

Yoga Explained 16

The Astral Body - Mind and Intellect

Dr. M. W. Lewis

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Going on this evening with our discussion, Yoga Explained, tonight we are taking up the different parts, some more of the Elements of the Electronic Body. The Physical Body we are familiar with. The Electronic Body, the Body of Energy within us, we're not so familiar with it. Once in a while we'll see parts of it, at the Spiritual Eye, or the flash of Light in our meditations, or the booming of the Cosmic Sound. Those manifestations come from the Electronic or Spiritual Body, and, of course, the love which we feel is the Feeling of God, which comes as Energy in the Electronic Body.

Last time we discussed the different parts of the Electronic Body, the 19 Elements, the 10 Senses, and we took up the 5 Pranas; and the other 4 are the Mind, Intellect, Ego, and Feeling or chittwa. Just to review a little bit about the, these Subtle Electric Currents within us, which it might be likened to the senses. For instance when you look and so you see something, you hardly realize that there is an electric current going from your eye, transmitting to your brain, the little images which you see. And then, from there, it is cognized, later, through other Elements of the Electronic Body, as the Mind, and the Intellect, and finally, the Feeling. As you see the flowers, the image is first; then, the discrimination comes and says, "Oh, those are flowers." Then comes the Feeling of your Soul through the Ego, is that you like those flowers, or they remind you of something, or many, many things come in through our consciousness.

That all happens, not through the sight alone – the sight is just the beginning – or through any of the senses, but through the fulfillment of the whole process, which is within us, in our Soul, and the Soul attached to the body as the Ego.

And so, those things go on, not just without reason, but there are Subtle Electric Currents within us – rays of vibrating Spiritual Energy – which cause these things to be fulfilled within us. And those rays of Vibrating Energy constitute the Electronic Body, the Astral Body, which is behind this Physical Body. Nineteen Elements, remember; 10 Senses; 5 Pranas; Mind, Intellect, Ego, and Feeling.

We took up last time, or we finished talking about these 5 Pranas. These 5 very important Spiritual Currents within us. First is the “Prana,” which is located in the chest whereby you breathe; and, of course, in breathing you get rid of the carbon dioxide and take in oxygen, and convert the oxygen to Life Force and therefore, you are living. God breathed into man the breath of life, and man became a living and manifesting Soul.¹ So this first Prana is very important, because it makes us living and manifesting. But, in the end, that is discarded, and we become a Free Soul, not depending on this vehicle.

And so, that first Prana is very important and it is called “Prana,” p-r-a-n-a, and also it is used, that term is used to designate the Life Force within us, the Lifetronic Force, which makes us living and manifests through the Electronic Body.

Then we come to the next one is the Apana, which governs the excretions of the body; and which you are familiar of the different ways in which waste is eliminated from the body. And one important one, of course, is the perspiration glands, and other things. These must go on due to the physiology of our bodies. And it is taken care of through this subtle second Pranic Energy within us known as the Apana.

Then the next is the Samana, which governs assimilation. We eat all sorts of things, all sorts of food, all sorts of colors, and different temperatures, and constituents. And in the end, they are assimilated and make our body as it is. How? Through this Prana known as the Samana; and that is located in the navel region, because most of the assimilation takes place in the intestines; and the final assimilation, so that’s located there. The other Prana I talked about is located around the different organs of excretion.

That takes us now to Udana, u-d-a-n-a, is the, which is the Prana of peristalsis. When food goes into us, it goes into the throat, and then it is swallowed. After it drops down over the first third of the esophagus it is picked up by the involuntary action of the muscles and carried all the down through our intestinal tract by this movement – peristaltic movement – and that is one of the Prana’s. We don’t mind that movement unless we get a blockage, and then we really have something. When we get gas, or something, that stops that movement, then we

¹ Genesis 2:7, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”

know it. But, usually, it goes on unknown, and it does perform quite a function in the body.

That brings us now to the next one. The 5th, which is the Vyana, v-y-a-n-a – these are Sanskrit words – and that has to do with the circulation; a very important Prana, because without the circulation the food which we assimilated through the previous current, of which I spoke, would not be carried out through the different parts of the body. And so the circulation is very important. And also, oxygen, you know, comes in through the lungs; carbon dioxide is eliminated through the lungs – by what medium? By this Pranic Current, operating the circulation; and perhaps, one of the greatest things that this Prana does is that it air conditions us in hot weather and in cold weather, keeps us warm. This is the current that does that. And there are many other things that are performed, functions that are performed by this current which governs circulation. The heart and the blood vessels are made to pump, and the little blood vessels have a little wave action by this current. So it's a very important current.

So, so much for just a little review of the 5 Pranas, which are very important. You don't necessarily have to remember the words, those of you who take the Preceptor² will find them there, but as you go deeper, you will feel those currents within you, and sometimes, perhaps, you will see them spoken of in the Bible as rivers of vibrating energy; rivers through, through "...his belly shall flow rivers of life."³ (*Sic*) And those currents of Light have life in them. So much for the review.

Now, going on this evening, we take us first the Mind – the Mind. The Mind and the Intellect, and the Ego, and the Feeling, the Higher Feeling – these constitute the Inner instruments in contrast to these Senses, which constitute the External energy. These are the Internal parts of us and are found in the Electronic Body.

And first, the Mind; the Mind – Manas, m-a-n-a-s – the mind is, in the dictionary is sometimes refer to not only as the mind alone, but as the intellect. And so there is confusion there. The Intellect is sometimes fused with the Mind, so to speak. For instance, as you look to the flowers there, first you see an image of those flowers; you see an image. Now, that which gives you the image is the Mind; that's the Mind – nothing else. But, what happens? Immediately, the Intellect comes and discriminates, and you know they're flowers. So sometimes

² The original name of the SRF Lessons.

³ St. John 7:38, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

the Mind is spoken of in connection with the Intellect, but they can be separated. An absent-minded person may be lookin' at those flowers and, the image is in them, but they're not cognizant of the flowers. Just a little illustration of separation between the Mind and the Intellect; they are separate, very much so.

And so, what is the real definition of the Mind, which the Master gave, and which I've always remembered, and it's helped me very much: "The mind has the function of coordinating sensation," that's all. Mind coordinates sensation. That's the definition which the Master has given to us. Another one which you sometimes will read is that: "The mind gives meaning to the senses without which the senses cannot act." Unless our Mind gave us the image of those flowers, then, of course, there'd be nothing there. But if you'll remember that the Mind simply coordinates the senses. I see this bouquet, little bouquet of beautiful little roses, and, if I want I can smell them, and then, from there on the Intellect discriminates what kind of roses they are, and the color, and perhaps where they came from, and all those things. That's discrimination; that's the Intellect. And finally, comes the Ego, says, "Oh, I, I like those roses. Those are wonderful roses." And if you carry it a little further, you will feel, see, the Presence of God in them. But the Mind is the first thing that gives you the image.

Master used to give this illustration. This is a window, here, and over here we have a big mirror. Now there are light rays that come in through that window which represents one of the senses. And as those light rays come in, they carry an image of whatever goes by that window, and it is reflected on this mirror of the Mind. And so, something goes by the window, and it has a long body, and it has four things sticking down, has somethin' out front, and somethin' out back. And we look there and we see the image on the mirror. That's all we see through the Mind – really. The Mind coordinates the senses. It puts an image there. In comes the Intellect and says, "Oh, yes, that's got these to back things are the hind legs and front legs, and it's got a long head, and that tail sticking out;" then, comes the Intellect and says, "Sure, I know that. That's a horse." But you see the first, the first factor is the coordination of the senses, which constitutes the Mind. But, what happens? You look that...you look out there, and you, immediately you know it's a horse, and you like the horse or dislike him, and he's yellow, or whatever color he is.

It's done simultaneously, but still there are divisions. And, if you meditate, you can easily separate them out. You can...one-by-one, you can drop the senses, and then you can drop the Mind, and then you can drop the Intellect; but still, you're existing; you feel the Peace and Bliss of something. That's the dropping,

one-by-one – the Senses, Mind, and Intellect, and finally, the Ego. You forgot who you are, and where you are, but you are fully conscious and Blissful and Peaceful – that’s the Soul. Meditation will help you to do that. Yoga will help you to separate these things so that you know what you are – Mind, nor Intellect, Ego, Chittwa. [Doctor asks someone aside him...] What is the rest of it Minna? ...what is it? “...Sky, nor Earth, nor Metals am I; I am He, I am He, Blissful Spirit I am He.”⁴ Yoga will help you to do that.

Now you may say, “Well, why go to all that trouble? Why don’t you just jump into the Soul and say ‘here I am’.” You can’t do it that way. You have to know the steps. You have to know what you’re dropping off, so to speak. But through meditation, it is easy. And so, so much for the Mind.

The Mind coordinates the senses, as I have said. Master used to give that illustration. Another illustration he used to give was that of the chariot – the chariot drawn by 10 horses, and the horses controlled by 10 reins, and the driver, and, of course, the Soul is the chariot. The horses are controlled by the 10 reins. The horses are the 10 senses controlled by the reins and the driver is the Intellect. The Mind constitutes the reins, because they coordinate the senses. You have 10 reins and the 10 horses are coordinated. That’s the Mind. Senses...is referred to as the driver, and the Soul is the chariot. Perhaps you can remember that for this lesson tonight.

Now, usually, Mind has two phases, that is in the ordinary sense which we should know about, but never forget the Mind just coordinates the senses – the true Mind. The Intellect is what discriminates. Now, in the Mind there are two phases: the lower and the higher. The lower phase of Mind is, “that which is swayed by the senses, and governed by passion and lower feelings, especially, emotion.” If you look, read the papers, which sometimes, when we have to, you’ll see what’s going on by the function of the Lower Mind. People are very sensuous, and they’re controlled by emotion and passion. And that’s the lower phase of the Mind as it is used in that term.

⁴ One of Doctor’s favorite chants “No Birth, No Death”
“No birth, no death, no caste have I.
Father, mother, have I none.
I am He, I am He; blessed Spirit, I am He.

Mind nor intellect no ego chittwa;
Sky, nor earth, nor metals am I.
I am He, I am He; blessed Spirit, I am He.”

Then we have the upper, the upper phase of the Mind, which is a form of reasoning, or inference. For instance we see this room and we know, by inference, what it is. We depend upon our senses to see this room. But if this room is darkened down so you can hardly see it, you cannot form an accurate definition or idea of what this room is. And so, the upper form of Mind is a form of reasoning – but it is not accurate. For instance, in a darkened room in a corner you see a coil of rope, and if your emotions are just right, you will take that perhaps, to be a snake or something like that. You cannot depend on the Mind, because the Mind depends upon sensation, and you cannot depend upon the senses, because right there – you think that thing which turns out to be a rope is a snake.

Another illustration that comes to my mind, if you take and eat half a lemon, if you can do it, and then, if you take a drink of water, and tell me what it tastes like. Tell me what...try it! It's entirely different from what water usually tastes like, because you cannot depend on the senses. So do not depend on your Mind.

Another illustration that comes to my mind, when you look up at the stars and you say, "Oh, yes, there's that star there." It isn't there at all, because it has moved and the number of light years it takes for the light to get here. And that star is not there where you see it, it's over here. They, they can prove that by something to do with the eclipses that shows that the light bends. So there are many things that we cannot depend upon with the senses nor the Mind, because the Mind depends upon the senses. And so, even this high form, or this higher phase of Mind, or form of reason, or inference, is not sure, because it depends upon the testimony of the senses.

And so, you know yourself, you have many times been fooled by depending on sensation. It isn't the same at all. So, don't depend upon your mind too much, nor your intellect, because the Intellect, usually, depends upon the senses and the Mind. But there is a form of the Intellect, which comes through the intellect... Intuition of the Soul which makes the Intellect much better than the just the Mind, these two phases of Mind of which I have spoken. And so, this higher phase of Mind, a form of reasoning, is not to be...must not be confused with Intellect, which receives from the Soul, Intuition.

And, therefore, the Intellect in a high form is, may be accurate in many cases. But still, it is not the same as Intuition, which is never failing. In...animals have instinct, which is intuition. They are never wrong. Human beings have intellect, which sometimes is wrong. But, the one advantage of intellect is that it can be

cultured and instinct cannot be cultured. Intellect can be cultured, because in intellect we have free will.

And so, Intellect, which means Buddhi, b-u-d-d-h-i, must not be confused with Mind. It is entirely different. Mind coordinates the senses. Well, now what does Intellect do? It discriminates – it discriminates. How do you know when you do a thing whether it's right or wrong? Conscience – that's right. What is conscience? Conscience is your Soul within you. The Power of your Soul, the Intuition of the Soul, will tell you right or wrong. And so, when we use Intellect, we are using a ray of our own Soul; and it is much higher than Mind. It does not depend upon the testimony of the senses. It is influenced by them. But if you forget the senses and go inward toward the Soul, then Intuition will come, which has never, never failed – unfailing – and that will tell you what is right.

And so, Mind coordinates the senses, but Intellect discriminates – Intellect discriminates. This is, “this is this,” “this is that,” “this is right,” “this is wrong,” “I like this.” Then comes the Ego and Feeling, which we'll take up next time. After you discriminate and you see that horse and you say, “That's a horse,” then, comes in the Ego and Feeling – or – “That horse is not shaped right, at all,” “he's too long,” “he's too high,” “the color is terrible” of that horse. That's the Ego coming in. That's where all the trouble comes. Feeling – likes and dislikes. “I dislike that horse.”

So, next time we'll take up about the Ego and the Feelings. And so, one other note I have in passing which might interest you. There is a phase or quality of Intellect in each spinal Center whereby giving rise to the discriminative tendencies, which start us on the road to Salvation. Most people live in the three lower Centers of the spine; and the live in sensation. But, in those Centers, is a form of discrimination, or Intellect. That's why, no matter how low we are in this plain of activity we can get out of it; we can attain Salvation. Because there's Intuition in those Centers just the same, and there's Intellect, a ray of Intellect in there. So that no matter if we are sensuous, of the world, worldly, we can get out of it, because of the ray of the Soul, as Intuition in all Centers. And these discriminative tendencies will show us, gradually, right and wrong, and we can be saved.

And so much, this evening, for the Mind and the Intellect, and next time we will go on with the Ego and Higher Feeling. Remember, these are all Elements of the Electronic Body; the Body of Energy, which is within us. And when this body is caste aside, what's left? The Electronic Body, with these 19 Elements in Subtle

form. Just like, in the seed is the whole big oak tree. And so, as we through off this body, in the Electronic Body is, not only the blueprint of this Physical Body, but the blueprint of the Infinite, because we're made in the Image of God. The Soul is in there, in subtle form. So we have to rise above these three bodies: Physical, Electronic, and finally, the Causal body – the body of ideas – and then the Soul is Free.

So, somethin' for you to think about until next time. I have a few references; first from Hindu scriptures, which I take this evening from Master's Autobiography.⁵ If those of you who which to read a little further, on Page 393,⁶ this is speaking about the Mind. First we'll take a few references about the Mind.

“You can control a mad elephant;
You can shut the mouth of the bear and the tiger;
You can ride a lion;
You can play with a cobra;”

if you have that power,

“By alchemy you can eke out your livelihood;
You can wander through the universe incognito;
You can make vassals of the gods;
You can be ever-youthful;
You can walk on water and live in fire;
But control of the mind is better and more difficult.”⁷

So, this little Mind, of which we are talking, is very difficult to control. If you meditate deeply, you will find that the problem is to shut out the mind – shut it out – put it down! And then, it's much easier to know God. But as long as that Mind is coming in there, how can you? Mind is of duality; God is One. So, this little poem – but the control of mind is better than all those things we talked about, and, also more difficult. Not to discourage anybody, but the truth is the truth.

Now page 152 [1952 Revision], of the Autobiography of a Yogi [1946 Release], which is the epitome of Hindu philosophy, here we read a little more about the

⁵ Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramhansa Yogananda, 1946

⁶ Ibid, 1952 Revision

⁷ Ibid, Chapter 41, “The ubiquitous religious shrines of Mysore are a constant reminder of the many great saints of South India. One of these masters, Thayumanavar, has left us the following challenging poem:”

Mind – another reference. “The breath and the restless mind I saw.⁸” Here Master had a vision, and, of course, everything melts into light, and light, from light we have come, from the Love and Light of the Infinite. And so, he was speaking about “The breath and the restless mind I saw were storms which lashed the ocean of light into waves of material forms...” earth, and sky, human beings, animals, and birds, and trees – all made from light; and the Mind is what causes the ocean to be restless with waves. And so, he goes on: “No perception of the Infinite as One Light could be had except by calming those storms.”

So we have to battle – the Mind and the Intellect. We have to still the waves of the mind. The Master said, “Still the waves of the mind, and then you can see, easily, the reflection of the moon your Soul.”

And one other, on page 159 – 159, same book – another reference to the Mind. And this now begins to take us into the realm of Intellect. Remember Intuition is in Intellect. How do you dis...how do you know right and wrong? How do I know right and wrong? Because the Soul Intuition is in it. And so here we read: “Intuition...”⁹

[Tape ends abruptly]

⁸ Ibid, Chapter 14, “The breath and the restless mind, I saw, were like storms which lashed the ocean of light into waves of material forms-earth, sky, human beings, animals, birds, trees. No perception of the Infinite as One Light could be had except by calming those storms. As often as I silenced the two natural tumults, I beheld the multitudinous waves of creation melt into one lucent sea, even as the waves of the ocean, their tempests subsiding, serenely dissolve into unity.”

⁹ Ibid, Chapter 15, “Intuition is soul guidance, appearing naturally in man during those instants when his mind is calm. Nearly everyone has had the experience of an inexplicably correct “hunch,” or has transferred his thoughts effectively to another person.”