

Jerry's Kundalini Experience

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My kundalini awakened in September, 1992 after doing several months of intense vipassana meditation practice. It seemed to shoot out of my brow chakra, and I've had constant movement and sensation at brow ever since, in addition to most of the other chakras. With the advice of a meditation teacher, I continued to use vipassana techniques for 6 months, which consisted of simply observing the energy with mindfulness and with as much equanimity as possible. During this initial period I had few problems and thought then that kundalini was the most wonderful thing that ever happened to me.

My problems began after I did pranayama practices which had been given to me at a solo retreat I did with a sufi teacher, the practices including alternate nostril breathing with breath retention and visualizations. As a result of doing these practices for several weeks I developed a constant headache at brow and crown chakras that was particularly exacerbated by attempting to meditate or even focus in any way. For 1-1/2 yrs I looked for help with this problem without success. A supposedly famous chi kung master from China was in my city and I did a weekend workshop with him -- instead of helping it made the headaches much worse. I went to a high Tibetan lama, who told me that I would have to forget about being able to meditate for a long time.

In Aug 94, I attended a retreat with a well known swami in the Kashmir Shaivism tradition, a tradition in which the swami's primary function is to act as an energy field for the student in the transmission of shakti kundalini. To my amazement, when I sat with this swami I was able to meditate without achiness in my head. It appeared his powerful shakti was able to clear away whatever blockage I apparently had at brow. I did 4 retreats with him over the next year--during this time I was able to meditate in his presence but still had problems with the achiness at brow and crown chakras. I also received shaktipat directly from him twice during this time.

As a direct result of the energy exchange between my swami and me at the last retreat I attended in August, 1995 I became violently ill. I vomited and had nausea for several weeks; my blood pressure and pulse soared; I had vertigo so bad I couldn't drive a car; I could

barely eat, at times going weeks without being able to do so, and after 3 months had lost 20% of my body weight. I had never been so sick in my life, and it actually took several weeks before I realized (after my doctor could find nothing medically wrong) that kundalini and the work with my swami had caused all this to happen. I had developed a loving and close relationship with him in a year's time, and I wrote to him, explaining what had happened and asked for his advice. He informed me through his secretary that I should work the problems out on my own. This was a blow to me, but I think inwardly I knew that it was the only way.

That was January, 1996, and over 4 years have passed since then. It took a year for my stomach to even begin to feel normal again, and although it is better, I still have to be very careful. I have difficulty lying in a prone position for long without getting stomach gas and must sleep in a semi reclined position to minimize stomach bloating overnight. I can't immerse my stomach in a hot bath or a hot tub without my stomach being upset, must watch what I eat and avoid stress. Any strong energy flow I experience still upsets my stomach to this day. Unfortunately other problems have developed. What was previously a very mild low back problem has been severe since 1997. I cannot sit down for long without feeling achiness in my buttocks--I can no longer drive for more than 15 minutes and can't do anything that requires sitting for any period of time outside my home (where I'm able to sit on a heating pad or an ice pack). This has ended my social life and greatly restricted all activities. Diagnostic tests have been unclear, and from all I know it appears that the energy is instrumental in my back problems.

My sexual functioning, endocrine glands and body chemistry have all changed for the worse as a result of the energy. From the beginning of kundalini, sexual orgasms were weaker and often occurred at the brow chakra. Sexual potency grew weaker over the years, and orgasms would cause a headachy and hung over feeling for days afterward, so I've just forgotten about having a sexual relationship with a woman during this time. I received a shocking diagnosis of osteoporosis 2 years ago (my doctor was more shocked than I was, declaring he'd never heard of a man my age getting this disease!). Follow up tests determined only one likely cause: very low testosterone level, which didn't surprise me at all, given the effect of kundalini on my sexuality. There's no other reason for me to have osteoporosis (absolutely no family history), and the sex hormone change caused by kundalini appears to be the reason I now have this disease. In addition, I'm also now unable to take most medicines, unlike before. Last summer what should have been a routine toe infection turned into a three month ordeal

because I can no longer take antibiotics as a result of kundalini.

I have been fortunate in some respects. When kundalini awakened I had been practicing law for 20 years and was a bachelor. When things got bad over 4 years ago I was ready and able to leave my law practice, which has enabled me to make helpful lifestyle changes. I devoted much of my time and energy to designing and building a large zen garden, which I feel has been wonderful for my process. I cook nearly all my own meals, using organic foods (I've been a vegan for 20 years) and do mild water aerobics daily. I do some volunteer work, which I think helps keep my heart open. And my process seems to be progressing: my head doesn't ache nearly so much anymore and it feels like the head chakras are opening more.

What appears to have worked best for me is simply listening to my body rather than listening to what all the so called "experts" have to say. Every time I've sought help it's either failed to provide relief or unfortunately made things worse. This includes not only spiritual teachers but also every type of energy worker out there. This is not necessarily true for all kundalini experiencers, but it has been for me. Based on my experience and what I have heard others say, those whose kundalini has already awakened need to be very cautious about going to teachers for help. I know there are "masters" who are able to stimulate and affect kundalini, but I don't know of any master who is able to control what it does after that. I don't consider myself an expert on matters related to kundalini, and I tend to distrust anyone who makes such claims. Over the years I found that most of the experts I have spoken to or read have contradicted the previous expert. I feel all each of us can do is share our own truth and thereby help each other along the way.

When the kundalini process began in my life I had already been following eastern traditions for many years and was hungry for the mystical experiences I hoped my meditation practice would bring. I knew some people were supposed to have had terrible kundalini experiences, but I thought this was so rare that the risk of anything bad happening to me was miniscule, especially since my initial opening was benign. I may yet have wonderful experiences--I don't know. What I do know now is how truly naive I was before and that the price for having such experiences can be far higher than anyone I know is prepared to pay.

This doesn't mean one shouldn't follow a spiritual practice. On the contrary, given the opportunity to start all over again, I would still follow a spiritual path and would do a spiritual practice. But I wouldn't be in such a hurry to have a mystical experience. In

addition to being risky, if there's anything else I've learned it's that true spirituality involves so much more anyway.

Having said all that, I think it's equally as important not to fear kundalini as it is not to dismiss its danger. Once kundalini has awakened, fear can only negatively affect the process and is probably itself responsible for many of the problems we hear about. I believe that with kundlini, as with most other things, one is usually best off finding the middle path, which means neither resisting it out of fear nor trying to overly encourage it out of spiritual greed. Once kundalini has awakened, no matter how difficult it may seem at the time, I think it's important to feel grateful for the experience and optimistic about the future. I know that I have much more compassion and a much greater sense of connectedness to the earth than before, and with that a growing awareness that we don't usually learn our lessons in the manner which we would have chosen.

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