

# Get Involved! Do Literary Research on Kundalini

Doing literary research gives you a rare opportunity to delve into the greatest mystics, geniuses, and creative minds of all time. It allows you to discover hidden layers of meaning in both the extraordinary and the ordinary happenings in their daily lives. What's more, it allows you to unearth evidence that there is only one spiritual energy – regardless of whether we call it *holy spirit*, *holy wind*, *jeng chi*, or *kundalini-shakti* – and to see how this knowledge could someday be a powerful unifying force for people of all spiritual traditions.

In many years that I have been involved in various aspects of this research I have never been bored! Exploring the lives of these individuals has been fascinating, and I've come across aspects of their lives – from the sacred to the sexual – that has expanded my awareness in more ways that I could ever have imagined and been, simply put, a lot of fun.

Why then, aren't more people volunteering to do these papers? The answer is often fear. As with any kind of writing this is usually the fear that you are just not a good enough writer. You do not, however, have to worry about this. Although you are probably a much better writer than you think you are, it is possible that some help could be made available to help you polish your final work. The second hindrance is often a feeling of being overwhelmed by the prospect. In order to help with that, we've created the following step by step guide.

## Step 1 – Get a basic idea of what and why you are doing this research

One way to phrase the “kundalini hypothesis” is to say that kundalini is associated with and/or the cause of mystical experiences, psychic ability, inspired creativity and genius and may in some instances, be either linked to or mistaken for, some forms of mental illness.

According to Gopi Krishna, one way to lay the ground work for testing this hypothesis would be to explore the lives of mystics and those inspired with creative genius. He postulated that in doing so we would find that many of them exhibited similar characteristics and these characteristics would, in turn, be those that the ancient yogis associated with the awakening of kundalini, more fully known as kundalini-shakti. This research, he noted, would also help to establish the understanding that kundalini was simply a yogic term for what was, in fact, a universal principle which was either the same as – or closely related to<sup>1</sup> – the transformative spiritual “energy” known in various spiritual traditions by names such as *dumo fire*, *jeng chi*, *mana*, and *Holy Spirit*.

## Step 2 – Pick a person that interests you.

Although ICR and the original Kundalini Research and Publication Trust in India have researched many mystics and inspired geniuses, there are many left to do. [Here is a list](#). If you are particularly interested in someone who has already been done, contact us to see if the work could benefit from being expanded.

## Step 3 – Begin reading about the person

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<sup>1</sup> In some traditions, the terms closely related to kundalini-shakti – for instance, *mana* – are used to describe what could more accurately be seen as *prāna-shakti*. In some cases, the term is used for both *prāna* and *kundalini* – two concepts that are intricately and complexly related in yogic and Tantric tradition.

It's often good to begin with an autobiography, if one exists. If the person has not written about her/himself, then start with a couple of good biographies. If a number of books exist about the person, you will find that they may cover a lot of the same material. So, you might only have to read a couple of them thoroughly, and that then you'll be able to skim and use indexes.

#### **Step 4 – As you read look for the characteristics of kundalini awakening**

Gopi Krishna detailed the characteristics of mystical experience and its aftereffects in *Higher Consciousness and Kundalini*. Richard M. Bucke made a list of characteristics of what he called "cosmic consciousness" in his book of the same name. Not coincidentally, this list is very similar to Gopi Krishna's. One way to look at these characteristics is to break them down into those associated with mystical types of experiences themselves and those that are related to the actual transformation of consciousness. [Here are characteristics to use.](#)

You will also want to include a brief biographical sketch of the person's life – how much detail you go into is up to you (and how interesting/relevant you found it).

#### **Step 5 – As you find the characteristics and relevant biographical facts, make notes!**

This is critical. Unless you already have a tried and true method, the best way to do this is to use note cards. Yes! Just like your junior high teacher taught you! You may think that, with all the electronic information available, this technique is passé. In fact, the massive amount of information available makes it more important than ever. Now, you can choose between tried-and-true handwritten note cards and note card apps. [Click here](#) for all you need to know about note cards.

#### **Step 6 – Write your paper!**

If you've used note cards, this becomes the easy part. Organize your cards by grouping all the similar subheads and sub-subheads together. Put them in the order you want to cover them in. (Many papers begin with a biographical sketch and then go into each characteristic.) Start writing. All you have to do is put down the information on each card. Don't worry about making it perfect at this stage, just get it all down. (But be sure to note the source card number and page number for each citation even in your first draft.) You can go back and polish later.

If you'd like to look at some finished papers, here are those for Walt Whitman;

<http://www.icrcanada.org/research/literaryresearch/whitman>

and Hildegard of Bingen:

<http://www.icrcanada.org/research/literaryresearch/hildegard>

#### **Step 7 – Optional: Submitting your paper for an ICR Honorarium Grant**

An honorarium is given out annually to one qualifying paper. Generally the amount is somewhere between \$400 and \$500. The expectations for these papers are somewhat higher than for regular research papers. Here's more information:

<http://www.icrcanada.org/research/honorarium/evaluating submissions>



# Mystics and Creatively Inspired Geniuses

## Possibilities for Literary Research

### To do

Thomas Edison  
Galileo  
Da Vinci  
Mozart  
Dostoevsky  
Tolstoy  
Schopenhauer  
Napoleon  
George Bernard Shaw  
Michelangelo  
Beethoven  
Nietzsche  
William Blake  
St. Paul  
St. Francis of Assisi  
Jacob Boehme  
Heinrich Suso  
Meister Eckhart  
Henry David Thoreau  
J.S. Bach  
Edgar Cayce  
Mahadevi  
Lalleshwari  
Rabia  
Mirabai  
Basavanna  
Dante  
Balzac  
Wordsworth  
Tennyson  
Pascal  
Cezanne  
Joan of arc  
Sri Aurobindo  
Teilhard de Chardin  
Spinoza  
Evelyn Underhill  
Irena Tweedie  
Vincent Van Gogh

St. Theresa of Lisieux  
Yeshe Tsogyel  
Mechthilde of Magdeburg  
Ramanujan

### Done

St. Teresa of Avila – research done  
St. Hildegard  
Walt Whitman  
Ralph Waldo Emerson  
Rudolf Steiner  
Sri Ramakrishna  
Victor Hugo  
Thomas Jefferson  
Krishnamurti  
Mahatma Gandhi  
Swedenborg  
Helen Keller

### Re-do / add to

Brahms  
Issac Newton  
Blaise Pascal

### In Progress

St. Teresa of Avila  
Mahadevi Akka  
Kabir  
Nikola Tesla  
Rabindranath Tagore

# Characteristics of Kundalini Awakening [^](#)

Based on his own experience and on his exhaustive research into the teachings of the ancient yogis, Gopi Krishna wrote about the characteristics of the awakening of kundalini in many places. In some cases, the awakening is so gradual the experience or development of the characteristics was virtually imperceptible. In more dramatic awakenings the characteristics are more noticeable.

These characteristics can be broken into those associated with mystical types of experiences themselves and those that are related to the actual transformation of consciousness. This list is adapted from Gopi Krishna descriptions of mystical experience and *Higher Consciousness and Kundalini* and from Richard M. Bucke's of *Cosmic Consciousness*. It is a good basic list of the characteristics you can look for in your research. While many of the great mystics exhibit all of the characteristics, other individuals may experience only a majority of them. (See below for more details on Gopi Krishna's list).

## Mystical experience

- Light
- Oneness
- Love, bliss
- Sensations of the movement of "energy" or heat through the body
  - Sexual energy – as the ancient Tantric yogis taught that prāna-shakti– the cosmic life energy – manifested as both kundalini-shakti

## Transformation

- Experiences of the extra-ordinary
  - Psychic or paranormal abilities known as siddhis in yoga/charisms in Christianity
  - Charisma
- Concern for humanity
  - Compassion
  - Social conscience/work for social justice
  - Passion to ease suffering
- Inspiration
  - Revelation to creative inspiration
  - A continuum of experience
  - Genius – Creative genius – the experience of inspired creativity
- Loss of fear of death and/or certainty of some sort of divine presence

Note: In cases of aberrant awakening, it is possible that the experience may trigger some forms of mental illness. In other cases, what the yogis called being "God intoxicated" by the experience may be mistaken for mental illness.

# Gopi Krishna's list<sup>2</sup>

## The mystical experience itself

- A sensation of light, which can be external and/or internal
- An overwhelming sense of wonder and awe
- Unshakeable conviction about the reality of the experience
- A sense of infinitude and unbounded knowledge
- A vivid feeling of encounter with an inexpressible, all-knowing Intelligence of an omniscient Divine Being
- A flood of pure emotion, an overwhelming feeling of devotion, reverence, submission, love, and adoration, cascading tears
- An expansion of consciousness in which the experiencers become "conscious of consciousness itself as a radiant ocean of sentience present everywhere in the cosmos" and see themselves as part of and one with this Divine Intelligence.

## The effects of the experience or experiences

- Transformation both of consciousness and in life's patterns
  - An alteration in one's own personality
  - May include altruism, charity, benevolence
  - Heroism, self-sacrifice, and even martyrdom
- An unshakeable belief in the existence of God even in those who were previously skeptical
- Inspired creativity
- Genius
- The development of paranormal abilities
- In the "more advanced recipients of the favor" , the individuals may be "fashioned into vessels to enlighten humanity"
- In the case of an aberrant awakening, some forms of mental illness may be triggered (See note above).

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<sup>2</sup> This list is based on and adapted from pages 27-30 of *Higher Consciousness and Kundalini* and from Gopi Krishna's kundalini hypothesis which is described in detail in the *Memorandum for Kundalini Research* <http://www.icrcanada.org/research/memorandum1> on the ICR Canada website.

## Bucke's List from *Cosmic Consciousness*<sup>3</sup>

It will be well to state here (partly in recapitulation) for the benefit of the reader of the next two parts, briefly and explicitly, the marks of the Cosmic Sense. They are:

- The subjective light.
- The moral elevation.
- The intellectual illumination.
- The sense of immortality.
- The loss of the fear of death.
- The loss of the sense of sin.
- The suddenness, instantaneousness, of the awakening.
- The previous character of the person—intellectual, moral and physical.
- The age of illumination.
- The added charm to the personality so that men and women are always (?) strongly attracted to the person.
- The transfiguration of the subject of the change as seen by others when the cosmic sense is actually present.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Bucke, Richard Maurice. *Cosmic Consciousness*. New York: Dutton & Company, 1901, p. 79.

# Making Note Research Note Cards [^](#)

## Source cards

1. Create a card for every source you use, regardless of whether it is a book, print or online article, website. Include all the identifying information. For instance, title, publisher, date of publication, website address, author(s), etc. (Think of this as *everything* you would need to find this *exact same* source again.)
2. Give each card a number as you add sources.

## Research cards

1. When you find relevant information, put it on a card.
2. Paraphrase whenever possible using your own words. Be sure to put quotation marks around any direct quote.
3. The card should include
  - one main point and only one
  - the source card number
  - the page number(s) the information was on
  - the subtopic
4. Subtopics
  - Subtopics might include things like "early life", "adolescence", "education", "marriage and family", for the biographical sketch.
  - Each characteristic will also be a subtopic, for instance, "experiences of light", "experience of oneness", "transformation", "charisma"
5. Sub-subtopics
  - You may want to make your subtopics broader, for instance, "Mystical experience"
  - The cards would then be headed "Mystical experience – oneness"; "Mystical experience – light"; "Bio – adolescence"
6. All the information you gather should be relevant to your main purpose
  - In the case of most papers, your main purpose is to look for the characteristics of kundalini awakening in your person's life.

Sample cards (see below)



Sample research card

<b>Mystical experience – light</b> (Subhead)	<b>3</b> (Source #)
<p>In describing the soul that experiences the highest state of God’s love he says, “In this state the soul is like the crystal that is clear and pure, the more degrees of light it receives, the greater concentration of light there is in it, and this enlightenment continues to such a degree that at last it attains a point at which the light is centered in it with such copiousness that it comes to appear to be wholly light...”</p>	
p. 40	

Sample source cards

<b>3</b>
<p>Pike, Nelson. <i>Mystic Union : an essay in the Phenomenology of Mysticism</i>. New York: Cornell University Press, 1992.</p>

<b>2</b>
<p>Clutch, M. (2014). “The Inner Life of St. John” retrieved from <i>Mysticism Past &amp; Present</i>. Retrieved on November 10, 2016 from <a href="http://www.spiritualitypast&amp;present.com/inner-life-st-john-1204144">http://www.spiritualitypast&amp;present.com/inner-life-st-john-1204144</a></p>

## Note Card Programs for PC and Mac

If you would prefer to use a note card program for your computer, here are a couple you can take a look at. Most of the programs allow you to sign up for free to try out the program. Some are very reasonably priced.

<https://www.supernotecard.com>

<https://evernote.com/>

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