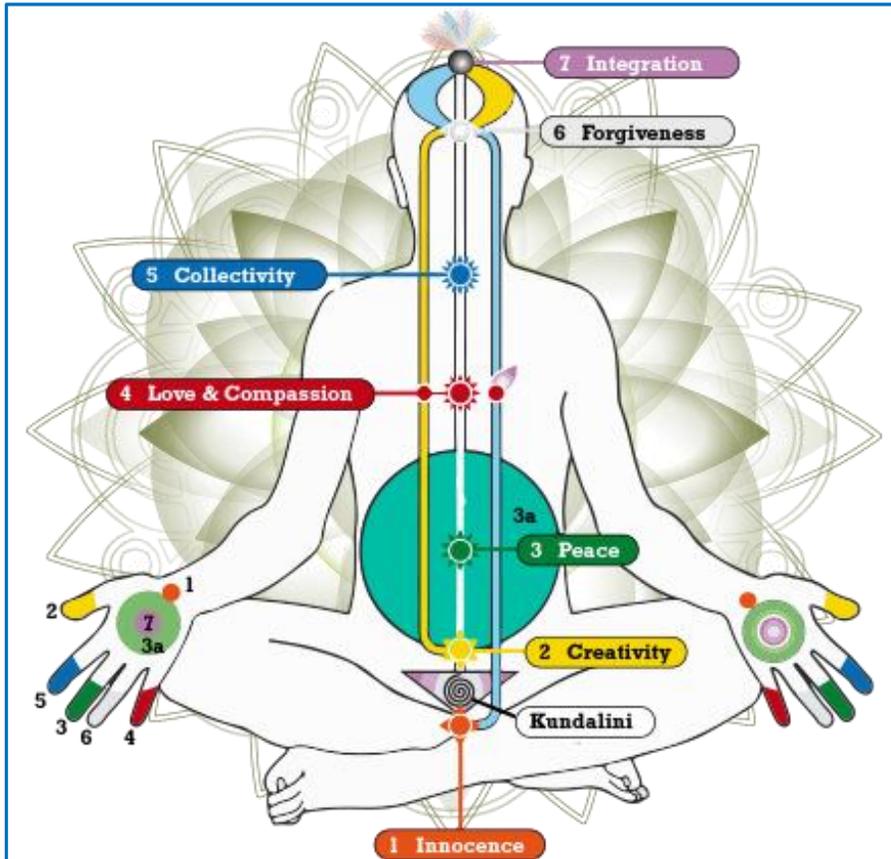


Overcoming Stress With **Sahaja Yoga** And Improving Overall Personality



www.sahajayoga.org
www.sahajayogabengal.com

What is “Stress”?

We all know stress when we see it (or feel it), yet it's hard to define!

Society pushes us to attain wealth, power, and success along with a great personal and family life.

That's probably the biggest stressful dilemma in life. People are trying to pursue all of the material goods and all of the personal strivings.

A way of describing stress is “the individual perception of losing control of his or her life” says a professor of cardiology of a famous institute.



It is a mismatch between expectations and reality.

It is also a fact that stress doesn't just arise from unpleasant, aggravating events.

Positive happenings like getting married, starting a new job, being pregnant, or winning an election can also tense you up.

It is not the external events that are stressful but your perception of them.

Everything from headaches, stomach upset, skin rashes, back pain, racing heartbeat can be stress related. In fact, every organ in the system can be affected, from the skin to the heart.

Stress is the tension and pressure an individual feels. It can be considered a part of daily life. As a college student you could experience stress while trying to live up to your expectations, adapt to a new environment or make new friends.

Stress is not always harmful. A slight amount of stress could also work to push you into action and improve yourself.

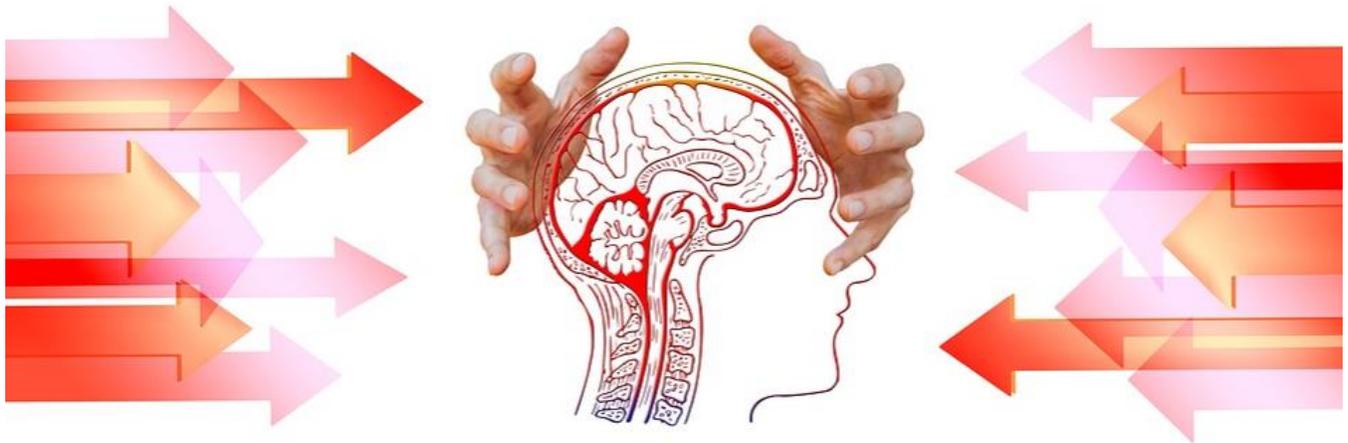
However, high stress levels could lower your performance, stop you from enjoying life and create problems in your relationships.

Most of us think stress comes from external factors like family, friends, sickness or school but these factors themselves aren't stressful events. **What makes them stressful is our reactions to them and our opinions.**

Different people might interpret events in a variety of ways and could show different reactions to stress. **This comes to mean, the external factor isn't enough to term something stress by itself, it is the relationship with the person that makes it stressful.**

How do we know there is stress?

Factors indicating that you are stressed can be grouped in four: emotional, mental, behavioral and physical. You might experience one or more than one at the same time.



Emotional indicators of stress

- If you feel worried or tense
- Fearful or ready to be afraid
- If you feel you are worthless, insecure or abandoned
- If you are offended easily and agitated
- If you feel embarrassed fast

Mental indicators of stress

- Lack of self confidence
- Forgetfulness

- Pessimism
- Negative thoughts about the future
- If your mind is constantly full of thoughts
- Constant daydreaming and inability to focus

Behavioral indicators of stress

- If you find it difficult to make decisions whereas it was easier in the past
- Difficulty in speech
- Laughing loudly or talking in a nervous voice
- Crying for no specific reason
- Acting without thinking of the consequences
- Grinding your teeth
- Increased intake of cigarettes, medicines or alcohol
- Tendency for accidents

Physical indicators of stress

- Oversweating of your body and palms
- Increased heartbeat
- Shivering in the body
- Nervous behavior patterns
- Dryness of mouth and throat
- Tiring easily
- Visiting the bathroom often
- Sleep disorder / more or less
- Diarrhea, indigestion or vomiting, problems in the digestive system
- Stomach cramps or headaches
- Increased PMS in women
- Aching in your neck and back
- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Getting sick often

Stressful lives for students



Both positive and negative events in life can lead to stress.

Big changes in life and some outer developments are important factors of stress that urge a person to look for help. Relocating, starting a new school or changing schools, a new job or way of life, marriage, pregnancy, divorce, separation, the death of a loved one, being fired, bankruptcy, chronic diseases can all be considered factors that lead to stress. Some outer effects could be meeting deadlines, competition, financial problems, noise or disappointments.

You might come across the following in your life as a college student. You might reduce stress if you prepare for them in advance:

- **Adapting to the speed of life:** there could be difficulty in getting back into a disciplined life of studying after just having joined university following years of hard work
- **Adapting to a new environment:** a new environment and getting used to it or adapting once again after giving a break could be stressful. You could feel stressed because you think you are different while trying to appear like something else or while trying to make others accept you as you are.
- **Homesickness:** this applies mostly for freshers who are missing their families. Being far from family at times of importance also make one feel this way.
- **Disliking your field of study:** the negative feelings of disappointment, anger and indecision in students who are studying in fields they did not want to take up. Looking for ways to take up your field of interest and points of failure in doing so all cause tension. Difficulty in choosing a career also contributes to this.



- **Disappointment:** new students find it particularly disappointing if their new environment does not match with their expectations and what was told to them.
- **Loneliness:** depressiveness amid confusion while trying to settle in a new environment. Being offended easily and absence of enough support from loved ones could make students feel this way.
- **Social activities:** either too little or too much. Difficulties in finding and fitting in with school clubs and outer-school places of interest.
- **Friends:** feeling incapable of finding a group of friends or feeling upset about being left out.
- **Boyfriend/girlfriend:** peer pressure about flirting could make a person feel insecure. Breakups would cause disappointment and upset.
- **Delaying studying:** constantly delaying studying and projects thinking that there is enough time and increased tension near deadlines.
- **Balancing:** difficulty in balancing studying and play.

- **Grades:** difference between high school and college success could cause frustration. Don't put too much pressure on yourself. Pressure from surroundings to succeed could also be a factor of tension.

- **Academic pressure:** Increasing pressure and the fear of not being able to live up to expectations. This could make some students quit completely.



- **Overperfectionism:** thinking you need to be the best. Expecting too much from yourself.

- **Drug use:** trying and getting addicted to drugs, smoking, drinking just to impress others or to feel better.

- **Conflict of values:** new lifestyles could be conflicting with your moral values. Identity loss while swaying between the new and old.

- **Financial problems:** not being able to keep up with costs.

- **Holiday pressure:** not being able to make good use of short holidays in between. Especially students without families find it difficult to cope.

- **Working** at an early stage in life
- **Working while studying**: for various reasons you might spend more time for work than studying, this would cause tension
- **Graduation**: insecurities about how to proceed in life. Fears of starting “real” life.
- **Panic over jobs and the future**: the scramble to find a job, prepare a resume, learn interview techniques and the fear of unemployment. Discontent about alternatives and indecisiveness.

Stress and Medical Science

As per Medical Science, the Human nervous system consists of three systems –

1. **Central nervous system,**
2. **Autonomous nervous system and**
3. **Peripheral nervous system.**

The **central nervous system** is responsible for issuing nerve impulses and analyzing sensory data, and includes the brain and spinal cord.

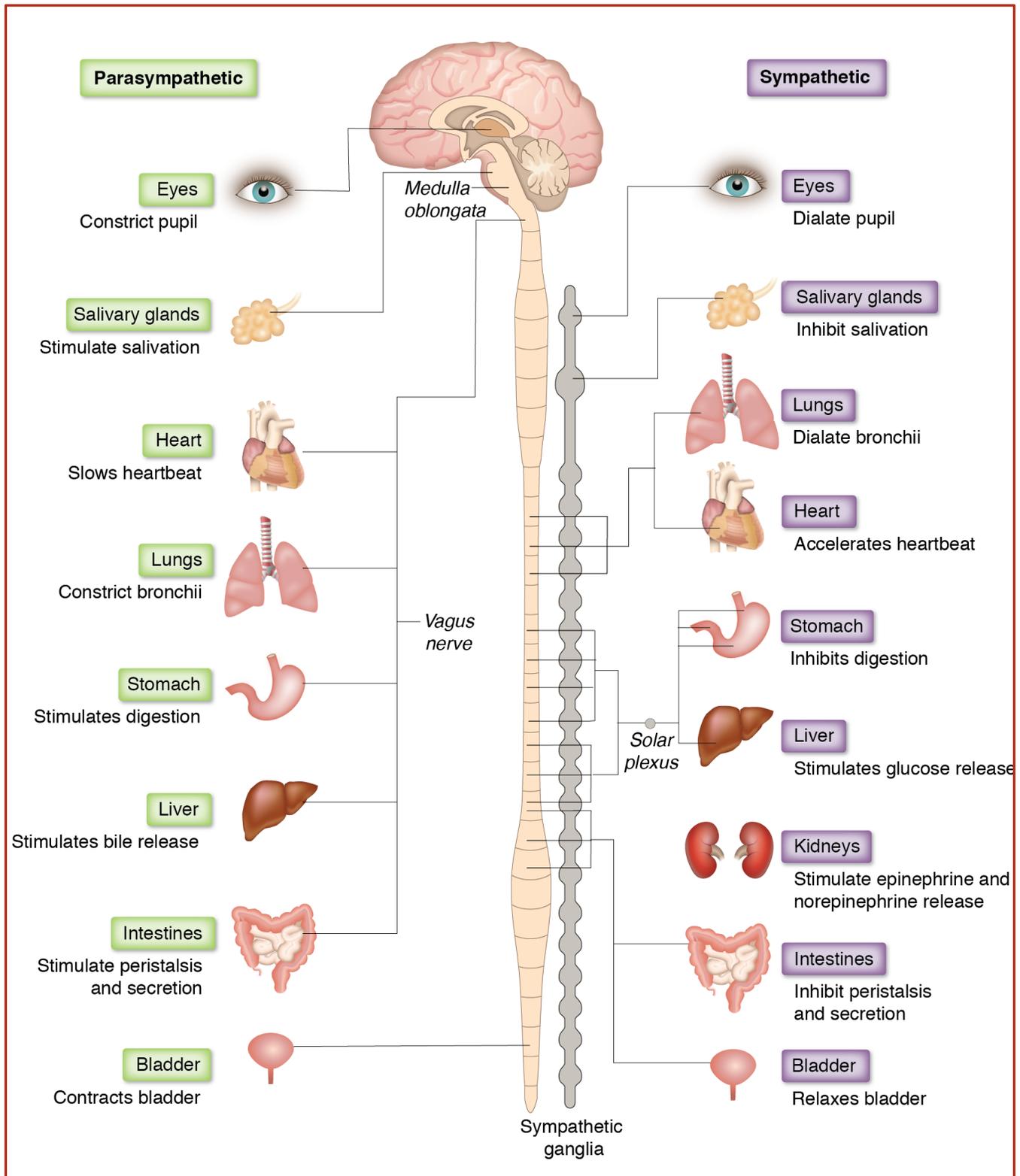
The **peripheral nervous system** is responsible for carrying nerve impulses to and from the body's many structures.

The **Autonomic nervous system** is composed of the **Sympathetic and Parasympathetic** division, more or less opposite in function, and is responsible for regulating and coordinating the functions of vital structures in the body.

The **Sympathetic division**, which stimulates the heart, dilates the bronchi, contracts the arteries, and inhibits the digestive system, preparing the person for physical action while the **Parasympathetic division**, which has the opposite effects, and prepares the organism for feeding, digestion, and rest.

Further, the term "**Plexus**" in medical science refers to a network of nerves or blood vessels, which control the functioning of different organs of our body.

The nervous system features a number of these networks, where autonomic and voluntary nerve fibers join together.



Medical science has no concrete explanations as to why stress is caused on slightest pretext even though it acknowledges its existence and its various ill effects.

Why a single situation affects different persons in a different ways are some of the questions, which are unanswered by the medical world.

Science can measure the various parameters of the body such as heart beat, blood pressure to find out the state of the system and prescribe medicines but has no rational explanation as to why it happened and how it happened which can be logically and scientifically proved.

The reason is because science has denied the existence of an inner subtle system in every human being and considers human beings as a network of nerves and sensory organs that interprets the outside physical world.

However, **Sahaja Yoga** is changing all that and now the existence of an inner subtle system of channels (nadis) and centers of energy (chakras) can be felt on our central nervous system which cannot be denied.

 This inner subtle system looks after our complete physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual being.

What is Sahaja Yoga?

In Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi's own words:

Everyday we see seeds sprouting, flowers blooming, fruits ripening, but we do not want to think how it happens. There is a power that does this work. It is the all-pervading power of Divine love. Now the time has come to feel this power through the instrument within us. This instrument has no use unless it is connected to the mains. We do not know our potential, our beauty, but once this connection with the mains is established, we will be surprised at the dynamic results.

At the outset, we have to understand that this connection is not mental. However, human awareness can be developed to a higher dimension through Sahaja Yoga, which is not a mental projection.

IT IS A BECOMING. This is the last step in our evolution, man has evolved from a single amoeba to such a complex human being, which has to manifest through our central nervous system.

When the fetus is about 2 to 3 months old in the mother's womb, columns of rays of consciousness emitted through the all-pervading power of Divine love, pass through the brain to enlighten it. The shape of the brain being prism-like, the column of rays falling on it gets refracted into four diverse channels corresponding to four aspects of nervous system. They are:

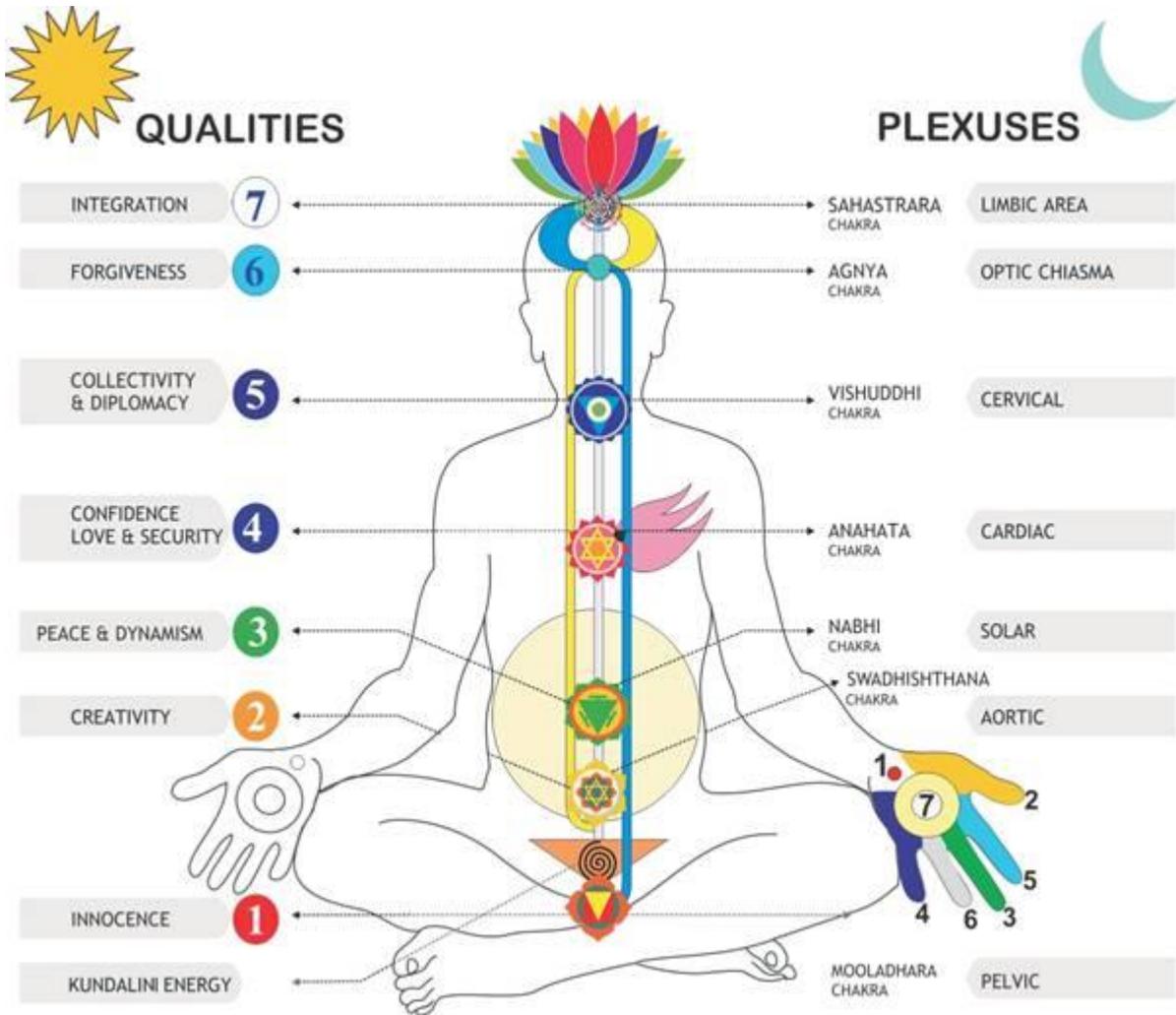
- Sympathetic nervous system - Right side (Pingla Nadi)
- Sympathetic nervous system - Left side (Ida Nadi)
- Parasympathetic nervous system (Sushumna Nadi)
- Central nervous system

This subtle energy enters through the centers in the brain and precipitates on its way to six more centers called **chakras** which are also called "**plexus**" in medical science.

The residual energy then settles down in three and a half coils in the triangular bone (medically called sacrum bone), placed at the end of the spinal cord known as "**Kundalini**".

 The Fundamental of this living force is self-organization, self-regeneration and Ascent.

- Through self-organization it sustains and protects.
- Self-regeneration is its innate ability to renew, heal, balance and recycle.
- Ascent is its capacity to transcend the mind and myth and attain collective consciousness.



Stress and Sahaja Yoga!

As mentioned and shown above, the human body is made of three channels (Nadis).

1. The left channel (Ida Nadi) takes care of our desires (Ichha shakti).
2. The right channel (Pingla Nadi) takes care of our working ability (Kriya Shakti).
3. The central channel (sushumna Nadi) is the channel of balance and ascent of Kundalini.

If we have too many desires but we do not work accordingly (if our attention is always lost in unfulfilled desires and in the past), then our left channel is under pressure. These

type of people become very emotional, conditioned & day dreamers and their left channel becomes weak.

Similarly if a person starts working too much (work alcoholic) without enjoying his day to day life (if he is always thinking and planning about the future), his right channel comes under pressure, and such type of people become very egoistical and do not listen to anybody. They become very harsh and get satisfaction from dominating others.

In such unbalanced extremities, stress is created in human body if any of the channels are overworked.

Stress Management – The conventional ways!

There are some conventional ways to overcome the edginess inside us, which we often read as well as try to follow.

- a) Setting a realistic Goal (personal and professional)
- b) New Ways of Doing Things
- c) Structuring Relationships
- d) Humour in life
- e) Exercise and Music
- f) Don't take out your frustration on wrong persons.
- g) Cut on caffeine & nicotine
- h) Nutritious Food
- i) Resolving Anger.

and many other ways.

But if you look at all of them, they are just mental exercise and not one of them can be done in a living and joyous manner because we try to become what we are not by forcing ourselves at a mental level.

This is why we are not able to continue the above methods for too long and discard them as soon as we get temporary relief only to get trapped in the problem again.

 More than that, fighting with stress at the mental level is a lost battle.

Stress Management and Sahaja Yoga!

The only way to fight stress (imbalance) is to be in complete balance.



To ascend in balance is what Sahaja Yoga is all about.

But who would provide us the balance or the ascent? Will it come from outside? "Know thyself" is the main theme of all the scriptures. The power to change has to come from within our ourselves - **One has to realize and understand oneself from within instead of tackling it from outside or forcing it mentally.**

But how?

The answer is the awakening of that energy called 'Kundalini' which came from the all- pervading power of Divine love at the time of our birth, which is self-organizing and self-regenerating.

Self Realization is the awakening of the Kundalini through the central channel, piercing the seven chakras and emerging at the top of the head (fontanel bone area) as a gentle "fountain" of coolness.

Each of the seven chakras has several spiritual qualities.

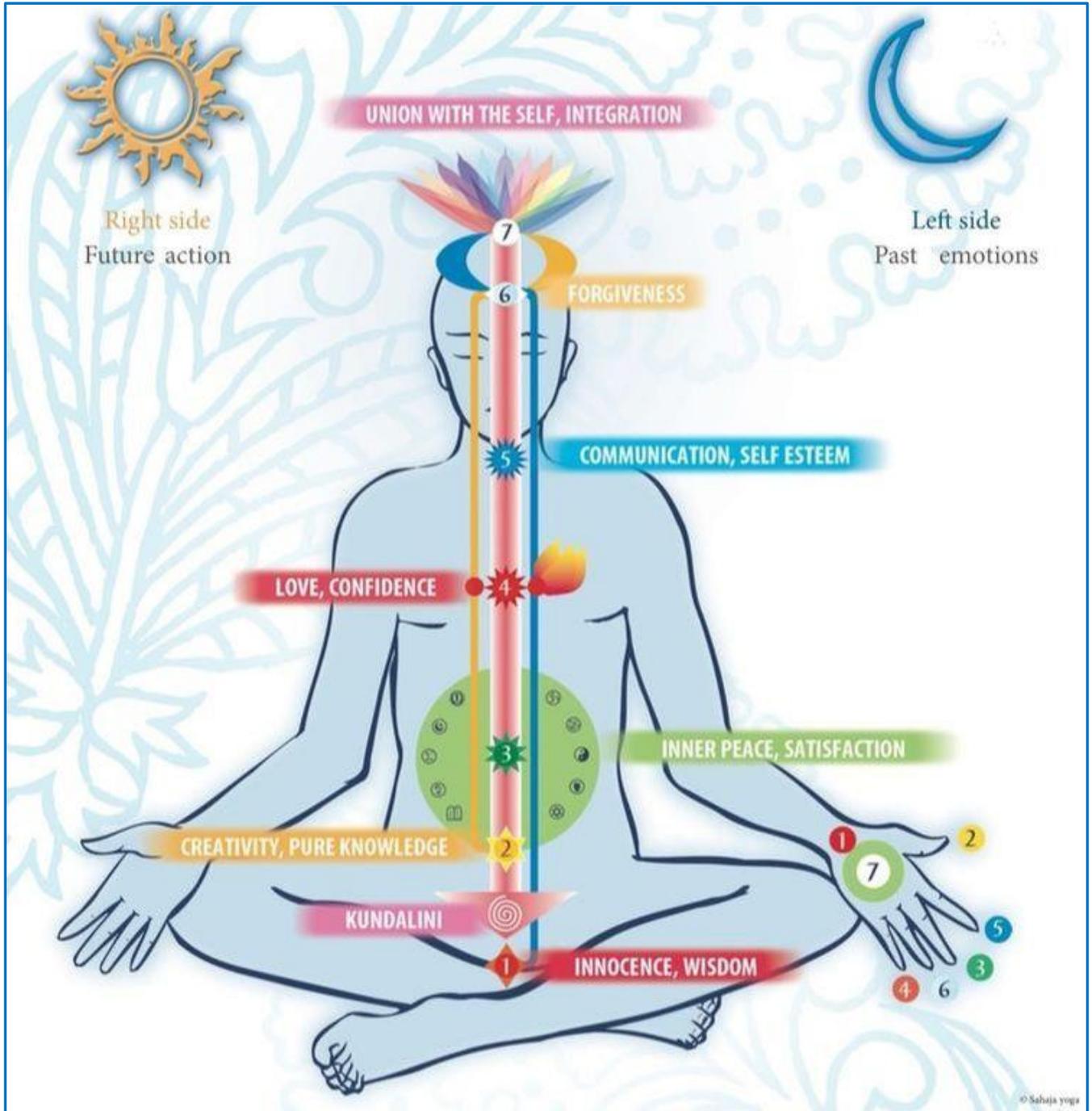
These qualities are intact within us, and even though they might not always be manifest, they can never be destroyed.

When the Kundalini is awakened, these qualities start manifesting spontaneously and express themselves in our life.

Thus, through regular meditation, we become automatically very dynamic, creative, confident and at the same time very humble, loving and compassionate.



It is a process, which starts to develop by itself when the Kundalini rises and starts to nourish our chakras.



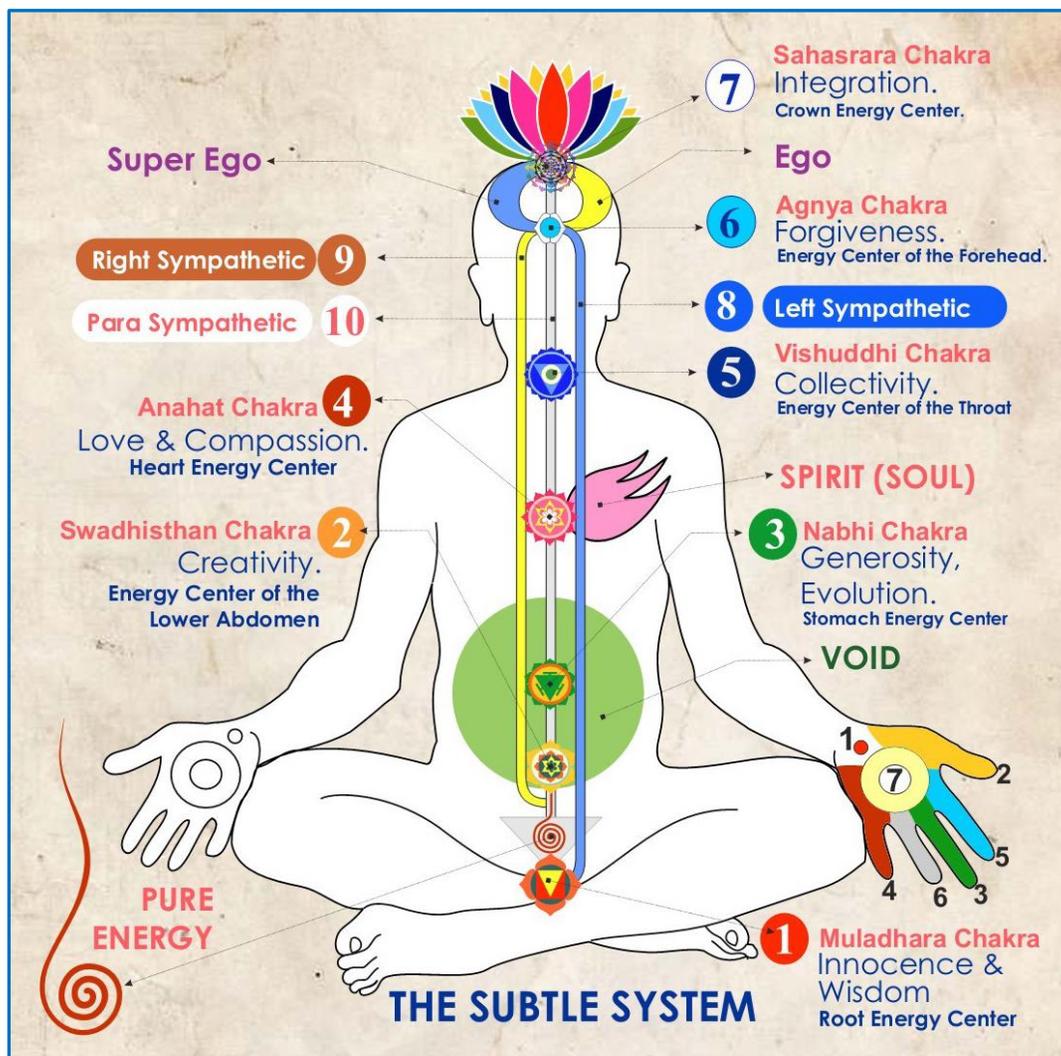
“After Self Realization, everything can be cured through the purifying power of the Kundalini in meditation.

A word about the three channels of energy:

The left channel (blue) aka. Left Sympathetic corresponds to our past, emotions, desires, and affectivity. Its termination is the superego, which is the storehouse of all our memories, habits and conditionings.

The right channel (yellow) aka. Right Sympathetic corresponds to our actions and planning, to our physical and mental activity. Its termination is the ego, which gives us the idea of “I-ness”, the sense that we are separate from the world.

(white) aka. Parasympathetic is the channel of ascent, it is the power, which sustains our evolution and guides us, consciously or unconsciously, towards the higher awareness of the Sahasrara (seventh chakra).



Sahaja Yoga was founded by HH Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi in 1970 and has since spread all around the world.



Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

Through this process a person becomes moral, united, integrated and balanced. "**Know thyself**" is the main theme of all the scriptures - this becomes evident and one reaches the absolute understanding of oneself.

Thus, one becomes peaceful and joyous in life.

The individual becomes collective like a drop falling into the ocean of compassion.

This is the actualization of such transformation, which is taking place now, worldwide, and has been proven and experienced by hundreds of thousands in over 130 countries.

This inner awakening is called by many names:

Self Realization,

Second Birth,

Enlightenment,

Liberation,

Moksha,

Satori and it is the goal of all spiritual traditions of the world.

“In these modern times, through Sahaja ("spontaneous") Yoga ("union with one's Self"), this experience has become effortless and available to everyone, for the first time in the history of human spirituality.

Through the practice of Sahaja Yoga, our awareness gains a new dimension where absolute truth can be felt tangibly - on our central nervous system.

As a result of this happening, our spiritual ascent takes place effortlessly and physical, mental and emotional balance are achieved as a byproduct of this growth of our awareness.

We then realize that we are not this body, mind, ego, these conditionings, emotions or intellect, but something of an eternal nature, which is always residing in our heart in a pure, undisturbed state - the Self or Spirit.

“The Spirit is the source of true knowledge, peace and joy.

Self Realization is the actualization of this connection with our Spirit, which as Shri Mataji advocates, is the birthright of every human being.

Please contact us for further enquiries. We offer 'Stress management' / 'Overall Personality Development' sessions for free at schools, colleges, Institutes, Corporations, Organizations!

Visit: www.sahajayoga.org | www.sahajayogabengal.com

email: info@sahajayogabengal.com

Article Extracted from : www.sahajayogaportal.org