

WHAT IS TANTRA?

Source: Christopher Wallis, "Tantra Illuminated"

A TIP SHEET

"To fully delve into the world of Tantra, you must not only relinquish any notions of what you think Tantra is but also your deeply held assumptions about reality itself."

MAJOR FEATURES OF TANTRA:

Yogic Meditation

Mantras

Mandalas

Guru

Initiation

Ritual Workshop

Bold are the three indispensable elements of classical Tantra.

TANTRA IS A MODE OF PRACTICE

It's prominent features come from different ancient and esoteric sacred texts from the Indian region.

ETYMOLOGY

Tantra breaks down into the verbal roots

tan,

meaning propagate, elaborate on, expand on,

tra

meaning save, protect.

TRANSLATION- Tantra spreads (*tan*) wisdom that saves (*tra*).
Tantra is a device (*tra*) for expanding (*tan*), or Tantra "stretches our awareness and expands our capacity for joy. "

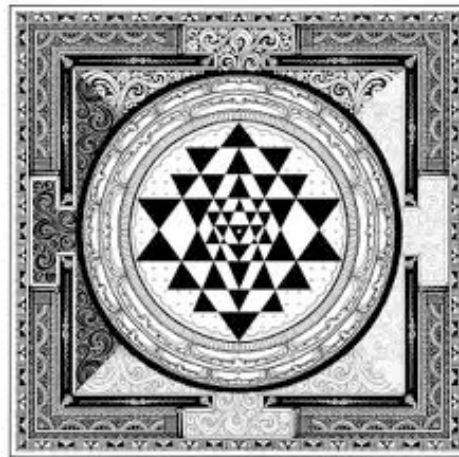
IS TANTRA A RELIGION?

You can remain a cultural Christian, Jew, or Buddhist, and still be a Tantrika. The practice of Tantra involves the realization of an **esoteric divine identity** *within* your earlier, culturally specific identity.

"To experience divinity in all things is the goal of Tantrik practice"

CONTEXT IS IMPORTANT

Western scholars and Indian teachers define Tantra differently. All definitions are valuable. Tantra is a mode of practice that affected all the Indian religions to some degree.



WHAT DOES TANTRA HAVE TO DO WITH YOGA?

Hatha-yoga's asanas and pranayamas trace back to Matsyendra, a Saiva Tantrik guru, and are the inspiration for the synthesis of the system of modern yoga.

What does Tantra have to do with Sex?

The Kaula Tantra teaches sensual practices and has what might be interpreted as a sexualized view of the world, seeing the whole of reality as a harmonious and joyous pulsating union of various sets of complementary opposites.

Want to learn more about Tantra?
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