



Svaroopaa® Vidya Ashram

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A Yogi in the World #8

## A Juicy Life

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Juice squirts out of the ripe peach I cut into, dripping down my chin as I bite into a chunk. Yum! It's called *rasa* — the juice, the nectar or blissful essence. Similarly, every chef will tell you that it's the sauce that makes the dish. In the same way, you want your life to be juicy, vibrant and meaningful. Yogis get their *rasa* from the inside.

Meditation is the direct path to the *rasa* of Self-Knowingness. By delving into your own inner dimensionality, you tap into the source of life, the power of love, the delight of creativity and the peace of timelessness. These fill you from within.

Yoga poses and breathing practices make this inner exploration easier. *Svaroopaa*® Yoga poses target your spinal tensions, dissolving them to open up interior space in your body. You breathe easier. You get taller as you get happier. You move freely as your joints glide due to the synovial fluid lubricating them more effectively. It's called *rasa*.

Your laugh is deeper and more frequent. Your eyes shine with light, especially after meditating. Your heart overflows and you act on your compassionate impulses. Your synapses fire, making connections that give you a new perspective, one that comes from the fullness of your own Beingness. It's called *rasa*.

Tripada adi anupraa.nanam. — Shiva Sutras 3.38

One should enliven oneself with the creative bliss of the fourth state, the potency underlying all the three states.

The fourth state is a deeper dimension of your own being, hidden just beneath the other three — waking, dreaming and deep sleep. Like the waves on the surface of the ocean, the three churn across, filling your mind. Yet just below the surface is the depth and expanse of the ocean of Consciousness. This is the source of the enlivening power as well as the source of your own creative bliss. This deeper level, *turiya*, gives you the juice that fuels your life.

In the waking state, your mind runs from one thing to another, like a hummingbird who gets only a little sip of nectar in each place. Those pretty little birds are hard workers! They must consume about half their body weight every day, feeding every 10-15 minutes by visiting 1,000-2,000 flowers throughout the day. When you get your *rasa* from the people around you, you have to work almost as hard. This is why your mind keeps going, even running around in circles and reviewing things over and over.

Your mind continues working in your dreams, the second of the three states named in this sutra. Processing things at the subconscious level, usually with visuals, sounds or other sense perceptions, your mind is almost as busy as during the day. We love to watch the dog's feet twitch when he's dreaming. It means we recognize how mind affects body even in dreams.

In deep sleep, it's like your mind is filled with goo. The density of deep sleep is blissful, but it is the bliss of unconsciousness. If you've taken an afternoon nap and slept "too long," you know how hard it is to get moving after deep sleep. Sleep is heavy and thick, but restful.

The spaces between these three states is what gives you rest and replenishment. Your mind alternates between the three, with wakefulness predominating in the daytime. At night, you cycle through all three, but there is a gap at each juncture point.

When a dream ends, you dip into the fourth state, *turiya*, before falling into deep sleep. After some time there, before you rouse to roll over, you deepen into *turiya*. In your eight-hour

hibernation each night, you get three hours of turiya. It is an immersion into Consciousness. This is what refreshes you, giving you energy and readiness for the new day. It's where you get your juice.

You also access turiya at other times. Anytime something stops your crazy-busy mind, you experience the peace of turiya. The bliss arising from the taste of delicious food is the rasa of turiya. When a song moves you, the feeling arises from turiya – the song was merely the trigger for your deepening within. Meditation is for the purpose of experiencing turiya.

This inner experience is why artists meditate, to tap into the source of their creative juices. This is why Phil Jackson taught his basketball players to meditate, for clarity of mind and to make their body more responsive. Your meditation gives you the fuel for living a juicy life. You bring your juice with you wherever you go. Rasa.

Most people look for others to give them joy. It is the norm to depend on circumstances for your bliss, but rasa's source is inside. This is why yogis fill their tank before going out into the world, eventually learning how to base their life in the inner flow. From this depth and dimensionality, you have something to share with others. You draw from an inexhaustible source, giving you vitality and bounce, the adaptability that life demands.

During the pandemic, you may have lost your external sources of rasa, especially while you were cocooned in isolation. Safe and sound may have proved to be lonely and boring. As you withdrew, you likely became less alive. You had less people connection, less sharing and caring. The stuff that used to make you juicy simply dried up, leaving you on your own.

It was a perfect time to do more yoga. It was like the yogis of yore who withdrew from the world. They sought enlightenment by cutting themselves off from family, as well as the economy and politics, while holing up in quiet places and simplifying their life. In many ways, you did that during the pandemic. Did you get enlightened?

If not, your path is to find your Self in the midst of life. It is a bigger task: to be so deeply based in Self that you can handle anything. The point is to live with your heart open while you see the reality around you. And you choose to participate.

You get your spunk from inside. It's called rasa. Fueled by Consciousness, you have dynamism and stamina. Meditation gives you the ability to draw from turiya while you get out there in a whole new way. It's time to get up and get moving.

Life is opening up again. You are reclaiming old turf. Families are getting together. Travel is happening, now back up to pre-pandemic levels. People are going to the movies. In-person yoga classes are starting to fill up while online options continue to be available. So many opportunities!

The trick is to bring your rasa with you. Instead of asking others to fill you up, come in with a full tank. Rasa is juice, spirit, energy. Bring yours with you and you have something worth sharing. This gives you a different way to approach the same old stuff.

All the stuff you used to do gave you what you used to have: familiar frustrations and anxieties, outer stresses and inner pressures, worries and the dead weight of old memories. Yoga frees you from all of this. How? By giving you the tools to develop spiritual maturity, so you grow into your Divine Essence and leave the old limitations behind. Thus the rasa flows all the time.

Now is the time to be doing more yoga. More yoga = more rasa.

THIS IS AN ARTICLE IN A YEAR-LONG SERIES, "A YOGI IN THE WORLD"

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