

OME: Outrageous Mantra Experiment

It is our desire to transform ourselves in connection with and in service to our community.

We have chosen a 40-day discipline within which to offer the fruits of our spiritual discipline to you, our friends and fellow adventurers and to ourselves.

When two or more gather in the name of anything, the efforts increase exponentially in their power.

In honor of spring, we have chosen to honor the remover of clutter and obstacles (both inner and outer): GANESHA

This experiment is being conducted for the highest good of all people involved.

To do:

Pick a “Ganesha” mantra that appeals to you.

Pick a discipline for your mantra.

Commit to your Self.

Gather your tools:

Mala Beads

Journal

A sense of humor

Your willpower

Say your mantra every day for forty days

(beginning Sunday, March 5th and ending Thursday, April 13th)

Getting Started

Start by picking some aspect of your life you wish to improve or some vexing problem

you would like to solve or dissolve. Then pick a mantra which seems, to you, to apply. Offer a prayer to God, in whatever way you relate to God. Ask for God's blessing in accomplishing your objective in doing this spiritual discipline.

Once you have decided to undertake the discipline and offered your prayers, then pick a place where you will say your mantra for a certain number of times each day. If possible, obtain a rosary (or mala) of some kind and do your mantras in some multiple of 108. If getting a rosary is not possible, then decide on a certain amount of time you will spend each day saying your mantra. It can be five minutes, ten minutes, twenty minutes or even an hour. For your first experience, any time up to twenty minutes is advisable.

The reason for taking things easy for the first 40 day commitment is due to the cumulative action of the mantra. For the first few days, all will probably go smoothly. Then as you progress, you may find that things start to get in the way of your doing the discipline: You oversleep; there is some minor emergency; you get a cold, whatever. This means that you are beginning to effect the inner 'something' for which you undertook the mantra. You are beginning to encounter inner resistance. That inner resistance manifests as outer obstacles to your discipline. It has almost become a joke in many spiritual circles in which the practice of mantra is common, that something of a very surprising nature happened on day 33 or 35 of a 40 day sadhana.

Develop a sense of humor about it, and be thankful. There is no better indication that your efforts are working than to have small upheavals in your life while you are in the midst of a 40 day mantra discipline. Ask anyone who has undertaken one and they will have some interesting stories for you.

A warning: These mantra formulas and the 60 day or 120 day programs should never be forced upon anyone. You should not even attempt to be persuasive about their use. If you feel drawn to use the mantra formulas, then by all means begin your discipline. If you find that you are thinking of someone who would benefit from this approach to changing inner conditions, then by all means recommend these methods. But remember you are working with karma. That means that nothing should be forced. As they say in the East, “You cannot rip the skin from the snake. It must shed by itself.”

Bija mantras (or seed mantras):

If you have a particular issue in your life, or a material or spiritual goal you wish to accomplish, pick a seed sound that seems to represent the energy you desire but have been lacking. Work with this mantra for 10 days, repeating it as much as you are able. Besides repeating it whenever you can (ie: in the shower, cleaning, cooking, walking, etc)

you should consider setting aside 5 to 10 minutes twice a day to chant the mantra in a focused meditative way. If it agrees with you, continue for an additional 30 days. Then stop and wait to see results (if they have not already presented themselves during your practice.)

Bija Option #1: Gum (as in chewing gum)

This is a masculine seed sound for Ganapathi, an energy of the benevolent elephant headed god Ganesha, which removes obstacles and brings success in endeavors. To remove obstacles, repeat the seed mantra Gum for a few days until you are comfortable with it. Then move on to the mantra Om Gum Ganapataye Namaha.

Bija Option #2: Glaum (Glah owm)

Another seed for Ganapathi, this removes obstacles that may exist between the throat and the base of the spine. It is related to Ganesha as an energy of will.

Longer mantra options:

Ganesha Mantra #1: Om Gum Ganapataye Namaha

Rough Translation:

'Om and salutations to the remover of obstacles for which Gum is the seed.'

For seen or unseen obstacles which seem to be standing in the way of your progress or achievement, either specifically or generally, this mantra has proved invaluable. It has been used it with great success not only in India, but here in the West dozens of people have related to me their success in turning things around in their life by using this mantra.

Ganesha Mantra #2: Ganesha Sharanam, Sharanam Ganesha

Rough Translation:

Obeisance to Ganesh, son of Lord Shiva. I take shelter of Ganesh, Ganesh is my refuge.

Ganesha Mantra #3: Aum Shri Ganeshaya Namaha

Rough Translation: I salute the name of Ganesha. This is the mantra of invocation, adoration and worship. It is repeated at the beginning of pujas and it can be used for japa, to invoke Ganesha's blessings for the auspicious beginning of a task, project, change of life, community undertaking or simply to offer Him our praise.

Basic Mantra Approaches:

OPTION 1. Repetition of the mantra as often as possible over a specific amount of time. This approach means that you will remember to say the mantra as many times as possible throughout each day. While doing household chores, you will say the mantra. In the shower, on a walk, while driving your car you will say the mantra (NOTE: IF YOU FIND THAT THE PRACTICE OF MANTRA WHILE DRIVING MAKES YOU "SPACE OUT" THEN DISCONTINUE AT ONCE.

If you choose this approach, sit down with a watch, check the time and repeat the mantra for five minutes while counting how many you do. You can use your fingers, beads or whatever you prefer. Then multiply the results by twelve. You now have a figure of how many times you say the mantra in an hour.

During the day, keep track of how many hours you say the mantra. Keep a small notebook in which you record your daily amount of time in mantra repetition. Tally up the totals and that is the total amount of repetitions for this period.

The minimum number of days for this kind of discipline is TWENTY ONE.

OPTION 2. Forty day discipline:

A discipline of forty days is the time given for practicing mantra in the Eastern Texts. Sages taught this process centuries even before Noah walked the earth.

Place: In addition to saying your mantra as often as possible, you should set aside a specific place where you will practice your spiritual discipline twice every day.

Time of Day: It is recommended that you perform your practice in the morning upon rising and in the evening before bed. While any time is appropriate for practicing mantras, the periods just before dawn and dusk are reported to be especially good.

Completing the Practice: If you are in the middle of your discipline and the telephone rings, do not answer it. Better yet, before you begin, turn the volume down on your ringer and answering machine. You should strive to complete your daily disciplines without interruption. If you miss a day, you should be aware of the circumstances which lead to your miss and begin again.

Option 3: Siddhi Attainment

Siddhi is a general term for spiritual power or ability. Therefore, some power or ability deriving from the saying of the mantra should become evident. The generally accepted time for achieving mantra siddhi is universally given in texts and references as a minimum of 125,000 repetitions. To say a short mantra like Om Gum Ganapatyei Namaha it is fairly easy to repeat the mantra, say 1500 times/hour. At this rate it would take 83.3 hours to complete 125,000 repetitions. This could easily be accomplished in forty days. Short mantras lend themselves easily to a forty day discipline. Driving on the highway or riding the subway provides a great opportunity to work with mantras and it is much cheaper than talking on the cell phone.

What Is a Mantra and How Does It Work?

A Selection from *Healing Mantras*

Definition # 1: Mantras are energy-based sounds.

Saying any word produces an actual physical vibration. Over time, if we know what the effect of that vibration is, then the word may come to have meaning associated with the effect of saying that vibration or word. This is one level of energy basis for words.

Another level is intent. If the actual physical vibration is coupled with a mental intention, the vibration then contains an additional mental component which influences the result of saying it. The sound is the carrier wave and the intent is overlaid upon the wave form, just as a colored gel influences the appearance and effect of a white light.

In either instance, the word is based upon energy. Nowhere is this idea more true than for Sanskrit mantra. For although there is a general meaning which comes to be associated with mantras, the only lasting definition is the result or effect of saying the mantra.

Definition #2: Mantras create thought-energy waves.

The human consciousness is really a collection of states of consciousness which distributively exist throughout the physical and subtle bodies. Each organ has a primitive consciousness of its own. That primitive consciousness allows it to perform functions specific to it. Then come the various systems. The cardio-vascular system, the reproductive system and other systems have various organs or body parts working at slightly different stages of a single process. Like the organs, there is a primitive consciousness also associated with each system. And these are just within the physical body. Similar functions and states of consciousness exist within the subtle body as well. So individual organ consciousness is overlaid by system consciousness, overlaid again by subtle body counterparts and consciousness, and so ad infinitum.

The ego with its self-defined "I" ness assumes a pre-eminent state among the subtle din of random, semi-conscious thoughts which pulse through our organism. And of course, our organism can "pick up" the vibration of other organisms nearby. The result is that there are myriad vibrations riding in and through the subconscious mind at any given time.

Mantras start a powerful vibration which corresponds to both a specific spiritual energy frequency and a state of consciousness in seed form. Over time, the mantra process begins to override all of the other smaller vibrations, which eventually become absorbed by the mantra. After a length of time which varies from individual to individual, the great wave of the mantra stills all other vibrations. Ultimately, the mantra produces a state where the organism vibrates at the rate completely in tune with the energy and spiritual state represented by and contained within the mantra.

At this point, a change of state occurs in the organism. The organism becomes subtly different. Just as a laser is light which is coherent in a new way, the person who becomes one with the state produced by the mantra is also coherent in a way which did not exist prior to the conscious undertaking of repetition of the mantra.

Definition #3: Mantras are tools of power and tools for power.

They are formidable. They are ancient. They work. The word "mantra" is derived from two Sanskrit words. The first is "manas" or "mind," which provides the "man" syllable. The second syllable is drawn from the Sanskrit word "tra" meaning to "protect" or to "free from." Therefore, the word mantra in its most literal sense means "to free from the mind." Mantra is, at its core, a tool used by the mind which eventually frees one from the

vagaries of the mind.

But the journey from mantra to freedom is a wondrous one. The mind expands, deepens and widens and eventually dips into the essence of cosmic existence. On its journey, the mind comes to understand much about the essence of the vibration of things. And knowledge, as we all know, is power. In the case of mantra, this power is tangible and wieldable.

Statements About Mantra

1 Mantras have close, approximate one-to-one direct language-based translation.

If we warn a young child that it should not touch a hot stove, we try to explain that it will burn the child. However, language is insufficient to convey the experience. Only the act of touching the stove and being burned will adequately define the words "hot" and "burn" in the context of "stove." Essentially, there is no real direct translation of the experience of being burned.

Similarly, there is no word which is the exact equivalent of the experience of sticking one's finger into an electrical socket. When we stick our hand into the socket, only then do we have a context for the word "shock." But shock is really a definition of the result of the action of sticking our hand into the socket.

It is the same with mantras. The only true definition is the experience which it ultimately creates in the sayer. Over thousands of years, many sayers have had common experiences and passed them on to the next generation. Through this tradition, a context of experiential definition has been created.

2 Definitions of mantras are oriented toward either the results of repeating the mantra or of the intentions of the original framers and testers of the mantra.

In Sanskrit, sounds which have no direct translation but which contain great power which can be "grown" from it are called "seed mantras." Seed in Sanskrit is called "Bijam" in the singular and "Bija" in the plural form. Please refer to the pronunciation guide on page 126 for more information on pronunciation of mantras.

Let's take an example. The mantra "Shrim" or Shreem is the seed sound for the principle of abundance (Lakshmi, in the Hindu Pantheon.) If one says "shrim" a hundred times, a certain increase in the potentiality of the sayer to accumulate abundance is achieved. If one says "shrim" a thousand times or a million, the result is correspondingly greater.

But abundance can take many forms. There is prosperity, to be sure, but there is also peace as abundance, health as wealth, friends as wealth, enough food to eat as wealth, and a host of other kinds and types of abundance which may vary from individual to individual and culture to culture. It is at this point that the intention of the sayer begins to influence the degree of the kind of capacity for accumulating wealth which may accrue.

3 Mantras have been tested and/or verified by their original framers or users.

Each mantra is associated with an actual sage or historical person who once lived. Although the oral tradition predates written speech by centuries, those earliest oral records annotated on palm leaves discussed earlier clearly designate a specific sage as the "seer" of the mantra. This means that the mantra was probably arrived at through some form of meditation or intuition and subsequently tested by the person who first encountered it.

4 Sanskrit mantras are composed of letters which correspond to certain petals or spokes of chakras in the subtle body.

As discussed in Chapter 2, there is a direct relationship between the mantra sound, either vocalized or subvocalized, and the chakras located throughout the body.

5 Mantras are energy which can be likened to fire.

You can use fire either to cook your lunch or to burn down the forest. It is the same fire. Similarly, mantra can bring a positive and beneficial result, or it can produce an energy meltdown when misused or practiced without some guidance. There are certain mantra formulas which are so exact, so specific and so powerful that they must be learned and practiced under careful supervision by a qualified teacher.

Fortunately, most of the mantras widely used in the West and certainly those contained in this volume are perfectly safe to use on a daily basis, even with some intensity.

6 Mantra energizes prana.

"Prana" is a Sanskrit term for a form of life energy which can be transferred from individual to individual. Prana may or may not produce an instant dramatic effect upon transfer. There can be heat or coolness as a result of the transfer.

Some healers operate through transfer of prana. A massage therapist can transfer prana with beneficial effect. Even self-healing can be accomplished by concentrating prana in certain organs, the result of which can be a clearing of the difficulty or condition. For instance, by saying a certain mantra while visualizing an internal organ bathed in light, the specific power of the mantra can become concentrated there with great beneficial effect.

7 Mantras eventually quiet the mind.

At a deep level, subconscious mind is a collective consciousness of all the forms of primitive consciousnesses which exist throughout the physical and subtle bodies. The dedicated use of mantra can dig into subconscious crystallized thoughts stored in the organs and glands and transform these bodily parts into repositories of peace.

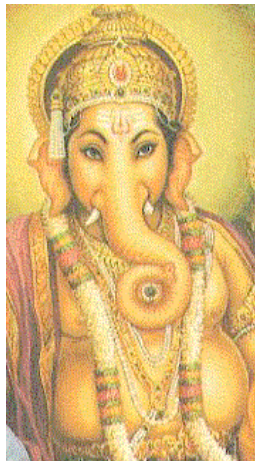
Note from the author:

A saying from the Vedas claims that "Speech is the essence of humanity." All of what humanity thinks and ultimately becomes is determined by the expression of ideas and actions through speech and its derivative, writing. Everything, the Vedas maintain, comes into being through speech. Ideas remain unactualized until they are created

through the power of speech. Similarly, The New Testament, Gospel of John, starts "In the beginning was The Word. And the Word was with God and the Word was God..."

In mainstream Vedic practices, most Buddhist techniques and classical Hinduism, mantra is viewed as a necessity for spiritual advancement and high attainment. In The Kalachakra Tantra, by the Dalai Lama and Jeffrey Hopkins, the Dalai Lama states, "Therefore, without depending upon mantra...Buddhahood cannot be attained."

Clearly, there is a reason why such widely divergent sources of religious wisdom as the Vedas, the New Testament and the Dalai Lama speak in common ideas. Here are some important ideas about mantra which will enable you to begin a practical understanding of what mantra is and what it can do.



The lord of good fortune

In general terms, Ganesha is a much beloved and frequently invoked divinity, since he is the *Lord of Good Fortune* who provides prosperity and fortune and also the *Destroyer of Obstacles* of a material or spiritual order. It is for this reason that his grace is invoked before the undertaking of any task (e.g. traveling, taking an examination, conducting a business affair, a job interview, performing a ceremony,) with such incantations as *Aum Shri Ganeshaya Namah* (hail the name

of Ganesha), or similar. It is also for this reason that, traditionally, all sessions of **bhajan** (devotional chanting) begin with an invocation of Ganesha, Lord of the "good beginnings" of chants. Throughout India and the Hindu culture, Lord Ganesha is the first idol placed into any new home or abode.

Moreover, Ganesha is associated with the first **chakra** (wheel), which represents the instinct of conservation and survival, of procreation and material well-being.

Popularly in north India Ganesha is accompanied by **Sarasvati** (goddess of culture and art) and **Lakshmi** (goddess of luck and prosperity), symbolizing that these qualities always accompany he who has discovered his own internal divinity. But this does not mean that Sarasvati and Lakshmi are consorts of Ganesha.

Symbolically this represents the fact that wealth, prosperity and success accompany those who have the qualities wisdom, prudence, patience, etc. that Ganesha symbolises.

Vedic texts reveal that Ganesha is the son of Siva and Parvati, although his sonship like that of his half-brother, Skanda-Subrahmanya, is peculiar. According to one version, Siva "emits" from his body a handsome son who becomes a seducer of women. Parvati is offended by her son's exploits and curses him to have the head of an elephant and a big belly-in other words, to be ugly. Though with this he would seem fated to celibacy, he gradually settles down with two wives: Buddhi ("wisdom") and Siddhi ("success"), who can see beyond his physical ugliness.

Popularity Of Ganesh

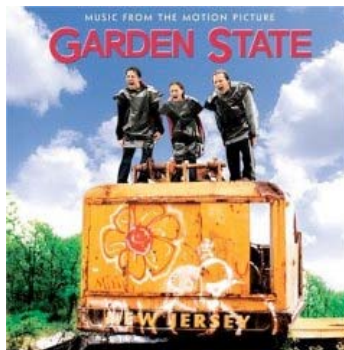
It is widely believed that "Wherever there is Ganesh, there is Success and Prosperity" and "Wherever there is Success and Prosperity there is Ganesh". This is why Ganesh is believed to be the harbinger of good fortune, and why he is invoked first at any ritual or ceremony. Whether it is diwali puja, a new house, a new vehicle, students praying before the exams, or people praying before job interviews, it is Ganesha they pray to, because it is believed that he will come to their aid and grant them success in their endeavor.

Ganesha is worshipped as Vinayak (knowledgeable) and Vighneshwer (remover of obstacles). It is believed that he blesses those who meditate upon him. Ganesha, in astrology, is believed to help people know what can be achieved and what cannot be. The "obstacle" theme also tells us why Ganesha uses a rat as his vehicle. As rodents generally succeed in gnawing their way through any obstruction, the rat, it is said, symbolizes Ganesha's ability to destroy every obstacle.

Popular Trivia



In *The Simpsons*, [Apu Nahasapeemametil](#) is a devoted follower of Ganesha. At least twice in the series, a Simpson family member has impersonated Ganesha in order to trick Apu into making a major life decision.



The movie *Garden State* begins with an invocation to Ganesha. The Ganesha Mantram is sung melodiously several times during a traumatic event.

Elephant Boy: The Story of Ganesha

Who is the boy who got an elephant's head? His name is **Ganesha** and he lived in India long, long ago. He is also called Ganapati. Actually, he still lives, because he is considered by the Hindus as one of the Immortals. His is a fanciful story, full of twists and turns and "maybe 'twas and maybe 'twas't"; but let us follow the tale as best we can, and enjoy!

The boy was born to **Parvati**, also known as the Divine Mother, the wife of **Shiva**. She thought him a most beautiful baby (for at that time he had a normal head) and he grew to be the darling of her heart in any case, and a very wise boy. In fact, even today he is looked upon as Wisdom itself, among other things. (And you know how smart elephants are!)

One day his mother brought out her most precious necklace of sparkling jewels. She wanted to test her two sons and said she would give the necklace as prize to the one who went around the whole universe and came back first. The brother of Ganesha darted out at once to begin the long journey. But Ganesha solemnly walked in a circle around his mother. Then he asked for the necklace.

"What is that?" Parvati asked, "What do you mean?"

"Mother," replied Ganesha, "I know that you are the Divine Mother herself, that the whole universe is contained within your body." Parvati was highly pleased at her son's spiritual insight. After many days the brother returned. Who do you think had got the necklace? Yes, Ganesha, the truly wise, and he put it around his neck.

However, all this was **after** he got the head of an elephant. We have to go back. It is said that when all the gods came to honor Parvati and admire her child, one of them (the one which we in the West call Saturn) refused to look at the boy. His mother was very peeved about this. Other gods chided him, but you see, he knew that **one glance** from his powerful eyes would burn the child's head to ashes. Still Parvati was insisting that he give the baby his admiring glance. At last, yielding to what we today might call "peer pressure," Saturn cast his eyes on the boy and sure enough, his head was immediately burnt to ashes. Of course his mother began to weep and wail (although it was mostly her fault) but the god **Vishnu**, who always wants to preserve things, ran quickly and found a freshly-killed baby elephant brought its head and put it on Ganesha's neck.

Growing up like this, he became "the one who removes obstacles," watches over the beginnings of things such as books, performances, building of a house, weddings etc. So in India when people begin those things, they appeal to the immortal Ganesha to give them a good start. Big as he is, he weighs very little, and this makes it possible for him to ride on a Rat. If you want to know why he rides on a rat, you must understand that his rat can get into all the small places where Ganesha cannot go; this helps him in his work of solving and removing difficulties.

Ganesha is worshiped all over Southern India. Statues and paintings show him as short, pot-bellied, with four arms and of course two tusks; but, one of the tusks is always shown broken off. The reason for this is that he was protecting the home when his father Shiva was inside. An enemy of his father's came along looking for his foe and found only Ganesha, guarding the door. Ganesha skewered the warrior and whirled him around on one his tusks! And the fellow was so humiliated and angry that he threw his hand-axe at the boy, breaking off the tusk.

Along with all the other things, he stands for purity. He vowed never to marry. The great author **Vyasa** thought so highly of him and his power of memory ("an elephant never forgets") that he persuaded Ganesha to write down at his dictation the longest poem in the world, the epic *Mahabharata*.

Bodily attributes

A popular representation of Ganesha.

Every element of the body of Ganesha has its own value and its own significance:

- _ The **elephant head** indicates fidelity, intelligence and discriminative power;
- _ The fact that he has a **single tusk** (the other being broken off) indicates Ganesha's ability to overcome all forms of **dualism**;
- _ The **wide ears** denote wisdom, ability to listen to people who seek help and to reflect on spiritual truths. They signify the importance of listening in order to assimilate ideas. Ears are used to gain knowledge. The large ears indicate that when God is known, all knowledge is known;
- _ the **curved trunk** indicates the intellectual potentialities which manifest themselves in

- the faculty of discrimination between real and unreal;
- on the **forehead**, the **Trishul** (weapon of Shiva, similar to **Trident**) is depicted, symbolising **time** (past, present and future) and Ganesha's mastery over it;
- Ganesha's **pot belly** contains infinite universes. It signifies the bounty of nature and equanimity, the ability of Ganesha to swallow the sorrows of the Universe and protect the world;
- the position of his **legs** (one resting on the ground and one raised) indicate the importance of living and participating in the material world as well as in the spiritual world, the ability to *live in the world without being of the world*.
- The **four arms** of Ganesha represent the four inner attributes of the **subtle body**, that is: mind (**Manas**), intellect (**Buddhi**), ego (**Ahamkara**), and conditioned conscience (**Chitta**). Lord Ganesha represents the pure consciousness - the Atman - which enables these four attributes to function in us;
- The hand waving an **axe**, is a symbol of the retrenchment of all desires, bearers of pain and suffering. With this axe Ganesha can both strike and repel obstacles. The axe is also to prod man to the path of righteousness and truth;
- The second hand holds a **whip**, symbol of the force that ties the devout person to the eternal beatitude of God. The whip conveys that worldly attachments and desires should be rid of;
- The third hand, turned towards the devotee, is in a pose of **blessing, refuge and protection** (**abhaya**);
- the fourth hand holds a **lotus flower** (**padma**), and it symbolizes the highest goal of human evolution, the sweetness of the realised inner self

The names of Ganesha

Like other Hindu **Murti** (or gods and goddesses), Ganesh has many other titles of respect or symbolic names, and is often worshipped through the chanting of *sahasranamam* (pronounced saa-HUS-ruh-naamam), or a thousand names.

Each is different and conveys a different meaning, representing a different aspect of the god in question. Needless to say, almost all Hindu gods have one or two accepted versions of their own sahasranaam liturgy.

Some of Ganesha's other names are:

- **Ameya** ,boundless (in **Marathi**)
- **Anangapujita** The Formless, or Bodiless
- **Aumkara** the **Aum**-shaped body
- **Balachandra** one who wears the moon on his head
- **Chintamani** one who removes worries
- **Dhumraketu** or the fiery one
- **Gajakarna** , one with ears of an elephant
- **Gajanana** , elephant face
- **Gajavadana**, elephant head
- **Ganadhyaksha** , leader of the masses
- **Ganapati** Conductor of the **Ganas**, a race of **dwarf** beings in the army of Shiva
- **Gananatha**, Lord of the Ganas
- **Gananayaka**, Lord of all beings
- **Ekadanta** , One-Tusked
- **Kapila** the name for a celestial cow. Ganesha represents the characteristic of

"giving" that symbolizes a cow, thus this name.

- _ **Lambodara**, big bellied
- _ **Mushika Vahana**, He who rides a mouse
- _ **Pillaiyar**, **Tamil** for "Noble Son"
- _ **Shupakarna**, Large/Auspicious Ears
- _ **Sumukh** one who has a beautiful face: Ganesha is said to be possessing all the qualities of Moon, who is also called the God of beauty, and is hence also known as Sumukh.
- _ **Vakratunda** Curved Trunk
- _ **Vighnaharta** remover of obstacles
- _ **Vighna Vinashaka**, remover of obstacles
- _ **Vighnesh** or **Vighneshvara** , controller of obstacles (*Vighna* = obstacle, *eeshwara*=lord)
- _ **Vikat** the ferocious one
- _ **Vinayaka**, a distinguished Leader (Vi stands for vishesha *Special* and nayaka from root *ni* to lead, thus *Leader*)
- _ **Vishvadhara** or **Jagadoddhara**, He who maintains the Universe
- _ **Vishvanata** or **Jagannatha**, Lord of the Universe