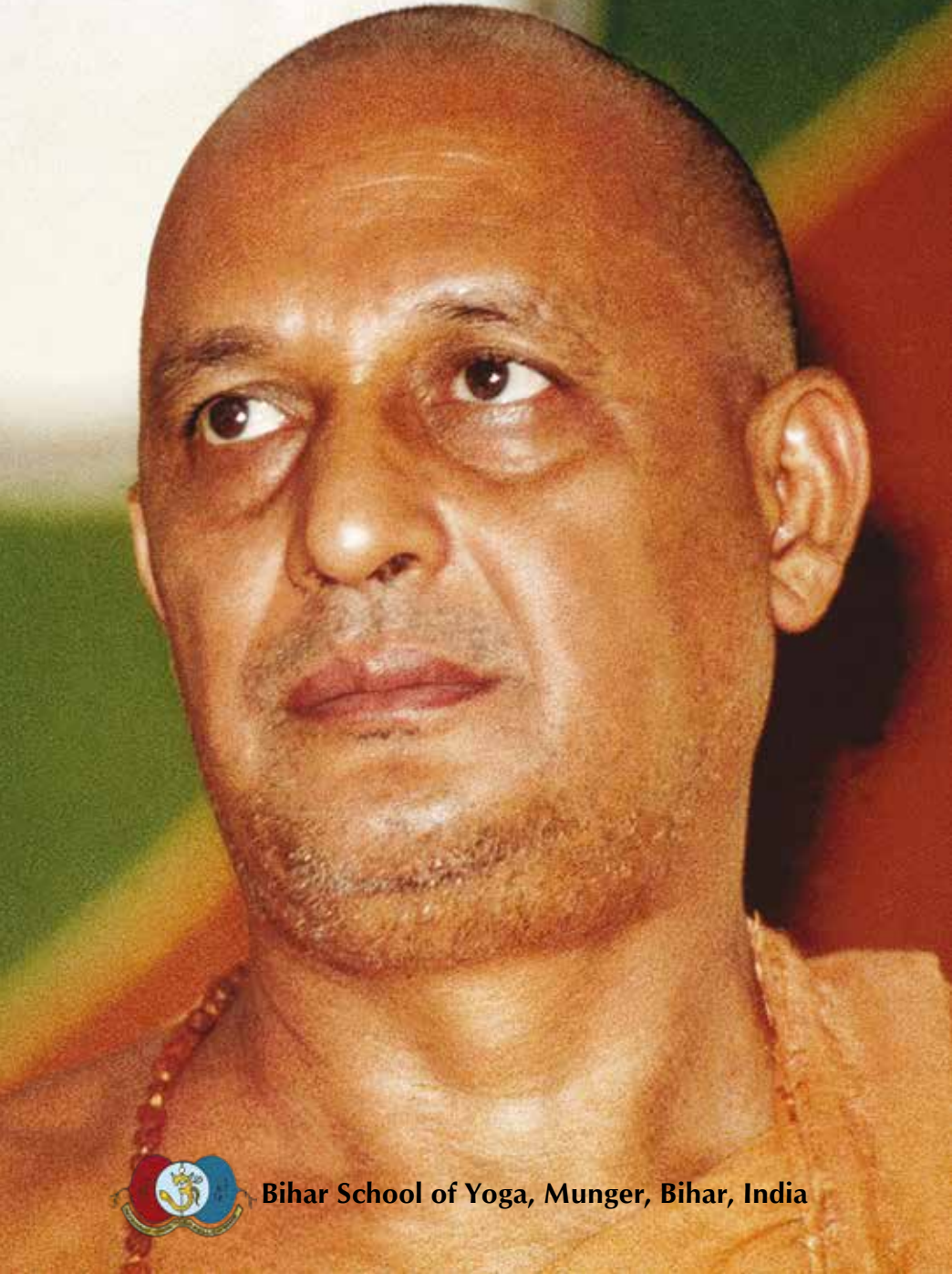


YOGA

Year 12 Issue 2
February 2023



Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar, India



Hari Om

YOGA is compiled, composed and published by the sannyasin disciples of Swami Satyananda Saraswati for the benefit of all people who seek health, happiness and enlightenment. It contains information about the activities of Bihar School of Yoga, Bihar Yoga Bharati, Yoga Publications Trust and Yoga Research Fellowship.

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YOGA is a monthly magazine.

Published by Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger, Bihar – 811201.

Printed at Thomson Press India Ltd., Haryana – 121007

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FFH (For Frontline Heroes)

Total no. of pages: 56 (including cover pages)

Front cover & Plates:

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



TRIBUTES BY SWAMI SIVANANDA TO SATYAM

Few would have such vairagya at such an early age. Swami Satyananda is full of the Nachiketas element. Yet, any work that he takes up he will complete in a perfect manner. He does the work of four people and yet never complains. He is a versatile genius and a linguist too. Yet, he is humble and simple – an ideal sadhaka and nishkama sevak. He is a pillar of the Divine Life Mission. May God bless him with health, long life, peace, prosperity and eternal bliss!

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Published and printed by Swami Shivadhyanam Saraswati on behalf of Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger – 811201, Bihar

Printed at Thomson Press India (Ltd), 18/35 Milestone, Delhi Mathura Rd., Faridabad, Haryana.

Owned by Bihar School of Yoga **Editor:** Swami Gyansiddhi Saraswati

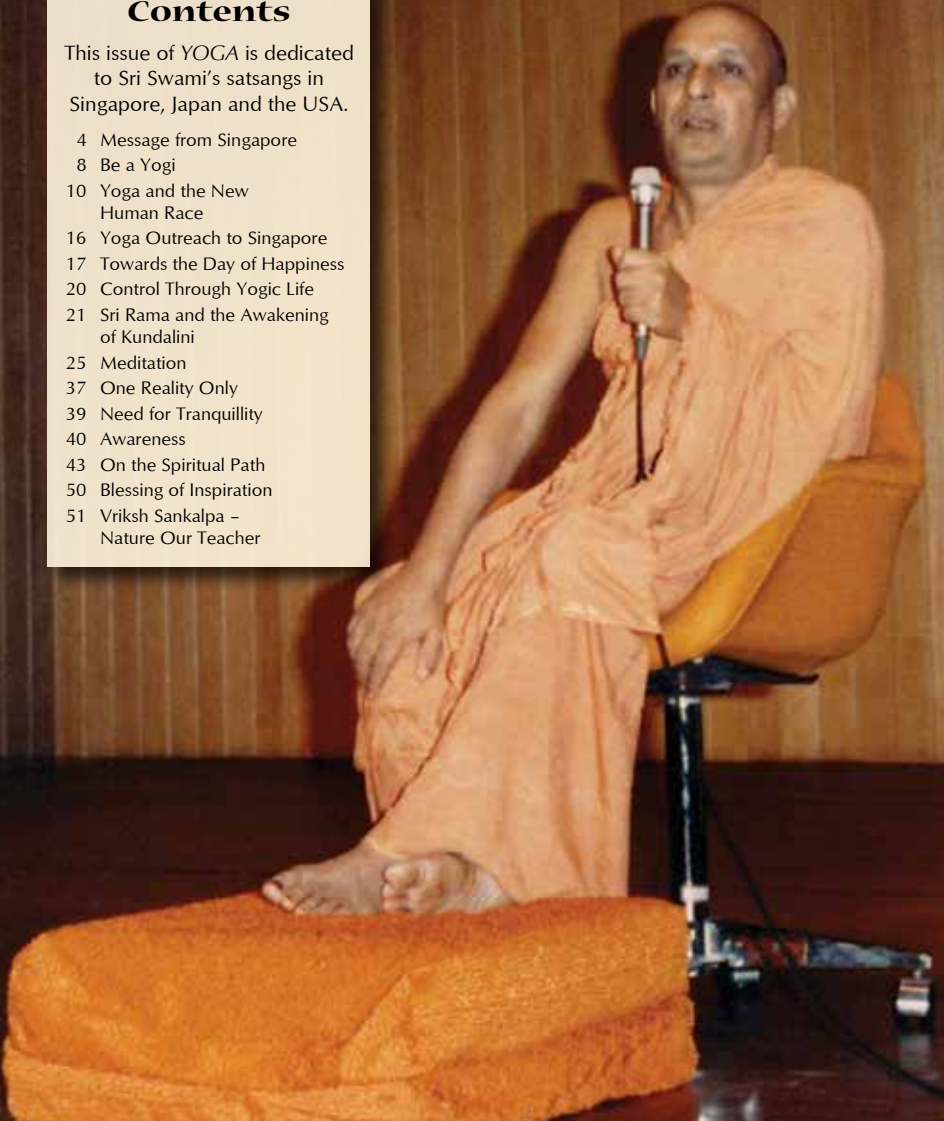
YOGA

Year 12 Issue 2 • February 2023
(61st year of publication)

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The Yogi is superior to the ascetic. He is deemed superior even to those versed in sacred lore. The Yogi is superior even to those who perform action with some motive. Therefore, Arjuna, do you become a Yogi. (*Bhagavad Gita VI:46*)
तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

Message from Singapore

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Yoga is the heritage of the past and the culture of tomorrow. Its real aim is to attain peace and tranquillity within. One need not require to give up one's normal ways of living to attain it. I feel that worldly duties should be attended with maximum care, efficiency, imagination and concentration. It creates the ability to emerge as the master of situations and protects one from falling prey to the senses, tensions and frustrations.

Political instabilities, social insecurities and constant fear of an outbreak of wars among most civilized nations appearing as sparks of our short-circuited materialistic civilization have already shaken the confidence of common man from the path itself on which humanity travelled so long during the last few centuries.

In reaction this gave birth to a new social order in the form of the Beatles and Hippies, in the style of new poetry in literature, obscene dresses, LSD, DMT, psilocybin, tetrahydro cannabiol, peyote and oloiugui in form of medicinal tranquilizers or trips. This is a revolt against society. However, it is yet to be known whether they prove to be a remedy or even worse the disease.

We are racing after a mirage in search of happiness outside, but do not devote even a little time to know ourselves, go within and get real bliss. The real joy is not hidden in any material object rather in the consciousness of enjoying the things itself.

While on one hand the march of science opened new venues of progress and brought many impossibilities within the easy approach of mankind, at the same time its unrestricted misuse disintegrated the personality of man and opened the wide gate of disaster for him. What we see around us can never be called to be encouraging symptoms. Man is breaking down. His unthinkable omissions and commissions have eclipsed his own beautiful image. He became a patient of a split personality, neurosis, mental error and various other abnormalities.

The overcrowded hospitals unable to accommodate even the donors who built them, a long queue at the gate of mental asylums, increasing rates of suicide and homicide cases; ever growing factories of sleeping pills, tonics and tranquilizers; the problem of unemployment, racial riots, favouritism, corruption and nepotism rampant throughout are the few gifts of our present-day social structure.

It would be erroneous to say that the science of yoga is useful for individuals only and not for society as a whole. The welfare of society is determined by the wellbeing of the individuals. Here yoga appears as the blueprint of perfection.

Man wants to remain in harmony with all, but cannot. He wants to get rid of his indecisiveness, hate, anger, aversion and revengeful tendencies. He himself does not want to commit wrong for any price, but quite helplessly he has to sacrifice his godliness at the altar of his own demony. He doesn't know why.

These conditions are prevalent not only in common man, but even the so-called great personalities of world politics suffer from the same trouble – sometimes more deeply. As a result of the reflections of their own coloured images we get wars and suffering of common man in various forms. I personally feel that the practice of yoga can eliminate from society the exploitation of man by man, error or world wars and sense of insufficiency from the minds of the people as a whole.

The veil of mystery, secrecy and absurdities created by some people covered the real image of yoga, and it was looked upon with apprehension, misgiving and doubts. The science of yoga has got great physiological and psychological potentialities. It can be effectively practised as a therapy. The effect of yogic techniques on human physiology is an inviting field for investigation and research by modern physiologists. So also the scientific investigations of yoga psychology is a challenge to modern psychologists.

Drinking of acid, walking over water or remaining buried underground for several hours may be a magic show or anything else, but cannot be called yoga nor their doers are yogis. During the recent past these types of miraculous circus shows not only tarnished the good name of yoga, but also created doubt and suspicion into many reasonable minds about the very purpose for which yoga stands.

There are many people who after achieving some ordinary power temporarily try to create confusion and mislead the innocent. There is nothing in any branch of yoga which is beyond reason and science. No doubt tremendous miracles can be performed with the help of yogic potentialities, but they themselves are not yoga.

Yoga has a special role to play in the world of today. Its practice alone can remove mental and physical afflictions. It can bring joy to our hearts and homes. It doesn't lay down extraordinary conditions of self-discipline and behaviour patterns. One can continue enjoying the good things of life and still be a yogi. There is no virtue in retiring to the woods and sitting enchanted in the solitary grandeur of self-equilibrium or *samadhi*. Heroism lies in remaining steadfast in the tumult of life even when the scales are heavily loaded against us and in the attaining of *samadhi* or equilibrium in the midst of all odds.

A physician who wants only healthy persons for his patients is no physician. Likewise, if yoga were to work its wonders only on the physically and mentally fit, it would cease to be an amazing science of life. It being a highly rational science can benefit all people under all circumstance of life. After the daily round of mental and physical toil, it can bring back resilience and vigour and restore equipoise. It is under these circumstances that these days the same section of the world populace feel very much attracted towards the great system of yoga.

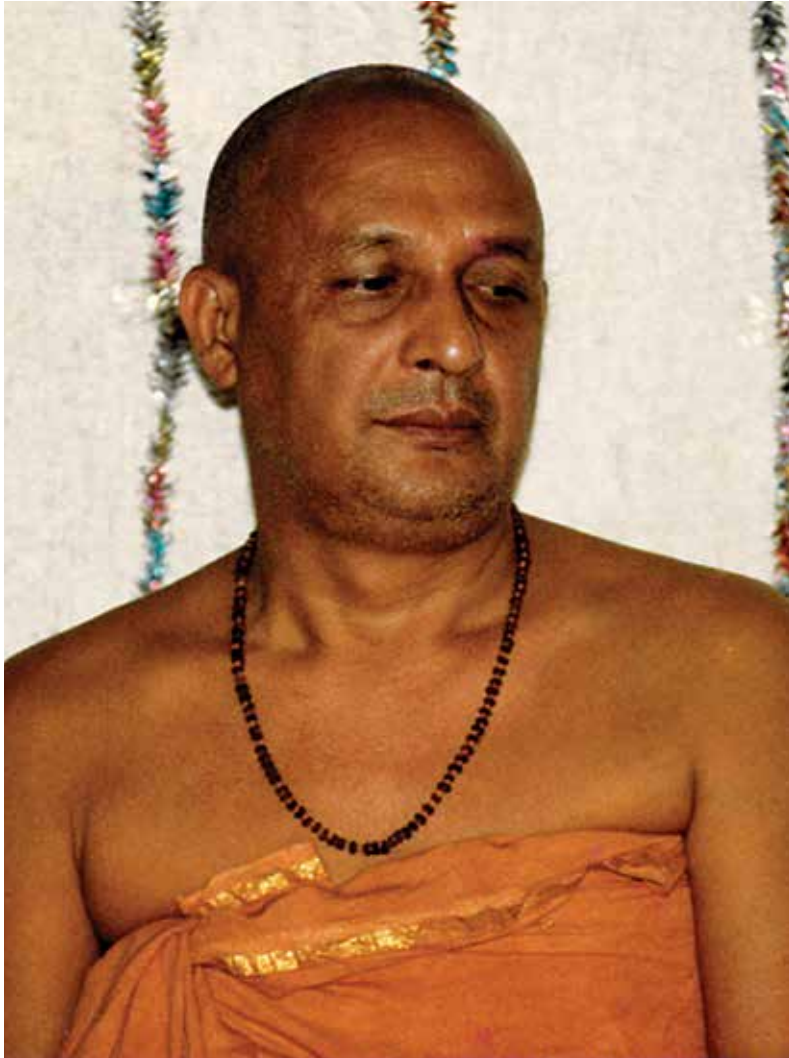
Yoga is secular and can be applied to any religion or faith of the world without any hitch. Like various branches of science such as physics, chemistry, astronomy, geometry, physiology, anatomy, which cannot be divided as Hindu chemistry and Christian biology, being universal truth yoga with its profound influence on the body, nerves, glands and different dimensions of consciousness can be adopted with the same ease by a Christian or a Hindu.

If the coming generation of tomorrow ignored to adopt this great technique of actual living, a time may come when they may be forced to meet unthinkable disaster which humanity has never experienced in the past.

– Published in *YOGA*, Vol. 6, No. 5 (May 1968)

Be a Yogi

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



All the wealth of man cannot equal ten minutes of dhyana yoga.
All the pains of man, and there are hundreds and thousands,

can be overcome by ten minutes of meditation. The best time to practise dhyana is in the early morning between 4 and 6. The second best time is in the evening after 9. The third best is around midnight, from 11 to 1.

Early morning is sattvic, evening is rajasic; and midnight is tamasic. The tantric sadhanas are practised late at night. The sattvic sadhanas are practised early in the morning. Therefore, adjust your sadhana accordingly.

The rishis of India realized the relationship between the mind and life. Life influences the mind and mind influences life. If you can control either one, you are a mahatma or a saint. Of course, you cannot control life – it is just not possible. But with the help of dhyana yoga, you can manage the mind. If you are able to manage the mind, you are a yogi.

Culture is not the result of an industrial or materialistic revolution, but a spiritual revolution. No matter what country you live in or which language you speak, yoga was part of your ancient culture. This great science was known and practised by your ancestors thousands of years ago. But for many ages the whole world has neglected this aspect of life. Today, however, humanity is again becoming aware of their spiritual heritage.

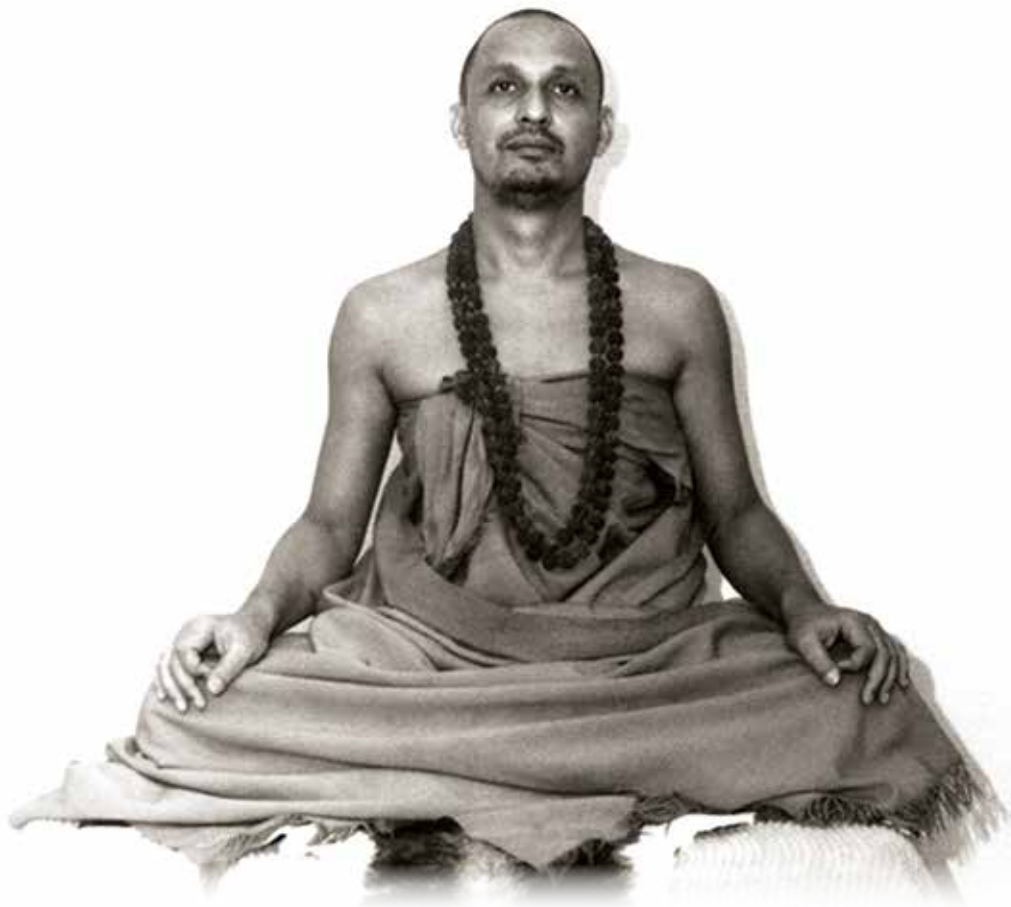
In 1968 when I started this mission, very few people knew anything about yoga. But today we are experiencing a great resurgence. Everywhere I go, people ask, 'Teach me a way to transcend the barriers of time, space and object.'

In the *Kaivalya Upanishad* there is a mantra which illustrates the meditation process very well: When you churn butter, you use a stick, and that is the mantra *Om*. Just as a milkmaid is churning that stick, right, left, right, left; so *Om, Om, Om*. Likewise, a pandit, a man of knowledge, should do the same and practise dhyana. In this way, all his pains, his *dukha*, his sins will be transformed.

– 25 July 1979, Bihar School of Yoga, Singapore,
published in YOGA Vol. 18 No 9 (September 1980)

Yoga and the New Human Race

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Through the practice of yoga a definite change takes place in the sphere of human consciousness. In fact, you must admit that all the aspects of yoga including the yoga asanas will surely bring about a change in the inner sphere of man. It is

true that by the practice of meditation, the yoga postures and through pranayama and other methods, a definite change can be brought about in the structure of the human brain and psyche. But it does more than this.

The awareness which is a special privilege of man becomes increasingly keen and intense with the practices of yoga. Animals think but do not know that they think; maybe monkeys, cows or some higher animals do think and also plan but they do not know that they are doing it. Some animals have even more intelligence than man, undoubtedly they do, but they are not aware that they have it. There are thousands and thousands of species existing but unaware of their own existence.

With the appearance of human beings something new has appeared. He not only exists, but he knows that he exists. He thinks and he knows that he thinks. He has problems and he is aware of those problems, and this is how the human being differs from the rest of the animals. This special quality of human beings is to be known as awareness.

In the phrase Sat-Chit-Ananda, the second word *chit* refers to this awareness. If we could develop this awareness in a monkey or a cow, perhaps something fantastic would take place. It is the mark of man's special evolution and this awareness produces the remarkable difference between man and the other species.

If you will for the moment imagine that man became aware of himself just like somebody else is aware of him, then you can go to the extent of discovering, creating, visualizing or imagining a seer, a spectator, you may say God, who shares my awareness. This awareness is the special vehicle by which man shall complete the journey.

This consciousness, this awareness is known as atman or Self. This atman is the seer of my existence, this atman is the witness of all that exists in the past, the present and which is sure to come in the future. But this atman is not aware of itself. The day that the atman experiences itself shall be the completion of your evolution.

You may say, "I will become aware of myself," but it will not be possible. If you close your eyes and think, "I am aware of myself," I can assure you that you will be aware of your body, you will be aware of your name, you will be aware of your background but you will not be aware of your Self. The name, form, time, space and object are not the Self. But it is through the atman that we know that they are.

Among human beings you will find that people are not aware of this higher existence. They are only aware of their external lives and because they are connected with this outer life there is pain, agony and there are problems. When we talk about the psychic race, the coming race, when we talk about the world culture we mean a culture that shall be aware of this atman. It is through the practices of yoga that you will become more aware of yourself and gradually you will commune with your inner nature.

For more than five thousand years of our history, mankind has suffered very much. Attempts to bring about this culture were made many times in the past but they resulted in utter failure. For some reason or the other this culture could not be restored because the people of that age could not develop their centre known as *bhrumadhya* or the third eye.

People had to work with their physical bodies, with their hands and feet and as it happened they could not develop their psychic centres which are situated in this body. For centuries people fought for prosperity, people fought for men and women. They did believe in God but they did not find their own source.

Now the whole picture is changing. The intellectual evolution is complete. With the completion of the intellectual evolution, the psychic body and the psychic centres in the brain are awakening. Whether you care or do not, kundalini in general is going to wake up in times to come.

Maybe after a few hundred years, people will not go to a guru to learn yoga but their kundalini will wake up with the passage of time. To express it in a different way, I can

tell you that in this brain there are certain centres which now have already become fused to waking consciousness and those centres in the brain which were lying dormant for past centuries are now coming to life.

You know very well that within the brain there are millions and millions of ultra-sonic and super-sonic circuits and centres. The centres of intuition, the centres of supreme understanding and all the centres are situated in our physical brain.

By the practice of kriya yoga, the awakening of mooladhara, the awakening of manipura chakra, by mahamudra, by bandhas people have been trying for centuries to awaken this dormant side of the brain, this nine-tenth of the brain.

When I started the practice of yoga, I found that people thought yoga had nothing to do with them and it was absolutely useless for the man of the world. I am talking of the years 1936 to 1939 when people did not know that this practice could bring them something precious and valuable. Within a few years suddenly a great change has taken place. In spite of heavy preoccupations, social and family problems, people have come to the understanding that yoga is for them.

In 1962, when a conjunction of eight planets occurred in Aquarius and many were terrified by the thought that chaos was going to take place I was in Munger, a town in Bihar, India, and that town was in absolute terror! Do you know why? In 1937, when there had also been a conjunction of four planets and the sun in Aquarius, the town of Munger was brought down to ashes by a terrible earthquake so that not one house survived. 50,000 casualties occurred in half an hour.

Thanks to the astrologers who told the people of Munger that the next time they were going to face the same calamity, everyone was terrified. Around the clock throughout the month people left their job, their duty or shop, and they were only praying day and night.

At that time, I happened to go to Munger for the first time. I was just a wandering monk. I was not speaking very much, so I did not even have one friend. I was accustomed to sleeping

on the roadside like many people do even today, and I was not sure that I would have something to eat at the time of lunch. If I had a few onions that was enough for me.

On my arrival in Munger, a gentleman called me and said: "Swami, what is your opinion about this day?" I told him, "The birth of a new world." That man left Munger that same afternoon. He misinterpreted me when I told him there would be 'the birth of a new world'." He thought that everything was going to be finished by that afternoon. This news spread to different people in the town. I stayed in Munger and that day passed without incidents.

At about one o'clock at night when the deluge, the destruction was supposed to happen, I got up and I felt, 'Now the birth of a new world is taking place'. The man who had left Munger the same day out of fear, got in touch with me the next morning, came back to Munger and asked me to build an ashram.

To tell you the truth and to be frank, I never thought of a mission, I never had any ambition. Without my wanting the ashram grew, without my wanting the disciples started coming, without my wanting it I came to the West a number of times, and everything happened without my wanting it.

So you can understand that even though mankind is at the same time moving in a different world, in a different and worldly sphere, sooner or later, a great change is going to take place in the whole world. Even if you take a vow here this evening that you are not going to practise yoga, I can assure you that you cannot help it. You can be sure of one thing.

After a few years when you meet your friends, you will say, "Have you got a television?" and he will say yes or no. You will ask, "Have you got a car?" And he will say yes or no. You will ask, "Do you practise yoga?" if he says no, you will say, "What type of man is he, he does not practise yoga at all!" It has already started happening.

When the great violinist Jehudi Menuhin was recently awarded the Nehru Prize in India and was asked by the press



correspondents what the firm bases of his life were, he said, "First yoga next music."

Finally, I can tell you that if you practise yoga asanas, pranayama, meditation, ajapa japa or antar mouna, a change does take place in the body, undoubtedly, but more than that, a change is taking place in the deeper spheres of your life but you do not know it.

When you practise yoga, you should not accept or you should not take to the path of abstention or rejection, it should be a path of synthesis. Yoga should unite not only two parts but many.

All the great thinkers like Annie Besant, Aldous Huxley, Sri Aurobindo have been talking about this super human race or this super mental race. You need not be afraid that you are going to develop horns or wings, but you will develop your consciousness to such a degree that you will become aware of the whole cosmos.

– *Published in YOGA, Vol. 9, No. 5, (May 1971)*

Yoga Outreach to Singapore

Swami Ratnashakti Saraswati

On 7 January 2023, a *Yoga Outreach for Health, Happiness and Harmony* program was conducted in Singapore at Huone Clarke Quay, River Valley Road. Yoga is a gift to humanity that promotes life through the development of the positive qualities and expressions of body, mind and emotions.

Beginning the New Year with a yogic approach to life and a focus on developing health, happiness and harmony was the theme of the program. In this program participants learnt yogic techniques in simple capsule form to promote optimum health, develop internal happiness and experience emotional harmony. For physical health a daily capsule of asana and pre-pranayama techniques were presented along with practical tips on how to incorporate asana and pranayama into a daily routine. To develop immunity, increase lung capacity and improve the overall breathing process, the techniques from the Bihar School of Yoga *Breathe For Healthy Lungs* program were taught.

Happiness is an internal state of mind that is not dependent on external circumstances. To promote the experience and understanding of happiness, yoga nidra along with relaxation and mind management techniques were taught.

To develop emotional harmony participants learnt a meditation technique designed to help them disconnect from the experiences of physical and mental comfort or discomfort and instead connect to the source of luminosity and peace within.

When body, mind and emotions are optimized and harmonious, challenges can be faced and overcome with a positive mind and creative approach to life.

A question and answer session was also conducted at the conclusion of the program and participants were encouraged to use the capsule sadhanas given by Swami Niranjanananda as a way of incorporating yoga into daily life.



Towards the Day of Happiness

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

You do not have to practise everything in yoga. If you know the right practice, fifteen minutes will do to transcend the outer space. You do not need days and years together. However, if you are practising the wrong techniques, which are not appropriate for your quality or functions, then it will take years and years.

One important practice which I have seen working with all people is to close the eyes and follow all the thoughts that come into your mind. Do not suppress anything. That should be done for about ten to fifteen minutes. Do nothing but sit down quietly and ask yourself, 'What am I thinking? Am I thinking about business, family, relations, future, past, useful, useless, evil thoughts, good thoughts?' Anything, let all thoughts come. You just become a seer, you just remain a witness.

Do not be attached and do not be detached, just look at them impartially. Do it for about ten minutes and then turn to your mantra. The tranquillity will come within twenty minutes. Then you must have a point, an image or a form for concentration. You must have it! You can have a star, a flame

of light, a flower, a deity or a living guru; it is all the same. You must have some image or form on which you must be able to concentrate your mind.

I am talking about day-to-day life. People need a strong mind which can be made by the practice of yoga. A little yoga practice will save you from an emotional crisis. Maybe, if there are conflicts in your personality, you can do something about them. I will not tell you that just by a few days' practice of yoga you can become free from conflicts. It is very difficult; but it is true that by the practice of yoga you can bring about harmony between your two personalities: *bhoga* means suppression and *yoga* means union.

When two things become one that is called yoga. What are those two things that become one in yoga? Philosophers have been telling us that the individual self and the cosmic self become one. Bhaktas tell us that the *jivatma* and *Paramatma* become one. As a student of psychology I feel that there are two personalities in every man: the ego and the super-ego. They are always in conflict with one another. Every man has two personalities, the subconscious personality and the upper personality. You are something to yourself and something else to me.

This schizophrenic attitude I call a split personality. We are two personalities, and the two personalities should be fused into one; that is the ultimate aim of yoga. What you are inside, you are outside, and what you are outside, you are inside. If I am a thief, I am a thief to me; I am a thief to all. If I am a good man, I am a good man to me; I am good to all. This particular fusion of the split personality into one is called yoga.

It is not possible in one day; it takes time, but according to the science of psychology and the science of yoga as long as there is a struggle between these two personalities, the ego and the super-ego, your behaviour will not remain the same. You will always remain abnormal somehow or other. Your thoughts will be clouded and your decisions will never be true.

Therefore, in order to succeed in life and be happy along with success, it is necessary that everybody practises yoga.

Man has been wanting success and he has been working for it, but even after having achieved success, he does not achieve happiness. There are some people who are successful but unhappy, and yet there are some people who are happy but unsuccessful. Happiness and success must come together and in the Upanishads that is called *shreya* and *preya*. *Preya* means pleasant and *shreya* means the good; both must come to man, and then life becomes complete.

Action, *karma*, is one hand and yoga is the other hand. We should get along with life and be aware that this modern civilization, which has been a matter of allurements to us, is not complete and it is not final; it is a phase. Students of history will tell you a lot about it, and perhaps in a decade or two, if we all meet again, we shall know the limitations of this modern civilization. It is a phase; it is not complete in itself, and it is going to lead somewhere.

If we have faith in modern civilization, and if we depend on modern civilization, perhaps we will be led to the same point in history as Babylon and Greece. However, if we are alert about this modern civilization, and especially as far as the effects on the human mind are concerned, then perhaps we may survive as a culture, just as India has survived against the accidents of history and ravages of time, not because India has something else, but India has faith; it is rooted in the permanent culture.

We want everything modern, which is fine, but at the same time we know that it is not final. Once we become the slaves of modern civilization, naturally our minds will become weak, and as a culture we will perish. It has happened in the past. Therefore, it is necessary that we accept the modern culture and civilization, because it is a part of human life, but we have to understand its limitations and supplement it with yoga.

So yoga for the mind and civilization for your creature comforts, with both together you will survive in the culture and it will be possible for you to see the day of happiness.

– May 1968, Indo-Japan Society, Japan

Control Through Yogic Life

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



There is only one method by which the mind can be controlled. Not by philosophy, not by reading a lot of books on this subject or by reading religious books, not even by leading a religious life. Only by a yogic life can one control the mind; one can control the physical brain, the physical heart and the physical muscles. When you are able to control the physical aspects of the brain, the psychological aspects are also controlled.

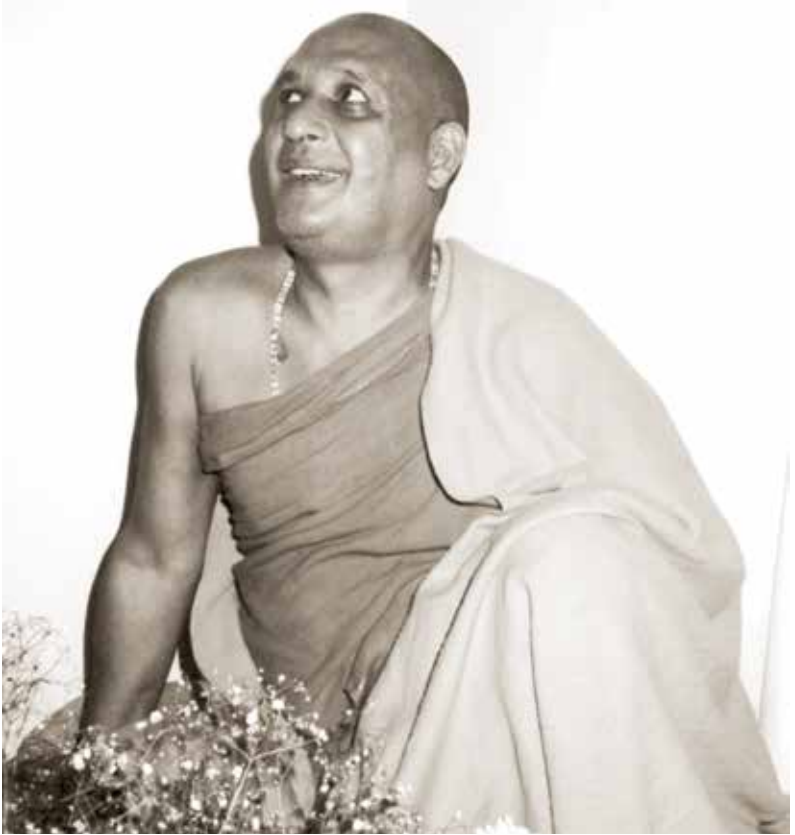
If you take a little drug, ganja or LSD, immediately you see the effect. Some people get more effect and some less. In the same manner, there are people in our society who can develop their equilibrium, mental peace and calmness to a great extent, but there are people who have absolutely nil, not even a fraction of equilibrium. Even the little things in life upset them, not to mind big things. If you know that someone has been talking against you in the street, you do not get sleep at night. Yoga means mental control.

Chapter 18 of the *Bhagavad Gita*, talks about control; it does not talk about renouncing life, wife, children, property and accomplishments. It says, 'Have everything with you, but have perfect control over the reactions, over the effects of the actions on your mind. You do your karma; you do your duty, but as far as the effects are concerned, they should not affect you. They should not bring about a crisis in your life.' This is the fundamental teaching of yoga according to the *Bhagavad Gita*.

– 29 May 1968, Indo-Japan Society, Japan

Sri Rama and the Awakening of Kundalini

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



In India, Ramalila is celebrated every year. To us, Rama was the son of a king, but at the same time he is the indwelling consciousness in every speck of this creation and the creative principle behind the visible and invisible universe. Also, Rama represents to us, not only the immanent reality behind this appearance, but also the transcendental reality.

Millions and millions of Hindus for many thousands of years have drawn inspiration from this great personality. Yogis consider him the incarnate consciousness and the entire Ramalila represents the discovery of the highest knowledge in one's own self. It is not merely a prince marrying the daughter of another king and going into exile, destroying the demon king, Ravana; it is something more than that.

This Ramalila has been going on, on every soil. The individual consciousness in man is trying to locate, is trying to capture and unite with the shakti, the highest power in the universe.

The awakening of kundalini is of utmost importance in man's life, and so is the experience that goes with it. Knowledge is not that important. What is important is experience. One iota of experience can immediately transport you to another realm of awareness, but knowledge cannot transport you to any realm; you remain where you are. In order to gain the experience, it is necessary for everybody, without exception, to withdraw his relationship with the sensorial world.

The five senses responsible for knowledge and the five senses responsible for action, represent the ten heads of the demon king Ravana, and each and every sense has twofold attitudes or *vruttis*, the positive and the negative. That makes it twenty, and these twenty attitudes are represented by the hands of Ravana which you will see in the Ramalila. When the battle was on between Rama and Ravana, Rama went on shooting him. Every time one of his heads was shot off, it was revived again. When it was discovered that in his navel there was something which had to be destroyed, this demon king Ravana ultimately fell.

When awakening of kundalini takes place, many things can happen. It is not merely a psychedelic experience which we have; it is not just the hallucination which we go through sometimes. This experience is responsible for transforming the total quality of man's consciousness, thereby giving him the total power to see the subtle forces that live in us beyond



our vision. The story of Sri Rama, the lila, is, in fact, depicting an entire journey of kundalini through the path of sushumna, right up to sahasrara chakra.

In India, the story of Sri Rama is sung day in and day out. For us he is a personal God, but more than that he is a constant inspiration in that he worked hard to discover Sita, who was in the captivity of Ravana, the demon king. So, today you are having Ramalila. It is very nice. Try to find some time to read the story. Rishi Valmiki has written the story of Rama. Then there is another story, *Adhyatma Ramayana*, the spiritual life of Sri Rama, and a third, *Ramacharitamansa*, the esoteric life of Sri Rama. It is important for all the spiritual aspirants to know what Ramalila stands for.

I have been talking about yoga for over two decades. I don't belong to a yoga cult. Yoga is not my tradition; my tradition is Vedanta. But I found that without a foundation, you can't raise a superstructure. If the union between ida and pingala does not take place, if the awakening of the chakras does not take place, if sushumna is not awakened through the practices and if kundalini does not awaken, man lives in the human body

but his consciousness is equal to an animal's. It doesn't matter what type of scholar you are. You may talk about any subject. You may talk about Vedanta, you may talk about bhakti, you may talk about raja yoga, you may talk about the *Bhagavad Gita* – it means nothing! A tape recorder can also talk.

There is an inner experience which is beyond this, and that experience is absolute reality. It is not imagination; it is the formation of the quality, the quantity and stuff of the mind. How do you see the lights in this room? Through the consciousness, that is, the vritti. In the same way, you can have inner experience, the gross mind can be transformed. And with this experience you can go ahead in your search for reality, in your search for anything, you might say, even truth.

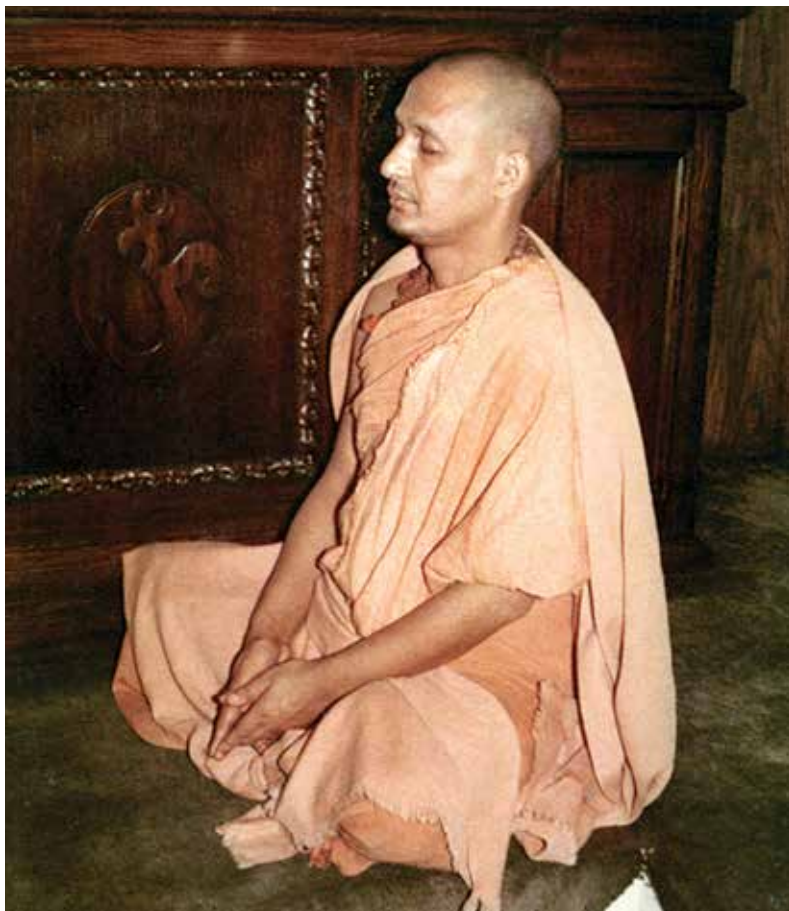
I thought it important for me to talk about yoga, and I find that people do understand it. Here you will sing in the Ramalila, but I can tell you a way of witnessing it. Every morning, sit in the lotus posture, siddhasana or vajrasana with any mudra, chin mudra or yoni mudra, close your eyes, stop all physical movement and concentrate your mind on one sound: the mantra. It can be *Om*, it can be *Rama*, or it can be the mantra your guru has given you. Every day, sit down and practise mantra, and this is how you awaken in yourself the Rama consciousness. This Rama consciousness moves from mooladhara to sahasrara through sushumna.

I am happy to be at this Ramalila, an opportunity given to me by Swami Ramamurtiji. And after twenty-eight years, I have met Swami Nadabrahmanandji, after longing to see him for many years. I will only be here for a few hours. I am on a flying visit to your country, but hope to come here again sometime and live in the peaceful surroundings of this ashram for some time. I don't have much to tell you, but I just want you to do one thing – experience, and go after it!

– 26 August 1982, Ananda Ashram, Monroe, New York, USA,
published in Teachings of Swami Satyananada Saraswati,
Volume III

Meditation

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Meditation is one method through which our soul, our spirit, our lives can evolve, but there is one major problem that bothers many aspirants. That problem is how to achieve successful meditation, and it is something that many people do not solve during their entire lifetime. To close the eyes and look within sounds easy enough, but to dive deeply into your own

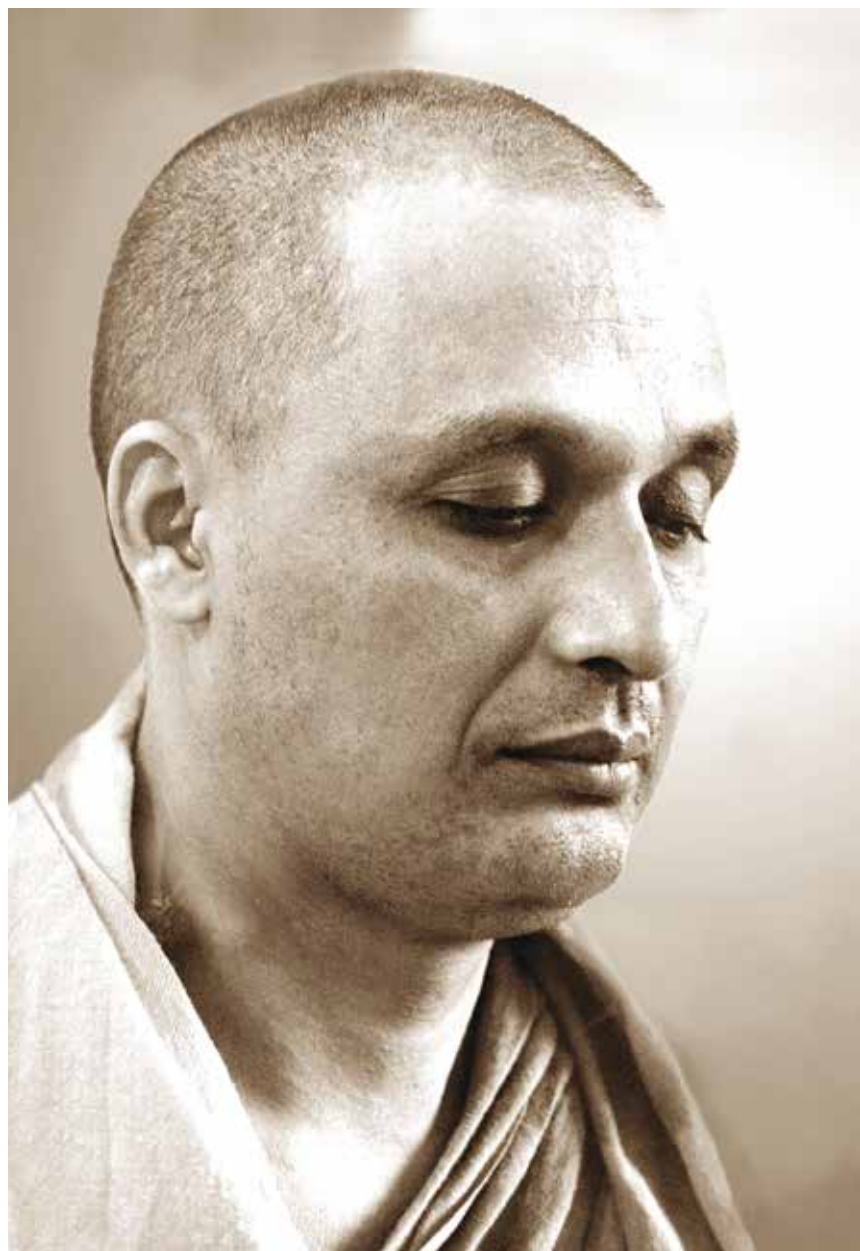
consciousness, well, that is not so easy. In order to do that, there has to be some kind of system formulated, some kind of way to go into meditation which is really a way we go into our consciousness.

There is such a system to guide the aspirant along the path of meditation. The main obstacles along that path are the many thoughts which crowd the mind automatically whenever we sit for meditation. They are of many kinds. There are thoughts about the past, present and future. There is a theory that these thoughts should immediately be suppressed, avoided by force of mind. A second theory supports the idea that if a particular thought comes into your mind, let it come and watch it carefully. Do not suppress it. The whole practice of meditation is based upon these two fundamental theories: one to suppress thoughts and the other to express thoughts.

Both ideas are right. They simply have to be applied correctly. In those cases, where the mind is terribly upset and thoughts are hammering over the mind endlessly, you should watch your thoughts and be a witness to them. Finally, when the mind becomes comparatively quiet and just a few thoughts come, which are not compelling and do not shake your consciousness from the very centre of your being, then you should suppress these thoughts. Those few distractions should be suppressed and avoided.

For instance, if you are upset mentally and you are sitting for meditation and you find that every time you try to fix your thoughts on one point, one subject, object or symbol, somehow or other the consciousness slips, and after a while, you find you are dwelling on those disturbances you underwent during the day. Then again you try to bring your mind back, but it does not want to come back. In this case, it will be necessary for you to practise witnessing the thoughts for some time. This method is known as inner silence, in technical yogic terms, *antar mouna*. In Sanskrit *antar* means inner, and *mouna* means quiet. This inner silence is the first requirement, the first step to successful meditation.









Antar mouna

This practice is good for those people who have a very disturbed condition of mind. Their minds behave like a drunken monkey. It is unable to sit quietly for even a second. This first step is not for evolved souls or aspirants already on the path; it is for beginners who know little or nothing about meditation, the mind and consciousness. They are babes so to speak, so they must begin at the beginning with the practice of inner silence. First sit down with the spinal cord erect. This is most important; it should not be tense or bent, but erect. You close your eyes and ask yourself what you are thinking. If thoughts come into your mind, good or evil, let them. Don't check a single thought; don't hold any thought; and don't be disturbed by any thought. Let the stream of consciousness flow.

In this practice the important thing is that you are not the thinker, you are the seer of thoughts. This is the one attitude you must maintain throughout, to be aware and to remain aware that you are a seer, a visualizer of the thoughts; and not the thinker of the thoughts. The tendency is to become a part of the thinking process and identify with the thinking process to such a degree that there is no difference between the thinker and the thought. In the practice of inner silence, the consciousness is split into two parts: one part is the thinker and the other part is the seer of the thought. There should be a constant process of 'I am seeing the thought', without becoming involved in the thinking itself.

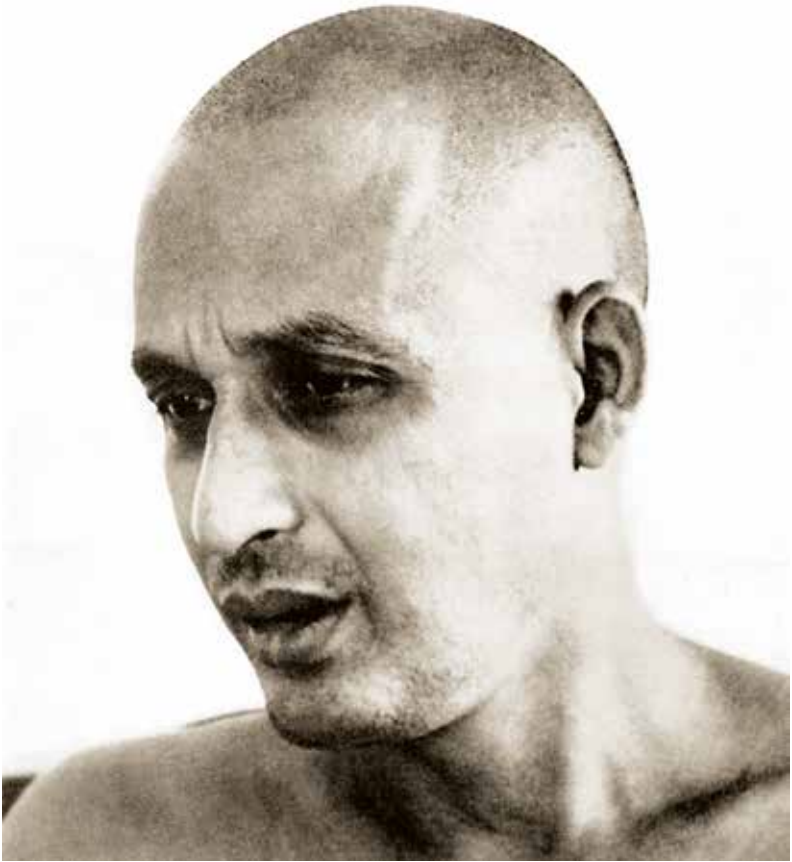
To help yourself to remain the seer, imagine a screen in front of you. See it mentally. It could be white, purple, pink, yellow or black, perhaps grey. The colour is determined by the elemental structure of your personality at that moment. It doesn't remain the same colour for long because the elements within your body change from moment to moment. When you close your eyes, you must project your thoughts onto the screen. Of course when your eyes are closed, you see darkness, the inner space or the inner firmament. That inner space is the

screen and onto the screen you project spontaneous thoughts; they must spring from the bottom of your consciousness.

By definition, a spontaneous thought comes from within; it is not induced by some external occurrence. For example, if a thought comes to you because a man has just passed through the porch, it is an external thought which gains entry into your consciousness from outside. But suppose a thought of your parents comes into your mind, that is a thought from the depths of your consciousness. You continue to project these thoughts upon the screen. You try to exhaust the entire fund of your subconscious thoughts which are expressed spontaneously, without putting the brakes on any thought. Throughout the practice you remain the seer, you say, 'I am thinking and now this particular thought is coming into my mind.'

In this method there is the danger that we are not aware that we are seeing a particular thought. It slips past our awareness. It is only after the thought has passed that you realize it went through your mind. Sooner or later, sometimes within days, you will find your mind is becoming quieter and quieter. So this practice of inner silence is a practice to produce tranquillity. In yoga this state of tranquillity is known by its Sanskrit name, *pratyahara*. It means withdrawal of the senses and is essential to meditation, but before we can reach the state of *pratyahara*, we have to go through a whole process of thought elimination from the mind.

There are other thoughts which need to be purged from the mind as well, thoughts from the past that are ready for expression. We can draw a parallel between these thought processes and the digestive process. You eat a certain food. It remains in the stomach for about five hours, then it goes into the small intestine for a few hours, then it passes into the large intestine, into the colon. It has been processed, and what the body does not need, it now eliminates. In the same way, within your personality there are hundreds and thousands of impressions belonging to this life, inherited, imported from outside and belonging to previous lives. All those thoughts



are in the form of impressions which have to be exhausted through expression in meditation.

There are experiences and impressions of your previous lives and also of this life which are in a premature condition and are not ready to come out yet. Even if you want them to express, they won't because they are immature. Then there are certain thoughts which need to come out and be expressed. They have come to the doorway. They have matured and have come to a state of fructification. This particular stock of thoughts has to come out. You cannot suppress them. These mature thoughts have gone through a process of resting, a process of fructification, desire expression. Therefore, the

meditator will have to exhaust all those thoughts which are wanting expression, standing at the gateway to the mind. This can be done through inner silence.

In meditation, the first practice is inner silence. It may continue for days, weeks, months, and even years. It is possible to exhaust most of the more compelling thoughts within a few weeks. The moment you have done this, you will find that calmness comes to your mind, and the compulsion from inside is not troublesome. The noise from outside is then left to deal with.

Exhausting the thoughts

There is the noise of the TV, loudspeakers, the radio, babies crying, children playing, neighbours, motorcars, trains, airplanes, along with thoughts of the future such as 'I have to go to the office, I must get my son educated, I have to lock the door' and ad infinitum. So many thoughts trouble the mind. These distractions also have to be worked out of the mind. This means that in the first stage of meditation you must work out of your mind those impressions seeking expression. In yoga the method to use is to 'see' your own thoughts. Watch them for as long as you can, whenever it is possible. Not only at the time which you set aside for this practice in the morning and evenings, but anywhere, everywhere. If a thought comes to you, become aware of it at any time. You will have to evolve a faculty to see your thoughts right from the time you get up until you retire at night.

Do you have any idea how many thoughts have come into your mind during one day? No, because you are not aware. Awareness is a faculty you will have to develop. The moment a thought comes to you from the depths of your consciousness, you should see it, know it has come and then let it pass. To give an example in order to make this perfectly clear, you pass over a certain road quite often. There are many cars that also use it every day, but you never notice them even though you look at them several times a day. Ask a traffic policeman. He

notices every licence plate because it is his duty to do so, that is his 'faculty'.

In meditation, you will have to use the faculty of a traffic policeman, so that the nature of every thought that passes through the mind is noted. If you do this during the day, you will find that your meditation is more successful, in so far as the impressions of the past are concerned.

Another difficulty you have to contend with is thoughts of the future, anticipatory thoughts. When you sit for meditation, no thought of the past comes up, but you find this second problem - thoughts of the future begin; potential financial difficulties, marriages, divorces, economies, family, whether certain things will or won't take place. What should you do? When a particular thought comes to your mind about a future difficulty, you are anticipating because of a basic fear in your personality, which you cannot cut suddenly, it is a fear complex. Fear comes.

Maybe there is the danger of a crisis in your life at some future time. What are you going to do, pacify this thought or ignore it? If you fail to pacify that thought and you force yourself into meditation on your deity or mantra, what will happen? In the depths of your meditation, the visionary fears will come. You will see dragons, snakes, ghosts, and other things of this nature, and you will think they are good experiences, but they are not experiences. They are expressions of your own consciousness. Unless you solve the particular problem of consciousness, it is no use going ahead with meditation.

There is a simple solution to this problem. The moment a fear or any other complex regarding the future comes into your mind, let it come and let the thought develop to the extreme. These are the psychological problems. Let the thoughts develop to such an extreme that you think of every bad thing that can possibly befall you. Come to a point where you are finished with the thought. Cut it off. Now bring into your mind a counter thought, use the same thought process,

but opposite in nature. Think of a positive thought. If it came into your mind that sometimes in the near future, you are going to suffer a grave financial loss and you let this thought work out to the maximum catastrophe, then start the thought that you can manage your financial problems, you have done so in the past and you will do so in the future. In other words, create a counter-balancing thought, a kind of heroic thought full of strength. Confidence should be entertained. Positive neutralization overcomes the negative. This is the law of the mind. This is point two.

Point three is concerned with the problems of the present. One of the problems is what to do about the physical body which refuses to behave, particularly for the aspirant from the West, who has always sat on chairs with the result that the ankle and knee joints are extremely stiff. For him the lotus pose comes very hard. Furthermore, he finds his spine won't stay erect, his neck gets sore and tired and his arms at times feel like leaden weights. These difficulties can be worked out through asana, the physical postures. There is scarcely a town of any size anywhere, particularly in the West, which does not have teachers teaching asanas and pranayamas of hatha yoga. There are many good books written on the subject which the aspirant can use, although it is advisable to have a trained teacher.

Along with the body problem comes the problem of a 'busy' mind that must be quietened before any kind of meditation will succeed. Once thoughts of the past and the negative thoughts about the future have been exhausted through the processes described in steps one and two, certain techniques can be employed to eliminate thoughts of the present and to still the mind. There are many ways to do this: counting the beads, using a mantra as in japa yoga, and chanting or music as in bhakti yoga, to name a few. Through these practices you can bring the necessary peace to your mind and when this is done you can proceed with meditation.

– 11 June 1968, *Theosophical Society, Chicago, USA*

One Reality Only

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Yoga means communion of the individual self with the cosmic self. At the same time, it is complete detachment or departure from the outside world into the inside world. It has to be noted that just by meditation with your eyes closed, when you develop awareness within, is not sufficient. Take it from me and also experience it in your own life. It is necessary that the awareness is applied in your day-to-day life.

Let us say you produced a bomb and kept it in your room, you did not make use of it, and it remained there. Similarly,

through meditation, you heighten and purify your awareness, but when the question comes of applying it in your day-to-day life, you do not do it. The daily life and the life in meditation become two different and contradictory realities. If you want your developed awareness to help you in your spiritual life and in your daily material life, you must know the method of squeezing out a little energy from that fundamental source of awareness and putting it in touch with your day-to-day activities.

In yoga, as in other sciences pertaining to yoga, there are methods, ways and means by which the supreme awareness can be applied. This is called applied yoga. In meditation, the vision, the psychic experiences are not everything. They are just symptoms of growing concentration. They are symptoms which prove that your consciousness is transcending different dimensions and stages of your awareness. It only means that.

If you want this yoga or awareness to become a reality in your life, you should also know the method of synchronizing the spiritual awareness with your day-to-day life. Unless you do that, you will never realize that potential.

Therefore, you will find many spiritual aspirants, renunciates or householders, who have gone very deep in meditation, and some of them lose complete awareness with the outer body but they have not been able to accomplish anything. They have not been able to understand anything in life. If you ask them something, they forget. They lack the power of memory and the faculty of understanding. They have completely dimmed the power of constant awareness.

If they are meditating correctly, why does it happen? It means that their day-to-day life in the senses and the world and their life in meditation become two different lives. Therefore, side by side with the practice of meditation, the practices of raja yoga, hatha yoga, bhakti yoga and jnana yoga, one will have to do karma yoga.

– May 1968, California, USA

Need for Tranquillity

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

People who have been running after spiritual enlightenment, about which they have the most vague idea or self-styled notions, become introverted, psychologically abnormal and misfits in society. Spiritual enlightenment means qualifications, and yoga is a means to that end, but the most important point is, how to achieve tranquillity, equipoise and a state of complete relaxation? It is a crucial question today.

Even the people who are not prepared to accept that they are restless and dissipated and who may boast that they are absolutely tranquil and do not worry or suffer from psychic dissipations, I will never believe them. Once you are put to psychological tests and your entire personality examined either through hypnosis, dream or your instinctive actions, it will be proved that you are not tranquil. You have not achieved a tranquil state.

Recently, I met a gentleman who was drinking a lot. He told me, "Swamiji, I don't worry about anything in this world," and he immediately drank one glass. Again he said, "Swamiji, I don't care about anything, I am such a happy man." To the eyes of a psychoanalyst, he cannot prove that he is happy. He is unhappy, he is the most disturbed soul, but he does not know it. Therefore, the first duty of every man is to become aware that he is unhappy. To realize one's unhappiness, which is a fact of life, is the first process in yoga.

For most of us ignorance is bliss. The way we accept, understand and react in society, the family or within ourselves will be proof that we have not attained the state of tranquillity. Therefore, yoga comes to us as a method through which we can attain a complete state of tranquillity.

– 25 May 1968, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Awareness

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

For some time, I have been thinking of one problem, of one event in life. Animals move on the instinctive plane. They react instinctively. They are not aware of what they are doing. The human being has the faculty of awareness, yet he generally lives on the instinctive plane. We move but do not know we are moving. We must leave the instinctive plane and make use of the faculty of awareness, which is the special gift given to the human being. We must learn to live on the plane of awareness.

This awareness, which has come into operation and manifested itself the moment we were born as human beings, is termed as *jnanam*. It is not mere knowledge but awareness. We are aware of what we are doing, what we are thinking and what we did and what we shall do. We are aware of the fact, that we are alive. If given time, and if this is the mode of my *sadhana*, spiritual practice, then I can sit down the whole day, and I can continue to sing, that I am and I am aware that I am.

This awareness, which has just evolved in the human being, should be intensified. The duration of this awareness must grow longer and longer. Whatever we do, we should do it with complete awareness. Yoga is a method by which we develop this type of awareness, so much so that this awareness is completely separated from the body awareness.

Now I am aware that I am giving a discourse on yoga. I am aware that this awareness is united with body awareness, with mind awareness and with sense awareness. When I know that I am, I am also aware that I have a body. The awareness is not purified; it is not non-sensual awareness. It is awareness but sense awareness. It is awareness but physical awareness. It is awareness, there is no doubt about it.

This awareness should be separated step by step, stage by stage, point by point, so much so that this awareness should



remain intact, and keep on expanding. At the same time, all those elements, physical, sensual, mental, psychic, must be removed from its body. Therefore, yoga is a process of purification.

Yoga is a process or act of separation in which we separate the non-self elements from this atman. This awareness is atman, it is pure. It is not aggregated, it is always homogenous, it is always true, it is always unchanging, it is in me, in you, in all.

For the time being, if you switch from me unto yourself, and think 'I am aware that I am listening to a discourse', this fraction of awareness, which is not complete in itself, not pure, is tainted and mixed with mental awareness, is to be separated from other forms of awareness and from our confusions. Through the practice of yoga, maybe through *viveka* or discrimination, maybe through the *yama* or *niyama*, the regulations, the rules, the self-controls, or through *pratyahara*, the process of withdrawal or act of tranquillity, or by *dharana*, concentration, or by *dhyana*, meditation.

We do nothing, but keep on eliminating all those foreign elements, which through habit have become part and parcel of our pure awareness. Stage by stage, the mind is intensified, is made introvert through meditation and concentration. How is it to be done?

There are various methods. There are different techniques of mantra, concentration on a symbol, devotion, prayer, serving humanity with absolute unselfishness, serving gurus or following the path of knowledge. You may choose any path. They are all used to make this atman free from the lower turmoil. There are various techniques of yoga like raja yoga, bhakti yoga, karma yoga and jnana yoga. Raja yoga is the method of meditation, through which you go deeper and deeper, become free from the physical awareness and transcend all sense experiences and finally merge with your own self. But this is not as easy as people have been thinking. Unless the personality is purified and made free from its burdens and tensions, it is not possible to go into deep meditation.

– 1968 Chicago, USA,
published in YOGA Volume 12, No.7 (July 1974)

On the Spiritual Path

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

All are pilgrims on a divine path. This great path is a spiritual path, and steadily and gradually we strive onwards towards perfection. The ultimate purpose of every human being is to make himself more aware of that which is perfect within, to become one and in harmony with the Higher Self, the state of perfection, the state of the Absolute. This great pilgrimage of spiritual life is only undertaken by those of great courage and boldness. The weak and infirm are afraid to walk on this path even though this path is for all, the weak and the strong.



Once you embrace spiritual life, the vicissitudes of life and the vacillations of the mind are no longer present in you. Just as a man dreams of death or of some accident, he overcomes all the tragedies of his dream-life just by waking up. In the same manner, the restlessness of human life, the emotional disorders, the lack of direction and purpose, the distractions of the mind, the anxieties and worries, the erratic and irrational behaviours, and all the psychological errors enumerated in psychology, known or unknown, realized or yet to be realized, discovered or yet to be discovered, all the physical, mental and emotional maladies of life can be overcome by leading a spiritual life.

This pilgrimage takes you from the outside to the inside. The outer consciousness, the human awareness is always in tune with the outer surroundings and environmental situations. The individual awareness is always in tune with the five senses and the mind.

These two types of awareness, the human and the individual, must be drawn inwards and made to penetrate through the veils of darkness by the incessant, constant practice of self-awareness, until this little individual consciousness becomes one with the Supreme Consciousness. Man has been limited to the realm of mental consciousness, his mental plane of existence, since he transcended physical consciousness. This consciousness is limited, finite, not permanent, and subject to change.

As long as your existence is in this dimension of consciousness, you will be subject to the mental vicissitudes of life, you will be subject to emotional crisis, but as soon as you transcend and go beyond this level of consciousness, you will have an understanding as to the nature, causes and effects of your troubles. It is as if you are looking back or down on your troubles from a great distance and the different perspective tends to lessen the seriousness of them. This is how spiritual life and the understanding of it takes you away from your troubles and difficulties. Spiritual life removes the imaginary psychological and mental fears and anxieties.

The whole basis, foundation and structure of a spiritual life can be worked out and drawn from one single plan, from outside to inside, from the point of the individual to the cosmic, from senses to spirit, from outer to inner awareness, from the changeable to the changeless and from the flickering shadows of pleasures and pains to that permanent bliss - *ananda*. Your whole program, from asanas, pranayama, meditation and studies can be worked out according to the blueprint. The purpose then is to become one with that blueprint. The whole aim is to go within and become one with the blueprint. This whole program of going within is known as yoga.

Once we sit down quietly, it should be possible for us to penetrate through layer after layer until we are able to experience the wholeness within. Of all the experiences, of all that can be said about yoga, this experience is wonderful and takes you into the deepest resources of your awareness.

Yoga

Yoga brings about a meeting of the two personalities in man. Throughout the history of man, these two personalities have always been separate and in conflict with each other. The individual personality, the *jiva*, as it is called in Sanskrit, has always been divorced from and unaware of the Supreme Self. It can be described in terms of the father and the son: I am here and my father is there, but we are not together. Either he has to come to me or I must go to him; that meeting point of the two is known as yoga. The process, the path of yoga is not just the meeting point between the two consciousnesses; it is the road, the path of going inwards, the journey of the one consciousness to the other. It is also the remover of obstacles and distractions on that path of the individual consciousness, so that the successful meeting does and will take place. In the beginning, it establishes tranquillity and peace, along the way it removes the darkness of the individual self and its understanding to bring light to that Supreme Self, so that the journey is completed with success.

I am giving you a discourse on yoga. You are quietly and calmly listening to me. You are very receptive in this state and you are able to absorb everything. In the same way, if one of you is crying or screaming, no one is able to hear me and you will not be receptive to undertake the journey and begin. The senses must be silent, calm and quiet. They must be annihilated, driven into silence as they are the cause that tends to disturb the mind. The mind attains peace and tranquillity through the annihilation of the senses. In yoga, that state is known as *pratyahara*. *Pratyahara* is that state or act of withdrawing the mind from the outer senses and then it rests in the inner silence.

Meditation should be a spontaneous act, experience or method. It is only after *pratyahara* that the mind attains the amount of serenity or power needed to meditate spontaneously. Without *pratyahara*, the mind does not have the required mental peace and balance for spontaneous meditation. So mental power is the first prerequisite. Yoga will ultimately

bring enlightenment, that experience of the deepest layer of consciousness, but yoga has a double purpose – to bring mental peace and a state of mental balance to the individual. Due to the so-called psychological frailties of man, the individual, society, the world is in a state of unrest and confusion. Every person has impressions, inhibitions, complexes, phobias and various other disturbances or fears deeply imbedded in their subconscious minds, which have been accumulating for years and years or from birth to birth.

You have been accumulating these experiences, bitter, sweet or mixed. They are imbedded in your subconscious mind, filed away until they come to maturity to the conscious mind. The manifestation, thought patterns taking place in the conscious mind can be defined as feelings. You experience feelings of exhilaration, peace, bitterness, worry or anxiety whenever you do something wonderful or something bad, the feelings are the manifestation of those impressions which have come to the point of maturity.

Meditation is an outlet for these impressions. The moment you sit for meditation, so many thoughts come to the conscious mind, because of the relaxed or respective nature or state of the mind. There is always a certain part or certain portions of your life or lives which are just coming to the threshold or gate of your mind, to the threshold of your personality. They are trying to find an outlet for expression and elimination. Meditation is the outlet for the elimination of all the thoughts in such a manner that you do not regain them but they are eliminated forever.

The house of yoga

It is in this light and from this point of view that yoga is used as a treatment for the ills of society. The whole theory behind yoga is based on the purity of your subconscious mind and the elevation of your conscious mind with the expression and elimination of the manifestations of these dark forces within you.

Society has given us everything. It has provided us with the comforts of the body, abundant prosperity and total social security, but society also gave us crime, juvenile delinquency, insecurity and unrest among the population. Society did give us mental, emotional or physical tensions or the need for pills, tranquillizers, alcohol or cigarettes. It did give us clubs and night clubs, methods of escaping from the realities of life and ourselves. Lastly, society has not given us a cure, but the situation, the state of mind goes from bad to worse and finally to hopelessness.

It is in this light that yoga can be thought of as a treatment, a relief from the ailments of our minds and of society as a whole. For example, people who have succeeded in life tend to suffer from coronary thrombosis, the disease is a product of having no faith, no security in success, they are always anxious of losing it. Yoga instils faith in a person, faith in himself and his abilities to the extent that the question of success never troubles him, and success comes automatically.

Yoga can also instil a sense of spirituality in a person, a faith in himself as a servant of God so that if success comes, it is only due to the grace of God and if success goes it is only due to the grace of God. God has become the power, the force behind the person; his life, his work, his success or failure is dependent upon God. God is carrying the luggage, the burden of life. As God is your guiding light, your personality, your mind is pure and relaxed, tension free, you have been breathing, thinking, acting, going about your daily habits unconsciously, in fact your entire life is moving from day to day unconsciously.

If you are unaware that you have never tried to breathe, think and act, then how is it possible that these things can and do go on automatically. You must accept there is some other law, some other director who has been doing these things for you. As you have been unconscious of your life, you have also been unconscious of Him. This is the basis, the theory behind yoga, the awareness of this other self.

Each one of you has provided yourself with a room, some type of shelter and heater in the cold and cooler in the heat. In order to keep your room clean, you must have a vacuum cleaner. Even if you keep your room closed all day, dust will collect daily. In the same way, the brain, the mind, your personality must be provided with a heater, a cooler and a vacuum cleaner. When the mind becomes agitated, angry, a cooler is required to bring the mind back to its original condition. When the mind becomes depressed, cool and melancholic, a heater is needed to stimulate and heat the mind. Even by closing your eyes, mouth, nose and ears, your subconscious will still produce dirt. These mental disturbances of your metabolic process go on continually. So your mind, your room must be cleaned daily.

There is a nice comfortable bed in the room, so you can provide your life with the proper amount of sleep and rest to refresh, to renew your energies to meet the requirements of the day. In the same way, your mind requires a bed and a certain amount of rest to renew its energies. Yoga provides the mind with rest, with the practices of meditation, asanas and pranayama. With a little reading from scriptures, this is equal to the sleep and rest required for the body. It gives the same rest to the mind as the bed gives to your body.

As you give shelter to the body, you also provide it with a kitchen, food to nourish and keep the body healthy. In the same manner, there must be some provision in your life for the food of the mind. Good thoughts are the food, the nourishment for the mind. With vitamins, carbohydrates, fats and starches you feed your body with a balanced diet. In the same way, with the reading of scriptures, the listening to mahatmas, yogis and learned people with wisdom and knowledge, keeping the company of the good and wise, you feed the mind, with the proper nourishment, balanced diet to keep it healthy and happy.

You have a room with a bed, heater, a cooler, a vacuum cleaner and a kitchen. All you need now is a house, but it must

be a house with a good lock on the door, so you can sleep well and so all that you have accumulated for the purpose of making your life comfortable, will not be stolen by the three burglars. These three burglars are not outside but they are within you. If you are not careful, they will steal everything you have accumulated, the good thoughts, the heater, the cooler and vacuum cleaner. You will have to be careful, aware of who is coming to visit you, you must know which thoughts are going in and by proper security which ones to let in the room.

In this one illustration, the whole scheme of yoga has been discussed. Yoga is a life-making science. It is not an act of renunciation, it is not an act of escape, and it is not the negation of life. It is not rejecting life, but it is the correction of the wrong notions, wrong impressions that we have formed over the years. You do not have to reject society or renounce your actions. You do not have to renounce love, serving people, good acts, good intentions and acts of self-purification. It is said in the *Bhagavad Gita*, 'Three acts should never be renounced, good actions of charities, helping others and acts of purification.'

What you have to renounce is the frailties in your own personality. You have to reject what is not wanted within. It is not possible to do it intellectually. It is only possible by having complete faith in yoga, a complete life in yoga. You must say, 'I am a yogi'. You must feel it every day. You must not be afraid. In this way, the practice of yoga, the moment-to-moment awareness to live a life with higher principles, with absolute faith in that higher Spirit who shall be made known to you through yoga, transforms the values of your life little by little. Make resolves and keep revising them. Finally remind yourself every day as to the purpose of your life and that while the ultimate purpose of yoga is to bring enlightenment, the primary, preliminary purpose is to clean the road, to light the path and to make the journey itself.

– 1968, *Integral Yoga Institute, New York City, USA*

Blessing of Inspiration

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

I extend my good feelings and in the name of the Lord I send you the greatest blessing in the form of inspiration so that you may continue your spiritual life with faith and your conviction in the life of yoga becomes consolidated.

In this great country, yoga is coming with a terrific speed, with the same speed with which prosperity came. When I came to Honolulu from Japan, I immediately felt the thirst, the aspiration, the craving and I began to think that the spiritual nature of man, which



is eternal, is suffering from instinctive greed for prosperity and materialism. It is not that the Americans are becoming less spiritual, no, they are rediscovering their spirituality. It was there before, it is there in the present, and it shall continue to exist.

Once prosperity begins, man lives in abundance, his thirst for spirituality begins to be felt. It is the right time, and it is the time that in your country, the spiritual movements should glow. Industrial movement is now overlapping into spiritual movement. And this spiritual movement will bring an era of enlightenment and supreme knowledge.

*– 1968, Chicago, USA,
published in YOGA Volume 12, No.9, (July 1974)*

Vriksh Sankalpa – Nature Our Teacher

Prasiddhi Singh

Vriksh Sankalpa – Nature Our Teacher is an eco-yogic series talking of nature, culture and learning to inspire everyone not just to think but also to act.

A lesson from the Palm Tree

Hari Om. I am Palm Tree. In India I am known as the *Palmyrah*. My botanical name is *Borassus flabellifer*. I am known as the tropical beauty. I have a huge family called *Areaceae* or *Palmae* with 2,600 species mostly found in coastal areas. We come in all shapes and sizes, from small, fat shrubs to skinny, thin towering trees. My grand-parents' species the *Quindio*, the wax palm, the national tree of Colombia, is the tallest species. It reaches heights of about 200 feet.

The areca palm family has a fairly small lifespan of 40 to 50 years, while the popular coconut palm lives between 70 and 100 years, and most date palms can hang on for 100 to 120 years, and some can reach even 200 years of age. It is true you find me in coastal areas, but I am everywhere let me explain how.



Trivia – Did you know?

The Talipot Palm's (*Corypha unbraculifera*) leaf is as big and tall as a Ship Mast. A single leaf will be able to cover about 20 men and keep them dry when it rains. Isn't this super cool.

Starting with my medicinal importance, such as treating breast cancer, diabetes, hypertension, inflammation and cognitive function I am the very oil you use in cosmetics and to relax your body. I am also in an astounding number of foods, from ice cream to pizza dough, margarine, cookies, and chocolate. I am in some of your favourite fruits and quick bytes like Acai berries, Chilean palm wine, which is extracted from the sap in the trunk, betel nuts, snake palm fruit, California fan palm fruit, coconut, ice apple and dates, and you also use my palm leaf baskets to collect my fruits I am everywhere you see.

This relation with me is not only from today. My relationship with history is vast. Tree worship is practised around the globe. We see it in the Sumer, Maya and Indus valley civilizations, to name a few. India is a wonderful country where tree worship is practised till today with the same love and fervour as it was 2,500 years ago. The 2,000-year old ancient Sangam Tamil literature and Sri Lanka's chronicle *The Mahavamsam* specifically say that my family and its trees are abodes of Gods.

I also inhabit nearly every type of habitat within my range, from beautiful rainforest to the very dry deserts. I am also the palm leaf that was used for writing ancient scriptures and preserving literature. Speaking of my scientific importance, during lunar and solar eclipse times, the Brahmin priests ask people to wear the Palmyra leaf with a written mantra over their foreheads. This is to remove the evil effects of the planets. In today's world where there is mental stress and not much family time, I purify the air and keep the environment away from negativity. I keep you and your family full of positive vibes, so your family grows with time and becomes stronger and better which is why I am also known as the fortune plant.



Trivia-Did you know?

The Areca palm generates oxygen 24*7 so day and night, while you sleep and are awake. Wow!



But I am extremely sad that my species is becoming endangered day by day despite our uses and benefits. Some of my species in Madagascar, such as the Tahina Palm and Manambe palm, and even the loneliest palm of Mauritius, are almost extinct, which is why I need your help to protect my family and yours as well. So bye-bye, and please think of us. *Jai Ho!*

In yoga ecology, the first attempt is to connect and communicate with nature, to have empathy with nature and not just treat nature as something to improve the life of an individual.

—Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Sankalpa - SERVE

So that was the Palm Tree telling its story. Are you aware that it is called *Karpaga Taru*, Wish-Fulfilling Tree, since no part of the tree is useless. While understanding the concept of wish-fulfilling tree, I also realized that humankind and the biodiversity of nature has a requirement of water, textiles and various things and Palm Tree provides us all the resources and does its best to SERVE. Similarly, we should also try to serve the planet Earth, including Palm Trees.



Now I will request you to please recite the pledge as you read; and don't forget to fill in the blank:

I ____ promise to SERVE the planet and help in protecting the Palm Tree. I will hereby take good care of the environment and protect planet Earth by planting more trees, spreading environmental awareness and living a yogic-sustainable lifestyle.

To help you, here are some questions for you to check how well you understand the importance of the Palm Tree in your life and how well you fulfil your pledge. Remember, you should not only think but also act. This is your weekly Tick Box for your Eco-Resolution Diary:



- Did I plant, water or take care of a tree?
- Did I talk about the environment to friends and neighbours?
- Have I SERVED to live a yogic-sustainable lifestyle?
- Have I seen 5 Palm Trees?
- Have I checked if the Palm Tree has enriched my food through its products?
- Has the Palm Tree become part of my worship?

Prasiddhi Singh, born in 2012, is mantra dikshit from Swami Niranjanananda and India's youngest environmentalist. She has planted 100,000 trees and has received many awards and distinctions:

- Founder and Social Entrepreneur
- Prime Minister National Child Awardee (India's Highest Civilian Honour under 18)
- Diana Awardee (Global Social Action Award)
- Global Child Prodigy Awardee
- Fruit Forest Creator of India - India Book of Record
- Brand Ambassador - Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, Tamil Nadu Government
- Brand Ambassador of the Green Tamil Nadu Mission
- TEDx and Harvard Model United Nations Speaker.



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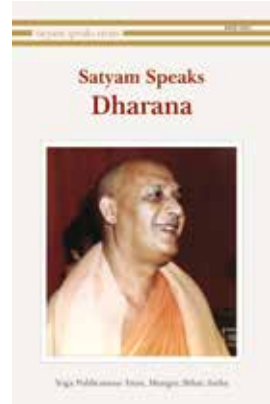
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Dharana

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- The *Bihar Yoga* app brings to the user ancient and revived yogic knowledge in a modern medium.
- *For Frontline Heroes*, designed for people who are active in the fight against Coronavirus, presenting simple yoga practices to help alleviate tension and stress caused by the pandemic.

- Registered with the Department of Post, India
Under No. MGR-02/2020-23
Office of posting: Ganga Darshan TSO
Date of posting: 1st-7th of every month
- Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers, India
Under No. BIHENG/2002/6305

issn 0972-5717

Yoga Peeth Events & Yoga Vidya Training 2023

Bihar School of Yoga Yogavidya Training

<i>Jul 2022-Jul 2024</i>	Ashram Life Training
<i>Feb 6-11</i>	Total Health Yoga Capsule (Hindi)
<i>Mar 1-30</i>	Bihar Yoga Teacher Training
<i>Apr 4-10</i>	Pratyahara & Dharana Training
<i>Apr 18-24</i>	Pranayama - Breathe for Healthy Lungs Training
<i>Jul 1-Dec 31</i>	Yoga Chakra Experience
<i>Sep 20-28</i>	Hatha Yoga/Karma Yoga Training
<i>Oct 4-12</i>	Raja Yoga/Bhakti Yoga Training
<i>Oct 15-29</i>	Progressive Yoga Vidya Training
<i>Nov 20-29</i>	Kriya Yoga/Jnana Yoga Training

Bihar Yoga Bharati Yogavidya Training

<i>Apr 15-Jun 15</i>	Yogic Studies, 2 months (English)
<i>Aug 7-Oct 7</i>	Yogic Studies, 2 months (Hindi)

Events

<i>Feb 13-14</i>	Bal Yoga Diwas, Children's Yoga Day
<i>Nov 4-15</i>	Munger Yoga Symposium II

Monthly Programs

<i>Every Saturday</i>	Mahamrityunjaya Havan
<i>Every Ekadashi</i>	Bhagavad Gita Path
<i>Every Poornima</i>	Sundarkand Path
<i>Every 4th, 5th & 6th</i>	Guru Bhakti Yoga
<i>Every 12th</i>	Akhanda Path of Ramacharitamanas