

YOGA

Year 4 Issue 2

February 2015

Membership postage: Rs. 100



Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar, India



Hari Om

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

Editor: Swami Shaktimitrananda Saraswati

Assistant Editor: Swami Yogatirthananda Saraswati

YOGA is a monthly magazine. Late subscriptions include issues from January to December.

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

Printed at Thomson Press India Ltd., Haryana – 121007

© Bihar School of Yoga 2015

Membership is held on a yearly basis. Please send your requests for application and all correspondence to:

Bihar School of Yoga
Ganga Darshan
Fort, Munger, 811201
Bihar, India

☒ A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be sent along with enquiries to ensure a response to your request

Total no. of pages: 62 (including cover pages)

Front cover: Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati, Mumbai, 2014

Plates: 1: Sri Swami Sivananda; 2–3: Sri Swami Satyananda, Mumbai, 1978 & 1982; 4–8: Swami Niranjanananda's Mumbai Yatra, 2014



GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Song of Immortality

Within you is the hidden God.
Within you is the immortal soul.
Kill this little 'I', die to live.
Lead the Divine Life.

Within you is the fountain of joy.
Within you is the ocean of bliss.
Kill this little 'I', die to live.
Lead the Divine Life.

Rest peacefully in your own atman.
Drink the nectar of immortality.

—Swami Sivananda

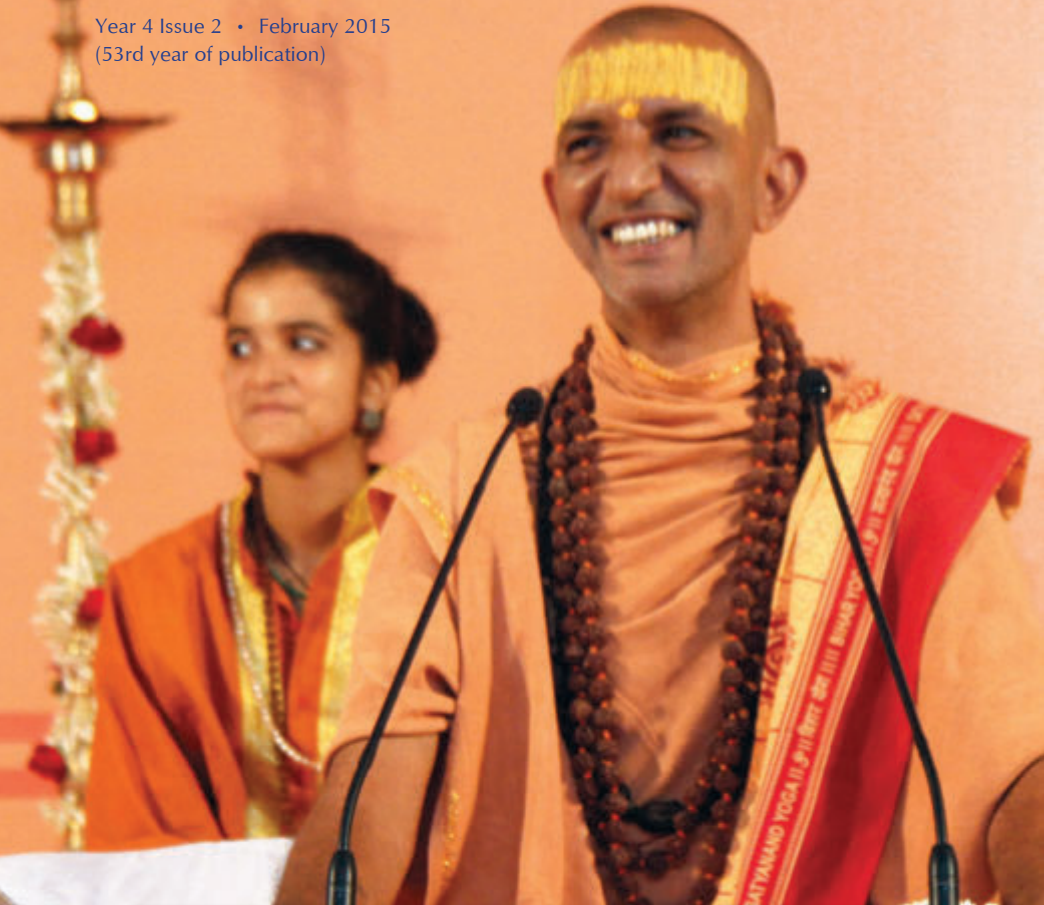
Published and printed by Swami Gyanbhikshu Saraswati on behalf of Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger – 811201, Bihar

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

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

YOGA

Year 4 Issue 2 • February 2015
(53rd year of publication)



Contents

This issue is dedicated to Swami Niranjana Ananda's
Bharat Yoga Yatra 2014

4	Towards Peace	38	Yoga, the Secret of Kings' Success
5	On the Threshold of the Next Fifty Years	40	How to Overcome Fear?
15	Service to Siva	42	Impressions of the first Yoga Instructor Course
16	What are Miracles?	44	Preventing Memory Loss
20	Crores of Yogas	46	Dealing with Regrets
25	Swami Niranjana's Next Steps	50	Meditation is a Living Experience
36	Messages from Abroad	56	Yoga Vidya

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 ॥

Towards Peace

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Sri Swami Satyananda was a visionary. He was a yogi and he was a siddha. Like his guru, Sri Swami Sivananda, he realized that the proper teaching of yoga will be necessary for future generations, so that people may understand the entire subject of yoga and not only partially. In order to give a picture of the complete yoga Sri Swamiji said, “Don’t look at hatha yoga, raja yoga, kriya yoga, or kundalini yoga, but look at your need, your life, personality, and look at your nature. Understand that you function at three levels: at the level of intellect, emotions, and performance or action.

It does not matter whether you are a householder, a renunciate, a professional, a sannyasin, whether you are male or female, child, young or old. You as an individual of this human society have to express the faculties of head, heart and hands on your own path. If you can harness and generate the potentials and faculties of intellect and emotions, and learn to do the correct, right, appropriate action, then there is peace in life, there is peace in the family and there is peace in society.

– 13 April 2014, Chembur, Mumbai, India

On the Threshold of the Next Fifty Years

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

This yatra to Mumbai is a part of a plan to visit, in the course of time, each and every village, town and city of this country. And why? To bring the message and the prasada of our parampara, Sri Swami Sivananda and Sri Swami Satyananda; to bring the fruit, the teaching, the information and the knowledge of yoga sadhana to the masses.

Sri Swamiji stated that when people of our society had incorporated yoga in their life, our country and society were prosperous. Yoga gave a different understanding of dharma, *kartavya*, or duty, and the aim in life. When we separated ourselves from the subject of yoga, we encountered strife, conflict, poverty and dissatisfaction.

Sri Swamiji told us that yoga is part and parcel of our civilization, not in form of a philosophy or a tradition but as an effort to sublimate ourselves, as an effort to discover happiness and fulfilment in this life. The motivation and drive to achieve this is the birthright of every human being. This was the statement of our guru.

Fifty years of the Bihar School of Yoga, which concluded with the World Yoga Convention, gave many flowers and fruits. Those flowers and fruits have to be shared and distributed for the benefit of our human community. The inspiration for the Bharat Yatra came from this.



I am free from my formal and informal commitments to the Bihar School of Yoga. I have embarked on a new chapter of my life: to experience what sannyasa truly is and to imbibe the knowledge of yoga for which our paramguru, Sri Swami Sivananda, and for which my guru, Sri Swami Satyananda, devoted their lives, and for which I am aspiring to devote my life.

The attempt is to follow the path that our gurus have forged before us and reach the destination that they willed each one of us to reach as the aim of this journey through life.

Three generations

You have to know about the father, the grandfather and the grandson. Each human being is connected with three generations: father, grandfather, grandson. Similarly in spiritual life, you are connected: the grandfather is tantra; the son of the grandfather, is our father: yoga; and the grandson of tantra and the son of yoga is yet to be born: Vedanta.

Tantra represents the *vidya*, knowing about life, about the transcendental nature, about the gross nature, about the qualities, the *gunas* of life, the restrictions of life, the aspirations



of life, the improvement of life. That is the vidya, the knowing of tantra.

The knowing of tantra is complemented with the action of yoga, with yoga sadhana. The knowing of tantra, the connection of vidya culminates in the development of an effort to discipline yourself. The purpose of yogic discipline is to culture yourself. Therefore, yoga becomes the sadhana, the process.

After you have cultured yourself the son is born. The son who is not yet born in your life is Vedanta. This is not the philosophy of Vedanta which you can read about in books, scriptures and literatures, but the experience of Vedanta that is natural and spontaneous, and which connects you to creation and to every individual.

These are the three progressions of human life on the spiritual journey. They are the three stages that a human being should be aware of when planning to take to the spiritual journey. The spiritual journey is not a journey of abstract imaginations, ideas or thoughts. It begins with understanding human nature: not trying to understand the divine, but trying to understand 'who I am'.

Power of sankalpa shakti

Many times spiritual aspirants ask me abstract questions as to: 'What is God? Who is God? Where is God? Have you seen God? Is God the purpose of human birth? Is God-realization the purpose of yoga sadhana?' God becomes an obsession with some aspirants when they think that they have become spiritual. They cannot differentiate their spirituality from their ambition to know something.

Spirituality is coming closer to the pureness of the human spirit. As you come closer to the pureness of the human spirit you become pure, and that is spirituality. Your ideas become clean, pure; your thoughts become clean and pure, positive and optimistic, hopeful and uplifting; your actions, your behaviour, your personality and your nature becomes that. That is spiritual awareness.

Spiritual awareness is not God-awareness. It is the awareness of the quality of life that you can live, in the best way that you can live it. Do the best in every situation, do the best in every environment, your wisdom, your skills and your creativity; do not be defeated, ever. There is no power on earth that can defeat human will. Always remember that. If you can connect with your sankalpa shakti, then there is nothing that cannot be achieved provided that your sankalpa shakti is given a clear direction for it to grow and develop. Provided the sankalpa shakti is protected from influences that can distract the mind from achieving its goal. This is the strength of life.

SWAN

You experience life in four ways. You can experience life as strengths and abilities, and connect with your strengths and abilities; or you can experience life in the form of limitations and weaknesses and then you connect with the idea that you are weak and limited. You can connect with life following your ambitions, which may be realistic or unrealistic, and you may not know the difference; or you can connect with life keeping in mind what your immediate needs are, and what you need to do to fulfil those needs and become content.

These are the four areas which guide your path and your journey. The strengths propel you forward, the weaknesses hold you back, the ambitions can create confusion for you do not know how to differentiate between the real and the imaginative; and needs are there and you cannot ignore them.

This is what you express every moment of your life: strength, weakness, ambition and need. There is no fifth component. When you are connected with your strength such as clarity of mind, conviction, having the right skills to complete what you have embarked upon, and creativity, then you are able to achieve anything and everything that you desire.

When you identify with your weaknesses, you begin to feel insecure, fearful and you see everything as dark and depressing. When you identify with your ambitions you

do not know what destiny has in store for you. You try to become what you are not capable of. That is why the ambitions often become the cause of your downfall. You try to become something that you are not capable of becoming, which is an unrealistic ambition. If you can become and excel at what you are good at, that is a realistic ambition. To know the difference is difficult, for you have never objectively analyzed what you want from your life, and you are always confused.

You are always seeking guidance and clarity from others. With every input you become more confused and lose your clarity. You stop believing in yourself, and you cannot be convinced that what you believe is correct. This is one of the greatest weaknesses of human life. When you stop believing in yourself confusion comes to mind. Your ambitions have to be realistic. Do not pursue unrealistic ambitions.

You also have to be aware of your needs. You cannot ignore those needs for they are the basic requirements of survival. Just as the body has its needs and is maintained and nourished by food, in the same way, the mind has its needs. The mind is maintained and nourished by contentment, joy and peace. When contentment and peace is not in the mind you sometimes begin to hate yourself for what you feel and experience. Your awareness has to be in the fulfilment of the needs connected with reality.



Moving towards change

If you can analyze what your strengths, weaknesses, your achievable and unachievable ambitions, and needs are, then you can practise balancing the strength with your weakness. You can pick one strength and cultivate it until you achieve excellence in it. You can pick one weakness every month and consciously try to remove it by making the necessary effort, by taking the necessary steps, by making the necessary adjustments in your thought, behaviour and lifestyle and by converting that limiting, restricting weakness into a strength.

If you are able to cultivate twelve strengths and overcome twelve weaknesses per year, just imagine how you will be by the end of the year. If you consider that there is an improvement of ten percent every month your improvement every year will be one hundred and twenty percent, even more than what is expected.

Swami Sivananda says this when he talks about the cultivation of the qualities that can help you progress and grow in life. Do not only be dependent on the mechanical movement of your body and the mechanical breathing of your lungs, but also make the fine adjustment to your brain and mind by modifying your thoughts, your understanding and your behaviour. Following the path of jnana yoga, karma yoga and bhakti yoga you are able to access all dimensions of your nature, and to come to a point of harmony and balance.

Cleaning the pipe of the mind

This harmony and balance leads to the awakening of the dormant faculties inherent in your nature and personality; it is what people know as chakras and as kundalini. The water will only flow through the pipe if the pipe is clean. The pipe of your mind through which the mental energy flows is not clean; it is blocked, it is constipated. You still carry the muck of some experience that has happened to you thirty years ago and is still as alive today as it was then. You have not been able to let go of that negativity. It is there inside as constipation.

That has made you sick, it has made you dislike somebody, it has made you hate somebody, it has removed peace from your mind, and it has removed the contentment from your life.

Why do you hang on to that state? To satisfy your own ego. If that is how you wish to live life, then do not come to such conventions or satsangs. Come here if you are willing to take the step to change yourself, for this is the message of the parampara, the rishis and the sannyasins. They have not given this message in vain, to satisfy your curiosity. They have given this message to indicate a path through which you can achieve fulfilment in all respects, on all levels and live your destiny as a true human being.

Swami Sivananda says, "Practise serenity, regularity, absence of vanity, simplicity, veracity, tenacity and all the 18 ITIES. They are not just philosophical concepts or good words spoken by a sage; they are sadhanas to be performed per month. Take a sankalpa, "I will practise serenity for one month or one week. I will try to be serene in all situations that I encounter during the day."

Remind yourself from time to time, "I shall maintain my peace and happiness. I shall not allow situations to disturb or distract me. I shall not run away from them, I shall not shun them, I shall not confront them, I shall not fight them. I shall look at them and keep myself clean from their effect and influence."

Only do that much, remove the ill-will from your memory. That will help build better samskaras and build a better karma. As it is said, 'Construction takes many years but destruction can happen in a moment'. The good times that you live are forgotten in one strife. The sight of beauty is gone, and you disconnect yourself from divinity.

A new mindset

Do you know what divinity is? Divinity is not God. Divinity in life is realized by the achievement or experience of three things in life: truth, *Satyam*; understanding, *Shivam*; and appreciation of beauty, *Sundaram*.

If you can connect with these three concepts in relation to yourself, to the people around you, and to the world, you begin to see divinity. Divinity means a combination of these three aspects.

Satyam is truth and truthfulness. Truthfulness means no hypocrisy in life, no dual personality, no split personality in life. Be what you are. Do not put on masks to hide your true self and to present to other people what you are not. Ultimately the human nature will manifest.

It is that nature that you have to transform and transcend, so why not start from the beginning? You know the story of the donkey wearing the garb of a tiger. Just by wearing the garb of a tiger the donkey does not roar, it still brays. That is its character. So just by wearing the garb of a puritanical attitude you do not become a saint. Just by wearing the mask of a puritanical attitude you do not become a sage or spiritual person. You have to work through the dross of the mind.

Swami Sivananda was clear that each of these qualities and virtues strengthens the human nature and personality. Serenity, regularity, absence of vanity, simplicity, all these eighteen qualities that he has spoken about strengthen the human character. Strengthening the human character will make you a proper human being, a better and an enlightened human being. Therefore, always remember that there is suffering in life, yet there are always options to come out of the suffering. Look for the options that yoga can give. Many of the solutions are here, as a practical method to apply the vidya and to give birth to a new mindset of atmabhava.

Your inheritance

Sri Swamiji has given this to us as his inheritance. It is not only that you practise pawanmuktasana and surya namaskara as your yoga sadhana or that you practise yoga nidra twelve hours a day, keep on sleeping and say, "I'm practising yoga." Not only that you close your eyes, go on some imaginative journey and say, "I'm practising meditation." If it does not give you

the control over your mental behaviour, then what is the use of an imaginative fantasy journey? It is a waste of time.

The purpose of meditation is to give you the ability to manage your mental behaviour, and not to make you into a person disconnected from reality. People who are misguided when they meditate lose control. They start imagining that they are the prophets of the age, they start searching for profit, and become the prophets of profit.

There is no clarity. Spirituality is thought of as something out there, yet spirituality begins by discovering the nature of the mind and modifying it.

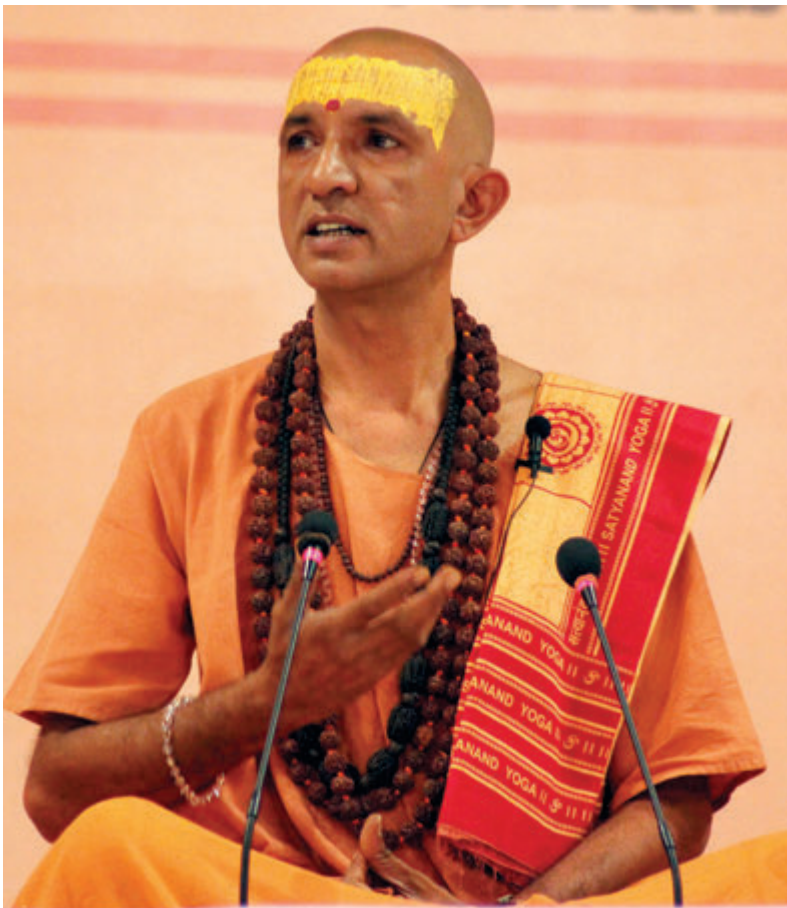
The expression of this ability happens in the outer dimension. Those of you who have had the opportunity to go to Munger and Rikhia have seen these two aspects of Sri Swamiji's mission: yoga in Munger and seva in Rikhia. The third option is becoming available to express the hands in Sannyasa Peeth. So, there is a place for head, heart and hands.

When we meet again we shall take another leap into the next stage and level of yoga work. More will have been consolidated and prepared to give to you; to hand over for you to use, cherish, promote and preserve.



Let us make a new beginning by closing the first chapter of fifty years of work, and reconnect with a new sankalpa: to start the second chapter on a better, solid footing allowing yoga the breakthrough it seeks for the development of human nature. If we allow this breakthrough to happen, if the *shakti*, the power of yoga can break through the dross of the mind, then we can transform our life and many lives. That will be our achievement in this world as human beings.

– 12 April 2014, Worli, Mumbai, India



Service to Siva

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Leaving the hall, Siva got into a vacant car in the compound of Madhav Bagh and took possession. A couple of us jumped in; the driver stepped on the accelerator. After a few seconds Siva found out that the car was a stranger's.

"Whose car is this?" he asked the driver. "It is Seth's car, Maharaji." "Oho! We got into the wrong car," exclaimed Siva. "No, Swamiji, it is the right car. It is your own car." "Do you know where we are to go?" "Wherever you wish to go Swamiji, I shall take you." "Will not the Seth be annoyed with you for going away like this?"

"No, Swamiji. On the other hand, I am sure he will be mighty pleased with me and the car, too, that we were of some service to you."

– 27 October 1950, Mumbai, From Sivananda's Lectures, during All-India and Ceylon Tour - 1950, Chronicler Swami Venkatesananda

What are Miracles?

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Miracles are known in yoga as *siddhis*; and these *siddhis* are known as 'ashta siddhis'. *Ashta* means eight, and the word *siddhi* means perfection.

Siddhis in raja yoga

First we will deal with *siddhis* from the point of view of raja yoga. When the mind as a substance merges instantaneously into the object on which it is meditating, there appears a special level of consciousness. The process of merging of the mind is known as 'samyama'. The word *samyama* generally means control, but in raja yoga *samyama* means dharana, dhyana and samadhi happening instantaneously, not one after the other.

This *samyama* can be practised on various objects. If you practise *samyama* on a person, you can read his thoughts. If you practise *samyama* on your own reflection in a mirror, you can completely experience disembodiment. You will not see your body in a mirror at all. In the same way, there are many centres on which *samyama* can be practised according to raja yoga: *samyama* on the sun, moon, planets, the kurma nadi (the internal thyroid gland area), chakras, on mahatmas, or *samyama* on a person who is full of vairagya.

From this *samyama* arises a special level of consciousness, and this level of consciousness is a sudden jump from the present state of mind to a very high level of mind. How to explain this? Supposing here is a dog and he is an incarnation.

So, the dog is an incarnation. He dies. There is metamorphosis. He is reborn maybe as a dog or as a horse or as an elephant or something. Then he dies. In about ten, fifteen or twenty incarnations he becomes a man, maybe you or I. Now what happened between that and this? What is that process that continued from the incarnation of a dog to a man? That is called the flow of evolution, and that flow of evolution in yoga is known as *samskara pravaha*, the flow of the samskaras.

This samskara pravaha, the flow of evolution, took about fifty years, or one hundred years to two hundred years to transform this dog into a man. If you know the laws of that samskara pravaha, maybe you can make that dog a man instantaneously. You can compensate. The same thing happens not only with the human body. It also happens with chemicals, materials and the atomic energy which disintegrates from uranium barium over two and a half million years, yet can be made to disintegrate in five seconds by realizing the entire process.

In the eyes of raja yoga, siddhi is the perfection of mind by compensating the necessary laws that the mind is subjected to in the course of a few thousand years. They are called 'ashta siddhi'. In India, Hanumanji is considered to be the owner and the giver of ashta siddhi: *ashta siddhi, nawa nidhi ke data* - "the giver of eight siddhis and nine kinds of wealth." Perfection of mind means dissolution of mind completely. It has nothing to do with the ethics and morality of a religion.

More ways to become a siddha

According to tantra, siddhi is an expression of the awakening of kundalini. When kundalini awakens, it energizes or awakens each chakra and finally goes to ajna chakra. As and when the chakras are getting awakened, they transmit and manifest their quality through the physical body. You may be a poet or an artist, a speaker or a prophet; you may make predictions or be clairvoyant. Concentration of the mind is considered to be the key behind it.

By birth also, one can be a siddha, from past karma or from one's parents. According to the shastras and scriptures, the conjugal relationship practised through the medium of yoga practices with the attainment of higher buddhi during the relationship, produces a high quality of energy in the sperm, infuses or injects that energy. When the energy level in your body is very high, everything in your body is charged with those extra electrical impulses. So children are born like that. Sant Jnaneshwar, Adi Shankaracharya, and many others at the age of six, eight or ten were brilliant people.

When you are a *yoga bhrashta*, when your yogic practices remained half-complete or incomplete in the previous birth, and you discarded the physical body, in the next life you are born, according to the traditions, in two types of families. One is a clean, prosperous family, not necessarily very rich, *shriman*, or the family of yogis who have a higher consciousness.

Need for yamas and niyamas

When you practise siddhis there are negative effects, therefore it is necessary that one should practise yama and niyama before.



That is precisely the reason why yama and niyama are prescribed before you take to the practice of yoga. If you are not truthful; if you are not full of love and the spirit of non-violence; if you are not a self-controlled person; if you are a thief, then you are going to project your siddhi to fulfil your personal purposes. If I am angry and we are enemies, then if I have a siddhi I am going to harm you.

Siddhi is the natural evolution and those who practise can get it very easily, but it is advisable

that one should not at all work for miracles. In the tantric tradition, these siddhis are attained by awakening kundalini, by invoking the spirits into the body and that's all.

The ashta siddhis are the capacities by which you can control and render your mind to the size of an atom, and the mind can become completely dissolved. Or the mind can be made into a very big object. You can create an elephant or a bigger substance and you can have control over nature. As you know, Lord Krishna created an illusion of darkness after the death of Abhimanyu. Then the Kaurava, Jayadratha, came out and thought that it was already night fall, and suddenly the whole illusion stopped and the sun was shining. So Krishna had control over that.

Whatever you wish must happen. *Anima* means smallest; *mahima*, very big, and *lahima*, very heavy. Hanuman became bigger and bigger.

Siddhis in Kali Yuga

These siddhis are not to be practised during Kali Yuga. That is what is said, because the minds of people in the Kali Yuga are polluted or vitiated by the lower instincts, like anger, passion and greed. If you get these siddhis you are going to use them for your own interests.

In this Kali Yuga we have the evidence of some small siddhis. From time to time either you take one bread and make it into five thousand; or you walk over the ocean or something like that; or you create this or that. These siddhis, such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, materialization of an object, should only be intended to turn the minds of the people, that is all.

Siddhis have their own limitations, even though they may be played by Krishna or Hanuman. For some time it is good, but people must be properly trained and they must be properly guided.

– 23 December 1982, Mani Umroli's Residence, Mumbai, India

Crores of Yogas

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



28th October 1950

Early in the morning, in spite of going to bed so late the previous night, Siva was ready for his work at 6 am, after a rest of barely four hours.

Three mandaleswaras lunch together

As soon as Siva came, the other two mandaleswaras also came. Our host had invited all of them to lunch at Lakshmi Bagh. It was a grand sight, the 'Big Three': Siva, Maheshwaranandaji and Prem Puriji, sitting in the centre and all around them their disciples. It was a sacred feast. Our pious hosts dispensed with servants and assistants and took delight in serving themselves the sannyasins. The Chapter 15 of the *Gita*, the Mahamantra and the Mrityunjaya mantra were chanted and we concluded with Shanti Path. While the lunch was in progress, devout mothers in attendance sang sacred hymns in praise of the Lord: *Devi Aparadha Kshamapana Stotra*, etc. At 4 pm Siva left Lakshmi Bagh.

To the minute punctuality

Our host had fixed with the AIR Station director that Siva would be at the Station at 6.30 pm to record a speech to be broadcast from the Bombay Centre of the AIR. Siva was received at the Blavatsky Lodge by the president and principal members of the committee of the Spiritual Centre. Mandaleshwar Prem Puriji was delivering his discourse. When Siva got on the dais, the mandaleshwar was requested to suspend his discourse so that Siva could conclude his and leave for his next engagement. After the *Om* kirtan, Siva said:

“The Bombay Spiritual Centre is doing very good work. I have been in touch with this centre for many years. I have been sending messages to them. I pray that the public of Bombay might cooperate with the workers of the Centre so that it may become one of the most dynamic spiritual institutions not only in India, but in the whole world at large.

Such spiritual centres are the need of the hour. When you meditate alone, for the first few minutes you meditate in all seriousness, then you begin to doze. You begin to fall into a sort of slumber. *Tandra*, sleepiness, and *alasya*, idleness, if not *nidra*, sleep, itself, overpowers you. But in congregational prayer, in common meditation in a group, just as is done at these spiritual centres, you generate a huge mass of spiritual current, and everyone is benefited by his neighbour's currents which help him to practise meditation vigorously.

Maya is working in a variety of ways. Dark, antagonistic forces assail man from all directions. At the same time, God is so very gracious. It is He who brings into being these centres, and helps divine forces to grow. They promote the spread of the message of yoga.

Yoga is union with the Lord. Any sadhana or any practice that helps you to steady the mind and fix it on the Lord is yoga. There are different ways of achieving this. There should be different ways, because capacities vary, tastes and temperaments differ. A man is full of emotions; he can take up his tanpura and sing songs. The mind is captured very

easily by music. Some do shabda upasana, laya yoga, and they attain samadhi. Only four or five yogas are mentioned in texts. But, there are crores of yogas. All of them lead to the same goal.

The chain that binds

You are the Supreme Purusha in essence. You are a silent witness of all the actions of prakriti. Through mysterious ignorance, *avidya*, you imagine that you are related to prakriti and that you derive pleasure from the objects of the world that are prakriti's toys. The transcendental awareness of unity is broken now, and the notions of 'I', 'you', and 'he' arise. This is *asmita*. The consciousness of the Purusha now flows outward towards prakriti, through the medium of the mind or the buddhi.

The ego arises and distinguishes one from the other and the buddhi begins to classify experiences as pleasant and unpleasant. This gives rise to likes (you like pleasant experiences) and dislikes (you dislike unpleasant experiences). This is *raga-dwesha*. They further strengthen your distinctive existence, and you cling to life as a separate individual. This is *abhinivesha*. This is *duhkha parampara*. This is a vicious circle. This goes on until you are able to release yourself from experiencing the play of prakriti. This sense experience naturally manifests itself in the form of *vrittis* in the mind-lake. When these *vrittis* are quelled, the chain that links the Purusha with the prakriti is broken, and the Purusha realizes His independence; you attain *kaivalya moksha*.

All yogas lead to one

Raja yoga prescribes the eightfold practices to achieve *moksha*. *Yama* and *niyama* pave the way. *Asana* and *pranayama* enable you to realize the truth about life. You go beyond the pairs of opposites. You no longer cling to individualistic living. *Abhinivesha* is rooted out. *Pratyahara* and *dharana* take you beyond *raga-dwesha*. *Dhyana* dissolves the ego or *asmita*.

Finally, in nirvikalpa samadhi, the veil of ignorance is torn and you are liberated.

There is another view. According to jnana marga, the individual's liberation is effected through the annihilation of *mala*, impurities of the mind, *vikshepa*, removal of the tossing of the mind, and *avarana*, tearing of the veil of ignorance. Raja yoga achieves all these, too. Yama and niyama annihilate the impurities of the mind. Asana, pranayama and pratyahara steady the mind and make it one-pointed. Dharana, dhyana and samadhi remove the veil of ignorance and lead to liberation.

First essentials in sadhana

All the systems of sadhana, all yogas and all systems of yogic self-culture agree that the essential prerequisite for an aspirant for self-knowledge is dispassion. He must turn away from enjoyment of objects. Desire must be crushed, for it is desire



that feeds the mind and fattens it. It is desire that brings up in the mind-lake countless vrittis every minute. It is desire that maintains the individual existence. It is desire that makes the Purusha want to enjoy the play of prakriti and thus get bound. When desire is annihilated, then the Purusha who rests in his own swarupa in samadhi will realize that the real bliss which he sought after in the objects was and always is in himself; and that happiness in the objects was his own mental creation. When the mind thus ceases to present the objects before him, it ceases to exist. For what is the mind without its vrittis? Mind without thought is no mind at all. The bondage is broken through vairagya.

The next essential condition for release is *abhyasa*, intense and protracted practice of sadhana. Practice in the stilling of the mind makes in due time for perfect stillness or tranquillity of the mind. Layer after layer of the chitta is cleared of the waves, and as each layer becomes still it reveals to the sadhaka its real contents. The sadhaka experiences various siddhis and divine visions, etc. But beware! You should not be led away into the by-lanes of siddhis. You would then miss the goal. Pursue your goal without ever being distracted. The goal is kaivalya or absolute independence. Continue your sadhana until such time as there remains none to practise; until the ego vanishes and ignorance disappears, and there is no perception of duality and multiplicity."

Siva concluded the lecture, and as he was getting down the steps, looked at the clock and then at Ajit, the host. He had kept his time to the minute.

At the AIR Station, the assistant director met Siva, at the entrance and led him to the studios. At the entrance to the studios, he was received by the Station director. After the usual voice tests, he commenced his talk. It was exactly 6.30 pm. Punctual to the second.

-From Sivananda's Lectures, during All-India and Ceylon Tour - 1950, *Chronicler Swami Venkatesananda*

Swami Niranjan's Next Steps



Swamiji is no longer a yoga teacher. He is now a developer of yoga, a visionary, an inspirer. That was clear the first day itself. In the programs he has done so far, he usually bears the responsibility of the entire program on his shoulders; he teaches asana, pranayama, yoga nidra and meditation, gives satsangs, but this time he told some of the sannyasins to teach the classes. He was still around in the class sessions, observing and noticing everything. At the end, he summarized the session by shedding light on some little-known aspects of hatha yoga or elucidating his concept of the ideal yoga class: a balanced combination of asana, pranayama, relaxation and meditation. In his sterling satsangs he expounded the vision of yoga which he has now. That was something that the people, who were receptive and in tune, just lapped up. It was something totally new and extraordinary for most of the people.

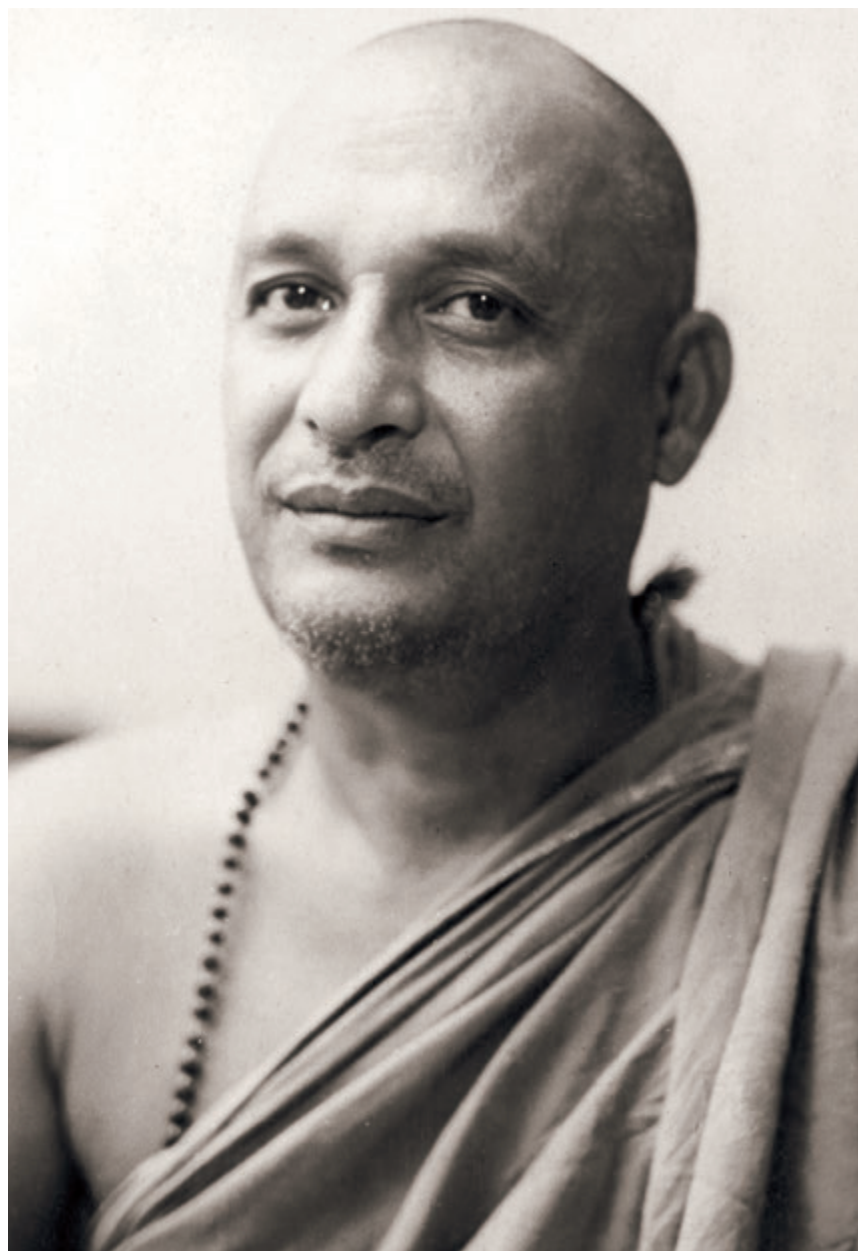
City people, accustomed to the modern brands of commercialized yoga, just cannot see beyond the body. They may dabble with a few breathing or meditation techniques, but that is the limit of yoga for them. When they heard Swamiji talk about managing the moods of the mind, improving one's character and the personality traits that we have, they were spellbound. No yoga teacher mentions such aspects, let alone discusses them, whereas these are the aspects of our personality that affect our lives directly. "Yoga is all about handling and managing the mind," Swamiji declared emphatically and that is the central theme he kept returning to time and again. It is the core message, the vision, the inspiration that Swamiji is trying to get across to people, and now we can see that it is beginning to take root.

Kindling the flame of inspiration

In one of the afternoon satsang programs, I came in a little late. As I entered the program venue, I could hear kirtan going on. The kirtan would usually be conducted by Amargeet and Shivankari, the extremely talented young girls who had accompanied us, but as I walked in, the kirtan felt different.









स्वयम् को जानो योगोत्सव 2014 मुम्बई

पूज्य गुरुदेव अनन्तविभूषित श्री स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वतीजी के श्री चरणोंमें समर्पित है।



Know Yourself Yogotsav 2014 Mumbai

In the presence of **Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati**, Para
Vishwa Yogapeeth, Munger, Bihar.

On 15th April 2014, REC Ground, Near Jawahar School, Opp Ashish Clinic, Chembur



Jointly organised by Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd., Dnyana Sadhana Trust,
Yoga Sadhana Kendra Chembur, Satyanand Yogadarshan Peeth Tryambakeshwar, Nasik
and Citizens of Mumbai



स्वयम् को जानो योगोत्सव 2014

पूज्य गुरुदेव अनन्तविभूषित श्री स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वतीजी

Know Yourself Yogotsav 2014

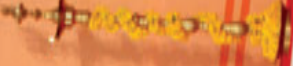
Swami Niranjananda Saraswati

Vishwa Yogapeeth, Munger, Bihar.

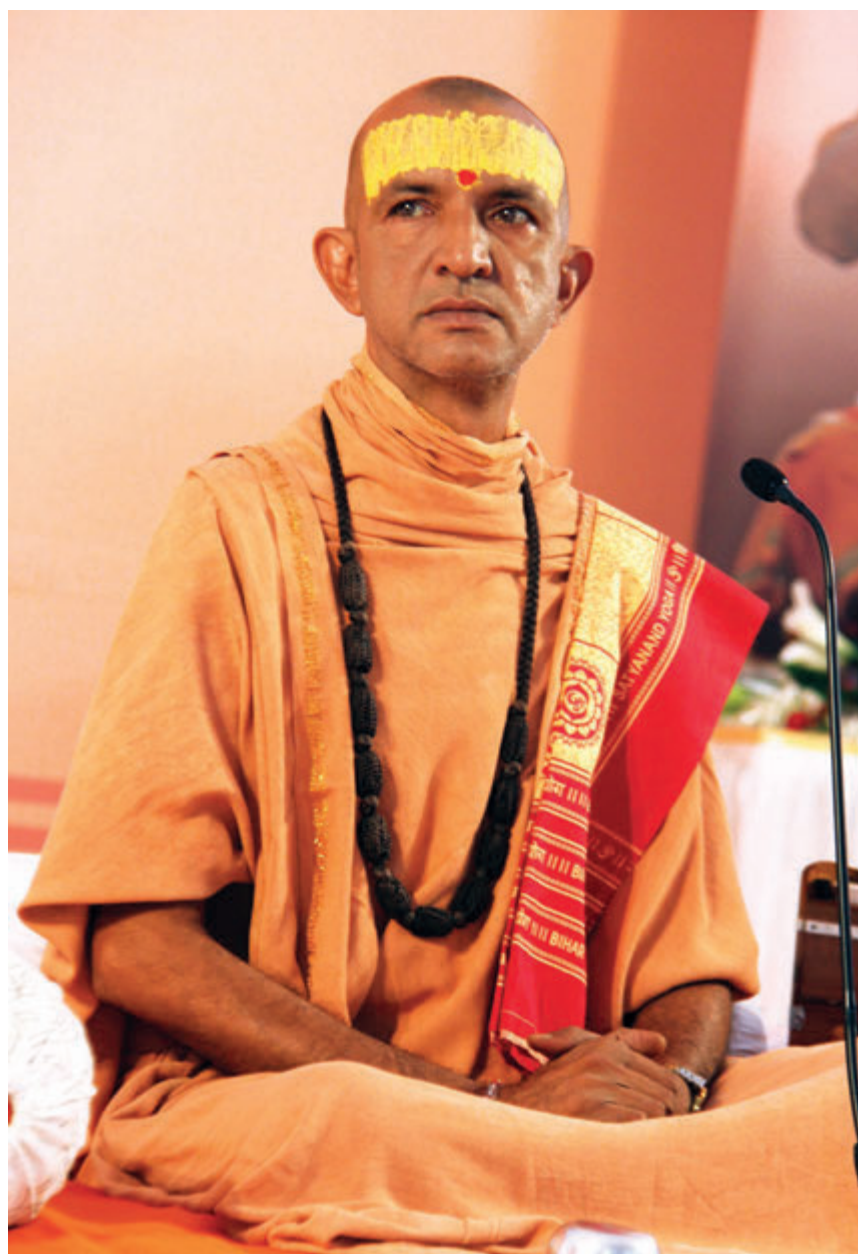
Ground, Near Jawahar School, O



In the auspicious
15th - 15th Apr







The voices were not the ones I was used to. As I came closer to the stage I saw a group of local school children singing kirtan. They were singing the same kirtans that we sing in the ashram like *Tripura Sundari Kamakshi Ma* and *Charano se hamko laga lai ho Rikhia wale Baba*, and singing it with real bhav. The kids themselves were playing the harmonium, manjira and dholak.

I sat behind them. For a while they seemed and sounded just like the BYMM kids back at Ganga Darshan, except for one difference: they were all blind. These children from a local blind school had been trained by a devotee of our tradition; someone who had taken the labour, the pains to teach them and inspire them. The result was remarkable. The children sang such beautiful soul-stirring kirtans that it was hard to imagine that they had never seen the light of day.

That is what Swamiji's role as an inspirer is about. Swamiji cannot possibly go to each and every place physically – well, to be honest he could, in his subtle body, and he probably does, but physically at least, he can't go everywhere – but his inspiration can go everywhere and touch people's lives everywhere. This is what is happening. The blind children are but one example. Someone took inspiration from the work with children that is happening in Munger and Rikhia, took that concept to a school in their own neighbourhood, and you see the wonderful result.

At one level Swamiji was speaking, but at another level he was also transmitting. Swamiji is a magician really, what he says is just the tip of the iceberg, the ten percent. The rest happens behind the scenes and that is what really affects people. Swamiji was conquering the hearts of people and that is what makes him a digvijayi. Let us hope and pray that his digvijaya takes him to greater and greater glories and heights in his mission of *bahujan hitaya, bahujan sukhaya* – “For the welfare and happiness of many.”

– Swami Sivadhyanam, Ganga Darshan

Messages from Abroad

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Last year at the time of the World Yoga Convention, I received news from Australia and France. The news from Australia was that for the last twenty years the yoga teachers, were teaching yoga to war veterans to help them manage their psychological crises. For ten years the government had sponsored many kinds of psychological therapies and other interventions to help the war veterans improve their life.

Last year a final decision was taken that the only therapy effective in the management of the mental condition of war veterans is yoga. Yoga was given the status of a therapy to manage the mental behaviour of war veterans. This is now established.

The second message was that after twenty years of yoga training in France, the French government decided that the Bihar Yoga system would be taught in each and every school in France. This agreement came after twenty years of research and experimentation with other forms of yoga. Last year the government concluded, "In our country, in all schools, colleges and universities the only yoga that will be taught is Satyananda Yoga because of its scientific nature, background and understanding, and its correct application in human society."

This was the vision and the gift of our guru, Sri Swami Satyananda. The work which started many years ago is bearing

fruits today and giving those results. Yoga is now becoming firmly accepted and entrenched in the community in all the countries where the yoga work was started many years ago.

Purpose of Bharat Yatra

In India, people think of yoga as asana and pranayama. Any other aspect related to yoga, you think of as religious. If you see a sannyasin with stripes on the head, you say, "He is a religious figure." If you do mantra, you say, "This is a religious mantra." Be it *Om Namah Shivaya*, *Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*, or *Om tryambakam yajamahe sugandhim pushtivardhanam*, or any mantra, you say, "This is a sectarian mantra." You say, anything that is not physical is religious. For this reason, until today, Indians have missed the opportunity of experimenting, realizing and experiencing the true nature of yoga.

It was during the World Yoga Convention that I decided to share the prasad and the achievements of the Convention; to embark on Bharat Yatra, visit each and every village, town and city, and give them the prasad of our *parampara*, our tradition, and the blessings of our gurus.

This visit to Mumbai and Chembur is the first in the sequence of this yatra. It will take time. It can take many years; but the first steps have been taken.

The purpose of this yatra is to make you aware of the other dimensions of yoga which are equally important, if not more, than the asana and pranayama that you do.

– 13 April 2014, Chembur, Mumbai, India



Yoga, the Secret of Kings' Success



The Times of India

Gaurav Gupta, 2 June 2014

Kings XI Punjab, who played their maiden IPL final on Sunday, were the team to beat this season. While the presence of star players helped, what caught the eye was that the side played with a self-belief, especially against bigger outfits, which was hitherto lacking. That self-belief was instilled due to a 'winning mantra' introduced to them by Mumbai-based yoga teacher, Eknath, before the tournament began.

Eknath imparts teachings of Satyananda Yoga, also known as the 'Bihar School of Yoga'. The Bihar School of Yoga, located in Munger, is the first deemed yoga university in the world.

Sportspersons practising yoga, which came into existence thousands of years back, isn't a unique thing. It helps them improve concentration powers and reduce stress.

In India, star golfer, Arjun Atwal, and the national archery team have practised Satyananda Yoga over the years.

"It inspired me to teach the cricketers," Eknath told TOI on Sunday. "The Kings gave me the opportunity to introduce it to their team. I am thankful that coach, Sanjay Bangar, and the players liked the sessions," he said.

The yoga teacher gave the players 'winning mantras', while practising meditation, which they had to recite thrice a day. "I had interest in yoga, but didn't know much about yoga nidra. I didn't know that if you keep a *sankalpa*, purpose, it never fails. It was beneficial to the players and they should do it regularly," said Bangar.

Elaborating on how yoga helped the players, Eknath said, "Asana and pranayama release mental tensions. They help maintain the body in an optimum condition. It results in releasing dormant energy; the body becomes full of vitality and strength. The mind becomes light, creative, and joyful. There is an increase in the confidence level of the players."

The highlight of the practice was meditation, which helps a player in unleashing his potential, the yoga teacher said, before explaining how meditation helped the players perform better in the high-stress situations that they encounter in the IPL. "It helps the body relax. It is the best tool to cope with lack of sleep. Thirty minutes of yoga nidra is equivalent to three hours of sleep. It reduces oxygen requirements and aids the metabolism. It also enables you to breathe deep and slow instead of fast and shallow."

After the sessions, Eknath received excellent feedback from the players. "Virender Sehwag told me that he loved practising yoga, and would suggest youngsters to do so. He said that he ignored yoga when he came into the Indian team, but, at thirty-five, he had found that it is the most powerful tool to help stay relaxed and improve fitness."

How to Overcome Fear?

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Pratipaksha bhavana overcomes fear by cultivating self-confidence. Fear is not fear of the unknown; fear is the absence of confidence. When you have no confidence, you do not want to take the necessary step as you fear the outcome.

Once you develop confidence and it becomes the hallmark of your mind, it becomes an expression of the mind. In my life I am confident that if I apply myself to anything, I can achieve it. That confidence removes all types of fears, whether they are spiritual or social. If you meditate with confidence you should not be afraid of your own luminosity. However, if you meditate and have not developed confidence in yourself, the fear of the unknown will come in between your realization of the illumination, and that will be the break.

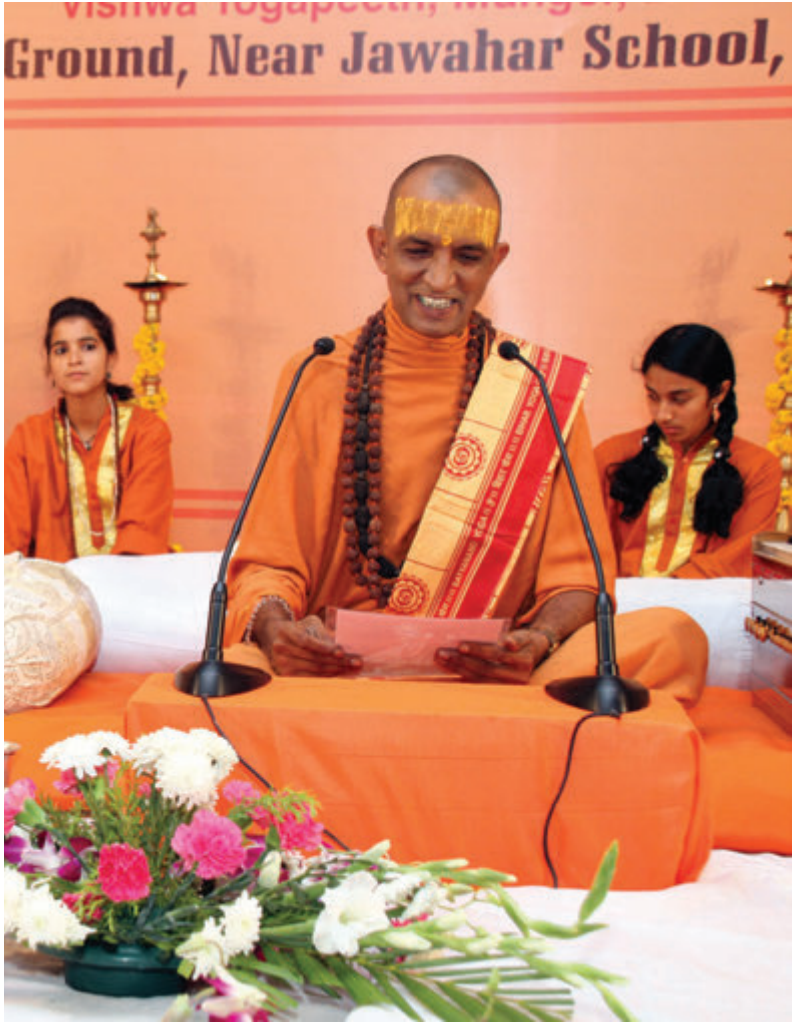
Always believe in yourself. Always believe that if you apply yourself to achieve something, there is no power on earth that can stop or hinder you provided that aspiration is positive, and is leading to your growth and development. Confidence will manage the fear which is psychological, social and spiritual.

Confidence-building comes when you begin to believe that you are not alone, that there is somebody else with you in your life who is always telling you to excel, achieve and succeed. The one who tells you, "Achieve, excel and succeed," is the guru or the God within you. The voice which tells you,

“No, I can’t do it,” is your own weakness of not believing that you can achieve.

If you realize that you are never alone and somebody is there with you who always wants your happiness and success, then connect with that person, be inspired by that shakti and strength, and move headlong into life.

– 14 April 2014, Chembur, Mumbai, India



Impressions of the First Yoga Instructor's Course

Ganga Darshan Vishwa Yogapeeth, 1st–30th August 2014



Hari Om

Due to my previous experience in many 'virulent' western yoga centres and not knowing much about this ashram, I entered it full of doubts and worries.

I knew about it partially, having travelled to India a few times. The seriousness of this ashram came to my ears many times, but nothing concrete and defined. Yet the fact that it is located in a relatively remote area and that it is not much mentioned in those so-called virulent centres, plus a strong motivation to finally understand what yoga really is, drove me to make this choice.

The first few days after my arrival, Swamiji was asking some of the students about their yoga background. I was ready to answer naming teachers, places and various yoga styles.

Today I can easily say that before I came to Ganga Darshan I had no yoga background at all. I knew nothing about yoga. Now I still don't know very much, but I am sure that I have taken my first step on the proper path.

I am sure I will be soon back hopefully with my family and for a longer time. I feel grateful to all: Swamiji, teachers, residents, students and the BYMM children with their contagious smile for giving me a daily lesson of life.

I feel grateful to Swami Satyananda and Swami Niranjan, who inspired by Swami Sivananda, made all this possible.

Thank you.

– Raul, Italy

Hari Om

For me the first point of this feedback is to say ‘thank you’, and excuse me for my English.

This was my first time in an ashram, so I don’t have any other experience of it. I was all my life dancing around the world without much discipline and method; and that is I think the most important thing for a place, for a school, for a system, to have a method . . .

If you have a method, you have the way, you have almost everything, and this is what happens here. You can like it or not, but there is a way.

– Leticia Cestu, Spain

Hari Om

The placid, content waving trees,
The fragrant flowers, humming bees,
The guttural notes of birds unseen,
The colours of the sky ‘n’ raining,
The scorching sun, silent moon,
The beating heart, singing tune,
The mystique vibration ‘n’ graceful presence,
Tis the vast expanse of thy consciousness!
Tis the vast expanse of thy consciousness!!
Tis truly the vast expanse of thy consciousness!!!

– Dr Samir, Maharashtra

Preventing Memory Loss

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Beautiful research was conducted in the United States in the mid-nineties. The theory that the researchers formulated was that as we age there are certain hormones of the body that stop secreting, and when they stop secreting, dead brain cells collect in the brain and are not removed by the blood. When they collect within the brain, the electrical transference is blocked. That was their view. They said that every

twenty years the body undergoes chemical, hormonal changes. When you are growing up there is endocrinal, hormonal activity, which stabilizes at around the age of twenty. Again a change happens at around the age of forty, at the age of sixty and again at the age of eighty.

The power of pawanmuktasana

In this twenty-year cycle the body goes through hormonal and chemical changes. Scientists and researchers developed an injection for recovering what people had lost: the memory. In those days one injection costed around ten thousand dollars. Of course, this was too much money, for who could pay that much? Therefore, they looked at other methods that could be applied. They tried yoga, and an interesting combination of yoga was applied: it was only pawanmuktasana part one. Not surya namaskara or other major asanas; only pawanmuktasana part one to ensure that there is movement and circulation, and no blockage.

This happened over a period of three to five years. The scientists came to the conclusion that the practice of pawanmuktasana helps in recovering memory. As you improve your circulation, and the circulation begins to remove the dead cells, you gradually begin to recover your memory. Slowly but surely. They suggested that no matter what exercises you do – go to the gym, swim, or any other form of physical culture – if, every twenty years for six months you practise pawanmuktasana part one, it will clean the pipes of the body. Otherwise you go for the medical intervention, which is the injection.

When I came across this research, I was happy. You know how to do the practice, so why not apply it? Therefore, prevent memory loss with the practice of pawanmuktasana part one for six months as a regular, continuous practice.

– 15 April 2014, Chembur, Mumbai, India



Dealing with Regrets

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



What in English you call 'regret', is called *prayaschit* in Sanskrit. Prayaschit is a way to convert the quality of thought. Why do you regret and what is the cause of misbehaviour?

Last year at the World Yoga Convention, I spoke on two aspects of yoga. The first one was that in the practice of yoga you must change your attitude and become more serious, sincere and committed. Normally people dig fifty holes, one-foot deep. When you are sincere, committed and serious about extracting water from the ground, you have to dig only one hole fifty-feet deep, and not fifty holes one-foot deep. This means that you immerse yourself in what you believe in, practise and aspire for. That is one aspect in regard to the yoga of the future.

The second aspect is your behaviour. When you are born, six friends come with the mind into this life. These six friends of the mind are: *kama*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada* and *matsarya*, passion, anger, greed, illusion, pride and envy. Right from your childhood these six factors make your mindset, character and personality traits; they make you what you are today.

The yogic or spiritual traditions, and sadhus say that these six are *shadripu*, six enemies. Whether you call them friends or enemies is your perspective and perception. We are subject to and influenced by these six conditions of the mind. Your thoughts, behaviour, performance, ideas, aspirations and ambitions are guided not by wisdom and not by skills that you have. They are guided by the ambitions created and generated by the six associates of life. This is my second theme: How can spiritual aspirants and yoga practitioners manage the six conditions of mind?

Guilt and regret

The fluctuating mood is sometimes happy, sometimes worried, sometimes sad, and sometimes anxious. Your mood fluctuates every minute. Here is the Niranjana challenge: is it possible to remain happy and smiling for twelve hours, from the time you wake up until the time you go to sleep? If you can do that for twelve hours, you bypass all mental barriers. You will have a breakthrough. In the same manner, to break the negative conditions of the mind you have to cultivate and strengthen the positive qualities of mind. When you are able to cultivate the positive qualities, you become aware of your mistakes, and *prayaschit* happens.

There is another understanding. If something wrong has happened you begin to feel guilty. Regret and guilt go together. It is guilt that actually harms the person, not regret. Guilt affects a person more. Due to guilt the feeling of regret arises. Therefore regret is secondary. When you recognize the mistake you have made, only then do you feel guilt. Guilt is recognition of a mistake that you have made, which you do not appreciate or like. Up to the point of recognition, everything is fine. Beyond recognition, when you begin to feel bad, you move into a negative state of mind.

From the yogic perspective there is no regret; everybody lives their karma, their *samskara* and their destiny. If by living your karma, *samskara* and destiny, others are hurt, how can

you change your own karma, samskara and destiny to ensure that others are not hurt? It is your character that has made you react, that has made you feel guilty, and which is making you feel regret, and wanting to rectify the mistake.

Recognizing the mistake is one aspect. After that, moving into a negative state of mind is not acceptable. Guilt creates a depressive, negative state of mind, and self-negativity comes in, and that is not correct.

Yoga does not subscribe to the idea of regret. It says that you must recognize the mistake you have made. If you have hurt somebody, apologize. As prayaschit, ensure that you do not commit the same mistake again. That is the best prayaschit. If you can ensure that you do not commit the same mistake again, there is nothing like it. What is the purpose of regret if you are not willing to change yourself and later commit the same mistake again? That kind of regret has no meaning.

Forgive and forget

There is also the concept of *kshama* which means forgiveness. Forgiveness comes once you are able to forget something. If you are able to take the thought out of the mind, if you are able to leave it behind and forget it, then forgiveness comes in. If you cling on to the negative thought, keep on brooding and worrying about it, there is no *kshama*, no forgiveness.

You have to be aware of this particular trait of mind. You have to let go of the problem that you are holding on to and forgive yourself with a sankalpa, with conviction saying, 'This situation has created conflict, ill-will, separation and bad blood between people. I am going to ensure that this does not repeat itself again'.

Do not count sheep

There is a simple sadhana with the purpose to make you aware of your responses, your reactions and behaviour during the day. This sadhana is to be done at night when you go to bed.

Lights are off and you are tucked in ready to fall asleep. At that point, do not allow the mind or thoughts to wander here and there; do not try to count sheep in order to go to sleep. Instead see the events of the day from the time you woke up in the morning until the time you have gone to bed. See the events as a movie on the screen of your mind.

In five minutes, see the whole day: 'went to bathroom, brushed my teeth, bathed myself, dressed myself.' Visualize the dress you wore, the colours. 'Had breakfast, read newspaper, visualize the news that influenced you or made you think about some event; visualize the discussion that you had with family members at the breakfast table: what you did, what you thought, how you responded. How you reacted in the office and at home. See the whole day in an objective manner, without getting involved.

Once you have indentified a problem area, saying to yourself, "Today I had this discussion and it was a disagreement. I became angry. The other person didn't like it and also became angry." Whatever happened, observe the reaction that had taken place that day. Think about it, reflect on it for a moment: 'If I encounter the same situation again, how will I deal with it in a better manner?'

In this way, you relive the reactions that you have gone through and see the fault lying in that reaction. Was it your projection? Or did you simply respond to somebody else's projection. If you do this for ten days, fifteen days, twenty days, you will find that this level of awareness will modify your behaviour, thinking, interaction and performance.

It is subconscious training to recognize the areas where you encounter problems in your relationships and communications, and to rectify the traits which harm you. This is the simple sadhana for it.

Therefore, the best form of prayaschit is the sankalpa: not to repeat the mistake again.

– 11 April 2014, Worli, Mumbai, India

Meditation is a Living Experience

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Meditation is a living experience. Another word for living experience is 'darshan'. Most of us are familiar with this word darshan. *Darshan* is 'inner vision' and it is definitely different from a psychic experience. When a person has this darshan, he feels the same depth of awareness as he feels during the waking state of experience, and therefore meditation is a living experience.

The raja yoga of Sage Patanjali has maintained this idea, that when the mind and its properties are controlled by the incessant practice of yoga, there is the manifestation of a higher state of awareness; and this higher state of awareness is meditation. Since we are involved in the practices of yoga in some way or other, it will be necessary for us to know as to how we should proceed with meditation. Closing the eyes and withdrawing the mind from the sensory experiences does not mean that we have achieved meditation.

From all the experiences we have gathered, and what we have learnt from the scriptures, is that the state of meditation is a dynamic state of awareness which does not merely influence the subjective, psychic experience, it also influences the whole nature and responses of the personality. Transformation is a very important process that follows meditation. It is also said that there are prerequisites for meditation.

Need for a form

Whether you practise meditation on a religious basis or whether you practise purely on the basis of raja yoga, the important point that everyone should remember is that meditation must have an object as the sheet anchor for the consciousness to travel. There has always been a controversy about *saguna* and *nirguna* meditation, meditation on form and on the formless. Most people who believe that the reality is formless have a serious objection in accepting an object for meditation. They say that if the supreme consciousness is formless, how can a form help you to achieve that experience? From all our experiences we have come to one conclusion: no matter what the nature of reality is, it matters nothing if the reality is absolutely formless. However, in order to maintain steady spiritual progress and to be able to have a grip over all the transforming states of consciousness, meditation on a form, *saguna*, should be practised essentially.

This is not a religious affirmation or emphasis I am making because I do not belong to that sect either. By a philosophical sect I belong to *nirguna* panth, Advaita Vedanta. Still I have always felt throughout my career of being a guide to spiritual aspirants, that a very important item in *dhyana* yoga is a concrete awareness, a concrete object or symbol. We should not confuse ourselves between the spiritual practice and the ultimate reality.

We choose a concrete object not because we believe that the experience in *samadhi* is a material experience, but we choose an object in order to guide the mind through the recesses of consciousness. When the consciousness passes from the external to the internal terrain of consciousness, there is absolute darkness; there are no supports whatsoever.

There are no guidelines and practically no proof whether we are progressing or regressing. There is also no indication to show whether our consciousness is spiritually transforming itself, or whether it is entering a state of inertia, *tamas*. As long as the object is kept intact during the various stages of



transformation, as long as you are able to visualize the object in the subconscious or the unconscious plane, you are on the right path. The moment the symbol vanishes, you are lost, which means that you have to come back again to mundane consciousness.

Freedom of choice

Patanjali has listed five practices in his *Yoga Sutras*, but he has given you freedom of choice also. First of all, you can practise meditation on light which takes you beyond sorrow and evolves in you a blissful condition. This light can be visualized in *trikuti*, the space between the eyebrows. This light may also be visualized in *anahata chakra*, the heart centre. It can be experienced within and without; it is the symbol, it is the thought. When you transcend name and form, time and space, and for a moment everything appears as if dead, it is that light that shines in the realm of consciousness which leads through the transforming states of your personality and consciousness. If it is not possible to visualize the light spontaneously by closing the eyes, the best thing is to place a light, a deepak, and practise *trataka*, steady gazing on the flame without blinking

the eyes, then you close the eyes and try to visualize the same light within. This is one technique.

You can also take, as an object for your meditation, any of the saints who have transcended the realm of maya, who have risen above karma and the three gunas – sattwa, rajas and tamas – and who have attained a high quality of dispassion. Those saints and gurus can also become the object of your dhyana. People may have an objection to it. Nonetheless, I have made it clear that it is not our intention to emphasize that the ultimate reality is bound by form; I am emphasizing that it is important that the mind has something to grasp. When you meditate on one of the saints, you develop in yourself the effulgent personality consciousness, which can also help you to attain the state of dhyana and samadhi.

From pranayama to dhyana

Pranayama, which is the fourth step in raja yoga, can also lead one to the state of dhyana directly. Pranayama appears to be a very gross practice, but it is not. When systematically practised, it does fulfil its promises as pranayama. When practised with the necessary preparations, it will fulfil itself as pratyahara. It will also create one-pointedness of mind and will help to withdraw the mind totally and make you steady in dhyana yoga.

The fourth and most important pranayama is known as *chaturtha pranayama*, when the ingoing breath and the outgoing breath must be separately visualized in their natural speed and rhythm. After visualizing the natural rhythm of the breath, you should make it a little deeper than natural. If the practitioner of dhyana yoga is able to combine consciousness with prana during these most natural movements of breath all the 24 hours, samadhi takes place by itself.

The great yogi Gorakhnath said that you must practise awareness of your breath in such way that your consciousness becomes aware of *So Ham, So Ham*. This music of the breath continues all through the day and night and when that

happens, the inner awareness will express itself spontaneously. It will just explode. It is the most important of all the pranayama practices. It has been adopted by the Buddhist system of meditation and many other systems of meditation, and in Iran it is practised by the Sufis.

It is said that the breath is the indicator, the torchbearer, and the play of consciousness is moving up and down. Awareness and breath must be integrated, and when these move rhythmically and you watch it quietly, this brings you to dhyana yoga.

The forgotten mind

Dhyana is not just a 'spot' experience; it is a range of experience. It has localized stages which are planes of experience. Therefore concentration, awareness of the movement of breath, is a very powerful system when you make your breath a little deeper than natural. When you prolong your breath, then your consciousness is able to open the sushumna.

No matter when you started your sadhana, when sushumna nadi wakes up, distractions fall flat and a wavering mind becomes almost a remote experience. We have been failing in our sadhana because we have always been wrestling with the mind. Somehow we are under the wrong impression that we shall triumph over the mind. It can never happen like this. The only way to get away from the mind is to transcend it, not to fight it. You can spend your whole life trying to fight with the mind, and when you are preparing to enter the grave you can only say, "Well, I'm coming again to fight with you."

Intelligent people have found another method called transcendence. How to transcend the mind? We cannot transcend the mind by the mind. The mind can be transcended by a spiritual practice and yogis have correctly said that we do what we like in our sadhana; we don't care how the mind plays.

What we are concerned with is how to awaken sushumna. Once the awakening takes place it is an explosive experience.

Suddenly we find everything expanding, disappearing and reappearing. What was considered to be one of the most difficult missions of life - to control the mind - has just happened by itself. Within a moment the mind has been forgotten.

- 9 March 1978, Lecture at Tata House, Mumbai, India



Yoga Vidya

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

In his farsightedness, Sri Swami Sivananda realized that the future generation will need the intervention of a spiritual discipline, and that discipline would be yoga. Therefore he taught the science of yoga to all his disciples, although for sannyasins our personal philosophy is of Vedanta as enunciated by Adi Shankaracharya. That is our life of sannyasa and our philosophy of sannyasa. Swami Sivananda said, "Maintain the ideal of Shankaracharya as your personal life: Vedanta. Live Vedanta and practise Vedanta in your personal life, but Vedanta is not the need of human society. The need of human society is yoga. In your professional life become a yoga propagator, and in your personal life remain a sannyasi and a follower of the ethics of Shankaracharya, and the traditions of this civilization."

Vidya and jnana

Our guru, Sri Swami Satyananda, also inspired in us this thought: 'In your personal life be a sannyasi, and in your professional life be the best and most competent yoga teacher that society has ever seen.' He gave us the understanding of yoga. Yoga is a vidya, not a sadhana; sadhana is the component of yoga vidya. *Vidya* means to know; *yoga vidya* to know yoga. Knowing yoga is not knowledge of yoga but 'knowing yoga'. *Jnana* is knowledge; if you say *yoga jnana* then that is knowledge of yoga. When you say *yoga vidya*, then it is 'knowing yoga'. There is a difference between knowledge and knowing. Knowledge is impersonal, knowing is an integral part of your behaviour, your mind, your understanding, your thinking, your logic and what you believe in. Therefore, jnana is knowledge, and vidya is knowing, realizing. The word used with yoga is not yoga jnana, but yoga vidya, which is

something you attain and experience, not something you only know intellectually. You also realize what is being spoken about.

The real taste of chocolate

Here is the example of taste: sweet. Look up any dictionary. Webster dictionary, Oxford dictionary, or Cambridge dictionary, and try to find out how the taste of sweet is defined in a dictionary. No dictionary will be able to define the taste of sweet. It will give the chemical composition, the breakdown of sweet and sugar, yet no dictionary can define or convey to you the experience of sweetness that you have once you put a sweet in your mouth.

Knowledge of the composition of how chocolate is made is there, however, this knowledge cannot give the experience. Jnana is there for you to know the composition, and how chocolate is made. Yet, when you taste the chocolate and become familiar with the taste of the sweetness which is inherent and contained in the chocolate, and when you have realized that sweetness, then that is known as *anubhava*. *Anubhava* indicates that you have understood and experienced a subject. That subject is not alien to you, it has become part and parcel of your understanding and your individual culture. This is known as *vidya*.

Four aspects of vidya

If you dissect *vidya*, you will discover it has many levels. One is a lifestyle, for what you know should translate into your behaviour and action. Your behaviour and action is your lifestyle. Another aspect of *vidya* is *sadhana*, knowing and perfecting. Another aspect of *vidya* is *darshan*, which is the philosophy of that subject. Another aspect of the *vidya* is *sampradaya*, the tradition, knowing how that *vidya* has developed over a period of time through a tradition. These are the four aspects: philosophy, *sadhana*, lifestyle and *parampara* or *sampradaya*. These four aspects constitute the total picture

of vidya, whereas jnana is only an intellectual analysis and intellectual gymnastics.

In jnana there can be discussions and debates, yet in vidya there is only knowing and realizing. Therefore, when we speak of yoga, at least within our parampara, we refer to yoga as vidya.

– 13 April 2014, Chembur, Mumbai, India





Yoga Publications Trust

Karma Yoga Book 1: Karma


*From the teachings of two great luminaries of the 20th century
Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati and Sri Swami Satyananda
Saraswati*

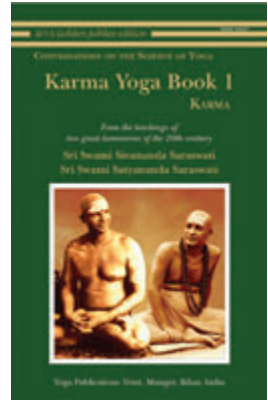
174 pp, soft cover, ISBN: 978-93-81620-31-1

Karma Yoga Book 1: Karma introduces the foundation for understanding the more specific aspects addressed in subsequent volumes. Karma is clearly presented in its many manifestations and mysteries. Included are: meaning and origins of karma; laws and classifications of karma; understanding samskaras; and karma in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

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

Yoga Publications Trust, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger, Bihar 811 201, India
Tel: +91-06344-222430 , 06344-228603, 09304799615 • Fax: 91+6344+220169

 A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be sent along with enquiries to ensure a response to your request



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.

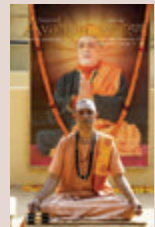


Living Yoga with Swami Niranjan

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.



Avahan Online

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.

- Registered with the Department of Post, India Under No. HR/FBD/297/13-15
Office of posting: BPC Faridabad
Date of posting: 1st-7th of every month
- Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers, India Under No. BIHENG/2002/6305

issn 0972-5717

bar code

Ganga Darshan Events & Courses 2015

Feb 1-May 25	4-month Yogic Studies Course (Hindi)
Feb 14	Bal Yoga Diwas
Mar 1-30	Yoga Instructor's Course (Hindi)
Mar 3-20	Yoga HMC*: Asthma (Hindi)
Jun 1-Jul 25	2-month Orientation in Yogic Science & Lifestyle (Hindi)
Jul 27-30	Guru Poornima Satsang & Aradhana
Jul 31	Guru Paduka Poojan
Aug-May 2016	1-year Diploma in Yogic Studies (English)
Aug 1-30	Yoga Instructor's Course (English)
Sep 8	Swami Sivananda Janmotsava
Sep 12	Swami Satyananda Sannyasa Diwas
Oct 1-30	Bihar Yoga Training for Satyananda Yoga Teachers (English)
Oct 1-Jan 25	4-month Yogic Studies Course (English)
Oct 3-20	Yoga HMC*: Diabetes (Hindi)
Nov 1-7	Yoga Sadhana & Swadhyaya Week with Swami Niranjanananda
Dec 25	Swami Satyananda's Birthday
	*HMC: Health Management Course
Every Saturday	Mahamrityunjaya Havan
Every Ekadashi	Bhagavad Gita Path
Every Poornima	Sundarkand Path
Every 5th & 6th	Commemoration of Sri Swami Satyananda's Mahasamadhi
Every 12th	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: +91-06344-222430, 09304799615, 06344-228603, Fax: +91-06344-220169
Website: www.biharyoga.net

A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be sent along with enquiries to ensure a response to your request