

**FOURTEEN LESSONS**  
**in**  
**Yogi Philosophy and Oriental Occultism**

**by**  
**Yogi Ramacharaka**

Bird Publisher, 2010

## **Yogi Ramacharaka: Fourteen Lessons in Yogi Philosophy and Oriental Occultism**

Yogi Ramacharaka, The Yogi Publication Society, 1903, 1904, 1931

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Bird Publisher  
DP, založništvo, d.o.o.  
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SI - 1234 Mengeš  
Slovenia  
Europe  
T: +386 (0)1 723 78 28  
Email: [bird.publisher@gmail.com](mailto:bird.publisher@gmail.com)  
[www.bird-publisher.com](http://www.bird-publisher.com)

Published in electronic format, February 2010 by Bird Publisher  
Available electronically at: [www.bird-publisher.com](http://www.bird-publisher.com)  
Editor: Damjan Plut  
Cover design by Damjan Plut  
Text editing in electronic edition: Damjan Plut  
Electronic version made by Damjan Plut.

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CIP - Kataložni zapis o publikaciji  
Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica, Ljubljana  
233-852.5  
133.2(5)  
ATKINSON, William Walker, 1862-1932  
Fourteen lessons in Yogi philosophy and oriental occultism  
[Elektronski vir] / by Yogi Ramacharaka. - El. knjiga. - Mengeš :  
Bird Publisher, 2010  
Način dostopa (URL): <http://www.bird-publisher.com/>  
ISBN 978-961-6763-63-9  
249828608

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## **The First Lesson: THE FIRST THREE PRINCIPLES**

### ***On the Threshold***

It is with no ordinary feelings that we address ourselves to our students of the Yogi class of 1904. We see, as they perhaps do not, that to many of them this series of lessons will be as seed planted in fertile soil, which will in due time put forth sprouts which will force their way gradually into the sunlight of consciousness, where they will put forth leaves, blossom, and fruit. Many of the fragments of truth which will be presented to you will not be recognized by you at this time, but in years to come you will recognize the verity of the impressions which will be conveyed to you in these lessons, and then, and then only, will you make these truths your own.

We intend to speak to you just as if you were gathered before us in person, and as if we were standing before you in the flesh. We feel sure that the bond of sympathy between us will soon grow so strong and real that as you read our words you will feel our presence almost as strongly as if we were with you in person. We will be with you in spirit, and, according to our philosophy, the student who is in harmonious sympathy with his teachers really establishes a psychic connection with them, and is in consequence enabled to grasp the "spirit" of the teaching and to receive the benefit of the teacher's thought in a degree impossible to one who merely reads the words in cold print.

We are sure that the members of the class of 1904 will get into harmony with each other, and with us, from the very start, and that we will obtain results that will surprise even ourselves, and that the term of the class will mark a wonderful spiritual growth and unfoldment for many of the class. This result would be impossible were the class composed of the general public, in which the adverse thought vibrations of many would counteract, or at least retard, the impelling force generated in the minds of those who are in sympathy with the work. But we will not have this obstacle to overcome, as the class has been recruited only from that class of students who are interested in the occult. The announcements sent out by us have been worded in such a way as to attract the attention only of those for whom they were intended. The mere sensation hunters and the "faddists" have not been attracted by our call, while those for whom the call was intended have heard and have hastened to communicate with us. As the poet has sung: "Where I pass, all my children know me." The members of the class having been attracted to us, and we to them, will form a harmonious body working with us to the common end of self-improvement, growth, development, and unfoldment. The spirit of harmony and unity of purpose will do much for us, and the united thought of the class, coupled with our own, will be a tower of strength, and each student will receive the benefit of it, and will be strengthened and sustained thereby.

We will follow the system of instruction of the East, rather than that of the Western world. In the East, the teacher does not stop to "prove" each statement or theory as he makes or advances it; nor does he make a blackboard demonstration of spiritual truths; nor does he argue with his class or invite discussion. On the contrary, his teaching is authoritative, and he proceeds to deliver his message to his students as it was delivered to him, without stopping to see whether they all agree with him. He does not care whether his statements are accepted as truth by all, for he feels sure that those who are ready for the truth which he teaches will intuitively recognize it, and as for the others, if they are not prepared to receive the truth, no amount of argument will help matters. When a soul is ready for a spiritual truth, and that truth, or a part of it, is uttered in its presence or presented to its attention by means of writings, it will intuitively recognize and appropriate it. The Eastern teacher knows that much of his teaching is but the planting of seed, and that for every idea which the student grasps at first there will be a hundred which will come into the field of conscious recognition only after the lapse of time.

We do not mean that the Eastern teachers insist upon the student blindly accepting every truth that is presented to him. On the contrary, they instruct the pupil to accept as truth only that which

he can prove for himself, as no truth is truth to one until he can prove it by his own experiments. But the student is taught that before many truths may be so proven he must develop and unfold. The teacher asks only that the student have confidence in him as a pointer-out of the way, and he says, in effect, to the student: "This is the way; enter upon it, and on the path you will find the things of which I have taught you; handle them, weigh them, measure them, taste them, and know for yourself. When you reach any point of the path you will know as much of it as did I or any other soul at that particular stage of the journey; but until you reach a particular point, you must either accept the statements of those who have gone before or reject the whole subject of that particular point. Accept nothing as final until you have proven it; but, if you are wise, you will profit by the advice and experience of those who have gone before. Every man must learn by experience, but men may serve others as pointers of the way. At each stage of the journey it will be found that those who have progressed a little further on the way have left signs and marks and guideposts for those who follow. The wise man will take advantage of these signs. I do not ask for blind faith, but only for confidence until you are able to demonstrate for yourselves the truths I am passing on to you, as they were passed on to me, by those who went before.

We ask the student to have patience. Many things which will appear dark to him at first will be made clear as we progress.

## **The Constitution of Man**

Man is a far more complete being than is generally imagined. He has not only a body and a soul, but he is a spirit possessing a soul, which soul has several vehicles for expression, these several vehicles being of different degrees of density, the body being the lowest form of expression. These different vehicles manifest upon different "planes," such as the "physical plane," the "astral plane," etc., all of which will be explained as we proceed.

The real self is pure spirit, a spark of the divine fire. This spirit is encased within numerous sheaths, which prevent its full expression. As man advances in development, his consciousness passes from the lower planes to the higher, and he becomes more and more aware of his higher nature. The spirit contains within it all potentialities, and as man progresses he unfolds new powers, new qualities, into the light.

The Yogi philosophy teaches that man is composed of seven principles - is a sevenfold creature. The best way to think of man is to realize that the spirit is the real self, and that the lower principles are but confining sheaths. Man may manifest upon seven planes, that is, the highly developed man, as the majority of men of this age can manifest only upon the lower planes, the higher planes not having as yet been reached by them, although every man, no matter how undeveloped, possesses the seven principles potentially. The first five planes have been attained by many, the sixth by a few, the seventh by practically none of this race at this time.

## **The Seven Principles of Man**

The seven principles of man, as known to the Yogi philosophy, are herewith stated, English terms being substituted for Sanscrit words, so far as may be:

1. Physical Body
2. Astral Body
3. Prana, or Vital Force
4. Instinctive-Mind
5. Intellect
6. Spiritual-Mind
7. Spirit

man or woman of spiritual development. The Hand (representing the manifestation of physical creation and work) must be trained to do the work set before it the best it knows how. It must learn to do things well, and to feel that all work is noble and not degrading. It is the symbol of physical creation, and must be respected and honored. The man or woman of spiritual development goes through the world making the best use of Head, Heart and Hand.

## **Ninth Lesson: MANTRAM AND MEDITATION**

The Mantram for the month is:

*"I AM."*

When you say *"I AM"* you assert the reality of your existence, not the mere reality of the physical existence which is but temporary and relative, but your real existence in the Spirit, which is not temporary or relative, but is eternal and absolute. You are asserting the reality of the Ego - the *"I"* The real *"I"* is not the body, but is the Spirit principle which is manifesting in body and mind. The real *"I"* is independent of the body, which is but a vehicle for its expression - it is indestructible and eternal. It cannot die nor become annihilated. It may change the form of its expression, or the vehicle of manifestation - but it is always the same *"I"* - a bit of the great ocean of Spirit - a spiritual atom manifesting in your present consciousness along the lines of spiritual unfoldment. Do not think of your soul as a thing apart from you, for *YOU* are the soul, and all the rest is transitory and changeable. Picture yourself in your mind as an entity apart from, and independent of, the body, which is but your shell - realize that it is possible for you to leave the body, and still be *YOU*. During a part of your period of meditation mentally ignore the body entirely, and you will find that you will gradually awaken to a sense of the independent existence of your soul - *YOURSELF* - and come to a consciousness of your real nature.

The student should endeavor to give a few moments each day to silent meditation, finding as quiet a place as possible, and then lying or sitting in an easy position, relaxing every muscle of the body and calming the mind. Then when the proper conditions are observed he will experience that peculiar sensation of calmness and quiet which will indicate that he is "entering the silence." Then he should dwell upon the subject given for meditation, repeating the Mantram in order to impress the meaning upon his mind. At such times he will receive more or less inspiration from his Spiritual Mind, and will feel stronger and freer all day.

The Mantram for this month, if clearly understood and impressed upon the consciousness, will give to the student an air of quiet dignity and calm manifestation of power which will have its effect upon people with whom he comes in contact. It will surround him with a thought aura of strength and power. It will enable him to cast off fear and to look the world of men and women calmly in the eyes, knowing that he is an eternal soul, and that naught can really harm him. A full realization of *"I AM"* will cause fear to fade away, for why should the Spirit fear anything? - nothing can harm it. We urge the cultivation of this state of consciousness upon our students. It will lift you above the petty worries, hates, fears, and jealousies of the lower mental states, and will cause you to be men and women "of the Spirit" in reality. You will find that the result will be felt by those with whom you come in contact. There is an undefinable aura surrounding these people of the *"I AM"* consciousness which causes them to be respected by the world around them.

## About the Author

When Atkinson wrote under the pseudonym Yogi Ramacharaka, he claimed to be a Hindu. As Ramacharaka, he helped to popularize Eastern concepts in America, with Yoga and a broadly-interpreted Hinduism being particular areas of focus. The works of Yogi Ramacharaka were published over the course of nearly ten years beginning in 1903. Some were originally issued as a series of lectures delivered at the frequency of one lesson per month. Additional material was issued at each interval in the form of supplementary textbooks.

Ramacharaka's *Advanced Course in Yoga Philosophy and Oriental Occultism* remains widely respected as an excellent primer for the Western layman, despite the fact that it was 100 years old in 2010 and is understandably dated in some respects.

According to Atkinson's publisher, the Yogi Publication Society, some of these titles were inspired by a student of the "real" Yogi Ramacharaka, Baba Bharata, although there is no historical record that either of these individuals ever existed.

In reply to inquiries about Yogi Ramacharaka, this official information was provided by the Yogi Publication Society:

"Ramacharaka was born in India in about the year 1799. He set forth at an early age to educate himself and to seek a better philosophy for living.

"Traveling throughout the East almost always on foot, he visited the depositories of books available. The primary places where libraries were open to him were lamaseries and monasteries, although with the passing of time some private libraries of royalty and of wealthy families were also thrown open to him.

"In about the year 1865, after many years of searching and many visits to the lonely high places where he could fast and meditate, Ramacharaka found a basis for his philosophy. At about this same time, he took as a pupil, Baba Bharata, who was the eight year old son of a Brahmin family. Together teacher and pupil retraced the steps of the teacher's earlier travels, while Ramacharaka indoctrinated the boy with his philosophy.

"In 1893, feeling that his life was drawing to a close, Ramacharaka sent his pupil forth to carry their beliefs to the new world. Arriving in Chicago where the World Columbian Exposition was in progress, Baba Bharata was an instant success. He lectured before enthusiastic audiences from all parts of the world who were visiting the Fair, attracting a considerable following in the process. Many wished him to start a new religion - but he felt only the drive to write on the subject which he lectured on so effectively.

"In the closing years of the 1800s, Baba Bharata became acquainted with William Walker Atkinson, an English author who had written along similar lines and whose books had been published by ourselves and by our London connection, L. N. Fowler & Company Ltd.

"The men collaborated and with Bharata providing the material and Atkinson the writing talent, they wrote the books which they attributed to Yogi Ramacharaka as a measure of their respect. The very fact that after all these years their books are well known around the world and sell better with every passing year is a credit, too, to the two men who wrote the books."

Note that in at least one point, this "official" account is false: William Walker Atkinson was an American, not "an English author" and L. N. Fowler, an occult publishing house, was the British publisher of books that Atkinson had published under various of his own imprints in Chicago.

Source: Wikipedia