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MAY 2015

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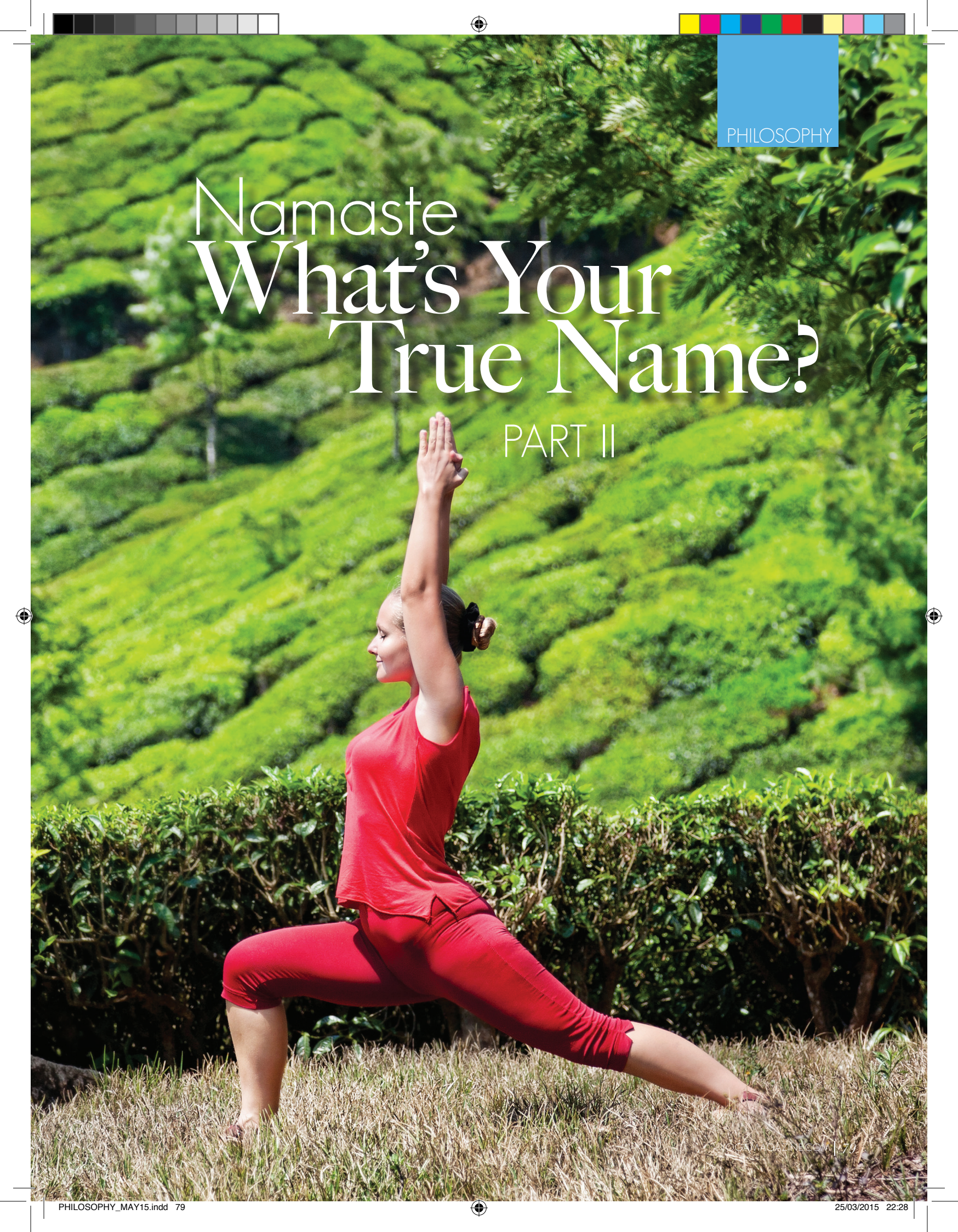
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PHILOSOPHY

# Namaste What's Your True Name?

PART II



In last month's article, we defined the phrase "Namaste" which is actually two words meaning "salutation to you." Grammatically, going from this to "Namaste" (literally "your name") is not much of a stretch, and therefore this phrase can also mean, "I invoke your true name." To invoke someone's true name means to go beyond the surface level of everyday speech and speak to a person's essence.

### *Three Levels of Speech*

The first level of speech is called 'vaikhari', ordinary, superficial speech. It is said to originate from the mouth, and is the most subject to modification and change (vikara) because there is no real substance behind it. Imagine three people on New Year's Eve. Person one with vaikhari vak says, "I want to lose 10 lbs. next year" This is the person who by the following morning will have forgot their resolution.

The next level of speech is called 'madhyama' and it comes from the throat centre. It is speech stimulated by thoughts and ideas, and as a result has a deeper effect on us. The person making a vow using madhyama vak has thought through what they want to do, and will likely follow it for a few weeks before becoming distracted.

Finally at the third level we have 'pashyanti vak'. 'Pashyanti' means 'seeing', and it is the deepest speech available to most of us. It comes from the heart centre, where the mind and emotions reside according to Vedic philosophy. It is from here that men and women of vision operate. It is from here that Dr. Martin Luther King declaimed, "I have seen the Promised Land!" and on the other end of the spectrum, that Adolf Hitler inflamed and galvanized a nation.

People who speak with this level of vision are passionate and convicted, so much so that obstacles do not faze them. Anyone making a vow from pashyanti vak has already envisioned the final result so clearly that the actual follow through is just details- the outcome is already a foregone conclusion in their mind's eye. This person not only loses the ten pounds, they inspire others to do so too.

There is a fourth level of speech, called 'para vak', which is available during meditative states, and is the level at which grace speaks to and through you. It is difficult to maintain for all but the most saintly among us.





So what does this have to do with names? Part of finding your dharma is to find your secret word and name, a technique I detail in seminars and my forthcoming book, *Sex, Love & Dharma*. For example, Sherri is a fine name, but there are many Sherris in the world; it is not descriptive enough. Sherri the Wise may be a better option for a teacher, or Sherry Goodheart, for a particularly generous person. Sound medieval? Perhaps, but it is also a fabulous way to examine and sometimes even redefine yourself. When in doubt, remember that friends or mentors can also help you find your descriptor, because those we are close to often see us better than we see ourselves.

How about some famous examples? Marshall Mathers is perfectly normal, but Slim Shady speaks to a deeper level of Eminem's alternate personality. Caroline is fine, but Sweet Caroline is more memorable. Bill is good, but William the Conqueror evokes the powerful persona of this famous character.

Another way to find your name is to link it to your totem animal. This Native American practice entails meditating on a creature from the animal kingdom that resonates with you physically, mentally, and spiritually. Your totem animal can help you find your place in the world, even the right diet and exercise programme. For example, one client in a seminar connected to Bear energy. When I asked him what he ate, he retorted, "pretty much anything... though I particularly love fish". Thinking quickly I asked, "But you must also have a sweet tooth, right?"

"Yeah, he replied, but I always feel bad after gorging on sweets and chocolate." At that moment the light bulb went off for him- his Bear totem not only described his personality and physical abilities, but also his diet and lifestyle- and what he needed to avoid.

Another client related: "I don't know what kind, but I'm definitely some sort of small bird." When we analysed her diet, she explained that, much like the totem she connected to, she loved nuts and seeds, preferring to snack a little all day over-gorging on just one meal. In addition, her frame was slight, and she preferred jumping and aerobic-style exercises.

The etymology of your name can also prove insightful. Petros (Peter) means 'rock'. And when Jesus exclaimed "I will build my church on this rock (petros) he was making a pun on Peter's name. If, as described in last month's article, that first sound ("Peh") also happens to resonate with the power syllable of your birth horoscope, sometimes called your "primordial sound," then it becomes an even more personal mantra.

Thus, next time you say "Namaste" remember that you are invoking the heart and soul of a person, their original name.

“When you notice a cat in profound meditation,  
The reason, I tell you, is always the same:  
His mind is engaged in a rapt contemplation  
Of the thought, of the thought, of the thought of his name:  
His ineffable effable Effanineffable Deep and inscrutable singular Name.”

T.S. Eliot, from *The Naming of Cats*

WRITTEN BY

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