

When The Serpent Bites

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THE EVENT

When I was eighteen, a little over a year before the event I had a phenomenal experience - an orgasm of the heart! It happened like this: I was lying on my front and woke up in the middle of the night. I felt completely charged and had an erection as you often do when your eighteen. I decided to move my pelvis a few times and felt myself reach the point-of-no-return but then I decided to completely stop everything and put my awareness on my upper back. Then I felt for the first time kundalini. It raced up through my spine to my heart where it stopped its ascent and activated the heart chakra. This caused the sensation of an inner expansion of my whole upper torso like that of a balloon being quickly inflated. It was very pleasurable but also quite violent. That day I had tremendous compassion and energy, it cleared away some blockages and charged the whole area. I was very excited about the possibilities of having such a strong, unlimited, and positive internal energy to enhance life. From then on I got into the 'spiritual thing' and started to read all the spiritual books I could find. Previous to that experience I had been bodybuilding and also doing yoga asanas twice a week for six months.

Some weeks later, I decided to try 'Yoga Nidra' at home. Without going into the details, I put myself into Samadhi. My gym membership then ran out so I stopped bodybuilding and began doing yoga postures and relaxation at home everyday.

I also practiced brief periods of meditation, engaged in sexual moderation and started cooking my own organic vegetarian food. All this helped me gain a tremendous sense of vitality, high energy, peace of mind, empathy, spiritual growth, enthusiasm etc. I was doing really well at university. No doubt, I was having a great time for I was conquering my world.

During this time I begun experiencing kundalini activity every couple of nights a week for a year however the experiences were not ecstatic. Typically what happened was that the Kundalini would awaken spontaneously in the middle of the night during my sleep. The feeling of warmth and movement at the base of my spine would wake me up from my sleep. After a few split seconds it

would erupt as a strong ball of electrical energy and then speed quickly along subtle energy channels in a haphazard manner. It was almost impossible to control. During this time I would lose perception of space, time, and enter a very distorted sense of reality with extremely loud rushing noises. My will power was like that in a semi-dream where one has only limited conscious control of thought. At the same time I would also become paralysed, and unable to move a muscle or even my diaphragm. Sometimes I would feel as though I were doing slow loops on a roller coaster or I was on the pirate ship. A few times I sensed horrible, negative beings around me but they disappeared when I induced love in my heart.

The energy would rush around until it encountered resistance/blocks in the subtle energy channel it was traveling along usually located in the chakra regions. This would often cause strong or extreme pain. If I concentrated on the block that was being 'burnt' the pain would intensify. The only way to exit this state of reality and have the energy return to its dormant state was if I would move any muscle in my body and retake control of my nervous system. This was very difficult as I would have to gather up and use all my will power possible. When I managed to do this, the energy ball would rapidly return to its home. After this, I wouldn't be able to feel any part of my body, so I would twiddle my toes and then regain awareness of my body. I suppose the nerves had to re-establish their connections. After this happened, I would fall back to sleep as normal like nothing had happened and it wouldn't happen again that night. It was all quite scary but at the same time fun. However I didn't know if it was dangerous or if it was the way kundalini should normally behave. Mostly I didn't think much about it.

I did a bit of reading, and spoke to a few people on the subject and came to the conclusion that what was happening to me was just one of the body's natural ways of eliminating energy blocks in the nervous system and as source of transformation and purification. It was confirmed with the fact that my overall health was improving and I was achieving a great nerve sensitivity and awareness of my body. I also came to understand kundalini as just one ingredient that can increase personal growth and that cultivation of good virtues and leading a righteous life is also important.

Nonetheless, there were two things that worried me. Firstly, these experiences I was often having were very different to the numerous kundalini experiences where the energy seemed to enter the spinal channel like in the heart orgasm and Samadhi experience. In these experiences the energy seemed to enter my spinal channel and

instead of moving as a ball of energy along different channels (using serpent imagery - like a snake which moves while coiled-up) as in the many nightly experiences, it would extend vertically (like a snake standing up). This would lead to a completely different experience. The energy would feel like an almost imperceptible straight rod. It would yield feelings of heart orgasms, genital orgasms without ejaculation, full body orgasms, consciousness expansion and other wondrous mystical experiences as it would move within the spinal column. They would be most pleasant and cause much personal growth and awareness of my higher self during and after the event. This, I thought, was how kundalini should behave.

Most, if not all of the literature I encountered referred to kundalini activity occurring in this second way and so did my main Yoga teacher who I only saw a few times as she lived interstate. However, what seemed to be happening to me in the spontaneous nightly experiences was that the energy would try to enter the bottom of the spinal channel but be blocked by it not being open. Instead it would force itself out through a different channel. I couldn't find any information on this type of occurrence, but I did discover in Feuerstein's acclaimed book 'Tantra' that when the energy symbolised a snake standing on its tail in the central channel it would be harmless. I didn't know if what was continually happening to me at night would or would not be harmful, in fact it appeared beneficial.

The other worry was that after a period of months, the energy seemed to have had dissolved the few chakra blocks in my torso. This meant that when it would awaken it would usually rush straight to my head unimpeded (but not through the spinal channel of course). When it did this, it would reach a block in the middle of my head that seemed to be protecting the brain from the energy. It felt as though the ball of energy was pushing against this block very forcefully, this was extremely painful. I finally decided that this was potentially dangerous because the energy might enter the brain and cause some kind of brain injury. However I wasn't too sure, maybe the energy was meant to 'burn' through this block like the rest of the blocks in the body. In one isolated incident, the pain became so unbearable but was then strangely dissipated suddenly as an orgasmic wave of energy starting from feet to head.

I didn't know what to do. There was not much I could do. It's not as if I was playing with Kundalini, it would just awaken naturally in my sleep but I didn't want that to happen because of the danger to the brain. I did realise that I could stop the awakening altogether if I rapidly and deliberately moved my body in the split second

after the kundalini would wake up just before it erupts into the moving ball. This would somehow stifle the energy but was difficult to do as it would be just waking me up and I would be in a slow-reacting, semi-dream, lethargic state. I also realised that the more power the kundalini had the more speed it would have, the more easily it would wake up in my sleep, and the more pain it would cause when it reached my head or any other block. This seemed to be regulated by the amount of semen I had in my body, for when I had a lot of semen the energy would stir frequently in the sacrum throughout the day and usually erupt at night. If I emitted semen, then there would be no fuel for the kundalini and it would stir less during the day and erupt at night after one or two days when the semen had built up in the body. However, I didn't want to emit semen all the time because it drained me mentally and physically and I thought perhaps kundalini activity was preferential to a few moments of pleasure by myself.

What was I supposed to do? Should I worry about the activity and existence of the energy? Was I in danger? Do I need to masturbate to stop the energy from erupting or from having too much power? If so when and how do I decide that the kundalini has too much power? Will it cause one of those orgasmic waves again if it does have too much power? Must it enter the central channel? How do I make sure it does this? What was the head block, a blocked chakra? Was the pain necessary to clear the block? My immediate attempts to answer these questions were fruitless, only long after the event did any answers start coming (along with many more questions). So just as I got to the stage where answering these questions became really important to me the terrible event happened.

On May 5th 1999 the energy erupted waking me up, I hadn't emitted semen for about two weeks so it was very powerful (in hindsight this was the main contributing factor) and with a great amount of energy it rocketed straight up to the brain, not traveling in the central channel, where it smashed through the block protecting the brain. I was terrified as I felt it momentarily explode in the whole brain starting at the frontal lobe while I lost consciousness for the split second. It was a very violent experience. The energy ball then went to another part of the body and came back to the brain exploding there twice again. It sped around my body some more and somehow I managed to break the paralysis so the energy returned to the base of the spine. All it took was a few brief seconds and the damage had been done.

As usual, I couldn't feel any part of my body but this time the lack of sensation felt much more serious, as if my whole body had disappeared. I twiddled my toes and regained awareness of my

body, it felt different because the signals weren't coming in as strongly, a little numbed. I felt as though the whole central part of my chest and torso had lost a lot of their presence, particularly the sensations coming from within my body - the stomach and intestines. Moreover, my penis had become limp and dead. I noticed that as the explosion occurred it made both my nostrils wide open and extremely dilated as though a hose had been sprayed through it. Not only did my body feel different, as I stood up and looked at the world around me the world also seemed different, strange, unreal, foreign, weird, and dreamlike. This was a big shock to me, I thought I had been killed or part of me had been killed. I panicked in a major way.

Still in a frantic state, I had breakfast and went to university. In the lecture I couldn't concentrate because my thoughts were racing. The world was strange and disturbing, I tried a Yoga class but that was hopeless. I tried talking to a few people but I couldn't think properly and could only articulate simple phrases. I bought some lunch even though I had no appetite. I couldn't finish it because my stomach gave no feedback on how full or hungry it was. I got three hours sleep with nightmares and because my nose was so dilated I had a couple of blood noses. I saw a doctor the next day still in a frantic, panicky state. I realised that I couldn't cry because I wasn't producing any tears or sweat. I also realised that my whole body had lost its responsiveness to sensitive touch, even my feet and armpits weren't ticklish anymore. Also, I tried to do some running but got hit with sudden tiredness, all my stamina was gone - my metabolism had been affected. Food was taking longer to move through my intestines because bowel movements were less powerful and of lower volume. Food started building up in the intestines because I was eating more than excreting. My abdomen slowly became distended. Indeed I had slow transit constipation. After three weeks I was prescribed an anti-psychotic medication, Risperidone. I stayed on this medication for ten months which stabilised me mentally. In the weeks before I started the medication, the insomnia made it feel like I was in a never-ending marathon where the pain from exhaustion was unbearable. Strangely, I would yawn constantly but wouldn't actually feel tired.

My mind became uncontrollable and irrational which was caused from the disruption to normal brain function from the event itself and also the insomnia. I became ridden with anxiety. Many life events came to mind and with each one I blamed myself for taking that particular course of action believing that this was the key factor causing me to have the event. I would think "If only I did this and not that" in a contrite way. When the anxiety reached a

certain threshold I would feel nervous/fear/heat energy sweep through my nervous system. It was probably adrenaline. When it got to my brain it would cause a full-blown anxiety attack. Both the anti-anxiety medication and the subsequent anti-psychotic medication which I had to take seemed to protect my brain from receiving and reacting to this anxiety energy and, moreover, from my body from producing these rushes in the first place. Sometimes in the period before I started taking the anti-psychotics I had full blown panic attacks which were absolutely horrific. I am so grateful for the medication. Had this event happened before the advent of modern psychotropic medication I would've surely changed forms.

Below is a total list of symptoms and there July 2000 status:

Symptoms that haven't improved:

PHYSICAL:

- Decrease of skin's responsiveness to sensitive touch.
- No more ticklishness in feet, and little in armpits.
- The body feels less 'alive' and less sensual.
- Lost some of the even olive skin tone/complexion on face and body with small blemishes and bumps appearing.
- Decreased effectiveness of internal organs with "blockages" (Chinese doctor)
- Increased fat on body even though I eat significantly less food.
- Slow transit constipation causing major bloating and wind.

MENTAL:

- Inability to feel hunger or thirst.
- Inability to feel emptiness or fullness in stomach.
- Relentless anxiety based dreams. The floodgates of my mind open when asleep.
- Inability to feel tiredness, fatigue, or differing energy levels. Only a constant flat dull feeling (even after tiring exercises, after long sleep or before bedtime).
- Frequent yawning, even after sleep

- Moodiness

SPIRITUAL:

- Depersonalisation and Derealisation: Sense that I am a stranger in a strange and spaced-out world. I've also lost my sense of connectedness to the world. Time feels "drawn out". There is no cognition of the past or future even after waking up in the morning into a new day. If I were to die tomorrow it would feel like I haven't lived a life. At first, all the emotional attachments to my local neighbourhood, friends and family had fallen away. I feel a deep sense of purposelessness.

Thankfully, these symptoms have been restored or improved greatly:

PHYSICAL

- Greatly diminished sweating, even under armpits
- No tears
- No moistness/mucous in nose
- No Semen Production
- Both nostrils wide open and dilated
- Loss of strength to most major muscles
- Limp penis, no nerve energy
- Inability to perform cardiovascular exercise

MENTAL

- Racing thoughts
- Panic attacks
- Copying the emotion with whoever I was speaking.
- Insomnia
- Difficulty thinking
- Difficulty tracking words while reading from lapses in concentration
- Difficulty thinking of jokes and being humorous
- Difficulty concentrating

- Obsessive thoughts, no deep contemplation or thinking
- Difficulty connecting with my mouth while speaking
- All actions being deliberate and difficult

Life and its perception of it have changed dramatically since before the event. It still holds some meaning but I would love to regain my health, passion for life and do all the things I used to love. I still hold the view that one should lead a righteous life but it is overshadowed by my questions of what is it to be alive and to actually live an individual human existence. Unless my mind and body heals, I doubt I'll ever do and be the things I wanted from my professional, personal, social, economic, musical, and spiritual life. This is a major blow seeing I had great expectations. Worry tends to dominate much of my thinking.

PART 2 of 2

The Aftermath

I received feedback, explanations, theories, and support from various people around the world after publishing the first version of the story. Some emailed me directly and others posted their responses on bulletin boards. In the process I learnt that many, many people have permanent or semi-permanent kundalini activity that produces a whole array of physical and mental disorders. However, no one I came into contact with has had the same plethora of problems that stem from the aftermath of a single burst of energy as in my experience. However, some have had long recovery times from single experiences.

The general thought amongst people with permanently active kundalini is that it has a purifying function on all levels. It is surprising to learn those with active kundalini do not necessarily ever experience the transcendental state of Samadhi that comes when the kundalini is merged with the midbrain center corresponding to the crown chakra. The ancient Indian works state that the kundalini energy must ascend along the central channel for this to happen. Often the outcome of the ascent depends upon the layer in central channel of the ascent. However, after reading the works of some of the sages, it is said that liberation doesn't depend on any prior experience but requires the letting go of all prior experience and knowledge, even your concept of God. The fact that transcendental experience is common to many of these sages means that the superconscious states are a requisite before this disregarding of all knowledge can lead to liberation. This is one of many

theories of liberation and how kundalini can lead to it.

Purification is also a common requisite for liberation. The function of purification is to have mind/body that behaves in harmony with the soul. Usually this is shown by a natural expression of patience, compassion, willingness to change, non-attachment and a self-centered focus on the present. The physical body is also positively affected. The fact that kundalini has a purifying effect and can cause transcendental states means that it can be a powerful tool in aiding liberation. Furthermore, when the kundalini pierces the center in the midbrain and the transcendental state arises many agree that it does stimulate dormant areas of the brain, which does create new abilities. Cosmic consciousness may arise but this does not necessarily mean liberation although they are sometimes confused. Other abilities also arise from the gaining control of subtle energy which is used by some to raise kundalini. It seems that purification, transcendental states, enhanced physical and mental abilities, and virtuous behaviour are all things that precede liberation but do not necessarily cause liberation.

It is not clear that being in the transcendental state itself causes purification however it does leave a positive mark on the person. It is the ascent of kundalini along the central channel to reach this state when it reaches the crown chakra which has the purifying effect. This is beneficial for enhancing the functioning of the charkas. It is said that the chakra's energies are disentangled, vitalized, and balanced (Feuerstein). The fact that people have active kundalini in all different areas of their body show that the purifying effect can be experienced in other areas besides for the central channel.

People with active kundalini energy often feel energy move up and down there spine which often causes headaches but they still do not enter into any transcendental state. This suggests that the energy is not moving in the central passage, or at least a deep layer of it and are probably not experiencing any real chakric cleansing or balancing even though purification at other levels may be occurring.

One thing people do to manually awaken their kundalini is to "smash" their vital energy against the blocked opening of the central channel. This assumes that their kundalini is in the dormant state and the lower opening of the central channel is closed. This has a dual effect of opening the channel and then awakening their kundalini which will start its ascent, either like lightning or like a snail. The results vary. It is said that at the bottom of the central channel just above where kundalini lies is the kanda. This is a

junction egg where all the body's vital energy channels emanate. The closed opening of the central channel is just above this point which represents the first of the three major knots on the central channel. In my experience this knot may be entangled and disentangled at various times either allowing or preventing the kundalini from entering the central channel. The knots probably represent the different states of the charkas at these points. In my event, the kundalini spontaneously awoke but at the time the opening to the central channel was closed because of the knot. Thus the kundalini energy could not rise in the central channel and connect properly with the chakras but instead exited through any one of the vital energy channels of the kanda. This meant that the energy could move freely anywhere in the body except in the central channel. At the time it felt like a single, moving, energy ball however in other experiences it seemed to flood the whole body unpredictably with no apparent leading energy point. When the ball reached the mid brain there was a problem.

This area corresponds to one's reference point of where they think they are in their body. Where the "movie in the brain" is occurring. This is the center of the crown chakra, the pineal gland. Here the 1,000 petals of the crown chakra emanate. In my experience of Samadhi, when kundalini reaches this point, instantly a nice warmth spreads through the body and brain as though the kundalini has been divided and is exiting evenly through all petals to the rest of the body. Energy can also exit through the top of the head. In my event, the kundalini arrived at this point through just one of the petals but could not be divided properly nor could it exit the top of the head as in Samadhi because it hadn't risen properly through the central channel. It was going in the reverse direction. This was the cause of the resistance and pain. It was not caused by the Rudra-granthi knot located at the third eye because the energy hadn't traveled through the central channel to even reach the Rudra-granthi. It is highly doubtful that the resistance was caused by "resistance to spirit", stored trauma, a knotted crown chakra, a lack of surrender, or from fear as some have suggested in their letters to me.

The kundalini had so much power behind it that it broke through the resistance but couldn't be channeled anywhere so it exploded and then came back to explode twice again. It is unclear of what happened on the subtle body level. On the physical level it was the equivalent to three brief but massive epileptic seizures where the epileptic patient loses consciousness from random uncontrolled electrical activity in the whole brain.

The experience disrupted brain activity to the point where many

nerve impulses ceased being sent to and from the rest of the body. Thankfully much has improved as shown by the improvement in my symptoms. Sweat and metabolism is a function of the nervous system. There could be a number of reasons for non improvement in other symptoms: these may be partial brain shutdown as a response to trauma, physical nerve damage in the brain, rearranged brain synaptic connections or some kind of 'short-circuit' where nerves 'burn out' in the brain, nervous system or both. The spiritual bodies I'm sure were also affected by the explosion.

The altered sense of self and time could all be due to disruptions in the proper neurochemical and morphological functioning of their corresponding brain centres. People who have had one bad drug experience also have similar long-term depersonalisation. Depersonalisation is still a mystery to medical science and alternative medicine. The brain is so delicate and complex.

It is no accident that Gopi Krishna in his popular book "Living with Kundalini" said that "in whom the awakening occurs all at once as the result of yoga or other spiritual practices, the sudden impact of powerful vital currents on the brain and other organs is often attended with grave risk". He mentions that "if by mistake kundalini were aroused through any other nadi (nerve) except sushumna, there was every danger of serious psychic and physical disturbances, ending in permanent disability, insanity, or death." This is probably caused by the "unhinging of the brain instantaneously." I required anti-psychotic medication to allow my brain and nervous system to rest and heal. Sadly, these medications probably cause physical damage to dopamine receptors. Martinus in his books also mentions the dangers of certain kundalini awakenings.

One night about four months before the event, I started thinking about the nightly experiences I was having and became very anxious. I felt compelled to go to the big book store nearby. Somehow I found my way to "Living With Kundalini" and opened straight to the page where it talked about the danger when kundalini doesn't travel through sushumna. I became very anxious. It was a clear warning signal that what was happening was dangerous and I wanted to buy the book but some impulse stopped me. I did end up buying the book but unfortunately only after the event. Other signals were evident to me preceding the event including direct intuition of "I'm going too fast" and "Speak to your Guru" but somehow it didn't end up preventing the event although I can't say I didn't have any warnings. One's intuition always knows best.

I have received some varying opinions of what has happened to me. The psychiatrist thought it was just a severe, acute, psychotic, nervous breakdown. He did not subscribe to my kundalini theory. There was also a female Shaman who had something to say:

"No psychiatrist or neurologist would understand what has happened to you, to put you in the condition that you are in, but I am a Shaman, and I do understand it, and I can lead you out of it, if you can find the faith, to follow my instructions . . . I do not do {the ego-death ritual} anymore, except in cases like yours: when Goddess{kundalini} has started the process and the fears of the individual has created blockages to cause them to be stuck there. In the twilight zone of the timeless underworld, stuck between ego-death and rebirth . . . You are in Hades. When the energy broke thru that barrier in your brain, it broke thru the barrier of your own ego-separation, and that part of you died. The veil of separation is also the doorway of death. You have become a kind of zombie, my friend, dead man walking. Your ego Died and went to Hades, and your body is a robot waiting for you to return to it. That is the meaning of your symptoms. Hades is a timeless place. In the fields of Lethe, the flowers never die. Your body is on autopilot; your consciousness is in Hades."

There was also an advanced Indian meditator who said that I have had a spiritual awakening and I should rejoice because I am "going through a phase of unfolding realization of the true nature of your 'self'". When I became unconscious it was because all of a sudden I became the "power for which I am conscious". This is upstream or prior to pure consciousness (Samadhi). He stated that this has a "tendency to lock up our poor 'brains' because the brain cannot compute an instance where the brain does not exist." He asserts that I shouldn't worry because I am not damaged and everything will heal in time.

An experienced Chinese doctor practicing traditional Chinese medicine who is treating me says that my mind and body are not properly connected. As for my main Yoga teacher I haven't been able to contact her yet.

I came into contact with many well-intentioned and kind people who each had something of value to say. I was grateful to receive all the 'blessings' at the end of so many letters. The goodwill shown was tremendously inspiring.

Here is some of the noteworthy advice all of which one could take without even having an event such as mine:

- Two Gurus suggested I start chanting OM TAT SAT and a Hare

Krishna mantra which bring peace and healing. The Satguru recommended that I start eating meat, not with milk, and drink alcohol occasionally for cheerfulness.

- I should drop down into my heart and even breathe into it.
- I should communicate only with people that felt right, and even better, with people that have been through 'the process'.
- I should be skeptical about what other people say about Kundalini because most people or even nobody really knows anything about it.
- My experience can and should be a tool for personal growth and I should see it in this way.
- One should meet the challenge of serious disappointment with wisdom and honour.
- I should ask myself 'Am I willing to change?'

Then there were other comments:

- I didn't have a proper teacher.
- I was involved in too many practices
- I didn't heed the warning signals.
- I have epilepsy because virtually all spiritual experiences are caused by different types of seizures.
- The experience is forcing me focus more on the spirit and to forget about achievement (inferring that the two aren't compatible.)
- I should make contact with Sai Baba because he has access to infinite knowledge.
- I should stay away from red lights and sit under a blue light for an hour a day to lower kundalini energy.

I did receive other advice which has helped me adjust and find myself. One great idea was to get a pet which did actually occur. My legendary dog 'Max' has provided me with the incentive to go to the park and provide a fresh focus.

It seems that everyone's experience with kundalini is incredibly different. Some individuals it causes pain, others joy, and for many it causes a mix of experiences. Many have been through much more suffering than myself. If I could time travel back to before the

event, I think I would've known the right steps to allow the kundalini to create a wonderful transformation instead of this unfortunate twist of fate. However, it is impossible for me to go back into the past and change things so all I can do is help my current self, and others for that matter, as much as possible which is not to say that I never did. In times of unfortunate circumstances it is not so important as to what happens to us as it is compared to how we deal with the changes. Immediately after the event I thought I was going to die, a few months later I thought my life was over but slowly my spirits are improving in this great lesson of self-acceptance and patience.

The kundalini still sometimes erupts at night even though I have stopped Yoga asanas and Ba-Gua. I doubt it will ever have enough power to explode in the brain again causing another breakdown however during the experience my breathing stops because the Kundalini is interfering with the operation of the nervous system. I would much prefer those orgasms of the heart, wouldn't you?

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