

## How to become a TANTRIC

By Dr. Subhasis Chattopadhyay May 1, 2022 657 views



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Tarapith in April 2022.

### Snapshot

This article briefly and simply explains how any human being can become a tantric.

Adi Shankaracharya was an Advaita Vedantin monk who believed in nondual nonqualified monism. Yet he composed the *Tripura Sundari Ashtakam*. It was Adi Shankaracharya who anecdotally named Srinagar since it was there that Sri Vidya blossomed.

Later Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa who was initiated into the Puri Order of monks by Sri Tota Puri, was a devotee of the Mother of this Universe and hundreds of other Universes which come into existence and disappear by Her Will. All of these holy renunciates practised Tantra. They are the *Viras* mentioned in the various Tantras including the *Mahanirvana Tantra*.

Tantra is the path of those who abstain from sensual pleasures and are dead to this world while remaining within the woof of this passing samsara. The various Tantras were written down from the 6th century AD onwards but Tantra as a living religion is as old as the Vedas. The Rig Veda teaches us that one should be a god to worship God. In other words, one should be one with Shakti to worship Shakti. What is Shakti?

Shakti is God or, Ishwara. Shakti is not a quality of God, but God Herself. [Within the Tantric marga initially God is worshipped as the Divine Mother](#). Shakti literally means power. Power over what? Power over oneself. It is important to note that Sri Abhinavagupta, the great commentator on the Tantras, nonetheless commented on the Kashmiri recension of the Bhagavad Gita. Why did the writer of the voluminous *Tantraloka* do so?

Because the Sanatana Dharma in all its various branches stresses *deha-ninda* (asceticism-It is a result of Buddhist influence said Sri Aurobindo) as against sensory pleasures. So how does one become powerful? We can by following the injunctions of the Bhagavad Gita first, especially reading Chapter XVI's verses on the qualities of pure beings. Only when one's mind is still, and one has been able to curb all hankering for worldly desires, should one begin various *nyasas*, or deity invocations within one's own body. This cannot happen easily.

Tantra is a method to become one with the One. So how does one become a Tantric? The following will help:

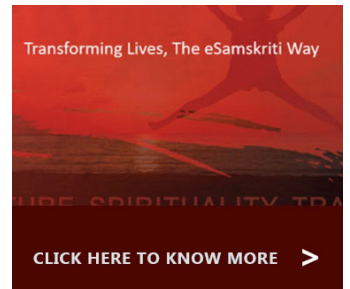
1. Read the Shastras over and over



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This is known as self-study or, *swadhyaya*. Read, especially the Bhagavad Gita and the *Yoga Sutras*. You can follow both the texts by practicing slowly the *mahavratas*, or the great vows. Do not steal, curb anger, stop any deviant behaviour or hoard wealth.

Practise helping the poor unconditionally. Do not seek miracles. Over time, say in five to six years, when your passions are curbed and you do not seek name, fame, power, wealth and have come to know yourself a little more, start the practise of Tantra.

2. Now you will find the Guru will appear to you. By this time you must be unmoved by praise or blame, well-versed in the Shastras, and at peace with being unknown. You do not any more desire to have a fan-following since while within family life, you have started living like a monk or a nun without giving up your duties to your family. It is needless to say, you have taken precautions to become unknown. This is the time that you will find your Guru or your Guru will find you. Again, there are no external marks to know you are intent on learning Tantra.

Following the Bhagavad Gita, commented upon by many Tantrics, you are free from the death-grips of samsara and are indifferent to what happens to you or what happens to the exterior world. Since by then, through years of practising the great vows, you are unaffected by the modifications of your or others' minds.

This is the point where you now begin to practise Tantra which has three main branches: the *Trika*, *Sri Vidya* and *Shakta Tantra*.

3. You will be given a mantra by your Guru and slowly over the years that mantra will reveal itself as a manifestation of the Holy Mother. And yet you shall not seek miracles.

If you desire to perform miracles or to misinterpret the Tantras, then you will be born as a *Preta*. (hungry condemned ghost)

Neither will you seek to speak of yourself, nor will you seek any form of fan-following. Now you have moved from the stage of reading books and meditating to the stage of trying to have a union with the Holy Mother. It is a do or die scenario. The dead body is to you nothing since a dead body does not have a soul. A living relative is dead to you since others are now your relatives. You understand that Shiva is *Jiva*. There is no difference between you and others. This is when Shakti will manifest Itself in you.














*Totapuri Maharaj Ashram Puri. Pranams.*

Now what happens?

You start experiencing the bliss mentioned in the *Madhu Kanda* of the Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad. You start wanting to help others in the here and the now in concrete ways: by teaching them that women and men are equal, by helping them overcome the three types of evil that plague humanity. You will not have to study the methods from books. They will reveal themselves to you since you are now, as the Bhagavad Gita says in Chapter XI, just an instrument (*nimitta matra*) of the Supreme Godhead.

Nonetheless if you get trapped by money, power and sexual attraction, it is the end of the road for you. Maa Tara will Herself destroy you. Reading many books without practising chastity, silence, various ascetic practices will just make you a debased, debauched cheater of others and of course, yourself. If you harm others, you will be

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cursed. If you accumulate money by cheating others and indulge even in slight unchaste behaviour is when you have to begin your journey again.

### So what can be done through Tantra?

You can cure diseases, help others in various distresses. And, even change weather phenomena. But if these things do not help others in finding *mukti*, then they are of no use. And Maa Tara help you if you once take money for this. Even if slight exploitation of others is there, you are treading an evil path.

What Tantra cannot do?

It cannot harm others. Rather, true Tantrics take the faults of others on them and die very painful deaths happily with the full knowledge that their service to humanity will bring peace to this world.

It is not Tantra if sex is involved, or money changes hands or self-promotion is involved.

Begin first by *swadhyaya* and doing daily worship of your deities at home. This will over the years cleanse your inner and outer being. This is known as *bhutashuddhi*. Then someday if you wish, and as the Katha Upanishad says, It chooses whom It Will, you might be called by Maa Tara to be a Tantric.

You do not have a right to be a Tantric. It is a freely given Grace of the Holy Mother, *ahetuki Kripa*, mediated by a Guru to you. Tantra does not discriminate between genders or social strata. This path is for all whom Shakti chooses. There are no secrets here except the tremendous secret that one has to give up everything while living as a family person. The mantras, the Yantras will all be revealed by your Guru and the Holy Mother.

But look into yourself, ask why you want to know about Tantra?

Perhaps you want to drink, which is prohibited in *Virachara*, perhaps you want to cheat others or perhaps you want to know the future? These are bad and outright evil reasons to start practising Tantra. The only reason can be that you want to have mukti in this life. That is why it is recommended to begin with the Bhagavad Gita and the Yoga Sutras.

If even slight desire remains in you, *Ma Chinnamasta* will Herself destroy you. Remember the Sanatana Dharma is Tantric in its mode. Our temples are based on sacred mandalas, our worships are all Tantric. Most of us do not know that but that would be the subject of another article.

But if you want to become a Tantric then be kind to yourself and others. Start taking care of your body through modern medicines and Hatha Yoga. Because, it is within your body, that Kundalini may choose to rise or, Shakti enter you through your Guru's Grace. That is *Shaktiphat*.

You cannot go wrong by following Adi Shankaracharya, Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa and Sanatana Scriptures.

This post is dedicated to my Guru who is a Bhairav. Harih Om.

**Author Subhasis Chattopadhyay** has a Ph.D. in American Literature from the University of Calcutta. His reviews from 2010 to 2021 in *Prabuddha Bharata* have been showcased by Ivy League Presses. He has qualifications in Christian Theology and Hindu Studies and currently teaches English Literature in the PG and UG Department of a College affiliated to the University of Calcutta.

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