

By Sri Goswami  
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## **On initiation (*diksha*)**

Initiation is generally meant that one is accepted into some religious or other sort of Order, and there is initiated into certain things, which are then to mould and guide his life, actions, behaviour etc. But *diksha* is something more specific in the yogic context where it is meant as a spiritual initiation, in which a Guru (or spiritual teacher) directly imparts to his disciple an appropriate mantra to be utilized for spiritual progress, in *pranayama*, *dharana* and *dhyana*, while in *samadhi* the mantra will become absorbed.

The mantra thus imparted has first of all to be utilized in the form of *japa*, that is by frequent and steady repetitions in its *vaikhari*-form, either by saying, or by thinking it. When uttered two forms are used: loudly where the sound is audible to others (this audible form is generally not used with the spiritual mantra), and one which is uttered in a very low tone, so that it cannot be heard or grasped by others.

In order to get the right sound-pattern of the mantra perfectly clear to ourselves, we have first to learn very exactly its right tone, its correct pronunciation and the *matrikas* of which it consists; and that must be done by training it aloud with the Guru. The second form is its thinking and repeating it mentally, without it at all being pronounced. However, before the correct sound-form can thus be heard mentally, it first must be said correctly over and over again for a long time, so that the sound-picture can clearly ring in our ears with the right pronunciation, lest it will not work. Thus it needs much training for it - under the direct guidance of the teacher. And when it will begin to work, certain inner parts of the body will be felt as being involved; and this feeling will occur in the mental field, in the nervous system and the body, as well. For it is meant that this specific sensitivity

should be developed, helped also by the purification of the body, breathing exercise and concentration. Only then will the mantra work properly. If this is not the case, it will only remain a meaningless sound.

In *diksha* we get an appropriate mantra, for us to really work upon towards its "awakening", or *mantra-chaitanya*. And this means the awakening of the *bija*-aspect, -or part, of the mantra, which is the one we mostly use here towards *nada-bindu*. But before it thus can begin to awaken to life, it very much needs our own mental effort to keep the mind on it without disturbance, so that the sound-form of mantra gets established in us with the right breathing-pattern, and produce the right effect on the nervous system. Then all the rest will be automatically adjusted when the mantra begins to awaken, for it will then automatically being involved, do the work, and even absorb our volition and our thinking. For what we then will be thinking, cannot be any of our usual thoughts, since the mind will be absorbed in mantra, by the power of the mantra.

But to get it that way needs great strength. We already know how difficult it is in concentration to keep our mind focused to one single point, and how difficult it is to drive out all else, to prevent the mind from wandering. In Mantra also, the first stages are very difficulty but then things get adjusted, and all labour will become fruitful, and the mantra will show all its different aspects when helped by right *dharana* and *dhyana*. Mantra will not work if not rightly used and helped towards its awakening. Nor will it awaken or do anything, if it is not specially given by a teacher who knows all this, and the pupil is prepared to work hard in that direction.

The breathing-exercises is intimately connected to the practice of Hatha Yoga. But these can also be regulated by *dhyana* or mantra, or both at the same time. Here again the teacher is very necessary in all work with mantra. So mantra is used only for special purposes and in a spiritual context,. If it

were not so, no teacher or mantra would be necessary. When rightly used the mantra turns to be very fruitful. Yet, always when working with mantra is wanted, it must be a *diksha*-imparted mantra, no other will work. Thus, even if the mantra-path is taken only for the sake of worldly purposes, a *diksha*-mantra must first be made living, or it will not help (like for instance in fire-walking). So, for any productive mantra *diksha* is necessary.

Being granted such a *diksha-mantra* is not necessarily connected to any kind of religious Order, or the like. It can only be used as one's very personal thing, in the way one has been taught, and kept strictly secret. The first mantra imparted by one's Guru is the root- or *mula-mantra*, and this will stay with us for ever. There are seven further stages of *diksha*. There are also different stages for those who work on the *chakra*-system with different forms of mantra, all are built up, step by step, on the *mula-mantra*.

In all these processes, the teacher's responsibility is very great. Therefore a genuine *diksha*-Guru will never initiate as many as possible for the purpose of gaining a great amount of disciples. And wherever there is a group-work, each pupil has to contribute, so as to build up certain spiritual thought-patterns; and for that all of pupils are expected to reach higher levels; for only there the group-system will work. But the question on who and what is to be worked upon, is the teacher's sole responsibility. And what the one gets must not be told by that pupil to any other. That discretion is here a test, for if that mantra is not kept secret, it will not work at all. Even if the same mantra is given to different pupils, it will work quite individually. For it can be efficient only at a higher level while the teacher has to help towards that goal in the pupil. However, even so, it will always work individually.

Mantra is not a part of a language to be used at the sensory level. It is true that to many non-Indian people certain sounds (*matrikas*) are difficult to be learned or uttered correctly right away correctly, but all have to learn the

mantra's correct pronunciation, even if that need a special effort at the beginning of the *japa* practice.

Rightly seen all mantras stem from the original mantra OM (or AUM) as they are built on It - the *maha-mantra*. Connected to the *mula-mantra* and as its indispensable part, is the *Ishta Devata*, whose conception can be male, or female, or both combined. This is because at the sensory level an image of that kind is always seen from the gender point of view. But this has actually no bearing on the *devata* concerned, as it is neither male or female: it stands beyond any sex distinction. It is first after the awakening of the mantra that we will know what form our *Ishta-Devata* has, for then the image will be clear.