

**meditating on the form of the body  
it becomes imperceptible  
as the clarity of its presence dissolves completely  
and all sensory phenomena disappear  
iii.21**

There is more to a word than its dictionary definition, and there is more to the body than skin, bone and cells. Within the silent stillness of deep meditation we can directly and deeply experience this if we allow the presence of the body to be our meditative seed or object. In doing so our attention is taken by the sensations through which the presence of the body is revealed. As the body relaxes it becomes less and less easy for mind to interpret these sensations with absolute certainty. This is partly because deep meditation requires the body to be so comfortable and stable<sup>1</sup> that none of its parts need call attention to itself.

So even though the presence of the mouth and throat, or the palm and wrist remain they give off no distinguishing sensations. Instead they each express themselves as a soft warm presence that mind cannot interpret more specifically than that even as it adds words like “energy”, “vibration”, “spaciousness”, “delight”.

At the same time in order to feel sensations more clearly mind must and does become more quiet and less interested in defining what there is to be felt. As the interpretative powers of the mind abate awareness infolds into its “awesome lucid uncertainty<sup>2</sup>”. So it is that the sense of the body as a solid, finite form dissolves into an amorphous vibrational presence with neither dimensions nor boundary with which to distinguish inner from outer, self from other. As the body as a phenomenal object dissolves, so too do all other perceptible objects, and awareness is taken by the pulsating delight of its own presence.

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<sup>1</sup> **sukham sthiram**

<sup>2</sup> Jalaludin Mohamad or Rumi the great sufi poet whose yogic credentials are beyond reproach

**meditating on the radiant luminosities  
of the body's subtle  
centres, currents, lights, and channels  
clarifies, releases, balances  
and potentiates the body  
iii. 26-33**

No matter how limited our experience or understanding of it may be the human body is a remarkable phenomenon; not only in its apparently endless capacity for creative thought and action, but even also in its nature, which is much, much more than a self conscious and self regulating organic capsule. When we allow ourselves to become intimate with the depths and subtleties of the body, as we must in meditation as well as yoga posture practice, we discover a universe within every bit as fascinating, potent and multidimensional as the universe without. As our attention settles inwards we encounter the depths and subtleties of its inner contours, substances, circulations and rhythms, to which there is almost no end. As we encounter them the mind makes sense of what we are feeling by interpreting it. It can only do this on the basis of its existing cognitive engrams and their conceptual framework. Ours differ considerably from those of Patanjali and his forebears.

Equipped as they are with the penetrating discoveries of chemistry, physics, biology and psychology our contemporary minds can never encounter the same cognitive landscape that Patanjali did, even though the psychosomatic terrain be more or less identical. Even if we have heard about the chakras, nadis, winds and knots whereby the ancients mapped their inner world without the help of modern science, the engrams underlying those notions are weak compared with those that underpin our conceptions of gravity, nerves, sodium ions and electricity.

Although mind does assign its own perceptual and cognitive labels to whatever we experience, the label is not the thing, nor is our experience of

it<sup>3</sup>. Anyone who has the patience to give mind enough time to let go completely of its external concerns and internal fascinations is bound to encounter the depths and subtleties of both body and mind. There is no experience as intimate, or even rewarding, as deep penetration of your own body. It offers not only fascinating experiences and transformations, but also profound and even liberating insights into the nature of body and mind and their possibilities.

While cultural conditioning sets limits beyond those of our genetic design on perceptual, cognitive and experiential capacity, every experience conditions us. So it is that we can expand our cognitive and perceptual horizons. As the meditative mind allows us to become intimate with our inner landscapes they become transformed. Our perceptual, cognitive and experiential horizons expand as we clarify the subtleties of body and mind. We become more refined and sophisticated in our perceptions, conceptions and notions. There is nothing magical about this. It is simply a matter of the natural learning process. Just as Vermeer or Picasso, on the basis of their unique DNA and interests, learned a refined visual sophistication, we too can enhance our powers of observation and understanding. However if we are interested in the nature of body and mind we do not need a grand strategy for this. Body and mind reveal their own depths and subtleties according to their capacity to do so in the face of our interest and intimacy. All we need do is tune in and relax into that which is actually happening in and as our body and mind, and soon enough all that was hidden will be revealed, and our experience of being human will be totally and rewardingly transformed.

### **meditation on the subtle elements of the body**

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<sup>3</sup> 'thing in itself' turns out to be an incoherent notion based on the navigationally necessary fragmentations of the discursive linearity through which we encounter and create the world as if it were a 'thing' populated by other component 'things'

an extract from: YOGA UNVIELED

**elicits the insubstantiality of the body  
in its boundless formlessness  
within which nonlocal fluctuations intensify  
kindling clarity  
iii.42-43**

Within the silent stillness of the meditative mind the body reveals its subtle nature. As the sensations that reveal its presence are encountered more directly and immediately<sup>4</sup>, its somatic landmarks dissolve into a nebulous and delicious formlessness. This is not a hallucination. It simply reveals and expresses a shift in perceptual perspective brought on by deep intimacy with the body.

Just as matter is a phase of energy, energy is likewise a quivering in the radiance of consciousness which reveals to the mind a deep delight<sup>5</sup> at its core. As we are taken deep into the subtle depths of the body all of its navigational landmarks, characteristics and qualities dissolve, and delight is the last step in this descent into nirbijasamadhi.

Of course the somatic coherence of the body remains, we are simply experiencing it in a radically different way that is neither more nor less real than experiencing it as a solid, finite capsule. This experiential dissolution of the structures of the body contains an equivalent dissolution of the structures of the mind. Freed from its conditioned pathways the intelligence of awareness is granted new, profound and liberating insights based on the nonlocal origin and nature of thought, perception and all that they project.

**meditation on the interrelated significance of  
the coarse and subtle forms of the body**

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<sup>4</sup> interpreted less and less by the culturally determined cognitive pathways of mind

<sup>5</sup> **ananda**

an extract from: YOGA UNVIELED

**gives inner freedom  
and reveals the remarkable possibilities  
of its beauty, grace, power  
iii.44-46**

The human body, like all aspects of the manifest world, is multidimensional. Yet we all become enslaved to its biological needs and manipulative power, without ever noticing or enjoying its more subtle and potent possibilities. By giving our attention fully to the physical sensations that reveal the presence of the body we are taken directly into the subtleties of manifestation. The layers of mental simulation upon which the manifest world is built are peeled away with a compelling directness and immediacy. The intimate familiarity of our body as a stable physical object dissolves through the subtle dance of elemental energies into the illuminate darkness of its fundamental insubstantiality.

Yet the experience of our body as subtle energies, or as a coherent frequency in the symphonic vibrations of consciousness is no more or less real than its apparent solidity and form. To be caught anywhere along the spectrum of consciousness is still to be caught. Yet as we encounter its depths and subtleties its usually hidden beauty, grace and power are revealed. We are no longer able to reduce the body to a tool with which we manipulate the world, nor experience it as a cage within which we are bound.

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