

INSIGHTS INTO THE NATURE OF DEATH

***A Course in one of the Six Yogas of Naropa
By Ferdie Rossi***

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ISBN
978-0-9804886-1-6

Transcribed and compiled by Consciousness Publishers,
P.O. Box 6405, G.C.A.C.
Queensland Australia 9725.

INTRODUCTION

Ferdie Rossi – a superb mystical teacher with exceptional clairvoyant perception, is totally unique because of his firsthand knowledge of the subject of this book – an in-depth look at death, and its relation to many other aspects of the spiritual life. He only discusses what he has actually experienced and thoroughly investigated for himself from many different angles - and his insights, wisdom and deep understanding are geared specifically to our Western way of thinking. However, don't expect to have a smooth ride! He loves to shock and surprise us out of our comfort zones, with startling statements that might sound extreme, but this is a deliberate move on his part, so that we are forced to find our own balance somewhere in the middle.....

Another unique ability that he has in abundance is to be able to turn everything he discusses into practical exercises, because it is only our own firsthand experience that really counts, as it becomes an integral part of our being. Reading about other people's experiences in a book is only second-hand knowledge, and it usually stays in the book! We never take any of our mental concepts with us into the next life, because they have not become an integral part of our being in the solar plexus – therefore they are all erased completely when we leave this world behind.

Because death and all its intricacies is well known to this author, he lifts the veil of ignorance enough for us to understand much more about this fascinating subject and all its implications, and therefore with more of a sense of responsibility for ourselves and the world around us.

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What are the Six Yogas of Naropa?

Before we start with Bardo Yoga (the yoga of Death), I want to give you a brief idea of the spirit of all the Six Yogas of Naropa as a background, so as to capture some of their knowledge. Bardo is one of the Six Yogas, and this ancient wisdom can be used in our modern times in very simple and practical ways for attaining enlightenment.

There are only three basic stages, no matter what evolution one observes in the world. In ancient history, the Golden Age was followed by the Silver Age, then the Bronze Age and finally the Stone Age. As mankind gradually evolved, so they also sank back again, and eventually they were in the depth of matter once more. The Six Yogas of Naropa started from this Stone Age period. In the Golden Age it was not necessary for anyone to say in what way things should be done to achieve fulfilment. But when spirit gradually started sinking back into matter, certain guidelines and methods were given of possibly obtaining that fulfilment stage again. Consequently, a great deal of knowledge was lost.

History of the Six Yogas of Naropa

So as to understand the origin of the Six Yogas of Naropa, we will go back about 2 to 3 thousand years in India's history, because that is where it started. In those days people were living in fear and despair, with no direction and no idea as to what the purpose of life was all about. They were ruled by despots, and lived in isolation. The conditions of those days were a thousand times worse than our current conditions. At that time, there lived a spiritually perfect being, by the name of Telopa. It was said that he wasn't born, and that he had the power to condense his own physical body – that he was 'lotus-born', so he literally came forth out of a lotus. But he had very strange and difficult ways. In his own perfection he taught people, but his methods were extremely cruel. In those times, people were extremely earnest in their search for fulfilment, as they were living in constant fear. Many people went to Telopa for training, and many of them failed his type of tuition.

One of those people was a man by the name of Naropa. He lived in Tibet, and studied all the texts and books he could find about the spiritual path, but he was unable to make any significant progress. He decided to find someone who could help him on his quest, so he left Tibet and travelled to India. It took him many months, travelling on foot and searching for the guidance he needed. His journey proved to be very difficult, and in his despair, he was on the point of taking his own life. He was always looking for signs and omens, and eventually they appeared to him; certain guidelines were given, and he succeeded in finding his way to Telopa. I will give you some idea as to what kind of ordeals Naropa went through, as Telopa was always testing him in different ways. For instance, while he was on his journey he came across a young man beating his own father and mother. Naropa told him to stop the beating, because it was utterly cruel to do such a thing. Then the young son quickly tied his two parents together and threw them into a fire he had made. Seeing all of this, Naropa could not understand what on earth was going on. It was eventually shown to him that this scene represented getting rid of pre-conceived ideas and past history. On another occasion, he was asked to eat lice and other insects – but he

declined, because he said he was a holy man. It was through all these lessons that he eventually learnt that there is no difference between good and bad – that ‘good’ food or ‘bad’ food in that sense does not really matter.

When it came to learning more about the deeper essences, Telopa began pushing pins and needles into Naropa’s hands and fingers, to teach him that pain and pleasure have ONE specific origin – that we make things painful or pleasurable in our minds. Telopa also threw Naropa into a fire, where he was almost burned to death. But Telopa made him whole again after the ordeal. In that way he was taught that there was no life or death in reality. In this manner Naropa went through many ordeals, and eventually he was able to compile the Six Yoga’s of Naropa. He brought them to Tibet, from where they spread to India, where they were taught as well. The Tibetan and Indian ways of teaching differ, but at their core, the essential truths are still the same.

The nature of the Six Yogas

What exactly are the Six Yogas of Naropa? Basically they are six ways of bringing certain energies or facets, emotional inputs and perceptions within the body to perfection. We are always trying to probe these essential truths, to find out what was said, and what was meant. We are in a very good position, as we can use the best of this kind of knowledge to bring through a core that is functional for us in the West. We will quickly have a look at the basis of this knowledge, as it is extremely important!

The Six Yogas of Naropa, which are basically blended together as *one* at their roots, just like the petals of a flower, are individually categorized as follows:

Dumo Heat Yoga
Illusion Body Yoga
Light Yoga
Bardo Yoga
Consciousness Transference Yoga
Dream Yoga

(More detailed information about the Six Yoga’s of Naropa can be found in the book – “Dance of the Inner Goddess – a course in Tantra” by Ferdie Rossi.)

What is the subconscious mind?

Where will you find it? It is difficult to really define the subconscious mind. One might say that within us there is an area that we are not aware of, and the question arises - are words spoken in that area? How does it function? I can say that there one finds a great many symbols that stand in a certain relationship with each other. We all have a symbol for a tree there, a symbol for a motor car, for peace, for war, and so on. Now, are all these symbols merely static, without any connection to each other? No, they interact in relationship with each other. One may say that the subconscious mind is a type of battlefield. Let's imagine that I am a symbol for peace, and you are a symbol for war – and we represent those two symbols in someone's mind – are we going to just smile at each other? No ways! Our symbols are opposed to each other, so we will be continually fighting, indicated by continual movement. You as peace would be pulled near that person, while I as war would be pushed far away, or visa versa, depending on the existing mood of that person. What causes that person to draw peace near, and push war away? Discrimination! When we discriminate we consider peace to be wonderful, and war to be terrible, therefore what will it cause in the subconscious mind? *Conflict* of course, but in what way?

Discrimination and judgement are capable of *shifting* objects or symbols! Can you understand that the moment there is measurement in the subconscious mind, there is a shifting of symbols, because one image seems to be more important than another image? We said that the fact that we measure, or discriminate, is causing this movement. What is backing discrimination? Why do we always measure, measure, measure throughout our lives? Our pre-conceived ideas about what is right or wrong causes us to measure, but behind all of this, there is a root core, and if it is understood, we can fight against the causes of discrimination.

That root core is our INTELLECT. Now what on earth is that? Let's define our terminology. When you are intellectual about something, what will you do? You will be thinking about it. In doing so, what will happen? You will judge and measure – and you will be logical. Logic is pinpointed and fixed in a specific direction – so we may say that intellectual capacity has a lot to do with the ability within us to fixate and concentrate. What is the use of this ability? When I fixate on a motor car, I will observe it and measure it by seeing that it is white in colour, that it has a rear-view mirror, and blue upholstery etc. Now, is that fixation quality dangerous in itself? Yes! It is a beautiful quality, but there is something in that perception that makes it dangerous. It immediately triggers off your judgement and discrimination. What happens in your subconscious mind when you do that? There is **movement**.

Of course we need to judge and discriminate to a certain extent in order to survive in this world, *but in its correct proportion!* Intellect is a most wonderful tool, but this tool has become a monster, because from our point of view, we have *no other mechanism*, except through judgement and discrimination. This has a devastatingly limiting of perception effect on our human structure here. There is a vital mistake backing our discrimination in our intellectual mode that

presently clouds our perception. Inside all of us, there is a bright part that is god-like, but there is also a dark and demonic part as well. We call the bright part 'goodness' and the demonic part 'the devil', bad, or 'lower self'. It is basically the 'you' that is here, and it is this 'you' that is using the intellect as a mechanism to keep its form or shape, as a manner of speaking. Here we come to the basis of the Six Yoga's of Naropa that can easily be understood if we keep it simple and don't get complicated about it.

Intellect and clinging

In life, I am sitting here with a lower structure, the 'me' that I *think I am*. But that 'me' is terribly limited, because it cannot perceive or see clearly. When I'm in my intellectual mode and measuring everything, I'm trying to prove to myself that I really exist here. I have to be sure about that fact. In life, if I can prove that a quality exists here, I can also prove the existence of this 'lower self' that is here as well. This is what the intellect is continually doing. When I fixate on something and dissect it into many little pieces, my intellect becomes a *power*. Then the 'me' that I think I am, feels comfortable here. What is actually happening? What are we doing throughout our lives? I *cling* to that which I feel in my mind really exists, and then I feel secure in the fact that my lower self also exists. Now why is it so terribly difficult to get rid of clinging? When I am convinced that something really exists after dissecting it with my intellect, then I will see through it and feel that it really, really exists. In the same way, I will feel that *I* really exist as well – as without, so within. But, when this 'me' here seems to be real, I find out that it is *not what I think I am*. Then I start feeling insecure, and cannot function properly. So as to avoid that insecurity, I keep grabbing hold of ideologies, images and concepts in my life, wanting to make them really real. Then I can justify them to be making life meaningful for me. A way of speaking is to say that the moment I can believe in a 'personal God', is the moment when I'm actually trying to justify the existence of my lower self!

Throughout our lives we measure everything, and we see opposites all the time. This is good; that is bad. This is wise; that is unwise. This is godly; that is wrong. This is important; that is unimportant. As we do this, what are we searching for, other than imagery and something we can cling to? We are searching for *reality*, so if we can prove anything in our mind to be real, then we succeed in proving the reality of this self here – and then it feels secure. But what does life continually do? It is a continuous lesson in which the *opposite* is proven, all the time!! An archetypal example: I walk down the street and see a pair of boots in the shop – I simply MUST have those boots, as I visualise myself wearing them, and feeling very happy. I quickly run to the Auto bank, draw the money and buy the boots. But what happens? I go home, try them on, and somehow they aren't really what I want, so they are thrown in the cupboard, and I hardly ever wear them. As life continues, we lose something. Eventually we are conditioned into not holding too much onto things. What is the outcome of such a situation? We experience a mediocre type of existence.

Then suddenly we feel ourselves to be in a groove, where we cannot move forward, and we cannot move backwards. That is when we grow old. Another example: You start thinking that 'I'm such an honest person', and the next day you will find yourself stealing something, or telling a lie, however small it is. Someone comes to you and calls you a 'bastard!' The next day you will actually be a little better than you were! If someone calls you a 'goody-goody', you will

be a little deceitful, to show the opposite to be true. This all happens without you wanting to do it, and without knowing that you're doing it. That is when you are constantly in the swing of the pendulum, when life is trying to show you the opposite of what you think to be true. It is a whole learning process. Do you understand?

What is reality?

Our cardinal mistake is that we think certain images are *really real* - just like a father who is always disappointed in his son, because he is constantly measuring his son against himself. When something seems to be real, it disappears out of our grasp. You must understand clearly that life as we live it is a continuous process of trying to hold onto 'something-ness'. We even cling onto spiritual truths, and then find that that in the world they never seem to be what they should have been. This is an extremely important subtle thing to understand – the fact that I am clinging, and the fact that I am measuring are actually *one and the same thing in their roots!! I am constantly proving the existence of ME, and trying to establish my position.* If I can only find something that is really truthful and holy and really right, then this 'self' here will really exist. But unfortunately life never gives me a chance to do this, because the opposite of my ideas is constantly being shown to me. I am repeating this in different ways so that you can understand clearly. I am always busy trying to prove that I exist, and as soon as I get myself into a nice structure, a nice little box, so that I can say that I am this and that, and I'm not that and the other – then suddenly it all crumbles, when life shows me that actually I'm the opposite to what I thought I was! When nothing makes sense any more, and when the structure I spent so much time trying to build simply falls to pieces – what is left? Only darkness, desolation and despair.

Does the world *really* exist? Yes or no? Then we will have to prove it one way or the other. Let's put it this way: When I speak some words, a fraction of a second goes by before you hear them - or another way is to say that first light will strike you, and then there is a fraction of time gone before you recapture a past image. We're always one step behind! It is something like the light of the stars. We are presently looking at only the *memory* of their light. The mistake we make is that we *think* we're seeing the present, but in actual fact we are constantly looking at the past! From that point of view, one can never say that anything here really exists, because of our constant witnessing of a memory – so from that point of view, we may say that all things only exist *potentially*, and *not really*.

It is our *want to make something real* which causes our perception of reality. Our inner conditioned way of looking at the world, clinging to it, and *wanting* it to be real, is what's *making it real*, even though we're perceiving the past the whole time, and even though the world is only a potentiality. We're never where the action takes place, because we are continually recapturing events that have *already* taken place. You must understand that what seems to be real to the eyes, and to this body as an impression that you feel, is merely *a potentiality* – *not a reality*. All things are relative.

Let us look again at the subconscious mind. We said that it contains certain images that stand in a certain relationship to each other. Before we can reach

enlightenment, whatever that may be, we will have to enter our own subconscious mind and come to understand it. Where can you find your subconscious mind? Remember that ***the world is your subconscious mind!*** It is important for you to understand this point most clearly! The reality you observe here is a *reflection of the subconscious mind* – not God's subconscious mind, your *very own* subconscious mind. An object such as a chair is standing in a relationship to you. You can observe its form, so therefore it is a symbol, and it relates to you in a particular way.

Let me tell you a story. In India, when you are a practicing yogi, you know that you need to find your own subconscious mind, because if you do, you know that somewhere in that area you can possibly find God, whatever that may be. So you will sit and meditate. What is the first attainment in meditation? It is to achieve STILLNESS in mind. There are many techniques to attain that state, which we will look at later. When you become still, you will 'look into yourself'. What does that term actually mean? Where are you actually looking? Are you looking into your subconscious mind? How and where will you look within? This is very important! One of the great mistakes we make when we 'go within', is to try and find 'mind' in this little lump here in the head! When you meditate, you must look *through the whole structure* of the body. Mind is not to be found in the head only, but *throughout the whole body!* Therefore, looking within is an *observation* of what is happening in the body structure. We are going to take that structure a little deeper.

Let's say that the person is looking within himself, and we assume that he has attained silence and peace. Then looking within will bring about the following sensation – he will feel a shift in himself – a movement of a kind, and the moment that happens, he will open his eyes and see a happening in the world. He repeats this action many times, again feeling the shift within, and each time he opens his eyes, something different is happening in the world around him. What is the conclusion that he will draw from this experience? He comes to understand that as something moves within, *its reflection* is moving on the outside. So if there are two opposing symbols of love and hate that are at war with one another in that person's subconscious, what will he see after a shift of these two symbols within him? He will observe conflict! 'As within, so without.'

How can this be? These things can only be sensed within, and they are experienced beyond what is true or not true, because 'truth' inevitably embodies the fact that if one thing is true, then something else must be untrue. This experience of a shift within goes beyond all that, as it is firsthand experience. The world IS your subconscious mind, and whatever happens within, is reflected outwardly in your world.

There is the interesting fact that people with a subconscious problem will inevitably create a circumstance in the world where they can solve the problem for themselves. A classic archetypal example is a woman who is always drawn to one type of man, who bashes and beats her up all the time. She will marry someone of that type, and then get a divorce. You will tell her to not make the same mistake again, but she will always do the same thing again, until she has solved the problem. This brings us to the understanding that WE ALL LIVE IN OUR OWN INDIVIDUAL WORLDS. No two people's worlds are the same, because *we create what is necessary for us to come to terms with, in our own particular*

world. Your subconscious mind is not a quality that you need to go and search for – it is right here in your own world, all around you.

The nature of your subconscious mind

Your subconscious is really a fathomless self, endless in its symbolism and its potentialities. It is capable of creating a lot of trauma in a lifetime, and we will observe the dance of the subconscious mind as if it is real. All the solid objects around you *seem* to be real but they are not – they are the dance of your subconscious mind, a potential reality – never make the mistake of thinking that it is real – it is not!! If something falls on top of you, then your perception of that fall will kill you. When you are capable of letting go of these potentialities of mind, you venture beyond them. From our point of view because we're experiencing this world as if it is so terribly real, we're earthbound. But when you can loosen yourself inwardly, what will happen to you? You will be free! And what will happen to you as a Shakti or power? You will drift in the air because you are no longer earthbound. You're no longer here, because this

is just another potentiality in mind. There is a great deal to be seen and experienced in that state of consciousness! So now you know where your subconscious mind is: touch and feel it, but don't make the mistake of thinking that it's real – it is merely a potentiality!