

AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF  
TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION'S  
INITIATORY PUJA

*Invocation*

Whether pure or impure, whether purity or impurity is permeating everywhere, whoever open himself to the expanded vision of unbounding awareness gains inner and outer purity.

*Invocation*

To LORD NARAYANA, to lotus-born BRAHMA the Creator, to VASHISTHA, to SHAKTI and his son PARASHAR. To VYASA, to SHUKADEVA, to the great GAUDAPADA, to GOVINDA, ruler among the yogis, to his disciples, SHRI SHANKARACHARYA, to his disciples PADMA PADA and HASTA MALAKA and TROTAKACHARYA and VARTIKA-KARA, to others, to the tradition of our Masters, I bow down.

To the abode of the wisdom of the SHRUTIS, SMRITIS and PURANAS, to the above of kindness, to the personified glory of the LORD, to SHANKARA, emancipator of the world, I bow down.

To SHANKARACHARYA the redeemer, hailed as KRISHNA and BADARAYANA, to the commentator of the BRAHMA SUTRAS, I bow down.

To the glory of the Lord I bow down again and again, at whose door the whole galaxy of gods pray for perfection day and night.

Adorned with immeasurable glory, preceptor of the whole world, having bowed down to Him we gain fulfillment.

Skilled in dispelling the cloud of ignorance of the people, the gentle emancipator, BRAHMANANDA SARASVATI, the supreme teacher, full of brilliance, Him I bring to my awareness.

Offering the invocation to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

Offering a seat to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down. Offering cloth to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down. Offering sandalpaste to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down. Offering a flower to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

Offering incense to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

Offering light to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

Offering water to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

Offering fruit to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

Offering water to the lotus feet, of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

Offering a bethel leaf to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

Offering a coconut to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

*Offering a camphor light*

White as camphor, kindness incarnate the essence of creation garlanded with BRAHMAN, ever dwelling in the lotus of my heart,,, the creative impulse of cosmic life, to That, in the form of GURU DEV, I bow down.

*Offering a handful of flowers*  
GURU in the glory of BRAHMA,  
GURU in the glory of VISHNU,  
GURU in the glory of the great LORD SHIVA, GURU in the glory of the personified transcendental fullness of BRAHMAN, to Him, to SHRI GURU DEV adorned with glory, I bow down.

The Unbounded, like the endless canopy of the sky, the omnipresent of all creation, by whom the sign of THAT has been revealed, to Him, to SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

GURU DEV, SHRI BRAHMANADA, bliss of the Absolute, transcendental joy, the Self-Sufficient, the embodiment of pure knowledge which is beyond and above the universe like the sky the aim of "Thou art That" and other such expressions which unfold eternal truth, the One, the Eternal, the Pure, the Immovable, the Witness of all intellects, whose status, transcends thought, the Transcendent along with the three gunas, the true preceptor, to SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

The blinding darkness of ignorance has been removed by applying the balm of knowledge. The eye of knowledge has been opened by Him and therefore, to Him, to SHRI GURU DEV, I bow down.

Offering a handful of flowers to the lotus feet of SHRI GURU DEV.. I bow down.

COMMENTARY

The ritual of initiation is the most important stage in the process of learning and practicing Transcendental Meditation (TM).. The heart of the initiation rit-

ual, in turn, is the PUJA, a Sanskrit hymn of worship which the initiator recites as a prolude to imparting the initiate's, MANTRA, the secret Sanskrit word upon which he is to meditate. All TM instructors learn the PUJA by rote and recite it in Sanskrit without deviating from the prescribed pattern. Even the physical movements which accompany the recitation are choreographed detail and carefully memorized.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION  
OF THE PUJA

The English translation of the PUJA is never revealed to the ordinary initiate-even if he asks. It is only available to those who are in training to become teacher and initiators themselves. It is considered vital that all prospective teachers of TM be personally trained by Maharishi. At the end of a teacher-training session those whom the Maharishi has qualified receive a secret anonymously authored & uncopyrighted handbook on the PUJA entitled The Holy Tradition. This little booklet of less than 30 pages contains the PUJA in Sanskrit and English, as well as extensive verse-by-verse commentary on its significance. It is this English translation of the PUJA - the "Official" TM version, as printed on page 5 of The Holy Tradition.. that we have reproduced.



## THE FORM OF PUJA

The content of the PUJA indicates that there are three distinct, phases of the ceremony.

The first phase consists of a recitation of the names of those being of legend and history who are believed to represent the line of "apostolic succession", through which the "holy knowledge" of the TM mantras has been passed. Beginning with the creator-gods of sacred legend, the list progresses through a sequence of historical and semi-historical personages; it concludes with several verses of praise to the most recently deceased representative of the tradition. Maharishi's own spiritual master of Brahman - and a Saravati (Guru Dev). It is important to realize that each person named in this phase of the PUJA is regarded not as a mere human being, but as a fully realized expression of divinity. Thus, they are exalted as deities in themselves who are worthy of worship. The Holy Tradition plainly attributes deity to Shankara in portraying him "in the status of the Absolute" (p. 16). The PUJA itself ascribes the same status to Guru Dev (whose image adorns the altar of the initiation ritual).

The second phase of the PUJA concerns the actual offerings placed before the image of Guru Dev. A succession of 17 different items are offered in turn, to the accompaniment of a repeated

verbal formula which concludes with the words, "I bow down." It is during this phase that the candidate's participation in the ritual is most obvious, as the handkerchief, flowers and fruit which he has been instructed to bring to his initiation are individually presented upon the altar during the prescribed course of the ceremony.

The third and last phase of the PUJA is literally a hymn of praise and adoration to Guru Dev in his status as deity. This section of the PUJA is unabashedly religious in character and worshipful in intent in the opening stanza of this section, Guru Dev is successively identified with the three major deities recognized by classical Hinduism (i.e., Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva). Homage is then offered to all three in the person of the guru.

At the end of the PUJA, the teacher actually bows down before the altar, thus physically affirming his repeated declaration "... I bow down." Simultaneously, the teacher makes a carefully rehearsed gesture toward the candidate which invites him to bow down beside his initiator. Following this climactic act of reverence to Guru Dev, the teacher verbally imparts a mantra to the initiate, making certain that he understands how to pronounce it properly. The initiate is then allowed to actually meditate for the first time.

## THE CENTRALITY OF THE PUJA

It is significant that the prospective mediator commences his involvement with TM in this way; not until the ceremony is completed does the initiate receive his MANTRA, the secret Sanskrit - word used in meditation. That the religious quality of this liturgy is not mere extraneous ornamentation, but is of the essence of TM is shown by the fact that no one is initiated except through performance of the ceremony and participation in the obeisances described in the PUJA. If the candidate, for reasons of conscience, declines to bow or remove his shoes it will be no barrier to receiving his Mantra; but if he refuses to bring an offering or if he totally, objects to the enactment of the ritual, he will not be initiated.

*for more information:*

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# The puja Translation

One of the primary deceptions of T.M. is that its adherents claim it not to be a religion. The following puja (or prayer) that is invoked at the time a teacher of T.M. is initiated, speaks for itself.....