

YOGA

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AWAKEN. ALIGN. TRANSFORM

VIJNANA
BHAIRAVA
TANTRA

BALANCING THE
Chakras

Akashic
Records & Yoga

Egyptian Yoga &
Kemetic Healing Arts

Samkhya Karika

Banana Yoga
MOVEMENT



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Words: Sarah O'Connor, BWY Tantra Course Tutor
and Advanced Energy Body Practitioner

Photos: Courtesy Sarah O'Connor



VIJNANA BHAIRAVA TANTRA UNLOCKING ABUNDANCE

As summer arrives, it brings a sense of vitality and abundance. Nature is in full bloom, the days longer and we feel naturally drawn outdoors, invited to immerse ourselves in the energy that sustains all life.

For many, the Summer Solstice marks a period of transition – one of possibility and spiritual growth. We may find ourselves navigating change, rediscovering passions or seeking a deeper connection with our inner selves. These seasonal shifts are powerful, but they can also be challenging.

That's why I'm offering a new course with the British Wheel of Yoga (BWY) to explore the teachings of the Vijnana Bhairava Tantra, a jewel of the Shaiva Tantra tradition that offers guidance for exactly these moments.

This sacred text presents a simple but profound message: abundance isn't something we chase outside ourselves. It's a natural state we can rediscover within. Through its 112 meditative practices, we learn to access this inner abundance in ways that feel grounded, accessible and deeply relevant to modern life.

In today's busy world, where we juggle work, families, and endless to-do lists, these ancient teachings offer something precious – a way to slow down, deepen our yoga practice, and reconnect with life's deeper rhythms. They have the power to transform how we experience ourselves, each other, and the world.

The Essence of the Vijnana Bhairava Tantra

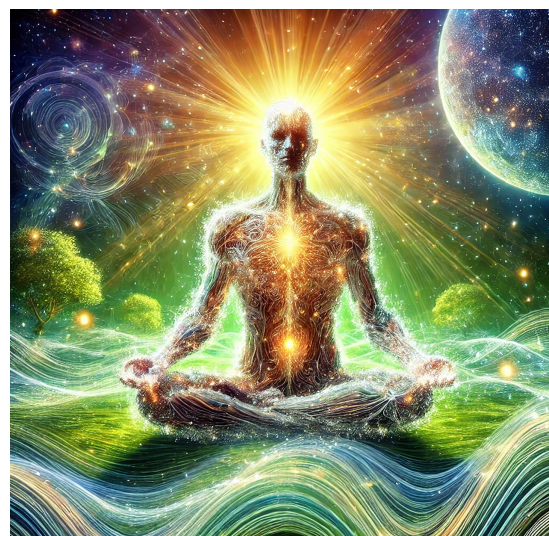
Vigyan (pronounced vig-yaan) means knowledge or understanding – particularly a deeper kind that goes beyond what we can see, hear or touch.

Bhairava is another name for Shiva, representing pure consciousness, the essence of all that is.

The Vijnana Bhairava Tantra is a sacred conversation between Shiva and Shakti, divine expressions of consciousness (often described as masculine and feminine energies). Shakti plays the role of seeker and asks Shiva to explain the nature of divine experience. Shiva responds by offering 112 meditative techniques (*dharanas*), each a gateway to a higher state of awareness.

This ancient text teaches us that spiritual realisation doesn't require turning away from the world, like in other traditional spiritual texts. Instead, it invites us to engage more deeply with life, seeing every moment as sacred and an opportunity for spiritual awakening.

Though composed over 4,000 years ago, its wisdom still applies today. Rather than resisting life's flow, the teachings inspire us to move with it. We're encouraged to discover a deeper kind of abundance – one that comes not from material wealth, but from the richness of awareness and presence.



Abundance is Our State of Being

In summer, we are surrounded by abundance. Gardens overflow with colour and vibrancy, flowers blossom, fruit ripens, insects sing their songs, and the sun warms the skin. But how often do we stop to appreciate it?

The Vijnana Bhairava Tantra reminds us that abundance is not something we find outside of ourselves – it's a state of being, cultivated through developing

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awareness and presence. When we slow down, tune in and connect with the energy of life, we begin to feel alive and whole.

Even the simplest experiences can carry us into this state. A deep breath, a shared smile, the sound of birdsong. All are invitations to remember the abundance that's already here.

Tantra and the Myth of Sex

Only three out of the 112 *dharana's* (68-70) use the intimacy of sex to connect to the divine. Yet, in modern culture, Tantra is often misunderstood as being all about sex.

In reality, Tantra is a spiritual path to enlightenment. The spiritual/physical union of people who recognise self in one another can be sacred – particularly when we embrace the energy of orgasm and we connect with the divine in the moment of joy and rapture. But that's just one doorway.

Tantra teaches us that divine experience can arise through anything when we meet the moment fully, with awareness and openness.

Practices for Summer: Living the Teachings

To align with the energy of summer and explore the teachings of the Vijnana Bhairava Tantra, here are two simple practices. Both are drawn from specific *dharanas* and invite you to deepen your awareness and welcome in abundance.

1 Savour the Taste of Life (Dharana 49, verse 72)

Summer is a feast for the senses—ripe fruits, fresh vegetables and meals bursting with flavour. The text encourages us to use sensory experiences as gateways to the presence and joy of Bhairava – the life force that exists in everything.

Try this:

- Choose a piece of fresh seasonal fruit, a fragrant juicy strawberry, a piece of ripe melon or a handful of raspberries.
- Sit quietly and hold the fruit in your hands. Look at its colour, smell its scent and feel its texture.

- Consider the journey it took to reach you: from seed to seedling, plant to flower, blossom to fruit.
- Feel the life energy within it.
- Take a small bite and as you chew, focus entirely on the sensations as the fruit interacts with your senses. Savour its flavour.
- Allow yourself to feel the fruit's energy becoming part of you.



Even the simple act of eating can become a meditation, allowing us to reconnect with the joy of nourishment and the experience of oneness. When we learn to truly nourish ourselves, we cultivate the capacity to support others on their journey toward self-nourishment.

2 Gazing at a Source of Light (Dharana 53, verse 76)

The sun is the ultimate symbol of summer abundance, radiating warmth, light, and vitality. This practice uses the sun as a focal point for meditation.



Try this:

Sit comfortably somewhere you can feel the sunlight on your skin, either outside or near a sunny window.

- Close your eyes and focus on the warmth.
- Imagine the sunlight filling your body with golden, shimmering energy.
- Be aware of an energy field around your physical body.
- Breathe deeply, drawing in the sun's vitality with each inhale
- With each exhale, release tension and let go
- Feel yourself surrounded by light, both inside and out.

This practice energises the body, reminding us of the abundant energy within and around us.



Bringing the Teachings into Daily Life

The beauty of the Vijnana Bhairava Tantra is its practicality. Its teachings remind us that we don't need to retreat from the world or live in a cave to experience spiritual fulfilment. We can find it in the very fabric of our everyday existence.

Earth is a school for consciousness to know itself through relationship and contrast. Without darkness, we wouldn't know light. Without sorrow, we cannot appreciate joy.

This summer, consider weaving some simple practices into your routine:

Start your day with gratitude: Take a moment to appreciate the sunlight streaming through your window, or during a walk when the sun emerges

from behind the clouds, warming your face. Close your eyes, lift your gaze upwards, and greet the light with a gentle smile. Feel your connection with the light and the world around you.

Reflect each evening on

abundance: What moments of abundance did you experience today? A good chat, a kind gesture, something beautiful you saw or heard? Write them down.



Create a Jar of Abundance: Write your observations on slips of paper and pop them in a jar. When you're feeling low, pick one out and remember the abundance that surrounds you.

Inner and Outer Abundance

As you embrace the teachings of the Vijnana Bhairava Tantra, remember that abundance isn't just limited to what we have. It's a way of seeing, feeling and being in the world. Anyone can experience it – in every season, in any moment.

These practices offer a pathway to reconnect with our inner vitality, find joy in the everyday, and celebrate the richness of life.

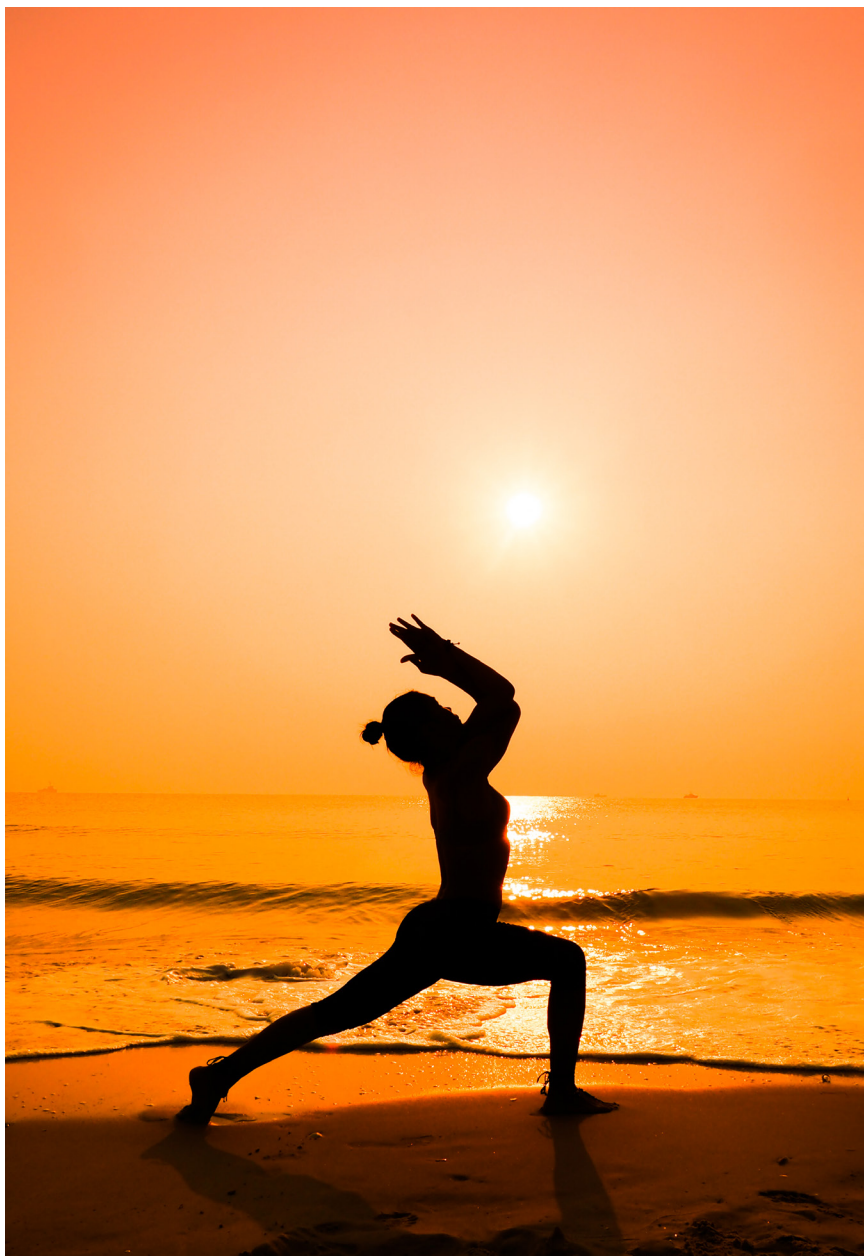
So, as the sun shines bright and life blooms around you, take a moment to pause. Breathe. Smile. Honour the sacred gift of this season and the light within you.

The abundance you seek is already here, waiting for you to notice.

Dive into the Teachings of Tantra

Join Sarah O'Connor and Tiffany Thorne to explore the transformative teachings of Tantra in their next BWY online course module starting 19 October. Rooted in ancient wisdom and designed for modern living, this course guides you through *Embodying the Teachings of Tantra – The 112 Meditations of the Vijnana Bhairava Tantra*.

Find out more: <https://portal.bwy.org.uk/user/trainings/448>



Sarah O'Connor is an Advanced Energy Body Practitioner and a BWY Diploma Course and Short Course Tutor with over 30 years' experience. She specialises in somatic approaches and Tantra, helping students release energetic blockages and reconnect with their soul's natural vibration. Her teaching blends intuitive wisdom with deep knowledge of the subtle body and energy systems.

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