

“My Experience of Kriya Yoga”

by Jennifer Ellis

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This article is based on Jennifer’s personal experience, after participating in an initiation seminar of Babaji’s Kriya Yoga with Acharya Satyananda at the Yotopia Yoga studio in central London

“For those of us who are on our yogic path to spiritual freedom, many may have come up against a point of stasis, finding it difficult to somehow push through to higher levels of understanding, in spite of a consciously diligent commitment to our practices.

I, like many others I suspect, have experienced and learnt several different forms of yoga within the broad scope that is Yoga, yet I have somehow lacked the wherewithal on how to integrate these varying aspects into a meaningful and effective yogic practice or methodology.

So it was an enormous privilege to have been able to attend a seminar with initiation into Babaji’s Kriya Yoga, as the first of a series of three levels, and to learn from a highly informed and gifted teacher some of the more subtle and esoteric aspects of yoga. I now look forward to practicing towards the second initiation at the appropriate time.

The Acharya’s teaching of Babaji’s Kriya Yoga techniques has been insightful and illuminating, with his unreserved commitment and compassionate teaching, and his ability to merge in an effective and precise way, my earlier disparate yoga practices into a unified whole. This has enabled me to further deepen my practice on my chosen path to self-knowledge. He is highly adept at introducing powerful techniques and practices in a way that is both accessible and attainable to non-adepts without diluting the essence of the Kriya Yoga practices.

In my recent experience, I have found that Kriya Yoga is the fullest flowering of yogic practices that integrates the broadest possible techniques and yoga philosophy into a cohesive and effective practice – a yoga practice offered as a living experience.

Kriya Yoga is a science and an art, developed by ancient eastern sages and mystics, and is based on the deep knowledge about the human mind body system. It offers a timeless and precise way of enabling each of us to move beyond our belief concepts and our conditioned and mechanical ways of behaviour and to overcome the limitations we have placed upon ourselves, so that we are able to unfold and experience our true potential as Humans. In effect, to liberate ourselves from all that holds us back.

The Acharya beautifully encapsulated the meaning of Kriya Yoga as comprising of two wings, the awakening of consciousness and the awakening of energy within, which merge as two sides of the same coin into our full human potential conscious power.

About Kriya and Karma

Kriya Yoga is conscious creation, deliberate action with awareness, whereby our directed attention and focused awareness leads to an inner exploration of our being and in turn, allows for expanded consciousness and for unfolding our full human potential power. ‘Kri’ as part of the word Kriya means action, ‘ya’ means with awareness, action undertaken with an intention to unite the Breath (life force) and the Self – energy and consciousness.

Karma means in effect ‘action with consequence’, whether it be physical or psychological, mental or energetic, born out of a default way of response, a default mechanism of nature, to drive the mind body system within nature and ensure its survival, based on the law of ‘cause and effect’. As we react (i.e. “re-act”) out of an automatic response based on our past programming of childhood, society or even pre-birth experiences, invariably this is a reflection of our past conditioning and our belief concepts, projected into the future. As a result, we re-create our past experience into our future.

Kriya Yoga offers techniques that ensure we become mindful in how we think, feel and speak and in our attitude and behaviour, whether in thoughts, words or actions. In contrast to karmic patterns, action done in awareness enables us to act in life out of deliberate intent. We cultivate our natural ability to distinguish the five bodies (“sheaths”) of our mind body vehicle (physical body, vital body, mental body, intellectual body, spiritual body), and our ability to receive inner insight and inspiration as the driving force and foundation for our action. Constant interaction of the breath and the Self with awareness brings about a spaciousness that allows for transformation and expanding our degrees of freedom of choice.

Kriya is about expansion, purification and transformation. It is using the power of intention to manifest and to unfold the dormant faculties and the amazing tools of our mind body system. The result is that through sincere intention and focus, the Infinite or Universal Consciousness is responsive, leading to a change in the vibratory field within us and around us.

Eventually, our environment will respond within the law of attraction and of energetic field resonance, and our experience will change according to our own vibratory reality.

Our life experience becomes one of magnetic resonance and natural ease. That is why to create is liberating, it sets you free to be who you really are, guided by your genuine heart intentions and by the Highest guidance and wisdom within.

About Pranayama and Kundalini

A key tool in the practices is “Kriya Kundalini Pranayama”, which entails using the breath for Pranayama but in a way that is focused and directed in order to move our Prana (life-force) around the body-mind-system. Those Pranayama techniques are not just simply breathing exercises, but a sophisticated holistic deeply devotional inner practice. There is a direct connection between consciousness and energy, and therefore the power of the Kriya Kundalini Pranayama is amplified as our concentration deepens. As all Yoga practice is in general, Kriya Kundalini Pranayama practice in particular is designed to lead the body mind system into the energetic state of “*satva*” bringing about balance and equanimity – we are awake and present, active yet calm. And it is only when one is in this state that one opens up to transformation. By raising our consciousness we experience little glimpses of our pure potential transformative energy, the power of Consciousness – this is the awakening of the Kundalini.

In summary, Action with Awareness, directed by deliberate focused intention, involving the interaction of breath and the Self, is Kriya. And it is within this capacity that Kundalini energy is awakened, rises to unite with consciousness, allowing for spaciousness in order for transformation to take place. Our subtle energy powers are awakened and allowed to develop and unfold the faculties of our human body and mind - our true birth’s heritage as incarnated human beings on this planet.

Kriya is then the root of everything and its aim of bringing about that integration, whereby we are liberated from all that holds us back from achieving our true potential. This process is self-empowering. The ultimate aim of Kriya is to assist us in our Self-evolution and Self-realization.

About Kriya and Direct Experience

I feel that my energy, health and consciousness is amplified through the practice. By harnessing my breath, the practice of Kriya Yoga has made me mindful of how it works on my physical, psycho-emotional and mental planes. These techniques have drawn my attention to not only the gross physical level, but also to subtle energetic states within, and how to further evolve and strengthen them, so that my ability to perceive sharpens on all levels and I can attain higher states of consciousness.

Our intention is paramount in directing the awareness to the perspective of a “witness consciousness” within. The practice of this yogic Sadhana becomes the vehicle to help drive us forward. But the techniques lead no-where if we are not mindful in how we attend to and practice them. It is through deliberate directed Awareness and Self-awareness that we are able to move forward with purpose and to experience the truth of what we are.

I have noted, as with all practices, especially the powerful Kriya techniques, that commitment and consistency in my practice is essential, in order to properly prepare my mind, body and nervous system for transformation to take place. The Acharya shared with us in an uncomplicated way traditional Kriya Kundalini Pranayama techniques, Meditation and Asana techniques – and continuously reminded us that ever anew attention and awareness is required to be brought into each and every practice we do, so that we are always mindful whether focusing on asana, Pranayama, meditation or devotional practice, or on our daily life routine activity or on challenging life situations.

What has Kriya Yoga revealed to me? That it is a living practice, one that can only be understood through direct inner experience. Neither books nor theoretical concepts can do justice to the personal inner experience. And to fully appreciate Kriya Yoga’s true reach and potential requires that the student approaches the practice with heartfelt sincerity in order to realise how beautiful and powerfully transformative the Kriya Yoga practice is.

I thank Acharya Satyananda for guiding me through my experience of the initiation into Babaji’s Kriya Yoga. It was a joyful experience that continues to live within me.”

October 2013 – Jennifer Ellis

Jennifer Ellis: Jennifer’s journey into yoga began 20 years ago. She teaches in order to share with others the infinity of Yoga, in its physical and meditative dimensions, and as a way to choose how to live one’s Life. Jennifer has a teaching practice in London. Contact <jenniferaellis@hotmail.com> or visit her website “YogaAsLife” (www.yogaaslife.co.uk).

Babaji’s Kriya Yoga: For details on seminars with initiation into Babaji’s Kriya Yoga near you, visit the international website (www.BabajisKriyaYoga.net) and check the <event schedule> or contact <info@babajiskriyayoga.net>.