



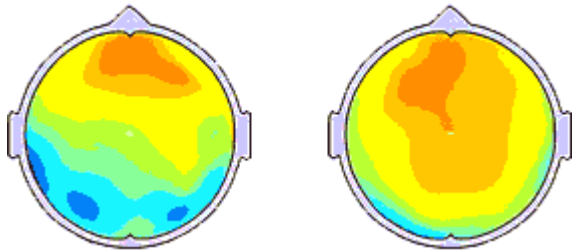
Sahaja Yoga Thailand, news/feature series.

Meditation, Medication

By Wanphen Sreshthaputra

Amidst the boisterous loud speakers and the bustling crowd strolling up and down Thailand's Health Care Festival, a stand seems to attract special attention and distinguish itself from other booths. Here, no highly sophisticated flashing electronic equipment are in use – the stand is only furnished with rows of stool and notice boards presenting various illustrations, texts and graph. Yet it is always full.

From the first hour of the morning to late in the evening, tens of people are seen lining up, grabbing a stool as soon as it is left vacant and patiently waiting for their turn, before entering what appears like a deep state of meditation.



The handful of exhibitors of both sex and various age groups, seem to make great use of their hands; now open flat palm upward, now doing rotating movements, raising some kind of invisible energy in the back of people sitting in front of them...

But no matter how invisible the energy in question may be, it seems that it could easily be perceived by whoever lent himself/herself to the experience. Visitors almost invariably nodded their agreement when asked if they could feel a positive effect or pleasing “cool-breeze like sensation” as a result of the short meditation.

“I felt intuitively attracted towards the stand and had a general good feeling about it,” commented German-born Bangkok-based Walter Tillmann, Managing Director of Chivaboon Holistic Clinic on Sukhumvit 16, who happened to visit the fair held recently at Muang Thong Thani and decided to try out Sahaja Yoga.

He continued: “I indeed felt some energy in the form of vibrations in the palm of my hands and perceived a flow of energy coming up from the lower part of my back to the top of my head. I also noticed some heat in the my third energy center – I must admit that whatever the instructor told me about my overall health conditions was correct and made perfect sense to me.”

If much of it sounds like double Dutch to you, be assured that within a single session of practice, you should understand it all.

Now attracting an increasing interest in Thailand, Sahaja Yoga meditation, founded by renown humanitarian H.H. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi is –say practitioners- “most simple, natural and accessible to all”.





Derived from the Sanskrit words “Sahaja” meaning “in-born, spontaneous” and “Yoga” meaning “union”, Sahaja Yoga by definition, implies an absence of effort in the process of yoga, or union; a spontaneous happening. The union referred to, would be between the conscious mind and “something beyond ourselves, essentially divine”; a higher, universal consciousness.

But if this very process, considered as a culmination and a very difficult achievement by most yoga masters can take place easily through the practice of Sahaja Yoga, it is surely because one’s subtle body is all set for this awakening. And better still according to practitioners; it is only awaiting this “transformative” experience.



“Sahaja Yoga is your birth right” stresses with conviction H.H. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, founder of Sahaja Yoga, who has long been touring the world to spread her message. “So how much could you pay for it? How much can you pay to flowers for blooming or to trees for growing?” she says, stressing that Sahaja Yoga everywhere in the world is taught free of charge.

To Shri Mataji – considered by followers in about 100 countries all over the world as one of the greatest living saints- the experience of spiritual awakening is indeed similar to the blooming of a flower: simple, natural and being the fulfillment of one’s very purpose.

Whether this scenario is a reality or not, one thing seems certain: the human body is well prepared and ready for the sprouting.

Age-old traditions (like the ancestral Indian Rig Vediya Purush Sookta) refer to three main channels of energy (*nadis*, cf. diagram) existing within human beings and controlling complex interconnected sets of smaller channels. (This network of *nadis* has, for example, been identified by acupuncturists who operate on this simple basis). These subtle channels are placed within the spinal chord and find their expression in the autonomous nervous system. It is comprised of the left and right sympathetic nervous systems and the central parasympathetic nervous system.



According to *the Advent*, a book released by Sahaja Yoga (Life Eternal Trust Publishers), “the sympathetic system (left and right) is a medium through





which we programme ourselves and are programmed – in the course of our daily life as well as in the course of successive births and deaths”.

The right side sympathetic nervous system uses the energy of *Pingala Nadi* as it is known in Sanskrit, that is the “sun channel”, the yang of the Tao philosophy. It looks after our action, both physical and mental. It caters to the emergencies of the active consciousness and culminates in the ego on the left hemisphere of the brain.

When our attention passes on the right side, we are involved in thought, planning, organization, the future, etc. When this channel is overstressed there is overload on the mental body. This explains many of the symptoms of mental restlessness or exhaustion, hyperactivity affecting many intellectuals, bureaucrats, etc. On the other hand, the left side sympathetic nervous system uses the energy of *Ida Nadi*, the “Moon channel”, or Yin of the Tao philosophy. It nourishes and nurtures our desires and emotions. This channel’s network corresponds to the subconscious life of the psyche and it culminates in the super-ego, on the right side of the brain where all past experiences are stored.

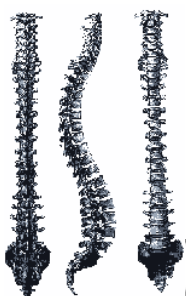
When our attention passes on the left side we are involved in feelings, the past, recollection, affective moods and so on. When this channel is overstressed, there is overload on the emotional body. Inflated super-ego results in an extremely conditioned psyche, affective disturbances, and emotional stresses...”

“Psychic energy tends to go back and forth between these two poles, rarely managing to settle on the equilibrium point – the balance (central channel) between the activity (right side channel) and passivity (left side channel),” writes G. de Kalbermatten, one of the foremost Western practitioners of Sahaja Yoga and author of the publication.

“The activities of the parasympathetic (central channel) aim at conserving, restoring and balancing the energy. It looks after our evolutionary capacity. It is in a way a potential channel. These three subtle channels are placed in series creating energy centres known as *chakras*, along the spinal chord. There are seven major such energy centres governing all aspects of our being and supplying energy to all our needs and functions. The *chakras* control one’s physical, emotional, mental and spiritual bodies.

Thus if this complex network of *chakras* and *nadis* can remain in a state of equilibrium, a subject can lead a life of harmony and balance.”

Yet for numerous reasons, most people find it extremely difficult to maintain this state of balance. Sahaja Yoga meditation offers an answer presented as “revolutionary” by practitioners. The method is based on the subtle instrument described earlier but above all, on an age-old knowledge of the existence within every human being, of a residual divine energy at the base of the spinal chord called “*Kundalini*”.





Kundalini means “coiled energy” in Sanskrit. It refers to a power which would lie in three and a half coils in the sacrum bone, at the bottom of the spine, initially in a dormant state. –It is interesting to note that this particular bone was called “holy” by the Greeks and then the Romans many centuries ago.

Like the *Sushumna nadi* or central channel, the *Kundalini* is in a potential state. It only can become activated after yoga, union or awakening, has taken place. When it is awakened, it rises through the seven subtle centres of energy on the parasympathetic nervous system, up to the top of the head. When the *kundalini* energy emerges at this point, yoga is said to have taken place. Authentic state of yoga is, practitioners say, “impossible” without this subtle awakening.

Although Sahaja Yoga practitioners insist heavily that this general theory be taken as a mere hypothesis –to be substantiated by an experiment-, similarities with ancestral teachings abound. The awareness of the presence of the divine energy within the human body was considered by the sages and *rishis* of old ages to be the highest knowledge: it was revered with a sacred respect and hidden from the multitude by a strict esotericism. This *Kundalini* energy has been indeed chanted by eminent Indian saints of the past such as Kabir, Nanak, Gyaneshwar... Guru Vashista in *Yog Vashista* for example asserted that: “Kundalini is the seat of absolute knowledge.”

Great Buddhist masters of the Mahayana or Vajra variant considered for example that the existence of the path of liberation within man himself was the deepest secret they had to keep intact and transmit to a few deserving disciples...

In other words, if the awakening of the *Kundalini* energy can truly take place for countless people by the simple method devised by H.H. Shri Mataji in the early 1970s, no wonder that it can bring forth great benefits for a person’s overall well-being.

“As the *Kundalini* rises through the seven charkas, it nourishes and revitalizes them, so that the person feels relaxed, calm and rejuvenated. He becomes peaceful and harmonious and filled with a joy and love quite unrelated to his worldly possessions and achievements,” explains Pascal Sethabutr, the Thai-French coordinator of the Sahaja Yoga group in Thailand and an automotive industry analyst and researcher.

Benefits on various levels are likely to be perceived. “*Kundalini* is a healing power. As a by-product of our yoga or “self-realization”, we receive our well-being and become capable of establishing the same in others. Most illnesses are the result of damage to the *chakras*. *Kundalini* repairs them naturally, from inside. It is her nature to repair what is broken and reunite it to the whole,” he says.

Other practitioners echo his enthusiasm.



Kundalini as the primordial snake





“I didn’t expect to feel anything but I indeed felt very peaceful during the whole session. I also felt some cool breeze-like sensations in my hands [“vibrations” according to instructors] with some fingers slightly tingling describing some blockages on my energy centers...” commented Weena, a Bangkokian construction engineer in her early 30s who attended the session for beginners for the very first time. “A good thing about the teaching is that it is very practical and it can benefit each individual directly. There is nothing to loose from learning about it,” she commented.

Based in Bangkok for the past 20 years, Indian-born Shubada started practicing Sahaja Yoga some 15 months ago and within a few weeks of regular meditation, noticed significant improvement on the front of lasting health worries. “I have been taking sleeping tablets for the past 26 years and was suffering from various pains in different parts of the body. I noticed a very fast improvement as I started meditating, and during the first year of practice took sleeping pills only twice! By now, I have completely stopped. All my pains and tensions have vanished and I feel very happy, able to focus on the present moment,” the beaming housewife confessed.

In Thailand for a short visit recently, on his way back to India from Los Angeles, architect Arun Goel would surely take the prize for one the most striking experiences as a result of his encounter with Sahaja Yoga, way back in 1985.

Then a fiercely ambitious architect, in the small northern Indian town of Deradhun, 30-something Arun would have given up his hectic life for nothing in the world, “handling 25 projects at a time and worshipping the god of wealth...” until a dreadful disease decided otherwise.

Diagnosed with a rare type of cancer at the early age of 31 and given only three months to live, the fate of the leading architect of Deradhun at the foothill of Himalaya, was shaking up the entire town.

A Scottish lady living in New Delhi, Linda Piers, practitioner of Sahaja Yoga came to know about the case and decided to introduce the meditation method to the young architect.

“Sahaja Yoga completely transformed my life. That is the least one can say. That was definitely a miracle. And the best about it, is that it was only a by-product of self-realization,” Arun commented glowing with joy and soundness, some 16 years after having been sentenced to death by cancer.





“Back then I never believed in any divinity, *guru* nor *baba*. Work and nature were gods to me. I was working very hard, non-stop, seven days a week and even when my friend -seeing how pale and weak I looked- advised me to go for a medical check-up, I refused on the grounds that I had no time for such matters. But when I finally went for a blood test, the doctor couldn't believe I was still capable of working. He thought I should have been lying flat in a bed... My haemoglobin was as low as 5,5, the White Blood Count was at a record low as well as all other values. It became an emergency for me. I was soon referred to three different doctors in Delhi, then to a medical institute, and then to another hospital in Mumbai specialized in cancer treatment...” Arun recalls. He continues: “I was given only three months to live, during which I was to find a donor for a bone marrow transplantation in UK or the United States [my bone marrow was not producing any blood anymore therefore I was totally dependent on transfusion] I was given blood transfusion every five days a week and hoping from one hospital to another...”

“The news spread in my town that a young architect is dying from cancer... It so happened that Linda visited me and said she wanted to tell me about something called Sahaja Yoga... I had never heard of it. She told me about *Kundalini*, the various *nadis*, etc. I realized that the purpose of one's life is precisely to receive self-realisation... as an instrument needs to be connected to the main source of power in order to find its true meaning”. She said – and this deeply touched me- that Sahaja Yoga was neither a hospital nor a curing institution but that ‘if there was one thing to ask from Shri Mataji, it would be the self-realization’...”

Having totally resigned himself to death, accepting it “willingly”, Arun started devoting himself totally to his new spiritual goal, although in the first weeks of practice, he couldn't feel the “cool breeze” he was told about. Yet some very intense meditative experiences led him to develop strength and confidence in the power of the *kundalini* energy...

“Five months later, I was still alive. During those months, it was surprising that my values remained stable, yet it didn't improve at such. But one day, after I had joined regular collective meditation sessions in Delhi, I suddenly felt for the first time ever the subtle cool breeze on the palm of my hands and the top of my head. I was overwhelmed with joy... From the following examination, my blood values started to come up. Nine weeks later, they were absolutely all at a completely normal level. I had also stopped all treatments.... In my town, the news spread like wild fire that Sahaja Yoga had cured me!” remembers Arun who didn't undergo a medical check-up for the past five years and has had no health worries for the past 15 years...



A few other similar amazing stories have been reported. Scientific studies conducted on Sahaja Yoga for example in Australia (funded by the Royal Australian College of





General Practitioners with the full support of the Australian Medical Association by Dr. Manosha), in India (by Dr. U.C. Rai, at Sahaja Yoga Research Institute in Bombay and in other countries have proven that the method was able to cure alcoholism, smoking and drug addiction, but it has also shown amazingly positive effects on a variety of ailments such as severe migraine, psychological stress, asthma, post-menopausal flushes, epilepsy, angina, paralysis...

Whatever is the trick, or the power behind it all, it might be worth trying it out.

Note: For more information on Sahaja Yoga in Thailand, please contact 02 253 33 98 or visit <http://www.thaisahajayoga.com>

