seekers and has made himself available as a guide in the path leading to the Master. [A new order in spirituality](#) has commenced in 1991 and is guiding the spiritual destinies of earnest seekers.

He was an ardent seeker of reality and had a pretty long journey in spiritual life. While more would be found in the section “Spirituality”, it may be said that he has moved from the traditional forms of worship to the most illumined path of Realisation in the system of Raja Yoga of Sri Ramchandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur. He answered the question of his development in the following manner.

“A question has been asked as to how it came about that I had taken to Sri Ramchandraji’s” method, preferring it to Sri Aurobindo and Sri Ramanuja. It is a question in autobiography.

I first awakened to spirituality through the reading of the life of [Swami Vivekananda](#). Earlier I had soaked myself in the lives of all warriors of the world as well as the great travelers of my school days. I admired the great works of Burke and soldiers. Though this was so, I did a good lot of reading in the lives of the great discoverers in science. Proctor books and the book of knowledge I had read avidly. But the reading of the life of Vivekananda, which synchronized with the First Non- Cooperation movement, which had deep spiritual coloring, was the beginning of my interest in Yoga. Though Karma yoga was what was put forward by the Gandhian way, yet the jnana attracted me or rather the Raja yoga attracted me. Then after study of all the books concerned including quite a lot of books by [Tolstoy](#) and [A.E \(Whitehead\)](#) and others I found that the books of [Swami Ramatirtha](#) (Words of God Realisation) and the Arya volumes of Sri

Aurobindo came to me. Though the first author did stir deep spirituality, it was Sri Aurobindo's works that made me get the feeling that here indeed is the authentic voice of spirituality. I drank literally the works of Sri Aurobindo. I do not know how it was so easy for me to feel into. After the Arya, I subscribed for the Standard Bearer (Chandranagore). I felt that weekly food was invigorating and necessary. I had discontinued the studies after F.A (Intermediate) now I once again entered into the college-to study Philosophy. European Philosophy I studied and took interest in the problems. [Bergson](#) I had to study fortunately, and under Dr. A.G. Hogg. I was all along saturating myself with the Arya and the essays on the Gita.

I discovered that Sri Ramanuja's thought was similar to Sri Aurobindo's at least on the side of Bhakti. I began to work for my research on Sri Ramanuja's major work and completed it. I then did another research project on Yoga Psychology in the Minor Upanishads and came to the conclusion about the major needs of spirituality and they agreed with that of Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo remained my pramana. However I did not make any effort to meet and get the personal guidance in my sadhana. In the meanwhile I studied Theosophical literature and [Krishnamurthy](#) and the skeptical modes and approaches. However though I had saturated myself with Visistadvaita the inner feeling that Sri Aurobindo was giving the right direction never left me.

It was in 1936, however that my two reviews of Sri Aurobindo's writings and life put me into touch with Sri Aurobindo. I had the first darshan of him on 24th Nov. 1936; I requested that I may be accepted as a sadhaka non resident. I was asked come in 1937 June, Aurobindo and the Mother saw me. I was asked to sit bare chested and on examination it was decided that I could not be accepted as a sadhaka. That was my first shock. However I continued devoting myself to a serious study of Sri Aurobindo.

In 1939, there was a call from the [Devasthanams at Tirupati](#) which is avowedly a Visistadvaita shrine to join the [Oriental institute](#) as Professor of Comparative Religion and Philosophy to do work (Service ) for the Visistadvaita Philosophy. The offer was not good salary wise. Yet owing to the insistent demands of my father, Sri Rao Bahadur K.V. Rangaswami Iyengar and his uncle Rao Bahadur N.S Narasimhachariar, I accepted the offer. Since I was not accepted by Sri Aurobindo I did not consult him but joined. (I belong to the sect of Visistadvaita by birth and thought that I had perhaps to do and achieve my salvation through it alone) I had to face lot of persecution and within two years the fact became clear to me that [Visistadvaita](#) had no hope and place at this famous shrine and might get discarded slowly. This was my second shock-profoundly more than the first.

“It began to dawn on me whether after all the God worshipped on the Hills was partial to Sri Ramanuja , or whether it was after all a common enough God for all sects and persons .....The diversion of funds towards secular.... meanwhile gained momentum..... the Srinivasa Mission, expansion of the secular activities, the expanded provision of amenities for pilgrims, the gold-gilding and so on. These undoubtedly popularized God: more income and more expenditure and more pilgrim traffic. T.T. Devasthanams began growing. I cannot say that there was a great wave of religiosity and interest. The summer school of Religion was a regular feature. But all was for making Sri Venkateswara more well known and popular.

We have been expanding and Tirupati became a really all- India centre of pilgrimage.... But in my inner thoughts one thing alone has been growing-a deep distrust and agony of an indescribable kind. There was perfect loss of hope about a renaissance in spirituality and growth of true philosophic evolution. More and more it became clear that institutions of religions can only lead to subtle corruption, and all sorts of persons take the shelter of religion for the furtherance of

their own vanity and livelihood. God becomes the vehicle for individual adventure...Philosophy suffered an eclipse in this place when the University came and a professor who had hardly any belief in philosophy was appointed to it.

Thus Visistadvaita became non-grata and every attempt to improve it had failed. Thus I was forced to the conclusion that it is futile to resurrect it or attempt to waste one's life over it. Its votaries were working against it: a suicidal affair. The philosophy is not obviously wrong-intellectually to me it has been fairly satisfactory. The Aurobindonian element of supra mental evolution was possible in terms of Visistadvaita according to me, but it was not so admitted by Sri Aurobindo. I had failed in both of my efforts. So I had to think again: perhaps a rejection of both was demanded of me by the Supreme Power that is beyond Venkateswara and Sri Aurobindo..... It was enough for me at this juncture to somehow get the grace of God and leave everything to it -to reveal or reject or illumine the great Vast of Being.

God indeed was kind to me also. I had experiences of the most vivid kind and almost certain times direct awareness..... It was at this juncture that two persons came into my life. One is Sri Swami Sivananda whose ability to catch men is as skillful as a master fisherman, who wrote to me a letter saying that my life was very important and offered to look after my body. This meant quite a copious supply of his literature and one tin of Chyavanaprasha and one of bottle of Brahmi Hair Oil every month. He made me a fellow of his Forest Academy also. But his teachings had not at all stimulated in me any serious spiritual vibrations. However Swami Sivananda considered him to be realised soul and has written as follows while conferring the Fellowship of the [Forest Academy, Rishikesh](#) "With disarming simplicity and effortless dignity that characterizes his written works Dr. K.C. Vardachari has consistently and persistently



yoked the services of his philosophical acumen towards the errors of a purely intellectual approach of life and has sought to defend and advance with adequate persuasion and power the claims of higher and spiritual values both for the attainment of deeper philosophical insights into the nature of the individual, the Word and the Ultimate Reality as also for the perfection and integration of the individual personality in a scheme of living that results in the fullest enjoyment of the prizes of this world and the gifts of the world beyond”.

The other was also seeking to introduce his book to the Public. I received a book and a letter from one of his abhyasis for opinion. I read the book and asked for further particulars. I Reviewed the book for The Hindu, Madras and I found that some three gentlemen responded to it by getting into contact with its author Sri Ramchandraji. He then wrote to me offering to help me in spirituality. I thus entered into this sadhana because here was an offer to lead me, to accept me as a disciple and sadhaka- and not on my request but by himself. I felt that I was not accepted by Sri Venkateswara or Sri Aurobindo and to me only SriRamchandraji himself came in 1956, 57, 59, 60 and has led me to spiritual experiences. So, I was led to test these carefully and was made a Preceptor in 1957 so that I could myself see how the spiritual training is done.”

From 1966 till his last days he was fully engaged in the spread of the system of Rajayoga of SriRamchandra. He delivered many talks and many books on the system during this period. After a brief period of illness he attained Maha Samadhi on the auspicious day of Basanth Panchami on 30<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1971

From: <http://www.drkcv.org/About/About.htm> (Pujya Dr. K.C. Varadachari)



The Golden Sufi Center is the vehicle for the work of the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya Order of Sufism. The purpose of The Golden Sufi Center is to make available the teachings of this lineage of Sufism.

Naqshbandi Sufis (named after Bahâ ad-dîn Naqshband, d. 1389) are known as the "silent Sufis" because their practices are done in silence. They practice a silent *dhikr* and the silent meditation of the heart—God is the silent emptiness and is therefore most easily reached in silence. They also attach great importance to dreams, which they consider to be a form of guidance along the Path. The central focus of The Golden Sufi Center is the meditation groups. At meetings, silent meditation is followed by dreamwork.

Sufi dreamwork combines spiritual and psychological approaches, helping participants to realize the guidance that comes from within and to understand the inner processes of the path as they are imaged in dreams. Dreamwork is regarded as the modern equivalent to the ancient Sufi teaching stories. Participants are encouraged to share their own dreams, particularly those which have a spiritual dimension.

From: <http://www.goldensufi.org/about.html> (The Golden Sufi Center)

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The essence of any Sufi order, or *tariqa*, is the energy of succession, the spiritual energy or substance that is transmitted from teacher to teacher, back in an unbroken lineage to the Prophet Mohammad. Without this transmission the *tariqa* is form without substance, lacking the spiritual energy that is necessary for the real transformation of the heart. The true history of any Sufi order is the

history of this transmission, which is the central core of the path, around which its practices and etiquette develop over time. The outer form of the path can change according to the time and the place and the people, but the inner essence must remain the same living substance of divine love.

In 1961 a Western woman, Irina Tweedie, arrived in the northern Indian town of Kanpur, where she met a Sufi master, Bhai Sahib. He was a member of a family of Sufis. His uncle, father, and elder brother had all been Sufi *sheikhs* in the lineage of the Naqshbandiyya-Mujadidiyya, an Indian branch of the Naqshbandi order, named after the fourteenth-century master, Baha ad-din Naqshband. The Naqshbandis, known as the Silent Sufis, practice a silent rather than vocal *dhikr*, and they do not engage in *sama*, sacred music, or dance; nor do they dress in any special way to distinguish themselves from ordinary people. A central aspect of the Naqshbandi path is the *suhbat*, the close relationship of master and disciple. The order was very successful in Central Asia, and spread throughout India through the work of Ahmad Sirhindî (d. 1624), who was known as the Mujaddid (Renewer).

What was unusual about this Sufi family is that they were Hindu, not Muslim. Traditionally the Naqshbandiyya-Mujadidiyya are the most orthodox of all the Sufi orders, stressing the importance of the *Shari'ah* (Islamic law); but at the end of the nineteenth century a transition took place. Fazl Ahmad Khan, the *sheikh* of Bhai Sahib's uncle, was Muslim, as were all of the predecessors on this path. But when the uncle, Lalaji, said to his *sheikh*, "I am yours. If you permit me, I may adopt Islam," Fazl Ahmad Khan rejected the idea: "You should not think of such an idea. Spirituality does not need following of any particular religion. Spirituality is seeking the Truth and self-realization, which are matters of the soul.... It is the duty of everyone to follow

the customs and rituals of the country and religion in which one is born.” ...

I attended her small meditation group in a tiny room beside the train tracks in North London. The heart meditation that we practiced was developed in India, where it is also known as *dhyana* meditation:

For the heart meditation, as long as the body is relaxed the physical position does not matter: one can sit or even lie down.

The first stage in this meditation is to evoke the feeling of love, which activates the heart *chakra*. This can be done in a number of ways, the simplest of which is to think of someone whom we love. This can be God, the great Beloved. But often at the beginning God is an idea rather than a living reality within the heart, and it is easier to think of a person whom we love, a lover, a friend.

Love has many different qualities. For some the feeling of love is a warmth, or a sweetness, a softness or tenderness, while for others it is peace, tranquility or silence. Love can also come as a pain, a heartache, a sense of loss. However love comes to us, we immerse ourselves in this feeling; we place all of ourselves in the love within the heart.

When we have evoked the feeling of love, thoughts will come, intrude into our mind—what we did the day before, what we have to do tomorrow. Memories will float by, images appear before the mind’s eye. We have to imagine that we are getting hold of every thought, every image and feeling, and drowning it, merging it into the feeling of love.

Every feeling, especially the feeling of love, is much more dynamic than the thinking process, so if one does this practice well, with the

utmost concentration, all thoughts will disappear. Nothing will remain. The mind will be empty.

The state of *dhyana* is a complete abstraction of the senses in which the mind is stilled by the energy of love within the heart, and the individual mind is absorbed into the universal mind. The actual experience of *dhyana* rarely happens during the first practice of meditation. It may take months, even a few years, to reach this stage. And once we do begin to experience *dhyana* we may not realize it. The initial experiences of *dhyana* usually last for just a split second—for an instant the mind dips into the infinite and just for a moment we are not present. There may be little or no consciousness that this has happened; the mind may not even be aware that it was absent. But gradually, the mind disappears for longer and longer periods; we become aware that our mind has shut down. The experience can for some time seem like sleep, since sleep is the nearest equivalent we have ever known to this mindless state.

The experience of *dhyana* deepens as the lover is immersed deeper and deeper into a reality beyond the mind. More and more one tastes the peace, stillness, and profound sense of wellbeing of a far vaster reality where the problems that surround us so much of the time do not exist—a reality beyond the difficulties of duality and the limitations of the world of the mind and senses, into which, for a little while each day, meditation allows us to merge.

*Dhyana* is the first stage in the meditation of the heart. It is, as Irina Tweedie described it, “the first stage after transcending the thinking faculty of the mind, and from the point of view of the intellect it must be considered as an unconscious state. It is the first step beyond consciousness as we know it.” In *dhyana*, the heart is activated and the energy of love slows down the mind. The mind loses its power of control and individual consciousness is lost, at first for an instant and

then gradually for longer periods of time. The lover becomes absorbed, drowned in the ocean of love.

Then in this state of unconsciousness a higher level of consciousness, or *samadhi*, begins to awaken. The evolution of *dhyana* into *samadhi* happens “by easy degrees,” as “the highest stages of *dhyana* are gradually transformed into the lower stage of *samadhi*, which is still not completely conscious,” and this less-conscious state leads in turn to the higher state of *samadhi*, which “represents a full awakening of one’s own divinity.”

The experiences of *samadhi* cannot easily be described. They belong to a level of reality beyond the mind, to a dimension of unity in which everything is merged, where the mind, operating as it does by making distinctions, cannot get a foothold. In *samadhi* we begin to experience our true nature which is a state of oneness: we are what we experience. Gradually we glimpse, are infused with, the all-encompassing unity and energy of love that belong to the Self and underlie all life. And this oneness is not a static state, but a highly dynamic state of being that is constantly changing. Also our experience of it changes: no two meditations are the same and our experience becomes deeper and richer, more and more complete. On this plane of unity everything has its own place and fulfills its real purpose. Here the true nature of everything that is created is present as an expression of divine oneness and divine glory. In the outer world we experience only a fragmented sense of our self and our life. Here everything is complete and we come to know that everything is just as it should be....

The *dhikr* is the repetition of a sacred word or phrase. It can be the shahâda, “*Lâ ilâha illâ llah*” (There is no God but God), but it is often one of the names or attributes of God. The *dhikr* we were given is Allâh. It is said in Islam that God has ninety-nine names, but foremost

among these is Allâh, for Allâh is His greatest name and contains all His divine attributes.

But for the Sufi, the name Allâh also points beyond all His attributes. According to an esoteric Sufi tradition, the word Allâh is composed of the article *al*, and *lâh*, one of the interpretations of which is “nothing.” Thus the word Allâh can be understood to mean “the Nothing.” The fact that His greatest name contains the meaning “the Nothing” has great significance, because for the mystic the experience of Truth, or God, beyond all forms and attributes, is an experience of Nothingness. Shortly before his death, the Naqshbandi Sufi Master Bhai Sahib told Irina Tweedie, “There is nothing but Nothingness.” He repeated it twice. The words point to the very essence of the Sufi path, as Irina Tweedie explains:

There is nothing but Nothingness. . . Nothingness because the little self (the ego) has to go. One has to become nothing. Nothingness, because the higher states of consciousness represent nothingness to the mind, for it cannot reach there. It is completely beyond the range of perception. Complete comprehension on the level of the mind is not possible, so one is faced with nothingness. And in the last, most sublime, sense, it is to merge into the Luminous Ocean of the Infinite.

Thus, the name Allâh contains the essence of all Sufi teaching: to become nothing, to become annihilated in Him, so that all that remains is His Infinite Emptiness. One of the mysteries of the path is that this Emptiness, this Nothingness, loves you. It loves you with an intimacy and tenderness and infinite understanding beyond imagining; it loves you from the very inside of your heart, from the core of your own being. It is not separate from you. Sufis are lovers and the Nothingness is the Greatest Beloved in whose embrace the lover completely disappears. This is the path of love; it is the annihilating cup of wine which His lovers gladly drink, as in the words of Rumi:

I drained this cup:  
there is nothing, now,  
but ecstatic annihilation.

In saying the *dhikr*, repeating His name silently on the breath—“Al” on the out-breath, “lâh” on the in-breath—we remember Him. With each cycle of the breath we return to the inner essence within the heart and live the remembrance of our love for Him. Practicing the *dhikr* as constantly as we can, we bring this mystery into our daily lives. Repeating His name as we engage in the simple activities of our day—walking, driving, cooking, cleaning—we infuse His name into all we do: cooking with the *dhikr* we put His remembrance into the food, for example; cleaning with the *dhikr* we clean with His name. Lying awake at night we can silently repeat His name. It is more difficult to do when we are talking or engaged in mental activities, but when our mind is free enough to remember Him again, we rejoice once more in repeating the name of the One we love.

We may find it difficult at first to remember as much as we would like to. But with practice the *dhikr* becomes a natural, almost automatic part of our breath, and then no moment is wasted; every breath aligns our attention with Him. And over time our whole being comes to participate in this attention. Through repeating His name, we remember Him not just in the mind but in the heart; finally there comes the time when every cell of the body repeats His name.

It is said, “First you do the *dhikr* and then the *dhikr* does you.” The name of God becomes a part of our unconscious and sings in our bloodstream. This is beautifully illustrated in an old Sufi story:

Sahl said to one of his disciples: “Try to say continuously for one day: ‘Allâh! Allâh! Allâh!’ and do the same the next day and the day after, until it becomes a habit.” Then he told him to repeat it at night also, until it became so familiar that the disciple repeated it even during his



sleep. Then Sahl said, “Do not consciously repeat the Name any more, but let your whole faculties be engrossed in remembering Him!” The disciple did this until he became absorbed in the thought of God. One day, a piece of wood fell on his head and broke it. The drops of blood that dripped to the ground bore the legend, “*Allâh! Allâh! Allâh!*”<sup>(12)</sup>

The way the name of God permeates the wayfarer is not metaphoric but a literal happening. The *dhikr* is magnetized by the teacher so that it inwardly aligns the wayfarer with the path and the goal. (It is for this reason that the *dhikr* needs to be given by a teacher, though in some instances it can also be given by the Higher Self or, traditionally, by Khidr. Working in the unconscious, the *dhikr* alters our mental, psychological, and physical bodies. On the mental level this is easily seen. Normally, in our everyday life, the mind follows its automatic thinking process, over which we often have very little control. The mind thinks us, rather than the other way around. Just catch your mind for a moment and observe its thoughts—every thought creates a new thought, every answer a new question. And because energy follows thought, our mental and psychological energy is scattered in many directions. To engage seriously in spiritual life means learning to become one-pointed, to focus all our energy in one direction, towards Him. Through repeating His name, we alter the deeply worn grooves of our mental conditioning that play the same tune over and over again, repeat the same patterns which bind us in our mental habits. The *dhikr* gradually replaces these old imprints with the single imprint of His name. The automatic thinking process is redirected towards Him. You could say that the practice of the *dhikr* reprograms us for God.

The lover experiences a deep joy in repeating the name of her invisible Beloved who is so near and yet so far away. When He is near, saying His name becomes the expression of our gratitude to Him for the bliss of His presence, for the sweetness of His companionship.

When He is absent, it becomes our cry to Him and helps us to bear the longing and the pain. In times of trouble His name brings reassurance and help. It gives us strength, and it can help to dissolve the blocks that separate us from Him. When we say His name, He is with us, even when we feel all alone with our burdens.

Through repeating His name, we begin to lose our identification with our isolated, burdened self and become identified with our Beloved who has been hidden within our own heart. Gradually the veils that have kept Him hidden fall away and the lover comes to know His presence in her heart. And as He removes the inner veils, so also does he lift the outer veils. Then the lover finds Him not only within the inner dimensions of her heart, but also in the outer world; she comes to experience that “whithersoever ye turn, there is the Face of God.”

Then He whom we love and whose name we repeat becomes our constant companion. And the lover also becomes the companion of God, for the “eyes which regard God are also the eyes through which He regards the world.” This relationship of companionship belongs to the beyond and yet it is lived in this world. The Beloved is our true friend, and this is the deepest friendship; it demands our total participation. Practicing the *dhikr*, repeating His name, we are with Him in every breath.

(A Brief Excerpt from “Neither of the East nor of the West: The Journey of the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya from India to America” by Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

From: [http://www.goldensufi.org/article\\_eastwest.html](http://www.goldensufi.org/article_eastwest.html) (The Golden Sufi Center)

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Rather than attempting to still one's thoughts by focusing on the mind, through focusing on the heart and the feeling of love within the heart one leaves the mind behind. Thought-forms slowly die and our emotions are also stilled. The "meditation of the heart" is a practice that drowns the mind and the emotions in love's ocean.

For the heart meditation, as long as the body is relaxed the physical position does not matter: one can sit or even lie down.

The first stage in this meditation is to evoke the feeling of love, which activates the heart chakra. This can be done in a number of ways, the simplest of which is to think of someone whom we love. This can be God, the great Beloved. But often at the beginning God is an idea rather than a living reality within the heart, and it is easier to think of a person whom we love, a lover, a friend.

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When we have evoked this feeling of love, thoughts will come, intrude into our mind—what we did the day before, what we have to do tomorrow. Memories float by, images appear before the mind's eye. We have to imagine that we are getting hold of every thought, every image and feeling, and drowning it, merging it into the feeling of love.

Every feeling, especially the feeling of love, is much more dynamic than the thinking process, so if one does this practice well, with the utmost concentration, all thoughts will disappear. Nothing will remain. The mind will be empty....

**Individually this meditation should initially be practiced for at least half an hour a day. Early morning is usually the best time as there are fewer thought-forms in the air and we are not saturated by the activities of the day. Meditating before falling asleep is also a good practice. But this meditation is not a rigidly prescribed discipline—it should not be forced. As in all Sufi practices if there is too much effort it is not spiritual. And sometimes one is unexpectedly drawn into meditation. The heart, awakened from within, calls one. Then if possible one turns away from outer activities and sits in silence for a few minutes or even hours, called by love into the innermost chamber of the heart.**

**(A Brief excerpt from “The Sufi Meditation of the Heart” by Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)**

**From: [http://www.goldensufi.org/a\\_meditation\\_of\\_heart.html](http://www.goldensufi.org/a_meditation_of_heart.html) (The Golden Sufi Center)**