

Sadhana

▶ *Sadhana* means a daily spiritual practice. *Sadhana* is a self-discipline that allows one to express the Infinite within one's self.

▶ *Sadhana* is a discipline of the mind and body to serve the soul. *Sadhana* keeps the mind clear to accurately guide our actions.

▶ Yogi Bhajan has given thousands of lectures full of yogic knowledge, exercises, meditations, recipes, remedies, and spiritual insights. Repeatedly he stresses that listening and reading are only a first step, and that one has to practice regularly. The motto of the Age of Aquarius, the New Age we are entering into, is "I know, therefore I believe." A practical personal experience is required to integrate these ancient spiritual truths. The regular personal daily practice of yoga, meditation and related exercises is called *sadhana*.



Sadhana

In sadhana the sadhu lives.

In sadhana the nectar of God's Love rains down.

In sadhana come the blessings of Simran, Awareness, and Divine Understanding.

In sadhana is the meditation of Raj Yoga.

In sadhana see God's glory.

In sadhana experience Infinity.

Sadhana is the daily meditation of the sadhu.

Oh Yogi! Become one with God!

—YOGI BHAJAN

Sadhana, Aradhana, Prabhupati

THE ESSENCE OF *SADHANA* IS IN THE SEQUENCE *sadhana*, *aradhana*, and *prabhupati*—discipline, attitude, and mastery. These three steps are inseparable. To understand daily *sadhana*, we view it within the context of *aradhana* and *prabhupati*.

SADHANA

Sadhana means a practice of self-discipline that allows one to express the Infinite within one's self. It is a time each day to notice the patterns that lead away from higher consciousness and to transcend those patterns.

Sadhana is a conscious activity. We consciously choose to rise up, to exercise the body, and to meditate. Each day is different. Each day, we are different. Every 72 hours all the cells of the body totally change. Sickness comes and goes. Motivation waxes and wanes. But through all the flux of life, through all the variations of the mind and heart, we consciously choose to maintain a constant and regular practice.

MORNING SADHANA —Cleaning the Subconscious

The 108 yogic scriptures called the Kundalini Upanishads, call for at least two-and-a-half hours of *sadhana* before the rising of the sun. The duration of two-and-a-half hours is determined by the law of karma: everything you give, you receive back tenfold. So if you dedicate one-tenth of each day to your higher consciousness, your whole day is covered by the returning energy.

To exercise before sunrise is important because the angle of the sun to the Earth is very good for meditation. Also there is much *prana* in these hours, and the body rhythms are more set to support physical cleansing than during the rest of the day. Few people are awake and busy, so the clutter and bustle of daily activities does not interfere with your practice.

Though many challenges may come to stop this constant early morning practice, as we conquer each one, we will build our willpower, confidence, and ability to concentrate. This is no small accomplishment. If at the same time each day, we tune all of our mental and physical rhythms to each other, then the entire day flows better. Besides this, if we learn to meditate at the same time every day, this natural rhythm will make it easier and easier.

In meditation, we are clearing the subconscious of fears. As each fear comes up and we look upon it neutrally, the fear loses its power over us. We become more flexible and feel more free. Most fears were learned at a particular time of day. So these fears tend to occur most intensely at the time of day they were originally experienced. By meditating at *sadhana* time, we slowly attract the anxieties from all other parts of the day. Normally we react to anxieties on their time and conditions. In meditation, the effects of old fears come to us on *our* time and under *our* conditions. Since they come at the same time each day, it becomes easier and easier to deal with each one. Eventually the mind is cleared of the clouds of fear and begins to see the light and power of creative consciousness. Then the morning meditation clears out the daily worries and projections so no further long-term subconscious fears can accumulate.

After practicing a regular *sadhana* for some time, the effect begins to seep into the deeper parts of the mind. This might take 40 days or one and a half years. It

It seems that on a daily basis, when you do *sadhana*, nothing happens. But you don't do it out of greed. You do it to conquer your laziness, your ego, your stupidity, with your essence of commitment. That's all *sadhana* is. We don't do it to get anything.

—YOGI BHAJAN

depends on the individual, the intensity of effort, and the starting condition. The subconscious mind finally gets the message. It understands that we are sincere, that meditation is a priority, that every day at this time we begin to wake up automatically without the aid of an alarm, and that even when traveling we will meditate every day on time. The subconscious begins to support us, and *sadhana* begins to feel effortless. The subconscious, which directs about 60 percent of our activities and responses by habit, has now acquired a habit to have the consciousness of *sadhana*.

ARADHANA—Connecting to the Universal Self

In the beginning, *sadhana* may seem like a negative activity. It imposes discipline at the cost of some other activities such as sleep! It is difficult to deal with the many influences that resist your attempts to be regular.

But as *sadhana* becomes *aradhana*, only positive feeling is left as a result of experience. The higher mind is able to connect with the Universal Self. The mind becomes more active now in its subconscious clearing. If we find resistance now it is not from external changes. We confront a basic inner question: "Am I willing to act and think in my highest consciousness, or do I want to hang on to my old identity even longer?" If the choice is for the higher self, then *sadhana* becomes a joy, and we leap up each morning to meet it.

If we put off the decision, we will start feeling tired or sick to avoid getting up, and we will fall asleep whenever we meditate in an attempt to avoid this commitment to the self. Another pitfall at this stage is the feeling that we have "made it." Since the physical habit is firmly established, we become lax in the mental discipline of concentrating on the Infinite.

It is just like climbing a mountain: when we reach a high plateau, our impulse is to camp and look at the valleys below. But waiting too long makes the muscles slack, and soon we may even forget why we wanted to climb to the top when this level is so comfortable. We know the rest of the climb is harder, narrower, and colder than what we have already experienced. So we resist the last step.

This is an apt metaphor for climbing the heights of self-realization. When we have practiced enough to confirm an attitude, we relax. We make it to *sadhana*, but fall asleep. We meditate, but sometimes the words are just mechanical motions without meaning, because we lose touch with our initial motivations. This is part of the subconscious reorganization of our motivation and intent. At some point in this, we may feel absolutely no motivation to do what we have set out to do. It is then that the regular habit of *sadhana* and the earlier commitments are essential. The thought of duty and of the *Nam* itself may become our only reasons for continuing. If we are constant through this dark time, we can tap new sources of energy and strength within ourselves. We will build a dependence directly on the Infinite and never need to rely on a finite motivation or structure.

Why is it important for a Kundalini Yoga teacher to do *sadhana*?

IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY FOR A YOGA teacher to do a regular *sadhana* to maintain and improve his radiance and impact. As Yogi Bhajan says, "A teacher who does not have a beam of energy within him or herself cannot teach Kundalini Yoga."

In this chapter, we are primarily referring to morning *sadhana*. However, every practice of regular daily yoga and meditation done in a group or by yourself is a *sadhana* and can add to your radiance as a Kundalini Yoga teacher. It is recommended from time to time to choose a special *sadhana* aimed at specific psychological or physical areas.

If you teach a lot, your body might remain flexible from demonstrating the exercises. But you can never surrender as much to the exercises and go as deep as when you do yoga for yourself. If you do not have a personal practice of spiritual growth along with your teaching, your teaching will run dry, and become flat and uninspired.

As teachers of Kundalini Yoga, you encourage people to do a *sadhana*, to develop a daily practice. For some people, that can be as simple as an 11-minute daily meditation. Some might develop 45 to 60 minutes of yoga. Others can start to rise in the early morning, and for some, a full-length two-and-a-half hour *sadhana* is their only desire.

The best way to have a potent projection as a teacher is to develop your own *sadhana*. Your influence as a teacher is not from control, but rather from control over your own inner shadow. We all have an inner shadow inside of us. It is brought out, provoked, and conquered by the way we act in relation to our *sadhana*. When that shadow is conquered, when you know you can conquer all shadows that come to you, you can also be the light that awakens people within their own hearts. You need to have a certain steady level of consciousness to pull people up. You can never get people to *sadhana* through any form of coercion; you can only do it by the light of awareness that you show in your own heart. That's why doing a *sadhana* as a teacher is one of the very first conditions for effectiveness in the teachings.

PRABHUPATI—Mastery of the Universe

The word *prabhupati* literally means “spouse of God.” Once *aradhana* has cleaned the subconscious, we enter into *prabhupati*, or mastery of the universe. This is the state of neutrality. Our motivation is neutral. No finite thing motivates us. No money, no fame, no sex, no personal advancement is enough to determine our actions. We cease to be manipulated by things. We stop being attached to our past, possessions, and hopes, so that we can creatively and freely act in the highest consciousness of each moment. In this neutral state, we sense the Infinite in all things. Nothing motivates us except the sense of the Infinite existence itself. Motivation comes from the center of our being.

The stage of *prabhupati* represents the opening and attunement to the super-consciousness. The conscious mind has merged with the subconscious mind, and there is no conflict in the personality. Everything is experienced as a harmony even

The highest *sadhana* is that your presence should remind people of God. What bigger and more powerful miracle than that can there be, that by your very presence you can invoke Godhood in people?

— YOGI BHAJAN

The person who is true to their *sadhana* begins to glow and gains the ability to guide and inspire others. Just being in his or her presence helps clear the mind of useless conflicts. She has opened the guiding potential of the supermind in her aura.

if the gross outward circumstance seems challenging or disastrous. A person feels more of the pain of the entire cosmos, and more of its joy, but rests in the neutral and sublime state of mind in the mastery of God. It is the full awakening and integration of compassion into the personality. Compassion gives one a capacity to forgive the unforgivable.

In acts of compassion a kind of vacuum is created, for the law of action and reaction has been transcended. Nature does not love a vacuum and neither does the universe. So it always must help that yogi who has the compassion to serve .

Group Sadhana

DOING *SADHANA* IN A GROUP DEVELOPS GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS. At the beginning of *sadhana* everyone has a different vibration. Some have traces of dreams; others are already filled with concerns for the day; and still others come with different expectations about *sadhana*. The more people there are, the more these individual differences balance out and create a harmony. The happiness of one person balances the sadness of another. Then the entire group finds its energy directed by the activity of the *sadhana* itself. The individual auras merge and form a group aura. If the group is well-tuned into the Infinite, a rainbow aura forms that reflects all colors. A bluish color of sincerity and devotion predominates. This auric transformation aids the practitioner in making the step beyond ego centeredness.

By the end of morning *sadhana*, when everyone's energy has intermingled and merged, it is easy to communicate and be on the same wave length. We experience this effect throughout the day. There will be fewer misunderstandings in the area of communications.

Yogi Bhajan on Group Sadhana: “All for One, and One for All”

YOUR BODY IS THE TEMPLE OF GOD, and your soul is the Divine Guru within. So, you get up in the morning, meditate, chant the mantras, do the exercises, call on your spirit, regulate the breath, and you get together in group consciousness. In that way you help each other. Group consciousness in morning *sadhana* is to help each other. If I am trying to sleep, another is not sleeping. If in this whole group, one person opens up to God just once, we will all be blessed in his openness. That is what matters. If one has walked into *sadhana* with heart and soul in a prayerful mind, we will all benefit. That is the power of the group *sadhana*. All should participate.

But, we still have something of the past in us. We bring up worries about who should lead. “Oh, that leader has brought a very good *sadhana*! That one has freaked out the *sadhana*.” The truth is that nobody freaked out the *sadhana*, and nobody made it beautiful. It is the Will of God which prevails through the soul. When you are a servant, and act as a channel, it prevails through you.

If in morning *sadhana* one cannot curtail the barriers and get to Oneness, I don't think there is any other time it can happen. All for one, and one for all. That is the principle.

•

IF YOU MUST DO *SADHANA* BY YOURSELF, then while you are chanting, imagine a million others all around you. Hear them all chanting, with you in the middle not moving at all. Feel that you do not chant physically and yet are leading the chant and letting the chant lead you. As you imagine this, continue chanting.



Preparing for Sadhana

WE SAY RISE IN THE AMBROSIAL HOURS AND BE WITH GOD, because God is Infinity. Anything which is multiplied by Infinity becomes Infinity. So, early in the morning, get up and multiply yourself by Infinity.

ENVIRONMENT

In a meditative *sadhana* you become supersensitive, and the environment that surrounds you has a huge effect on the ease of going into meditation. Colors, sounds and even the past usage of the room all register in your consciousness and affect its energy. There are rooms beautifully designed and used only for meditation. Just walking in such a room inspires meditation, like being in a forest automatically draws one into a meditative state.

The meditation room should smell fresh. Air should be allowed to circulate, and the temperature should be moderate. Too much cold may harm the body in deep meditation. Too much heat will induce sleep and poor circulation. The spot you sit on should be covered with an animal skin or a wool blanket, since they are non-static and insulate your psycho-electromagnetic field from the electromagnetic field of the Earth. Sharp noises and interruptions should be avoided during meditation and *sadhana*. In some stages of meditation a closing door may sound like an explosion.

PREPARING YOUR BODY FOR SADHANA

Create some routine for your early morning preparation. Wake yourself gently in the morning and do the standard wake-up exercises. (See *wake-up exercises in Yogic Lifestyle chapter*.) Remember to drink a few glasses of water.

Take a cold shower. You cannot meditate fully if your circulation is still in patterns suited for sleep or drowsiness. (See *Ishnaan in Yogic Lifestyle chapter for the correct way to take a cold shower*.)

After your cold shower routine, put on clothing which is neat and clean, loose and flexible. White is the best color for *sadhana* clothing. Do not wear the same garments to *sadhana* as you wore to bed. You must tell your consciousness that *sadhana* is a special activity that you prepare for and even dress specially for. Your mind will be more alert and more cooperative if it knows an important event is about to take place. Choose a meditation blanket or shawl made of wool, silk, or cotton. Use it only for meditation. Over a period of time, the shawl will absorb the vibrations of *sadhana*. Then just putting it on will immediately aid your efforts.

YOGA EXERCISES

An important part of *sadhana* is a *kriya*, an exercise set. The physical body must be exercised to keep the circulation balanced

and strong, to remove tensions and blocks created by emotions, to alter the glandular secretions so that they correspond to the state of consciousness you want to attain, to clean the circulatory system to prevent disease, and to stimulate the kundalini.

A strong exercise series awakens the will. Press through the minor pains of limbering and nerve strengthening. This helps you to stay alert during meditation and chanting. The exercises you practice should be sets as taught by Yogi Bhajan. The series should leave you with a feeling of greater energy flow, mellowness, alertness, and enthusiasm. Too much exercise can tax the body so much that you will feel drowsy and lack motivation. Therefore, a very heavy exercise and cleansing *sadhana* should be done when there is plenty of time to relax afterwards. A balanced series of exercises that works on breathing, nerves, glands, and spine is perfect for *sadhana*.

CHOOSING THE EXERCISES

Each day of the week has its own energy. In astrology this is symbolized by associating each day with a planet. The daily *sadhana* exercise set could be chosen to relate to these energies. An emotional, calming *pranayam* for Monday; a *nabhi* (Navel Point) *kriya* for Tuesday; a brain cleansing set for Wednesday; a deep meditation Thursday; a sexual energy transmutation set Friday; a strenuous physical cleansing *kriya* Saturday; and a blissful projective Laya Yoga meditation Sunday.

Ultimately you will use your own sensitivity to choose what kind of energy to deal with in the exercises. Or, you can use this chart as a guideline.

DAY	PLANET	QUALITY
Monday	Moon	Emotion
Tuesday	Mars	Energy, combativeness
Wednesday	Mercury	Business communication
Thursday	Jupiter	Expansion & deep thought
Friday	Venus	Love, sensuality
Saturday	Saturn	Karma, constriction, discipline
Sunday	Sun	Purity, energy of self

LEADING GROUP SADHANA

If all the physical preparations have been cared for, you can then set your mind for group consciousness. If you are leading the *sadhana*, check for unexpected visitors and guests. If they do not know the procedure, make them secure with a brief explanation.

Clearly establish who is to start the *sadhana*. When you chant by yourself you are only one voice, but sitting with others the effect of your sound is multiplied by adding to the sound of others, and by others hearing and reflecting your voice.

The Effect of Sadhana

CHANT *ONG NAMO GURU DEV NAMO*, AND FEEL THE IN-FLOW OF ENERGY and light to the body and mind, and the presence of the Teacher. Meditate on the higher Teacher within, and feel that in all devotion and humility we are asking for guidance in *sadhana*.

Many people build a regular *sadhana* but fall into the pit of boredom, because of false expectations. They want an experience of flashing light and sparkling energy. Although this does occur at times, (well, maybe not the flashing light!), it is more important to have contact with the Infinite. Realize that doing the same chant or the same exercise we have done many times before can give us a totally different effect today. We are not at all the same person who went to bed a few hours before. The body's cells have renewed themselves, and in the deep slumber of nocturnal meditation we have forgiven ourselves for all the errors made the day before. We are fresh. Let the individual mind rest in the neutrality of the Infinite Mind.

OVERCOMING THE DUALITY OF THE MIND

Yogi Bhajan: "When I tell you to get up and meditate in the ambrosial hours, it seems odd. Why should you get up at 3:30 am? Because you require those two hours to work out your own mind, so that the rest of the day you can work out your life. *Amrit vela naam jaap. Rise in the ambrosial hours and meditate. Be with God.* Whenever your mind will be in duality, you will be in trouble. There is no way you can function. 'Should I go north? Should I go south?' If you can't decide which way you are going to go, you are going to sit right there. You'll neither go north nor south. That's called duality. Life is a gift of God, and duality is a waste of that life.

It doesn't matter who you are. You may be the President of the United States, or a beggar in the street. Whenever you have duality, you will be in trouble. That's the law. Nobody can change it. To have no duality and to have oneness and clarity of mind, you have to keep your mind clean, smart, and healthy."

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

There is a dynamic triangle within each of us between practice, experience, and our experience of the experience. There's a constant cycle between these three.

If you have many beliefs and no *sadhana*, how are you really changing? If you believe very good things about people and you serve no one, what good is that? *Sadhana* becomes a key. In terms of the body and posture there is one law for *sadhana*: "Get up, set up, and keep up." If you don't set up for the day, if you don't posture yourself, ready to engage the day, how are you going to keep up? And how are you going to have a set up if things are already happening before you even get up? So, first you have to get up before things are happening. Then you can set yourself in a posture, attitude, and commitment; ready to engage. Then you have the potential to keep up. If you keep up, you will start having a momentum above Time. And the effective human is timeless above Time. As long as you feel that you are just at the whim of Time, you're not at the level of the extraordinary human that is your normal potential. And it all starts with *sadhana* and posture. That's what a spiritual posture is. It gives you spiritual fitness.

Yogi Bhajan: Wisdom, Commitment & Consistency

Why do we get up for morning *sadhana*? Because we have to face the whole day, and we cannot face the day without a constant level of energy. People love you for three things only: wisdom, commitment, and consistency.

Wisdom is the intuitive nature that allows you to give the right answer by listening within the question that is asked. For every question there is an answer in it.

Commitment is the ability for your whole self to sustain its status in projected reality of action. Then people can trust you. Otherwise, it is like building a cozy bungalow on the top of a volcano. If you act like an earthquake or volcano, who will build upon you?

Consistency is steadiness through time. *Sadhana* gives us sensitivity to know, to feel, and to touch. It gives us intuition to touch reality. The methods are three-fold: *jappa, tappa, sanjam*. *Jappa* is repetition. *Tappa* is the heat of central impulsion. *Sanjam* is merger through *simran*—meditation on a very slow, conscious breath.

In your consciousness, you must find a time to ask yourself three questions:

- 1) "How much am I a part of the I AM which made me what I am?"
- 2) "During my working day, during my existence, during my awareness, how much of the time have I been aware that I am part of the greatness that I am?"
- 3) "What can I do to extend myself to the greater I AM of which I am a part?"

In finding the answers to these questions, you will find your way from the realm of finite ego to the realm of higher consciousness, and you will have the experience of total relaxation into mental happiness and contentment.

INTEGRATION & COMMITMENT

The lifestyle of modern civilization induces a split from nature's rhythms and consequently from the natural attunement to our inner life. This leaves a split that runs between the two sides of our brain. It is a popular notion to recognize that our brain has two sides which have differentiated functions. The same difference has been recorded by the yogis. The two sides deal with action, emotion, and perception in opposite ways.

Another element in the *sadhana* process is commitment. Yogi Bhajan once said that 90 percent of today's insanity comes from a lack of commitment and the lack of a capacity to commit. Commitments set the values of the self. The values of the self allow you to subject the power of the self to create. Creativity allows detachment. Detachment allows judgment. Judgment plus forgiveness give progress in the process of expansion of the self.

Sadhana acts as a counselor to the two sides of the self. It encourages a central self to become bilingual and translate the languages of the two sides.

Sadhana creates a meditative mind which can absorb all the stimuli in the environment, compute it, and then act wisely instead of just reacting. The inner observer can understand logic as well as intuition, activity as well as rest, science as well as art. We must develop the bilingual self, fully prepared with a clean sense of values and a deep capacity for commitment. This capacity comes through *sadhana*.



Sadhana: The Ultimate Approach to Change

All these changes that you are seeing in your personality did not happen because you got counseled, or your teacher was great. You all changed because you wanted to change and you did *sadhana*. *Sadhana* changed you. All this other stuff is being done to keep you going. This is a rational approach, not an ultimate approach. The ultimate approach is when you want to change, and you do *sadhana*. Then you shall change.

- YOGI BHAJAN

Yogi Bhajan Answers Questions About Sadhana

Question: What is the greatest reward of doing *sadhana*?

Answer: The greatest reward of doing *sadhana* is that the person becomes incapable of being defeated. *Sadhana* is a self-victory, and it is a victory over time and space. Getting up is a victory over time, and doing it is a victory over space. That is what *sadhana* is. And when you do a *sadhana* in the *sangat*, you enrich yourself in multiple ways. First, the isolation which can hit anybody and make them go totally crazy is defeated. Secondly, when all of you meditate on God, the total effect of your *sadhana* becomes multiplied by the number of people participating. *Sadhana* is not a matter of advantages and disadvantages. It is simply a means through which you can defeat all your miseries, misfortunes, and handicaps. It is a very personal thing which does not relate to anybody except yourself.

You are supposed to go through self-evaluation every day. That is what *sadhana* is. On one side is God, the superiority of you; on one side is you; and on one side is the devil or the inferiority of you. Between the three you have to assess yourself.

A *sadhu* is a being who has disciplined himself. *Sadhana* is the technique to discipline yourself. It is a scientific way to live.

Question: I have been having a problem with *sadhana*. I fall asleep in the same posture every morning.

Answer: Whenever you have a problem with *sadhana*, you are very fortunate, because it indicates you are working on something. That is the time to conquer it, and get it out of your system.

Question: How can I find out what it is?

Answer: There is nothing to find out. Just go through it. Whenever you have a problem with *sadhana*, luck is smiling on you. That is what you have been waiting for. There is a challenge—you can challenge it, and go through it.

Question: How do you challenge it?

Answer: Challenge it by doing it. *Sadhana* gives fearlessness and a sense of self, as well as projection, polarity combination, equilibrium, respectability, totality, internal and external self-knowledge, purity, dignity, divinity, and grace. In addition, it gives you radiance, *pranic* and *auric shakti*. Finally, it gives you the quality of metal which is ever shining. You become a shining, living grace. This quality is embodied in *loh*—iron—which can absorb all the heat. *Sarab loh* means that which absorbs the entire heat and cold of all the universe, and still remains neutral. That is what *sadhana* gives you. When you want to be bountiful, do *sadhana*.

Question: Is leading the yoga exercises in sadhana the same as teaching a yoga class?

Answer: No. There are differences. One difference is the amount of talking that should be done. In an outside class, there is more need for inspiring, coaxing, and explaining. *Sadhana* occurs in the quiet ambrosial hours. At this time, mostly we should *listen* to the Infinite.

Question: Should I change the exercises and kriyas every day?

Answer: One part of the *sadhana* should stay constant long enough for you to master, or at least experience, the changes evoked by a single technique. Each *kriya* and mantra has its individual effects, although they all elevate you toward a cosmic consciousness. Learn to value the pricelessness of one *kriya*, and all others will be understood in a clearer light.

There is a natural 40-day rhythm to habits in the body and mind. It takes about 40 days of consistent practice to break a habit. It takes about 90 days to establish a new habit in action and in the subconscious. It is good to take these biorhythms into account when designing your practice.

Question: If I have to leave sadhana, what is the best way?

Answer: The same way you entered. Be aware of the presence of the teacher by bowing in your consciousness. Be quiet so nothing is disturbed. Choose a time to leave that is between *kriyas* and meditations. A sharp noise during a deep meditation is a shock to the total system. Do not come and go as you please, but to please the highest teacher.

Question: Should I wake someone up who is sleeping in sadhana?

Answer: No. God should wake him. The experience of *sadhana* is between the individual and God. Do not interfere. You can inspire beforehand. If sleeping is a chronic habit, discuss it with the person at a convenient time, but do not abruptly wake someone. He may be at a different level of experience than you think.

It is our intention, of course, to stay alert and awake during *sadhana*. If you are leading the *sadhana*, you can lead exercises which can stimulate the brain and supply blood to the brain to help people to stay awake.

Sadhana is to bring physical and mental awareness. Some people pretend to be tired. They are not fortunate enough to catch up with that gap. But it is very unfortunate on the spiritual path when, instead of inspiring people, we start criticizing them. That is projecting your hatred.

I feel that in the morning when you go for *sadhana*, you are going to be *sadhus*. What does it matter if somebody just gets up to say, "hmmmmmm?" That person is still doing *something*.

At least he is not sleeping. It is far better than a person who is snoring at home in bed. Do you understand? *Sadhana* is a willful effort to prove you are not lazy about your own Infinity. When the sun rises early in the day, even idiots rise. But blessed are those who rise before the sun and prove that they are the children of the Almighty. Does it sound clear to you? Those who have guts will open the gates of the heart at 3:30 am.

Question: As the leader of sadhana, should I participate in all the exercises?

Answer: As a leader, your responsibility is to set a good example and to give clear instructions for each step of the *sadhana*. You should do as many exercises as you can without becoming unaware of the group. You must check to make sure that everyone understands the exercise before beginning yourself. Sometimes it will be better not to participate at all. Always join in during chanting, though. When teaching a class outside of *sadhana*, you should participate as little as possible in the physical exercise. Concentrate only on inspiring and serving the students.

Question: Is it mandatory for the same person to lead sadhana every morning?

Answer: In all Kundalini Yoga *sadhanas*, the same teacher teaches every *sadhana* — Guru Ram Das. Anyone who is qualified to teach can lead a good *sadhana*. It can be very beneficial for the group to experience the effects of slightly different styles of leadership.

Question: When chanting in the morning, the pitch often gets low. What, if anything, should be done to change the pitch?

Answer: Chant at a constant, mid-range pitch as much as possible. If your breath rhythm is not correct, your spine is not kept straight, or you do not take complete breaths in the *Adi Shakti Mantra*, the chant will lose energy and drop in pitch. If you project the sound of the mantra from the back of the mouth in a full and roundish way, the power of the chant will increase as you continue, and the pitch will stay constant.

If you are constant and listen to the sound of your chant, you will hear different pitches. These are actually overtones of the basic sound you are creating. The overtones will be high-pitched, subtle, and seem to float around the room. You cannot identify that tone with one person since it is formed by the combination of group sounds. The overtone is a good sign that the *sadhana* group is tuned in to each other and beyond each other. As you listen to the first overtone and become very calm, you may begin to hear higher and more subtle overtones. This awareness aids meditation on the etheric echo of your chanting, as you sit silently after chanting aloud.

Question: Is it alright to harmonize with the main tone?

Answer: Chanting is not singing. It is vibrating all the cells of the body, all the thoughts of the mind, and the core crystal of the soul to the same *shabd*. Chanting in meditation is beyond personality. Chanting like a choir with many harmonies can turn the group consciousness, which is striving for universality, into individual consciousness responding to social consciousness. Leave vocal harmonizing for *kirtan* and group songfests. Learn to harmonize the body, mind, and soul while chanting.

Question: When I am sick, should I attend *sadhana*?

Answer: If you are going to be in bed all day with an extreme sickness, then no. If it is not extreme (this includes most menstrual periods), then attend *sadhana* and do what you can. If you cannot exercise or meditate well, then at least attempt to meditate. Afterwards, lie down and rest in *sadhana* while mentally listening to the *shabd*. This way you will get well faster, and maintain the rhythm of a regular *sadhana*. It also eliminates the tendency to have minor morning illnesses to escape the self-discipline of a constant *sadhana*. In other words, participation in a group effort and regularity of discipline are paramount. But do not be a fanatic to the point of aggravating a serious illness.

Question: I am a beginner and can only spare one hour on *sadhana*. Will one hour have any effect?

Answer: Always do some *sadhana* no matter how short, because every effort of the individual mind to meet the Universal Self is reciprocated a thousand-fold. The ideal is a perfect two-and-a-half hour *sadhana*. But if we are to run, we must first learn to walk. An hour is excellent. As you grow into *sadhana*, you will find time to extend it if you really want to do so. It is good for some people to start slowly. If you try to climb Mt. Everest without climbing even a foothill beforehand, failure could discourage you from all other attempts. Build slowly and constantly at a pace you can maintain, but definitely do something.

Question: Do we need a special place for *sadhana*?

Answer: A special place or altar is ideal. The care you give the external environment is a sign and symbol to the mind of your intention. The outer reflects the inner. If the place of meditation is sloppy, it usually means you do not value relating to that Infinite Self, or you value it, but do not believe in it or yourself. When traveling, you do your best to bring a sense of specialness with you to wherever you meditate.

Question: Should I bring my children to *sadhana*?

Answer: Your children are the future. The future will only be as secure as the foundation that is built into the young generation. It is very inspirational to see the radiance from young children who attend *sadhana*. There is no restriction. These hours of soothing sleep for them are the best, but they are in good vibrations, and subconsciously they have experienced the *sadhana*. So you can just bring them with you so they can live in those vibrations.

Whether or not your particular child should attend is an individual determination. If he has been raised in the yogic tradition where chanting and exercise are a natural part of his environment, then bring him. If he is disruptive during *sadhana*, then his attendance should be discussed with the rest of the group.

Question: Is it important to wear a head covering during *sadhana*?

Answer: During *sadhana*, be sure to cover your head with a non-static, natural cloth like cotton, and keep the hair up. The hair regulates the inflow of sun energy into the body system. To let the solar energy flow without obstruction, let the hair grow to its full natural length, and take good care of it. If this is done, the amount of energy that goes downward from the Seventh Chakra increases tremendously. The kundalini energy is activated by the radiant force of the solar plexus and moves upward in response to the solar energy coming down. This balances the body energy and maintains the total equilibrium.

If the hair is down, unkept, or uncovered so that it is electrically imbalanced, this natural process of raising the kundalini energy will be impeded.

Question: Is right after *sadhana* a good time to take a nap?

Answer: Right after *sadhana* is a time to do anything—even to eat ice cream. Right after *sadhana* do whatever you want. What is God's, give to God through *sadhana*. Take what you take during the rest of the day—it is your day.



Sadhana Mantras for the Aquarian Age

YOGI BHAJAN GAVE THE FOLLOWING SEQUENCE OF MANTRAS ON JUNE 21, 1992, with instructions to continue using them for morning sadhana in this order for 21 years. So, until the year 2013, we are set with the best *sadhana* tools possible. Total time is 62 minutes.

1. The Adl Shakti Mantra:

Ek Ong Kaar Sat Naam Sri Wha-hay Guroo

(7 minutes)

"One Creator created this Creation, Truth is His Name, Great beyond description is His Infinite Wisdom."

The cornerstone of morning sadhana is an Ashtang Mantra, the Adl Shakti Mantra, also called Long Ek Ong Kars or Morning Call. This mantra initiates the kundalini, initiating the relationship between our soul and the Universal Soul.

Long Ek Ong Kars are chanted without musical accompaniment, whereas the six mantras that follow may be chanted using various melodies with or without instrumental accompaniment. (Musicians take note: Instruments are for background to accompany and support the voice. Also, be sure to preserve the original rhythm of the mantra by keeping the length of the syllables intact.)

2. Waah Yantee, Kar Yantee (7 minutes)

This mantra uses the words of Patanjali. It represents thousands of years of prayer. With it, we call directly on the Macroself, beyond the gunas, beyond creation.

Waah Yantee, Kaar Yantee

Jag Doot Patee, Aadak It Waahaa

Brahmaadeh Traysha Guroo

It Wha-hay Guroo

Great Macroself, Creative Self,

All that is creative through time,

All that is the Great One.

Three aspects of God: Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh (Shiva).

That is Wahe Guru.

3. The Mul Mantra (7 minutes)

The Mul (Root) Mantra gives an experience of the depth and consciousness of your soul. There are 108 elements in the universe, and 108 letters in the *mul mantra* (in the original Gurmukhi script). This mantra expands creativity and projects us into action in line with the Creator, and our destiny.

In chanting the Mul Mantra:

▶ Leave a slight space (not a breath) between *ajonee* and *salbh-hang*. Do not run the words together.

▶ Emphasize the "ch" sound at the end of the word *such*. This adds power.

Ek Ong Kaar

One Creator, Creation

Sat Naam

Truth Identified (Named)

Kartaa Purkh

Doer of Everything

Nirbho

Fearless

Nirvalr

Revengeless

Akaal Moorat

Undying

Ajonee

Unborn

Salbung

Self-illuminated, self existent

Gur Prasaad

Guru's grace (gift)

Japl

REPEAT (Chant)

Aad Such

True in the beginning

Jugaad Such

True through all time

Hal Bhee Such

True even now

Nanak Hosee Bhee Such *Nanak says Truth shall ever be*

4. Sat Sree, Sree Akal (7 minutes)

Yogi Bajan has called this the Mantra for the Aquarian Age. With it, we declare that we are timeless, deathless beings.

Sat Sree

Great Truth

Sree Akaal

Respected Undying

Sree Akaal

Respected Undying

Mahaa Akaal

Great Deathless

Mahaa Akaal

Great Deathless

Sat Naam

Truth Identified (Named)

Akaal Moorat

Deathless Image of God

Wha-hay Guroo

Great beyond description is His Wisdom

5. *Rakhe Rakhan Har* (7 minutes)

This is a *shabd* of protection against all negative forces which move against one's walk on the path of destiny, both inner and outer. It cuts like a sword through every opposing vibration, thought, word, and action.

It is part of the evening prayer of the Sikhs (*Rehras*). *Rakhe Rakhan Har* was composed by Guru Arjan, the Fifth Guru.

***Rakhay rakhanahaar aap ubaarla-an
Gur kee palree paa-i kaaj savaari-an
Hoaa aap da-laal manaho na visaari-an
Saadh Janaa kal sang bhavajal taari-an
Saakat nindak dusht khin maa-eh bidaari-an
Tis saahib kee tayk Naanak manal maa-eh
Jis simrat sukh ho-i sagalay dookh jaa-eh***

*Thou who savest, save us all and take us across,
Uplifting and giving the excellence.*

*You gave us the touch of the lotus feet of the
Guru, and all our jobs are done.*

*You have become merciful, kind, and compassionate; and
so our mind does not forget Thee.*

*In the company of the holy beings you take us from
misfortune and calamities, scandals, and disrepute.
Godless, slanderous enemies—you finish them in timelessness.
That great Lord is my anchor.*

*Nanak, keep firm in your mind, by meditating and
repeating His Name*

All happiness comes and all sorrows and pain go away.

6. *Wahe Guru Wahe Jio* (22 minutes)

Chant this mantra sitting in *Vir Asan*: sitting on the left heel with the right knee up, right foot flat on the ground and hands in Prayer Pose. Eyes are focused at the tip of the nose.

***Wha-hay Guroo Wha-hay Guroo
Wha-hay Guroo Wha-hay Jeeo***

Wahe Guru is a mantra of ecstasy. There is no real translation for it, though we could say, "Wow, God is great!" or "Indescribably great is His Infinite, Ultimate Wisdom." *Jeeo* is an affectionate but still respectful variation of the word *Jee* which means soul. We establish ourselves for victory and the right to excel.

7. *Guru Ram Das Chant* (5 minutes)

Guroo Guroo Wha-hay Guroo Guroo Raam Das Guroo

This is in praise of the consciousness of Guru Ram Das, invoking his spiritual light, guidance, and protective grace. We are filled with humility.

Guidelines for Leading the Aquarian Sadhana

This is meant to be a model for morning *sadhana* only—times are very approximate. Adjust according to the needs of the group. With a group *sadhana*, it is important to end *sadhana* on time, so that everyone can adjust their schedules accordingly.

▶ First guideline for *sadhana* leaders: ***Show up!***

If for any reason you are not able to make it on the day you are leading, you must arrange for someone else to lead.

▶ ***Japji Sahib 4:00 am***

If you are unfamiliar with *Japji* or concerned about fine-tuning pronunciation, use a tape or CD. If possible, read *Japji* tantric style—male-female reading alternate lines. *A copy of Japji can be downloaded from sikhnet.com.*

▶ ***Ong Namō Guru Dev Namō & Yoga Set 4:20 am***

Dim the lights. A good choice for the yoga set is a basic energizing, Kundalini-raising set, including lots of stretching, Spinal Flexes, and Breath of Fire. It's a good idea to end with Sat Kriya. The yoga set should be about 25-30 minutes. If you are going to play music during the yoga, choose mantra music, and play it at a low volume.

▶ ***Deep Relaxation***

Dim the lights further, if necessary. Keep the relaxation relatively short—5 minutes. If you choose to play music, keep it very low. Mantra music with a meditative quality is effective.

▶ ***Meditations (62 minutes). Begin approximately 5:00 am***

Lights can be turned very low or completely off. Keep *sadhana* music loud enough to be heard clearly throughout the entire *sadhana* room, so that it envelops us, and is easy to sing along with, while being sensitive to not making it too loud. Let the music surround and expand you.

▶ ***After the meditations, starting approximately 6:00 am***

Sadhana ends with a sacred prayer (which can be taken from *Peace Lagoon*), singing the Sunshine song, and chanting *Long Sat Naams*. For a deep experience of *Naad*, one can choose to end *Sadhana* by taking a *hukam* from a *Nitnem*, reading from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, or having a Gurdwara program.

Hold the space, enjoy the bliss of this ambrosial hour. It will fill your days with connection, sweetness, and purpose. ***Sat Naam.***