

Intelligence has to precede enlightenment or arousal of your kundalini. So create intelligence first

— Osho

DISCUSS

THE SPEAKING TREE
BANGALORE, SEPTEMBER 18, 2011

03

ZEN COLLECTION



First Lesson

A new monk came up to the master, Joshu. "I have just entered the brotherhood and I am anxious to learn the first principle of Zen," he said. "Will you please teach it to me?" Joshu asked, "Have you eaten your supper?" The novice answered, "I have eaten." Joshu said, "Now wash your bowl."

I Don't Know

The emperor, who was a devout Buddhist, invited a great Zen master to the palace in order to ask him questions about Buddhism. "What is the highest truth of the holy Buddhist doctrine?" the emperor inquired. "Vast emptiness... and not a trace of holiness," the master replied.



"If there is no holiness," the emperor said, "then who or what are you?" "I do not know," the master replied.

Strict Rules

Soyen Shaku, the first Zen teacher to come to America, said: "My heart burns like fire but my eyes are as cold as dead ashes." He made the following rules which he practised every day of his life.

- In the morning before dressing, light incense and meditate.
- Retire at a regular hour. Partake of food at regular intervals. Eat with moderation and never to the point of satisfaction.
- Receive a guest with the same



attitude you have when alone. When alone, maintain the same attitude you have in receiving guests.

- Watch what you say, and whatever you say, practise it.
- When an opportunity comes, do not let it pass you by, yet always think twice before acting.
- Do not regret the past. Look to the future.
- Have the fearless attitude of a hero and the loving heart of a child.
- Upon retiring, sleep as if you had entered your last sleep. Upon awakening, leave your bed behind you instantly as if you had cast away a pair of old shoes.

Any so-called material thing that you want is merely a symbol: you want it not for itself, but because it will content your spirit for the moment — Mark Twain

Get Down And Dirty... so you can rise and shine

JJ SEMPLE is a leading authority on the practice of kundalini — the life force science. He has been practising the art for 35 years. "I succeeded only after failing many times over, only after stumbling. Kundalini tore me apart and put me back together," he says. He talks to POONAM KJAIN about how to live with the experience

Before you adopted a more spiritual lifestyle, you lived through a phase of sex, drugs, rock and roll. Do you regret your past?

■ I don't regret my past. I was lost and now I am found. Living that kind of life has taught me to be empathetic, to put myself in the place of others. In this era of narcissistic self-aggrandisement and self-absorption, empathy has become an indispensable human quality.

A journey through awakening one's kundalini can be dangerous and agonising without personal supervision. You moved to France for a year just to meditate all by yourself. Did you consider the pitfalls of doing so?

■ I didn't know what I was doing. Headstrong trailblazing, perhaps, but my ignorance allowed me to press forward without second-guessing myself. And it just so happened that the method I discovered — the Backward-Flowing Method — doesn't allow the energy to travel up the wrong channel in the spine.

I didn't realise until later that I was using my body as a laboratory. Yes, there are pitfalls, but as Gopi Krishna pointed out there were very few people — even in India — who could answer questions about kundalini with empirical authority. Yes, you can do it with supervision, but how do you know the person supervising you knows more than you do? And suppose you do encounter problems, how can another person really help? Are they sufficiently realigned to exert some magical power or will they simply comfort you by talking common sense? In the end, each person has to find the techniques that work best for them. It's not like dancing or cricket where coaches can correct improper form or posture. We're working with inner space where self-observation plays an all-important role.

How important is a guru — as your experience clearly shows you didn't need one?

■ There are systems that work for some people and those that don't. At the beginning, supervision is useful, but many gurus tend to have something else going on. If that something else involves the cult of personality, then it's not useful.

You've said: 'Sublimation is abstinence with a higher purpose.' What is the role of

karma in defining one's sexual appetite?

■ I'm not sure that karma has anything to do with sexual appetite. What I meant by that statement was that abstinence is the attempt to regulate sex through self-control, minding the little voice in the back of the

Rock Star To Yogi



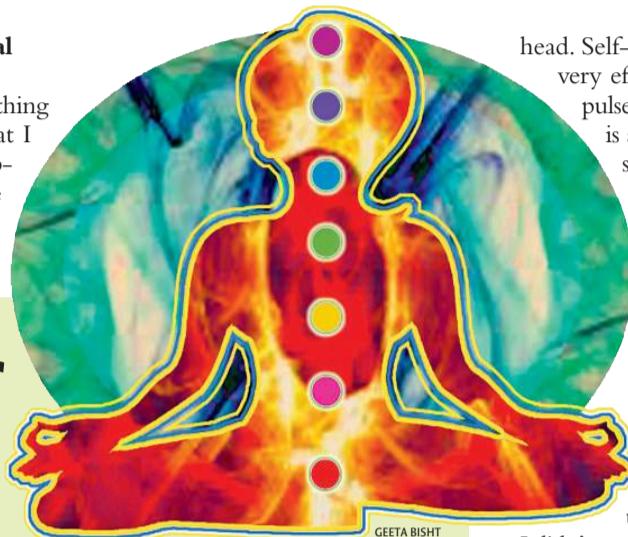
Born in 1938, JJ Semple starts life in the upper echelons of an Eastern Brahmin establishment. A childhood incident robs him of his two most precious talents which he is exceptionally gifted in. "My body slowly imploded. As a consequence, my abilities in maths and music disappeared. The changes were physical, caused by interference with vital nerve conduits — the result of my refusal to tell doctors about the splinter lodged in my ankle. This is difficult to understand because most people live their entire lives with their bodies in a single morphological state. They experience normal growth, but do not lose faculties or abilities and do not change their base morphology."

The Secret Revealed

In 1972, as he is making his way, unsuccessfully, into the Jazz scene in Paris, a stranger gives him a copy of *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, a significant Taoist book about meditation. After reading the book he realises through 'serendipitous happenstance' that he is slowly correcting the effects of his childhood accident. "It was only after I started practising the method that I realised its empirical value as a manual for activating kundalini."

Inevitability Of Karma?

We wonder if it is the inevitability of karma that led to his self-realisation in 1973 as he turned 35. He says, "It wasn't my ability to see be-



head. Self-control has never proven very effective in controlling impulse or addiction. Sublimation is a kind of end run, around sexual appetite. It diverts sexual energy to the brain, thereby realising the higher purpose.

What do you mean when you say, 'Spiritual transformation happens through giving up sex by diverting vital fluid into the nerves and up the spinal column.'

■ I didn't say, 'I'm going to sexually sublimate.' I simply started breathing correctly. The sexual component was a seamless by-product of my breathing. Once you master diaphragmatic deep breathing, you feel an energy build up in the lower belly. At this point, you command the energy to change direction, which draws distilled sexual energy up the spine to the brain. My book, *The Backward-flowing Method: The Secret of Life and Death* explains the techniques in depth.

As for why it's so hush-hush in India, Indian friends of mine tell me that gurus talk about kundalini in terms of religious doctrine, thereby excluding those whose practices are inconsistent with their doctrines. Americans are caught up in an opposite paradigm. To raise kundalini, you have thousands trying everything from harmful drugs to intensive yoga to drinking exotic tinctures to questionable tantric practices. Gurus, whatever their origin, are territorial, out to protect their own domains. There's very little collaboration and sharing of information as improvements come to the fore.

More are turning seekers today. Would you like to advise them?

■ I was attracted to *The Secret of Golden Flower* because of its stance vis-à-vis the real world: "When there is a gradual success in producing the circulation of the light, a man must not give up his ordinary occupation in doing so." The ancients said, 'When occupations come to us, we must accept them; when things come to us, we must understand them from the ground up'. Living with kundalini is something most people don't think about while they are trying to raise it. My method takes about a year, but once raised, you have to live with it for the rest of your life. There is a long

period of adjustment. Kundalini not only changes our metabolic and somatic systems, it affects how we relate to the world and to others emotionally.

If we didn't inhabit bodies, there would be no material attachments, negative emotions, war, greed, pride, fear and pain. Kundalini makes us feel we should get rid of these things. But however petty, selfish, imperfect, or foolish the world outside may seem to us, despite living in a body primed with kundalini energy, we are still human. At the same time, kundalini is developing greater consciousness; we must not neglect real world obligations.

Is 'awakening' an ongoing process, or is it a one-time experience that stays with you?

■ There are many types of kundalini awakenings: permanent, temporary, accidental, casual. Gopi Krishna's and mine were permanent, but that doesn't mean we were set for life. Kundalini only provides fertile ground for continual spiritual development. Nothing is automatically granted; the work is never done.

The aftermath is just as important as the actual awakening. So are the reasons and the motives for undertaking the activation process in the first place. Forty years ago, when I activated kundalini, I had never even heard the term kundalini. Unlike many today, I wasn't looking for extraordinary powers; I was practising a breathing method, hoping it would help me find myself. Once activated, everything came together. It's been that way ever since; it's the gift that keeps on giving — once you realise you have to surrender to its power. ■

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We Get What We Deserve

SHIVI DUA

If we believe that spiritualism and materialism are two separate things, then we will be able to enjoy only one of the two: that which we are more inclined towards. The fact is that no one can stop us from experiencing both simultaneously, none other than we ourselves. If we believe that materialism keeps us away from our true selves, then it will. On the other hand, if we have the right perspective towards wealth and self-realisation, then we will be able to invite both in our lives. It is not a sin to long for the comforts of the physical world. Wealth cannot shape our lives; our power packets do.

Wealth provides the means to improve the quality of our lives. We can choose to be either generous or selfish with the money we have. These options are always available to us, irrespective of the amount of money or wealth we possess. However, we may have many more choices available to us when we have more wealth at our disposal. It does give us a certain power in the world. Of-



ceeding at it, they develop a belief that huge amounts of money can be earned only through unfair means. If we see someone close to us become wealthy overnight, it affects us greatly. Then if we see the same person lose most of that wealth due to careless expenditure, we thank our stars, for wealth goes away just as fast as it comes.

We can pick up beliefs from the negative experiences of others and create our lives accordingly. On the other hand, we could just observe the world around us as a spectator while being confident of ourselves and watch our power packets create a life that we desire and deserve. We always get what we deserve, and we deserve what we believe we do. Let The Power Be With You; Wisdom Tree. ■

ten, contentment begins to blur and greed begins to take its place. Greed keeps the object of desire at the highest level of priority and provokes an individual to do whatever it takes to acquire it. On the other hand, when we know that we deserve something, it will come our way for sure, especially when we are free from restlessness or from the anxiety to cling to material things.

The desire for wealth arises out of envy. One negative emotion attracts another and can easily make us give in to greed; but if we live with complete acceptance of ourselves and our life as it is, our desire for wealth is unlikely to throw us off balance. When honest people leading a simple life observe others adopting unfair means to earn wealth and suc-

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