

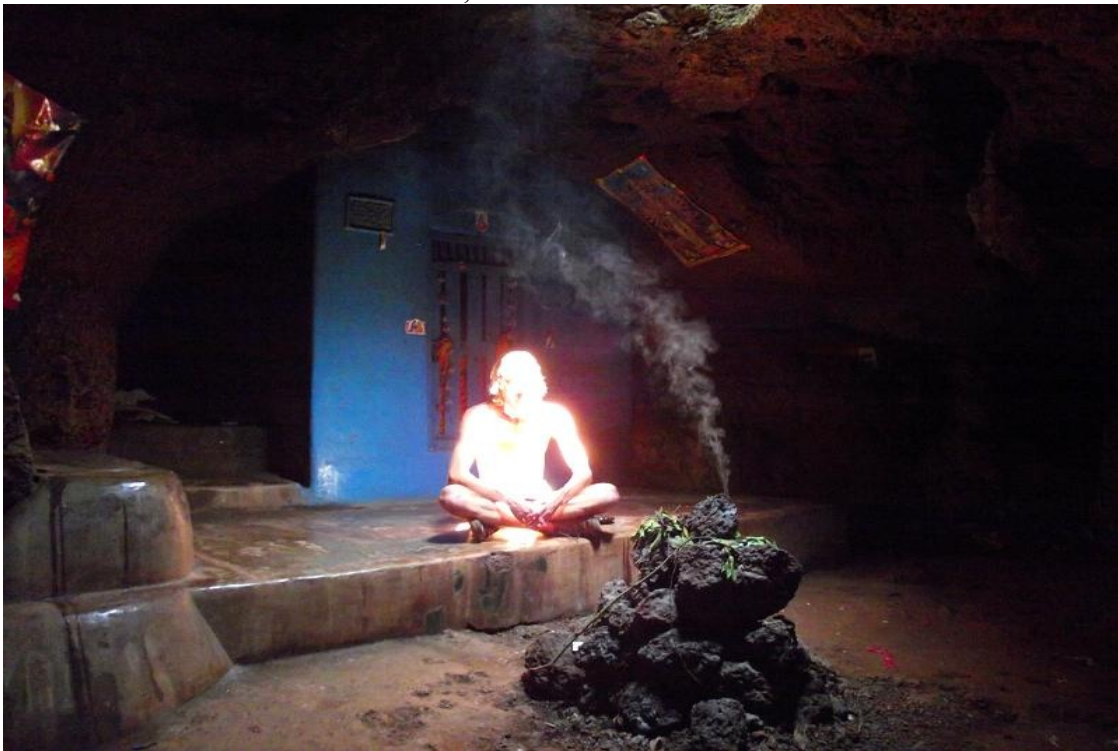
The Essence of Kundalini

An Exploration of Kundalini Energy,
Kundalini Awakening and the Spiritual Quest

By Gabriel Morris

(For more info visit his website at www.kundalini-fire.com)

Below: the author in a cave in Gokarna, India.



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Chapter 1. *What is Kundalini?*

More than fifteen years ago, when I was twenty-two, I experienced something known as a *kundalini awakening*. When it happened, I had no idea what had occurred. I didn't have a spiritual teacher or a guru on the somewhat meandering spiritual path I'd embarked on a few years earlier. I'd started practicing hatha yoga, read voraciously everything from *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* to Carlos Castaneda to *Journeys Out of the Body*, meditated alone in the desert, fasted for days at a time, practiced emotional clearing, went to various workshops and spiritual gatherings and in the process met many others also reaching for a higher state of consciousness and a more meaningful experience of being. It was still completely out of the blue and totally mind-blowing, literally, when I experienced my kundalini energy awaken, or arise.

There are, of course, many different forms of spiritual awakening that can occur to a person. Sometimes it's simply a revelation or epiphany that sends one in a completely different direction, one focused more on spirituality and inner searching. Awakening can result in seeing angels or contacting and channeling an alien entity. An experimental drug trip, such as in a teepee ceremony or sweat lodge, can lead to discovering and embracing a previously unknown part of oneself, or even to communing with some aspect of the divine. Or an awakening

can lead to the ability to see people's auras, talk with the dead or leave one's body to explore the astral planes.

Kundalini awakening, however, is something else. It can come about as a result of some of these types of experiences, and it can also lead to activating some of these otherworldly phenomena, and many others. In essence, kundalini is simply energy. Specifically, it is spiritual energy which resides in every human being. Kundalini means literally "coiled serpent". Figuratively speaking the coiled serpent represents a reservoir of spiritual energy that lies at the base of the spine in the root chakra, coiled up because in most people it is latent or potential spiritual energy, which the person is for the most part unaware of. Through yogic or other spiritual practices this energy can be awakened in an individual, in which case the energy begins flowing upwards from the root chakra through all the chakras along the spinal column, invigorating and cleansing them; and finally culminating in unification with the uppermost crown chakra at the top of the head.

Like the many forms of spiritual experiences in general, kundalini awakening itself takes wildly different forms for different people. These differences can range from experiences of pure bliss to sheer terror, and everything in between. The unifying element is that of this rising spiritual energy that awakens and activates the chakra system—those six or seven or more energy centers (depending on who you ask) located along the spinal column, each of which corresponds with some integral aspect of the human soul.

In my case, the initial experience of kundalini was one of extreme inner challenge, to say the least. One of the reasons this can occur is that kundalini energy is like a fire hose of energy whose innate purpose is to cleanse the chakras of any blockages or disturbances and bring them back to their full, vibrating potential. And once switched on, it apparently cannot simply be switched back off.

That certainly rings true in my case, after so many years of experiencing the powerful intensity of this energy.

Once the energy is gushing forth, rising up the chakra system, it will come into contact with each of the chakras. And if met with resistance—in the form of blockages, past traumas, denied emotions and memories, guilt, judgments and all the various frozen energy we hold in our human souls that keep us from vibrating fully—then the kundalini will awaken these hidden pains like a spotlight shining into a dark and dusty attic.

Kundalini energy has a single-minded mission, and that is to reunite with the crown chakra. I say reunite because it is also a matter of returning ourselves to our original, natural state, that of oneness with all aspects of our multi-faceted souls as well as with the spiritual realms beyond our normal, waking perceptions. The process of this reunification is where things can get difficult and frightening, and at worse can seem nearly impossible to make sense of or resolve.

As mentioned, the symptoms associated with kundalini are extremely wide-ranging. Some simply experience a stream of blissful energy that flows upwards to invigorate their mind. Some might find themselves kept awake, unable to sleep for days at a time, instead practicing art or music, inspired by a constant flood of creative energy. Others find themselves spontaneously assuming yogic positions or reciting chants, perhaps in languages they've never spoken or even heard before. Still others might find themselves gazing into otherworldly realms or dimensions, hearing voices, seeing non-physical entities, perhaps having visions of the future or else peering into the ancient past.

For many (such as myself) kundalini awakening can be a more localized experience that brings about a barrage of assorted energetic symptoms on the physical, mental and emotional planes. These are oftentimes downright bizarre,

and sometimes highly unpleasant or even excruciating. In my case, I experienced a sensation as if a fire were burning at the base of my spine, raging up my spinal column. I had electrical shocks occurring all throughout my body, and flashes of light seemingly before my very eyes as well as outside of my normal field of vision. And I felt as if I were simultaneously being crushed and pulled apart by a powerful force of energy that I couldn't have previously imagined. For months after my kundalini awakened, I experienced a constant onslaught of such symptoms, to the point that I was certain at the time there was no way that what I was going through could ever truly change and be resolved.

Fortunately, I eventually came across a number of books explaining what I was experiencing; as well as a Buddhist teacher with some knowledge of the phenomenon. All of this helped assure me that there was a purpose to it as well as some sort of conceivable resolution to what I was going through. However, resolution in this case doesn't mean that suddenly the experience ends and it's all behind you. As my Buddhist teacher informed me at one point in the depths of these overwhelming sensations:

“The force of energy itself will not lessen in its intensity. However, *you* will eventually change to accommodate it. And then it will seem that the energy has in fact changed.”

Though that wasn't exactly what I wanted to hear, almost two decades later I can say that he was exactly right. The purpose of kundalini awakening is not simply to give us an experience which we then look back on and say that it changed us to some extent. Instead, its purpose is to awaken a source of spiritual energy within our souls which will connect us with our full potential and bring about an expanded consciousness and heightened awareness of both the world around us, and the infinite and eternal realms both within and far beyond us.

Rather than simply shifting our mind and beliefs or our perspective, it brings about a much more fundamental transformation of our very essence. Kundalini awakening is not simply an epiphany or a revelation, a greater understanding or more expanded perspective on life. It is a very real and palpable force of energy that is undeniable when it happens. Now, you may or may not necessarily know *what* has actually happened, or what it really means or how to deal with it. But when this energy awakens within you, you will know that everything has changed for you and it will never be the same.

I believe that contacting and awakening this energy is truly one of the most important aspects of healing that humanity needs to undergo during this time of monumental upheaval and transformation on our planet. Why? Because, for all the challenges associated with it, I've also experienced during brief glimpses of clarity and illumination the depth of blissful presence and all-encompassing wholeness which the awakened kundalini ultimately brings about. And in that state of oneness and knowing and connection with everything, there is no wanting for anything else, and the incessant problems that plague our world based on separation from ourselves cannot continue to haunt us.

Humanity has come to a crucial crossroads, where we simply cannot continue going forward as we have for the past several hundred years of accelerating technological progress, unguided by a true connection with our inner core, and with the universe as a whole. Humanity needs to make a huge, critical leap, an evolution of consciousness in order to begin relating with our world and with each other in a completely different way: one that is deeply attuned with the rhythms of the natural world, the unseen realms, and the multi-dimensional complexity of the human spirit. And kundalini has the power to bring about this critical transformation of humanity, one person at a time.

Chapter 2. *How Does One Awaken Kundalini?*

First, I would simply like to state that I'm not an "expert" on kundalini energy in any sense. I'm not a certified yoga instructor or yogi of any kind or someone trained by a teacher in kundalini energy, kundalini yoga or ancient Hindu texts, the oldest known writings on the phenomenon. I am simply an experiencer. I was a spiritual seeker and a wandering traveler who spontaneously experienced kundalini awakening in the fall of 1994 when I was twenty-two years old; and so I have plenty of personal, in-depth experience with it. I've also, of course, read and studied a lot about it in the course of those years of experience. So take that for what it's worth in terms of what I have to say here. Ultimately, look within yourself for the truth of what is right for you, because every person's spiritual path is different.

So, how does one go about awakening their kundalini? My first answer to anyone asking this question would most likely be: "*Don't try to awaken your kundalini!*" Not a very helpful answer, I suppose. But there are several reasons why one shouldn't focus too much on kundalini awakening, even as you become more aware of the reality of its existence and its potential impact on your state of mind, your body and your soul.

For one thing, trying to bring about the awakening of kundalini is like trying to experience an orgasm. The more you focus on it, the more it eludes you. Because the very essence of its nature is such that it cannot be conjured and commanded by mere thoughts in the mind. In fact, some teachers on the subject have suggested that freely flowing kundalini energy could even be equated in some

sense to experiencing an ongoing orgasm. And I would agree that there is something to that comparison, though I must admit that I have yet to achieve that state of experiencing my own kundalini flowing in a pure, uninterrupted state. But I have certainly glimpsed momentarily at times over the years its potential to warrant that comparison.

Continuing with the orgasm analogy for a moment, another reason not to focus too much on the awakening of kundalini is that, like orgasm, if you focus on it too much then you're liable to miss all of the other good stuff that can be experienced in leading up to it, or else instead of it. In other words, there are many spiritual states of awakening, revelation, ecstasy, bliss, oneness, etc. which can be experienced, explored and learned from, independent of kundalini awakening. More important than anything on the spiritual quest is simply to be fully in the moment, with whatever it is that you're experiencing, rather than looking forward in anticipation to something that may or may not ever come about.

And there's one more important reason not to focus too much on kundalini: which is that kundalini energy is a very powerful force that, as my own personal story illustrates, can be intense, overwhelming and even dangerous if encountered prematurely. It shouldn't be forced, but instead should be allowed to awaken within an individual naturally, of its own accord, when they are truly ready. (See my book *Kundalini and the Art of Being* for the full story of my own challenging tale.)

Although it is a vitally important aspect of each individual and holds great potential for evolutionary development, kundalini energy isn't something that one should search for, as if it were a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow. Instead, think of kundalini awakening as a lifelong process. This is the ideal way to experience it, as a series of inner awakenings on various levels, rather than one huge awakening

that blows you off your feet and leaves you reeling for months or even years. Focus on the spiritual path and increasing your spiritual awareness and presence of being. In the course of doing this, with the intention of contacting your latent spiritual power within, you can begin to contact this inner energy, get acquainted with it and bring it into your being over time; rather than diving immediately down into the deepest depths of your soul, without first having gotten in touch with all of the intermediary levels along the way.

So, allow me to offer an analogy that might help to explain a little better what kundalini is really about. Imagine you have a house that's built a little ways from a river. This house is designed to be powered by water. There's a channel that runs from the river to your house, underneath your house, and then ultimately returns right back to the river. Under your house there are all sorts of machines and equipment and gadgets that are set up to take in this flow of water and use it to power your house. It flows into your plumbing system of course, but it also powers your lights and virtually everything else in your home.

Over the years of neglect, however, this flow of water has gotten mostly dammed up, so that you only have a little stream of water running underneath this proverbial house. There's just enough of a flow that you're still able to get by. But the water pressure isn't very good...sometimes you have hot water and sometimes you don't...the lights flicker on and off regularly, etc. And there are things in your house you can't even use, which might not be essential but would greatly improve and enhance the quality of your life if you *could* use them. But things have been like that for so long, you've pretty much gotten used to it and have learned to live with it.

Perhaps you've already put two and two together here with this analogy. The

house in this case is you: your mind, body and soul. The river is the universal life force, what you might even call God. And the channel that goes underneath the house, connecting it with the river, is your chakra system—that which connects your individual being with the rest of the universe “outside” of you.

Kundalini awakening, then, is more or less like that dam separating you from the river of life breaking, and the full potential of this channel of energy opening up, allowing a rushing torrent of water to come flowing down the channel and underneath your house, “turning the lights on”, so to speak.

The problem is that it’s been so long since this was the case for most people, things aren’t set up properly to receive the full force of this water. You have stuff stored down under your house where the water suddenly starts flowing. Outside, there are tree stumps and old tires and broken refrigerators and garbage and piles of dirt and your compost pile, and maybe even a garden, all along this channel, next to what was previously a tiny stream but which is now a rushing river, attempting to carry it all along. And much of the machinery under your house that was designed to convert the energy of this water into electricity and fully power your house is rusted or broken or otherwise not set up properly to deal with this sudden influx.

So this water is now flowing rapidly, and you have to start the process of getting all the stuff out of the way that doesn’t belong down there; as well as get the machinery up and running correctly so that it can properly receive this water and convert it into energy so that it will be useful to you.

This is why you don’t want to awaken kundalini right away. You don’t want to be in the position, if possible, of having to get your house in order, as it were, while this flow of energy is rushing through you. You want to start getting things cleaned up and fixed *first*, so that when the dam breaks and the water comes

rushing in, you're actually ready for it.

It's not a perfect analogy, but hopefully it gets the point across. Kundalini allows us as humans to reach our full spiritual potential. But you don't just flick a switch and get zapped suddenly from 10% capacity straight to 100% capacity. It's a long process that involves literally rewiring your spiritual being, as well as your physical nervous system. And it's much easier and healthier to bridge that gap in ever-increasing stages, rather than to attempt a massive leap that can leave you reeling, overwhelmed and wondering if you really want to keep on going.

Chapter 3. *Explore the World Within*

More important than *trying* to awaken the kundalini, is to get more acquainted with your own consciousness. That is ultimately where the kundalini is, that intense flow of potential energy. And that's also where all that clutter and garbage is. Focus on the clutter instead, and the kundalini will then reveal itself and begin to flow in some capacity, once you've gotten a lot of that stuff out of the way.

Consciousness is not something that is simply on or off. We aren't just "conscious" or else "asleep". It's not nearly so simple, fortunately. Consciousness is a world within you. I've had experiences in meditation and through other means that have shown me how my consciousness is truly like a maze, a cavernous tangle of tunnels and rooms and doorways that go on and on virtually ad finitum, ultimately interconnecting with divine consciousness, God, universal mind, whatever you want to call it.

When I was traveling in central Turkey a couple of years ago, I visited the

ancient underground city of Derinkuyu, in the fascinating region of Cappadocia. Throughout this region there are dozens of cities that, as a defensive move to deal with periods of intense warfare, were built entirely underground, completely invisible from above ground. Some of these underground cities are as many as twelve stories deep, and could permanently house up to 50,000 people. They are a vast network of tunnels and caverns and rooms and hallways, all carved entirely out of solid rock.

This is your consciousness. Consciousness is not like a light bulb that is on or off. It is an intricate, tangled web of stuff that you experience mostly as thoughts and feelings, but which is much more than that. All of your experiences, all of your memories, all of your skills and knowledge and wisdom, all your doubts and fears and secrets live within this complex realm that makes up your mind, your soul, your consciousness. But even we are strangers to much of what is inside our own minds. We spend most of our time existing in a small area of this underground city, taking care of our daily business. The vast majority of this realm within ourselves has only been glanced at briefly, or else has never even been seen by us, by the light of our conscious mind. Most of our own mind is unconscious to us—the enigmatic, murky subconscious.

When I was a senior in high school, I was taking a photography class my final semester that I didn't need to graduate. So I decided not to focus on it much because I was focusing instead on getting decent grades in my core classes. Most of the class was free time anyway, in which we were on our own to work on developing our photos that we had taken outside of class. There was one little darkroom that was broken, or rather the door didn't shut properly, so a thin sliver of light came through. Because of this no one used it.

Instead of working on photography, I would go into that darkroom almost

every class, sit in the virtual darkness and meditate. This was long before I'd read anything about meditation, done yoga, read any metaphysical books or considered myself to be on a spiritual quest. I just enjoyed sitting there in the darkness, exploring my own consciousness, running down these different hallways, up and down stairs, poking my head into the different rooms and seeing what I found. There's no way to accurately describe what I was actually finding or why this was inherently interesting to me at such a young age. But I have no doubt that this same inner yearning to explore my own mind played a big part in my eventually stumbling across the potent kundalini fire.

So, getting back to the original question, there are lots and lots of different things that one can do to begin awakening their inner spiritual power and propel themselves along the spiritual path. Do yoga. Meditate. Those two things alone might be all that you need to do in order to, someday, some lifetime, reach enlightenment. I'm not going to go terribly in-depth in terms of describing different techniques here; though I'll give a few basic ideas for meditation exercises later on. If you want to learn more, then of course there are thousands of books on those subjects that have already been written, as well as plenty of yoga and meditation instructors to be found these days.

Instead, I want to explore things from a little different angle. Keep that image in mind of what really exists within your own consciousness, buried deep within your conscious awareness: a vast, complex underground city of potential space in which to exist and be and live and roam. And if you like, combine the two images I've drawn up here and imagine an underground river also flowing somewhere deep below this underground city—one that has the power to light up those dark, damp hallways and fill them with life, enough juice to power a bustling

metropolis of 50,000, to bring all of the different aspects of yourself into a thriving, harmonious state of being.

But like the cluttered house, this cavernous network of hallways and tunnels and rooms has gotten clogged up with debris over the years, the centuries, and most of it is long lost and forgotten. The quest, then, is to clear out this space within yourself, so that you can expand the full gloriousness of your potential being to occupy all of that which you truly are, and turn your inner world into the fully awake, alive and vibrantly buzzing hive of pulsing life that you are meant to be.

Chapter 4. *Seek Out the Dark and Dusty Realms*

Did you ever get yelled at as a kid? Of course, who didn't. Did you ever get spanked? Or perhaps were you even abused? Do you remember that ultra embarrassing incident in high school? Remember getting picked on, ridiculed or even beat up? Remember how it felt the first time you were fired from a job? And how about that time you fell off the roof of your house into a bush, and ended up breaking your leg (or some other similarly stupid incident), and have harbored a fear of heights ever since?

How many experiences have you had in your life? Thousands. Millions. Billions, if you consider each experience in every unique moment. Our mind imprints every one of them. We have a mental observation, recollection or impression of them. And then in another part of our consciousness, we have an emotional reaction to them. These shape who we become. A lot of our experiences are fun. A lot of them aren't so fun.

The worst experiences, whether remembered or not, affect our very soul by scarring it in subtle or not so subtle ways. If we don't fully bounce back from the experience, then part of us dies in a sense, and we carry on with our life somewhat less alive, less awake. Imagine that underground city. It's as if one of those rooms gets filled up with junk, we retreat from it, forget about it, and then think it's gone forever. Our life is a series of events and experiences, many of which, especially in our younger and more sensitive years, can be quite painful and scarring. And those experiences of pain, guilt, shame, judgment and failure stay lodged in some part of us if we don't completely resolve them. They get lost in the underground network of our consciousness.

That's not to say that there's anything inherently wrong with tough, challenging, painful experiences. Because that's part of the whole deal, that's one of the elements of life that makes us grow. But many of these experiences also manage to shut us down. We toughen up, but in toughening up we lose sensitivity—sensitivity that we need in order to be more aware of what is really going on inside of us, what is really motivating us, what we're avoiding, what clutter, baggage, self-judgment and emotional chains are keeping us tied down or locked into a limited version of our self.

The good thing is that, even if our physical body dies, our consciousness never does. It does go to sleep. But it can always be revived and reawakened. Even if we're still alive, breathing and kicking, some part of our soul is almost surely dead to the world, fast asleep. That's the case for every one of us humans on Earth, aside from perhaps a few truly enlightened individuals hidden away somewhere in the sea of humanity. Most of us have spent much of our lives ever so slowly, or perhaps abruptly at times, filling up the hallways and living spaces of our consciousness with assorted junk, steadily retreating into a smaller and smaller

sub-section of ourselves, to the point that many people are confined to a tiny little room where they carry out the rest of their life, oblivious to the vastness of who and what they really are. The spiritual quest, the quest for the river of life, the search for the holy grail, the fountain of youth, the fire in the belly, the kundalini, is really the quest for those long lost parts of ourselves that have gone missing, which we often assume can never be reclaimed.

There are many different ways in which one can embark on this quest and reclaim wholeness. Yoga brings you more into the body, which is actually a part of our consciousness. Meditation brings you more into your mind. Reading about these and other spiritual subjects enlightens the mind and opens up the possibilities. Music can inspire the soul to soar, to expand and awaken, as can dance, art and other forms of creative expression. Relationships can create a connection with another that helps us to reconnect with ourselves. Sexuality can remind us of the experience of oneness with another, which can in turn show the way to oneness with the universe. Certain mind-altering substances can, under the right conditions and with the right intention, take us deep into the darkest caverns of our soul to find places we'd completely forgotten existed, and didn't realize we actually needed in order to be more awake, more alive.

What happens when we have traumatic experiences, in a literal sense, is that energy stops flowing—the energy of our own awareness of being. Some part of us turns off, even as the rest of us keeps on going. Perhaps we have a nagging thought in the back of our mind or a pain in our gut, that we can't quite put a finger on, that leaves us feeling uneasy. Eventually, perhaps that unease turns to disease, as that dead part of our soul bleeds out into the body.

But we don't necessarily have to go back over every single experience

we've ever had in order to reclaim those parts of ourselves that got left behind. That can be one way to do it, by reawakening long lost memories; though simply remembering the event itself won't necessarily heal us from the effects of that event. Instead, what needs to happen is that we have to get the energy moving again, that piece of our soul that got stamped out and turned off.

In order for that to happen, we have to find it within ourselves, the raw energy, the stuff of our consciousness. We have to break out of that cramped little area that we find ourselves trapped within, our prison of our own making. We have to make the effort to reverse the trend we've been on for most of our life, of retreating into an ever-constricted zone within ourselves...and instead start branching out, breaking out of our confined molds, reclaiming the space of who we are.

This is the process of going from a partially alive and awake human, to a fully conscious and vibrating spiritual being of light and love. Because that underground city, that convoluted network within ourselves isn't simply dead space for us to make use of if we want, or else ignore without consequences. It is who we are. It is the essence of our very existence. And unless we are occupying and shining light in every last corner of ourselves, then we are a limited version of our self, and we're missing out on experiencing our fullness.

Chapter 5. *The Chakras*

Pardon me if you're already fully aware of the seven chakras, but I'd like to summarize them briefly, and then explore their significance a little deeper. Our chakras are essentially concentrated energy centers along our spinal column that

are doorways of sorts within our souls, each of which represents and channels a different quality of our human and spiritual selves. They all have their strengths and positive qualities and they all have their inherent weaknesses when in a state of imbalance. None of them is better or worse than another, as they are all essential to our existence in some capacity.

The first chakra, or root, is located roughly at the base of the spine, specifically at the perineum at the bottom of the abdomen, right between the legs. It is associated with the color red and with basic primal power, pure potential energy. The second chakra is located at the sex organs. Its color is orange, and it is associated with sexual and creative energy. The third chakra is in the naval and belly region. It is yellow and is associated with emotions, feelings and intuition. The fourth chakra is at the center of the chest, in the heart area. It is green and is associated with feelings of love, unity and balance, as it is the midway point between the upper and lower chakras.

The fifth chakra is located in the neck and throat. It is light blue and is associated with the voice and personal expression. The sixth chakra is at the third eye, in the middle of the forehead. It is indigo, a deep blue, and is associated with the eyes and with spiritual sight and visions. The seventh or crown chakra is at the very top of the head. It is purple (a combination of red, the root chakra and deep blue, the sixth chakra) and is associated with oneness and enlightenment, and a connection to the rest of the universe. Depending on who you ask, there might be some variation on the colors and the number of chakras, but that briefly outlines the traditionally agreed upon model.

I have no idea if the chakras have ever been scientifically proven to exist by scientists. I do know that they, and other subtle energy channels throughout our body, have been a part of Eastern medicine and spiritual practices for thousands of

years. And each of the areas of our physical bodies where these chakras are located happen to be extremely important, since they are all associated with vital organs of our body that we couldn't live without, or at least would severely limit our ability to live a normal life. And these organs all emit an electromagnetic energy field. But the chakras go beyond the mere physical. They are doorways to the spiritual realms, and they embody the many different qualities that make up who we are as complex, multi-dimensional beings.

Now, an important thing to understand at this point is that your consciousness is not something that is simply sitting inside your brain. Far from it. Instead, it permeates throughout your entire body, encompassing all of the chakras. And it even goes far beyond that. In reality, consciousness has no physical location. The brain is simply a meeting point of sorts between the spiritual world of consciousness, and the denser world of the physical. We tend to experience our consciousness most prominently in the area of the head; but in fact our entire physical body is imbued with our awareness of being. The chakras are intensified meeting points for this energy of conscious awareness. In fact, the heart has a much stronger electromagnetic frequency than does the brain.

Continuing now with the analogy of the underground city (since it seems to be working so far) the chakra system of our physical bodies could be analogous to different command centers of sorts within this city. I.e. the 7th chakra, the crown chakra might be considered a 'welcome center' of sorts, the first place you would come to upon going down into this city, that would handle interactions between those entering the city from the outside world, and the residents of the city. In other words, it could be considered an entrance or connecting point between the city and the rest of the world/universe; and correspondingly a connecting point between

your individual self and the rest of the universe. It is at the crown chakra that the kundalini energy flows up and out and reunites with the universal flow of energy, or divine consciousness.

Next, the 6th chakra, the third eye, might be likened to a room filled with TV screens that were connected to video cameras above ground, alerting the residents of the city to what was transpiring above ground, the “sight” of the city. The 5th or throat chakra, source of one’s voice and personal expression, would be the communications center, with telephones, internet, etc. for communicating both within the city and with the rest of the world. And so on.

Finally, the 1st chakra, the root chakra—source of the kundalini—would be that underground river that both provided life-giving water, as well as the energy supply that would power everything else within this metaphorical city. That’s how important kundalini is to your own being. *Everything else within you is powered by it.* If it were to run dry, then this city, and your body, couldn’t survive.

Chapter 6. Masculine and Feminine

In a generalized sense, the upper chakras embody the masculine polarity, while the lower chakras embody the feminine polarity. (Baby boys are represented by blue and girls by pink, no coincidence there.) Masculine is associated more with action and *doing*; whereas the feminine is more associated with presence and *being* (though this is, of course, by no means exclusive, as masculine and feminine intersect and overlap...and of course men and women are both varying mixes of masculine and feminine energies). Neither is superior nor inferior to the other, any

more than any color of the rainbow is inferior or superior to another. They are all simply part of the varied palette of existence, and equally essential for maintaining our sense of health, balance and wholeness within.

Our modern day cultures however, and even going back through recorded human history, have been primarily male dominant, upper chakra oriented societies—placing the greatest value on doing, creating, building, deciding, the intellect, moving forward, observing the outer world and shaping, manipulating, dividing and conquering it. This has been at the expense of the feminine, which is receptivity, feeling, sensing, emotion, passion, intuition, creative spontaneous expression, being in the present moment, attuning with nature, looking within, recognizing the interconnectedness of all things and communing with others in a state of loving togetherness.

Our modern day world needs a source of energy to support itself. Oil has become the replacement for our lack of connection with the kundalini energy within. We sustain ourselves on oil, and without it our current civilizations would utterly collapse in a matter of days; just the same as if that life-giving river were to dry up.

The problems associated with this dependence on oil are multi-faceted. For one thing, it is a limited resource. Perhaps we can continue to base our current civilizations on sources of oil for a few more decades, or even another century or two depending on what the truth is regarding available oil reserves. But ultimately this system is unsustainable, and it will have to fall apart in order to move to another, radically different system that is based around truly sustainable sources of energy.

Also, this oil dependency goes hand in hand with our obsession with the material world “out there”, and simply reinforces our lack of connection with the

world within. So many of the things that we buy today come from petroleum. But we don't actually need hardly any of them. It's our lack of inner spiritual wholeness, primarily our disconnect from the divine feminine, that drives our insatiable greed and hunger for more and more things in the material world, constantly searching for something out there in the physical realm that will finally make us truly happy within. But what is missing in our lives and in our frenetic modern day civilizations is not something without, but something essential and vital within. That something missing is our inner connection with the source of life; a result of our disconnect from the feminine elements of sensing, feeling and being, and with the divine river of kundalini energy that resides in the root chakra, at the base of the spine, and at the depths of our awareness.

So this is why it's important to awaken one's spiritual energy in stages, rather than all at once. Because most of us who live in these upper chakra, male-dominant societies are out of touch with our lower chakra, feminine energies, from which kundalini originates. Kundalini awakening can be a major shock to the system, because it brings forth the full power and intensity of the primal feminine energy of existence.

And if we're disconnected from feelings of love in the heart at the fourth chakra, and with our emotion and intuition in the third chakra at the solar plexus, and with our creative sexual energy in the second chakra at the genitals—then suddenly allowing the root chakra energy to flood into our consciousness is almost certainly going to be a mind-blowing experience, that we are unlikely to be prepared for.

So instead of trying to awaken the kundalini, it's better to focus on increasing a connection with and presence within yourself of all these other aspects of yourself, building up and strengthening your presence of being spiritually,

mentally, emotionally and physically...And then, if your consciousness ultimately spreads out within the vast caverns of your consciousness and digs down deep enough to find and connect with that infinite reservoir of divine energy known as the kundalini, then you will be more prepared on all levels of your multi-dimensional self to handle its power and to incorporate it more readily into your being.

Chapter 7. *Honoring the Body*

So, what can a person actually *do* in order to increase their spiritual presence, and thus pave the way for the kundalini to eventually surface? In my own experience and understanding, many of the steps to take are beneficial both in preparing for kundalini awakening to occur, as well as in processing and balancing with it after having experienced a kundalini awakening.

One of the most important things is in relating to the physical body. A lot of spiritual paths focus on the non-physical, at the expense and neglect of one's physical self. But like the colors of the rainbow, like masculine and feminine, the physical is not inferior or less important than the non-physical; but it is simply one of the essential aspects of the individual, one of the four bodies that makes up who we are as spiritual human beings: mental, emotional, spiritual and physical. Each aspect of our multi-faceted selves plays an important role. And in denying any one of them, we deny some essence of who we are, and leave ourselves less than whole.

The physical body can be a source of both pleasure and of pain. So can all the other aspects of who we are. The key, as always, is in finding the right balance

with each of the different parts of ourselves, and in balancing them with each other. Just because our world tends to be overly focused and even obsessed with the material realms, doesn't mean that the material, then, is the problem, and the solution is to deny the physical and only focus on the spiritual. This is overcorrecting for the problem. We can't exist on this Earth without a physical body. The body is a tremendous gift, an amazing, even miraculous creation and a source of great potential for learning and evolution, if seen as an integral part of one's spiritual path.

And the body also factors in greatly when it comes to kundalini energy; because kundalini works within the body, not just on a spiritual level. After I experienced my spontaneous kundalini awakening, I found myself thrust into a wide array of bizarre and challenging symptoms that manifested both physically and non-physically (which I go into much greater detail in *Kundalini and the Art of Being*). Over the years of dealing with the aftereffects of the kundalini, I've found that an essential element in dealing with these symptoms is in working with the body, because kundalini works to change and transform one's actual nervous system, one's very cells. Ultimately kundalini works on all levels. It may be through spiritual seeking or other non-physical experiences that one ends up awakening kundalini, such as deep meditation, an emotional trauma or through experiencing a mind-altering drug trip. But the energy itself is deeply rooted in the physical body, and must be worked with at the physical level as well as at the metaphysical levels.

There are lots of different, practical things that a person can do to incorporate the body into the spiritual path of awakening, and to facilitate physical evolution along with one's spiritual evolution. *But the first, catalyzing thing happens in the mind.* It is that simple shift of focus, intention and thought, away

from denigrating the body as something non-spiritual that you ultimately want to deny or transcend, into honoring the body as an essential and sacred aspect of one's spiritual being. The fact that Jesus apparently ascended *with* his body makes a vitally important statement—that ultimately the body is a part of who we are in some integral way, not simply a physical vessel or vehicle like a car that we use for a specific purpose and then discard...even if humanity hasn't evolved yet to the state that Jesus achieved, of ascending rather than dying in order to move on from the physical plane. But remember, Jesus also said that others would do what he did, and greater things.

There are many, many different things that a person can do to get more in touch with, and grounded in, their body. Some are everyday types of activities: walking, hiking, running, bicycling, swimming, etc. These are all good things to do in life in general, in order to keep oneself in shape physically and mentally. They also can prove to be very helpful and beneficial after having experienced a kundalini awakening, in order to remain grounded in one's body and not get caught up and carried away by all of the challenging phenomenon rushing through the mind and emotional body that kundalini oftentimes brings up. I found that simply taking long walks in nature was an extremely helpful and soothing exercise when in the most overwhelming throes of kundalini awakening. It both helped me to connect with my own body—to get out of my mind, get out of the house and do something—as well as to connect more with the calming rhythms of nature, while I was experiencing so much turmoil within.

Yoga is, of course, one of the most effective tools for both propelling a person along the spiritual path, and for keeping grounded within the energies one encounters in the process of spiritual awakening. The word *kundalini* comes from Sanskrit, the ancient language of India. And yoga, too, originates in India. The

ultimate purpose of yoga is in fact to awaken the kundalini. Yoga (and *pranayama*, the breathing exercises that go along with yoga practice) work on both the physical and spiritual planes simultaneously, and they are perfectly designed to help a person get in touch with their inner spiritual energy and infuse it into the physical body. *Yoga* actually means “union”, and its purpose is to inspire union both with oneself, and with the divine.

But there are plenty of other disciplines other than yoga, or as a complement to it, that can serve a similar purpose; such as tai chi, chi gung, various martial arts, reiki, massage, dance, etc. These all bridge the physical and the metaphysical to some degree, and can be incorporated into the spiritual path. Really, almost anything can be turned into a spiritual experience of connecting with the divine, simply by approaching it with that intention, as the book *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* made abundantly clear (my own book pays fairly obvious homage to that book in its title).

The important point here is to balance out the spiritual quest, philosophical musings, contemplative ponderings and awakening inner energies swirling throughout the mind and soul; with something that connects you with the body, giving all of those swirling, discombobulating energies a place to anchor themselves.

Lastly, it hardly bears repeating that diet is an important consideration when it comes to honoring the body. Since I experienced kundalini awakening, my body and nervous system has become much more sensitive and reactive to whatever things I happen to put into it. The energy we need to carry ourselves through life comes to a great extent from the food we eat. I’m not entirely vegetarian, and don’t always eat 100% healthy or organic, but I do my best to keep my diet as healthy as reasonably possible. Drinking lots of water and herbal tea is an excellent idea, as

they help to wash toxins out of the body. I avoid refined sugar to a great extent (with occasional indulgences or else lapses of judgment) and over the years, I've found that I have to avoid completely a number of things that never bothered me before, but which now, because of my more sensitive nervous system as a result of the kundalini energy, will altogether ruin my day: caffeine, MSG and artificial sweeteners such as NutraSweet, aspartame and sucralose. I read the ingredients of almost everything I buy, especially since MSG is in so many packaged items these days. So it's just one more thing to keep in mind when it comes to balancing the spiritual quest with living in a physical body—to keep in mind that to some extent at least, we are in fact what we eat.

Chapter 8. *Meditation*

Meditation is, to some extent, the very foundation of any spiritual path—because it's about becoming more fully aware of what actually exists within one's own consciousness. Ultimately the spiritual path is about self-realization. But there can be no self-realization, without delving down into that underground world within and exploring what is actually going on within.

Our current society is chock-full of distractions: newspapers, video games, movies, computers, the internet, TV, you name it. That's not to say that these things are all inherently bad. But we've created a world of constant noise and clutter and bright, flashing neon lights that keep us constantly mesmerized and dazzled by the physical world around us, while neglecting to notice the world within. You have to really go out of your way in our modern society to find the opportunity to genuinely peer within your soul and see what's there (which,

fortunately, many people are doing these days).

The reason why we have all of these distractions and bright, flashy toys and games to constantly entertain us, is because inside we're bored. We don't realize that that's what is motivating us, until we don't have something handy to keep our minds occupied for some period of time. And then we often discover that without such things, we are absolutely miserable. We need to be distracted, because otherwise, we start to notice something. We start to feel stifled, confined, constricted, numb inside, and we want to get away from that feeling. We're trapped within that limited part of our being without realizing in the slightest that we're cut off from our very selves. We don't know at all what to do about it...because the space beyond our familiar zone of existence is dark, foreboding, unknown, and there seems to be no good reason to venture out there, or rather in there.

Meditation provides the opportunity to explore that world within and see what actually exists within the depths of one's own mind. The deeper you go, the more you find. Thoughts reveal themselves to be only the tips of icebergs, which are connected to more bundles of thoughts, which then dredge up deep emotions, memories that you had long forgotten, both scarring and joyful ones, experiences that greatly shaped who you are today without your realizing it at the time. You begin to roam the tunnels and caverns of your being, and in so doing can begin reclaiming parts of yourself that you had surrendered to the darkness, thinking you would never see them again.

You stumble across doors, open them up to reveal rooms holding clues and treasures that help you to connect with the truth of existence within. Your consciousness expands and stretches out to fill the vastness of who you are, and you find that doing nothing at all, *just sitting there*, can be one of the most

fascinating experiences. Because you realize that you are much, much more than you thought you were, far more complex than a simple spark of consciousness; and a spark of hunger ignites a deep burning desire to discover the rest of your being, that which has been hidden away from view all these years, all these lifetimes.

My own experience of kundalini awakening occurred while I was meditating on my back, as detailed in-depth in the first chapter of *Kundalini and the Art of Being*. I experienced in a very literal sense that underground network within my mind. I found myself falling down a dark shaft within myself. And at the bottom of that deep, dark well, I dropped into a darkened room. Within that room, I discovered a somewhat silly, yet still traumatizing childhood memory. Remembering and reliving that memory and all the fear and emotions associated with it, was what caused my kundalini to spontaneously awaken. And I was suddenly flooded with a profound and overwhelming flow of energy like I could never have previously imagined.

Whether or not you stumble across the kundalini within, meditation will serve to expand your mind, your heart and your soul and propel you along the spiritual path of discovering what you are actually made of—consciousness. There are countless different ways to meditate. It might help to find a spiritual teacher of some sort to learn more about meditation, such as a Buddhist lama or a yoga instructor. But you don't need to wait for someone else to tell you how to do it, because it is, essentially, a very simple concept. Turn off the TV, turn off the music, close the door to your room so that you have privacy, find a comfortable spot in a chair or on the floor or in the middle of your bed, cross your legs, close your eyes—and just sit there.

I'll simply mention a few simple techniques that are well known and might help in the process. One technique is to focus on the breath. Take long, slow

breaths. Watch yourself breathe slowly in, and then slowly breathe out. That's all there is to it. Simply observe your own process of breathing. In doing so, you may find that your thoughts slow down and your mind becomes calmed, and you become more in the present moment, which is really what meditation is all about. Because the more you claim your own inner space, the more you expand outwards and downwards to inhabit the depths of your own mind, the more you are **being here, now.**

Another trick is to meditate with the eyes open, while staring at a candle flame. Simply place a candle on the floor in front of you, or on a table while you're sitting in a chair, or however it works so that you can sit comfortably while staring at it. And then, the same as focusing on the breath, stare into this tiny flame and allow your concentration on this subtly moving, dancing spark of light to capture your focus and your attention, thus allowing your thoughts to slow down and your mind to relax and settle into its own awareness of being. Whenever you find your mind attempting to run off, chasing one thought or another, reliving some experience or memory... simply bring your mind back to the present moment of the flickering flame before you.

Another helpful exercise is to “om” at the beginning of meditation. Sit cross-legged with eyes closed, take in a long, slow, deep breath—and then let the breath out through your voice, with the low hum of the om sound. This can be a great way of focusing your mind initially, because expressing yourself through your voice can help relieve any stress you may have accumulated through the course of the day or week. And it can also really get your head and mind buzzing in a way that breaks up some of the frozen energy and releases it. Do this omming exercise several times, or even a dozen times or more, inhaling slowly, exhaling with your voice projecting out to fill the room. And then, once you feel like you've done it

enough, simply stop, keep the eyes closed, feel the energy buzzing within your mind and allow yourself to come fully into the moment and relax into exploring the depths of your conscious awareness.

And I have one more meditation suggestion, that might sound a little strange—try meditating naked. This can be a great way of simultaneously getting more in touch with both your consciousness, and with your body. You could try any of the exercises above, or any other meditation exercise you might come across, with the addition of being naked. Sit cross-legged, close the eyes (or else stare into the candle) and allow your mind to relax into itself, while you also notice the sensations of your bare skin. And you might add another element, of visualizing your chakras. You could visualize them in whatever order you prefer, but one is to start with the crown chakra at the top of the head, move your way down through the chakras to the root chakra, and then move back upwards. Imagine each of your chakras glowing with their appropriate color, and opening to take in the energy of the universe.

Since you're sitting there naked, perhaps this might lead to some sexual feelings in the lower chakras. If this happens, just let it happen. Don't deny it, don't try to manipulate it, don't do anything about it. Just allow it to be. This can actually be a very effective way of getting more in touch with the kundalini energy, because of the fact that the sexual energy resides in the second chakra, which is right next to the lower root chakra—the source of the kundalini. By awakening your inner sexual energy, you awaken the lower chakra energy in general, and this can help allow all of the lower chakras to open and vibrate more fully.

If you find yourself experiencing this energy more and more intensely, and feel as if it's starting to build up inside of you and wants to move in some way, then this is a good thing; because it means you are really tapping into your potent

lower chakra self, which is what most needs to happen in order to be able to handle the kundalini. So, there's a simple, straightforward solution to this quandary of intensifying sexual energy—allow it to rise up within you. Connect to it with your mind, acknowledge it, be present with it, allow it to be and to heighten and intensify; and then imagine it moving up your spine, to connect with, flow through and invigorate your other chakras. If you experience this happening, then you are actually experiencing a precursor to kundalini awakening. The lower chakras energize and enliven and invigorate the upper chakras, just as the upper chakras shine light and understanding and acceptance down into the lower chakras. So allow this relationship and transference of energy to take place, because it has the potential to make you feel much more alive and present in the moment.

You might be able to experience this in a very intense way, without tapping into the full potential of the kundalini, because the kundalini tends to be deeply buried away in the root chakra. So don't go out of your way to seek it out, don't try to force it, don't focus or obsess over it all. Simply allow the energy to flow. What may very well be happening is that—going back to the analogy of the house with all the clutter that's gotten built up—this energy moving within your lower chakras may be serving to clear out your own inner channel, removing the junk and the garbage so that the energy, the river, can begin to flow. Simply allow it to happen, bit by bit, in its own natural way. You can begin to tap into feelings of pleasure, bliss and ecstasy within, long before you awaken the full power of the kundalini. So simply allow yourself to enjoy the experience of your inner potential coming back to life, the light flowing through the dark caverns of your consciousness, the divine source being reawakened within you. This is really what the spiritual quest is all about—becoming more alive, more aware.

Chapter 9. *Sexuality*

Sexuality and sexual energy is undoubtedly a subject that divides spiritual seekers right down the middle. Many, many spiritual paths state quite clearly, or else subtly, or simply by their ignoring the topic, that sex is not really sacred or a part of God, and that spiritual awareness, self-realization and enlightenment does not encompass sexuality. Ultimately, you will have to make the choice on your own as to whether or not that is the case, and whether or not to include sexual energy as part of your spiritual quest one way or another.

Personally, I would say that it can be looked at in exactly the same way as the body itself—it is a part of us, and we literally could not be here without it. There are pitfalls to sex. It can become an obsession, an addiction and a source of pain and suffering in relationships. But that doesn't mean that it is wrong and evil and should be abandoned. That can mean simply that you are out of balance in your life and within your soul in general, and then it manifests in an unbalanced way in terms of sexuality.

I'm not going to go too in-depth into this subject, other than to say that as mentioned in the previous chapter, kundalini and sexual energy are closely connected. One can awaken the other, or at least they can affect each other in different ways. Upon experiencing kundalini awakening, many people will discover an intense resurgence of sexual energy. Others may end up feeling a temporary loss of sexual potency. I would say that, particularly in terms of kundalini energy, this is a part of yourself that shouldn't be ignored and denied,

because of the intertwining nature of kundalini and sexual energy. That doesn't mean that you have to be engaging in sex with someone, by any means. There are legitimate paths of abstinence that also involve working with the kundalini energy. But there is a difference and distinction between being abstinent, and completely denying one's sexual power. As shown in the naked meditation technique above, you can experience and awaken your sexual energy alone, experiencing the energy without acting on it. This may prove to present some inner challenges and tribulations. I would say, simply search within yourself for the answer. Don't come to conclusions based on guilt, shame and judgment around the issue. Recognize it for what it is—the energy of union that brings all life into existence on this physical plane. And then feel out how to approach it and work with it in your own life. And if you want to learn more, there are countless books and teachers to be found, going much more in-depth into the subject.

And if you decide that you want to experience the full potential and power of sexual energy and choose to incorporate it into your spiritual path, then there are certainly precedents for doing that. The path of tantra, while greatly misunderstood and distorted in many ways in the West, is a spiritual path that acknowledges and incorporates one's sexual being into the quest of self-discovery, and has been around for thousands of years. I've visited in India a place called Khajuraho (which I talk about in my book *Following My Thumb*), where dozens of temples are covered with intricate stone carvings, all of which explicitly depict humans engaged in the sexual act in a myriad of different forms. The history of the place has been lost to the ravages of time. But it's evident by the thousands upon thousands of detailed carvings covering some two dozen different exquisitely built temples, that sexuality was something deemed sacred and spiritual to those people.

The first and most important thing is, once again, making that shift within

your mind. Choose to make sexuality spiritual, and it will be. It is a natural expression of ourselves, and that which brings life into form on Earth. It is an energy within you that can be directed towards the experience of self-awareness and enlightenment. Use the energy wisely and reverently and consciously, and it will serve the purpose of moving you forwards and inwards on the spiritual path, leading to greater presence of being.

Chapter 10. *The Essence of Kundalini*

Ultimately, kundalini—its qualities, how to awaken it or how to deal with it once awakened—is not something that can be adequately encapsulated within any book or teaching. It is too unique, too dynamic, too mysterious, too personal. Some might spend their entire lives devoted to yoga and meditation, and never have a kundalini awakening or any other particularly profound or metaphysical inner experience. Others might experience it without ever formally launching themselves on a spiritual quest. My experience falls somewhere in the middle, in which I had delved deeply into the spiritual path for several years, and had been practicing yoga regularly for almost two years. What exactly caused the kundalini energy to stir and reveal itself within me, I will never know for sure. Despite knowing a little about kundalini yoga, I was for the most part unfamiliar with what the word kundalini actually referred to...Although, not entirely.

It is a bit strange and coincidental that about a week before my experience, I was in a used bookstore in Austin, Texas, perusing the shelves of the spiritual section, when I came across Gopi Krishna's *Living With Kundalini* (which I highly recommend). I took it off the shelf and read the first chapter, in which he recounts

his own powerful account of spontaneous kundalini awakening during meditation, in India in the 1930s, at the age of 34.

After reading the first chapter I thought, “Wow, that’s really weird”, because I’d never heard of such an experience. But I put it back on the shelf, deciding not to buy it for some reason, even though it was only a dollar or two and I was a voracious reader of spiritual books. Then, just a week or so later, I had my own powerful and unexpected experience of kundalini awakening that eerily resembled his, and which completely altered the course of my life. I recount in-depth the events leading up to and then following that experience in my own book *Kundalini and the Art of Being*.

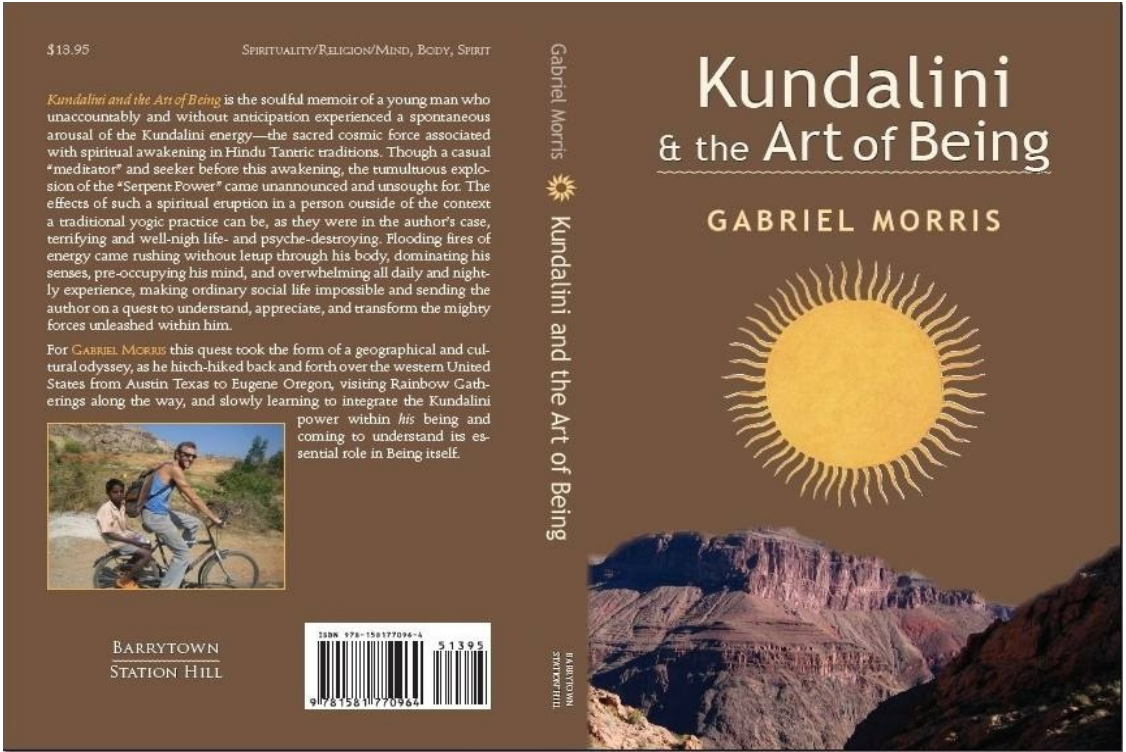
As for how to better grasp the essence of kundalini, remember that the lower chakras embody the feminine energy, and the upper chakras embody the masculine. Kundalini, then, represents and embodies the deep-rooted, intense power of the feminine, which exists as a potential within all of us. It is at the same time extremely powerful, even ferocious, and also very sensitive and vulnerable. It can’t be said definitively how exactly to approach it. You simply have to experience it, sit with it, listen to it and trust the process to guide you, rather than following any sort of prescribed method for how exactly to deal with it.

For those who haven’t had a kundalini experience but simply seek greater presence of being and inner connection with that divine force of life, simply keep that intention in your mind and make it a focus of your life, even if you forget about it or lose sight of the spiritual path at times. As long as that is your underlying intention—to better know yourself, to find something meaningful and valuable within, to create a palpable sense of oneness with the universe, as it were, to become self-empowered and self-realized—then your winding path will find its way in that general direction. We create our own reality, as they say, and that is

most certainly true when it comes to discovering the truth of who we are.

And for those who have already experienced the kundalini or else some other form of spiritual awakening that has opened up another world within and perhaps propelled you on a challenging route such as I know very well, always remember to listen to your inner truth to find guidance. Teachers and the lessons of others can no doubt be invaluable. But don't allow them to override your own inner voice. Because there is a vast reservoir of knowledge, information, intuition and personal power within you, that is simply waiting to be tapped into and utilized, and which should be the most important factor in guiding your way towards inner balance and harmony.

Gabriel Morris is an author, photographer, world traveler, outdoors enthusiast and spiritual seeker, with a B.A. in World Religions. He was born in Vancouver, Canada, raised in rural northern California and has also lived in Alaska, Hawaii, Oregon and Alberta, Canada. He has been traveling the world off and on for more than twenty years, while simultaneously walking a spiritual path of learning and self-discovery. He is author of *Kundalini and the Art of Being* (Station Hill Press, 2008), a gripping spiritual adventure story and hitchhiking travelogue; and of several other books. For more about kundalini energy, or to see photos and videos of his world travels and read excerpts from his other writing, visit his main website at www.kundalini-fire.com or his travel website at gabrieltraveler.com. And for more information about Gabriel's other publications, including e-books, paperbacks, printed color photo books and calendars featuring his adventurous travel photography, visit www.lulu.com/spotlight/Gabrieltraveler. Or simply search for Gabriel Morris on Lulu.com.



Following is the Introduction to *Kundalini and the Art of Being*, a gripping spiritual adventure story and hitchhiking travelogue (published by Station Hill Press, 2008). It's available on Amazon.com; or you can download it instantly from Gabriel's e-store for only \$5. AND, it also comes completely free as an e-book with *any* of Gabriel's other books available at his e-store. See the link below, or else go to Lulu.com and search for Gabriel Morris.

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Introduction.

In the fall of 1994, I was twenty-two and leading a relatively stable life in rainy western Oregon, when I rather impulsively quit my job, sold my old Datsun pickup, moved out of my house and hit the road with just my backpack on my back, thumb leading the way. I had only a vague notion of where I was going and what I was getting myself into. I simply had an undeniable yearning for adventure and the unknown, which I chose to follow. I was the type who tended to act on these sorts of impulses. Little did I know the real adventure that I was embarking on this time.

Two months later—after hitchhiking partway across the country—I was staying with a friend in Texas with even less of an idea of what I was now doing in my vagabond existence than when I'd started my impulsive journey. It was nearing winter, I was almost broke, a long ways from home and the living arrangement with my friend was less than ideal. And then, in the midst of meditation one evening, something subtle yet powerful shifted within my mind that changed my world forever. A sudden rush of energy flooded through me like nothing I'd ever before experienced or could have even imagined. I had no understanding then of what had occurred within my fragile consciousness. All I knew was that, in no more time than it takes for a bolt of lightning to strike, my experience and perception of reality had been utterly and irrevocably altered.

What happened to me in that pivotal moment actually had a name, although I didn't know it at the time—kundalini awakening. I wish I could have known then that I wasn't suddenly going crazy, but had actually experienced a spiritual breakthrough. At the time, however, I found myself cast abruptly into a psychological and physical hell from which I found only temporary relief. I seemed to have, for no apparent reason, turned spontaneously schizophrenic. My spiritual quest of the past few years had inexplicably taken a painful and

challenging turn, to say the least. The torment I experienced following my unanticipated Kundalini rising was so profound as to make me wonder if it was even worth enduring, just to live through another torturous day.

But fortunately, as surely as I'd fallen down a canyon of darkness within my soul, I managed to climb my way back out of it as well—to live to tell the tale, as they say. As those frightening first few days turned to weeks and then months, I began to see a glimmer of light shine from within myself, that eventually proved to guide me back to something resembling sanity.

Following is the story of how I found myself in such a strange predicament—like many seekers these days, stumbling rather blindly down the spiritual path—as well as how I managed to get myself out of it. Although I certainly didn't feel it initially, the awakening of the Kundalini energy is in actuality a great blessing. This I've discovered over the years, learning over time how to incorporate it into my daily life. Kundalini has the power to invigorate and evolve our spiritual beings like nothing else can, if we can just figure out how to handle it.

I'm not a qualified expert on this subject—just someone with a story to tell and a perspective to offer. My hope is that sharing my own experience will prove helpful to anyone struggling with this phenomenon, as well as satisfy the curiosity of those interested in Kundalini; who may decide instead that they want nothing at all to do with its potent force, or else perhaps be inspired to seek it out within themselves, and in so doing journey to the heart of the unknown.

Note:

Kundalini and the Art of Being is a story of a spiritual journey, and much more. It chronicles three years in the wandering life of author and traveler Gabriel Morris, from 1993-1996. Chapter 1 launches directly into his profound experience of kundalini awakening in 1994, while visiting an ex-girlfriend in Austin, Texas.

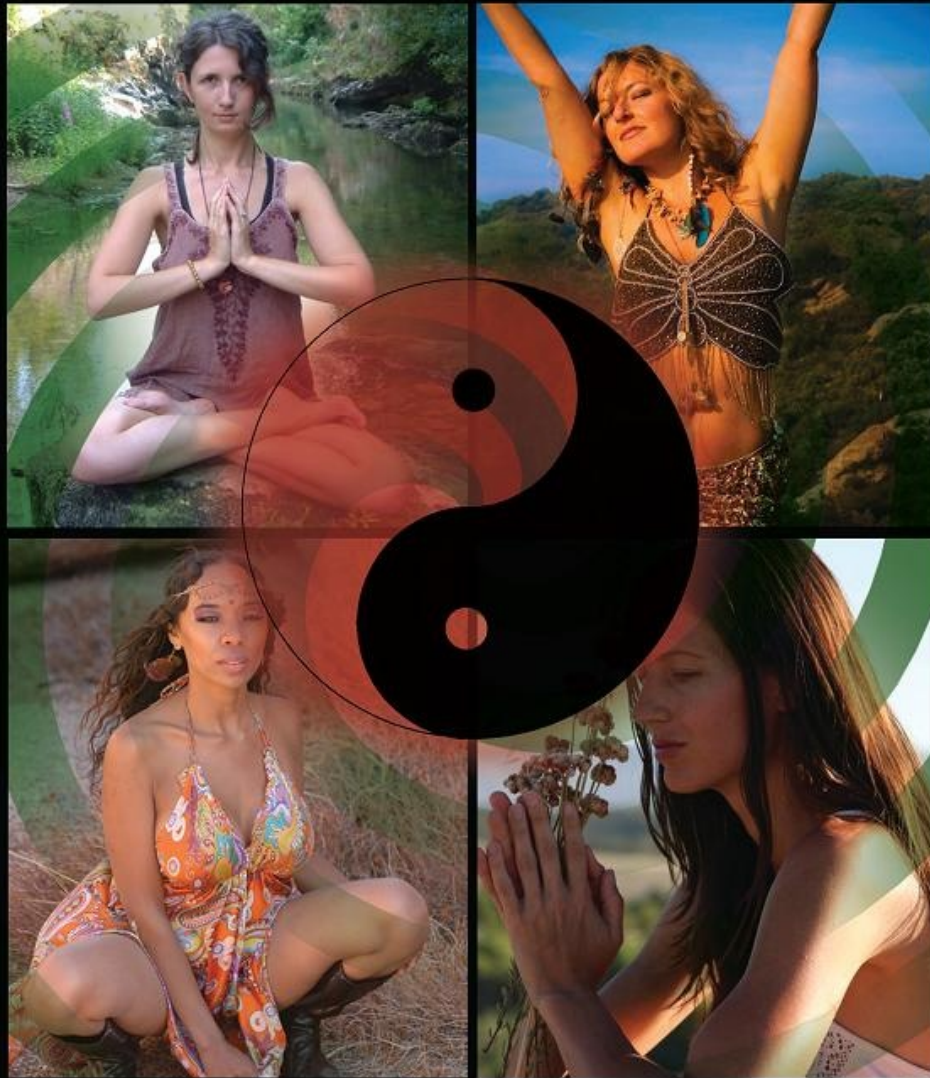
From there it flashes back to more than a year earlier and recounts the strange, exciting and synchronous events that led up to his experience of kundalini rising: including experimenting with astral projection, meeting a strange and mysterious homeless man, beginning a yoga practice with a kind and wise instructor, experiencing a mind-blowing drug trip that opens his eyes to the realities of the modern world, attending a 20,000-strong Rainbow Gathering festival in the forest of Wyoming (and collectively battling a forest fire in the process); and finally, selling almost everything he owns at the time, leaving his home in Oregon and hitchhiking across the western U.S. in search of love and

spiritual truth.

Part 3 then continues from his sudden, shocking (literally) experience of kundalini rising and tells the challenging story of how he endured, and eventually found balance with the kundalini energy; all while hitchhiking back and forth across the western U.S. and Alaska, following the wind, his thumb, his heart and his gut on a great quest to make sense of the meaning of life.

THE MYSTERY OF WOMAN

A Book for Men



Gabriel Morris

...Following are excerpts from *The Mystery of Woman: A Book for Men*, also by Gabriel Morris; a book that explores the complex subjects of relationships, women, masculinity and femininity, sexuality, love, romance, tantra and lots more. Part 1 of the book features seven chapters written by Gabriel Morris. Part 2 features 24 essays written by women on all of the above subjects, including pieces from established authors such as Alice Grist, author of *The High-Heeled Guide to Enlightenment*, and Gabriella Hartwell, author of *You Find Your Soul Mate When You Let Go of Searching*; as well as a fascinating, nearly 20-page interview with Maya Yonika, subject of the tantra documentary *Sex Magic: Manifesting Maya*. Finally, Part 3 of the book features nine essays from men, giving their suggestions, experiences and advice to fellow men on how to improve and enhance their relationships with women. The *Mystery of Woman* is available both as a downloadable e-book, as well as in paperback through Gabriel's e-store on Lulu.com. The paperback can be shipped worldwide. Both the e-book and the paperback include a free e-copy of *Kundalini and the Art of Being*.

More info on Lulu.com here:

www.lulu.com/spotlight/Gabrieltraveler

From Chapter 3, Man vs. Wild...

Women are indeed, to some extent, volatile and unpredictable. Deep down they are wild, untamed creatures prone to random emotions, spontaneous expression, powerful desires, unbridled passion, ever-changing moods, animalistic instincts, intuitive, irrational knowings and much more. And that is the beauty of them, to be intensely celebrated.

From Chapter 4, Yin and Yang...

Recall the Taoist yin-yang symbol in which two complementary fish-like images, one black and one white, are swirling around one another. And remember that there is a spot of black within the white symbol, and a spot of white within the black. This perfectly captures the dance of masculine (light, in this case) and

feminine (dark) and is an essential piece of the puzzle. Because it embodies the fact that men and women are actually part of one unified, coexisting force of energy—not two completely separate and opposed entities. We are very different in many ways, but wholly equal and both completely necessary for one another's existence. And we are inevitably, perpetually, hopelessly intertwined with each other, now and for the rest of eternity. That's even longer than marriage. It's worth taking the time and effort to make it an enjoyable relationship.

*From **Cosmic Union** by Tracy Cooper...*

Are you a God wielding lightning with your hand, a heroic champion on a truth quest, a warrior ferociously steeled, silently stalking your next meal, a romantic creatively weaving words of homage to your lover, a gregarious lion ready to pounce, or an adventurer waiting for life to call? At different times, you have inhabited the souls of all these great men. A new role is calling. Can you hear the rustle in the wind, in your breath as you exhale, the buzzing in your ears beginning as a low hum and gaining momentum to the fever pitch heard by astronauts hitting the sound barrier, rattling the depths, forcing you to action?

*From **I Want Burning: Loving a Woman on the Spiritual Path** by Kylie Devi...*

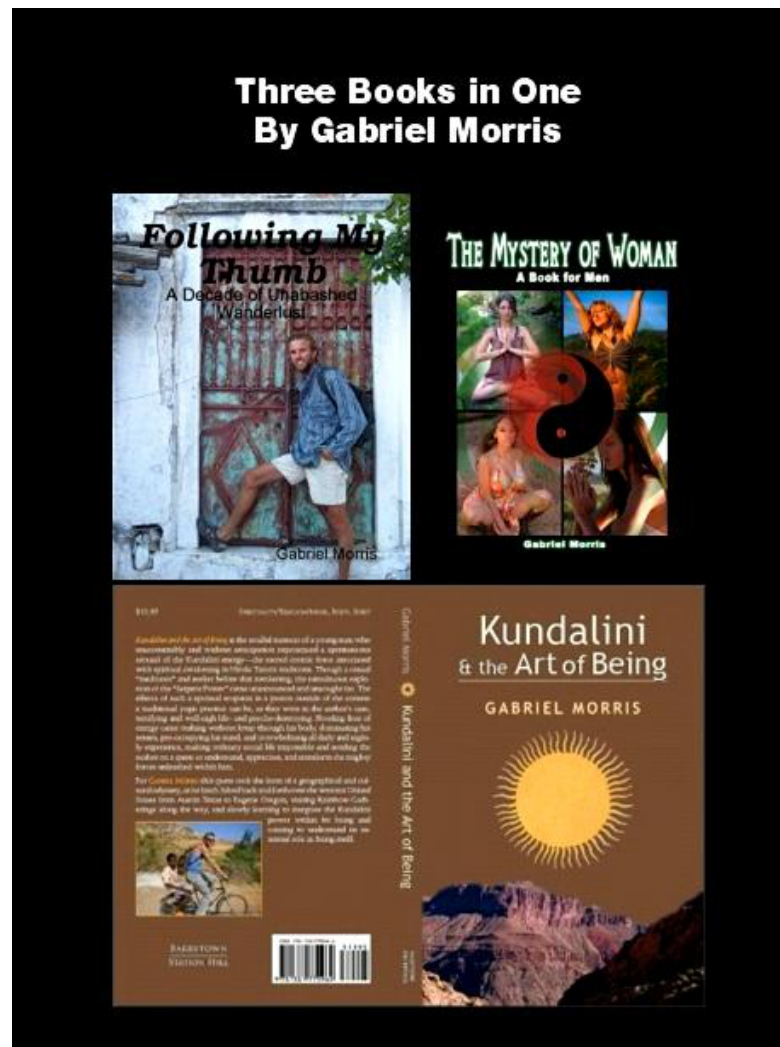
Have you ever loved the type of woman who simply cannot be captured? Her beauty shines through strikingly even in the most mundane of moments. And yet, you cannot quite fathom what her beauty is made of. She is wild one moment and peaceful the next; ecstatic for no comprehensible reason, and then sobbing into her hands at something you can't perceive or relate to only minutes later. In her eyes you see the depths of the universe; yet she can seem so youthful, innocent. It almost seems as if she needs your protection, but then...there she goes, she is free. She is untamable. She is likely to do the most profound things you have conceived of, and then on a whim make choices that perplex and stupefy, but which generally receive no explanation other than a coy smile. This, my Beloveds, is the story of

any man or woman who has ever loved a woman who is in love with Love, the mystic fire.

*From **Merger** by Amanda Lyons...*

One of the greatest gifts we can give each other through sexual union is the opportunity for us to reconnect with our core. Partners who are complimentary opposites within their energetic selves have an amazing potential for fulfilling, devotional gifting—for enabling the soul of each to surface in sweet ecstasy...*if* they allow one another to move beyond the empty-grunting-humping-over-in-a-flash sex, and into a deeper experience of physical union. If they delve within so that they can know themselves fully, know their essence, then they can resurface more whole, and allow the merger of Goddess and God.

Special deal: **Three Books in One**. Get three complete books by Gabriel Morris in one book. *Following My Thumb* and *The Mystery of Woman* are included in one paperback for just \$21, which can be shipped worldwide. Additionally, *Kundalini and the Art of Being* is included free as an e-book...



Available at Gabriel's e-store (Control key and click to open the web page):

www.lulu.com/spotlight/Gabrieltraveler