



*– An Introduction –*  
**Multi-faceted Vedic Hinduism**  
*(Sanaatana Dharma)*

Presented by:  
M.G. Prasad



## What does *Sanaatana Dharma* mean?

- ❖ *Sanaatana* is Perennial and *Dharma* is universal principles and laws that govern life
- ❖ Refers to the whole process and values of life starting from inception of an idea, activity, results and beyond
- ❖ Provides a vision and a way for practice in life, both at an individual and collective level.



# What are the Objectives of Life (Purushaartha)?

1. *Dharma:*            *Laws of Life, Nature and Universe*
2. *Artha:*                *Wealth, Possession and Power*
3. *Kama:*                *Desire and Ambition*
4. *Moksha:*            *State of contentment and tranquility*

*The above order is very important and should not be interchanged.*



# What are the major Stages in Life (Ashrama)

1. *Bramhacharya*: deals with the younger years of a student's life (education).
2. *Grihasta*: deals with married life (social responsibility).
3. *Vanaprastha*: deals with later years of life (contemplation).
4. *Sanyaasa*: deals with the senior years of life (renunciation).

The above order is general guideline but it is possible to become a *Sanyaasin* directly from any stage

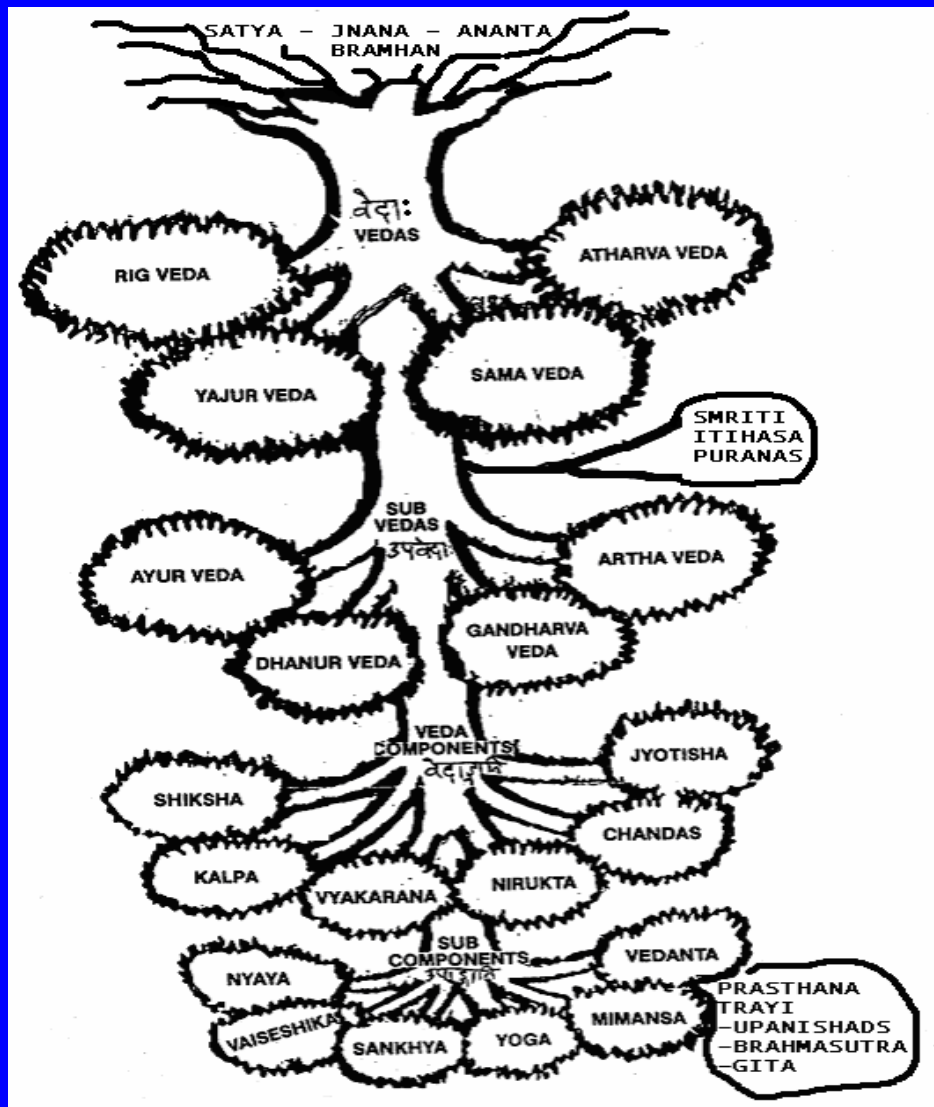


## How do India's *Rishis* define what goal of life is?

- “It is the view of the *Rishis* (enlightened beings) of *Bharata* that spiritual enlightenment is the ultimate goal of life. That is attainment of ultimate joy (*Ananda*). That is liberation (*Mukti*). Spiritual knowledge (*Jnana*) is that by which one merges into the light of *Atman* (One Source) as a river merges into the ocean.
- The *Rishis* or *jnanis* having attained this ultimate goal have brought forth the knowledge in science and arts (*Vijnana*) keeping in line with their roots in spiritual knowledge (*Jnana*) because *Vijnana* is the manifestation of *Jnana*.
- It is for this reason an in-depth sincere study of knowledge in science and arts at any stage of manifestation will lead to attainment of the ultimate goal of spiritual knowledge (*Jnana*)”

*Sriranga Sadguru*  
1913 - 1969

# Vedic Knowledge as an Inverted Tree



*Bramhan - God  
Non - Dual Reality*

**4 Vedas**

**Vedic literature**

# And, *Yoga*\* is the practice of *Vedic* knowledge in all aspects of life



“ The customs and habits, the dress and ornaments, the manners and etiquette, the conceptions of right and wrong and of good and evil, the learning, literature and the various arts like music, the political thoughts, views regarding all actions and the consecratory ceremonies, etc., of the Indians (*Bharatiyas*), are all permeated like the warp and woof by *Ashtanga Yoga*.”

*Sriranga Sadguru*  
1913 - 1969

*\*Yoga means the union of the individual soul with the Supreme*

# Ashtanga Yoga is the practical approach of Vedanta

## 1. Yama

- i. *Ahimsa* (nonviolence),
- ii. *Satya* (Truth),
- iii. *Asteya* (non-covetedness),
- iv. *Bramhacharya* (continence),
- v. *Aparigriha* (non-receiving)

## 2. Niyama

- i. *Shoucha* (cleanliness),
- ii. *Santosha* (contentment),
- iii. *Tapah* (austerity),
- iv. *Swadhyaya* (Scriptural study),
- v. *Ishvarapranidhana* (Surrender to Supreme God)

3. *Asana* Firm postures

4. *Pranayama* Vital force regulation

5. *Pratyahara* Withdrawal of senses from object

6. *Dharana* Fixing the mind on a sacred object

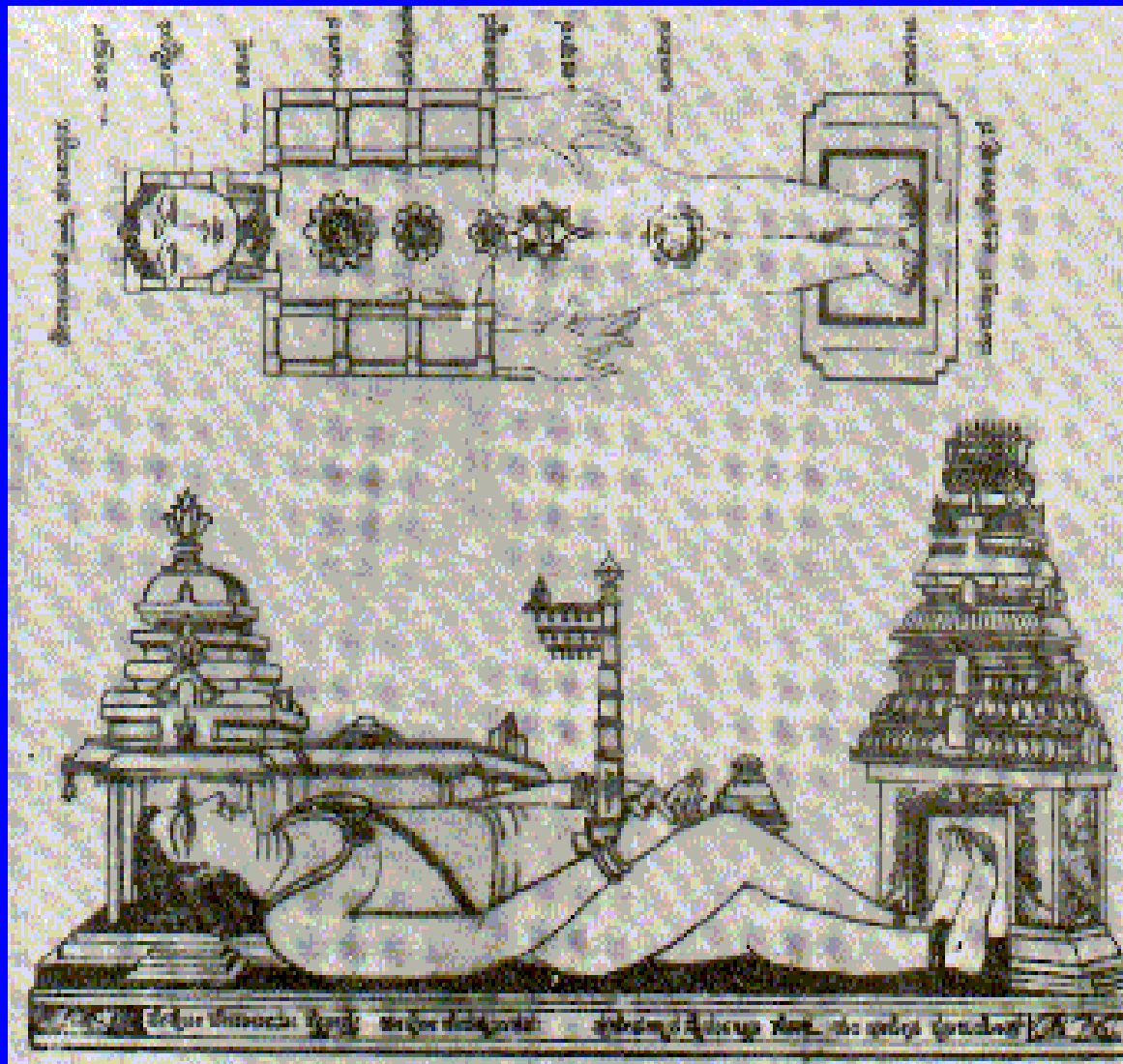
7. *Dhyana* Unbroken flow of mind on a sacred object

8. *Samadhi* Original state of bliss



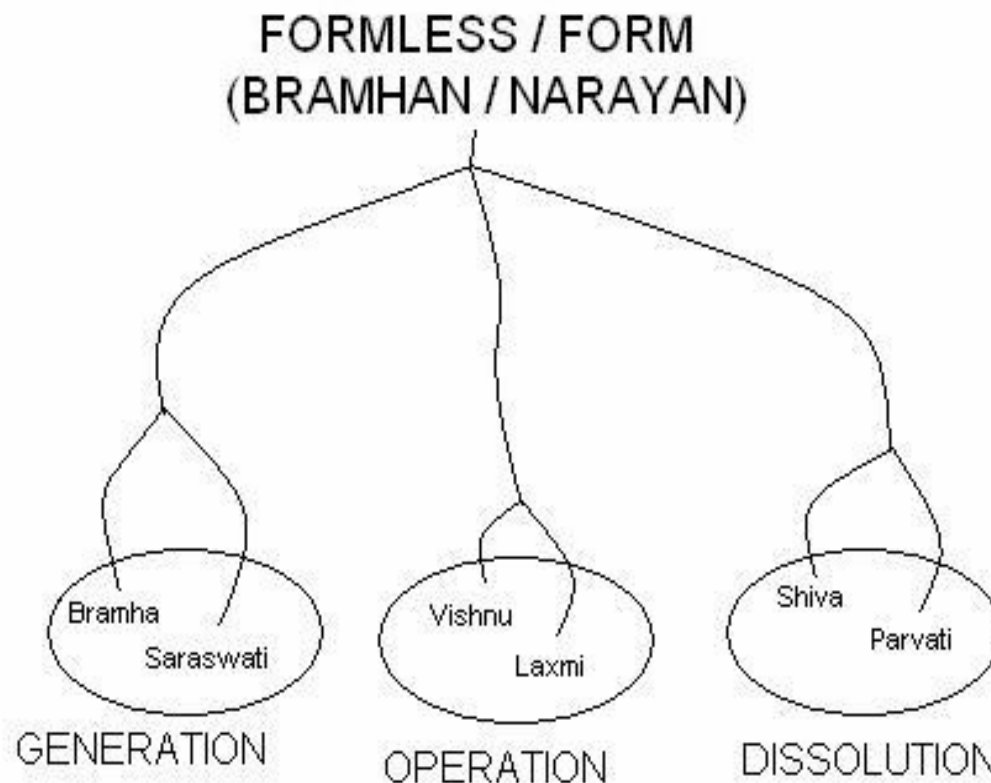


# Vedic Hindu Temple designed on Yogic principles of the Human Body



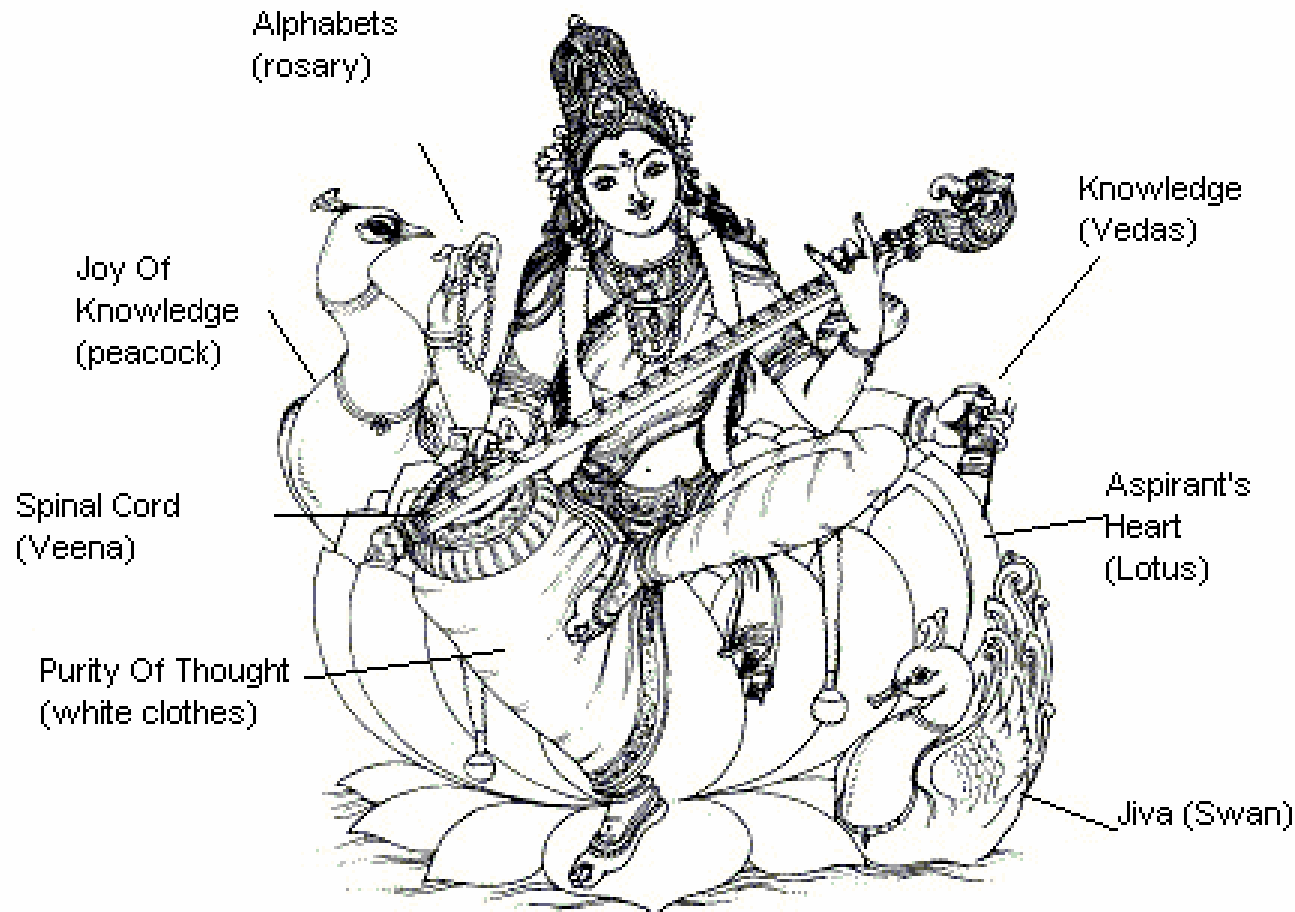
- Human body with *chakras* - (Abode of God) *Devaalaya*
- God indwelling in human being - (Deity) *Murti*
- Feet - *Rajagopura*
- Hands - *Prakaara*
- Abdomen - *Mandapa*
- Heart as *Antaraala* (entrance to *Garbha Griha*)
- Crown of the head - sanctum sanctorum - *Garbha Griha*
- Rituals - a guide to inner worship

## Monotheistic Vedic Hindu Trinity describes Manifestations of the One Source



**Non-dual Reality -  
GOD - with  
inseparable  
masculine  
principle and  
feminine energy.  
*Bramhan*, the  
formless,  
manifests in  
different forms to  
ease the seeker's  
understanding of  
life and universe.**

# Goddess Saraswati symbolizes Divine Knowledge



SARASWATI

*Saraswati*  
means the  
one who  
gives the  
knowledge  
of one's  
own Self  
and  
Universe.

# Lord Nataraja, Divine Dancer, in Spiritual Bliss of Perfect Yogic Balance



- Dwarf - demon of forgetfulness
- Snake - *Kundalini* yogic energy
- Drum - *prana* energy
- Fire - *apana* energy
- Two hands in the middle - blessing of fearlessness
- Head Ornaments - Sun, moon and fire  
(Ref: Sriranga Sadguru)

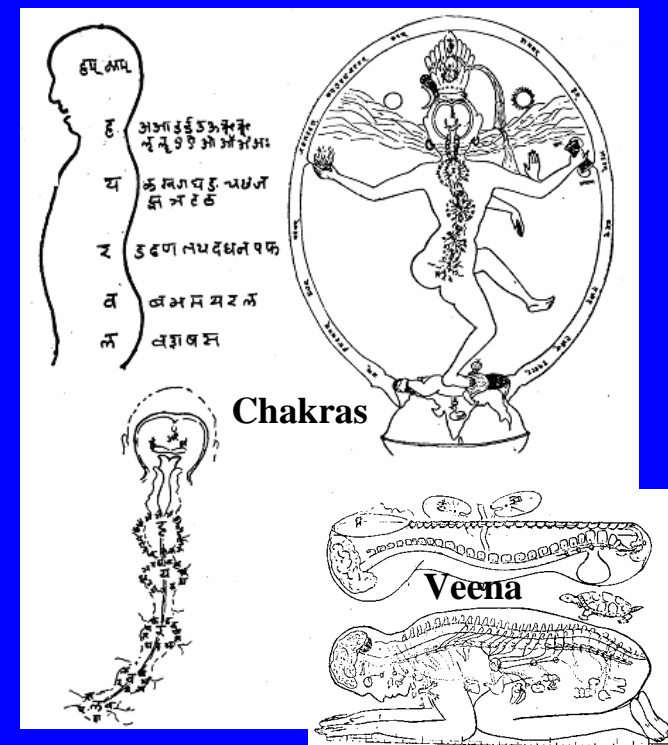
## And, *Lord Nataraja* illustrates scientific principles of Speech sounds

- *Chakras* represent the energy centers. The importance of various *chakras* in spiritual path is well known.
- The production of various seed-sounds in relation to various *chakras* starting from *Muladhara* at the base are shown.
- In the *Vedic* tradition, the human spinal cord is represented as the musical instrument (*Veena*).

The 24 frets of the instrument are analogous to the 24 cartilages in the spinal cord. The number 24 also relates to the 24 syllables in the *Vedic Gayatri Mantra*.

(Ref: Sriranga Sadguru, Amaravani)

The divine dance of *Lord Nataraja*, Lord of Dance, signifies the *yogic* process of self realization.



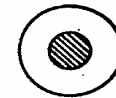
# Vocal and instrumental music expresses the experiential aspects of Vedic Hinduism

- Vocal music has its origin in *Vedic* chants
- Melody characterizes instrumental music; rhythm the Percussion instruments
- The design of *Mridangam* and *Tabla* have both melody and rhythm. This is from the tonal combination like string instruments.

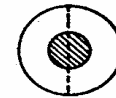
FROM: JASA, vol 26, 523-529, 1954 (B.S Ramakrishna & M.M Sondhi)

## F INDIAN MUSICAL DRUMS

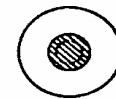
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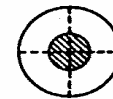
$$\Psi_{01} : \frac{x_{01}}{x_{01}} = 1.00$$



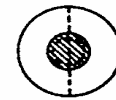
$$\Psi_{11} : \frac{x_{11}}{x_{01}} = 1.94$$



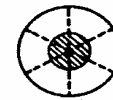
$$\Psi_{02} : \frac{x_{02}}{x_{01}} = 3.06$$



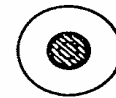
$$\Psi_{21} : \frac{x_{21}}{x_{01}} = 2.95$$



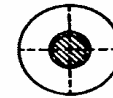
$$\Psi_{12} : \frac{x_{12}}{x_{01}} = 4.10$$



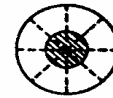
$$\Psi_{31} : \frac{x_{31}}{x_{01}} = 3.97$$



$$\Psi_{03} : \frac{x_{03}}{x_{01}} = 4.83$$



$$\Psi_{22} : \frac{x_{22}}{x_{01}} = 5.15$$



$$\Psi_{41} : \frac{x_{41}}{x_{01}} = 4.96$$

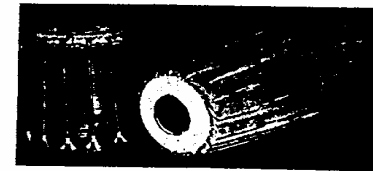


FIG. 1. Photograph of the Indian drums *Tabala* and *Mridanga* (left to right) which possess an approximately harmonic set of overtones.

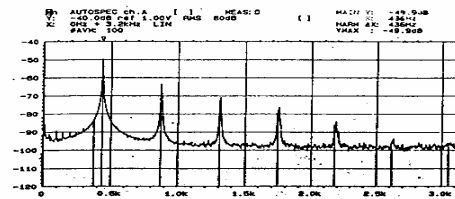
FIG. 3. Nodal lines (shown dotted) of the ideal composite membrane corresponding to the first nine modes of vibration. Cross-hatched portion shows the loaded central region. The modes and their frequency ratios with respect to the fundamental are indicated below each. The various modes are arranged in different rows according to the harmonic to which they closely correspond.

# Sound carries spiritual vibrations

- **Shankha (Conch Shell) produces an unusually pure tone**
  - Reflects the sound of OM
  - Used in Hindu rituals
  
- **Sound interacts with the flame to bring about various shapes**
  - A particular tone breaks the flame into seven tongues (Tyndall effect)

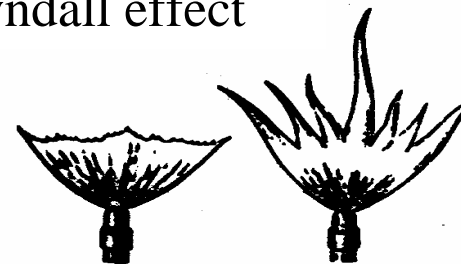
## Shankha

Lisa Taylor, M.G. Prasad, R.B. Ghosh



1698

## Tyndall effect



EFFECT OF SOUND ON FLAMES (TYNDALL)

## ***Veda Mantras interacting with flame...***

***Appearance of Goddess Lakshmi during a Yajna***



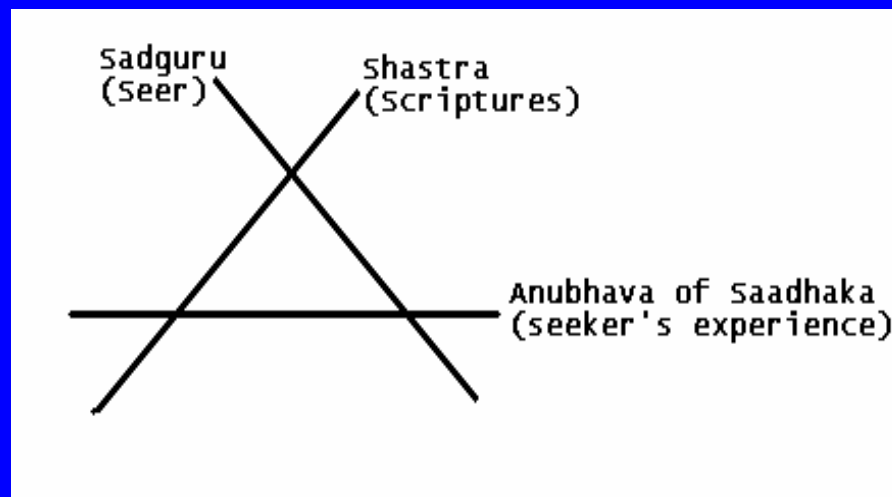
**An example: The interaction of *Veda* mantras and spiritual vibrations has a role in the appearance of the forms of the *devatas* and *devis***



# Vedic Triadic Approach to Seek Spiritual Knowledge

Three essential components for making an effort to acquire any knowledge, particularly spiritual knowledge are:

- The *Sadguru* refers to the guiding energy in the form of mother, father, acharya, spiritual mentor
- *Shastras* refers to the body of knowledge (Vedic literature)
- *Anubhava* means the experience of the seeker



Eventually, the seeker should advance towards spiritual enlightenment.



## ***Vedic Hinduism (Sanaatana Dharma) has universal and contemporary relevance***

**The multifaceted *Vedic Hinduism* or *Sanaatana Dharma*, through its universal principles of life and science, shows the ability to sustain the timeline through past, present, future and beyond.**

***“Ekam Sat Vipra, Bahudha Vadanti”* - The Truth is One. The Realized Ones describe the One Truth in several ways.**



# Multidisciplinary Team

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