

Yogi Bhajan's Claims: Hype or Hope

We received this great question and felt inspired to turn it into an article. Yogi Bhajan made all kinds of claims for the various kriyas and Meditations in Kundalini Yoga. Some of these claims are quite extravagant. For instance he said that if we do the Long Ek Ong Kar Meditation for 2.5 hrs., starting pre-dawn, for 40 days we will be "liberated." That basically means that we are able to clear all of our karma and be one with the Universe. Regarding the Sa Ta Na Ma Meditation, he said that if we do it for 2.5 hrs. a day for a year and a half, and wear white, we will "See the unseen and know the unknown."

Dear Ana and Ravi, I've structured my question into 3 parts:

1.

I would like to ask you why there seems to be no one out there (including you, who has done Sodarshan Chakra Kriya, who wears a turban and a Sikh Name) who did 2 1/2 hours of Kirtan - or Sodarshan Chakra Kriya; the two Kriyas of which Yogi Bhajan said that they would elevate anyone into enlightenment if practiced for 2 1/2 hours.

This is especially strange for me, since so many people in 3HO totally dedicate their entire diet & lifestyle sternly to the ways Yogi Bhajan taught - yet no one really seems to go for the full gold of wisdom.

2.

Talking about this highest level - for Kirtan Kriya Yogi Bhajan claimed that it would make one see the unseen after 1 year of 2 1/2 hours, but for Sodarshan Chakra Kriya no timetable is given. Do you have any estimate for how long someone should do it for 2 1/2 hours before expecting some wisdom ?

3.

What do you expect to be the difference in outcome if someone does an equal amount of either SDCK, Kirtan Kriya or any other Kriyas which yield the same claim if done for 2.5 hours ? thank you very much for your answer

Thanks for writing. There are many people (including us) who've done these techniques for 2.5 hrs. per day for forty days and beyond. And many of these people are definitely walking the walk! Of course it's not enough just to get our reps in. We have to rock those reps!

Overall, we feel that many people have quite a few flawed assumptions about what enlightenment is, etc. I (Ravi) did So Darshan for 62 min. 2x per day for 18 years. It gave me many gifts that continue to inform my teaching and life. There are many people in and around 3HO who have done So Darshan for 2.5 hrs. for 40 days. I've done it for 2.5 hrs. at various times. I've also done the Long Ek Ong Kar Meditation for 2.5 hrs. a day for 40 days, starting at 4 a.m. Yogi Bhajan was talking in absolutes when he made certain claims but the truth is that in this human life everything is incremental and we have to appreciate that things happen by degrees and there are no absolutes. We may attain a certain plateau Spiritually, but very often we may need to do some catching up emotionally, etc. There is no such thing as total enlightenment unless we happen to be a once in a 1000 year prodigy like Buddha.

We believe that if us earnest seekers knew beforehand how much we were up against, i.e., the amount of purification required on all levels; the amount of gut wrenching self-examination; and the amount of blood, sweat, and tears; to get from point A (where we are now) to point B unto Infinity, we would've never taken the first step onto this royal path of Spirit. But there's no place to go but upward and onward. That's why Teachers employ the carrot on the stick method to rouse us out of lifetimes of slumber and get us moving in the right direction. In the greater scheme of things the claims made for the wonderful, amazing techniques in Kundalini Yoga are right on,

although there are some caveats with regard to a strictly literal interpretation.

As long as we are in a human body we are in process. It's the process of bringing our mind and emotions under conscious control. Of learning to turn negative habits into positive attributes. Of learning to use our talents to heal uplift and inspire. Of learning to open our hearts to loving and being loved. All of the techniques in Kundalini Yoga are tools towards those ends (and new beginnings). Ultimately, these Meditations can't be done "by the numbers." The gifts they impart are gifts of grace and it's up to the Universe to decide what gifts we need to fulfill our soul's purpose. The effects of the various Meditations in Kundalini Yoga are different for everyone. We encourage you to try various Meditations and permutations to see what works for you. Don't do these practices expecting a reward. Just do them as an act of devotion with an attitude of gratitude. You will have much to be grateful for.

thank you so much for you quick reply.

I do take in your advice / wise perspective not to do the practices expecting a reward but as an act of devotion and with gratitude and I will work on that, but I have to say that I feel a bit disappointed about Yogi Bhajan selling us his Kriyas as "the highest" or which will "make you seen the unseen" if been practiced for 2 1/2 hours daily etc., because I did take Yogi Bhajan literally and did practice with a hell of a lot of pain to build up Sodarshan Chakra Kriya only to experience that the severe cleansing of my internal rubbish destroyed my entire worldly life.

Yes, I know, it's my own junk which probably would have gotten out sooner or later anyway, and yes, maybe that is the lesson to learn, not to cling onto any teaching or so. I just find it irresponsible of Yogi Bhajan to have sold us his gadgets like a door-salesman as ultimate keys to the understanding of the universe which never fail (but the end may be so, or may not be so).

I guess I will go forward now and continue to do it and then see if it will yield some results somehow sometime. After all I can not see myself improving much by "spiritual channelhopping" because Guenka, the founder of Vipassana said once that someone who wants to drill for oil has to keep digging on one place. Lots of love, gratitude for your reply, and best wishes for Ana and you,

It is true that Yogi Bhajan made some extravagant claims. We believe this was a function of the gratitude he felt based on what these things had done for him. Also:

A) based on my (Ravi's) observation of Yogi Bhajan for a very long time, it did seem that he was proof of concept for many of the claims he made for these techniques. Yogi Bhajan was in process just as we all are, but he represented the Teachings impeccably. In my experience he turned out to be right about so many things, some of which took me 40 years to verify. I'm pretty positive that Yogi Bhajan did in fact "known the Unknown and see the Unseen." For instance, once he called me and told me exactly what I was eating. Once in LA he told someone exactly where to go to find their lost dog and before long had about 100 pet owners pestering him night and day. These are just two very minor examples of things many of us witnessed all of the time. Of course these types of things are not an end in themselves. They simply indicate that certain capacities were very well developed.

B) I think YB felt so strongly about these techniques but but in lieu of experiencing it ourselves, the language to express their subtle dimensions so he resorted to blanket superlatives. and/or in many cases he was also simply passing on what he had been taught.

C) We do believe that techniques like So Darshan, Sat Kriya, SaTaNaMa and so many more, help us illuminate those areas of the psyche where the work needs to be done. If we are honest with ourselves those techniques are quite miraculous if we are willing to let our life be informed by them. We are beyond confident that if you continue to rock your practice you will be pleasantly surprised and will continue to receive beautiful and long lasting rewards.