

Tantrā: A Compilation by Mark A. Foster, Ph.D.

The Tantric practitioner seeks to use the prana (divine power) that flows through the universe (including one's own body) to attain purposeful goals. These goals may be spiritual, material or both. Most practitioners of tantra consider mystical experience imperative. Some versions of Tantra require the guidance of a guru.

<http://www.tantraastrology.com/tantraastrology.html>

At the heart of Tantra is the principle of creative transformation, embodying and manifesting our essential nature in the world creatively and compassionately. To understand Tantra requires experience, not just intellectual knowledge. These retreats will focus upon specific themes of meditation aimed at providing a foundation of practice that can be built upon and deepened.

http://www.mudra.co.uk/mudra_retreats.html

Tantra (Sanskrit: "weave" "tool" "Tools for Weaving" denoting continuity), tantricism or tantrism is any of several esoteric traditions rooted in the religions of India, Nepal, and Tibet. It exists in Hindu {Hinduism, known as Hindū Dharma in some modern Indian languages, is a religion which originated on the Indian subcontinent. In contemporary usage Hinduism is also referred to as Sanātana Dharma , a Sanskrit phrase meaning "eternal law"}.

<http://devimaya.escortsite.com/tantra.phtml>

The spiritual awakening of a sadhaka is described in Tantra by means of the symbol of the awakening and rising of the Kundalini power. What is this Kundalini? Properly understood, it is not something mystical or esoteric, peculiar to Tantra, but the basis of the spiritual experiences described by all religious faiths. Every genuine spiritual experience, such as the seeing of light or a vision, or communion with the Deity, is only a manifestation of the ascent of the Kundalini. Let us try to understand the Kundalini with the help of an illustration from physical science. There are two kinds of energy in a particle of matter: potential and kinetic, the sum total of which is a constant. The kinetic energy, which is only a fraction of the total energy, is responsible for the movement or action of the particle. There exists a particular ratio between the kinetic and the total energy; when this ratio is changed by inter-molecular action, the nature of the particle changes: one element is transformed into another. According to Tantra, the Kundalini, in the form of cosmic energy, is present in everything, even in a particle of matter. Only a fraction of it, like the kinetic energy, is operative, while an un-measured residuum is left, like the potential energy, "coiled up" and untapped at the "base root." It is a vast magazine of power, of which the operative energy, like the kinetic energy of the particle, is only a fraction. In the jiva-centre, also, there are this potential energy of the Kundalini, which is the storehouse of the energy of the body (physical, subtle, and causal), and also the active energy of the Kundalini, which accounts for the action and movement of the jiva. The coiled-up Kundalini is the central pivot upon which the whole complex apparatus of the body and mind

moves and turns. A specific ratio between the active and total energies of the Kundalini determines the present condition and behavior of the bodily apparatus. A change in the ratio is necessary to effect a change in its present working efficiency by transforming the grosser bodily elements into finer. A transformation, dynamization, and sublimation of the physical, mental, and vital apparatus is only possible through what is called the rousing of the Kundalini and its reorientation from "downward facing" to "upward facing." By the former the physical body has been made a "coiled curve," limited in character, restricted in functions and possibilities. By the force of the latter it breaks its fetters and transcends its limitations. This is the general principle. But there are different forms of spiritual disciplines by which this magazine of latent power can be acted upon. Faith and love act as a most powerful lever to raise the coiled-up Kundalini; so also the disciplines of raja-yoga and jnana-yoga. The repetition of the Lord's name or a holy mantra, and even music, help in this process. Tantra recognizes all this, The student of Tantra should bear in mind the psychological aspect of the process of the rise of the Kundalini, which is more of an unfoldment, expansion, and elevation of consciousness than a mechanical accession to an increased and higher power. The aim of waking the Kundalini is not the acquisition of greater power for the purpose of performing miraculous feats or the enjoyment of material pleasures; it is the realization of Satchidananda. The passage of the awakened Kundalini lies through the Sushumna, which is described as the central nerve in the nervous system. A kind of hollow canal, the Sushumna passes through the spinal column connecting the base centre (chakra) at the bottom of the spine with the centre at the cerebrum. Tantra speaks of six

centers² through which the Sushumna passes; these centers are so many spheres or planes, described in Tantra as different-colored lotuses with varying numbers of petals. In the ordinary worldly person these centers are closed, and the lotuses droop down like buds. As the Kundalini rises through the Sushumna canal and touches the centers, these buds turn upward as fully opened flowers and the aspirant obtains spiritual experiences. The goal of spiritual practice is to make the Kundalini rise from those centers which are lower and more gross to those which are higher and more conscious. During this upward journey of the Kundalini, the jiva is not quite released from the relative state till it reaches the sixth centre or plane, which is the "opening" for the experience of Reality. At this sixth centre (the two-petalled white lotus located at the junction of the eyebrows) the jiva sheds its ego and burns the seed of duality, and its higher self rises from the ashes of its lower self. It now dies physically, as it were, in order to be able to live in Pure Consciousness. The sixth centre is the key by which the power in the thousand-petalled lotus in the cerebrum, which is like the limitless ocean. is switched on to the little reservoir which is the individual self, filling the latter and making it overflow and cease to be the little reservoir. Finally the Kundalini rises to the lotus at the cerebrum and becomes united with Shiva, or the Absolute; and the aspirant realizes, in the transcendental consciousness, his union with Shiva-Shakti....

Tantra claims that mantras are efficacious, that the diagrams used in the worship are potent, that the deities, or devatis, are conscious entities, that supernatural powers are attained, and that the earnest aspirant experiences the rise of the Kundalini through the different spinal centers and finally realizes his identity with Satchidananda.

[by Swami Nikhilananda]

<http://www.iloveulove.com/spirituality/hindu/realtantra.htm>

Like every other branch of tantra, too, Srividya leads its devotees to experience and harness her energetic, creative power—her shakti—that is the only reality. The Sri Chakra is a map of its flow out from the incomprehensible unmanifest state which is beyond even the separation between subject and object and into the world that is its phenomenal form. Emergence is separation; everything starts with the polarity of Shiva and Shakti, the archetype of all the inescapable divisions and contradictions of experience, and their separation and union produces a seed. These three together make up the inner triangle at the heart of the Sri Chakra. From there the energy flows outward, its activity ever more diverse and concrete until it is manifest as the world of our experience. The accomplished Srividya adept can move both ways along the flow of that power, dissolving his or her body and the world itself into divine shakti and putting them back together again.

A science or sadhana (spiritual practice) based on a vast collection of religious and occult Hindu scriptures that emphasize the shakti (energy of the deity), usually called kundalini, which comes from the goddess. The scriptures are generally in the form of a dialogue between the god Shiva and his wife Parvati. In treatises where Shiva answers the questions, they are called agama; where Parvati answers it is a nigama.

The tantra scriptures represent a cumulation of knowledge dating to ancient times. The majority of texts are written in Sanskrit, but are also found in Pali, Prakit, Tibetan, Hindi, and Bengali. They are considered encyclopedias of esoteric wisdom, covering topics such as creation and destruction of the universe, worship of the gods, spiritual disciplines, rituals, occult powers, and meditations. The tantras also discuss the subtle anatomy of the body including the chakras (spiritual centers) and the connection paths between them through which the kundalini energy travels. The tantras are also supposed to be specially relevant to Kali Yuga (the present age of devolution).

“Tantra,” [*Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*](#). 2001