

CHAPTER 4

ŚAKTIPĀTA INITIATION IN MEDITATION

1. Śaktipāta or Transmission of Spiritual Energy

What is known as *śaktipāta* in *Tantra* is called *anugraha* (grace) of God or *guru* in the *Bhakti* and *Yoga* paths. An able *guru* can give *śaktipāta* to many aspirants at a time if he or she so desires. Traditionally, *śaktipāta* is given to only the deserving ones. This does not mean that those who are unfit or who are not qualified as 'deserving ones' will not receive the benefits of the *guru*'s grace or *śaktipāta*. The *guru*'s grace is very generous, and like the rain, it falls equally on all. However, according to their degree of fitness, some aspirants derive its benefits quickly and completely, while others are benefited slowly and to a lesser extent.

Rain nourishes the seeds of the banyan tree and an okra plant equally. The okra plant grows, but it will never become as big as a banyan tree, no matter how much nourishment it receives. Likewise, the river may flow uniformly over a jug, a water pot and a barrel, but each will be filled with water according to its capacity. This natural limit of capacity or ability is called *adhikāra* (fitness).

Prāṇa is aroused through *śaktipāta* initiation, and those seekers who are already treading the path of *yoga*, *bhakti* or *jñāna* are more affected. This is due to the fact that the body of an action-oriented person, the mind of a devotee, and the intellect of the reason oriented person are well-trained. *Śaktipāta* also affects, to a greater extent, those who love physical exercise, those who eat less, and those who observe celibacy. *Śaktipāta* works to a lesser extent and more slowly on old persons and those who are predominantly *tāmasic* (inert) or *rājasic* (lustful). Old persons, women, boys and girls often begin performing *asanas*, *mudras* and *prāṇāyāmas* spontaneously during meditation after receiving *śaktipāta* initiation, and many of them even reach the stage of *mūrchā* (yogic swoon). The swoons they attain are of many different types.

At first they enjoy these experiences, particularly after coming out of the swoon, since it is mistakenly considered to be *nirbīja samādhi*. Later, however, they do not derive much pleasure either during or after the experience.

2. Fitness for Receiving Guru's Grace

Only that aspirant who enjoys the practice of *yoga* much more than worldly life becomes fit for *anugraha* (grace of the *guru*), and through such practice the seeker's attachments go on decreasing and his detachments increase.

However, if a seeker does not spend adequate time practicing *yoga* and remains very involved with worldly activities, he cannot make much progress, even after receiving *śaktipāta* initiation. The seekers with desires are not able to undergo the rigorous disciplines required for attaining *sabīja* and *nirbīja samādhi*, since they lack qualities such as *jñāna* (knowledge), *vairāgya* (detachment), *dhairya* (patience), *utsāha* (enthusiasm), etc. Providing they work hard, the best that seekers with desires can hope for through the practice of *yoga* is the stage known as *murcha* (yogic swoon). None of its aspects are to be condemned, but it is not *samādhi*.

Savikalpa samādhi can only be attained by that desireless seeker who has found favor or grace of *guru* or God. The remaining desireless seekers who have not found such favor will not be able to reach that stage. Salvation or liberation is the result of *anugraha* (grace or favor) only.

It is of interest to know why there is a tradition of giving *śaktipāta* initiation only to deserving persons, even though it is true that it does not do any harm to the seeker even if one is unfit. Even the most ignorant and sinful person may be able to attain God, if by chance, past impressions of spirituality are awakened making them strive hard to achieve further enlightenment. That is why it is said that even a little spiritual practice can relieve the seeker of great danger. Thus it is possible even for an unfit person to receive *śaktipāta* initiation of *guru*'s grace.

But, here it should be pointed out that even if an unfit person is bestowed with *śaktipāta*, he or she may not be able to handle it properly for want of the sense of self-sacrifice or surrender to God. The way to God is the path of complete self-sacrifice and total surrender of all desires. Not only is this path very, very long, but it is also full of obstacles. Those seekers who have a multitude of desires yet still say that they have surrendered themselves to God are in illusion. The type of surrender and self-sacrifice needed for spiritual enlightenment can be offered only by an extraordinary seeker. Generally, most seekers have a strong desire to attain miraculous spiritual powers. If by chance they get even one such power, they start to demonstrate it like a magician and subsequently turn away from further spiritual practice. On the other hand, if they do not come across any such spiritual power, they begin losing interest in *yoga* and ultimately give it up.

Thus a person goes on fighting the battle between worldly attractions and spiritual attractions over many lifetimes. Finally, in some birth their love for God and liking for the spiritual path become strengthened and they come to be a genuine aspirant. Such an aspirant is fit for receiving *śaktipāta* initiation and practicing *yoga*. This shows that even if an unfit person receives *śaktipāta* initiation, they may not be able to take adequate advantage of such favor in their present life. The grace will be wasted on them.

3. Types of Seekers

There are two types of seekers, the *sansarī* or one who lives a worldly life, and the

Sanyasī, the one who has renounced worldly life. The *sansarī* seeker has a predominance of worldly desires, and the *sanyasī* seeker has only *yogic* desires. The first type is practicing the elemental or lower stage of *yoga* and without going beyond it, entry into the higher stage is not obtainable. For advanced practice, one has to give up external (worldly) activities; otherwise many difficulties arise during the practice of *yoga*.

All seekers are not equally fit. Therefore, even though they might have received the same kind of initiation from one and the same *guru*, the benefits they derive from it are of different degrees. On the basis of the results of the initiation, the seekers can be classified as good, medium and ordinary.

One who becomes overwhelmed with joy on receiving the initiation is a good seeker. One who does not know what real knowledge or ignorance is before receiving the initiation, but whose heart becomes filled with devotion after the initiation, is a medium seeker. One who is devoid of faith or devotion before the initiation, but gains knowledge and devotion gradually is an ordinary seeker.

4. Types of Initiation

Dīkṣā or initiation is that through which one attains Godhood or divine knowledge and destroys all sins. Initiations are of three types: 1) initiation by touch, 2) initiation through glance and 3) initiation by contemplation. *Brahmā* (Lord of Creation) has mentioned four types of initiations: by mind, speech, sight and touch. Lord *Siva* refers to three types of initiations in *Śivāgama* scripture, viz., *śāmbhavī*, *śākti* and *māntrī*. In the path of knowledge, *śāmbhavī* is given, *śākti* or *yogic* initiation is given in the path of *yoga*, while in the path of *mantra* or devotion, *māntrī* initiation is given. In the *Tantra* path, *vedha* initiation is given. The ultimate goal of all kinds of initiations is liberation.

If a seeker cannot visit an able *yogī guru* in person, but has great faith in him and believes him to be his *guru*, he will be able to obtain initiation even from a distance. Even if a seeker studies well the writings of such an able *guru* and practices *yogic* exercises, meditation, *japa*, etc. as shown therein, they will receive initiation from a distance. The seeker's *prāṇa* energy is released through such initiation. It is also true that one's *prāṇa* can be released even without having a *guru*, provided one practices *āsanas*, *prāṇāyāmas*, *japa*, meditation, etc. using the correct techniques. This can be called initiation through the grace of God. But it is possible that such a seeker might not properly understand the experiences or would get frightened by them and give up the practice. The spiritual path is full of many difficult obstacles and that necessitates the guidance of an able *yogī guru*.

There are many *yogic* techniques which are known and practiced in the world today. But none of them is capable of yielding immediate results. *Śaktipāta* initiation is the only means through which a seeker can instantaneously undergo spiritual experiences. Through *śaktipāta* initiation, the *prāṇa* energy in the seeker's body is immediately released. As a result, all *yogic* processes manifest

spontaneously in their body and mind. Then the seeker does not need to learn any other *yoga* technique from anyone. Thus *śaktipāta* initiation greatly enhances the enthusiasm of the seeker.

5. *Śaktipāta* Initiation as Described in Various Ancient Indian Scriptures

(a) *Śaktipāta* in *Śivapurāṇa*: In this scripture, Sage Upamanyu tells Lord *Kṛṣṇa*, “O *Kṛṣṇa*! I am telling you about that initiation which Lord *Śiva* calls the one that liberates one from all sins, grants fitness for worshipping, purifies all the six passages and gives scientific knowledge.”¹

The basis for *Śhivaism* is *śaktipāta* initiation. If a disciple does not receive the influence of the *guru*'s power, his purification does not take place, nor does he obtain knowledge, righteousness, salvation or miraculous powers. It is said that after receiving the initiation, the disciple attains knowledge and bliss. As a matter of caution, therefore the *guru* should test the disciple's fitness before giving initiation.

(b) *Śaktipāta* in *Yogavāsishtha*: In this scripture Sage Viśvāmitra says to Sage Vasiṣṭha, “O great Vasiṣṭha! You are the eldest son of *Brahmā* (Lord of Creation) and a great preceptor. You have immediately established your guruhood by granting *śaktipāta* initiation (to Lord *Rāma*).”²

Further explaining the characteristics of *śaktipāta*, it is said that one rolls down onto the floor, experiences tremors, thrills or delight and sweats profusely.³ If these symptoms are seen, take it for granted that the seeker has gained favor or grace and has found the path of liberation.

(c) *Śaktipāta* in *Bhakti-Rasamṛt-Sindhu*: As a result of grace (i.e. *śaktipāta*) various emotions or mental feelings manifest externally. Such manifestations include dancing, singing, rolling down to the floor, chanting loudly, twisting the bodily organs, roaring, yawning, breathing deeply, ignoring the onlookers, salivating profusely, laughing loudly, hiccoughing, dashing the hands and legs, shaking violently, etc.⁴

(d) *Śaktipāta* in *Maṇḍala-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad*: Where the mind dissolves, it is the highest abode of *Viṣṇu* (Lord the Maintainer). With the dissolution of the mind, all dualities vanish and one experiences the pure and non-dual element. That is the highest or ultimate element, knowing which one behaves like a child or a delirious person or an evil spirit.⁵

¹ *Śivapurāṇa*, Seventh *Vāyavīya Samhitā* Second part, Chapter XV

² *Yogavāsishtha*, 1

³ *Yogavāsishtha*, 21

⁴ *Bhakti-Rasamṛt-Sindhu*, 1,2 and 3

⁵ *Maṇḍala-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad*, Part V

(e) Grace (*Śaktipāta*) in *Nārada-Bhakti-Sūtra*: Knowing or experiencing that, one becomes delirious and stupefied and one's source of joy is the soul and not the objects of the senses.⁶ This is the state of meditation during the stage of *sabīja samādhi* or the lower active state of *samādhi*. It is true that a beginner also undergoes active external manifestations, but he does not recognize them correctly. Such manifestations are rightly recognized only in the advanced stage of meditation.

(f) Grace (or *Śaktipāta*) in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata*: In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata*, Lord *Kṛṣṇa* says to Uddhava, "Dear Uddhava! There are various means of Self-realization, all of which are good. Yet I consider *Bhakti Yoga* to be very important, since through it a seeker becomes disinterested in sense objects and becomes interested in Me. As time passed, this Truth of the *Vedas* was forgotten. Initially I had induced this Truth in the mind of *Brahmā* by mere will power. It contains the *Bhāgavata Dharma* (Divine religion). Then the self-existent God *Manu* obtained this Truth from *Brahmā*. *Manu* passed it on to seven *Prajāpatīs* (progenitors of mankind), and subsequently down to many generations. Thus Gods, human beings, demons, and others took advantage of this Vedic Truth."

"Due to the triple qualities of human nature, viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, all beings have different kinds of desires and intellects. Hence they grasp the meanings of Vedic Truth in different ways according to their nature."

"My devotees, being desireless about the results of actions, are different from other seekers. Since they completely surrender themselves to Me, I manifest in their hearts in the form of *ātman* (soul). Uddhava! I am the beloved *ātman* of the Saints. I can be realized only through strong faith and devotion. "

After this, Lord *Kṛṣṇa* describes the condition of a devotee while in meditation. He says, "There is no possibility of the purification of mind-stuff as long as the body is not filled with energy, and the mind, dragged in the flood of internal as well as external devotion, is not deeply moved with tears of joy rolling down from the eyes." "He is my true devotee, whose voice is choked with emotion of love for Me, whose heart is moved with tears rolling down from the eyes and who laughs loudly, dances and sings at a high pitch without becoming shy. Dear Uddhava! Only such a devotee of Mine sanctifies the whole world."

"As gold attains its pure state after the dross gets removed due to the heat of fire, the human soul attains Me, its pure state, after becoming free from the bondage of actions and desires, through *Bhakti Yoga*."⁷

Through the meditational manifestations described above, a devotee's mind and body are purified. This means that meditation is a kind of penance.

⁶ *Nārada-Bhakti-Sūtras*, 6

⁷ *Srīmad Bhāgavata*, 11:14

In the second chapter of the eleventh section of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata*, there is a narration that once nine great *yogīs* happened to witness the *yajña* (ceremonial sacrifice) of King Nimi of Videha. The king was much pleased, and having welcomed them with reverence and love, he solicited guidance from them by asking about the nature of spiritual well-being and the means for attaining it. To this, one of the great *yogīs*, named Kavi, replied: “O King! True spiritual well-being lies in continuous worshipping of the Lord’s feet. The remedy, which is shown by the Lord Himself for His simple and humble devotees, is known as *Bhāgavata Dharma* (Divine religion). In that, the devotee has to surrender all his acts to the Lord. I shall tell you about the characteristics of such a devotee when he is meditating.”

“The devotee listens to the life stories of various incarnations of the Lord and sings His virtuous names without shyness. Thus he roams in this world in a detached state. During such singing of the Lord’s names, his heart gets filled with tremendous love and his behavior looks like that of a delirious person. He laughs, cries, shouts or sings loudly or sometimes begins to dance. Thus he goes beyond the norms of the people.”

“A person, while eating, gets satisfaction, nourishment, and relief from hunger--all three things at once. In the same way, a devotee seeking refuge in the Lord and meditating upon Him, attains devotion, detachment and experience of His true nature--all three simultaneously.”⁸

Normally, all understand *bhakti* (devotion) in its limited sense. But in fact, all three: a *jñāni*, a devotee, and a *yogī*, when meditating upon the Lord with great love, can be said to be doing *bhakti*. A *jñāna yogī* is also a *bhakta yogī* and a *karma yogī* a *bhakta yogī* is a *jñāna yogī* and a *karma yogī*, too; and a *karma yogī* is a *jñāna yogī* as well as a *bhakta yogī*. They cannot be separated--like the whiteness, liquidity and sweetness of milk.

6. Surrender is the Key to *Śaktipāta* Initiation

Various activities mentioned in relation to the initiation through *śaktipāta* or grace are the manifestations occurring during meditation due to the spontaneous release of *prāṇa* energy in the body of the seeker. These activities are automatic manifestations of *prāṇa* and are not to be resisted or stopped by the seeker. That is called ‘surrender’ or ‘God-worship’ because the body and mind are to be surrendered to God.

It may be clarified here that the gross *prāṇa* in the form of air is not the motive force behind the spontaneous manifestations in meditation, but it is the subtle *prāṇa* in the form of energy, derived from God’s Cosmic Energy, which propels the body. The seeker has to surrender to this energy and welcome all of its manifestations. This is real surrender to God.

⁸ *Srīmad Bhāgavata. 11:2:39, 40 and 42*

7. Prānottāna or Release of Prāṇa Energy in Inevitable

A seeker cannot expect to proceed on the path of *yoga* without securing *prānottāna* or the release of *prāṇa* energy. In fact, like surrender, the release of *prāṇa* is inevitable for entry into meditation. Such release of *prāṇa* can be the result of the grace of either *guru* or God. *Guru's* grace is received in the form of *śaktipāta* initiation. But it is also possible to have the *prāṇa* released through regular and systematic practice of any of the several means of *jñāna*, *bhakti* or *karma yogas*. This can be called God's grace.

Without the release of *prāṇa* energy and real surrender to the Lord, it is not possible to make headway on the path of *yoga*. Unless a seeker becomes desireless and devotes their whole life to this purpose without any expectation of results, one cannot succeed in reaching the highest stage of *yoga*. Because of this requirement, though millions of seekers make efforts to tread the path of *yoga*, hardly one of them succeeds in reaching the final goal.

8. Various Embodiments of Yoga Manifest Automatically Through Śaktipāta

Yama, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇayāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi* are the eight components of *Aṣṭāṅga* (Eight-fold) *Yoga*. All these components are natural, being the spontaneous manifestations or experiences of *yoga*.

The first two components, *yama* and *niyama*, are established for the protection of the science of *yoga*. If they are not included in the eight *yoga* experiences or manifestations, out of the remaining six *dhyāna* or meditation becomes the fifth component. Here the question may arise that leaving aside the practice of the four previous components, viz. *āsana*, *prāṇayāma*, *pratyāhāra* and *dhāraṇā*, how can one succeed in practicing *dhyāna* or meditation straightaway? In other words, if a seeker, through *guru's* grace or *śaktipāta* initiation, gets direct entry into meditation, where is the importance and the need for the practice of the four previous components?

It is true that a *guru*, by way of granting *śaktipāta* initiation, can introduce a seeker to meditation without requiring him to practice *āsana*, *prāṇayāma*, *pratyāhāra* and *dhāraṇā*. But it should not be forgotten that as soon as the *prāṇa* is released in the body of the seeker through *śaktipāta* initiation, the previous components, *āsanas*, *prāṇayāmas*, *pratyāhāras* and *dhāraṇās*, begin to manifest automatically. The speciality of all these embodiments of *yoga* is that one can begin with the practice of any one of them and secure the experiences of the remaining ones in turn. However, the lower components cannot be considered superfluous because it is only after mastering these lower components that one really attains the higher state of *dhyāna* (concentration of mind). Further, it is not necessary that a *guru* bestow *śaktipāta* upon a seeker by asking him to meditate. *Śaktipāta* can be given even while the seeker is doing *āsana*, *prāṇayāma*, etc. What is important here is

not the practice of any particular component, but *prānottāna*, or the release of *prāṇa* energy.

9. Śaktipāta Results in Active Meditation

In the beginning, a seeker receiving *śaktipāta* initiation has to practice only active meditation, which includes the initial components of *yoga*, i.e. *āsana*, *prāṇayāma* and *pratyāhāra*. Steady meditation begins only after the *prāṇa*, and subsequently the mind, becomes steady or inactive.

Those who have not received *śaktipāta* initiation usually try to practice inactive or static meditation. They do so by keeping the mind and the bodily organs passive through coercion. But due to the impurities in them, they do not remain steady for a long time. Hence, such meditation does not prove to be interesting. Moreover, it does not offer vivid experiences like active meditation. As a result, the seeker soon loses interest and enthusiasm.

It is true that in meditation, after receiving *śaktipāta*, both the mind and *prāṇa* remain active, making the body of the seeker unsteady. But such unsteadiness is supportive and not opposed to meditation. Ordinarily the mind controls the body as well as *prāṇa*, while *prāṇa* controls only the body. However, when the *prāṇa* becomes strong, even the mind accepts its control. Agitation of mind is related to movement of *prāṇa*, and the steadiness of the mind is linked with the stability of the *prāṇa*. Thus both have friendship between them. If one of them moves in a certain direction, the other follows. In the case of a seeker who is initiated through *śaktipāta*, the mind's control over the *prāṇa* is easily lifted, permitting freedom to the *prāṇa* to do its work. As a result, various embodiments of *yoga*, such as *āsana*, *prāṇayāma*, *pratyāhāra*, etc., occur spontaneously. The main objective of such manifestations is physical purification.

In the *Bhagavad Gītā*, Lord *Krṣṇa* says: "The *yogī* abandoning attachment performs work with the body, the mind, the intellect and the senses only, for self-purification."⁹

In *Gorakṣa Paddhati* it is said: "*Rajas* (activity) is destroyed by *āsanas* and sins are destroyed by *prāṇayāmas*; all impurities of the mind are removed by a *yogi* through *pratyāhāra*."¹⁰

10. Śaktipāta Does Not Directly Awaken Kundalini

All the manifestations which occur spontaneously in the seeker's body are the result of *prānottāna* or the release of *prāṇa* energy. Though this release of *prāṇa* is not the awakening of the serpentine power *kuṇḍalinī*, it does help in awakening her. In fact, there is no other way to awaken the *kuṇḍalinī* except through the

⁹ *Bhagavad Gītā*, 5:11

¹⁰ *Gorakṣa Paddhati*, 2: 11

release of *prāṇa*. The release of *prāṇa* is no doubt a praiseworthy step in *yoga*, but it can neither penetrate the *cakras* (nerve centers) and *granthis* (tangles of nerves), nor can it purify the mind and the body fully. All these tasks are carried out later by the *kuṇḍalinī* only after her awakening. This means that the first important result of *śaktipāta* is the release of *prāṇa*, which in turn can bring about the awakening of *kuṇḍalinī*.

11. Guidance of a Guru

It is not an absolute necessity to receive *śaktipāta* initiation for the release of *prāṇa* or for the awakening of the *kuṇḍalinī*. If a seeker practices various means of *jñāna* (knowledge), *bhakti* (devotion) or *yoga* with regularity and faith, they will certainly achieve the same results which can be achieved through *śaktipāta* initiation. This means that one can accomplish the release of *prāṇa* energy and then awakening of *kuṇḍalinī*, power even by practicing rigorously the disciplines which purify the body and the mind.

However, it takes longer for the seeker to attain the desired results when he practices these disciplines of knowledge, devotion or *yoga* without the guidance of a *guru*. It is true that even through self-guidance one attains the results of *śaktipāta*, but there are difficulties in such self-guided efforts. If by chance such a seeker experiences the release of *prāṇa* and the awakening of *kuṇḍalinī*, he is not able to recognize them correctly. Moreover he may get very upset by the frightening experiences of *kuṇḍalinī*, and lose the courage to continue further practice. And due to the lack of proper understanding, one considers the boons to be obstacles. In fact, they are not obstacles to be afraid of, but are the attainments of *yoga*.

At this point, one feels the real necessity of the guidance of an experienced *guru*. That is why *yogic* scriptures have ordained that one should obtain the guidance and grace of a realized *yogi guru*. A seeker who inherits spiritual knowledge from such an enlightened *guru* can reach the highest peak of *yoga*.

12. Types of Gurus

Gurus are of three types: *vācaka*, *sādhaka* and *siddha*. A *vācaka guru* is one who knows only the scriptures. They are mere scholars and do not actually practice *yoga*. Such a *guru*, through talks and lectures, attracts people towards *yoga*.

A *sādhaka guru* is one who is practicing *yoga*, but has not reached the highest state. Such a *guru* can initiate aspirants into various *yogic* techniques. He or she puts seekers on the path of spirituality. However, since he has not mastered all the steps of *yoga*, there is a chance that he is nourishing some illusions, misunderstanding them as truths. In such a case, he transmits those illusions to his disciples as true knowledge. As a result, his disciples are never able to realize the Ultimate Truth. Often there are contradictions in what is stated by him in the past

and what is stated at a later stage. If such contradictions are found the disciple should accept the later statements.

A *siddha guru* is one who has realized all the steps of *yoga* and possesses thorough knowledge of the science of *yoga*. No contradictions are found in any of his statements made at different times. They lend the necessary courage and enthusiasm to his disciples to tread the complete path of *yoga*. Under the guidance and protection of such a *guru*, the disciples practice *yoga* wholeheartedly and fearlessly.

It is not true that only a *siddha guru* can bestow *śaktipāta* initiation. That can be done even by a *sādhaka guru*. Not only that, but a disciple initiated by a *sādhaka guru* also can bestow *śaktipāta* upon thousands of people at a time, even within four days of his own initiation, provided he is given that grace by his *guru*. However, this does not contribute towards his own spiritual progress. For that he must personally undergo the hard penance of regular *yoga* practice. His real growth is accomplished only when he gains *ṛtambharā prajñā* (the highest wisdom). Only then can he be called a *siddha guru*.

13. Proper Regard for *Śaktipāta* Initiation and Meditation

Śaktipāta initiation is also known as *yoga* initiation. It is the initiation of the highest kind. There is and there can be no better initiation than this. *Mantra* initiation is of a preliminary type as compared to this. It is meant for all who want it. But *śaktipāta* initiation is meant for only those who are genuine and deserving seekers. Even out of such seekers who receive *śaktipāta*, very few can persevere on this difficult path of *yoga* to the end. When renunciate seekers find it difficult to persevere on it for long, what about worldly seekers?

Worldly seekers who are fortunate enough to be initiated into *yoga* through *śaktipāta* should practice meditation keeping in view all the limitations of worldly life. They should adjust their schedule of meditation according to the availability of time after fulfilling their worldly duties and responsibilities. It should be sufficient for them to meditate for two hours every day. Moreover, such seekers should also bear in mind that they should follow the spiritual path in a way which does not create disharmony among themselves and relatives, friends, and others with whom they have to interact. Though worldly seekers must carry on their worldly duties, they should try to avoid unnecessary social contacts and obtain sufficient time for meditation.

Often seekers are tempted to narrate their new experience to other people. Sometimes, in order to impress others, they even fabricate their experiences. By telling such fabricated stories of experiences, they try to gain fame in society. Those who are seeking such easy popularity invent predictions about the future, or stories of previous births or fake incidents about their miraculous powers.

Once a youth received *śaktipāta* initiation in one of the seminars conducted under my guidance. He then started practicing meditation regularly at his home. He had been practicing meditation for hardly a month, when one day he told his wife: “I have become conscious through *samādhi* of the reason that we are not on good terms and not loving each other. In our previous lives you were a female serpent and I was a snake charmer. One time you got furious and gave me a poisonous bite. As a result I died. In this life, we have met each other again as husband and wife. But due to the enmity of that incident, we do not like each other.”

The person who made up this story as a vision of *samādhi* is not an illiterate or ignorant person. He is educated, a university graduate. By fabricating such stories or by boasting about powers which one does not possess, not only is the seeker himself lowered in the eyes of others, but his *guru* and the science of *yoga* are criticized as well. Therefore a seeker must be able to digest this knowledge of *yoga* and should not vomit it out by telling lies. By doing so, one never benefits but suffers loss of prestige.