

Three Bodies

Causing that point of light to become a flame, by steadily fanning the spark and feeding the fire.....

Thousands of year ago, the ancient sages in their deep Meditative state attained total knowledge of the functioning of the Universe. They found the Theory of everything which is now being touted as something revolutionary by the west.

How do geese know when to fly to the sun? Who tells them the seasons? How do we, humans, know when it is time to move on? As with migrant birds, so surely with us, there is a voice within, if only we would listen to it, that tells us so certainly when to go forth into the unknown. *Elisabeth Kubler-Ross*

What we call the human body is actually a combination of three bodies according to the Great Indian Rishis and Seers who were truly the greatest scientists. In ancient history, there have been times when our culture was highly advanced, scientifically as well as spiritually. The society was guided by highly evolved rishis (sages), master exponents of metaphysical skills who had conquered death through Yoga and meditation.

When we die, only our physical body is destroyed. We, the spirit along with the astral and causal body are born again in another physical body, as directed by our Karmic record. In between the death and rebirth, the spirit, along with the astral body goes to a particular astral plane depending on its level of evolution. There it experiences a detailed review of its latest life before being born again in another life. And this cycle of birth and death continues. The process of rebirth causes a memory loss, and we humans forget the real purpose of our lives. *The aim of human life is to remember who we are*, and to work towards the goal of evolution and the ultimate moksha", freedom from the cycle of birth and death.

Hatha Yoga is designed to gain in-depth understanding of our body and to unleash its power and strength to obtain our higher selves. To a Hatha Yogi, the body is not a mere mass of living matter, but a mystical bridge between the spiritual and the physical being. It is certainly the case that Hatha Yoga works very much with and through the body, and that this conceptual isolation of the body is crucial to Hatha Yoga's theory and practice.

Kaya Sadhana

Kaya Sadhana is the Sanskrit term for the development or cultivation of the body for a spiritual purpose. Kaya Sadhana in Hath Yoga has a typical meaning that explains, Hatha Yoga does not seek mere transcendental experiences. Its objective is to transform the human body to make it a worthy vehicle for Self-realization. According to a yogic philosophy: the body, mind and senses constitute instruments or tools for the respective processes of: Experiencing the world and realizing our true nature. If these instruments



Three Bodies

are to work efficiently then it is important that the yogi maintains them in the best possible condition, and, furthermore, endeavours to strengthen and purify them to the utmost.

Multi-layered Body

The underlying theory of Hatha Yoga is a conception that the human body is highly complex. It is also considerably at odds with the standard Western materialist model. Central to the yogic conception does the notion that human beings comprise a series of layers` of substance, from the `gross` and `external` through to the `subtle` and `internal`. The notion of three bodily levels is described as:

1. **The Physical Body** (sthula-sharira) is the gross external form, corresponding roughly to the physical body known to materialist science. This sharira is shed at the point of physical death, although the personality continues to exist, operating through the Astral Body (sukshma-sharira).
2. **The Astral Body** (sukshma sharira) is capable of migrating from one Physical Body (Sthula-sharira) to another, thus engendering the process of reincarnation; the world can only be experienced when both Physical and Astral bodies are present.
3. **The Causal Body** (karana-sharira) is so-called because of its status as the original embryo or source of the body.

The key feature of this belief is all three bodies either act in harmony, or they are disconnected (in a relative sense). **When these connections are blocked or unempowered then stress, conflict, confusion, disease and other afflictions manifest themselves.** It is here that Yoga helps, by opening up the pathways. The point of Yoga is to clear up the passages, or channels, that have become obstructed, thus reactivate and harmonize this intricate network.

Since this is an intertwined system, all bodies connected to each other. The acts of the physical body are influenced by the more subtle functioning of the astral body (Sukshma Sharira) as well as the quality of the passages to the causal body (Karana Sharira) and vice versa. In other words there exists a two way street between all three bodies.

In the beginning we use Hatha Yoga practices to tone up the muscles and internal organs. Then, through the practice or pranayama, we become aware of the subtleties of the Pranic body and start to cleanse the nadis (energy channels). In so doing, we reactivate the dormant circuits. Subsequently, they align more harmoniously via breath regulation. And, as the fruits of Yoga start to manifest themselves, it is purified, reactivated and re-empowered.



Three Bodies

Likewise, when we meditate, we start from the subtle body. This allows us to clear out the most subtle pathways that lead to and from the causal body. And, as the connections between the bodies are cleansed there comes about a congenial harmony and attunement which flows naturally without effort, will, or decision.

The three bodies roughly correspond to what we would call body, mind, and soul. Furthermore, each of the three bodies conforms to a state of consciousness. The physical body functions in the waking state, the astral body in dream state, and the causal body in deep sleep state. The inner self that is housed by these sheaths exists in the fourth state of consciousness that is the ever-wakeful state of pure awareness.

Only the causal body endures over many incarnations, whereas the physical and astral bodies can be formed anew at each new birth. The causal body is the repository for all our karmic impulses. **The yogis tell us that the causal body can alter reality, create worlds, and bring about materialization. However, even this body is not eternal. When a person attains full realisation, it too is dissolved into the infinite spirit.**

This scheme of things can be explained by the following example. Lets us say that I want to build the house of my dreams and I have unlimited money at my disposal to do so. Now, I know exactly what I want. I want five bed rooms, a large living room, five bath rooms, a big kitchen, a swimming pool, a porch, a large garden and so on. I picture the house in my mind and when I have visualized every detail I go to an architect to put my dream house on paper. He constructs everything - on paper. The building, the wiring, the plumbing is all there. Every detail is worked out. Everything I wanted in my house now exists – on paper. I am now ready to build. At this stage I take the blue print to the builder and ask him to convert the blue print to reality. The builder takes six months and a large sum of my money. At long last my dream house is a reality.

The house took shape in three distinct stages. In the first stage it existed only as a thought pattern. An electrical impulse in the brain is all it was. The consciousness of house existed but it could not be felt by the five senses. This was the causal body stage of my home.

In the second stage my house consciousness took a more visible shape. Everything I wanted was constructed on a sheet of paper. The house existed but not in the physical form. It was in an intermediate stage. This was the astral body stage of my house.

Finally in the third stage, the builder converted the blue print to reality and I had a home that I could see, touch and feel. This was the physical body stage of my home.

Scientists have a problem with this conception as their intellect can only operate with in the three dimensional world and can not accept the existence of anything which can not be measured and reproduced. **In situations where neither experimental measurement nor reproduction is possible it is only now, in the post Einstein and the quantum**



Three Bodies

physics era, that the modern scientist is dimly grasping the existence of a divine intelligence.

The whole of the creation is totally dependent upon the life forces emanating from the causal and astral bodies. The physical body is created and sustained by the astral body which supplies the life current called Prana to the fertilized egg, nourishes it and makes it grow into an embryo and eventually into a human being. Without the nourishing energy coming from the astral body and without the intelligence of the causal body telling the cell when to subdivide and how, living creatures will not sustain life.

Everyone is aware of their physical body. Most people know about the various bodily systems such as the nervous system, digestive system, circulatory system, and so on. The physical body is very dense, made of muscle and bone, blood and other fibers. It can be touched, and is visible to the eyes.

Each person also has an astral body. It is of a more subtle nature than the physical body. It exists within the physical body and is a few inches bigger than the physical body all around. It cannot be seen or touched, but you can sense its presence when you stand very close to someone and you have the feeling of being in sync with them or not.

Everyone also has a causal body. The causal body exists within the astral and physical bodies, but is still larger and more subtle than the astral body. It carries the seed state of the individual from one reincarnation to the next.

In Hatha Yoga we are mainly concerned with working on the physical and astral bodies.

Nadis

Nadis are located in the astral body and carry the prana. Sometimes they are referred to as astral tubes. There are 72,000 nadis in the astral body and generally they correspond with the nerves of the physical body. However, there are three main nadis that correspond with the spine and which concern us in the practices of Hatha Yoga.

- * The three main nadis located within the spine are called: Ida
- * Pingala
- * Sushumna

The Ida is generally associated with the left side of the body, and with the mind, cold, passivity, apana and the moon. Pingala, on the right side, is associated with prana, heat, activity, and the sun. The sushumna is in the middle between the ida and pingala, and it is through the sushumna that the kundalini eventually rises when the state of purification of the nadis and chakras has progressed far enough.



Three Bodies

The goal of many of the Hatha Yoga practices is to purify the nadis, and then to cause the prana and apana to meet and rise up through the sushumna.

Chakras

Chakras are intersections of two or more nadis. Because there are so many nadis, there are literally uncounted numbers of chakras in the astral body. The chakras are the mechanisms by which the prana is able to permeate the physical body from the astral body, and basically then, it is the prana that keeps the physical body alive. Purification of nadis is critical to good health so that a balanced level of prana can flow throughout the nadis and chakra systems. Impure nadis cause blockages of the prana and this is what leads to disease in the physical body.

Within the astral body are 7 main chakras associated with awakening. They are located within the astral body in locations that correspond with the spine in the physical body, and at the junctions where the ida and pingala, and various other nadis, meet.

These main chakras are called:

1. Muladhara - located near the base of the spine in the perineal space for men, at the back and top of the cervix for women
2. Swadishthana - located at the level of the uro-genital systems
3. Manipura - located at the area of the navel in the solar plexus
4. Anahata - located at the level of the cardiac plexus near the heart
5. Visuddha - located in the throat region near the thyroid and adam's apple
6. Ajna - located in the space between the eyebrows
7. Sahasrara - located at the top of the head

Only by purifying the nadis and awakening these 7 main chakras is the kundalini able to rise up through the spine. As the kundalini ascends through the various chakras, various siddhis, or yogic powers will manifest. Many yogis, not as pure as they should be, have been ruined by the manifestation of these unchecked powers when they tried to awaken kundalini before they were ready. It is because of this that the groundwork of purification and practice of the yamas and niyamas must be well established prior to kundalini awakening.

There are many techniques aimed at purifying the nadis as well as opening the chakras. For best results you should have a qualified teacher for using any of these techniques.

AUM

Akara represents the "Causal" body. This is the original manifestation BEFORE creation. It exists and yet does not exist. It is formless without ego, emotion or physical body.



Three Bodies

Uokara represents the "Astral" body. This is the state between form and formlessness. It is the state in which our emotions and ego exist but still does not have physical form.

Mokara represents the "Physical" body, the state where there is form. Or to put it another way, destruction of the formless stage resulting in maya, Sanskrit for illusion.

It is wondrous to imagine what ancient Yoga seers first discovered with the aid of meditation as they pierced through the dimensional veils to examine the astral body. They report to have seen energy circulate through the astral body's system in a pattern that corresponds to the physical body's circulatory system, which moved along prescribed paths creating energy vortexes. When this energy moved up into the area of the astral body which corresponded to the spine, the energy passed into definite centres of swirling energy. Within these centres, stellar energies were observed which moved in a cascade of light and sound. There were six centres along the spine and a seventh at the crown of the head. As energy passes through these centres, it is charged and refocused. They called these centres Chakras.

Your body is a remarkable instrument: it truly is the temple of the spirit. Your body allows you to have experiences on many levels: physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. To support this multi-dimensional level of experience, your body exists at different levels.

Just as you normally bathe your physical body to remove the junk it picks up during the day, this exercise cleanses your inner bodies of the trouble spots that have been built up within your energy field over the course of time.

Preparation:

The FIRST time you do this exercise it will have a very powerful impact on you.

Imagine for a moment an oven that has never been cleaned. The first time it is cleaned, it is quite a work effort. A lot of junk has to be removed and the cleaning process can be quite time consuming and painful. But once the oven is clean, it takes very little effort to keep it clean in the future.

Cleaning trouble spots from your bodies is much the same process as cleaning ovens. Loads of junk must be cleaned out the first time this exercise is done.

So the first time you do this exercise, do NOT wash away ALL the trouble spots. Concentrate on washing away small ones. See how this effects you before you even attempt to remove larger ones.



Three Bodies

Do this exercise once a week for 15 minutes. Inner cleansing is VERY powerful and it takes time for the work that you have done on the inner bodies to be reflected in your outer body.

Be patient with yourself. Doing inner cleansing can be quite disorienting until the changes are fully integrated. If you are doing this process to effect a change, then you should be fully prepared to expect a change. You know the old saying: "Be careful what you wish for, you might get it!"

How to Do This Exercise:

1. Take some deep, refreshing breaths until you are totally relaxed and comfortable.
2. Close your eyes and envisage the inner representation of your bodies. They appear as circles around the central core which is your physical body and are bound by the outer layer of your Soul.

Your outer physical body is in the centre and looks like you except that it is **green**. Your inner astral (emotional) body is a layer of **red** surrounding the physical body. Your inner causal (karmic) body is a layer of **orange** surrounding the astral body. Your inner Soul is a layer of white gold, the outer skin holding everything together.

3. To heal your physical body:

- a. Focus your attention on your **green** physical body. Take your attention to a trouble spot or energy blockage that you wish to heal.
- b. Focus your attention on it as if you were a surgeon using a laser beam to remove a wart or some other unwanted item. Cut around the trouble spot and then see the laser beam erasing it from your physical body until it has been completely removed.
- c. To seal the effected area in your physical body after the spot is removed, imagine that you are filling in the hole with **green**. Say "I have released this trouble spot from my body and return it to the universe with love. I fill this spot on my physical body with healing, wholeness, and love." Then chant the tone which will stimulate healing of your physical body which is **Alayi**.

4. To heal your astral (emotional) body:

- a. Focus your attention on your **red** astral body. Take your attention to an emotional issue that you wish to heal.
- b. Focus your attention on it as if you were a surgeon using a laser beam to remove a



Three Bodies

wart or some other unwanted item. Cut around the trouble spot and then see the laser beam erasing it from your astral body until it has been completely removed.

- c. To seal the effected area in your astral body after the spot is removed, imagine that you are filling in the hole with **red**. Say "I have released this trouble spot from my body and return it to the universe with love. I fill this spot on my astral body with healing, wholeness, and love." Then chant the tone which will stimulate healing of your astral body which is **Kala**.

5. To heal your causal (karmic) body:

- a. Focus your attention on your **orange** causal body. Take your attention to a behaviour pattern that you wish to change. For example, I had issues with abuse of power in past.
- b. Focus your attention on it as if you were a surgeon using a laser beam to remove a wart or some other unwanted item. Cut around the trouble spot and then see the laser beam erasing it from your causal body until it has been completely removed.
- c. To seal the effected area in your causal body after the spot is removed, imagine that you are filling in the hole with **orange**. Say "I have released this trouble spot from my body and return it to the universe with love. I fill this spot on my causal body with healing, wholeness, and love." Then chant the tone which will stimulate healing of your causal body which is **Mana**.

Immediately after this exercise is complete drink a full glass of water, do some good cleansing (see below), and get as much rest as you can. This will help your body integrate the changes. Good cleansing will vary depending on if you are an:

"Air" person, sweating in a sauna or steam room is good cleansing.

"Water" person, taking a long shower is good cleansing.

"Earth" person, taking a mud bath is good cleansing.

"Fire" person, sitting surrounded by lit candles is good cleansing.

Over the next 7 days, drink as much water as you can take. This will help your body to flush out the toxins from the "trouble spots" you released.

Meditate.
Live purely. Be quiet.
Do your work with mastery.
Like the moon, come out
from behind the clouds!
Shine *Buddha*

