



# Comparison Between the Kundalini Practice and the so-called Toronto Blessing

Written by Antti Huima in August 1996, based on the Kundalini FAQ, the Siddha Mahayoga FAQ, and general knowledge about the so-called Toronto Blessing movement.

The Kundalini FAQs are found from <http://www.spiritweb.org>.

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**Abstract.** The occult practice of Kundalini [energy] and the Toronto Blessing experience are compared. It is disturbing to note how the at least 1000-years old Kundalini and the contemporary Toronto movement are *almost identical* in at least the following aspects:

1. the both involve the **very same bodily manifestations**
2. the both are **distributed in the very same way**, namely by a touch or by some other method from **one already "in fire"**, the phenomena being **very contagious**.
3. the **reason for the bodily manifestations** is explained in the both to be **the very same**. Also **the genuinity of the experience is based on identical proofs**.
4. the both require the **same initial mental etc. conditions for one receiving the power**
5. the both consider **the transfer of the power to be a central issue and subject to scientific considerations**

**Purpose.** The sole purpose of this document is to warn the individual believers and to encourage them to seek for spiritual wisdom to make a distinction between what is from God and what is not.

As Christians, we must not accept "spiritual" experiences and teachings that are **not from Bible but from occultic traditions**.

It is clear that the Devil tries to mimic the genuine works of God. However, God does not try to mimic the works of the Devil. If there are experiences and practices that are not supported by the God but are common in non-Christian spiritual traditions we should reject them as they are certainly counterfeits.

**Note.** This document is laid in two columns. The leftmost column contains quotes from the documents describing Kundalini. The rightmost column contains the comments of the author, pointing to the indifference between the Kundalini and Toronto Blessing experiences.

Kundalini is at least 1000 years old occult practice. It involves bodily manifestations as a consequence for the "awakening of an individual's kundalini" and is related to, for example, Qi Gong (a Chinese occultic tradition).

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## The Similarity of the Outward Manifestations

### Kundalini

Briefly, according to classical literature the signs of an awakened kundalini can be grouped into: mental signs, vocal signs and physical signs.

### Toronto Blessing

The Kundalini FAQ mentions the following manifestations: **singing, reciting mantras, animal sounds, trembling, shaking, yoga**

Mental signs can include visions that range from ecstatically blissful to terrifyingly frightful. Vocal signs can include spontaneous vocal expressions that range from singing or reciting mantras to make various animal sounds such as growling or chirping. Physical signs include trembling, shaking and spontaneously performing hatha yoga postures and pranayamas.

From a more subjective perspective the more pleasant experiences associated with a kundalini awakening may include: waves of bliss, periods of elation, glimpses of transcendental consciousness. The less pleasant experiences associated with a kundalini awakening may include: trembling, sharp aches in areas associated with the cakras, periods of irrational anxiety, sudden flashes of heat.

[*Kundalini FAQ: What are the signs of an awakened kundalini?*]

**postures, waves of bliss, elation, altered consciousness, aches, anxiety, and feeling of heat flashes.**

The counterparts of these manifestations in the Toronto Blessing are found in the table below:

| <b>Manifestation in Kundalini</b> | <b>Manifestation in TB</b>   |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| singing                           | inspired singing in the spirit   |
| reciting mantras                  | other inspired utterances. It is conceivable that while yogists recite mantras, the Christians manifest something more typical to them |
| animal sounds                     | animal sounds  |
| trembling                         | trembling  |
| shaking                           | shaking  |
| yoga postures                     | strange (or prophetic) postures in general; compulsory movements   |
| waves of bliss                    | inward joy; laughter   |
| elation                           | euphoria   |
| altered consciousness             | prophetic glimpses; reception of inward understanding of spiritual issues  |
| aches                             | pain   |
| anxiety                           | weeping; crying; anxiety because of the childhood traumas now being healed [sic]   |
| feeling of heat flashes           | feelings of heat or cold in the body   |

We note immediately that *every manifestation mentioned to happen in Kundalini does happen in TB also.*

## The Similarity of the Outward Method

### **Kundalini**

Broadly speaking there are two radically different direct approaches to awakening kundalini. One approach requires initiation by a guru and relies upon a technique called shaktipat, or "descent of shakti." It is variously called: Siddha Mahayoga, Kundalini Mahayoga or Sahaja Yoga (Spontaneous Yoga)...

While not every long-term student ... necessarily shows signs of kundalini awakening it is

### **Toronto Blessing**

Shaktipat means "the descent of power (literally: kundalini)". The most common form of shaktipat is a touch by the guru on the individual's forehead. This is exactly the method that is used greatly to impart the "anointing", for example by Rodney Howard-Browne. This is also the most common way to receive the power.

amazing how many people have had instant awakenings of kundalini through initiation from siddha gurus...

[*Kundalini FAQ: So how do I awaken kundalini? and the next section*]

## The Contagiousness of the Phenomena

### Kundalini

There is no doubt that shakti is contagious. The mere presence of a single being whose shakti is strongly active can awaken the shakti of those around him. Similarly being in the presence of many people whose shakti is awakened to some degree can awaken one's own shakti.

[*Siddha Mahayoga FAQ: Can one receive shaktipat just by being in the presence of those with awakened shakti?*]

### Toronto Blessing

The "anointing" is known to be contagious by nature and easily transferred from one to another. John Arnott compared it to a "spiritual virus".

It also spreads from men to men in macro scale (between towns) and occasionally regionally even in smaller scale (in the midst of a meeting, for example when the members of a group of people keeping others by hand fall simultaneously).

## The Similarity of the Proofs for Validity

### Kundalini

Ultimately the validity of any spiritual tradition rests in its ability to transform the beings of its followers. The real value of siddha mahayoga is in transforming the minds of those who practice it.

[*Siddha Mahayoga FAQ: Are these kriyas some sort of self-hypnosis or some sort of New Age phenomenon?*]

### Toronto Blessing

The Toronto Blessing advocates say that they cannot understand why these phenomena are happening. They continue by saying that, however, that the phenomena belong to a genuine work of the Spirit is clear because of the transformations appearing as a result in the minds of the believers.

So we see that the experience is justified by the same means.

## The Distributors of the Power

### Kundalini

To continue the analogy, in theory "anyone on fire" can give shaktipat, i.e. anyone who's kundalini is already awakened. The more relevant question is: "Who should give shaktipat?"...

Giving shaktipat is a science and it is helpful, if not essential, to be instructed in that science...

Therefore, it is desirable that the guru be empowered to give shaktipat by his own guru and has been trained in an unbroken lineage back to a great master who was fully aware of the science of shaktipat. In this way some quality control is maintained.

### Toronto Blessing

In general, TB is known to be easily transferred further from anybody "already on fire". However, usually short courses are held to direct intercessors before they go on to minister people.

The method for distributing the TB anointing is different from the traditional view of Christian intercession. When in the traditional intercession focus is on God and His work needs no control, surveillance or intervention from people, in TB the intercessors are instructed to watch people and their bodily manifestations to know what the spirit is doing. In this way, TB ministry resembles science more than the traditional

[*Siddha Mahayoga FAQ: Who can give shaktipat?*]

intercession.

In Toronto meetings, usually only appointed ministers are allowed to pray for people. This is because of some quality control. In a sound Christian assembly, all are required and allowed to pray for others, not just appointed ministers.

## The Similarity of the Goal

### Kundalini

Kriyas, literally "activities", are spontaneous movements that occur after kundalini awakening. These include bodily activities such as trembling, shaking and spontaneous yoga postures; vocal activities such as yelling, or spontaneous chanting and mental activities such as visions. These kriyas eliminate the blocks to kundalini rising within the spine or central channel.

[*Siddha Mahayoga FAQ: What are kriyas?*]

Blocks, known as samskaras or impressions, do not just obstruct kundalini, but they embody attachments, conceptions and other mental afflictions that limit the freedom of our consciousness. Left unattended these attachments lead to actions which only reinforce the attachment. For example if we have impressions of anger then we will manifest anger in our activities which only reinforce our impressions. As kundalini rises it will purify the anger and as a result of the purification process the kriyas will occur...

It seems more useful to think of kundalini as a natural intelligent force whose natural movement untangles the knots which limit its expression. The garden hose analogy makes another point clear as well. Imagine what happens if the hose is very tangled. Turning up the water pressure may be a very dramatic and perhaps even counter-productive process.

[*Siddha Mahayoga FAQ: How do kriyas purify one's consciousness?*]

## The Similarity of the Requirements for a Receiver

### Kundalini

The unique perspective of Siddha Mahayoga is that because kundalini is an intelligent force it

### Toronto Blessing

The common explanation for the "kriyas" happening in TB meetings is that the God is doing some inward work on the people's lives and that it results in the outward manifestations.

Also, more generally, that the touch of the power from God results in the manifestations.

Also, one alleged purpose of the manifestations is to remove blocks from people's lives (such that pride, self-control etc.) that sustain the Spirit from moving freely in one's life.

So we see that the supposed purpose and reason for the manifestations is -- below the surface of religious terms -- *exactly the same*.

### Toronto Blessing

In Toronto Blessing the receiver is asked to surrender to the "power of the Holy Spirit" and

will, upon awakening, naturally direct the practice of the student. All that is required is that the student completely surrender to this force. As a result of kundalini's unfoldment spontaneous purifying movements, called kriyas will occur...

Even to reach the point of simply surrendering to shakti takes some practice for people. Some aids in cultivating surrender are chanting and selfless service. These practices open the heart and make one more susceptible to the influence of shakti.

[*Siddha Mahayoga FAQ: So what happens after shaktipat? What's the practice of Siddha Mahayoga?*]

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to receive the good work ("purifying kriyas") of Him without questioning. *So this is exactly the same initial condition that is required for the awakening of kundalini.*

Also, chanting spiritual songs is done abundantly in Toronto meetings. This is supposedly to pray to God, but at least as a side-effect it *moves people to light trance* (this is widely known in the psychology) and so enables one to receive counterfeit spiritual experiences.