

# From the surface TO THE CORE

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev is an international spiritual Master, author and authority on yoga, with profound spiritual and cultural insights on health and human values.

**Questioner:** Sadhguru, What is aura?

**Sadhguru:** Every substance on the planet has a certain field of energy around it. Or, what you see as substance on the planet is actually energy. It is a scientific fact that the whole existence is energy. One part of the energy has manifested itself into a certain level of reverberation which makes it a physical form. Another part of the energy does not manifest itself into a physical form, but still has a form. That form which is not yet physical or refuses to become physical but still maintains a form, is being called 'aura.'

Auras are of many kinds. One can carry anything from a pitch black aura to a pure white aura. Between these two, there are a million shades. Essentially, the physical, mental, emotional and energy status of who you are right now is represented by your aura in a certain way; it is visible through the aura. Too many fancy things have been told about it, particularly by the new age community today. A lot of it is fiction, but there is some substance to it.

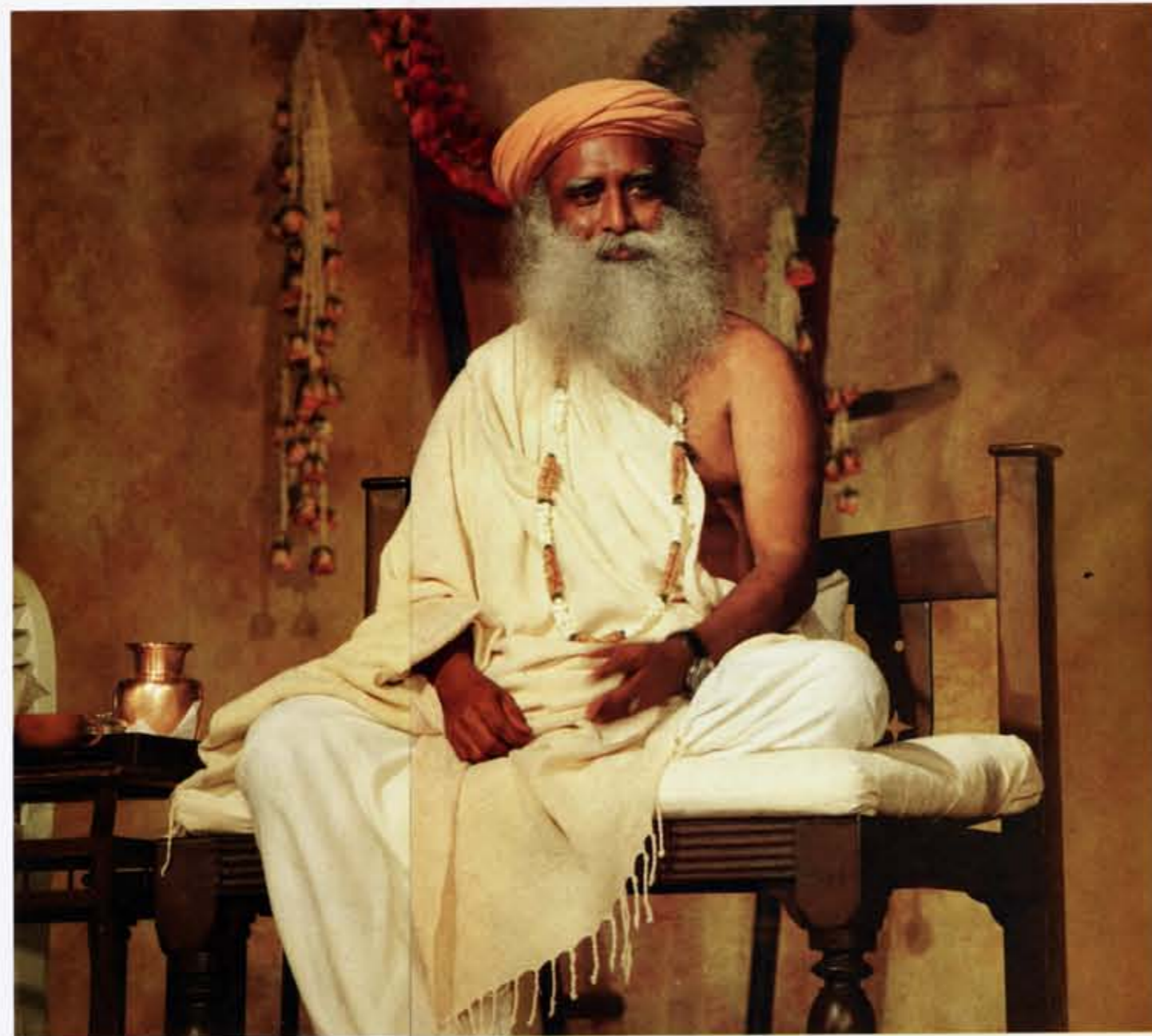
You should not concern yourself about such things. Don't try to see people's aura. The aura is the periphery of the person. I would like you to look a little more at the core of the being rather than looking at the surface. The surface is for doctors because they want to fix some physical part that may be going wrong with somebody. The surface should not be the interest of a spiritual seeker. What you call 'aura' is even more superficial than the skin because it is even further out. If one has the necessary insight, it may give you a certain access to the nature of the person, but you

are only looking at the psychological, emotional and physical structure of the human being.

On the spiritual path, it is best you ignore the aura — yours and everybody's ... and focus on the core. If you are focused on the core, you will have a wonderful aura. If your focus is on the surface, you will have a miserable aura. So don't keep looking at other people's aura and your own. [All laugh] It's time you looked at the core of this one [referring to oneself] and that one [referring to the other]. If you look at the core of this one, then naturally you will see the core of everything because in the core, 'this and that' does not exist. In the core, only 'this' exists. On the surface, 'this and that' exists.

You know people said, "beauty is skin deep." Yes, a certain type of beauty is skin deep. If you saw somebody with their skin peeled off, you wouldn't think they are beautiful, even if they were the same people; that way — yes. But the aura is not even skin deep, so it is not worth spending time on it. If you become conscious of the core, the surface may just be visible to you, but you trying to see and read people's aura is a stupid thing to do; you will waste your life trying to do such things. If your perception is enhanced, you may see things. It is good to see things which are there. If you start seeing things which are not there, you are graduating from ashram to asylum. [Meditators laugh] If a lot of you go in that direction, we can transform the ashram into an asylum. [All laugh] You want to make it into an asylum? No. We want to keep this as an ashram. So you must be focused on the core, not on the surface. Too much

surface means we will make the place into an asylum. All kinds of nutcases who believe they are spiritual — there are too many like that on the planet, they are the biggest deterrent for other people



to seek any spirituality. Because of too many nutcases like this, right-thinking people who are a little more sensible don't want to have anything to do with spirituality. So, if you need to go, we will promote you, [laughs] but please don't turn the place into an asylum. [Laughs]

**Questioner:** Sadhguru, what is the subtle body? And why should we imagine it during yoga asanas?

**Sadhguru:** It is the body which is subtler than the physical one. [Meditators laugh] See, this life is so fragile: Inhalation,

exhalation, inhalation, exhalation ... [Gestures - meditators laugh] - gone! Very fragile, isn't it? Your death is just a breath away right now, isn't it? If you do this, [blows] it may go away. [Meditators laugh] Don't blow the candles; [all laugh] it's very symbolic. If you blow it too hard, it may go away. Between life and death, there is just half a breath, not even a full breath, please see this. The structure is very complex and beautifully done. It's extremely fragile, at the same time phenomenally resilient. What all human beings can do; unbelievable things they can do....

Even though their life is so fragile, still it has this resilience, because this body is done on many different levels. If it was just physical, if you just held somebody's nose in their sleep, they should be gone; but that's not how it is. It is in layers of existence. Even if the physical loses its ability to live, if the other dimensions are still alive, the physical could be revived. Every day, it happens to you: When you sleep, one part of you is actually dead, but because the other parts are still awake — either when the d-o-n-g [meditators laugh] happens in the morning or when they throw cold water in your face ... How do they wake you up? [All laugh] When one of these things happen, everything comes awake once again. When you are sleeping, one part of you is really dead — your personality, your thought, your idea of what you are — everything is dead; but just see how quickly it comes awake. At least the moment you have the morning shower, it comes awake; till then it may still be sleepwalking. [Meditators laugh] It is on many different levels....

In yoga, whether it's a simple asana that you are practicing or whatever dimension of yoga you are doing, essentially the only goal is to enhance your perception; because only what you perceive you know; the rest is just imagination. Generally, instead of enhancing perception, people have unfortunately been given spiritual teachings. Spiritual teachings will only lead to unbridled imagination, which is a sure way of graduating into the asylum. If your imagination loses control, if it is not rooted in reality, you are definitely moving towards insanity. So, on the spiritual path, if you take in teachings which are not necessary for you, very easily you will move towards insanity; the danger is always there. I have been almost brutally trying to curtail any possibility of people taking in any other teaching or any other kind of spiritual inputs, but there are many of our very educated seekers here who have to read something, who have to take in some input from somewhere.

The danger is always there; by taking in the so-called spiritual inputs, you can get unbridled imagination. If your feet are still firmly on the ground and then you imagine something, it's okay. But your imagination can take you off the ground; then you have no control over the situation.

Asanas and other yogic practices are essentially designed only to enhance your perception; not to send you on a flight of imagination. As your perception is enhanced, then you know life, you are not thinking about life. Right now, this question has come because there is no experience of the subtle body, but somebody is telling you "please see it," — imagination. Yes, we are asking you to imagine this because the distinction between what is real and what is imagination is not big; it's a very thin line. The real process is anyway happening; if you assist it with the right kind of action and awareness, the real thing will come into the picture. Today, it's an established fact in the neurosciences that unless you have some memory and imagination, your

visual apparatus will not function. Do you know this? You always believed that your eye is a camera — no. Without the computer behind, it cannot function. We are doing what is called natural eye care methods, the Sunethra Programme; we are using memory and imagination to see better. You can distinctly see if you build memory about something, within a minute's time you can see things better.

There have been very dramatic examples for this and even now it is true. Things that you have never seen till now, even if they appear in front of you, you cannot see them. It takes a certain amount of memory before you can actually see them. The classic example which is always quoted about this is when the first ships came to North America, the tribal people, when they looked at this, they could only see the people. They thought people are flying over the ocean because they could not see the ships. Such huge objects, but they couldn't see them because they had never seen anything like that. It took some information, some memory, before

they could see them. Even now it is so — many things about which there is no memory, you are unable to see. So we are just trying to build some memory; and you can't build memory without imagination. You always thought you cannot imagine unless there is memory. No, you cannot build memory unless there is imagination. Without imagination, memory is not possible.

So, we are asking you to imagine the subtle body. Just make it like yourself, don't make it too beautiful. [All laugh] Don't make your subtle body like a Samson 2, [meditators laugh] just like yourself. [Laughs] Don't let your imagination run wild; just a little bit is okay; because if you build this, the memory will play. Once the memory plays, you will actually begin to see. But don't see it walking all over the place; only when you are doing the asanas, okay? [Laughs] Those of you who start seeing subtle bodies all over the place, for such people we will give only subtle food. [All laugh] Really. [Laughs]

Source: Isha Foundation

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Source: Rotary International