

The science of Mantra Chanting

- *Dr. Kaustubh. Dhargalkar*

Sound is said to be the most primordial manifestation of energy in the cosmos. Even before creation, there existed vibrations which manifested as sound energy. All other forms of energy: light, heat, hydro etc. are but different manifestations of this primordial energy. These vibrations exist all around us.

If we humans could induce these vibrations within ourselves, we could experience oneness with the cosmos. Chanting Mantras is a scientific tool of inducing certain vibrations within oneself to channelize the cosmic energy through our bodies and maximize our potential and expand possibilities.

The Genesis of the Science of Mantras

These cosmic vibrations can be heard in the form of sound. However, our minds are so scattered that we are unable to perceive these cosmic sounds. **When one can cut the clutter from the mind and be perfectly silent, physically and mentally, one can hear them. These inherent sounds of the cosmos are called, 'Anahata Nada'**

The great rishis or sages of the past, could get into a state of complete silence, a deep meditative state, where there is complete oneness with the object of meditation. In such a state, they could hear these 'Anahata Nadas'. These realized souls, with their ability to maintain such states for long periods of time, realized that these sounds had very beneficial effects on the body and mind. They were then faced with the question: **how to make the common man experience the positive benefits of these vibrations/sounds experienced by themselves?** A common human being could not achieve that state of perfect silence, due to her/his pre-occupation with worldly pursuits and duties. So she/he could never be able to experience the benefits of the cosmic vibrations. **To overcome this obstacle and make the benefits of the cosmic vibrations available to the common man, the rishis discovered syllables, which when uttered in the right manner, would induce the same vibrations within one's body.** The rishis studied the movement of the lips, the tongue, the contraction and relaxation of the muscles of the voice-box etc and came up with words which when pronounced or chanted in a specific manner would induce these vibrations. Hence chanting of Mantras follows a strict procedure of pronunciation, intonation and breathing. The words were put in such that the desired sounds could be induced. Therefore, the meaning of Mantras is of secondary importance, it is the vibrations induced that are paramount.

Translating a mantra, into any language other than its original one, takes away its power. Though, this might make for beautiful lyrics, the pronunciation and intonation would be totally different and the vibrations induced would be far from the desired. Mantras exist in all religions and cultures and must be chanted in their original language.

How do Mantras work for us?

First, let us seek an answer to the question, "What sustains our existence?" It is the 'Prana' or the 'Life Force' that our bodies derive from the universe. Prana exists in everything, living or non-living. In a non-

living object, it is in dormant form. It is closely linked with the air that we inhale but, in reality, subtler than that. A balanced, well-regulated flow of Prana ensures optimum health.

To balance and regulate the flow of Prana in the body, there exist certain energy centres within. These energy centers are similar to distribution boards in an electrical network. The energy centers vibrate at certain frequencies. **Many a time, in an individual, these energy centers vibrate at frequencies which are undesirable, leading to a disturbed, unregulated flow of Prana within our bodies, causing various physical as well as mental ailments.** The chanting of mantras is aimed at inducing the desirable frequencies at the energy centers, to harmonise them, thus regulating the pranic flow within the body.

Every organ in the human body has a basal frequency at which it vibrates, e.g. the heart beat, the peristaltic motion of the intestines, the stomach's contraction and relaxation etc. the cumulative effect of these vectors results in a particular frequency that is unique to an individual. When the basal frequency of an organ goes awry, diseases manifest. **Certain specific mantras, if chanted properly and repeated over a period of time can induce vibrations within the body that can restore the basal frequencies.** This, in turn, can take care of specific ailments.

According to the Wave Theory, resonance between two waves occurs when the two waves traveling in the same direction and having the same frequencies, overlap. Regular chanting of mantras does exactly this.

Can a common Mantra work for all?

Every individual is born with a different physical, mental social and spiritual makeup. Hence the basal frequencies of every individual are different. Therefore, the frequencies of vibrations needed to create resonance between the individual's frequency and the cosmic vibrations are unique to every individual. Hence, the probability of a common mantra working for different individuals is low. Having said this, there are general mantras such as Gayatri Mantra, Mahamrityunjaya Mantra, AUM etc. which benefit all without exception.

AUM is referred to as the 'Pranava' by sage Patanjali, the author of Patanjali Yoga Sutras. 'Pranava' translated literally, means, 'That which helps the attainment of the ultimate aim'. The ultimate aim of any being is oneness with the supreme consciousness. It is said that before creation, the compacted primordial mass packed a lot of energy. The mass had its inherent frequency which matches that of the vibrations induced when one chants AUM. Hence, AUM symbolizes pure consciousness. Chanting AUM induces vibrations within the body which are synchronous with the natural vibrations of the cosmos, thus inducing oneness with the universe. These vibrations massage the organs, tissues, nerve cells, the endocrine glands etc. resulting in efficient functioning of the body. Chanting improves lung capacity. With regular practice, the practitioners experience recession of thoughts, concentration improves, stresses and tensions are released, thus calming the mind-body complex. The therapeutic effects of AUM chanting coupled with Shavasana in rehabilitation of cardiac patients were first documented scientifically by Dr. K.K. Datey of the K.E.M. Hospital in Mumbai, way back in 1968. Several other studies have been undertaken since then and the results have further reinforced Dr. Datey's findings.

Benefits of Mantra chanting

1. **Healing power of Mantras:** The vibrations induced by chanting specific mantras stimulate the cells of specific organs, enhance blood circulation and improve gaseous exchange at the cellular level, thereby inducing vibrant health. The endocrine system gets stimulated and well-regulated by chanting specific mantras. A realignment of the individual's vibrations with those in nature has a wonderfully positive effect on the healing process.
2. **Enhancing the potential of the mind:** a mantra provides the mind with an anchor to focus upon. Regular practice brings about one-pointedness of the mind. The clutter in the mind reduces, focus improves, power of concentration gets enhanced, memory sharpens. Clarity of thought heightens, perspectives about situations become multi-dimensional, enhancing decision-making ability.
3. **Mantras quieten the mind:** Within our body, there exist various states of consciousness which vibrate at different frequencies (every cell of our physical body has a consciousness of its own). This leads to scattering of the pranic energy within. Regular practice of mantra chanting induces vibrations which are strong enough to override the smaller disturbances. As a result, the chanting creates a state where the individual's vibrations are in synch with those of the energy represented by the mantra. When all other disturbing vibrations are overcome, tranquility or silence sets in. This silence is pregnant with possibilities and one experiences BLISS, when the mind is transcended.
4. **Mantra chanting is a great stress-buster:** the vibrations induced have a soothing effect on the nervous system. The jangling nerve-endings, during times of stress, are the main cause of discomfort. Mantra chanting helps dissipate the excess electrical energy generated by the whirlpool of thoughts

Mantras are not some abstract mysticism. Making them a part of our lives greatly enhances the quality of life. Regular practice is bound to yield wonderful results, irrespective of one's faith or religion, since the science of Mantra Chanting is based on optimizing the channelization of energy through our being. If at all, one has to attribute mantras to any religion, I would call that religion, 'Wave Theory' 😊😊😊