

# Joyride

From the perspective of Eastern philosophy, the bliss we are seeking is already inside of us. So it interests me that from a scientific perspective this is also a true statement. Bliss is a chemical state that the body itself creates and maintains, and it is a state that we are apparently hard-wired to seek. Chanting is one of the world's oldest means of finding it.

Chanting affects the areas of the brain that produce our sense of where our body ends and the world begins. It also slows and steadies breathing, producing hormone and neurological changes in the body that feel simultaneously calming and thrilling. One's sense of separation diminishes, and one's feeling of connection increases.

Moving from the individual level to the collective level, the effect is magnified. A group of people singing together, breathing together, is a cloud of intelligence, turning like a flock of birds. As the song itself vanishes into the skies of silence, it's a mighty thing to be a part of. You feel intimate with all the strangers surrounding you, concurrently expansive and still. Intensely, vividly, alive.

Even though I'm singing the names of Hindu gods and goddesses, I'm not really chanting to anything or anyone in an objective sense. I'm motivated by my interest in getting to a place of pure, loving, awareness: beyond images and concepts, subjects and objects. That's what God is for me. It's an awareness I can only really touch in moments of profound inner silence, and chanting is what gets me there.

## **About this recording:**

To understand Kirtan, you have to immerse yourself in it. Listening to the music can be enjoyable, but if you don't directly participate in it, it's like going to a carnival and watching other people ride the rollercoaster. It's much more rewarding when you jump on the train and throw your hands in the air. This recording was made for singing along. So take a drive, or take a shower, and just let yourself go. I know from experience that singing always makes me feel better. I hope this recording makes you feel better too.

Dave Stringer