

# YOGA

Year 3 Issue 6

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Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar, India

Commemorating the *World Yoga Convention 2013*



## 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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## GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

### Guru Bhakti Yoga

The highest and the easiest yoga to practise in this age is guru bhakti yoga. It is the transformation of the sense of ego. It consists in the transmutation of individual feeling, willing, understanding and determining into infinite consciousness. The greatest point in the philosophy of guru bhakti yoga is to identify the guru with the Absolute, to realize the oneness of the guru with his ishta devata.

The sadhanas laid down in guru bhakti yoga are simple and sure ways to take the aspirant to the shore of fearlessness. Therefore, see the guiding hand, the awakening voice, the illumining touch of the guru in every object in this creation. The whole world will stand transformed before your changed vision. Guru bhakti yoga is the science of all sciences.

—Swami Sivananda

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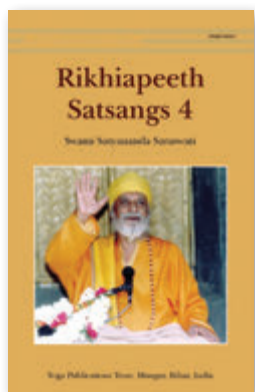
The Yogi is superior to the ascetic. He is deemed superior even to those versed in sacred lore. The Yogi is superior even to those who perform action with some motive. Therefore, Arjuna, do you become a Yogi. (*Bhagavad Gita VI:46*)

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥



# Finding the Guru

From Rikhiapeeth Satsangs 4, Swami Satyananda Saraswati



## Did you find your guru due to prarabdha karma?

No, guru is not found because of prarabdha. Guru is found only by the grace of God: *Rama kripa bina sulabha na soe* - "You cannot attain anything auspicious without the grace of divinity." To get a guru and to recognize a guru is very difficult. If you tell a beggar woman to go to the jeweller and buy a diamond, how can she do it,

she cannot recognize a diamond. She will ask someone if it is indeed a diamond or not. If you know diamonds then you will say, "Yes, it is a diamond," and if you have no knowledge of diamonds then you will say, "Yes, well, it looks like that." Guru is like a diamond, it is a very great *tattwa*, element, in life. In India, in almost every community and region there is a tradition of having a guru. In Madhya Pradesh, those people who are uninitiated, those who do not have a guru, are not allowed into the kitchen. It is the custom in Madhya Pradesh that until the daughter-in-law is initiated by a guru, she is not allowed into the kitchen.

Not every teacher in life is a guru. *Guru* is one who opens your eye of knowledge, removing the darkness from life. How many have found a guru like that? Swami Vivekananda did, and his life became worthy, but that was not because of prarabdha. If a lost traveller in a dense jungle comes upon a forest ranger who leads him out of the forest, would you call that prarabdha? This is not prarabdha, it is God's mercy that the forest ranger reached that spot and showed the traveller the way out.

## *Guru Poornima*

At the feet of guru smiling with happiness I came  
Opening the heart I pronounced his name.  
His eyes he turned to me  
And his light all pervading  
Enlightened my being.

At the end of the tunnel I am,  
something special is waiting outside,  
For guru is guiding my way  
Under his wings I'll find reply,  
Expression, impression, joy, surrender and bliss.

This perspective modified the vision and work,  
Enthusiasm is bathing around,  
Sparkles of wisdom are dancing in joy,  
Inspiration sings beauty in unity.  
Guru is present here, there and everywhere . . .

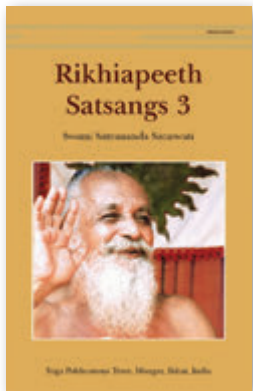
What else could be worth more?

*—Sannyasi Dharmaratna, France  
(Sannyasa Trainee)*



# A True Disciple

From Rikhiapeeth Satsangs 3, Swami Satyananda Saraswati

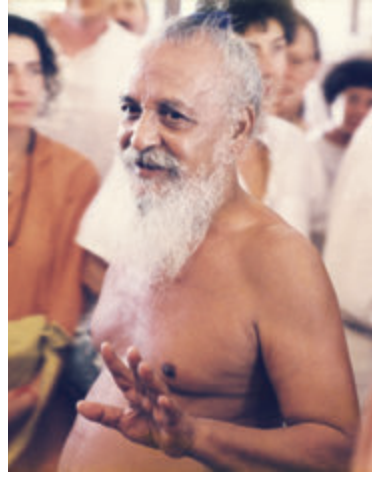


## Why do disciples leave their guru?

The guru-disciple relationship is very nice to hear about; however, very few people are able to fulfil it. There are all kinds of people in this world. When a thief enters your house in the guise of a servant, he washes your utensils, your clothes, cooks food for you, does everything; yet his eyes are always on your wealth. Similarly, there are a lot of disciples who come to their guru to gain *siddhis*, psychic powers. Someone runs away from home, someone else does not feel happy at home; the wife has died or the son has passed away, or he has suffered a loss in business, or someone has said something offensive, and so for a short while a feeling arises of wanting to be free from worldly desires. This is known as *kshanika vairagya*, a momentary wish to be free from desires. The mind moves away from the world and the person thinks, 'Let's go to the ashram, shave off the hair and comfortably sing the Lord's praise.' A lot of people come here thinking like this. Many people used to come to me thinking, 'Swamiji will send me abroad.' They would stay for four to five years, and when they realized that Swamiji was not sending them abroad, they would leave saying, "Swamiji is not a good person." I knew all this very well.

When people come here to become disciples, they come with different perspectives, and they receive exactly in accordance to the perspective they come with. However, if someone comes to live with the guru thinking, 'I am going to live here and die here', and he does not have the desire to become someone, to

do something or bring about something, then whether the guru puts him on a pedestal or treats him with scorn, it makes no difference to him. After marriage, when a girl comes to a different house, she does not think, 'After some time I will leave everything and go back. If my husband is an alcoholic or an adulterer, I will leave him and go back'. For her, it is a situation of living there and dying there. However, such disciples are very few. A guru may receive just one out of hundreds of thousands of disciples.



It is difficult to be a true disciple. Read the stories of the Sikh gurus. They are strange stories. There was a Sikh called Angad who used to clean utensils and drains in his guru's ashram. When his guru's time of death arrived, all the well-educated disciples thought it was now time for them to occupy his position. Everyone's eyes were on his seat, but the guru's eyes were on someone else. He said, "Call Angad." Angad was called. The guru said, "He will be your guru from today, Guru Angad Dev!"

There have been many gurus like that. The stories are found everywhere. It is not necessary for a guru to be well-educated. He should be humble like a blade of grass, patient like a tree, give respect to others and sing bhajans all the time. These are the attributes of a guru, according to the scriptures:

*Trinaadapi suneechena tarorapi sahishnuna  
Amaaninaa maandena keertaneeyaha sadaa hariha*

"(A guru is one), who is humble like a blade of grass, patient like a tree, who respects others and sings kirtans of Hari all the time."

## Guru Nanaka

A guru is one who does not say that others are beneath him, that they are beggars or thieves or bribe-takers or adulterers or people with bad intentions. A sadhu or guru has no right to say this. His time is used only for chanting the name of God and singing kirtan. Kirtan does not mean just playing the harmonium or the tabla. Kirtan means to ponder the power of God, to spread the glory of God.

Guru Nanaka was a great guru of his time. He was from the vaishya caste and he was given work in the government grain warehouse. In those days, grains were measured on a weighing scale. Once, he was weighing the grains and when he reached the count of thirteen, instead of continuing to count, he went on repeating: Terah, terah . . . - "Thirteen, thirteen . . ." Phonetically, 'terah' means 'yours'. He was absorbed in the thought of God, and while repeating, "Terah, terah . . ." he gave away all the grain. He emptied out the entire government warehouse! He didn't stay there for long. He became a fakir.

Once he travelled to Mecca, which is a centre of pilgrimage for Muslims. The peculiarity of this pilgrimage centre is that no one from another religion can go there, even if he is the President of America. They do not even allow photographs to be taken. Nevertheless, Guru Nanaka reached there. It was afternoon, and he had found a comfortable spot to sleep in. A man came to him and said, "Hey! Move your leg from here. Your leg is facing the Kaaba, the shrine." Guru Nanaka replied, "I am a very old man. Shift my leg to a direction where the Kaaba is

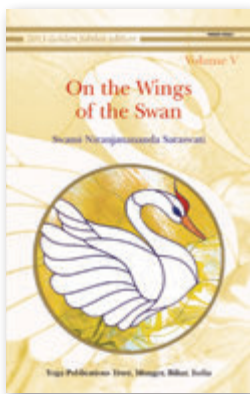
not." Having said this, he went back to sleep. The man tried to move his leg, and wherever he moved his legs, the Kaaba also moved in that direction! This story is approximately five hundred years old. Apart from Guru Nanaka, no other non-Muslim has ever visited Mecca. No one can go there, but Nanakaji managed to do so.





# The Role of Guru

From *On the Wings of the Swan*, Volume V, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Guru is one of the names of God, just like Rama, Krishna or Devi. It is a name which represents an attribute of God: the energy which dispels darkness. It has also been said that guru is inside; the power to change, the power to transform and the power to enlighten a being is within everyone. This energy, this *shakti*, this power, is an attribute of the turiya state of consciousness and in order to access this source of power, a person needs a catalyst, an external agent. The external agent is the physical form of a person who is recognized by the aspirant as the guru.

## Definition of the physical guru

The concept of the physical guru is someone who knows the process of self-transformation. A guru who can understand the limitations and the abilities of each aspirant can guide aspirants according to their evolution. The concept of guru implies a natural understanding between two people. A guru does not say, "I am a guru." Those who do are caught in their own ego-trip. A guru does not say, "I am a master," for such statements or sentiments go against the principle of spiritual life. In spiritual life one is supposed to transcend the ego. Saying, "I am a guru" is not transcending the ego; rather, it is overemphasizing one's self-image and self-esteem. This self-projection leads to the downfall of a spiritual person, whether it be the master or the disciple.

According to all spiritual traditions, the realization of guruhood or connection with the inner guru takes place



when the entire system of the body and mind is purified. There is no question of anybody claiming to be a guru. In the state of purification, if ego is to be transformed and transcended, naturally the aspirant develops simplicity, innocence and purity. These become the hallmarks or trademarks of an enlightened being.

### **Guru-disciple relationship**

The association that a spiritual master and a spiritual aspirant have with each other develops trust and faith. This trust and faith creates an awareness in the mind of the spiritual aspirant, "This person is my guide." This trust and faith has to be innocent.

There is a story of a saint who walks through a town with his disciples. He goes to a bar and has a drink of whisky. The disciples become happy and say, "Well, if the guru is doing it, there is nothing wrong with it and we can also do it." They order a huge glass of whisky each and get drunk. The guru then goes to a nightclub, listens to music and dances. The disciples think, "When the guru does it, it must be all right and also good for us, for the guru is only teaching us through his example." They start dancing, listening to music and displaying all kinds of funny behaviour. The guru goes into the red light district. The disciples say, "If it is all right for the guru, it must be all right for us," and they have a good time. Finally, the guru goes to a place where glass is being melted. He takes a beaker full of molten glass and drinks it. This time the disciples say, "Only gurus can do that. We can't."

This is a story, but in the lives of many people it is a real story. If you look at yourself, how many times do you compare yourself with your guide, teacher and master? If you want

to do something and the guru does it, you think, "Oh, it is sanctioned." If the guru does something that you can't do, you say, "Oh well, only gurus can do it because they are powerful siddhas." With such a comparative and competitive mentality, the relationship with the guru cannot be established. Rather, it is a false relationship and you are duping yourself. Therefore, you must be clear in realizing that the relationship which has to be developed with the guru is based on understanding, trust, belief and the realization that this person can guide you.

A blade of grass cannot conceive of becoming a mango tree. Disciples are like the blade of grass and guru is like the mango tree. The basis of the relationship between the spiritual aspirant and the spiritual master is of understanding, faith and trust. It is knowing the limitations that exist in each one of us and accepting that. Therefore, it is also necessary not to have preconceived ideas about what a guru should or should not be because such ideas are generally false.



## Surrender

The outcome of this relationship based on trust, faith and understanding is identification and surrender. This can be seen in the life of Swami Satyananda. He lived with Swami Sivananda for many years and then left the Rishikesh ashram under his guidance. However, even today, when it comes to his feelings for Swami Sivananda, he says, "I may be guru for others, but in my personal life I am still a disciple of my guru." This sentiment was expressed most clearly when he sent his message for the World Yoga Convention, held in Munger in 1993: "The most memorable event in my life has been the moment when I surrendered myself to my guru." That was the starting point of his spiritual life.

If we have to think of what has been the most memorable event in our life we will definitely point out some achievement, when we received a degree or a promotion. I do not think that anyone is going to say, "When I met my guru." Nobody has said it so far. Nobody has the courage to say it because their concept of guru is a reflection of their personality



and not the realization of the spirit which is being reflected by the guru. This is a major difference between a spiritual master and an aspirant. If we can understand this much, we have understood everything.

The process by which the guru takes his disciples to task and inspires them to reach the highest is: sadhana, karma yoga and egodectomy – to some close disciples, not to everyone.



## Sadhana

The most common process is sadhana, for everyone expects a nice outcome or achievement from sadhana. Therefore, the guru encourages one to participate and involve oneself in sadhana. However, even in sadhana, one makes mistakes.

The guru gives an instruction that this is what one needs to do, like so many rounds of japa. Instead of following that sadhana, people apply their mind and try to do more. When they do self-motivated sadhana they may lose their balance, because they applied the mind and crossed the threshold of safety. After all, they are not aware of their nature, mind, or vrittis.

The guru is also not one hundred percent aware, but the difference is that the guru is monitoring and observing. During this process of probing or monitoring, the instructions are, "You do this much," because that is the safest threshold or system to follow. If people apply their mind and say, "Well, if I do more, I will attain faster," then psychic imbalances happen and they lose mental and emotional balance. They will not accept their own shortcomings, but the blame for failure or unsuccessful effort will always be put on the guide.

For this reason, gurus are reluctant to guide people into higher yogas. They simply teach the basics and talk about the concept of yoga but they do not wish to guide them, because they know that people cannot disassociate themselves from their ambitions and the mind's involvement in sadhana. This does not mean that they are incapable of achievement. It simply means that they need to work on themselves to develop a correct level of identification with the energy that is being reflected by the guru. They need to follow the path in a gradual, systematic, progressive way.



## Karma yoga

The second aspect that is emphasized is karma yoga, not in the sense of work, but in the form of developing the right attitude towards one's participation and involvement in society. The human mentality is such that when people think of spiritual life they begin to believe that spiritual life negates and denies participation in material efforts. The concept of karma yoga is taught to the next, more sincere group of people, who are ready to go beyond sadhana. The direction is realizing that one is not free from actions; rather, one can change the participation in action to improve one's mentality, attitude and consciousness, and gain more wisdom. One can become free from attachment to experiences which bind the mind to the gross plane. Therefore, karma yoga as a belief and philosophy has been given a lot of importance.



## Egodectomy

Once the disciple is able to disassociate himself from the bondage or the influence of karmas, the next step is egodectomy, destruction of ahamkara. This destruction or transformation of ego relates to the manifest, the subtle and the individual identity. Ego is seen in three forms here.

When the ego is associated with the manifest personality, the body and mind, it is seeking fulfilment. The manifestation of ego comes in the form of arrogance, the 'I am holier than you' attitude. In a gross or manifest personality it is only arrogance, *abhimana*.



When ego is related or associated with the subtle mind, it takes the form of what is known as self-esteem, confidence, optimism, belief in one's self, *swabhimana*. To begin with, at the mental level the guru tries to develop *swabhimana*, the ability to trust oneself, to listen to one's conscience, to know the appropriate and right method to achieve the goal. However, in the final stage, the guru helps the disciple to overcome the remnants of the individual self.

The remnants of the individual self is one's individuality. Loss of one's individuality creates a lot of fear in people because they begin to feel, "What will be my identity if I do not have my ego?" However, in spiritual life loss of identity is seen as a gain and not a loss. One gains in the sense that one overcomes the limited nature of the self and connects with the cosmic self.

This idea or concept is further clarified in the *Yoga Sutras*. After going through the various stages of savikalpa samadhi (savitarkara, nirvitarkara, savichara, nirvichara samadhi)

comes *ananda samadhi*, the state of bliss. The last form of savikalpa samadhi is *asmita samadhi*, in which there is loss of individual identity. Only after this the final state of nirvikalpa or nirbija samadhi begins. Egodectomy is the effort of the guru to take the disciple beyond the state of asmita to the realm of enlightenment.

The egodectomy can take any form, depending on the individual. What has to be recognized is the role of the aspirant in relation to the guru. The aspirant must strive to develop a sense of identification with the energy and spirit of the guru. This becomes a separate sadhana for the disciple, to evolve to the level of close connection where, although guru and disciple may live in two bodies, their spirit is one.

### **Trusting the guide**

Guru is a spiritual aspirant who has gone through the process of personal transformation, who knows the pitfalls on the spiritual journey and can guide the aspirant to overcome those pitfalls. That is the meaning of the relationship between guru and disciple, and in spiritual life guru is a necessity, not a compulsion.

How can one be open? That is a difficult question to answer because each one expresses openness in a different way. Generally people think openness is when they dump their social, family or other problems on others, but this is not real openness or open communication.

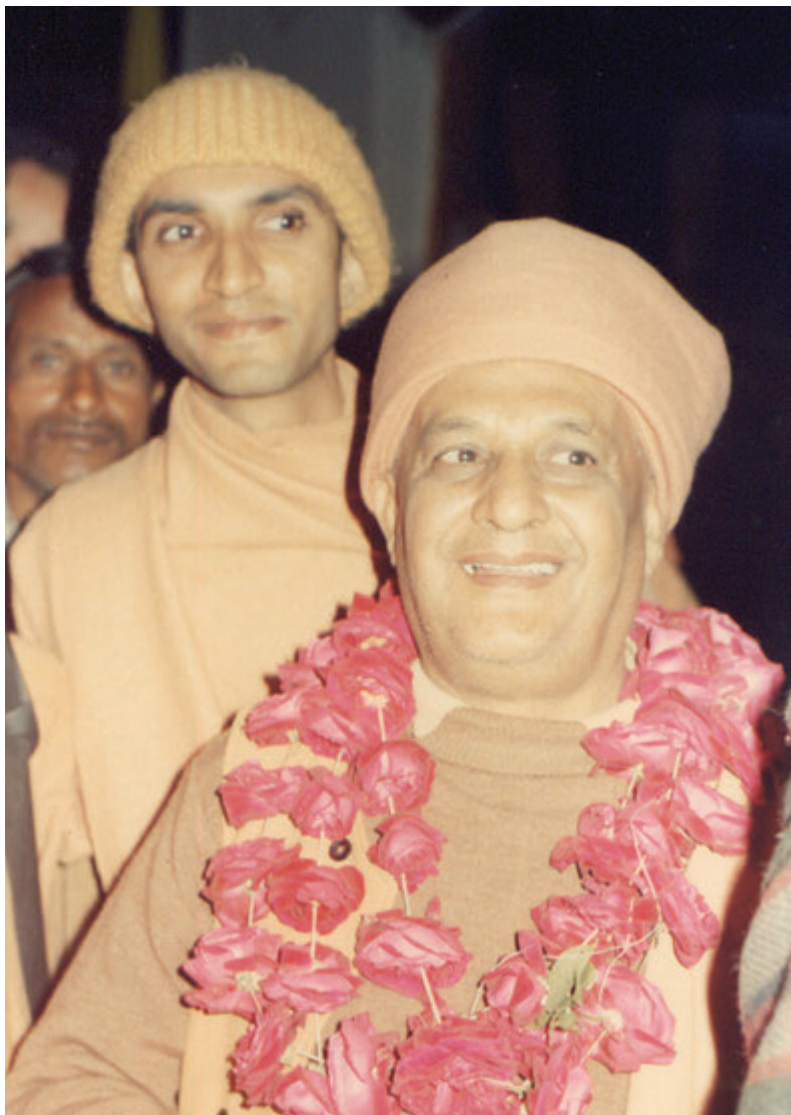
Open communication means one is able to consult the guru, see the validity of the advice, and adhere to that advice without bringing the mind into it. That is the beginning of openness. The guru is not there for intellectual satisfaction; for that there are pandits, people who are knowledgeable, and who can convince an aspirant as they have read or developed their own understanding of a topic.

Guru is not for intellectual conviction, but for spiritual development. Therefore, the only way to have open communication is by developing trust and faith. Open communication is



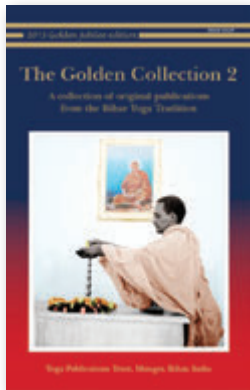
established not by applying the mind but by becoming innocent and simple. It has to happen spontaneously. One cannot make an effort to achieve it. It only happens as one develops more trust in the guru.

– 1998, *Ganga Darshan*



# A Guru's Duty

From The Golden Collection 2, A collection of original publications from the Bihar Yoga Tradition



A guru does not merely help his child in spiritual matters only, but his help can be commanded – yes, not requested but commanded at every step of life. You can ask for my help and advice at any time for anything. This is my duty, my mission. I shall be thrice blessed if I can help those who need and seek. I know that sometimes a little sincere guidance from the one who understands can destroy many self-invited frustrations and remove the imaginary layer of weakness in a man and bring out to the light the power that is there in every soul.

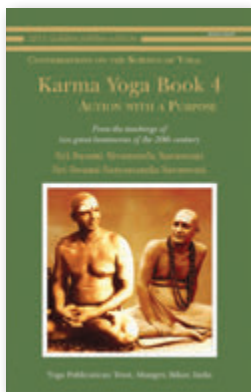
You might consider yourself the weakest one, but I know you well. I am sure that by uncovering the superficial layer of *ajnana*, ignorance, you can also work wonders in the world. I know the fact and I am confident about those who sincerely wish to walk on the road to knowledge and enlightenment.

– Swami Satyananda Saraswati



# The Voice of Three Masters

From Karma Yoga Book 4: Action with a Purpose, From the teachings of two great luminaries of the 20th century, Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati, Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati



## What is the role of grihastha ashrama?

*Swami Sivananda:* Householders deserve a lofty status, for they are the real yogis. They have great duties and responsibilities. Sannyasins keep themselves away from the stormy seas of life. *Grihastha ashrama*, the stage of the householder, is the crucible which burns the dross of past samskaras and tempers the steel, so that the personality may blossom in full fragrance. The householder's life is a long, continuous sadhana. He has to stand firm and hold on to his duties, his dharma, when the storms and tempests of life try to sweep him off his feet.

## Can one who works in the world with the attitude of a karma yogi still be a sannyasin?

*Swami Sivananda:* A man does not become a sannyasin by merely giving up actions. The karma yogi, who hates neither pain nor the objects that give him pain, who has no desire for pleasure, and neither attachment nor aversion to any sense object should be known as a perpetual sannyasin. He is ever engaged in action and has risen above the pairs of opposites: heat and cold, joy and sorrow, success and failure, victory and defeat, gain and loss, praise and censure, honour and dishonour. A perpetual sannyasin has this mental attitude and does not have to take sannyasa formally. Mere ochre-coloured robes cannot make him a sannyasin.

What is wanted is a pure heart with true renunciation of egoism and desires. Physical renunciation is not renunciation at all. Renunciation of the fruits of all work is sannyasa. He who is equipped with a mind steadfast in the yoga of renunciation is *sannyasa yoga yuktatma*. The act of offering everything unto the Lord constitutes the yoga of renunciation.

### **What is the purpose of life?**

*Swami Sivananda:* Human life is a process of seeking and self-expression. It is seeking freedom from bonds, from want and pain. It is a quest for harmony, repose and peace. It is a thirst and a search for happiness. By this very search everybody expresses their innermost need.

The true goal of life is to return to the source from which one came. Just as rivers flow restlessly till they join the ocean, the ultimate source of their supply of water, just as fire leaps and burns furiously till it merges in its own origin, so, too, everybody will be restless here until they obtain God's grace and become one with Him.

### **How did you come to understand the importance of the purification through karma yoga?**

*Swami Satyananda:* In 1943, I came to my guru Swami Sivananda. I had a problem with meditation, as I could not go beyond a certain point where I used to face the great wall. Therefore, I asked Swami Sivananda only one question, "If one has a spiritual experience spontaneously, how can one become a master of that experience and have it at will?" He gave me one small key, "You must exhaust your karmas."

In order to succeed in meditation the weight and the grossness of karma has to be reduced. In one's awareness there are layers and layers of grossness, impressions, dirt, distractions, *vasanas* or hidden desires and much more. Those karmas must be exhausted. The exhaustion of karma is an important sadhana in the process of enlightenment. If the aspirant exhausts his karmas, it is possible that the experience





in meditation will give positive rewards. But karma cannot be exhausted by action, as every action brings another impression. In order to exhaust one's karma, one will have to do karma yoga and not just karma, one must work hard and sincerely to purify the mind.

In 1956, Swami Sivananda called me and asked, "What sadhana are you doing?" For twelve years he had not asked me any question like this. Of course, I did practise asana, pranayama and mantra as a personal matter, but not at the command of the guru. Instead I practised karma yoga day and night like a bull or a donkey. Along with many of the other young sannyasins, I helped to build the ashram step by step. I lived with my guru in order to fulfil the promises of seva,

*chitta shuddhi* or purification of the mind, elimination of karma and giving myself totally.

I never reconsidered or questioned this. I did not work for myself; I received no mundane objects in return. Each year the ashram gave me two dhotis and one old blanket. There was no protein in the diet, but I did not think of protein. For twelve years I forgot about it. When I came out of the ashram and people talked about protein, I thought, 'What is protein? Milk is protein, cheese is protein, meat is protein and fish is protein.' When I was sick, there was no medicine. The nearest hospital was twenty-six miles away and there was no car, no vehicle, so we walked. If I had done the same work in my family, I would have received a lot of money and respect.

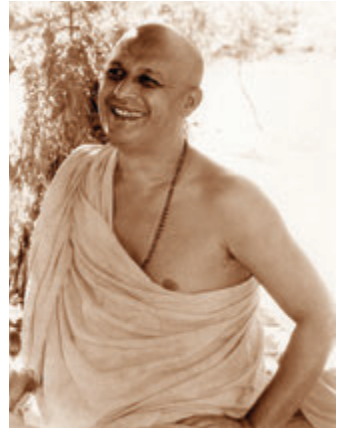
Why did I work like this? It is called *nishkama karma* yoga, action without the expectation of personal reward. I am an analytical person, but I did not analyze my guru at all. I never thought he was exploiting me. This thought never came to my mind. Even to this day it has not come. I am sharp in my academic criticism, but I knew that when I was working, I was exhausting and throwing away my karma. Within the consciousness are the desires of many, many incarnations. Everyone, including myself, has a lot of impressions. Everyone has natural and social repressions, and they are idiotic repressions. That is why there is suffering. When I gave myself to my guru through service and work, I was actually throwing away my karma and my repressions.

### **How was Swami Satyananda introduced to karma yoga?**

*Swami Niranjanananda:* There is a belief that one has to wilfully transcend the karmas and wilfully be free of them. However, the moment one frees oneself of karma, one won't remain in this creation any more. The nature of this creation is karmic, so how can one live in this creation without karma? That is what Swami Sivananda told Swami Satyananda.

Karma cannot be exhausted in the normal conditions or environment. Swami Sivananda said, "After sannyasa you will

carry on with the normal karmas which you have been performing till today, working in the office, kitchen, publications department, tying up parcels, sweeping the floor, secretarial work and so on. Nothing is going to change.” Swami Satyananda said, “Well, if nothing is going to change, instead of performing karmas here, I may as well go back home and work there. It will help the people in my



home.” Swami Sivananda told him, “You can do that, but when you perform karma at home, you are doing it for your pleasure, fulfilment and satisfaction; you are performing it with certain expectations and you will be affected by the outcome of that karma. Success will elate you and failure will frustrate you. When you perform karma in the ashram, you will not be doing it for your gratification nor will you have any expectation of it. What you do in the ashram you offer to the guru. The success of the karma is guru’s and its failure is also guru’s. You are free and think, ‘I have been told to do this and therefore I am doing it. I am not interested in success or failure. It is the positive and creative expression that is required of me’.”

The positive and creative action and expression is the focus in the ashram while engaged in karma. The karmas do not change; only the inner understanding and mental perception changes. With this understanding and perceptual change, eventually one can become aware of all the different ties and knots of karma, and release them one by one. Swami Satyananda asked Swami Sivananda, “How will I know when I have fulfilled my karmic duties?” Swami Sivananda told him, “When the karmas are over, you will know. When night comes you know the sun is not there any more. Similarly, when you are free from karma you will know that you are free. If I tie you up, you will know that you are bound and if I untie you,

you will know that you are free. It is an experience.” Swami Satyananda embarked upon the path of karma yoga with full determinations and devotion.

**What was the training you received from Swami Satyananda?**

*Swami Niranjanananda:* From 1963 to 1977, the ashram residents lived simply. The lifestyle changed in 1982 when we shifted from the old ashram to Ganga Darshan. These situations and conditions allowed us to watch ourselves. Every day was a realization of the power and grip of the ego. Every day was a realization of the hold that the lower buddhi, the lower mind, the lower memories, the lower ego had. It had to be faced, and because we were able to face it, we are sitting here today. Not because we have practised eight hours of meditation. My achievement is not a result of practising meditation. My achievement is because I was taught to confront and face the situations arising in the mind. That is the practical training which I have received, not the meditative training. This training given by the guru is karma yoga.





# The Dance of Swans

*Swami Yoga Jyoti, France*

Like the wild bare-headed geese on their migration, after crossing the Himalayas in a formation, could not do anything but let themselves be drawn in by the column of energy rising from Ganga Darshan and the Akhara, we too, were pervaded and immersed for one month by the grace of guru. Like the geese, it was difficult for us to leave.

Certainly the graceful dance of these huge birds, the wild swans, around the Akhara, Satyam Vatika and Ganga Darshan was a humble homage and a respectful salutation to an exceptional event and an extraordinary Being.

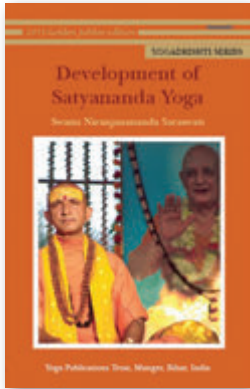
In our turn, we want to thank you by humbly bowing down. We received so much.

Thank you, Swamiji.



# Waiting for the Right Disciple

*From Yogadrishti Series: Development of Satyananda Yoga, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



Swami Sivananda had two questions in his mind when he became a spiritual seeker. The first question was, “Who is going to be my guide? Who will lead me? Who will direct me? Who will initiate me on the path of spiritual awareness, the path of spiritual realization?” The second question was, “How can I alleviate the physical, mental, psychological and spiritual suffering of humankind?”

He received the answer to the first question in the form of his guru, Swami Vishwananda Saraswati, who initiated him into the path of sannyasa and ignited in him the flame of spiritual awareness. Although the meeting between guru and disciple lasted only about fifteen to twenty minutes and occurred only once in their entire lifetime, the connection was so deep and intense that the energy of the guru fused into Swami Sivananda and guided him continuously in the later years. Swami Vishwananda mentioned to Swami Sivananda that his mission in life was to give him sannyasa and after that he was free from his mission.

We read stories of gurus waiting for the right disciple to appear. There are many who appear, but it is only the right one who qualifies to carry on with the inspiration, the vision and the wisdom of the guru. Ramakrishna Paramahansa waited for Swami Vivekananda and when Vivekananda came in front of him he said, “I have been waiting for you.” Although Ramakrishna had many other disciples, he was waiting for one particular person capable enough to carry on his inspiration,

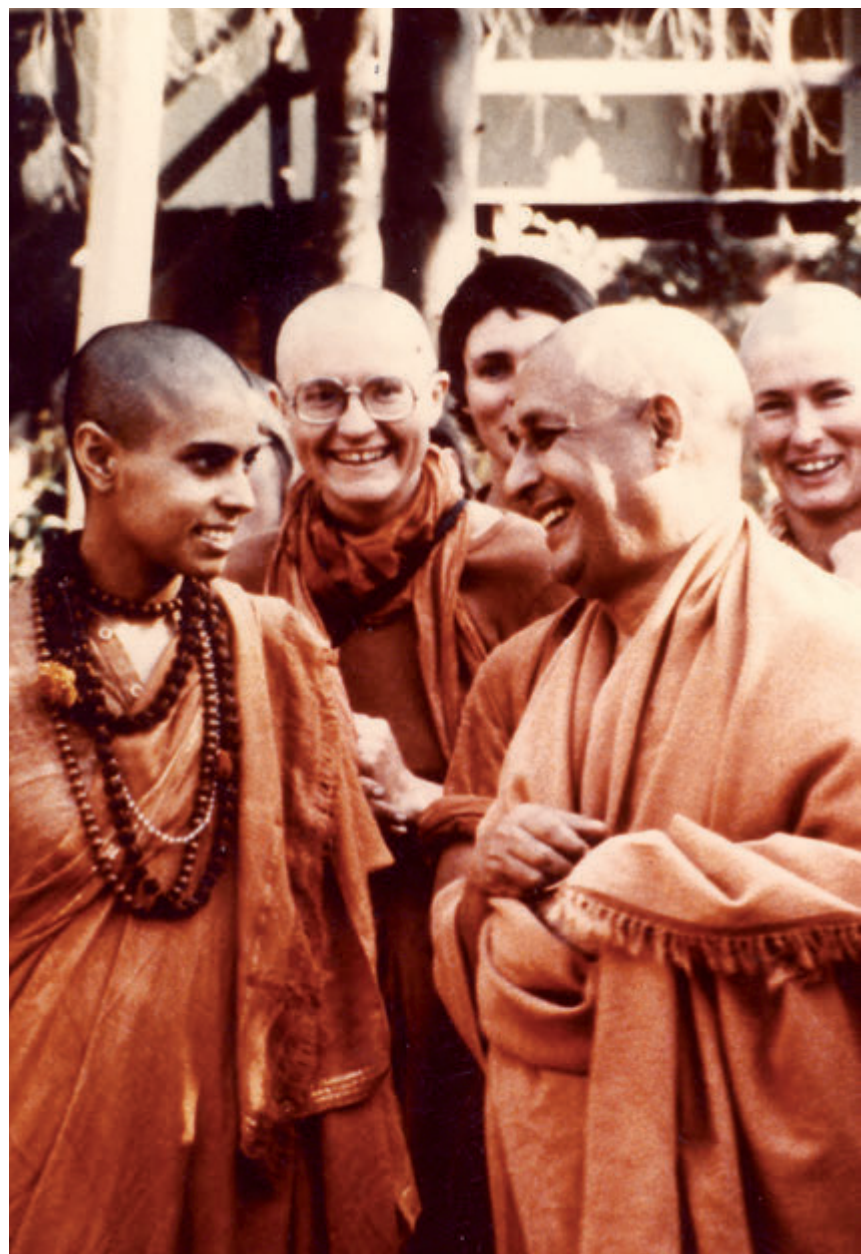










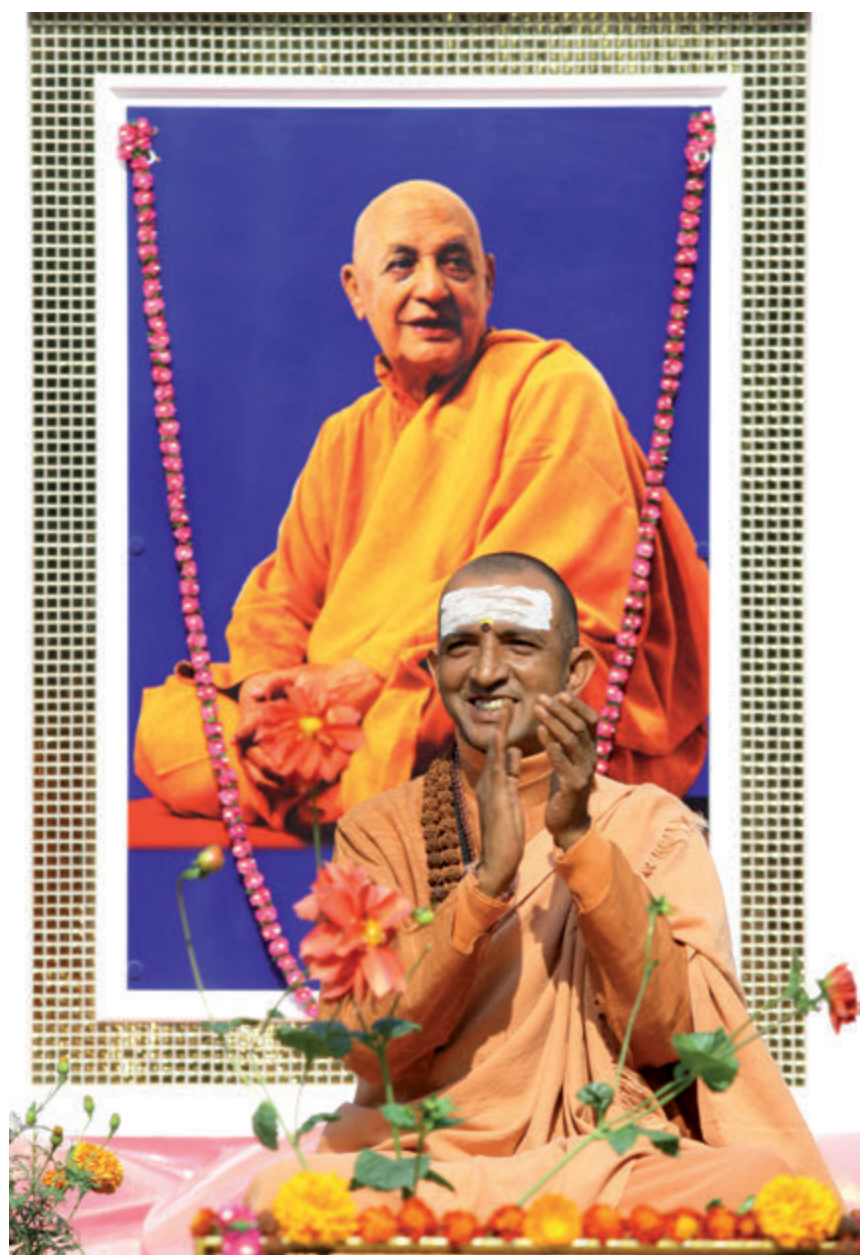














vision and mission. It seems that God provides the environment and the people. If it is God's will, then God provides the right conditions and right persons to carry on with the divine work.

### **The right disciple**

Who is the right disciple and who is the right guru? Think of a computer. In a computer, there is an installed software that manages its systems. Whenever you plug a device into the computer, the software reads this device. Without the software, the device will not be recognized. The appropriate operating system has to be there to begin with, which checks all the systems and knows that this is connected, this is not connected, this is unrecognized and this is recognized. Second, what is the capacity of the drive device plugged in? It can be small, say 50 MB, it can be 200 MB, it can be one gigabyte. Most people have a small capacity disk, maybe 50 MB to 100 MB, not even 500 MB. These people expect that the guru will give them all his power. How can the guru do that? It is physically and spiritually impossible. Your capacity, brain and mind can hold only 50 MB, and you want the whole ocean to fit into a small cup?



The guru cannot transfer his or her energy into a disciple who is unqualified no matter how much the disciple demands, rants, raves and abuses the guru. There are people and there are disciples who demand, and when they do not get what they demand, they abuse their guru. That this happens is a fact of life as it is the nature of the brain, mind, emotions, sentiments, character and personality. One cannot help it. Nevertheless, to transfer the guru's energy, certain qualifications, capacities and abilities have to exist.

The guru waits for the right person with the right capacity hard drive and recognizes this person. Twenty people can come and the guru will say, "You" to one of them, having recognized that this person has the right capacity. That happened when Ramakrishna recognized Vivekananda and when Swami Vishwananda recognized Swami Sivananda. Within fifteen minutes, the transfer of energy took place between guru and disciple. The device which was connected to the computer was identified as the appropriate hardware to which the information could be downloaded. The information was downloaded, and that was the initiation.

The relationship between guru and disciple is based on trust, not on intellect. It is based on faith and conviction, not on satisfaction of intellectual questions. You try to satisfy your intellectual questions in the presence of the guru and because of that, many times you miss the actual secret of connecting with that source of power and energy, which is cultivation of trust and faith. Even if you have a very close and intimate intellectual relationship with the guru, you cannot progress spiritually as the basic connection of trust and faith does not exist. When this trust and faith intensifies, then guru and disciple become one. That happened in the life of Swami Sivananda. It happened in the life of our guru, Sri Swami Satyananda.

– 7 February 2011, *Ganga Darshan*

# Global Tribute – Romania

*Jignasu Mangaldharma*



We have come from Romania to participate in the celebrations of the Golden Jubilee of the Bihar School of Yoga, and to express our solidarity with the mission of Sri Swami Sivananda, Sri Swami Satyananda and Sri Swami Niranjanananda, and the yogic vision that they have propagated through the Bihar School of Yoga.

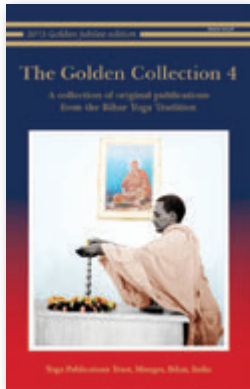
In 2007, Swamiji said that a lot of work can be done in Eastern Europe. With faith in guru's words, I began my journey in Romania. From one student in 2008, today a large number of Romanians have become a part of our tradition. We are now teaching yoga to children from age four to people in their seventies.

Though it is still in its nascent stage, Satyananda Yoga is regarded as a serious tradition of yoga, offering life-enhancing skills and not just asana and meditation practices. People have experienced a strong impact in their personal lives and society as well.

I thank the teachers, the gurus and most of all, Sri Swami Satyananda for offering this priceless tool of transformation to us all.

# The Cosmic Vision

From The Golden Collection 4, A collection of original publications from the Bihar Yoga Tradition



No amount of theoretical exposition as to the nature of the world, God and of the human mind swayed by desire can ever bring home the realization of the ultimate truth that nothing exists in this universe which is real, that the soul alone is the eternal reality. It requires an actual experience of a sublime mystical character to carry such a conviction to the human understanding. Where doubts prevail, disbelief in the ultimate reality which is unseen and unseeable persists, where the mind is tossed to and fro on the stormy sea of desires, where the intellect remains paralyzed due to the entanglements in the meshes of a complicated existence, where the heart is parched by longing after the mirage of happiness – where in brief the human personality is completely disrupted from all sides, such an experience can only be achieved through the grace of a great guru, symbolizing in flesh and blood, the glory and the expression of the Supreme.

We have seen the state of Arjuna's mind and the methods indicated by that greatest teacher, Sri Krishna, to resolve the moral crisis in which he was involved. His intellectual confusion was dispelled through the sublime exposition on the immutability of the soul and the mutability of the world. His physical lassitude and inertia were treated by means of a correct and a true exposition of the nature and kinds of actions, the supreme need for doing them and of the kind of attitude to be developed towards them. His emotional tensions, arising out of an uncontrolled upheaval within, were resolved by showing the way to channel the emotions and centre them

around devotion to God. In the course of the discussion as to the form, the nature and method of such a devotion, it was explained that the unmanifest was a matter of realization only and could not be comprehended by the finite mind and the intellect, and therefore, the seeker after truth must first slowly and gradually develop an eye to see the presence of the divine in the diversity about him. The divine glory is ever present and can be seen by one whose vision is pure and unsullied by the impurities of the world.

Sri Krishna set at rest the mind of Arjuna by pointing out that the glory of the Supreme was perceptible to the human eye and comprehensible by the human mind, and a heart full of love and devotion can see the manifestations of the divine everywhere. Nothing that exists in this world, whether animate or inanimate, is devoid of His glory. The good and the bad are the divisions of the same reality made by the human mind according to its sense of values, but in the realm of the spirit there is only the one abiding reality. The Supreme manifests himself in the light of the sun and the moon, in the smell of the earth, in the goodness of the good as in the wickedness of the bad, in and through all the created things. Whether it be a sage or a hero, a river or a mountain, a fish or a crocodile, where it is the justice of the just or the injustice of the wicked, in and through all the spheres of existence, physical, mental and emotional, He manifests Himself through these bewilderingly varied forms of His expression. Sri Krishna, therefore, asks Arjuna to look not at the surface of things, but to realize that at the depths of all things, there abides the immanent and all-pervading reality. It is not for the finite mind to dissect and analyze, doubt and disbelieve things which it can never comprehend except by and through an inner experience. It was a matter of inward awareness, not of intellectual comprehension.

The confusion in the mind of Arjuna, who it must be remembered was an enlightened soul desirous of reaching the highest state, was thus slowly resolved and the inner light began to give him a glimpse into the real nature of things. And



so he longed to realize in experience this unity in the apparent diversity, this actual functioning of that great immutable law at the behest of a sovereign power, that created, destroyed and recreated a multitude of worlds. Thus enlightened, Arjuna was on the threshold of a deep and mystic experience. And when in the sovereign moments of existence, a rare moment comes when the heart and the mind with a single-minded purpose and devotion long for a great and stupendous spiritual experience with a sincere and pure heart, the grace of God descends and that moment has to be seized or it never recurs.

That great moment for Arjuna had come, he was standing on the frontiers of two worlds – one of his immediate surroundings rapidly receding in the distance, the other one of supreme beauty and grandeur about to be opened before him. At that supremely beautiful moment, when amidst the travails and anguish of the soul he surrendered himself at the feet of the Divine, or in other words when the extrovert mind turned totally inward and reached the near-self stage, away from the distractions of the world of sense-consciousness and dwelt deep within, an effulgent splendour was made visible. Sri Krishna saw the deep unquenchable longing in the depths of Arjuna's being and gave him the divine vision. This divine eye is not a mere physical phenomenon but it is the awakening of the 'third eye', the eye of knowledge or the eye of illumination, which is opened only when the entire being of man completely works in harmony with the great cosmic law, when self-effacement, self-surrender, and self-denial are complete.

The grace of God descends in such circumstances upon the aspiring human soul and the little limited ego, within whose narrow confines the faculties were functioning, assuming doership and enjoyership, dividing, differentiating and distinguishing, piece by piece, individual units out of a complete whole; it is transformed and becomes the seer, a witness of the stupendous drama of creation. The mystic experience of infinite grandeur and majesty which Arjuna was given is the result of the awakening of the inner awareness of the supremacy and



the all-pervasiveness of the Self. There Arjuna saw visions not only of sublime beauty but also of hideous terror. He realized that the one whom he regarded as his friend and charioteer was the Supreme, shining with the effulgent splendour of a thousand suns, pervading the entire universe consisting of those multitudes of worlds of which the scriptures speak. He was the one whose glories were sung through the infinite time by sages and illumined souls. He was 'the supreme container of all, containing everything in him and yet not contained in entirety in any', He was the great Kala, the devourer of everything in the creation and in the inward awareness of his illumined self. Arjuna saw with speechless wonder the entire universe being ground down by the fierce teeth of the terrible manifestation of the Supreme in the form of Kala.

The majesty of the vision that Arjuna saw was indescribable, for it was something that transcended the realms of the mind and speech; it was an inner mystic experience, the grand sublimity of which could only be expressed in the silence of

a chastened spirit. The senses and their play were silenced; the manipulations of the restless mind were also silenced in awe and wonder, and no wonder, therefore, that when that experience of serene spiritual unity of all created things with the source of all things was felt, the heart of Arjuna was bowed down with wonder, awe and supreme humility and he realized in actual experience that the Supreme was the ultimate reality towards which the entire creation moved governed by a great immutable law, and that he was only a unit in this cosmic chain and had to play his part as the instrument of the divine.

When the illumined eye of the yogi – and here Arjuna was for the moment the yogi, who had reached the near-ultimate state of union with the Supreme self – sees himself established in the self, sees that the world of names and forms emanates from the self by the projection of His omnipotent power, it loses all its significance. For through such an experience of an exalted nature, he realizes that the power which he sees functioning is not separate from the self and that the ultimate and right relationship is with the self and self alone and not with the world, which is only a phase of the projection of the mind, with its tendencies running uncontrolled. He sees that there is an ‘inward centre in us all where truth abides in fullness’ (Browning), and that this identification with the self-created world and self-imagined concepts of right action and wrong action, of sin and sinlessness, of good and bad, were merely assessments of values by means of supremely mundane and finite standards. In other words what happened was the cosmicization of the ego, which surrendered its separate individuality and resolved back to its source, the self.

Such a cosmic vision which Arjuna had with the grace of the divine was nothing but the awakening of the inward awareness, the opening of the intuitive eye of knowledge, the *ritambhara prajna*, of the yogi, which illumines the essential nature of everything. Arjuna’s experience was nothing but one sovereign moment of an existence when the mind and the senses resolve back to their source, where the thought processes were silenced

and the entire being was attuned to the highest. When such a realization comes, the seeker is absolved from the results of all actions, for the mind and the senses having finished their respective functions of bringing the individual self to the stage of union cease to function. It was a case of dwelling within, of release from the state of involvement with prakriti and its laws.

Such a vision comes only to a rare soul whose entire being is completely surrendered to the Supreme and whose actions, mental, intellectual and spiritual are done, devoid of ego as a sacrifice at the altar of the Supreme. In such a state where the mind ceases to exist, there remain neither intellectual confusions nor emotional incongruity. The basis of discord in the mind of Arjuna is thus removed when he realized the real nature of his own self and stood firmly established in it. This indeed is the pledge of the Lord in the *Gita* (18:66):

*Renounce all things foreign to thy nature and resolve thyself unto Me; then shall I release thee from all sin – grieve not.*

*– Swami Satyananda Saraswati, 6 November, 1964*



# World Yoga Convention 2013

*Samidha*

Hari Om. Sadar pranam to Guruji, Swami Satsangi and friends of yoga. Twelve years ago, when I first came to Munger, I had two issues that needed urgent resolution. One was physical and another spiritual. My body needed repair so I joined the fifteen-day health program at Sivananda Math. I learnt asanas, pranayama, shatkarmas, and practising them regularly my health improved drastically. The problem of sinus just vanished in thin air.

Secondly, I felt a vacuum in my life. I was happily married, had children and finance was good; everything was there, yet I felt a spiritual vacuum. I was feeling empty inside. I felt as if time was running out and I had to do something fast, but I did not know what to do. I changed the nature of my work but the restlessness persisted. Here, yoga nidra proved a big boon and I never felt that vacuum again.

## **Meeting Swamiji**

Of all this, the most amazing and wonderful of my experiences was the darshan of Swami Niranjan, albeit from far. I was so charmed with his magnetism that it induced a deep and everlasting influence and I had no option but to surrender. At his satsang, most of us felt that he was speaking directly to each one of us and answering our queries.

Those days Swamiji used to visit Kolkata to give satsang. It was difficult to speak to him as he was always crowded with devotees around him. I wrote to him, that since yoga has benefited me so much, what should I do in return? Luckily, I was able to meet him the next day. He looked at me with his kind eyes and told me, "Do yoga therapy." I looked at him with blank eyes. Believe me, in those days I did not know the meaning of therapy, let alone yoga therapy, and today what I am doing is healing



people with prana vidya. It was a guru's mandate and had to be fulfilled. When he said "Do yoga therapy," they were not just three words, rather the unfolding of a whole process.

During my stay at the ashram, I once attended a havan presided by Swamiji. I had no idea what happens in a havan but in a matter of minutes, I could see my shortcomings and weaknesses in abundance. Weaknesses



like fear, hatred, anxiety, passions, everything began to come to the surface one by one. The same thing happened at Mahamrityunjaya Path and at kirtans.

Then one day I asked Swamiji for a spiritual name. He wrote on a piece of paper 'Samidha', meaning one who becomes an offering to God. I am still preserving that precious piece of paper. It was literally a new birth, a new life as I was saved miraculously from two life-threatening accidents immediately afterwards. When I received my new name I could not help feeling that my old self was dying and a new one was being reconstructed.

### **Guru's omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence**

Today, I am here to narrate my experience of yoga. My major experience is the constant presence of Swamiji in my life. Many times my needs were supplied even before I knew them myself. At those times, I felt the towering presence of Swamiji in my life. Swamiji only gives and gives and does not expect anything in return. Swamiji is like an architect. This body and mind instrument of Samidha was just like a piece of rock. Over the years, he has chiselled and hammered this rock, cutting here,



chipping there, and given it a new shape. Swamiji, you still have lots of chiselling and hammering to do. Swamiji sees a broader view of which I can only see a part. When I reach my destination, I realize that path was already laid by him. I just walked the path and reached my destination. My vision is limited. It sees very little, it is like a small telescope while Swami Niranjan is like a huge radar from which he keeps his

benevolent eyes on each one of us as he guides us. I am sure many of you are feeling the same way as I do. Have we ever thought why we feel so much peace and so much bliss while sitting here? It is because we are sitting in Swamiji's aura, because we are sitting in his light.

### **Immense gratitude**

In the span of twelve years, I have barely exchanged seven to eight sentences with Swamiji, yet I feel he is the only person in the whole world who understands me. Today, I realize that a teacher works so hard for his disciple. Tears well up in my eyes even before I can say "Thank you!" to Swamiji. Every person thinks of Swamiji as their own; there are thousands and millions who have an intimate connection, an intimate relationship with him. I too feel the same, because he has given me knowledge, insight, clarity, ideas, and he has shown me a way of life with so much compassion and grace that I feel it is my duty and obligation to work towards my inner evolution.

Hari Om Tat Sat

# Guru Tattwa

From *On the Wings of the Swan*, Volume VI, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



## What is the function of the guru element or guru tattwa?

People say that the guru is the remover of *avidya*, darkness, nescience. Where does this *avidya* lie? What does it mean? The darkness, the nescience, the *avidya*, is the covering over the light, which has to be removed. The centre of this light is the heart, not the mind. From unconditional light it has become conditioned light, from unconditional love it has become conditioned love, from unconditional feeling it has become conditioned feeling. There are many such coverings over the heart and the guru aims to remove them.

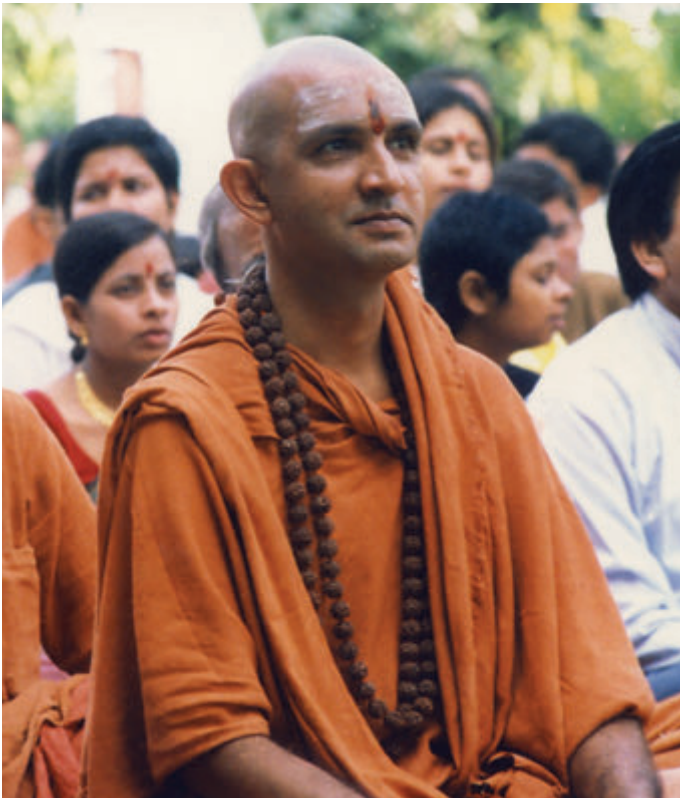
You have to deal with the mind yourself. The process of dealing with the mind has been defined in the *Yoga Sutras* of Sage Patanjali. "Management of the mental modifications is yoga", this is the second sutra. "After you have managed your mind you will establish yourself in your own nature", this is the third sutra. Here, personal effort is emphasized in order to deal with and manage the mind. However, when you want to remove the conditionings from life and express the unconditional nature, then the guru comes in.

For the practice of yoga and for managing your mind, you do not need a guru. Systems have been defined very clearly. You can learn and practise yoga at home from a book, from any teacher, and you will get some benefits. However, when it comes to removing the veil of *avidya* from the heart, then the guru comes in, as it is the guru who tells us how we can let go of our ego, how we can surrender, how we can develop

our faith, how we can develop conviction, how we can develop clarity of perception, action, thought, speech, and so on. The spiritual teaching that is imparted by the guru is to develop the unconditional heart, not the unconditional mind.

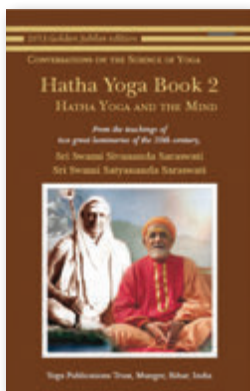
The role of the guru is to open the heart. The role of yoga is to open the mind. The role of an ashram is to open the perceptions that allow you to involve yourself in effort. These roles are predefined. In the ashram we practise effort, *purushartha*, we learn to control the mind through discipline and to awaken the *bhava*, the emotion, towards the guru. These are the three components: ashram life for discipline and motivation; yoga for mind management; guru for opening the heart.

– 14 November 2001



# Need of a Guru

*From Hatha Yoga Book 2: Hatha Yoga and the Mind, From the teachings of two great luminaries of the 20th century, Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati, Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



## Is enlightenment possible without a guru?

*Swami Satyananda:* Whichever yogic text is picked up, the same thing is written. Hatha Yoga Pradipika says, “Yoga should be practised in the way instructed by the guru.” This is probably the most important sentence in the whole text. The Shiva Samhita says, “Having attained the guru, practise yoga. Without the guru, nothing can be auspicious.” According to Skanda Purana, “The systematic stages of yoga can only be learned from a competent guru.” The Yoga Bija says that, “He who wants to practise yoga should have a competent guru with him.” In the shruti it is written that, “Mahatmas reveal those things only to him who has deep devotion towards his guru as well as God.” Thus, guru is the most vital element in sadhana.

Guru is not merely a yoga teacher. He is the only one who can enlighten your soul by the luminosity of his own revealed spirit. He reflects the brilliance of your spirit and what you see in him is actually your own Self. *Gu* means ‘darkness’ and *ru* means ‘light’. *Guru* is the one who removes the darkness and ignorance from the mind to reveal the pure light of the inner consciousness. He may be an adept in yoga or any science, or he may be completely illiterate. His social qualifications are unimportant as far as one’s spiritual experience is concerned. The important factors are obedience and having faith in his words; then it does not matter whether his instructions seem right or wrong, they will prove fruitful.



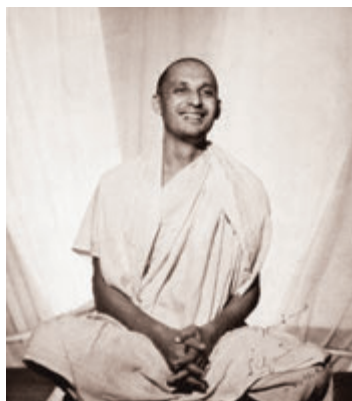
In the science of hatha yoga there is a specific system that has to be followed, and if one finds a hatha guru he will instruct each person in the correct manner of practice. This does not mean that the same system should be followed by one's neighbour. The guru knows how to tackle all the individual problems one has. If no obstacles arise, good, the seeker can be guided quickly. If one is facing certain problems or difficulties, the guru will know how to guide one step by step, in accordance with one's own evolution.

We have very little understanding of our bodily functions and are virtually unaware of our mental potential. Consciousness is like an iceberg; only the superficial portion that is above the surface can be seen, and because of limited perception, we cannot understand how yoga can evolve the spirit from the gross body and the lower consciousness. Therefore, when sadhana is taken up, the guidance of one who thoroughly understands the process of spiritual unfoldment is essential. There is only one person for this purpose, and that is the guru.

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### **How to practise yoga nidra?**

Do a few asanas and pranayamas at first and follow them up by yoga nidra. The technique is best learnt from the guru. Not that it will harm you if you practise it without his help. But if you do it on your own, the chances are that every time you begin it, you will end up falling asleep. Then your samskaras will not get destroyed, with the result that you will not make any progress. Yoga nidra to be absolutely successful presupposes a spirit of communion between the guru and the disciple.



—Swami Satyananda Saraswati

# The Golden Jubilee is History Already

*Swami Vedananda, Germany*

Let me say “Thank you” again in this way. Every time I come to Munger, I feel a whole ocean of warmth floating towards me – always! But this time, for reasons you are very well aware of, it was even more. When I did arrive, I was happy to be here – finally. To meet you and Swami Satsangi right at the beginning was my good fortune.

This celebration of the Golden Jubilee of BSY was very special in many ways. I have seen many conventions, and Sat Chandi Yajnas, but still, I was very much impressed in the way this Jubilee was conducted. Everything, everything was organized extremely well.

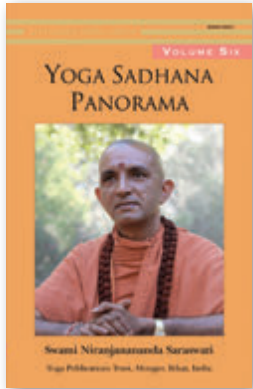
The Prasad Tent was something I am not able to express in words . . . I could go on and on with my mind-boggling experiences . . . On top of all, everybody was warm, welcoming, helpful and very friendly. I am proud to be a member of this family . . .



One highlight after yet another highlight, but for me the culmination of it all was the way in which you treated me. It honestly touched my heart at its very centre and that is the reason I am writing this email to you, to say again “Thank you” – and to let you have part of this feeling I had and still have. I wish you the very best for now and the future to come.

# The Guru and His Teaching

*From Yoga Sadhana Panorama, Volume Six, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



## **How did you become what you are today?**

Trust in my guru has made me what I am today. That is a very crucial point to understand. Trust grows spontaneously. Trust which is created and built up can also shatter and change, but trust that is spontaneous, natural and coming from the depth of one's heart never breaks or bends. I feel privileged and lucky to have that understanding and awareness. I knew that whatever happened, he would be guiding me. He has always wished me well. If a person is always wishing me well, how can I mistrust him? Many times intellect comes in between and says, "I have placed my trust in that person, but today I feel it was misplaced." However, if I realize that person has always meant well, then will that person allow me to deviate from my path? That is the trust that was nurtured inside me.

I always felt that Sri Swamiji was the sculptor who picked up a rock and started to carve it, to remove the extra bits from the rock in order to bring out the image that was inherent in the rock. Chipping away the extra pieces is painful, but with trust I accepted that. If I had said, "This is painful," I would have lost my trust in the sculptor's abilities to carve an image from rock. That trust allowed me to realize that this person is never going to permit me to deviate from my path and my aspiration, and he will always continue to guide me and to shape me in my life. It was that trust which has brought me to this point today, and it is that trust which I will protect



with all my forces and strengths. I care for it. That is the force which inspires me today and it will continue to inspire me in the future.

**How can I cultivate the guru-disciple relationship? Living in the direct presence of the guru in the ashram is not always practical. How do you recommend I strengthen this bond with you from a distance?**

The relationship between guru and disciple is an internal relationship, a faith, a conviction, an understanding, that 'by following the teachings of the master I can reach my destination'. I left India at the age of ten and I returned to India at the age of twenty-three. In thirteen years, I met Sri Swamiji only three or four times. In those days there were no mobile phones, so it was not possible to call him up and speak. With snail mail we would not get a reply to a letter for a month. We had to make trunk calls. At that time there was no dialling system and we had to go through the operator. Books were not published. However, I never felt the physical need for Sri Swamiji in my life. I never craved his physical presence. The craving was not there for I knew that as long I was true to myself and remained true to the teachings of my guru, he would always be with me.

This is the message to all of you. We crave for physical presence. That may be our need, but in order to create a deeper bond between guru and disciple the teaching has to become the central authority, not the person. Your conviction in the teaching and the application of that teaching in your life will create the inner link with the guru.

When Sri Swamiji left Rishikesh, he did not see Swami Sivananda again, but he was so tuned in to him and his teachings that, in Munger, he knew the exact moment of Swami Sivananda's departure from the body. He had the vision. That is the link. He was able to know that Swami Sivananda had left his body and he knew that Swami Sivananda had blessed him. We are so bound by the physical presence that we cannot do without it, but as spiritual sadhakas we have to go beyond this mentality at some point in our life. When we see the guru it is a bonus, and when we don't, the teaching continues to inspire us, and if we are true to ourselves, we shall progress. That is my understanding as I have experienced it. Therefore, apply the teachings in your life.

*– April 2009, Mangrove Yoga Ashram, Australia*





# Grace of Guru

*Sannyasi Shivaroopananda, Chennai*

Respected Swamiji,  
When you put your hand on my shoulder I was thrilled and dumbfounded. I can never explain the elixir feeling of warmth, affection, kindness and blessings. You exemplify the greatness of guru, the greatest yoga and spiritual guru, the most respected spiritual successor of Swami Satyananda Saraswati.

I am amazed the way the World Yoga Convention was organized and conducted. One had to be there to believe that it was organized in such an orderly manner, with every session starting and ending on time. It is amazing to see that over

fifteen thousand people were fed every day of the Convention in an orderly manner.

I have attended the Silver Jubilee function of BSY, and I am fortunate by the grace of the most respected and revered Swami Satyananda Saraswati and your blessings to have attended the Golden Jubilee of Bihar School of Yoga and the World Yoga Convention 2013.

Whatever I am today is the grace of my guru and I always seek your blessings.





WYC 2013

## Cosmic, Collective Wakening

The cosmic eye at the centre of the multiverses opens wide, waking each and every one, revealing the eternal truth, auspiciousness and beauty of that mysterious beyond, the wordless presence.

The collective unconscious awakens and glimpses the yoga vision, seeing deep into eternity momentarily, the one witness watching.

Each tastes the exquisite nectar of the divine life, the ambrosia of the gods intoxicating every soul.

You, Swamiji, reveal your unspeakable being, beyond all names and forms, astounding all with its purity and perfection . . . the Cosmic Shiva – jaya guru!!!

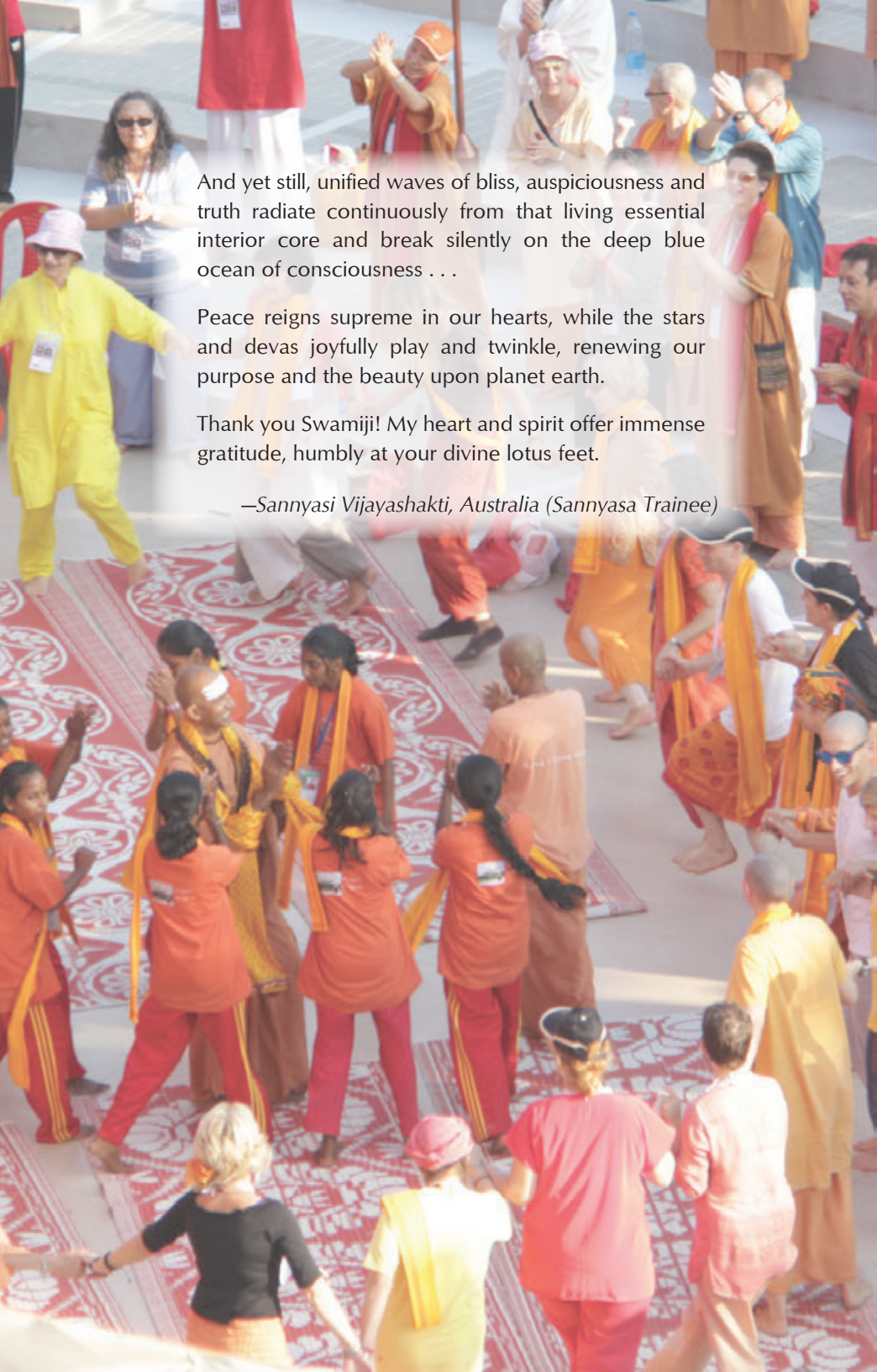
All beings rejoice in sparkling happiness, love and unity, sharing their best with each other, extending beyond limitations and boundaries, into unalloyed bliss, *anandam*, and connection.

Yoga is now shimmering particles of prana flowing throughout GD, the Spirit quietly whispering its sweet omnipresence, and Sri Swamiji and you, Swamiji, our shining guiding stars.

Devaguru Grandfather, Sri Swami Sivanandaji, glows and beams blissfully.

Glory to the sages, rishis, munis, prophets, gurus, masters and sannyasins of yore and yea, for their sacrifices and offerings to bring the truth to all, their vow to wipe the tears of suffering and pain, and bring a smile of heartfelt happiness to the faces of all beings great and small on planet earth.



A group of people, many in orange and yellow traditional Indian attire, are gathered on a red rug with white floral patterns. Some are clapping, while others are in various poses of devotion or prayer. The scene is outdoors, and the atmosphere appears to be one of a religious or spiritual event.

And yet still, unified waves of bliss, auspiciousness and truth radiate continuously from that living essential interior core and break silently on the deep blue ocean of consciousness . . .

Peace reigns supreme in our hearts, while the stars and devas joyfully play and twinkle, renewing our purpose and the beauty upon planet earth.

Thank you Swamiji! My heart and spirit offer immense gratitude, humbly at your divine lotus feet.

—Sannyasi Vijayashakti, Australia (Sannyasa Trainee)

# Guru Points the Way

*Swami Sivananda Saraswati*

Only genuine, thirsty spiritual aspirants know me. Aspirants need not be afraid of pitfalls and snares on the spiritual path. The whole spiritual world is ready to back up sincere students who are trying to lift up their head from the quagmire of samsara. Aspirants should nourish their good samskaras through japa and regular meditation.

Even in this materialistic age, India is full of thirsty aspirants who want God and God alone, who are ready to give up wealth, family and children, ruthlessly, for the sake of God-realization which they regard as the be-all and end-all of their existence. This is a land of sages and saints. Thousands of seekers after truth are in close touch with me from all parts of the world. Many foreigners come to India in search of yogis and mahatmas.

The spiritual path is beset with many obstacles. The guru who has already trodden the path will guide the aspirants safely and remove all sorts of obstacles and difficulties. A personal guru

is therefore necessary. There is no more powerful way of overcoming the vicious nature and old samskaras in the aspirants than personal contact with and service to the guru.

Guru's grace will, in a mysterious manner, enable the disciples to perceive the spiritual power within, though it is impossible for the guru to point out God or Brahman to be this or that.



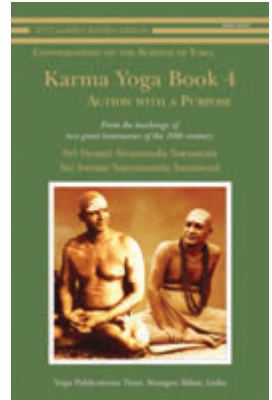


# Yoga Publications Trust

## Karma Yoga Book 4: Action with a Purpose

189 pp, soft cover, ISBN: 978-93-81620-44-1

*Karma Yoga Book 4: Action with a Purpose* introduces the concept of karma yoga, an approach to life based on the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita*. The karma yogi is inspired to maintain happiness and harmony within the complexities of everyday life. Included are the relation to other branches and practices of yoga, ashram life, sannyasa, one's involvement in the world and the commitment to the spiritual journey.



*New*

**For an order form and comprehensive publications price list please contact:**

**Yoga Publications Trust**, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger, Bihar 811 201, India  
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A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be sent along with enquiries to ensure a response to your request

## Satyananda Yoga Websites

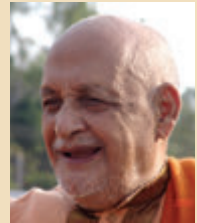


### [www.biharyoga.net](http://www.biharyoga.net)

The official website of Bihar Yoga. Includes information on: Satyananda Yoga, Bihar School of Yoga, Bihar Yoga Bharati, Sivananda Math activities, Sita Kalyanam events, Yoga Publications Trust catalogues.

### [www.rikhiapeeth.in](http://www.rikhiapeeth.in)

The Rikhiapeeth website is a sanctuary for all spiritual seekers so they can stay connected to the cardinal teachings of Swami Sivananda, 'Serve, Love, Give', that are practised and lived at Rikhiapeeth. Includes inspiring satsangs, information about Rikhiapeeth, upcoming events, courses and more.



### Living Yoga with Swami Niranjan

[www.biharyoga.net/living-yoga/](http://www.biharyoga.net/living-yoga/). Dedicated to the vision and mission of Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati, the spiritual successor of Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati, it contains news and articles.

### [www.yogamag.net](http://www.yogamag.net)

The official website of YOGA magazine. Includes world-wide links to Satyananda Yoga centres and teachers, a brief history of *Yoga* magazine, news and more.



### Avahan Online

[www.biharyoga.net/sannyasa-peeth/avahan/](http://www.biharyoga.net/sannyasa-peeth/avahan/). Provides online access to *Satyka Avahan*, the bi-monthly magazine of Sannyasa Peeth, which contains the higher teachings of Sri Swami Sivananda, Sri Swami Satyananda and Swami Niranjanananda, along with the programs of Sannyasa Peeth.



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## Ganga Darshan Events & Courses 2014

<i>Aug 2014-May 2015</i>	Diploma in Yogic Studies (English)
<i>Aug 1-30</i>	Yoga Instructor Course (English)
<i>Sep 8</i>	Swami Sivananda Janmotsava
<i>Sep 12</i>	Swami Satyananda Sannyasa Diwas
<i>Oct 1-Jan 25</i>	4-month Yogic Studies Course (English)
<i>Dec 25</i>	Swami Satyananda's Birthday

<i>Every Saturday</i>	Mahamrityunjaya Havan
<i>Every Ekadashi</i>	Bhagavad Gita Path
<i>Every Poornima</i>	Sundarkand Path
<i>Every 5th &amp; 6th</i>	Commemoration of Sri Swami Satyananda's Mahasamadhi
<i>Every 12th</i>	Akhanda Path of Ramacharitamanas

Please be aware that mobile phones are NOT permitted in the ashram.  
Ensure that you do not bring your mobile with you.

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**For more information on the above events contact:**

Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Munger, Bihar 811201, India  
Tel: 06344-222430, 09304799615, 06344-228603, Fax: 06344-220169  
Website: [www.biharyoga.net](http://www.biharyoga.net)

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