

3  
witness the mind and senses without multiplying them with our attention. One method, given by Swami Lakshmanjoo, is to see the senses themselves as voids. Swami Lakshmanjoo instructs: "Concentrate simultaneously on [the void while experiencing each of] these five, that it is nothing, only a void and nothing else. Forcibly concentrate that these objects are nothing—'What I see is nothing, what appears to me is nothing, what I hear is nothing, what I touch and what I get [as] the sensation of smell, it is nothing, it is only śūnya.' This practice is about seeing as energy—just seeing, hearing, without analysis. We interact with our mind and senses in a way that allows us to use them, but not be used by them. This teaching aligns with the Tattvas, the yogic map of manifestation, where Shiva and Shakti's dance creates all of manifestation. As we expand further from Shiva, maya, illusion, covers us, leading to less identification with our true



1 1 1 1 1 >> **Step One: Fold Lengthwise, keeping text on outside** ----- 1 > **Step One: Fold Lengthwise, keeping text on outside** ----- 1 > **Step One: Fold Lengthwise, keeping text on outside**

Follow the Directions in the Dotted Lines to Fold Your Pocket Sutra!

nature. The outward expansion from the center, detailed in Tattvas 17-21, involves the development of the power of the physical senses—referred to as the Jnana Idriyas. This source gives rise to the sensations themselves (tattvas 27-31), the subtle elements, representing the capacity for sense itself, not necessarily of any particular scent or sight. The power and capacity for the senses eventually give rise to the actual gross elements (tattvas 32-36), the final and most externalized manifestation. Interestingly, all three capacities arise simultaneously, with the object often overshadowing the deeper mechanism within us. The Intro to Kashmir Shaivism notes: "The moment the senses of perception are produced, the five tanmatras or subtle elements of perception also come into manifestation from the same Ahamkara." This reveals that the

2  
Sri Shambhavananda often shares in Satsang how Swami Muktananda taught him that while many meditation traditions focus on experiencing the void, our tradition goes further, revealing that beyond the void is Shiva. In the current Dharana, the same teaching is emphasized. When we use our practice to detach from the infinite manifestations of the mind and senses, we attain mindful separation, akin to a void. Sustaining that state brings us into union with our true nature, named Bhairava, synonymous with Shiva, who exists beyond the void. In this Dharana, our mind and senses are depicted as a five-fold mandala—smell, touch, taste, sight, and sound working as one to inform us of our physical reality. These senses are likened to a peacock's feathers, creating a dizzying experience when fanned behind them, similar to how the mind and senses can become overwhelming. As yogis, our task is to

2 2 2 2 2 ~ **Step Two: Fold Over this Line** ----- Keeping this text on the Inside of Fold

indriyas (senses) have no meaning or existence without the objects they are correlated with. Behind every color, for example, lies its source which yields a deeper understanding that we gain through surrender. This act of surrender, emphasized by Swami Rudrananda, describes a paradoxical yet essential reality. Letting go of the sense object appears as losing something to the mind, but to the heart, it is a gain. Beyond the void is Shiva, another way of teaching us the nature of surrender. When we let go, we begin to receive. Letting go of the sense object allows us to experience its source, which is a much more powerful and enriching experience. As Jai Deva Singh teaches at the end of his commentary on this Dharana: "The Absolute void is Bhairava, beyond the senses and the mind, beyond all the categories of these instruments. From the point of view of the human mind, Shiva is most void. From the point of view of

8  
Daily life is a dynamic mandala of creation, the sights and sounds of our senses create a dizzying array of thought patterns that keep our minds running in circles. Dharana 9 teaches us how to melt the beauty of our external world within so that we may experience the source of the mind and senses in our heart. This source, which appears as a void from the perspective of the mind, is actually an overflowing abundance when experienced directly from the heart.

**#9: Beyond the Void is Shiva**



Reality, Shiva is most full, for Shiva is the source of all manifestation." Which brings us to the translation and practice of Dharana 9. Paul Reps wording is very much on the positive side, instead of letting go or getting less, he focuses on melting within and receiving more. Instead of rejecting outer form, we see that our goal is to absorb it. We find the source by letting ourselves really open up to it. In sight we see that once we surrender the object of our focus, we receive the object of our wishes. "Imagine the five-colored circles of the peacock tail to be your five senses in illimitable space. Now let their beauty melt within. Similarly, at any point in space or on a wall—until the point dissolves. Then your wish for another comes true."

Reflections

Reflections

Scan for Class Video/ Podcast