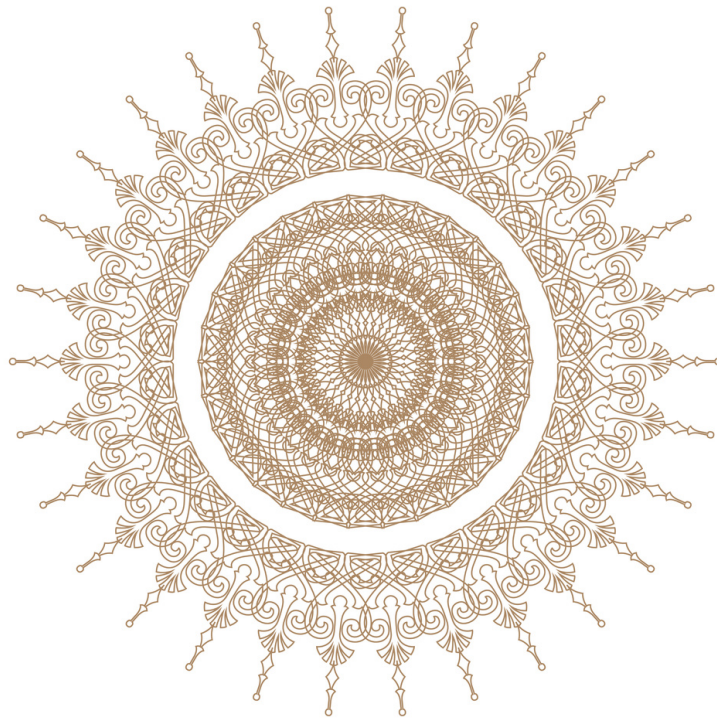


Gāyātrī Japa Taster

W O R K B O O K



Michelle
Thompson



Namaste & Welcome

Welcome to the Gāyātrī Japa - taster workbook !

The aim of this is to dip into the sounds of Sanskrit, so that you can have a go. It will not teach you how to sound correctly or the meaning or wisdom of the mantra, but it does offer some material so that you can chant along to the youtube recording and discover the energy and the sound of the Maha Gāyātrī mantra for yourself.

The link below will take you to a short sounding of the mantra 11 times. You can use this both as a meditation or as a learning tool, which is supported by this work book

https://youtu.be/JL79Nx99_ro

The following slides are extracts taken from my Gāyātrī Japa and Gāyātrī Upāsana courses and are meant as a sounding guides to start you on your chanting journey.

The Gāyatrī Mantra is one of many in the veda

What, I hear you ask? The mantra we call the Gāyatrī Mantra is one of 12 in the vedas and one of over 200 during the vedic period. We call it The or the Maha (*meaning great*) because it is considered the one of most import and significance.

Gāyatrī is not the deity we are gifting our practice to, this is actually the meter, the rhythm (the *chandas skt.*) that the verse is written in.

A Gāyatrī is a divinely channelled verse made up of three lines of three syllables. You will see as you work your way through that this is four lines, but that is a spoiler for another day. For now, just enjoy having a go at the practice.



Taster Introduction

TO RECITATION
OF THE VEDA

BY MICHELLE THOMPSON

Learn how to approach the practice of chanting mantras of the veda through the lense of The Gāyatrī mantra

The Mantra and one of the many translations

One of the things I learnt from my teacher was that, contrary to what I thought, one did not need to know the literal translation. In fact from the perspective of chanting the veda that almost needs suspending as often times things are just representative of the human experience, i.e. when the veda speaks about the 'forest' is it actually talking about the mind. Speaking to being lost in the forest does not literally mean someone wandering through pine trees, rather being lost in the forest of ones mind. *(Again, that is a lesson for another day)*

There are 70+ different translations of the of this mantra, all illuminating it in a slightly different way. The below is a beautiful translation by Jean Le Mee. Commonly **dhīmahī** is translated as **meditation on** but this choice of words **rest in** has an easefulness about it which is lovely, there is no 'doing' at all.

Gāyatrī Mantra

oṃ bhūr bhuvāḥ suvāḥ |
tat sāvitur varēṇyaṃ
bhargó devasyā dhīmahi |
dhiyo yo nāḥ pracodayāt ||



"Let us bring our minds to rest
in the glory of the divine truth.
May truth inspire our reflection
- Jean Le Mée"



What is the 'prayer value' of the mantra

So saying that we don't need to know the literal translation, what do we need? My teacher calls it the '**prayer value of the mantra**'. What are we seeking to attain? What do we want assistance with? What do we need support with to discover?

Here we are invoking the Sun deity Savitr. We are asking them to illuminate our understanding. For clarity of thought to propel us in the right direction so we can think clearly and make the right decisions.

We are asking to shine light onto the path in front of us and show us the right way.

The sun self illumines, it doesn't need any light to light it. We're asking to embody that quality, to self illuminate, to find the answers within ourselves.

Gāyatrī Mantra



- Illuminate our understanding
- Light the path
- Give us clarity
- Show us the way
- Help us make decisions

om bhūr bhuvāṣ suvāḥ |
tat sāvītur varēṇyaṃ
bhargó devasyā dhīmahi |
dhiyo yo nāḥ pracodayāt ||



How does one chant in a lineage

Simply put, one learns from ones teachers. The passing down of sanskrit mantra is both an aural and oral tradition, one listens and repeats. Obviously that tradition has evolved with technology supporting, rather than replacing that. I am sharing this with you, just as one of my teacher has calls with their Guru in India (still over the phone not on zoom yet!) but the core of the tradition remains.

It is always with humble gratitude that I give thank my teachers at the start of my sessions. This teaching comes from a living South Indian lineage, my teacher, of that lineage, is a long term disciple of the Challakare Brothers - Karnataka who have blessed the sharing of that work with me, and from me to you, and so the tradition continues.

In this tradition, the Krsna Yajur Veda tradition, we listen once, repeat twice, then we are chanting vedic mantra!

Tradition of Recitation

As is often said every journey starts with the first step.

The study of mantra begins by simply ...

Listening and Repeating

LISTEN
ONCE

REPEAT
TWICE



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Some Basics

As I said, this is not meant to teach you anything, rather put some principles in front of you so that you can have a go.

In this tradition we observe the **Svara** all you need to know about this now is that this is, for want of a better word, the tune of the mantra. The diacritics, the little lines and squiggles that you see, they tell us exactly how this is sounded.

In the Svara we have just 3 notes, low middle and high and there is a special instance where we go middle to high.

The middle note is where you naturally sound **Om**, so you always know where to start.

The Svara

- ✓ anudātta अनुदात्त low note -
- ✓ udātta उदात्त middle note (no mark)
- ✓ svarita स्वरित high note |
- ✓ dīrgha svarita दीर्घस्वरित middle to high ||

OM BHŪR BHUVAṢ SUVĀḤ



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The 'svara' and Om̐

In my model for learning I have mapped out the Svara for you over 3 lines so you have a visual representation of the 'tune' of the mantra.

There is also some colour coding to help you out as you chant along. But first a little note on **Om̐**. We are chanting according to the rules of the veda and in this there is a specific rhythm, it is not long as you might be more familiar with. It is also as in 'home' not as in 'office' or 'aum'. There are some tips in the notes below.



Om̐

- Is effortless
- Is partless
- O = 2 count
- m = 1/2 count
- sounded in the nose
- tongue to roof of mouth
- Energy send upwards

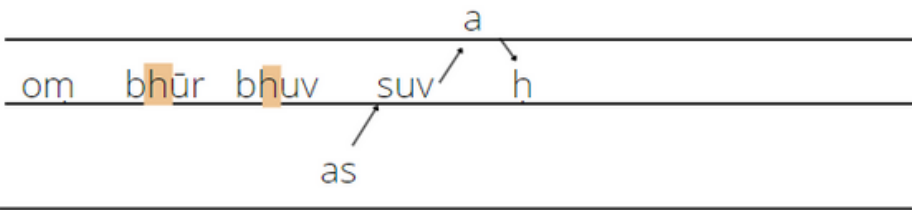


Svara स्वर - line 1

Gross or physical realm (vaiśvānara)
The Waking State

emphasised
aspirate

OM BHŪR BHUVAS SUVĀḤ

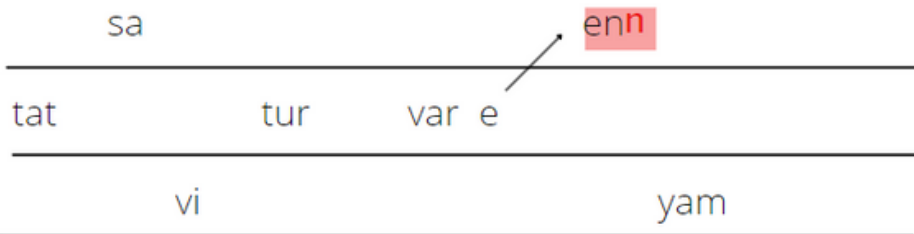


Svara स्वर - line 2

Gross or physical realm (vaiśvānara)
The Waking State

emphasised
aspirate
changes

TAT SAVITUR VAREṆYAM



Svara स्वर - line 3

Subtle realm (taijasa)
The Dream State

emphasised
aspirate

BHARGO DEVASYA DHĪMAHI

go ya
bhar vas dhi ma hi
de

Svara स्वर - line 4

Causal realm (prajñā)
The Sleep State

emphasised
aspirated
changed/added

DHIYO YO NAḤ PRACODAYĀT

naḥ^{ff} ā
dhi yo pra da yā te
yo co

The full Mantra Map

Here is the full Mantra Map, as you become more familiar you will only need the text and after a while you won't need that at all.

Gāyatrī Mantra

oṃ bhūr bhuv suv ḥ |
as
tat sá tur varē ēṇ
vi nyam
bharg ó asy dhīmahi |
dev
dhi yo náḥ prac dayā ā t ||
yo o

Here is the link again to the short practice, these are the steps

https://youtu.be/JL79Nx99_ro

- Start with a moment of silence and a few deep breaths
- 11 cycles of the mantra
- Sit in the silence
- Close with om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ ||

Gāyatrī Mantra



om bhūr bhuvāḥ suvāḥ |
tat sāvitur varēṇyaṃ
bhargō devasyā dhīmahi |
dhiyo yo nāḥ pracodayāt ||



"Let us bring our minds to rest in the glory of the divine truth.
May truth inspire our reflection - Jean Le Mée"

Stay In Touch

I want to hear from you! Tell me about your wins, ask me questions, tell me about your progress, just feel like connecting ...



1

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2

INSTAGRAM

www.instagram.com/michellethompson.

3

WEBSITE (Join for new content)

<https://www.michellethompson.co.uk/>

4

YOUTUBE CHANNEL (new, subscribe for new content)

<https://www.youtube.com/@michellethompson>.

5

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/www.michellethompson.co.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/michellejanethompson.personal/>

With Love.



Next Steps.

This is just the beginning. You'll find all the ways to stay in touch with me on the previous pages and I highly encourage you to use them, I am here for connection, questions. feedback both from you and for you.

As you will know doubt have gathered I am in love with sacred sound, it light up my soul and makes my heart very happy to share it

Until Next Time.

This workbook is my gift to you to support you as you discover the sound of sanskrit.

I would love love love to see you at an event or workshop in the near future and I am here to support you in anyway you need. I would love to hear your progress and wins and if you would like to feedback with a testimonial that is always appreciated.

Until next time ..

M Thompson

M Thompson