

Shakta Kaur - How Kundalini Yoga 'Dropped' Into Her Life



a reflection upon her ten-year journey - 2001 to 2011

By 2001 I had already traveled to India on a tour with Deepak Chopra and was preparing for a trip to Egypt with another spiritual teacher. In the meanwhile I continued to work on my own personal growth and development. It seemed like every weekend I was taking one workshop or another at a bookstore in Chicago called *Transitions Bookplace*.

Transitions was what you'd call an 'alternative' book store filled with self-help and new age books, magazines and book chats every evening with various authors. On the weekends *Transitions* held workshops and seminars with these very same authors.

On a typical Saturday after attending a workshop I was wandering around the store and saw a table piled high with 'Meditation as Medicine' books. 'Hmm,' I thought to myself. 'Now, that sounds interesting.' The workshop was the *very next* Saturday and I wasn't really prepared to return for more 'studying' the very next weekend. So, with just a few seconds of thought I decided *not* to attend the 'Meditation as Medicine' workshop.

During the intervening week I took a coupon that I had for a free latte at a local Borders bookstore. I went in, ordered my latte and, as was usual at this particular Borders, there was no place to sit in the café. So, I wandered through the book stacks browsing and sipping my latte. As I turned a corner into the 'new age' section a book literally flew off the shelf and hit me on the head before dropping to the floor. I picked it up, turned it over and read the title—'Meditation as Medicine!' I wish you could have heard me laugh out loud. At the same time I said to myself, 'OK, God, I guess I'm going to this workshop after all!'

By the time I arrived at *Transitions* on Saturday, February 3rd (in 2001) I had already read half of 'Meditation as Medicine.' And, as was becoming a habit for me on a Saturday morning I found myself with about 30 others waiting for an author to arrive. It wasn't long before a tall, thin, bearded man wearing a turban walked in with a guitar case. He set himself up near the teaching platform. I wondered if he was the teacher. Then a few minutes later another bearded, turbaned fellow walked in. He introduced himself as the author of 'Meditation as Medicine,' Dr. Dharma Singh Khalsa, MD. 'Just call me Dr. Dharma,' he said. 'And, this is my friend and musician Livtar Singh Khalsa. We're here to share with you the science and technology of Kundalini Yoga and Meditation.'

What I remember most about that class was first, the sound of the mantras. We practiced Basic Spinal Flex in chairs. But we also chanted. We practiced Kirtan Kriya, the Siri Gaitri Mantra and long Sat Nams. I also remember that Dr. Dharma and Livtar were wearing all white *and that I was wearing all black*. Third, although I had been trying other yogas in the months preceding this workshop I knew immediately that 'this was it' for me.

At the time, Dr. Dharma had one audio-cassette available called 'Wake Up to Wellness.'

I purchased a copy and the very next morning Basic Spinal Flex and Kirtan Kriya became my daily sadhana. Shortly after returning from the trip to Egypt I traveled to Rhinebeck, New York, to study with Dr. Dharma and Livtar Singh, along with Dr. Dharma's wife, Kirti, at a weekend workshop at Omega Institute.

Kundalini Yoga and Meditation had begun to change my life. And, informally I had begun to introduce others to the technology that I was learning, too. It seemed natural to enroll in my first Kundalini Yoga Teacher Training course (in Chicago) in the fall of 2001. And, by August of 2002 I traveled to Espanola, New Mexico, to (again) take the Master's Touch course so that Hari Dev Singh and I could be in the presence of the Master of Kundalini Yoga, Yogi Bhajan.

February 3rd is the anniversary of my very first Kundalini Yoga and Meditation class, it is also my mother's birthday. I'm reminded of that every time I look at my well-worn and highlighted copy of 'Meditation as Medicine' which Dr. Dharma signed and dated ten years ago.

You probably don't need to have a book fall on your head as I did to make a change in your life. You probably listen to your inner teacher today a lot more than I did then. And, as funny as it might sound, I am very grateful that a book fell on my head. I am also grateful that I not only paid attention but that I had the courage to follow a totally different path than the one I had traveled up until then.