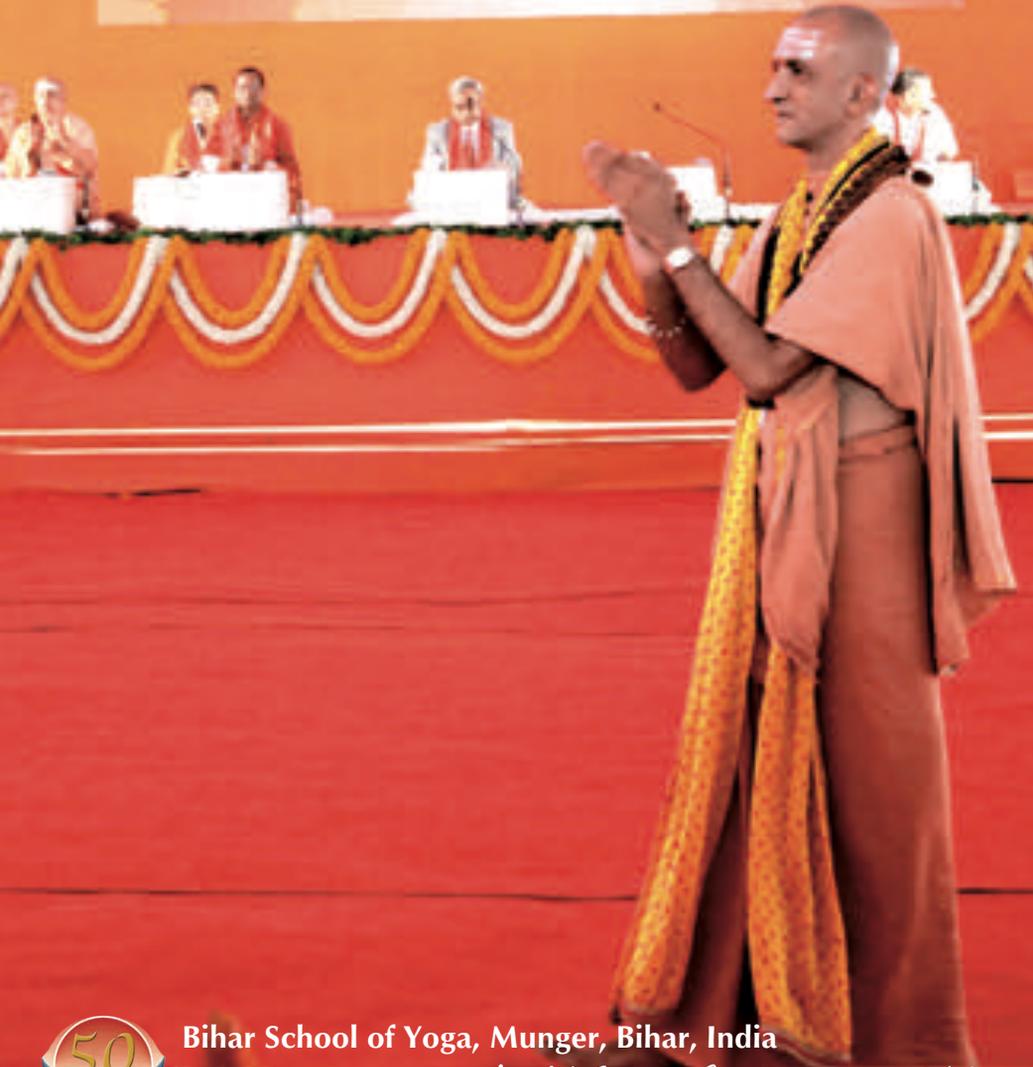


YOGA

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Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar, India

Commemorating the *World Yoga Convention 2013*



Hari Om

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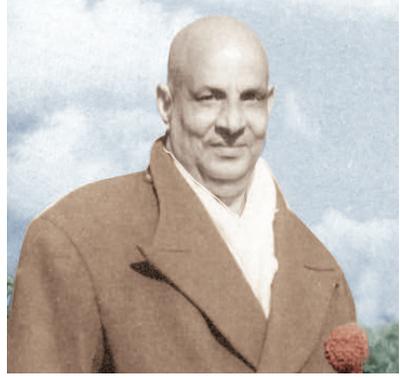
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GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Sadhana

Through sadhana one can have complete mastery over the mind, passions, emotions and impulses. One is able to remove the disturbing elements from the mind. Regular spiritual practice can help in business life as well as in daily life, and it gives restful sleep. Sadhana will infuse the aspirant with new strength, confidence and self-reliance.

Sadhana should make one ever cheerful, more concentrated, joyful, balanced, peaceful, contented, fearless, courageous, compassionate, angerless, selfless and desireless. Seeing visions and lights or hearing transcendental sounds does not have much spiritual value, although they indicate that one has attained some small degree of concentration. Sadhana should give a rich inner life, an introspective inner vision and equilibrium under all conditions of life. These are the signs of spiritual growth.

—Swami Sivananda

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Contents

This issue is dedicated to talks and workshops presented at the World Yoga Convention 2013, Munger.

- 4 Living Harmoniously
- 8 Message of Goodwill
- 9 Synthesis of Yoga
- 16 Global Tribute – Bulgaria

- 17 Yoga to Develop Awareness and to Live with Awareness
- 22 Making History
- 36 Guru Bhakti Yoga
- 38 Beyond Expectations
- 39 Universality of the Satyananda Yoga System
- 45 From Analog to Digital
- 46 The Quiet Mind: Antar Mouna
- 53 A Transformative Event
- 56 An Aim to Please

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 ॥

Living Harmoniously

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Today, the theme is 'Yoga and Lifestyle'. You have to understand the word 'lifestyle' in its correct context. What is the meaning of lifestyle? Lifestyle and life routine are two different things. Routine is what you do on a daily basis and lifestyle is how you live.

You wake up at four, five, six, seven, eight, nine or ten o'clock. That is your choice and your routine. You eat your breakfast at whatever time you want, go to work at whatever time is defined, come back at a specific time, do your things at specific times. That is your routine, not your lifestyle.

Definition of lifestyle

Lifestyle is an expression of your personality, your traits and your character. If your personality, traits, character and habits are conducive to the attainment of peace, contentment and prosperity, and if they are conducive to the development of your spiritual awareness, then you are living a perfect life. If you find, though, your expressions are contradictory to your own inner aspirations, you need to modify your lifestyle, as lifestyle is an expression of the maturity of mind and emotions.

How you live, how you act in the world, how you respond to situations, all happen because of an inner quality and strength. That inner quality and inner strength is contained in the mind. You become what you think. Thinking and becoming, however, both have to be in sync with each other.

Becoming and being

A banana cannot think, 'I can become an orange,' and become an orange. A lemon cannot think, 'I am an apple,' and become an apple. No. There is a difference between thinking and becoming, yet human beings have the ability to become what they think. That is the only sentient life form in nature that has this ability: to become what they want to be. Therefore, in the life of a human being two processes take place: one is becoming, and the other is being. First you become, and then you be.

The process of becoming is adopting new qualities in life, and being is the expression of the best that you have to offer. Becoming is sadhana, and being is expression. Becoming is Munger, and being is Rikhia. Therefore, Sri Swamiji says, "Before you come to Rikhia, spend time in Munger." Becoming and being are the two expressions of Sri Swamiji's mission.

Here in Munger you have to work hard and confront yourself, transform yourself and transcend the limitations. There in Rikhia you just have to be: one with the environment, one with the spirit and one with the energy of the place, that

is all. These are the two aspects of Sri Swamiji's mission. There is nothing more important or less important. This is neither more important nor less important, and that is neither more important nor less important; they are both complementary to each other, just as Swami Satsangi and myself are complementary to each other.

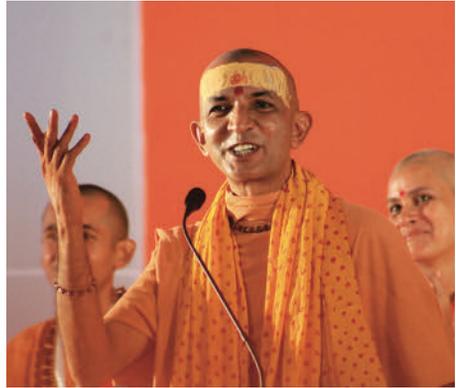
We are talking of lifestyle and this is the process: first you become through the process of transformation, then you be, living that creative expression. That constitutes the lifestyle. Lifestyle is an expression of the traits, habits, nature and character of your inner self, what is known as the 'personality'.

Six powers of Prakriti

This personality is constructed not only by your friends, family, society and culture, religion and belief, ethics and morality that surround you, or the education or environment in which you grow up and live, but also by the six powers of Prakriti, which you have inherited when you came into this life and took birth.

These six powers of Prakriti are both binding and liberating. They are realized in our tradition as friends and foes. When they bind, they become the enemies. When they liberate, they become the friends. In real life, it happens the other way. When we are born, they begin to help us in shaping and constructing our nature and our personality. Who are the six friends? *Kama*, passions, desires, obsessions; *krodha*, motivation, aggression, dynamism; *lobha*, greed; *moha*, infatuation; *mada*, arrogance, superiority complex; *matsarya*, enviousness of other people. These are the six qualities of tamoguna that attract the mind in this dimension. They become friends with the mind and construct the personality of your mind. What you express in life is what they have given to you as input. Your thoughts, ambitions, interactions and perceptions are guided by them. They become your nature and your personality.

Then there comes a time when the mind and spirit connect together. When the six friends and mind connect together, you forget the higher self, the higher nature and the higher qualities. Sometimes it happens, though, that a flower blooms even in the desert. Sometimes it happens that a connection takes place between the mind and spirit, and you realize that 'Those things I used to consider mine and was proud of are actually detrimental to my growth, and are impediments to my development. Those things that have made me what I am today are in reality my enemies, containing me in this dimension of suffering, desires, *vasanas*, and not allowing me to experience the freedom and beauty which is the purpose of life.'



Applying sanyam for a harmonious life

The six friends are then seen as six enemies. The six enemies are then controlled by the process of sanyam, just as you control the horses by holding the reins in your hands. If you leave the reins, you do not know how the horse will run; you have no control over it. In the same manner, through sanyam you restrain the six: kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada and matsarya. They do not disappear, as they are a part of you, yet they are restrained with sanyam. Nothing disappears in this life, habits and traits do not disappear, yet they can be channelled, controlled, modified, converted and transcended. This is the purpose of yogic lifestyle. Yogic lifestyle is not defined by how many hours of yoga and meditation you practise. That is irrelevant. Yogic lifestyle is the concept of living a harmonious and correct form of life.

– *Welcome Address, 26 October 2013, Polo Ground, Munger*

Message of Goodwill

Arjun Atwal, Golfer, India



Hari Om. My first visit to Munger was in the 1980s, and since then I have been seeing Swamiji and everybody here at the Bihar School of Yoga for quite a while. I began learning yoga with the Bihar School of Yoga when I was a boy of fifteen, and my teacher was Swami Kaivalyanandaji, who is sitting here before me now. I learnt yoga from him when I was fifteen,

and I have carried the teachings of BSY with me ever since. I am forty now, and I have been doing the same routine all this while.

Let me tell you a little bit about the sport of golf. Golf is an individual sport where you set out by yourself for five hours on the golf course. There is no one there to help you, no team like in soccer or cricket. There, alone on the golf course, you have to control your own emotions. After a little while, at the professional level, you have to begin controlling your breathing. You have to be conscious of what you are doing, mentally more than physically, and it is here that yoga comes in. Swamiji told me a long time ago to remain very aware of my body and my mind, and if the body and mind are in sync, then you can produce unimaginable results. I have, and I still cannot imagine that I did, and all through yoga. Therefore, any success of mine is due to the Bihar School of Yoga, Swamiji's blessings, and everybody here. It's been a great journey. I ended up being the best golfer in India and it has nothing to do with me, it has all to do with the Bihar School of Yoga, and so I thank you.

– Address, 23 October 2013, Polo Ground, Munger

Synthesis of Yoga

Swami Madhavananda, Acharya, Chinmaya Mission, Ranchi

I feel honoured and blessed to be here with you. I represent the Chinmaya Mission and my topic is 'Synthesis of Yoga'. This is what Swami Sivananda has explained in four yogas.

The word 'yoga' is used often in our vedic literature. The Vedas say: *Karmakandopasanakanda jnanakanda*. In the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Lord Krishna speaks

to Uddhava in the eleventh canto about different yogas. The *Bhagavad Gita* has eighteen chapters and each chapter is named as a different yoga, like 'Vishada Yoga', 'Samkhya Yoga', etc.

What is the meaning of yoga? As you know, in Sanskrit every word derives from a root. In the word 'yoga', the root is *yuj*, to join. So *yoga* is a means, a technique to join with the Supreme Goal. As Pujya Swamiji was elaborating yesterday, there are two types of systems. One is of Sage Patanjali and the other is Swami Sivananda's eightfold method. Swami Sivanandaji speaks about the synthesis of yoga, mainly of karma yoga, ashtanga yoga, bhakti yoga and jnana yoga. I will shed some light on these four yogas.

Karma yoga

First is karma yoga. What is the difference between karma and karma yoga? Everybody is compelled to perform action on account of his desires and vasanas. What then is the difference between karma and karma yoga? Swamiji has emphasized on seva several times. Karma yoga is otherwise known as nishkama karma or seva. It is the method or the



means for sadhana. Karma yoga, as Lord Krishna says in the third chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*, is the doctrine of action. *Karma* means action, *karma yoga* means dedicated action. In action, there are three demerits. One is *kartritva bhava*, the feeling of doership. The second is attachment towards action, and the third is desire for a fruit. In dedicated action or karma yoga, these three demerits are eliminated. One says, "I am not doing. God is doing through me." *Naham karta, Hari karta*.

In karma yoga the first point is to think, 'I am an instrument. Thy will be done, not mine. I am just the instrument.' *Nimittamatram bhava savyasachin* - "Arjuna, be an instrument." In karma yoga the sadhaka feels like an instrument. Here at this Convention, as Swamiji said, during whatever work you are doing, you are feeling like an instrument. That is karma yoga.

The second point in karma yoga is that there is no attachment to the action. Not that the person thinks, 'The particular work that I want to do should be given to me.' No. The thought is, 'I am an instrument. Any work that is given to me I will do happily.'

The third point is not to desire for the fruit of action. Lord Krishna says in the *Gita: Karmanyevadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana* - "Don't think about the fruit." The fruit you will get, but don't desire it. You don't get what you desire, you get what you deserve. If you deserve the fruit, you will get it. Therefore, in the doctrine of action, or karma yoga, the thought is, 'I am an instrument, I am totally surrendered to God.' This is a beautiful word, 'surrender'. Say it after me: Surrender. Sur-under. That means when the 'sur' - which means head in Hindi - is under the feet of God, one becomes 'surrendered'.

Ashtanga yoga

Now let us get to the second yoga, ashtanga yoga, which is being narrated by Lord Krishna in the sixth chapter. As you

are the sadhakas of ashtanga yoga, you know the eightfold path of Patanjali, as Swamiji was narrating yesterday: yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi.

The first and second steps in the eightfold path are the yamas and niyamas, the ten values. *Bahya mulya sthiti visheshah yamah, antara mulya sthiti visheshah niyamah.* The sadhaka has to inculcate these ten values. It is beautifully said that if you don't stand up for one value, then you fall in every value. That means for attaining the goal of sadhana, these ten values must be inculcated within us. What I value – that I should do; and what I do – that I should value. So the values should be there in our lives. Here in the Bihar School of Yoga and in other spiritual institutions, these values are being inculcated.

The third is asana: *Sharira sthiti visheshah.* Asana is a special condition of the body. The fourth is *pranayama*, control of the vital air. The fifth is *pratyahara*, withdrawal of the sense organs away from the sense objects and placing them 'in their own cavity'. The sixth is *dharana* or concentration. It is a state of the mind. The seventh is *dhyana*, meditation. *Tatra pratyayaikatanata, buddhi sthiti visheshah. Samadhi*, the last state of atman.

All these branches are narrated beautifully by Lord Krishna in the sixth chapter of the *Gita*:

*Shanaih shanairupamed buddhyaa dhritigriheetayaa;
Aatmasamstham manah kritvaa na kinchidapi chintayet.*

Arjuna, don't think anything. Let your mind be placed in Atman. Concentration, meditation and samadhi are explained.

Bhakti yoga

Now we come to bhakti yoga. This is what Lord Krishna explains in the twelfth chapter, which is also titled 'Bhakti Yoga'. Bhakti is the mind, and jnana is the intellect. Let



me explain to you what the mind is and what the intellect is. They are the two inner instruments. There are three instruments which we have received as free gifts when we took birth; one is the body, the second is the mind, and the third is the intellect. The physical body is the gross body, or *sthoola sharira*. The mind is the subtle body, or *sukshma sharira*. What is the mind? The mind is a flow of thoughts, a flow of emotions. Acharya Shankaracharya says in his text *Tattwa Bodha*:

*Sankalpa-vikalpaatmikam manah
Vimarshaatmika antahkarana vrittih iti manah.*

The emotional faculty is the mind, whereas the intellect is a rational faculty, the *nischayatmika buddhi*: *Nischayatmika antahkarana vritti iti buddhih*. Now let us discuss about the mind and its emotions. Emotions are neither bad nor good. Emotions towards God become devotion. Emotions towards the world become attachment. The kirtan that Swamiji conducts every day is devotion. Whatever we chant, whatever we sing, all penetrate, surrender and merge with God; it becomes devotion. Emotions plus God, emotions plus higher emotions, emotions in promotion become devotion. Emotions in demotion become attachment. This devotion is explained in the twelfth chapter of the *Gita*, and Lord Krishna states different types of sadhanas.

Jnana yoga

Now let us come to *jnana yoga*, the path of knowledge, the path of wisdom, the path of enquiry, the path of viveka, dissection and intellect. The quality of the intellect is to think, to dissect. In *jnana yoga*, we are thinking and questioning: 'From where does this object come? From where have these created objects been created?'

The Upanishads deal mainly with *jnana yoga*. There is no Upanishad without a question from a disciple. The Upanishads are sessions between the teacher and the taught on *Brahma vidya*. The topic is the thinking process – *jnana yoga*. Through intellect the *sadhaka* enquires. *Ramana Maharshi*, for instance, would tell everybody who went to him, "Enquire 'Who am I?'" Therefore, in *jnana yoga* the *sadhaka* thinks, 'Who am I? What is my purpose of birth? What is my purpose of life? What do I have to do?' Generally it is difficult to think. We have poverty in thinking. We have demerits in thinking. The first demerit is that people don't think: no thinking. The second is thinking very little, and the third is wrong thinking. No thinking is *avicharah*. *Avichare krite bandhah, vicharena vimuchyate* – "Not thinking leads to bondage, and thinking leads to liberation."

The great western philosopher *Socrates* said, "Ignorance is the cause of all sorrows." It is a great statement by him. The second statement is, "Ignorance is the greatest sin." If we are ignorant, we don't know who God is, who we are. That means we are sinning, and it is the cause of all sorrows.

The second demerit is less thinking. Suppose we are compelled to think, but we think very little. We feel too bored to think. We feel too frustrated to think. Therefore we leave our thoughts. So thinking less is the second demerit: *swalpa vicharah*.

Suppose that we think the false way, we think wrongly? That is *bhrama vicharah, kuvicharah*, and it is the third demerit, wrong thought.

These are the three demerits in thinking. So the great masters say, "Think right." Right thinking, *samyaka vicharah*, as *Swamiji* was speaking about yesterday, is knowledge.

Generally, what happens is that when thinking, we think in terms of 'I have no problems' or 'I have problems.' The great masters say, "You don't have problems. You are the problem." So it is not, 'I have a problem', no, it is, 'I am the problem'. To think, 'I have no problem' means 'I am not a problem'. We think, 'I have a problem,' 'You have a problem,' but the great masters think beautifully. They say, "No, think like this: 'I have no problem, I am the problem'."

The great masters say that in our dealings with people, we come across two types: those who have difficulties and those who are difficult. While dealing with them, we have to think whether the person has difficulties or is difficult. Think minutely in each case. Lastly, the great masters, the rishis, have inspired us to think that we are atman. That is why in kirtan we sing, *Shivoham, Shivoham, Shivoham. Naham deham* - "I am not the body, I am not the intellect, I am not the vital air, I am not the ego. I am that atman." This is jnana yoga.

*Asangoham Asangoham Asangoham Punah Punah
Satchidanadaroopoham Ahamevaahamavyayah.*

I am unattached, unattached, unattached, again and again. I am consciousness, bliss, existence.

The great masters such as Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda have given us this thought: 'You are not the body.'

Synthesis of yoga

In conclusion, while acting, we must each think, 'I am an instrument.' In devotion we should think, 'I am a bhakta, I am the part and the Lord is whole.' While thinking on the seat of meditation, we must think, 'I am that, the Lord. *Soham. Soham.*'

Lord Rama asks Hanuman, "What is your identity?" Hanuman says, *Dehadrishtva tu dasoham* - "In relevance of the body, I am your servant and you are the master." *Jivadrishva todanshakah* - "In relevance of the jiva, I am the part and you

are the whole; I am the created and you are the creator.”
Tattwadrishtva jnanadrishtva twameva aham – “In relevance of knowledge, the essence, I am you and you are me.” *Soham*.

This is the synthesis of yoga as our Paramgurudeva has given. I am really delighted to be here under the leadership of Swami Niranjananandaji, because we are all family members. Swami Chinmayanandaji, Swami Chidanandaji and Swami Satyanandaji are disciples of Swami Sivanandaji, and as I am a disciple of Swami Chinmayanandaji, so we all are family members. And truly, under the leadership of Swami Niranjananandaji, this conference is so vast and well-conducted. I feel proud that one of our family members could develop and conduct such a vast conference.

I also feel proud and offer prostrations to Swami Niranjananandaji and Swami Satyasanganandaji for inviting our guruji, Swami Tejomayanandaji, who sent me, so I am representing the Chinmaya Mission. I am honoured to be invited in this ocean of devotion and dedication. Really, when you listen you do not listen tentatively, you listen attentively, and this is due only to Swamiji, for he has trained you in such a way. Thank you.

– Address, 25 October 2013, Polo Ground, Munger

Tears of Joy and Fulfilment

Finally I have arrived back home to Portugal and am writing to say a huge heartfelt thank you for such a beautiful Golden Jubilee.

The ashram was looking amazing and the evening programs there were breathtakingly wonderful. Congratulations to everyone who took part in them. I think I cried tears of joy and happiness every night and had an overwhelming feeling of being blessed and proud to belong to such an incredible tradition and lineage. The two-part movie, which again had me sobbing, was fantastic.

Look forward to the next Convention in twenty years’ time.

–Swami Vedantananda, Portugal

Global Tribute – Bulgaria

Swami Shrutigyana



Hari Om

We have come from Bulgaria 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 the Communist Bulgaria of the 1960s and 70s, there was no room for spirituality. But somehow, Satyananda Yoga or the Bihar Yoga tradition broke through those iron walls and opened up our hearts. At first the inspiration trickled in through the medium of books, and from the 1990s, Swami Niranjan directly guided the yoga movement in Bulgaria. And today, Satyananda Yoga is the path almost every Bulgarian seeker walks when they think of spirituality and yoga. We cannot thank Sri Swamiji and Swamiji enough for what they have done for us.



Yoga to Develop Awareness and to Live with Awareness

Swami Anandananda, Founder and Acharya, Scuola Di Yoga Satyananda Ashram Italia, Italy

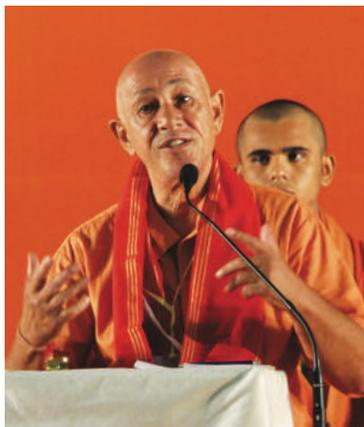
First of all, my deepest thanks and respect to Sri Paramahamsaji in the physical form of Swami Niranjanananda and Swami Satyasangananda.

Awareness the hallmark of Satyananda Yoga

One of the most important subjects or aspects of the Satyananda Yoga tradition, which I recognized in the course of time, is the education of awareness. What makes the Satyananda Yoga tradition special is the fact that it teaches, emphasizes and encourages the use and application of awareness. If we attend a Satyananda Yoga class or seminar, or if we live in an ashram like here at Ganga Darshan or Rikhiapeeth, what we learn, what we practise, what we are stimulated and encouraged to develop is awareness.

All the practices that Swami Satyananda has taught, from asana to pranayama, relaxation, and yoga nidra are all techniques of awareness. If you read the 350 or so books and listen to all the CDs, the yoga nidras and the meditations, you will hear many, many times the word 'awareness'.

If you attend a yoga class, you are asked to be aware from the moment you enter the classroom or the hall. It does not matter what or how you perform, but you must be aware. We are trained in developing and expanding



that awareness. However, we do not leave this awareness in the classroom or on our yoga mat after we have finished the practices. We have it the whole time. In the classroom, through the means of asana or breathing, pranayama, the technique of yoga nidra or antar mouna, we are stimulating the awareness. Then we move and continue our daily life, and our awareness is with us. It is always there and we should apply it.

We have heard of breath awareness. In children's education in the classroom or in any field of application of yoga, awareness should be there. 'What am I doing?' That is awareness. That awareness can take place at any moment of our daily life. I recognize that this is the greatest gift and component of the Satyananda Yoga tradition: the emphasis on awareness. What is this awareness?

What is awareness?

I had to discover and explore it a bit more, because by visiting many countries I found that in several languages there is no word for awareness. In some languages, there is only one word for 'mind', 'consciousness' and 'awareness'. So I had



to think hard to explain what awareness means. I got the answer by watching a BBC documentary. There were some experiments being done on the awareness of humans living in metropolitan conditions and situations. The final statement of this documentary by eminent researchers is that, "You have the eyes, the eyes are open and you look, but if there is no awareness you do not see." Therefore, awareness is the difference between looking and seeing; awareness is the difference between hearing and listening.

It is an amazing research experiment and if Swamiji allows it, I would like to share it with you. The researchers used some actors at a very busy time of the day, for instance, at the exit of a train station. One actor was dressed as a lost tourist with a camera and map. He stopped one person coming out from the station. He went up to him and said, "Ah, please, some directions." The person stopped to help him out, to give him directions. While they were talking, two other actors dressed as labourers, carrying a big piece of plywood, walked between these two guys. For two seconds, they were covered and they could not see each other.

At that time, the experimenters changed the tourist and put another person there. Ninety-nine percent of the time, the people continued to give explanations and directions as if nothing had happened. They did not know that the person they were talking to - a tall guy with glasses dressed in blue jeans, and the next guy, short, fat guy, no glasses - had changed. The experimenters asked them, "Do you realize that you were speaking to two different people?" They said, "Ah . . . Ohh, maybe, yes, something, you know." However, they did not realize that they were talking to two different people. The experimenters said that this is the condition and state of awareness of people living in metropolitan conditions.

Distraction

Swamiji said something yesterday; there also I learned Latin from Swamiji, the word 'distraction'; 'dis' has come from

distance, and 'traction' has the Latin root 'tractus' which means to attract to some other direction. This distraction is not just one. In a metropolitan condition and situation, the number of distractions is enormous, thousands and thousands of distractions. If you walk merely five hundred metres in a city, you will hear so many things, see so many things and be drawn in so many different directions, which affect the condition and the state of awareness. They cause the awareness to be scattered, resulting in stress and so many diseases and ailments.

When we go to a yoga class or to an ashram, we are asked, "Become aware of your feet, become aware of your breath, become aware of your navel, become aware of what you are thinking, become aware what you are doing." We ask ourselves, 'What am I doing?' By that awareness we change our condition from a scattered, dispersive state to a more centred and compact condition and state of being. It is also being proved. I was recently reading an interesting book about the brain and it has been found that when something is done with awareness, the brain and the brain mapping registers it at the proper place in relation to all the other areas of the brain and you will not forget, it will stay there, it will become an experience.

Moving from gross to subtle awareness

This use and application of awareness is what I would say is the main flag of the Satyananda Yoga tradition. Whether it is for health, for children in schools, in prisons, or for inner realization, awareness is what is used. I am so glad and grateful for this tradition that has educated me in awareness.

If you are practising Satyananda Yoga, and especially if you are teaching Satyananda Yoga, put awareness into the practices, include the word 'awareness'. Use the term. Ask the students, the practitioners, to be aware. If you are practising yoga, whether in this tradition or any other tradition, practise with awareness. Ask, 'What am I doing? What am I doing now? What am I experiencing now?' Then that approach and attitude

will be useful in: 'Where am I going? Where am I coming from? What is my direction?' It will bring about an awareness of your aim in life, awareness of your dharma, awareness of what is your role, awareness of what is appropriate.

Concluding remarks

I would like to conclude with one instance, something I experienced recently at Ganga Darshan. Ganga Darshan, I tell you, is the most active place where awareness is exercised and that happens at many, many, many levels.

In the bathrooms, next to the mirror, there is a photo of Swami Sivananda, and underneath there is a statement saying: 'Preserve water, every drop of water is precious.' I read it, I said, "Oh. Very nice. Good, good." I opened the tap, quickly washed my hands and closed it, keeping in mind, 'Don't waste water, water is precious.' Then I left the bathroom. After a few hours, I was at the tank getting the filtered drinking water. I put some water in my glass and drank some. I felt a little more thirsty. I got a bit more, and drank two to three sips and some water was left in the glass. Instinctively, I was going to throw out that water, but you know my arm went, 'No.' I brought it back, realizing the statement of saving water is not only true for the bathroom. Why am I throwing this water now? The same happens in the classroom – why should you be aware only in the classroom and then go out and be no longer aware? This incident for me has been a further education in awareness.

I am sure that whoever is here for this time, the Convention and the Golden Jubilee, is being educated in every area, in every aspect. Not only are we being educated, but we are also all scientists. As it was said by other speakers, we are the researcher and the laboratory. We are the students and the scientists.

Thank you very much. Thank you Paramahamsaji, thank you Swami Niranjanananda, thank you Swami Satsangi.

– Address, 25 October 2013, Polo Ground, Munger

Making History

Sannyasi Sivamaya, Colombia

Although there are no words which can fully express the magnificence and the beauty of the event, I will attempt to find the best way to transmit, if not all, at least some of the fascinating impressions imprinted on my memory.

From the moment we arrived we were overtaken by a special joy due to the warm and loving welcome we received. There was a very special, exulting, and motivating energy in the air, full of peace, and it was the energy of Sri Swamiji.

Upon entering the ashram, our mirth only grew when we saw the gardens, the decorations of the various stages where the events would take place and the enthusiasm with which everyone worked. Everything flowed in a tranquil, orderly and perfectly synchronized manner. The swamis, the sannyasa trainees and all the volunteers were consecrated with total dedication to each and every one of their respective



duties so that we could all thoroughly enjoy every activity, while the children and the youths of BYMM and YMM made us feel at home. They were dedicated to their duties: some were guiding the participants, others were the guards of order and discipline, and yet others were messengers for the various instructions from Swamiji to his helpers and the participants.

Swami Niranjan himself was resplendent! He was present everywhere, and his creative and constructive energy was contagious to all. Each of his words transmitted a message of love, understanding, commitment and total surrender to Sri Swamiji's mission. Swami Satsangi, always by his side, reinforced the importance of the continuity of this mission.

Over the five days of the Convention, we saw and experienced creativity in all its artistic expressions. We felt it in the architecture, through the beautiful design of the Polo Ground and other event pavilions erected to host the different programs. We felt it in music, through the kirtans and bhajans sung during the day, and through dance, as the children danced spontaneously to the rhythm of the kirtans. We felt it in worship, through the yajna in Akhara. Creativity was experienced in the decorations, expressed in an elegant and colourful manner, and finally in nature, through the gardens filled with flowers, butterflies, squirrels and birds, all attracted by the special circulating energy.

Polo Ground pavilion

The Polo Ground pavilion, where the Convention took place, was immense and filled with light and circulating air. Its capacity was for over twenty thousand people and had enough space for each participant to find an ample, comfortable spot. The crowd management was astonishing, although people indeed came and left twice each day, it was hardly noticed, we came and went in peace, calm and joy. It was the circulating energy, absorbed by all of us, that kept order and discipline in reign.

From this beautiful pavilion, Swamiji would translate each lecture into a fantastic synthesis of the topic, in Hindi if the talk was in English or in English if the talk was in Hindi, so that all of us could understand what the speakers were expressing. The motto of the Convention, 'Sincerity, Seriousness and Commitment', given by Swamiji on the final day, summarized the essence of our practice, our sadhana and our lives.

Kirtan and dance

Following the morning pooja that commenced each session, the children of the BYMM sang kirtan and Swamiji would sing along with them, inspiring all present to join in. This created a magical energy in the hall that focused everyone's full attention on the present moment.

On the first afternoon, Sri Swamiji's energy could be felt when a group of kanyas and batuks, the girls and boys of Rikhia, performed the Bharatnatyam with so much innocence and elegance that they appeared to be classical dancers. We could see Sri Swamiji guiding these children and youths to achieve excellence in everything they embark on.

Over in Satyam Vatika, Ganga Darshan, where there was continuous kirtan, we sang and danced with the leading groups. Whether staying for a while or simply passing by, our joy, mirth and enthusiasm was awakened by the experience.

The moments of creative inspiration, joy and enthusiasm continued in the evenings with five nights of special dance-drama presentations. On the first and second nights, the group of actors and dancers from Chennai, who recreated the life of Sri Swamiji through acting and dance were not only fantastic performers, but also transmitted their devotion and conviction to recreating moments of the life of the saint who illumined their lives.

On the third night, the *Rudrashtakam*, a powerful prayer to Shiva performed by the sannyasa trainees, vibrated mesmerizingly in the heart, in the mind and in the surroundings, while the fourth night's English songs, 'Lord



of the Dance' and 'Another You', were hymns that led us to appreciate the light and guidance that our gurus represent. The same night's demonstration of karate performed by the children of BYMM was an impressive display of their defensive skills and self-reliance, especially that of the girls. Thanks to the training received in the ashram, these girls know how to defend themselves, and now nobody can mess with them since they have learnt well how to take care of themselves!

The fifth and last day, dedicated to Swami Niranjan, was a wonderful closure with the allegorical story of Swamiji conveyed by the sannyasa trainees, garmented with special costumes, pretty and luminous, alongside clips of the movie *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. Each night we would go to bed feeling full of energy, joy and optimism.

Akhara

While the evenings ended joyfully and energetically, the days began in the same vein. Each morning of the Convention started with Swamiji's sadhana for invoking the Goddess Katyayani. Upon getting up and going for breakfast, we could hear the mantras and feel their power transmitting the energy that preserves, unites, strengthens, soothes and sweetens life. It was the best way to start the day.

The Akhara felt like the power centre of the ashram, a power which grew each day with the mantras and tantric ceremonies taking place there by the Varanasi pandits. It was a power felt by all of us as it descended and showered its blessings upon us, the ashram, and the entire universe.

Nature's bounty

Eagles are the vehicle of Lord Vishnu, the deity that protects and preserves. Attracted by the creativity and energy of the ashram, Garuda sent his fleet of emissaries, who were spotted every day doing rounds of all the places, especially the Akhara, with their numbers increasing every day. It was a magnificent sight. On the last day, coming back from the closing session of the yajna, it was very exciting to watch them above the Akhara and the Main Building. It was a parade of eagles, flying from one place to another, seeming to shoot headlong down into the building only to rise and soar again, like an aerial show. What a beautiful demonstration!

Nature also displayed her generosity. When I arrived in India, the news of cyclones, torrential rain and flooding in Bihar was a matter of worry. I was wondering what Swamiji would do with so much rain and how he would handle the floods. A few days before the first day of the Convention, the downpours stopped, with only some refreshing rain falling the night before the commencement. In the ashram, Nature was in her full glory. All the plants were blooming, the trees and palms stood erect and overflowing with green and freshness, the mango trees bore fruit out of season, butterflies of all colours were flying everywhere, and the birds and squirrels played.

Special highlights

There were many, many highlights during the Convention. The movie, especially, gave very emotional, constructive and inspiring moments as Sri Swamiji spoke to us and personally commented on aspects of his life and relationship with his guru, Swami Sivananda.

















The prasad pavilions left a lasting impression. Although we were given a catalogue of all the publications in advance so we could choose the ones we wanted before visiting, once inside, our eyes opened wide and our greed did too. Before such generosity, we wanted to take everything!

The latest technology was presented at KAC, the 'Kundalini Awakening Centre'. It was something very special. All of us were wondering what that place could be. The external appearance was that of a completely enclosed room. "What's happening in there?" we would ask those who had already attended and they would answer, "It is a fantastic experience of five dimensions. You must live through it!" Our curiosity grew. When we entered, it was a hall with very comfortable chairs and a big screen. Our bodies vibrated; there was lightning, mist, sparks and bubbles falling. It was indeed a supreme experience for the body, mind and spirit!

History is made

Definitely, an event of this magnitude only becomes possible when a superior intelligence connects to a powerful, creative, constructive and inspiring energy and channels it into a magnificent success like the Golden Jubilee of the Bihar School of Yoga Convention.

I thank our gurus, Sri Swami Sivananda and Sri Swami Satyananda, for always being present, and Sri Swami Niranjanananda for channelling, crystallizing and materializing their energy into this event that has become a part of the history of humanity. It was an event to be remembered forever.



Guru Bhakti Yoga

Swami Achalananda Giri, Sainacharya and Peethadheeshwar, Akhil Bharatiya Sain Bhakti Peeth Trust, Pushkar, Rajasthan. Translation by Swami Niranjanananda



Swami Achalanandaji has spoken on the subject of guru bhakti yoga and his exposition has been very lucid, enlightening and inspiring. He says the first guru of a being is the mother, the second is the father and third is the spiritual guru.

If you look at the connection that a child has with the mother, it is very deep and intense. For a mother, the connection with her child is so deep that even the ugliest child in the world will be the most beautiful one for her and vice versa, since the connection is that of love. Through that link of love you imbibe the samskaras, the sensibilities, the sensitivity, the compassion, the softness and kindness from the mother. The soft qualities of life are always inherited from the mother; the gentleness is always inherited from the mother.

The second guru is the father. From the father you receive the hardness, the strictness, the discipline. The two become your first teachers. Then the guru, the spiritual master, comes in and he inspires you to go beyond your limitations. Therefore, these three are considered the most important gurus in one's life.

Apart from having an association with the guru, you should also make an effort, an attempt to know how you function and live. Generally everybody makes their body, their stomach, their mind either a post office or a rubbish bin and everything goes in, every kind of food goes in the stomach in the garb of

taste. You do not know what you are eating; you are eating the taste, you are not eating nutrition.

Similarly, the mind is a bundle of habits, and what interesting habits it has. It makes you do things that even animals do not do. It makes you have tobacco; even donkeys do not have tobacco. Who is the intelligent one here? You have tobacco, wine and other intoxicants, which damage your system. You drink at night, as that is your habit, then in the morning you go to the doctor to take medicines for your liver. Then again you drink at night and in the morning again you say, "My liver is failing, my liver is affected due to over-drinking," and again you go to the doctor, yet continue drinking. Where is the relief, where is the change or transformation, an attempt or intention to cure yourself from the damaging influences and effects of your habits? You consider yourselves intellectuals and leaders of society, and this is the way you live?

Apart from your awareness of those people who give you the learning to grow and live, there also has to be an awareness of how you live due to your habits. Try to know when to change and what to change, and then you can progress, develop and evolve in life and attain your aspirations.

Thank you, Swami Achalanandaji.

– Address, 26 October 2013, Polo Ground, Munger



Beyond Expectations

Sannyasi Navaratri and Chandramukhi, US



Hari Om Swami Niranjanji,

Thank you so very much for the wonderful World Yoga Convention this year!

It totally surpassed my expectations. The organization, the variety of talks and presentations, the beautiful tents with the books and the souvenirs, the kundalini experience, the stage with all the dances and plays, and most of all, Sri Swamiji's documentary movie! Wow! With so many thousands of people at the Convention, there was no hassle, pushing or trouble. Everything moved smoothly, effortlessly and seamlessly. The prasad, too, three times a day! Thank you!

For this to be so perfect, there must have been a lot of forethought, management, organization and so many sevaks working together.

Thank you for the lovely accommodation at the ashram and for each and every thoughtful consideration to make our stay and overall experience at the Convention so wonderfully amazing!

Swamiji, we appreciate your efforts and also those of Swami Satsangi, Swami Suryaprakash, the sannyasins, and all the sevaks. You are all very cherished and loved. We are most touched.

Universality of the Satyananda Yoga System

Swami Pragyamurti, Founder and Acharya, Satyananda Yoga Centre, London, UK

Hari Om Swamiji and Swami Satsangiji, and sisters and brothers in this beautiful family.

We have heard a lot in the last few days of the universal application of Satyananda Yoga around the world, and we have heard about the very interesting research being done on the benefits of yoga to the body, mind and spirit.



I would like to discuss a little bit about some of the journeys on which Sri Swamiji has taken me. Some of these places that I have been privileged enough to teach are in areas that have been much neglected. Often in the West, we think of yoga as being a pastime for fairly wealthy, skinny people; however, the wonder of Satyananda Yoga is that it gives us a variety of simple practices to make changes now, moment by moment, for no better reason than because you, me, we, deserve it.

Efficacy of yoga in London Prison

I find this particularly true in my work in prisons. For more than twenty years, I have been working in a big men's prison in London where my students are murderers, thieves, sex offenders, alcoholics, drug addicts and the occasional terrorist. The people in prison by and large are undereducated, 'dragged up' rather than 'brought up', and of course they are in prison. Where else could they possibly be? Through the damage

that has been done to them from their most tender years of childhood, they are disconnected from the better parts of themselves. Connections between body and mind, never mind heart, are non-existent.

What can you do for them? You cannot possibly sit and teach them pawanmuktasana part 1. Wonderful though it is, it is far too subtle. What Sri Swamiji has guided me in is to be appropriate, to give people the techniques that work for them in their circumstances now.

Prison is not a good place to be; however, there are wonderful practices that can help deal with the tension. Tension builds and builds and builds in life, and particularly, in prison. Therefore, it is important that we are able to give our students practices that help to deal with the build-up of tension, something as simple as naukasana. It works wonders.

Another exceptional practice, and we all know this, is yoga nidra. I have discovered in my work in the prisons that many people have a very limited connection between the body and the mind. Sometimes I can say, "Breathe in and raise your right leg," and for half the students, the left leg comes up. Through the practice of yoga nidra, people are able to rebuild a connection between their bodies and their mind, and what they are doing with their body and with their mind. This is hugely valuable in this population that is so desperately underprivileged. There are numerous such people amongst us. We cannot forget them, we cannot possibly neglect them, not just for their own selves but also for our own selves, because otherwise we will be taken over.

Universality of Satyananda Yoga

Just last week in my class, we were having a sitting meditation, sitting on chairs and I thought instead of yoga nidra, this week we will have a simple practice of hridayakasha dharana. These are beginners so they have not had the background and all the years of preparation that I would ideally give my students; however, yoga works. We know it does. With these guys, I

asked them to place their hands in chinmaya mudra. They sat. They placed their hands in chinmaya mudra. Chinmaya mudra touches the breath. It brings the breath in to the chest area; thoracic breathing. The breath connects us to something deeper. It brings us into contact with our emotions, with our feelings, one breath at a time, moment by moment. For me, sitting there in the circle guiding the practice, giving people time, breath by breath, moment by moment, watching the body language change, watching hard faces soften, and at the end of the practice inviting my guys to chant *Om* three times and listening to the beauty and the depth of that sound, there were tears in my eyes.

This to me indicates the magic, the depth and the absolute universality of Satyananda Yoga. Simple practices that have such depth, that demand no intellectual understanding, no periods of study, yet which enable all of us to make changes now, because we deserve it.

One of my students in that group had told me the week before that he was going to the funeral of his daughter who had been killed. Prisoners, when they are allowed out to a funeral, have to go in handcuffs and shackles. This student friend of mine was taken out to go to the funeral of his daughter and he was agitated, inevitably, and rude to the prison guards who were taking him to the funeral. They dragged him back to his cell, so he could not go. I was informed of this and I asked him, "How are you today?" and he said, "I'm okay, Swami, I've been practising your yoga stuff." How he was okay God alone knows.

So this work with the prison is hugely valuable, not just for them, but I have to say, for me. It is always a two-way traffic.

My guys in South African prisons

I have also spent a lot of time in prisons in South Africa. For the last six years or so I have been going to Cape Town, where I go not only to teach, but also to go on a pilgrimage to Pollsmoor Prison in Cape Town. I say it's a pilgrimage because that great yogi, President Nelson Mandela was imprisoned in

Pollsmoor for some time. It is probably one of the most ghastly jails in the world. It has huge gang cultures and those people, incidentally, are masters of hasta mudras; I am going to study that the next time I go.

In going to Pollsmoor jail and working with prisoners there, again, the relevance of yoga became clearly evident. I do a lot of work with abdominal breathing there. Abdominal breathing, as we know, connects us with manipura chakra. Manipura chakra is not necessarily to do with the negative connotations of criminals, power, abuse and aggression; it is to do with your sense of self-esteem, your sense of yourself as a human being.

Very few people come out of prison a better person. Abuse and brutality do not make a better human being. I feel very privileged to be able to pass on some of the beautiful techniques from our tradition to my guys in prison. I call them 'my guys' because I really love them and we have a good connection.

Ancient yoga culture in Africa

Apart from prisons, I would like to talk a little bit about the relevance of yoga in South Africa as a whole. What I have discovered is that there is a huge connection. Yoga and the ancient symbols of yoga are alive and well in Africa. Africa has not been mentioned in this conference and it is not mentioned in many yoga conferences worldwide. Despite that, I have been very privileged to meet with a number of sangomas, the traditional healers in Southern Africa, and I have been lucky enough to meet with people from the San and taken to various caves in Southern Africa where there are yantras and mandalas. In their depictions, there is the symbol of the kundalini serpent, exactly the same as ours in yoga, which takes us from the depths to the highest heights through the chakras. In Africa, the chakras are also symbolized by animals, the same animals that we use in the Indian system: antelope, elephant, crocodile, deer. They are all there in Africa. We are connected and this goes back thousands and thousands of years.

Through my discussions with the sangomas, we have discovered all of this that we have in common. They use breathing practices, they use hand mudras and they use *amaroli*, urine therapy, as a basic system of healthcare. As the sangomas and I can discuss such things together, they can say to their people in the villages and the townships, "This old white woman is all right, she's talking sense." Thanks to Sri Swamiji.

I do spend a lot of time in the townships. One of my best classes is held in a car park in the middle of Nyanga where goats are being slaughtered and cooked. My students there are people who are living with HIV and TB. When I first went there, they hobbled in on their sticks and we sat down in a huge circle. By the end of the first class these guys were standing up, they were doing shoulder rotations while standing. We also practised a little yoga nidra while sitting. Each year I go back to those guys and they say, "See, we're still here." They are improving their health and they are improving their spirit. Southern Africa has been used and abused for centuries by colonization and apartheid. You cannot cure that in a generation; it is an ongoing process.

There is a colleague of mine in South Africa, a woman who runs an organization called the Brave Foundation. She works with quadriplegics and paraplegics through yoga nidra. Some of the research she has done there is absolutely astounding. The help that is being given to people, who have been told they will never walk again or that they will never



stand again, through yoga nidra is remarkable. They are learning to breathe on command. They are learning slowly, slowly to get movement back in their toes, in their fingers. I see it. Each time I go back I see how they are improving.

Be generous with your love

I am hugely grateful to Swamiji for guiding me into these areas, which benefits me greatly and benefits the people in very simple, easy-to-understand ways. Satyananda Yoga is hugely practical, and simple practices are often the most profound and the deepest.

I would request all of you, when you are chanting your mantras – Gayatri mantra, Mahamrityunjaya mantra, Shanti Path – please be generous. Extend your heart to touch my students, all of our students, all of our fellow human beings in the most desperate conditions, striving, trying, and hoping where there is so little hope. Please, please be generous with your love.

– Address, 26 October 2013, Polo Ground, Munger



From Analog to Digital

Sannyasi Mukhtamantra, Slovenia (Sannyasa Trainee)

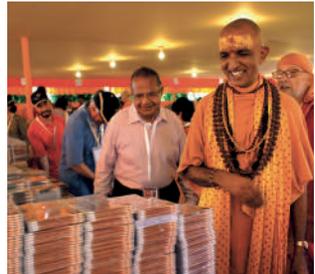
We were a small team that became the Audio Department for two years prior to the Convention, responsible for creating the CDs that would become part of Satyam Yoga Prasad.

The actual creation of an audio CD starts with transferring the content from an ancient reel-to-reel tape to the computer. This was quite a delicate part of the job since many reels were old and the tapes snapped frequently. After the transfer, many questions arose. How to approach the restoration process? How to remove unwanted noises without removing too much of Sri Swamiji's voice? How to improve his voice? What digital tools are there to get the best out of an old recording? How to edit this vast knowledge?

Practice makes perfect and soon enough it became quite a challenge to remain concentrated on the actual work and not become absorbed in the teachings of Sri Swamiji. On a few occasions I stopped with the restoration process to sit and listen to Sri Swamiji's words. Looking at Mother Ganga flowing gently beneath the window at Paduka Darshan, while listening to satsangs, was a wonderful privilege of my seva. Days passed by quickly and we were in full Convention mode, producing as many CDs as possible.

A few months before the Convention, CDs started coming back from the factory. Holding a finished, packed and printed CD in the hand was very satisfying and gave the motivation to work even harder. Seeing CDs being distributed during the Convention and knowing that I was able to contribute to Swamiji's offering of prasad brought a smile to my face.

Thank you Swamiji.



The Quiet Mind:

Antar Mouna (Extract)

A Method to Improve the Quality of Life

Swami Sivamurti, Founder and Acharya, Satyanandashram, Hellas, Greece

My subject is the 'quiet mind', one of my favourite techniques in the Satyananda Yoga tradition. *Antar* means inner, and *mouna* means silence, so the technique induces a state of pratyahara. *Pratyahara* is the fifth stage of raja yoga, the threshold between the external environment in which we live and witness, and the internal environment that we witness within the mind. Therefore, it is a very important threshold.



Yogic awareness

You will have heard the word 'awareness' often in yoga; we never really develop enough of our awareness. Awareness is the outcome and the way of yoga. When Swami Satyananda was visiting Greece, in one of his lecture tours around the country he gave a brilliant lecture in Patras, which is a town in the southern part of Greece. There were hundreds and hundreds of people attending that lecture and at the end, when we were walking out together, he turned to me and said, "Sivamurti, it doesn't matter whether anyone remembers anything I said in that whole lecture as long as they remember one word, and that word is 'awareness'. Then my lecture is a success." At that time the word 'awareness' to me was not terribly interesting. Actually, that was many years ago and I was far more interested in dharana and other subjects.

Most of Sri Swamiji's lectures were on awareness. He stressed that point. It seemed such a beautiful statement to my mind at that time,

I have never forgotten it and it is only in the later years that I realized just how very important awareness is. Every branch and system of yoga stresses awareness. Awareness in the English language means 'I am aware that is a watch', but that is not what we mean by awareness in yoga. Awareness in yoga means 'I know that I know that it is a watch'.

Identifying with the inner witness

Awareness in yoga means that we find the ability to identify within us the principle that is witnessing, rather than identifying with an ego-orientated state of mind. We have the chance to become the witness and if we can do that, the awareness that we develop has an inherent intelligence and detachment. We can detach ourselves from what is going on in the world around us and inside of us, in the world of the mind.

Through that awareness and detachment we befriend the mind, we become impartial, and we can witness the mind without being identified with it. We start to observe it, observing thoughts, feelings, and emotions. We observe the six friends that Swami Niranjan has been talking about recently: arrogance, envy, passion, infatuation, aggression, greed. We take a distance from the mind and witness it. Before we develop awareness, we have all those emotions within, yet we do not realize it. It takes awareness to give us that perception and ability to actually see what is going on in the mind. So antar mouna is a technique to develop this awareness.

Developing the quiet mind

All of the Satyananda Yoga-Bihar Yoga techniques develop awareness, but antar mouna stresses the development of awareness in a very systematic, scientific way and it quiets the mind. When the mind is quiet, it can see the self. Our minds are full of turbulence, noise, all sorts of wants, desires, feelings, sentiments, worries, fears, guilt, passions. When the mind is like that, agitated and turbulent, we cannot see ourselves, we can only see what is going on in the mind.

Although it is not finished in its evolutionary process, our mind has evolved to a certain point today where a few beings can witness the mind. We can identify our thoughts and we can identify what emotions are going on in our mind, at least most of them. There is suffering and complex, painful emotions where we are still not sure exactly what may be going on. Generally speaking though, we can

identify the emotions that we feel and we can identify the thoughts. Animals also have feelings and have their own way of thinking, but they do not know it. They are not aware of it; their minds have not evolved enough to know that they are happy. They are just happy. They do not know that they are happy. They do not know that they are sad; they are just sad or they are just happy. In contrast, as a human being we have the ability to know that we know that we are happy.

While I was in India when I first came and we were living in the old BSY, Sri Swamiji said the only difference between a man on the street and a yogi is the level of awareness. The only difference between a yogi and a guru is the level of awareness. The man on the street knows, the yogi knows that he knows, because he has that level of awareness, and the guru knows that he knows that he knows.

Sri Swamiji gave us three tips to develop the quiet mind. One was to disassociate ourselves from everything that affects the mind or agitates it in any way, for example, worry, fear, jealousy, envy, the different negative forces that agitate the mind. He invited us to withdraw ourselves from situations or from people who create that type of agitation in our mind. That was one method he gave us.

The second way he said was that in the ancient times the sages and the yogis of yore gave advice that we should endeavour to witness the mind, to watch the mind, to be impartial. One of the tests that we can give ourselves to see whether we actually have awareness or not is to see whether we are impartial. As long as we are not impartial, as long as there is a trace of criticism, aggression or worry when a certain thought, feeling or emotion comes into the mind, we are not witnessing, although we may think that we are. We pass the test when we can remain impartial. We can feel or experience the fears, witness the negative thoughts or anger, but to be impartial towards it, just watch it, not to interfere is the accomplishment. We always try to interfere with the mind, we cannot help it. The only way is to witness it.

The third tip was to befriend the mind, to accept what was there.

Levels of mind

Sri Swamiji used to give us the example of an iceberg floating in the sea. The waters around the iceberg come up to a certain point, so you can only see the tip of the iceberg, but underneath the water's surface is the vast mass of the iceberg. He used to say the tip of the iceberg

can be likened to the conscious mind, that mind that is active on a daily level. If you were standing on the iceberg looking down into the sea, you will see the iceberg extending a few metres under water, then you cannot see any further. It is that aspect we cannot see that is the subconscious mind.

The subconscious mind is the mind that records everything that has happened to us. Everything that has been said, done, felt, or even what our mother felt or experienced when we were in her womb, has gone into the programming of the mind we have today. This contains the complete record of this particular lifetime and everything that has happened to us. It is likely to be responsible for the way we see and perceive, and for our personality today and how we project ourselves.

The vast amount of the iceberg, the force that moves the iceberg through the waters, could be likened to the unconscious mind. The unconscious mind is the realm of our archetypes, the complete record of all our past lives. It contains all the psychic powers that are within us in the chakras. It is said to contain the complete record of our evolutionary past and some say that it contains the complete record of our evolutionary future. It is this part of our mind that is really motivating us, though we are unaware of it and we find it very difficult to get into contact with. We can only really reach it through yantra, mantra and mandala, through some form of symbols, which is the language that it understands, a symbolic language which the conscious mind does not understand. That is one way of looking at the mind.

Another way of looking at the mind is from the perspective of Vedanta. Vedanta divides the mind into four qualities: *manas*, thought and counter thought; *chitta* or memory, where we store and record information; *buddhi* or intellect, the aspect of the mind that uses logic and reason, which rationalizes and analyzes; and *ahamkara*, the ego, that which self-arrogates, that which we think we are.

In yoga, we have three selves: first, the self we think we are, the self that is ego-oriented; second, the self that others think we are, which is also ego-oriented; and third, the self that we actually are, which is the Self that is beyond the body, mind and senses, spoken about in the Upanishads and also talked about in the ancient Greek philosophies. Socrates said: "Know thy Self." Pythagoras said: "Know thy Self and you will know either of us and you will know God." When they spoke about their own Self they were talking about that Self which in reality we are,

not the body, mind, or senses, but the Self beyond these. That Self we can experience when we quieten the mind. When the mind is turbulent, filled with its passions and worries, we cannot see the Self. We must find a way to quieten the mind. Sri Swamiji has also said we must calm the mind. If you can calm your mind then you can conquer the whole world. When you can be a master of yourself, you are a master of the world.

Preliminary preparation: five levels of pratyahara

Antar mouna is a technique that develops awareness. Swami Nirajan has classified pratyahara into five stages. It is a process, not just something wild, it is a systematic process.

Stage one, awareness of the senses and their effect. The first stage is when you become aware through which sense organ you are receiving the sense stimuli and the effect it has on your mind. For example, if someone says something and offends or insults you, you have to be aware that you are receiving that impression through the ears and how it is affecting your mind. You may try to ignore it, though you are agitated. Now insulted, you insult the other person back, due to the reaction in your mind. Witnessing such impressions and reactions is the first stage of pratyahara, which needs to be learned. You learn witnessing through antar mouna, not just through hearing but through all the senses except for sight, because antar mouna is classically practised with the eyes closed.

One of the beauties of antar mouna is that you can practise it at any time. Once you learn the technique, you can practise it now, while you are listening to me or I can practise it now while I am talking to you. You can practise in your home on a telephone call, while you are eating or having a bath. There is no place where you cannot practise it, since all you have to be able to do is to disconnect, dis-identify from what is happening in your mind and become a witness.

Stage two, managing internal reactions. The second stage of pratyahara completes the first stage and involves managing the reactions. Using the same example, say someone insults you, they tell you they do not like you, the way you look, what you said, who you are or whatever it is, and there is a reaction in your mind. The second stage of pratyahara is that, despite the reaction and turmoil you feel in your mind, you do not show it on your face. You keep a blank expression. You do not let the other person see how much it affects you. It is a conscious choice. It is not that

you are suppressing it, for you do not suppress anything.

As long as we are aware of what we are doing we are not suppressing the reaction. If we are not aware then we do suppress these things. This is a practice where we are learning awareness. So we are aware that we are being uncomfortable, insecure, insulted, ashamed or sad about what the person has said, yet we do not show it.



Stage three, identifying deeper associations. In the third stage of pratyahara, again you are aware from which sense organ you are receiving the impression, of how the interaction is and you try to see how you can trigger off the deeper memories associated with the sense experience. For example, in the instance of the person who has insulted you, it might trigger off a memory of an insult that you had ten years ago that you have never really worked out; you have never really integrated it into your personality, you have never really come to terms with it.

In this stage, we watch for such situations where something deeper is triggered off in the subconscious mind, or even from the unconscious mind, through an experience that comes through the senses and turned into a reaction.

Stage four, immunity. Using the same analogy, the fourth stage of pratyahara is when a thought arises, but this time there is no inner reaction, you do not feel a reaction any more, it just passes through one ear and out the other. You acknowledge what the person has said and you consider if what the person said is correct. You may have to judge your behaviour, and improve it by making a correction, but it does not create a ripple or leave a trace in your mind to disturb you in any way.

Swami Niranjana calls this the stage of immunity, when we become immune to what people say and do to us. We become immune to external situations; we become immune to what is going on internally in our mind.

Stage five, thoughtlessness. The fifth stage of pratyahara is called *shoonya*, thoughtlessness, void.

Stages of antar mouna

The technique of antar mouna in itself has six stages.

- *Stage one:* The first stage is becoming aware of the sensory impressions, the impressions we receive through the senses, whether it is through the ears, the nose, the mouth, or the eyes, since we can do antar mouna also with the eyes open.
- *Stage two:* The second stage of antar mouna is becoming aware of our spontaneous thought processes, witnessing the mind without interfering, without judgement, without criticism. It is not a stage where we judge, blame, criticize or condemn our mind, we just witness that we are not the thought. At the same time, if we are not the thought we are not the mind.

We are learning how to witness the mind and that makes us aware of the negative part of the mind that we all have, the shadow. We all have this inside us. The shadow is that part that we have not really come to terms with, that part of us that we are ashamed of, that part of our experience that we are putting away somewhere. This comes out in antar mouna. At the same time, the instruction from the teacher is always, "You are not the mind, become aware that you are witnessing the mind. Do not judge the mind, be impartial."

- *Stage three:* The third stage of antar mouna is the creation and disposal of thoughts at will. We learn how to create a particular thought, observe it, study it from all points of view and then flick it off at will. Just like that. Then create another thought, focus on that and again flick it off.
- *Stage four:* This stage is again about spontaneous thoughts in the mind and removing them at will.
- *Stage five:* The fifth stage is thoughtlessness, no thoughts, shoonya, the void; the stage of no thoughts.
- *Stage six:* The sixth stage is focusing on your psychic symbol, and allowing that symbol to light your way, to go into deeper and deeper aspects of the mind and more of the mind than you have ever seen before.

That is antar mouna in a nutshell.

Hari Om

—Workshop, 23 October 2013, Ganga Darshan

A Transformative Event

Radhika Seth, Mumbai

The World Yoga Convention was an experience that has made a huge impact on my psyche at many different levels. Organized under an adept and world-renowned yoga master, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati, I witnessed more than a convention; it was a modern-day miracle. Firstly, Munger, which is in the back of beyond, where there is no convention centre, or even a three-star hotel, had 30,000 delegates: 15,000 from fifty-six countries from all over the world. All the states of India were represented and there were local Biharis too.

The speakers were eminent people who had successfully combined yoga in tandem with their various disciplines, including neurologists, scientists working with NASA, physicists, medical doctors, psychiatrists, educational experts specializing in the field of child education, and many more.

What was fascinating was how yoga was being used across a wide spectrum, from developing creative potential among children, to handling a smooth transition into puberty, to the calming effects of mantra chanting on babies when done by expectant mothers, to dealing with serious psychiatric issues.



The speakers were predominantly swamis of different nationalities, who looked very relaxed as they were presenting their papers, and it was apparent they were talking from the depths of their experiences with yoga.

In one of the sessions, Swami Pragyamurti from London said that she conducted research on the impact of yoga on jail prisoners and was overwhelmed with the successful outcome of her work with them. She said that she noticed marked differences in the behaviour and mannerisms of a large number of these prisoners within a few months after they had undergone yoga lessons.

Not to be left behind, Nature too performed her little miracles as if She were gracing the event, wherein a group of eagles constantly circled the entire area as if they were guardians watching over the happenings of this magnificent event. On the second day, the mango trees in the ashram had tiny mangoes on them (out of season) and the kamini flowers blossomed also out of season.

Presence of a master

Swami Niranjanananda's energy, his aura, and the way he held intellectuals from all over the world to the local Biharis spellbound, was a feat in itself. Despite the fact that Swamiji was in all the places at all times, right from chairing the sessions



to effortlessly translating speeches from different languages, to moderating discussions, to dancing with the crowds, to performing tantric poojas – what amazed most of us was his absolutely relaxed and calm composure through all of this, with an absolutely firm grip on all that transpired in those five days. It seemed that even the leaves on the trees would not ruffle without his permission.

Smorgasbord of creative spiritual activity

What struck me was the simplicity and creativity of the whole program. There were different events happening at the same time, and all of them were so spiritually elevating and exciting that I felt like a kid in this candy shop, wanting all the goodies!

The various events were Akhand Kirtans by different groups from all over the world such as Kazakhstan, Uruguay, France and the UK. Then there were rare tantric poojas that were unearthed from the tantras and being performed like they used to in the ancient days. The chanting and the energy was so powerful that one felt totally mesmerized, calmed and elevated to another state of consciousness. Other interesting tracks were a makeshift theatre where they were showing a movie on the life of Swami Satyananda and how he gave up all he created in a split second: no attachments, a true yogi!

The grand finale and the biggest take-home on many different levels was the prasad. The way the prasad was given was extremely creative. A marquee had been set up wherein 350 publications of BSY books, DVDs and CDs were laid out and people were asked to take whatever they wanted from this huge spread of knowledge. This event encapsulated the philosophy of the gurus: give, give, give. Swamiji said that the prasad that was given was that of *vidya*, knowledge, that can transform the being. This is the highest form of prasad!

It truly was an intellectually and spiritually enriching experience that has had a deep transformational effect on me on many different levels, an event that will be etched in my heart always for many lifetimes to come.

An Aim to Please

Paul Smith, UK

I'm standing in my bank in Balham, SW London. All around me are signs saying how they want to help, how they want to listen to my problems, how they care about my future and how they can enhance the present. Everybody is smiling and calling me Mr Smith, this is great, who needs yoga?

One month earlier I'd made my first trip to Munger, to visit the Bihar School of Yoga, an ashram that holds huge significance to the Satyananda Yoga Centre in London. Swami Satyananda was the guru of Swami Pragyamurti, founder of SYC London over forty years ago, and not a week goes by without Swami Pragyamurti quoting his wise words and inspiring actions.

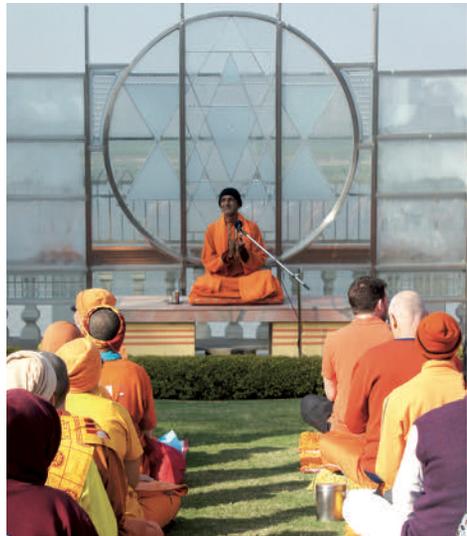
The trip to Munger was long (as most pilgrimages are), and my first impression of the Ashram was the build quality. I'd like to be more interesting at this moment, but as a construction worker I can say, hand on heart, the construction projects in Jamalpur didn't inspire confidence. The Ashram, however, had beautiful lines, well kept gardens and was totally spotless. The whole campus is ergonomically perfect.

Any worries or trepidation I felt quickly evaporated as I was given the keys to my room, number 108, the auspicious number. I'd come to the Ashram, primarily, to connect with the Guru. How can some bloke in India have any bearing on my life? Why should I listen to him? After five years practising with Swami Pragyamurti these were the questions I needed answering. Luckily, my parents have brought me up to respect other people's houses, so whilst I still had an inquisitive, slightly cynical outlook, the mantra I brought with me was: don't complain, don't fall out with anybody and don't get sick.

After two days rest, and getting over the initial shock of cold showers and how attractive a bald woman can be, I threw myself into seva. The work is constant, and necessary, it needs to be to keep this place going, but it's also a blessing. The reality of the Ashram, as I quickly discovered, is that you are mollycoddled; you are cared for in a way that gives you freedom to walk a spiritual path. A confrontation with one's ego in life is inevitable, but with the structure and support of the Ashram this process is fast-tracked. It's a joy to visit a place that strips you of your usual day-to-day responsibilities and allows one to see the person they really are. It's an added bonus when the person turns out to be of an agreeable persuasion. This is where I found my Guru.

Now don't get me wrong, I found some seva challenging, decorations isn't in my skill set, but through the seva, and through the people I met, I realized: the human spirit can never be broken whilst people are prepared to renounce everything. That particular gem came to me while cleaning the prasad off the toilet floor somebody with questionable awareness had left for me.

Swami Satyananda, by his own admission, was a tough guru and Swamiji is beyond focused. The ongoing work at Paduka Darshan shows that his vision will be achieved, and a new breed of sannyasa will emerge to face the difficult challenges of a world in transition. I've long ago given up trying to intellectualize Satyananda Yoga, but one thing is certain: whatever you put into it, you'll get double in return. Show me a bank that can do that!



Joyful Praising

New Year at Ganga Darshan, 2014

Joyful praising raising flags of love
Your light shines like a 1,000 suns above

We meet by the river
In the ashram by the holy river
The seeds you sow take root and grow
They deliver showers of flowers and

Joyful praises, rivers to the sea
Playful going, flowing always free

In our minds the drive to become
In our ears your voice
In our hearts some glimpses of love
In our eyes your smile

Joyful praising setting spirits free
Growing, changing learning how to be

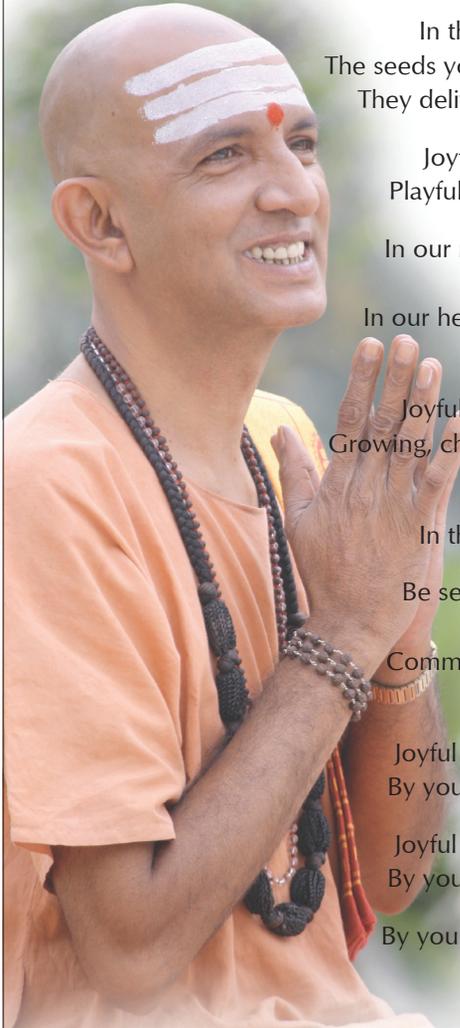
We meet by the river
In the ashram by the holy river

Be serious and laugh like a child
Be sincere and you'll be
Committed to all that you aim for
Know this and be free

Joyful praises raining from above
By your grace we're rising in love

Joyful praises raining from above
By your grace we're rising in love
By your grace we're rising in love.

—Sannyasa Trainees





Yoga Publications Trust

Swadhisthana Chakra

Rishi Nityabodhananda

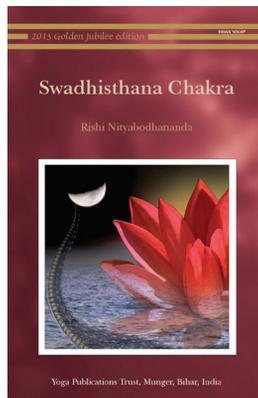
96 pp, soft cover, ISBN 978-93-81620-86-1

Swadhisthana chakra represents the realm of the unconscious and is the storehouse of samskaras. In *Swadhisthana Chakra*, Rishi Nityabodhananda discusses the many facets of this chakra, including its place in kundalini yoga, its influence on the personality, its symbology, and practices to awaken and transcend swadhisthana. Written in an easy style full of wit and humour, the book draws from traditional and modern texts on yoga and tantra, and provides a foundational understanding of this essential energy centre in the scheme of human life.

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

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New

Satyananda Yoga Websites



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

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.



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

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



www.biharyoga.net/sannyasa-peeth/avahan/

Provides online access to *Satyaka 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>July 12</i>	Guru Paduka Poojan
<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 & 6th</i>	Commemoration of Sri Swami Satyananda's Mahasamadhi
<i>Every 12th</i>	Akhanda Path of Ramacharitanamas

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

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

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