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Hari Om

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GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Song of Divine Life

Gopala Gopala muralilola
Yashoda nandana gopibala.

Serve, love, give, purify, practise ahimsa
Satyam, brahmacharya, study *Gita*.
Have satsang, control senses, do japa kirtan
Meditate in Brahmamuhurta, know thyself.

Love all, embrace all, be kind to all
Work is worship, serve the Lord in all.
Purify, concentrate, reflect, meditate
Know the Self through enquiry, 'Who am I?'

Purify, concentrate, reflect, meditate
Serve, love give and be dispassionate.
Know the Brahman, maya, samsara and 'I'
Behold the goal of life, Hae Saumya nirbhaya!

—Swami Sivananda

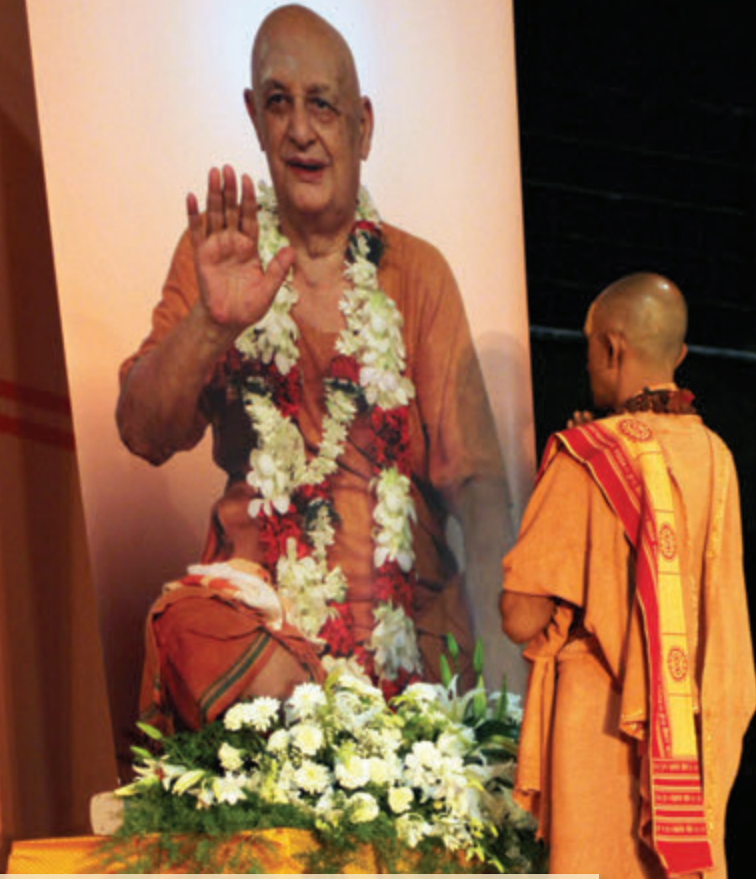
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Bharat Yoga Yatra 2014

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

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

Now Learn to Swim

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Last year in October, we had the biggest yoga convention. I am saying 'the biggest', for it was really a gathering of people who have devoted their life to yoga, and who have experience in yoga training and teaching in their own lives. This Convention was a way to honour the people who have devoted their life to the propagation of yoga.

In this Convention there was no post-holder; there were only teachers who have been involved with yoga for many years. They presented their work, their accomplishments, their research, their understanding and their approach to yoga. Listening to all of them, it was clear that the propagation of yoga is now complete. We have to take yoga to another level. Propagation of yoga was the theme of the first fifty years, in which we all played a role: *Yoga ki jyoti jalau* – "Let us light the light of yoga." We came together as a group to work for it. We came together as a force, a unit to propagate yoga. In fifty years, from being unknown to today's wide scope of applications, yoga has become a household word.

When I look around the world and the country, I find that misconceptions about yoga continue to exist. So many people are trying to project 'this yoga' or 'that yoga' as the final solution and answer, according to their own perspective: fusion yoga, fashion yoga, couple yoga, power yoga, hot yoga, cold yoga, no yoga, more yoga . . . The word yoga has become a khichari. Today, nobody knows the meaning of the word yoga. Everybody knows the types of yoga, but not the meaning of the word yoga.

The prevalent trend in our country is that there are many institutes who conduct teacher training courses for one week and give certificates. Can you be a teacher of yoga with one week of training? There is interest and I respect that interest; however, I do not subscribe to the approach or to the philosophy that you can become a yoga teacher in one week or one month. Ninety-nine percent of teachers in our country are people who are using yoga for their personal survival. I am not against it, for yoga has to give this opportunity too. However, what about the sincerity part of yoga? Is yoga going to become a joke in the next fifty years? Will yoga represent the sanctity of the tradition as defined by the seers of the past?

After the World Yoga Convention, the thought came clearly that 'You have to work to sustain yoga in the next fifty years.' You have propagated yoga: you are doing yoga, she is doing yoga, he is doing yoga, they are doing yoga, we are doing yoga, in whatever way.

Now you have to go deeper and explore the possibilities of yoga. You have played enough on the beach, putting your toes in the water, then running and making sand castles. Again going to the water, then making sand castles. That has been the game you played with yoga until today.

From now, you have to go into the water for a swim; and that is the next fifty years of yoga training: do not play on the beach, learn how to swim.

– 11 April 2014, Worli, Mumbai, India

Message to the People of Bombay

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



26th October 1950: Arrival in Bombay

During his four-day halt in Bombay, Sri Swamiji covered a number of functions held at different parts of the city. He addressed a public reception held in his honour at Madhav Bag, and attended several meetings held under the auspices of the Bombay Spiritual Centre, Astika Samaj, Bhajana Samai, Chaitanya Prabha Mandali, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Vanity

Vishram, and other organizations. Regular satsang was held at Lakshmi Bag near Sandhurst Road, where the Swami stayed.

Sri Swamiji broadcasted a talk over the local AIR station and held a press conference. He also visited the Sannyas Ashram at Vile Parle and granted interviews to many devotees. On 29th October he left Bombay for Amalsad on his way to Baroda.

On 26th October 1950 at 4.30 pm, Siva was interviewed by the press. He gave his message in writing and added, "I have put the essentials of all Vedas and scriptures in an aphoristic manner: serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realize, be good, do good, be kind, be compassionate. Enquire 'Who am I' Know the Self and be free. Bear insult, bear injury - this is the highest sadhana. Adapt, adjust, accommodate."

He then did kirtan and sang the *Song of a Little*, the *Song of 18 ITIES* and the *Song of Chidananda*.

To the people of Bombay

"During my past month and a half of travel through the length and breadth of this sacred Bharatavarsha, I have found, time and again, that everywhere people are perturbed about the one question of what the role of India is to be in the world of tomorrow.

From the Himalayas right up to Lanka, people have asked me again and again what light we, belonging to the order of monks, have to throw upon this point. I have but one invariable answer. That is: be true to yourself. Let every son of Bharatavarsha make himself a faithful, loyal embodiment, representing the highest element of the true essentials of Bharatavarsha's culture.

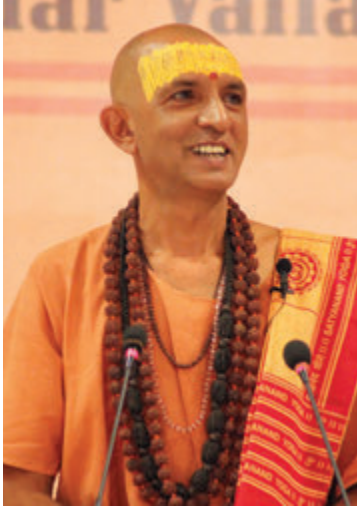
This great culture could be summed up in a few short sentences as: *Paropakaraartham idam shareeram* - "Human life is meant solely for spontaneous service to one and all." *Papaya parapeedanam* - "Sin is the greatest torture." *Ahimsa paramo dharmah* - "Non-violence is the highest dharma." *Satyameva jayate na anritam* - "Indeed, truth triumphs not falsehood." *Achara prabhavo dharmah* - "Dharma is rooted in ethical perfection." And above all, *Yo vai bhuma tat sukham na alpe sukham asti* - "In the fullness of spiritual experience alone is lasting happiness to be had, not in this imperfect world."

To the people of Bombay I have to say this that more than any other state, it is you who have to do this duty in the largest measure. For, the sons of exotic cultures enter India through your shores. Bombay is the Gateway to India, and when one enters this gateway and steps into Bharatavarsha, he must behold everywhere such ideal representatives of the true Indian culture, entirely free from any vestige of blemish acquired by the impact of alien culture during the past few centuries. Be true to yourself. Be a true Indian."

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

Total Package of Yoga

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Yoga has to be seen in two forms: first, as the preparation of the body; and second, as actual performance of the yogic practices. More important than yogasanas is the preparation of the body to practise the asanas. According to Patanjali, the concept of asana is: *Sthiram sukham aasanam* – a posture in which you are comfortable and a posture which you can sustain for an extended period of time.

This indicates static movement or static postures of yoga. When one speaks of the dynamic postures of yoga, they don't come under the category of yoga as taught by Patanjali. People speak of Patanjali but they never teach the system of Patanjali. They teach the system of hatha yoga not of raja yoga. Sage Patanjali never had anything to do with hatha yoga; he was only concerned with raja yoga. The whole concept of Patanjali's system of yoga is not a dynamic practice of asana or pranayama. It is a practice that connects you to your body, to your prana and to your mind; and this is how the practice of yoga begins.

Purpose of asana

Many times people do asanas as physical exercise. Maybe for some time they feel happy, for they have done something physical, yet those physical exercises of yoga do not represent the real practice of yoga. According to the yogic theory, you have to work with your body, with your mind, and with your

pranic system. These three dimensions are to be involved in the practice of asana and pranayama.

Sri Swami Sivananda, our paramguru, and my guru, Sri Swami Satyananda, have emphasized the practice of yoga for the cultivation of human qualities and creativity, for health and wellbeing at all levels. From their perspective, to confine yoga only to physical practice is incorrect. They are looking at yoga for an integrated development of the human personality and not just to make a person light and free physically.

In a class that has been inspired by Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda, the tradition that you follow, you have to keep in mind that asana is for the body, pranayama for the pranic system, relaxation to overcome the stresses and tensions of body, emotions and mind, and the concentration techniques to work with the mind. These four practices constitute one class of yoga: asana, pranayama, relaxation and concentration. Asana is only one aspect of yoga, it is not yoga. It is only one yoga *anga*, one aspect of yoga, not the total yoga. Asana comprises only ten percent of the entire yogic discipline. Asanas, no matter how you practise, how many times you practise, or which one you practise, only comprise ten percent



of the total yogic system. Pranayamas are only five percent of the yogic system. The rest are different practices from asana and pranayama. The purpose of asana, apart from health and physical wellbeing, is to connect your body with prana and the mind.

Integrated experience of yoga

Yogis have understood that we live in five different bodies at the same time. The physical body is known as *annamaya kosha*, the sheath of the body of matter. The energy system is known as *pranamaya kosha*, the sheath of energy, *prana*, the vital energy. The mental behaviour, mental experiences and mental dimension is known as *manomaya kosha*. It is the interactive mind. The fourth sheath is the *vijnanamaya kosha*, the dimension of consciousness. After completing, perfecting and harmonizing *annamaya*, *pranamaya* and *manomaya koshas*, you access consciousness, *vijnanamaya kosha*. Then, the fifth one is *anandamaya*, the sheath of bliss, spirit, spiritual realization or awareness. These are the five levels that integrate to create one complete experience of yoga.

This is the total package as Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda have conceived. With this you will experience the ideas that Swami Sivananda set forth in the early days. After all, why do you practise yoga? Some people practise for physical reasons, some for mental reasons, and some for spiritual reasons. However, after they have fulfilled their expectations, they disconnect with yoga, and this is the trend prevalent in society today.

Practical realization

If you think of yoga as part of human culture, what is its role and relevance? After forty years of involvement in yoga, I have come to the conclusion that for me, the purpose and aim of yoga is to develop excellence in all aspects and areas of my life. Not self-realization, not peace and not relaxation. These are concepts that you have not been able to understand. When

you think of self-realization you think of something from above coming into you and making you illuminated and enlightened.

Few people realize that realization or enlightenment is a product of a balanced nature, personality and mind. When you are in harmony then realization comes. This realization is not of the divine; this realization is practical and related to life. In life you discover the higher qualities.

Asana, pranayama, relaxation and concentration constitute one complete class of yoga. Their aim is to manage the conditions of body, illness, ill-health, disturbances, stresses and tensions. At the pranic level, their purpose is to stimulate and activate the prana shakti, so that you are more dynamic, vibrant and energetic. At the mental level, the purpose of yoga is to give you clarity, understanding, awareness, concentration and wisdom. Once you are equipped with these three levels of balance through the practices of yoga, you move into the discovery of your inner nature and the cultivation of the faculties of consciousness.

– 10 April 2014, Worli, Mumbai, India



Integral Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Hari Om. I want to be at home with you first.

Swami Sivananda Saraswati of Rishikesh was my guru, with whom I lived for many years and yoga is a subject which has attracted thousands of people. It has gone around the world without any royal patronage. Scientists and doctors are talking about yoga today, but compliments should not go to them. Compliments should go to the swamis, the mendicants

and the wandering and unimpressive beggars of your country. They have crossed the barriers of religion and the political boundaries for over centuries and have brought this healing science of yoga not only to the heart and core of Indians, but also to the people who are far from this culture. It is to these wandering and unimpressive beggars who do not have a national status, even today, to them I pay my respect.

Head, heart and hands

Man is a composition of four temperaments: dynamic, emotional, psychic and rational. You are a composition of all, but one temperament can be predominant and the other can be subservient. Those who are rational predominantly by temperament, for them jnana yoga is the predominant yoga; then bhakti yoga, raja yoga, karma yoga can be practised.

In the same way, if you are dynamic by temperament, karma yoga becomes your main yoga, but bhakti yoga,

raja yoga, jnana yoga must go along as well. Lopsided development of the personality is of no use. We always say, 'head, heart and hands' must be simultaneously developed. Bhakti yoga is for those who are emotionally predominant by temperament. Raja yoga is for those who are psychic by temperament. On this basis, bhakti, karma, raja and jnana yoga were discovered by the great rishis. A synthesis of yoga has to be there all the time.

We emphasize in this particular age, asana, pranayama and meditation, as they are not intellectual but practical. Many times when we practise karma yoga, we say, "I have nothing to do with this. God is the doer." It is all intellectual, because when we confront the situations in life, we fall flat. The type of sadhana which we want to do has to be a little more than intellectual or something else than intellectual.

You do asana, it is not intellectual; you do japa, it is not intellectual; you meditate, it is not intellectual. However, if you sit down and say, "I am Brahman, I am not atman, not the senses, I am not prana," it is okay. However, when you are facing the problem you forget everything. You become the enjoyer of karma and karma phala, in spite of asserting every day that "I am not the doer, I am not the enjoyer."

Therefore karma yoga is true, bhakti yoga is true, jnana yoga is true, but to make them more tangible, more true and more effective in life, there has to be a practical approach to yoga. I have found from a majority of people that asana, pranayama, mantra and dhyana are very simple, very non-intellectual. In the morning or whenever you practise, practise all the four yogas.



True evolution

The evolution has to take place in an integrated manner, because we do not want evolution to go in such a way that humanity becomes extinct after a few decades. So the process of evolution has to be balanced. The basis of evolution should be inner awareness, inner experience. We have seen in the last few hundred years, that civilizations, cultures, education and national organizations have been based on man's external experience or material experience. As a result of this there has been some sort of prosperity, because these systems based on material philosophy have been very reckless, they have not cared for anything; they just went on like a bulldozer.

Prosperity was created and things appeared to be better for sometime, and we thought that we were evolving. As we went deep into ourselves, honestly and sincerely, we found that we were not evolving. This evolution, which we thought was real evolution, did undermine the quality of our soul, the quality of our experiences, the quality of our interaction, the quality of our behaviour in the family.

In the last fifty years, thinkers basing themselves on external experience are now at a crossroads. They have started rethinking. They want to know whether they are to go further or they are to come back. They expect some sort of precipitous yield, some sort of brink somewhere, and they think that if they go beyond it they might be destroyed. When I talk about evolution, I think there is an inner voice, an inner experience and an inner plan which must be revealed to you, to me, to our wise men, to my parents or my rulers, or to those thinkers. Those inner experiences must be dictated or must be accomplished by other people in the external life.

Evolution should always mean inner evolution first. On the basis of that inner evolution, society must be structured, nations, institutions and your social codes must be structured.

*– 24 December 1982, Homi Baba Atomic Research Institute,
Mumbai, India*

The Yoga of Positivity

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The theme and subject of the Bharat Yatra is 'Know Yourself and Find Divinity in Life'. The medium to know one's self and to attain the higher qualities of life is through the process of yoga. Yoga has to be understood in the right perspective. Your understanding of yoga is limited to postures and breathing, and possibly to some form of meditation. That is not yoga. Yoga is much more than the practice that you do in form of asana, pranayama, relaxation and meditation.

The attention of humanity at large has been on these, believing them to be the complete yoga. Those who think asana, pranayama, relaxation and meditation are not enough, think of yoga as kriya yoga and kundalini yoga. Beyond this people have no understanding of yoga. Yoga is not only a practice, it is also a sadhana, a lifestyle and the culture of the individual. Therefore, you have to look at the various aspects of yoga from this angle.

Yoga practice

Yoga practice is something that the majority of you do for your own reasons, pursuing your own aspirations in yoga, be they physical health or mental peace. When you come to yoga you do not come to yoga as a sadhaka or aspirant. You come to yoga as a person who needs rectification in his life, to better experience health and peace of mind. Once you attain better health and that little bit of mental peace you think that yoga has completed its purpose, and you stop the practice. In the practice aspect, you are using yoga practices and techniques of asana and pranayama, relaxation and meditation to improve your health, to improve your mind. It is all for your improvement. Whatever practice or technique you apply to improve yourself does not go beyond asana, pranayama, relaxation and meditation.

Yoga sadhana

There is another aspect of yoga sadhana. The purpose of yoga sadhana is to follow the aim defined by yoga. If it is said in the *Yoga Sutras* of Sage Patanjali that the purpose of yoga is *chitta vritti nirodha*, managing the mental modifications, then your yoga practice must lead you and provide you with the skill and ability to control your chitta vrittis. That is your sadhana. When you follow the aspirations defined by yoga, setting aside your personal requirements and needs of the body and mind, you become a yoga sadhaka. That is when you follow the aim decided by yoga.

Every yoga has a definite aim, a focus and a goal. What is the aim of karma yoga? To acquire immunity from the effect, actions and reactions in society and in the world. That is the purpose of karma yoga: immunity from actions and reactions. Another purpose of karma yoga is the cultivation of the quality of excellence. That is the aim decided for karma yoga.

What is the purpose of bhakti yoga? Sublimation of human emotions. The aim of bhakti yoga is to divert the human emotions to discover yourself. Human emotions flow outwards

into the world and they connect you to the world. Therefore, the purpose of bhakti yoga is sublimation of human emotions that are directed out into society. In bhakti yoga you redirect and rechannel your emotions to enable you to discover yourself. That is the purpose of bhakti yoga.

What is the purpose of jnana yoga? To know you are an extension of the cosmic creation; to apply creativity, to enhance the beauty of this creation, and not to destroy this creation. That is the purpose of jnana yoga.

What is the purpose of hatha yoga? Harmony between the twin forces of *ida* and *pingala*, the solar and the lunar forces. Have you achieved it in all your years of hatha yoga practice? No, since you never considered that aspect of yoga. You only considered the physical aspect of yoga as needed by you.

What is the purpose of raja yoga? Managing the mental modifications. People who have practised meditation for the last thirty years are unable to control their mental behaviour; their anger, fear, insecurity and frustration. What is the purpose of that meditation which you have practised for the last thirty years and which has not taken you anywhere? You are still the same in your mind, you are still the same in your behaviour, you are still the same in your thinking, and you are still the same in your responses. Where is the qualitative improvement that you are looking for in yoga? Where does the mistake lie? Not in yoga, but with your understanding of it.

Yoga principles

Yoga is a tool, and the person who uses the tool is you, the individual. The knife is in your hands; how you use the knife has to be decided by you, not by the knife. Therefore, how you use yoga is decided by you, according to your choices and needs. That is where you have made a mistake, as you have not been able to understand the full scope of yoga and its influence on human life.

Setting aside for the time being the asana, pranayama, relaxation and meditative component, look at what other



forms of yoga are there to improve the quality of life and of the human being, the practitioner. Can the enhancement of the human personality take place only with the practice of asana, pranayama, relaxation and meditation? The answer is no.

How can enhancement of the human faculties take place in life? For that you have to understand the principles and not the practices of yoga. In order to know the principles of yoga, study the literature of Swami Sivananda. In his books he has clearly defined the barriers that restrict your journey on the path of yoga. He is not looking at asana, not pranayama, not relaxation, not meditation, not kriya, not kundalini, not chakra, but at yoga principles.

Nine traits to be avoided

Swami Sivananda says that in order to experience the purity, strength and creativity of one's self there are nine traits that one has to watch out for. One should guard against these nine traits, for these mind traits do not allow one to grow spiritually. What are these traits that have to be observed, managed, modified and transformed?

According to Swami Sivananda, these are the traits which restrict the growth and evolution of the human mind and consciousness: Number one is 'avidity'; it is the same as greed. Number two is lust or passion. Number three is stupidity, which is delusion or infatuation. Number four is arrogance or impertinence. Number five is confusion of mind. Number six is instability of mind; it means dissipation of mind, a wandering, unstable mind. Vanity is the next trait. Eccentricity is slavery to whims and fancies, and the last is irritability, which is anger in all its forms. These are the traits that you have to avoid or guard against for your spiritual growth.

How do you guard against these traits that are common and happen every day? You go through those experiences and situations, so how can you avoid these negative traits?

Cultivate the opposite

The answer is given in the tradition of yoga. The answer is simple: *pratipaksha bhavana*, cultivating the opposite virtue, cultivating the opposite thought. Greed or 'avidity' can be lessened or removed with the practice of generosity. If you practise generosity, charity, *daan*, giving, then greed can be controlled, modified and transformed from a selfish need to a selfless service.

Similarly, passion or lust, 'cupidity' can be controlled through the practices of purity: keeping the thoughts, the mind and the ideas pure. You then are no longer swayed by your passions and lust. For, when you are swayed by passions and lust, the purity of mind does not remain anymore and it becomes tainted. That taint of mind makes you behave in an improper manner. Purity has to be there to manage passions: purity of thought and intention, purity in heart and mind. If purity is there, passions, lust and infatuations have no role in your life.

Instability of mind, the wandering of the mind, can be managed through the practices of concentration, *dharana*. The practices of meditation, *dhyana*, will stop the wandering

of the mind. Vanity can be controlled through the practice of humility, eccentricity managed through the practice of right conduct, and irritability through the practice of patience and forbearance.

Negative versus positive

Cultivating the opposite of a negative trait is known as pratipaksha bhavana. When people ask, "How do I deal with the negative mind?" "Can I eliminate the negative mind?" "Can I remove the negativity from my mind?" The answer is that you cannot remove the negativity of the mind. Whatever quantity is there will always be there. However, you can increase your positivity. Once the positivity increases in your life, the negative automatically goes to the background. Imagine that there is a taraju, scales. On one side you have put the negative tendencies and traits of life, and on the other side the goodness. Which side will be heavier, the negative side or the positive side?

The negative is always more weighted than the positive. Nobody can deny it, for negativity comes naturally, and positivity has to be cultivated. Nobody has taught you how to get angry. You have not asked anybody, "Please teach me how I can get angry" or "How can I be envious?" "How can I be jealous?" "How can I be greedy?" No, everybody is asking, "Please teach me how I can love others more." "Please teach me how I can be a little bit more compassionate." "Please teach me how I can be more sympathetic."

You want to learn about cultivating the good and you ask, "What is the way to become better." Where did the anger, greed and jealousy come from? Did you get them, learn or study about them in any school, college, ashram, or university? No. These are natural traits as life is tamasic.

Tamas all around

There are three gunas: tamasic, rajasic, and sattwic. *Tamasic* means conditioned, conditioning; *rajasic* means dynamic; and

sattwic means illuminated. Your body, senses and mind are conditioned by the senses, sense objects and the influences of society and the family. This conditioning becomes your *samskara*, your karma and your mentality.

You are conditioned about religion and about society by your family, you are conditioned about your own personal habits, expectations and needs from life. In the tamasic nature, there is always a desire, an expectation, a goal that you set for yourselves. This nature is reflected as *vasana*, as *kamana*, as *iccha* – desire. This body is tamasic and this mind is tamasic.

If the mind was *sattwic*, there would be no need to discuss anything, we would be in the state of purity and wisdom. When we are not in that state of purity and wisdom, and there is conflict and confusion in the mind, and the path is never clear, it is the state of *tamas*. The state of *tamas* means *ignorance*, *tamas* means *avidya*, not knowing the appropriate, not knowing the correct, not knowing the right method, and floundering, being confused, uncertain, insecure and fearful. That is *tamas*.

Focus on the positive

This tamasic condition in life gives birth to the negative traits which restrict the growth and evolution of every human being. The question was, if you place the negatives of your life on one side of the *taraju*, the scale, and the positive of your life on the other side of the scale, which will be the heavier side? Unquestioningly the negative will be heavier. Then what to do? Do you try to remove the negative and lighten that side of the scale? The more you become aware of the negative, the more depressed you will be for you will see 'this is what I am'. Therefore, let the negative be there, ignore it and develop the positive. Keep putting more on the positive side of the scale so that eventually it becomes heavier. In the course of time, the negative becomes lighter. As long as you focus on the positive, you are focusing on the uplifting and on the betterment of yourself. The moment you become aware of the negative

you fall into the states of anxiety, depression, frustration and unhappiness.

When you are placing the good virtues or the cultivated qualities on the positive side, your awareness is always focused on the positive, and the negative is ignored. If you try to remove the negative, your awareness is focused on and thinking about the negative all the time. You forget the positive and how to strengthen your positive side and qualities.

The concept of pratipaksha bhavana, cultivating the opposite of what you feel and think is the sadhana to manage the traits that restrict the growth or evolution of the human mind, human consciousness and human life. In the *Yoga Sutras* of Sage Patanjali and by other propagators of yoga the emphasis has been placed on the sadhana of pratipaksha bhavana, as part of yoga sadhana.

Swami Sivananda said you have to guard against the nine traits , for they are emanations and reflections of your own mind. They are your own creations. Therefore, guard against those destructive, self-created impositions which will restrict your happiness, peace and prosperity.

– 11 April 2014, Worli, Mumbai, India



Thank-you Letter



This is a big 'thank-you note' to Swami Niranjanananda and Dr Swami Nirmalananda. They gave guidance to my cousin, Nekzan, regarding his illness, during the Yoga Yatra program in Mumbai, in April 2014.

When Nekzan's cancer was detected he was told that it was in an advanced stage and incurable. Today, his latest PET Scan shows that the cancer is in regression and only 20 to 30 per cent of it is left. His oncologist says that it is almost miraculous. Nekzan's chemotherapy will continue for some time though.

Since April 2014, Nekzan is learning yoga with me under the guidance of Dady Billimoria. As recommended, I also refer to the two new books, *Yogic Management of Cancer* by Dr Swami Nirmalananda, and *Exploring Yoga and Cancer* by Dr Swami Yogapratap.

Nekzan is practising yoga nidra regularly since June. He is also putting in an effort to eliminate resentment from his life. He says that he has not reached the same level of physical fitness he had when he used to visit the gym, but he feels much calmer and more relaxed with his daily yoga practice.

Thank you once again.

– Sannyasi Shantikriya

Computer Generation

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



In this computer age, communication skills are taking a beating. In the ashram in Munger, we have a computer department, and these young IT-savvy people came to work in the department. A few months ago, I was surprised to hear a report that there were two people sitting at different tables, five feet away from each other, yet instead of talking to each other, they were sending emails to each other. I could not believe it! We have lost the skill of communication.

Isolated children

You don't even know how to speak, you don't even know how to communicate, that you need to send emails.

There have been many results and reports coming from various parts of the world. There was a report from the UK that children are forgetting how to write. In our time we used to write and improve our handwriting. We had books with lines and we had to write our letters between the lines, 'A, B, C, D'. Today, the young people in the West with computer overuse are forgetting how to write by hand.

These children with computers are not interacting with children of their own age. They are isolated in their room playing games on their Gameboy. There is no interaction between children anymore. There is more interaction between Google and children, than children and children.

What does this indicate? You are losing your ability to communicate, to interact, to be in groups with people. You are isolating yourselves; your children are isolating themselves from interacting with other people and from interacting with society. You as parents are allowing them to do so. Later you will say, "I don't know what happened, but my child has a low emotional quotient. I don't know what happened, but my child has a low social quotient."

Losing the grip on life

This is going to be the problem in the future. With high IQ's there will be low EQ's and low SQ's. It will be the death of humanity, as you are unable to express yourselves in a manner that is dignified. You are losing the qualities and skills of communication and interaction, the more that you isolate yourself from your society and confine yourself in your own world with your laptops, Gameboys, iPads, and iPhones, and all the apps that are available. At one level, you will have information at your fingertips, yet at another level you are going to lose the grip on your life. This is the developing trend.

In this situation, training to know the nature of the mind is going to be important. When Sigmund Freud developed the concepts of psychology - the unconscious, the id, the subconscious, and the interactions of the different dimensions of the mind and instincts - it gave an understanding of the basic structure of the human mind. Other psychoanalysts developed the theories propounded by Freud and Jung, and they developed various forms of psychoanalytical processes, such as EST, Silver Mind Control, and Transactional Analysis.

Rectify the imbalance

Further advancements in psychological research have shown that the human mind is governed by archetypes. What psychology calls archetypes and symbols are known as *samskaras* in yogic terminology. The archetypes of mind are the *samskaras* of yoga. According to modern psychology, as

you become more material in thought, and more sensorial and sensual in your life, the archetypes, the samskaras, will go through a change. They will modify according to your life situation and condition. This modification, which may happen due to the normal social condition, will isolate the individual from other individuals, from society and from the community. The trend in society is to be independent and free from other people and their influences, so that one can live one's own ambitions and fulfil one's desires without any restrictions of parents and society. However, this is going to create confusion as to how the human character and human traits have to develop in the future.

What will be the appropriate steps taken by future generations to rectify the imbalance, which you are creating now in this generation in the form of isolation? You will have to come back to the principles and the practices of yoga. There, you can relearn to use the faculties of mind in the proper manner, starting with communication, understanding and purification. Communication is an integral part of human behaviour.

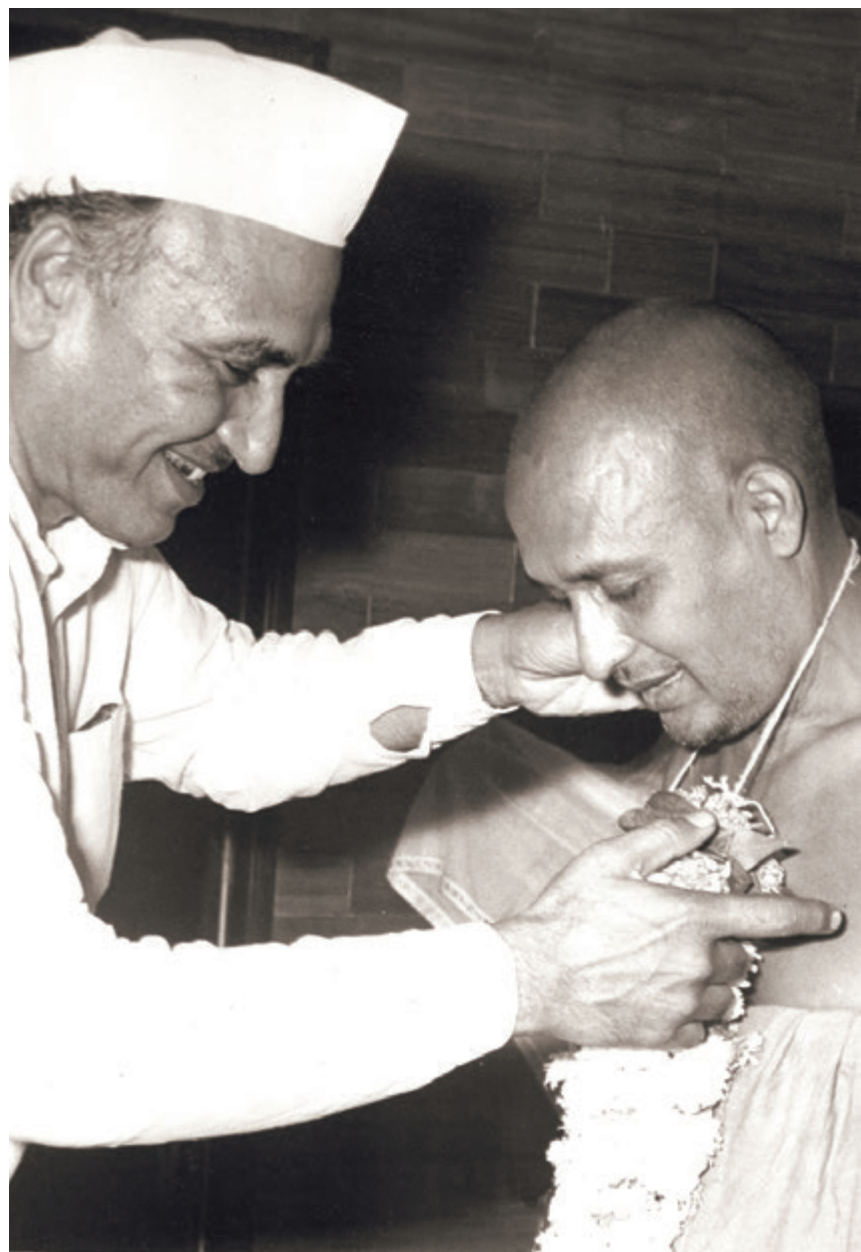
Bring in positivity

There are only two *jatis*, two types of life forms, that always talk, talk and talk. One, the birds; they are chirping the whole day. Second, the human beings; they are gossiping, gossiping and gossiping all day.

The speech of human beings is only criticism and gossip. It is not constructive. You talk of politics, it is always negative talk; you talk of social conditions, it is always negative talk; you talk of your family problems, it is always negative talk. This is how you condition your mind and this is how you condition your samskaras: in negativity.

This negativity has to be countered by positivity. Countering negativity through positivity has to happen at different levels. First, as a personal discipline: What can you do to be yourself and to improve yourself. Apart from spiritual disciplines, your







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Vishwa Yogapeeth, Munger, Bihar.

14th April 2014. NSCI Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sta

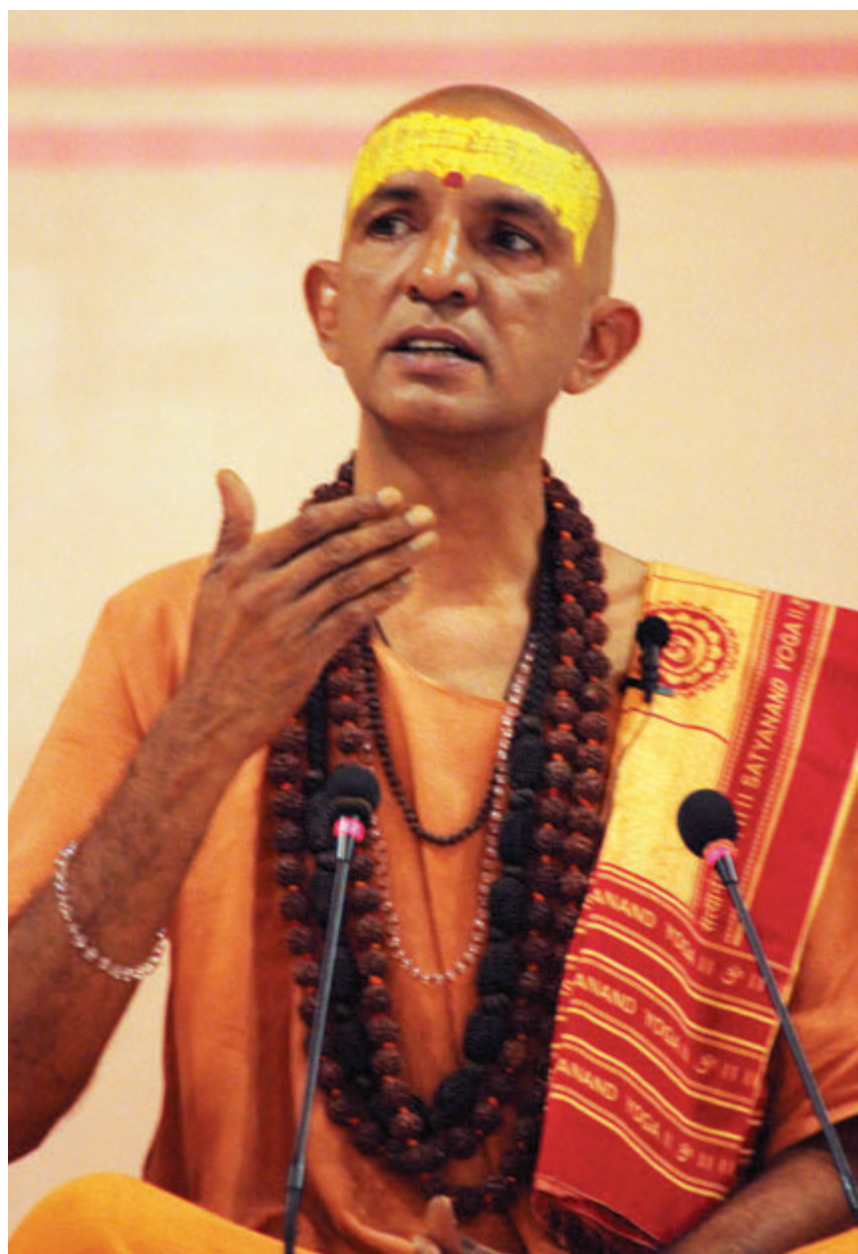


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social life has to improve. You cannot isolate yourself from social life under the guise of spiritual desire. You can bring a better balance into your social life and your family life, and integrate it properly with your spiritual life. When you are able to do this, your society will change and human society will change.

– 10 April 2014, Worli, Mumbai, India



WINDOW TO THE PAST

Hanuman without a Tail

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

What are the best yoga practices for a teenager?

These two things: surya namaskara and nadi shodhana pranayama, every morning. You can practise more yoga, but these two are compulsory.

Also the worship of a deity like Hanuman is most powerful and ideal for a young person. You will have no weakness, no heat, no cold, no infirmity of will or of body.

I am like Hanumanji without a tail.

– 10 November 1976, Mumbai, India



Looking at the Koshas

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

You are composed of various levels: physical, energetic, mental, consciousness and spirit. These are five elements that have come together to create 'you'.

Earth, water, fire, air and ether are the material elements, however they are not the elements that give you the experience of what life is. Earth, fire, water, air and ether are not sentient elements. They are only the building blocks of life. Within this building block of life, there is a sentient power. That is the spirit. That is consciousness.

You cater to the needs of the body and harmonize the body. You cater to the needs of the energy system and you regulate and activate your energy system by working on the annamaya and pranamaya kosha.

There is also a need to make the mind free of its own stressors and stresses. Therefore, for manomaya kosha, the ability to relax has to be developed. To focus the dissipated energies of the mind and to experience the power of the mind, concentration and meditation become a must for the experience of vijnanamaya kosha.

Proper application of yoga at these four levels will automatically take you to the fifth level of anandamaya kosha and bliss. The harmony at these initial four levels will culminate in the experience of *ananda*, bliss. Although you work with four levels, body, prana, mind and consciousness, the integration of the four gives birth to the fifth experience of your inner luminosity. That is the state of bliss, the state of ananda. This is not a spiritual philosophy, it is a philosophy grounded on the realities of life, the realities that you confront in your life every day.

In our *parampara*, tradition, it is said that the purpose of yoga is to realize life. The purpose of yoga is not to realize

God. The purpose of yoga is to realize life, to be in tune with life's expressions, and to enhance the beautiful expressions of life. The moment your dissipations are negated and eliminated the mind becomes powerful. The restrictions of the mind are its own negativity while the strength of the mind is its own positivity. You can experience this in your life in all situations. Once this stage is complete the further journey of cultivating spiritual awareness becomes accessible.

– 13 April 2014, Chembur, Mumbai, India



Mananat Trayate Iti Mantraha

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Manan means ‘involvement with thought. This involvement with thought in the negative form becomes worry, *chinta*. As a positive thought or in the positive dimension it becomes *manan*, reflection. How do you know the difference between reflection and worry? In reflection, your mind stays peaceful, whereas in worry your mind becomes agitated. The process is the same as you are becoming involved and absorbed in your own thoughts. However, when you can maintain your objectivity those thoughts are known as reflection. When you cannot maintain your objectivity and you become involved those thoughts are known as worry.

You are worried for you are unable to disconnect with what is predominant in the mind. If a thought is predominant you are unable to disconnect from that, if an emotion is predominant you are unable to disconnect from that. When you are unable to disconnect, and you are caught in the swirl of those emotions and thoughts, then that is obsessive-compulsive behaviour.

From the perspective of the mantra, it is *mananat trayate iti mantraha*. Mantra is the procedure, the method which frees the mind from its own obsessive-compulsive thinking.

When you do the mantra, you are breaking this thought pattern and focusing your awareness and thoughts on something different. The first thought became the cause of your anxiety and worry. Then you cut that, and you generate a second thought which allows you to experience peace and harmony within you. That is the effect of mantra, for mantra realigns and reorganizes the energy structure of the body and mind.

Mantra is a whole subject *mantra vijnana*, the science of mantra. It is not called *mantra vidya*, knowledge of mantra. It is

not the knowledge of mantra, but the science of mantra. Where the word 'vijñana' or the idea of science is used, it indicates a specific procedure that the mantra takes you through, which is sequential. There are various types of mantra in mantra vijñana. One is mantras like *Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*, *Om Namah Shivaya*, the Mahamrityunjaya mantra, the Gayatri mantra. These are common mantras or universal mantras, which anybody can use for a specific purpose.

Then there is the guru mantra which is personal and private. It is given to you according to what the guru wants: what level of understanding, what growth, what aim the guru wants you to achieve in life. Therefore, it becomes a personalized sadhana. If the guru gives the mantra *So-Ham*, you are free to do all the other mantras like Mahamrityunjaya, Gayatri, or various stotras, yet your personal sadhana is indicated by the mantra *So-Ham*. This mantra *So-Ham*, when you do it as a meditative practice and not as a chant, internalizes you. The *spandan* or the vibration influences the behaviour of the brain. Your brain is relaxed and tranquillized.

– 15 April 2014, Chembur, Mumbai, India



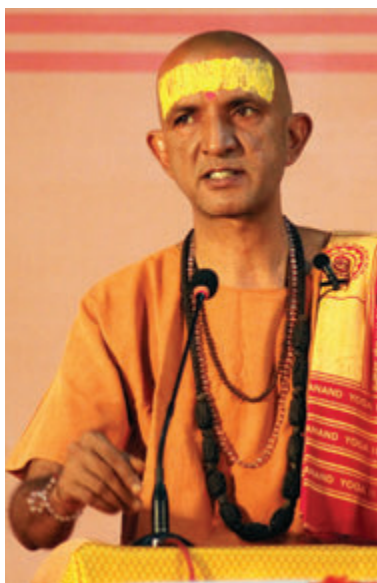
The Yoga of Excellence

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

I have taken it upon myself to excel in everything that I do: excel in anger, excel in compassion, excel in love, excel in understanding, excel in relationships, excel in communication. At all levels, excellence has to become the hallmark of my life, and there is nothing to negate.

Look at the intention

You can say, "How can Swamiji say 'excel in anger'? Yogis are not supposed to be angry." You can say, "How can Swamiji say



he excels in hatred? Yogis are not supposed to hate." Don't look at the word, look at what the intent is. Look at the example of Sri Krishna: He was Yogeshwar. He was an avatara. Did he not get angry ever? When he became angry, he lived his anger to perfection. He did not harm anybody in that anger, he did not slap anybody in that anger, he did not kill anybody in that anger – he just became angry. That was excellence in anger, without harming another person with the anger. You can excel in hate too, without projecting the hate on another person, just as you can excel in love without imposing your love on another person. It is an awareness and it is an understanding of knowing when not to react.

Reactions are there. Everyone reacts. Reactions allow you to see another aspect of yourself and control it. Observe your reaction, allow it and yourself to excel in it, and then pacify

it. There is nothing wrong in excelling in the bad or the good, as long as you know that your bad will not affect the other person.



Excellence versus perfection

There is a difference between perfection and excellence. Obsession comes when you want everything to be perfect. Even the straws lying on the ground have to be aligned, not thrown at random. This is a perfectionist mindset, and that creates problems, for if things do not happen as you desire, you react, you rebel, are frustrated and angry. Excellence does not have that problem. Excellence is not perfectionism. Excellence is putting the best foot forward. Whether you succeed or not, whether you are perfect or not; it does not matter. Whatever you are doing presently, give your head, heart and soul to it. Believe that you are doing it for the first time in your life, and it is a new experience, and it will be for the last time in your life; so give your best. This is also the understanding of karma yoga.

People ask, "What is karma yoga?" We say, "In the ashram we teach you karma yoga." People say, "What do you mean? You give us a jharu, a broom, ask us to clean and then you say this is karma yoga?" This is an aspect of karma yoga; it is not all of karma yoga. This aspect of karma yoga indicates that there is no difference between any type of work. There is no work that is superior and there is no work that is inferior. Sweeping the ground is not an inferior job; it is an act of hygiene, and how can an act of hygiene be considered inferior by anybody with common sense?

If you feel ashamed to pick up a broom, that is your shortcoming. It is your ego and arrogance which says, "How can I pick up the broom when there are servants to do the job?" Picking up the broom and sweeping the room with a clear and peaceful mind indicates that you do not see any difference between any kind of job, and there is no confusion as to the status or ego identity of the individual.

No job is dirty

Sri Swamiji himself used to clean the toilets. It is not a dirty act. The dirt is the junk in your mind, and that junk is in your perception. A mother also cleans the bum of her children. Is it a dirty act? No. Yet you are unable to clean your own toilet seat due to the conditioning of your mind. Does that mental conditioning make you into a better human being? No. Rather, it indicates a retarded nature of mind, for you are not willing to see what your *kartavya*, your duty, and dharma is, and where your dharma lies.

In a family household where four people live, husband, wife and children, where there is supposed to be no projection of the ego, and where there is supposed to be understanding, cooperation, *sahayoga*, and mutual respect for each other, even there the husband will never attempt to put his clothes in the washing machine; the wife has to do it. The husband will never attempt to take his cup of tea to the kitchen sink; the wife has to do it.

That is the ego which you all live with, and that ego becomes the status of an individual: "I am like this." If you identify with your status, you are identifying with your ego. It is as simple as that. You are connecting with



arrogance. You are not supporting or encouraging cooperation, sympathy, harmony and communication.

Put the best foot forward

In this situation, how can anybody seek excellence? In all situations people can be perfectionists and demand that something should not be a particular way. They become aggressive that “Why did you do it like that, when it should not happen in that way?” The perfectionist mentality gives birth to aggression, frustration, and there is loss of human creativity and excellence. Excellence is just trying to put your best foot forward, and leaving everything in the hands of destiny: ‘I have done my best – this is my first and this is my last time.’

When I speak to you, this is the thought that makes me speak to you: that I am speaking to you for the first time, and this may be my last time too. Therefore, what I have to convey, I should be able to convey. When I clean my room in the ashram, I think that I am doing it for the first time ever in my life, and put all my attention in cleaning. I ensure that not a single spot is left dirty, for I want it to be the epitome of cleanliness. At least for me, that is excellence.

– 11 April 2014, Worli, Mumbai, India



Evolution of Consciousness (Extracts)

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Let us remember the great Rishi Patanjali, and by remembering him let us also remember the purpose for which we have incarnated. Patanjali conducted tremendous research throughout his life and finally uncovered a great secret, which was the discovery of consciousness or *chitta* as it is known in Sanskrit. All the practices of yoga advocated by Rishi Patanjali, termed as 'ashtanga' or 'raja yoga', are aimed at taming this great power, this great force in every individual.

Mind versus *vritti*

Most people beginning to tread the spiritual path regard the mind as the aim of their sadhana, but unfortunately they are not able to analyze or interpret the word 'mind' correctly. Most of us engaged in spiritual practices of any type and dimension regard visions, thoughts or fluctuations of the thought patterns as the mind. According to Patanjali, however, that which is mistaken for the mind is simply a *vritti*, a pattern, ripple or modification; it is not the actual consciousness. An emotion is not the definition of consciousness, nor is a memory of the past or an anxiety about the future. All these feelings which we have been experiencing during our sadhana or at any other time of our life are not *chitta*, or mind, they are the *vrittis* or modifications of the mind.

Yoga means control over the patterns and modes of consciousness, but not over consciousness itself. Whether it is the practice of *dhyana yoga* or even the experience of *sabija*, *nirbija*, *savikalpa* or *nirvikalpa samadhi*, it is not the consciousness or the mind that we are withdrawing. It is the modifications, patterns and structures of consciousness that are suppressed, blocked, withdrawn or annihilated.

The consciousness is not withdrawn in meditation or in samadhi, as consciousness is an abstract force. It is the basis for the experience of the individual in relation to time and space. The homogeneity of our awareness, knowledge and relationship with the world of diverse names and forms is based on what we call consciousness.

Fantastic stuff

This consciousness has two different areas of manifestation. When it is in the form of movement and activity, it has a definite pattern and structure known as chitta. When it is free from modification and any kind of pattern or structure, it is known as *chit*. Chit represents consciousness with a capital 'C' which we call atman, and chitta represents consciousness with a small 'c' which we call mind. When consciousness or atman identifies itself with the world of names and forms, and is able to express itself in certain patterns and modifications, then it is chitta.

In yoga we follow this process in reverse order by the practice of *pratyahara*, sense withdrawal; *dharana*, concentration; *dhyana*, meditation; and *samadhi*, superconscious state.

Spiritual development is a slow process of transformation. Chitta is the most fantastic stuff, the ultimate form of which is chit; just as nuclear energy is the ultimate form of fissionable matter. During the process of transformation we must be prepared to face ourselves. Before reaching chit or atman, a lot of unpleasantness has to be worked through. A lot of effort has to be made in spiritual life, as well as in our day-to-day life. This applies to everyone, whether householder or renunciate. *Chitta shuddhi*, or purification of mind, is not necessarily a pleasant or sweet process, but it is definitely a beneficial process. Through purification the mind becomes effulgent, and with this cleansed mind we are able to perceive our true nature.

– 7 March 1978, Lecture at Tata Hall, Mumbai, India

His Inner Content

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

27th October 1950: Public reception at Madhav Bagh

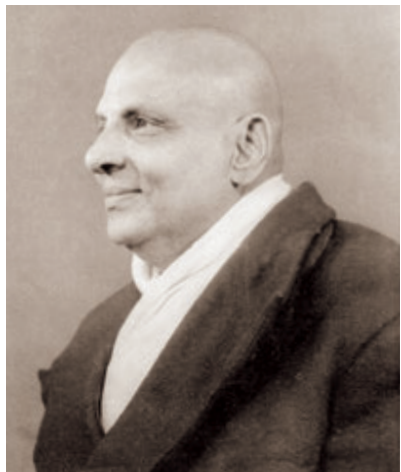
Immediately after the function, Siva rushed back to the city and went to Madhav Bagh. At 6 pm the public meeting at Madhav Bagh commenced. Mandaleshwar Maheshwaranandaji Maharaj of Suratgiri Bungalow, Haridwar, who had got a very big ashram at Vile Parle here had also come to attend the meeting. He met Siva earlier that day, along with Mandaleshwar Prem Puriji of Kailash Ashram, Rishikesh. Siva spoke as follows:

The message of the Gita

“Adorable and worthy Mandaleshwar Maheshwaranandaji Maharaj, venerable mahatmas, and children of immortality! Let us chant *Om*, as usual. *Om Om Om*.

Madhav Bagh is a sacred place where Sri Satyanarayana dwells and where His Holiness Mandaleshwar Vidyanandaji had given continuously his discourses on the *Bhagavad Gita*. Now also Mahamandaleshwar Swami Maheshwaranandaji is giving you discourses daily. The *Gita* is a subject well known to you all. You have heard and assimilated all the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita* already.

The *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* is a sacred book which contains the essence of the Vedas and the Upanishads. It is a book for all times and is suitable for all people and all nations of this world. It gives



practical instructions to guide you in your daily battle of life, in the removal of *avidya* or ignorance, and in the attainment of your supreme abode of immortal bliss and perennial peace. If you live even in the spirit of a few verses of the *Gita*, you will attain supreme peace and perennial joy.

The unborn, changeless absolute

Ajo nityah saswathoyam puraano - "unborn, eternal ancient". If you dwell on the meaning of this one verse, and meditate constantly on it, you will attain immortality. You can get over *deha adhyasa*, wrong identification with this body, which is the result of *anadi avidya*, beginningless ignorance. This identification with the body is the cause for all our miseries, troubles and tribulations in our life. If we can remove this *deha adhyasa* and attain true knowledge through discrimination and dispassion, we shall free ourselves from the mortal coil of birth and death, and we shall enjoy the supreme peace of the self. We shall become supermen, yogis and sages, not in the unknown future, but right now, in this very second.

Ajah means unborn. The Lord is unborn. The Absolute is unborn. He is changeless. He is immortal. In reality this mortal



jiva and perishable world, the changing phenomena, has never come out of Brahman. It is only an illusory perception in the mind. If the immortal, unchanging Absolute can become the perishable, changing world or the individual soul, if the Unborn Being can take a birth, Brahman will lose His immortality! In reality, there is no world in the three periods of time, from the transcendental point of view, from the viewpoint of real wisdom.

Apply yourself diligently to the practice of the *Bhagavad Gita*. You will have to put into practice, in your daily life, what you have learnt from the discourses and the teachings of the great and the wise. Lead the divine life in accordance with the teachings of the Lord in the *Bhagavad Gita*. Engrave on the tablet of your heart, slokas like (12:13):

*Advēshta sarva bhootaanaam maitrah karuna eva cha,
Nirmamo nirahamkarah sa shantim adhigachchati.*

He who is free from malice towards all beings, friendly and compassionate, and free from the feelings of 'I' and 'mine' . . . he attains peace.

Meditate on it. You will develop cosmic love, *kshama* and *vishwaprem*; and you will get over *ahamta* and *mamata*. *Maya* binds you to the world through egoism, *ahamta*, and mine-ness, *mamata*. If you can give up these two through discrimination and enquiry into the nature of the self, you will be free right now, from the mortal coil of birth and death. You will enjoy this very second the supreme peace of *moksha*.

Beware of maya

The goal of life is self-realization. Never forget this. *Maya* is so powerful that she tries to bind you in a variety of ways. You know it is not good to tell lies; yet you indulge in falsehood. Introspect regularly and find out for yourself! You know it is not good to be selfish; yet you are selfish. This is *maya*. When you are in the burial ground, you make various resolves: I

will lead a virtuous life; I will do more japa, more meditation; I will never hurt others' feelings. However, as soon as you come back to the house, you forget everything. This is maya.

Sometimes the husband and the wife quarrel in the house, on account of some friction and lack of psychological unity of hearts. The husband wants to abandon the wife, renounce the world and embrace sannyasa. Again she smiles and he clings to her like a leech! This is maya. So powerful is maya's influence over the poor, deluded jiva. But the Lord has assured you in the *Gita* that if you take refuge in Him, He will enable you to cross this maya very easily.

Do japa. Sing kirtan. Associate with the wise and the saints. Satsang, santosha, vichara and shanti: these are the four sentinels at the door to moksha. If you make friendship even with one, he will introduce you to the others, and you will have all of them. If you get shanti, you will get other virtues. Gradually you will attain the goal. Therefore, cultivate the virtues enumerated in the *Gita*.

Thy essential nature

The nature of Brahman is described in Chapter 13, sloka 17:

*Jyotishaamapi tat jyotih tamasah param uchyate;
Jnaanam jneyam jnaanagamyam hridisarvasya vishthitam.*

That, the Light of all lights, is beyond darkness; it is said to be knowledge, the knowable and the goal of knowledge, seated in the hearts of all.

Nowhere in the books of the world will you find such grand teachings (15:6): *Na tadbhaasayate suryo na sashanko na pavakah -* "The sun does not shine there, nor the moon, nor the fire . . ." He gives light to the intellect; He gives light to the mind and the indriyas. He is *manasya manah, pranasya pranah, chakshushah chakshuh* - "the mind of the mind, the prana of prana and the eye of eyes." The eye does not go there, but through his power, through the power of the Absolute, alone does the eye perceive

and the ears hear. The intellect and the mind function, through His power only. All these, the intellect, the indriyas and pranas, receive and borrow their light, power and intelligence from this Supreme Brahman, the Absolute, the Substance or the Thing-in-itself, any name you may give Him. There is One Supreme Being whose nature is *satchidananda*, ever-existent, immortal, supreme bliss. You should attain That, then only will you be free from the miseries of *samsara janmamrityujaraavyadhi duhkham* - "The world of birth, death, old age disease and pain."

You must enquire into the nature of the atma. We have forgotten our essential divine nature, because we are identifying our Self with this body, being influenced by this little mind and the self-arrogating little personality. As a concomitant effect, we are miserable. The moment we realize our essential divine nature, we will be freed from misery.

In dream you have no experience of the body; the body remains as a log of wood. In that there is a clue that you are distinct from the physical body. In deep sleep there is no functioning of the mind either. This clearly proves that you are distinct from the mind also. Your essential nature is peace. What do you enjoy in deep sleep? Peace. In the morning the next day, you say, "I enjoyed a peaceful sleep." In a place where there is no play of the raga-dwesa currents, where there are no objects, in deep sleep, you enjoyed peace. There is no hotel there; no clubs nor



stimulating drinks; yet you feel joy and peace in deep sleep. This goes to prove that you are non-dual, and that you are an embodiment of peace and bliss. This is your essential nature. If you can annihilate the mind by sadhana, deep meditation, and knowledge of the nature of the mind, you can enjoy that peace and bliss in the waking state. Mind is only a bundle of raga-dwesha, of sankalpas, of vasanas, habits and trishnas. If you can eradicate all vasanas, trishnas or raga-dwesha currents, there is death for the mind. You become one with the Supreme Being. This is the goal of life.

The way of attainment

Self-realization is the goal of life. Never forget this. Maya tries to delude you and makes you think that this world alone is real, that sensual pleasures alone are real and that there is nothing transcendental beyond the mind and senses. Be vigilant, be diligent, apply yourself to yogic sadhana. Have satsang, practise enquiry, do japa, meditate, study vedantic literature.

Vedantins say that there are three doshas in the mind: *mala*, impurity, *vikshepa*, dissipation, and *avarana*, veil of ignorance. Remove mala through selfless service. Annihilate the evils and impurities of the mind, raga-dwesha, jealousy and hatred, through untiring selfless service, through charity, service of the poor, service of the sick. When the heart is purified, then only will the knowledge of the self descend. You must have a pure heart. The mind is ever oscillating and fluctuating like a monkey. You must do upasana, tratika and pranayama and steady the mind. Sage Patanjali says in the *Yoga Sutras* (2:52 and 53):

*Tatah kshiyate prakashaavaranam.
Dhaaranaashu cha yogyataa manasah.*

Thereby the covering of light disappears. And fitness of the mind for concentration (develops through pranayama).

Sattwa is enveloped by rajas and tamas. Destroy rajas and tamas by the practice of pranayama. You will be filled with sattwa. Then alone will you be able to practise enquiry and vichara, and attain the goal of life.

*Vihaya kaamaan yah sarvaan pumaamshcharati nihsprihah;
Nirmamo nirahankarah sa shaantim adhigacchati.*

The man attains peace, who, abandoning all desires, moves about without longing, without the sense of mine and without egoism.

Dwell on this one sloka (2:71) from the *Gita* constantly. Where lies real peace and happiness? Not in trying to accumulate wealth in a variety of ways, in having mills here and there, floating limited companies and amassing wealth. Remember, nothing in this world can give you lasting peace, mental shanti. Ask any multimillionaire, "Have you got mental shanti?" No. *Vihaya kaamaan!* Give up all the desires, give up mineness and I-ness. Then alone will you attain shanti. Remember this sloka (4:39):

*Shraddhavan labhate jnanam tat parah samyatendriyah;
Jnaanam labdhva param shantim achirena adhigachchhati.*

The man who is full of faith, who is devoted to it, and who has subdued all the senses, obtains (this) knowledge; and, having obtained the knowledge, he goes at once to the supreme peace.

Faith in the words of the guru, in your own self. When you have shraddha, everything else you will get. You believe in so many things! You should have faith and firm conviction: there is one atma, one Absolute Consciousness that dwells in all these names and forms:

*Eko devah sarvabhooteshu gudah
sarvavyaapi sarvabhootaantara atma.*



One pure consciousness is hidden in all beings like butter in milk, like fire in wood, electricity in the wires, like a foetus in the womb of the mother. Through enquiry, through the study of the *Gita*, through a disciplined life, eating little, always loving all, being kind to all, removing all the barriers of raga-dwesha which separate man from man, and destroying this bheda-buddhi through *vichara* or enquiry, attain the goal of life right now in this very second.

In Chapter 13, you find the Lord has enumerated certain virtues such as: *amanitvam* – absence of vanity. In Chapter 16, again He has enumerated some other virtues: *Abhayam sattoasamshudhir* – fearlessness, purity of heart . . .

Courage is your essential nature; this timidity is a negative evil vritti; it will not last by itself. Only courage is eternal. It always persists. Timidity is a negative evil; therefore it will disappear. Remember the nature of the atma, Abhayam Brahman; you will attain the Supreme Courage of Brahman. All these virtues I have combined in the form of a small English song which I shall sing now.”

Siva then sang the *Song of 18 ITIES*:

*Serenity, regularity, absence of vanity,
Sincerity, simplicity, veracity,
Equanimity, fixity, non-irritability,
Adaptability, humility, tenacity,
Integrity, nobility, magnanimity,
Charity, generosity, purity.*

*Practise daily these eighteen ITIES,
You will soon attain immortality.
Brahman is the only real entity,
Mr So and So is a false non-entity.
You will abide in eternity and infinity;
You will behold unity in diversity;
You cannot attain this in the university.
But you can attain this in the Forest University,
But you can attain this in the ashram in Rishikesh.*

After a number of other bhajans and kirtans, Siva spoke to the women and placed before them the noble examples of Madalasa and Sachi. Siva then chanted the Mahamrityunjaya mantra. He said, "In these days of complex life, those who recite this mantra will be free from accidents, will have health and long life. You should repeat this mantra daily. It will bestow on you moksha also." He then sang:

*Glorious Bombay, sublime Bombay,
Sacred Bombay, beautiful Bombay.
This is the sacred land which is trodden
By various yogis and sages,
Where His Holiness Swami Vidyanandaji,
And Mahamandaleshwar Maheshwaranandaji
Deliver beautiful discourses.
To Bombay-oasis, to Divine Life organizers,
My silent adorations, my silent salutations.
My silent prostrations, my silent namaskarams.
Namaste, Namaste, Jaya Jaya Ram-ji-ki.*

May the Lord bless you all with health, long life, peace, prosperity, eternal bliss, success in all undertakings, a brilliant career, *vidya*, knowledge, *tushti*, contentment, *pushti*, wellbeing, and all divine *aishwoaryas*, attributes. Siva concluded his talk with *Swasti Vachapa*.

A discourse on a single theme

Everyone sat spellbound and listened to the entire oration. From the point of view of both the delivery and the message itself this speech was one of the most thrillingly delivered by Siva during the yatra so far. This was practically the first occasion when the people were able to pin Siva down to



one topic. Everyone who knew Siva to be an inspired thinker-aloud, who would not be tied down to speech-making and would invariably bring into his lectures a bit of everything, delivering His Message as His True Messenger, wondered at Siva's ability to canalize intuition.

The wise ones said (and perhaps they were right) that as Siva himself was a running and living commentary on the Gita, it was his pet theme, and therefore when he allowed his thoughts to flow from within outward, they bore the sweet fragrance of his inner content: the *Bhagavad Gita*.

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

Family Samskaras

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Although the world is being connected, human connectivity is lessening. You are connecting the world through technology, yet where is your human connection with each other. There is no connection in the family, everybody is engaged in their own world, believing that they are living in a family. Today there is no environment of family at home. There is no communication between family members at home. There is no understanding of each other's qualities, strengths, weaknesses and shortcomings. This creates a split in the family, and eventually in society and our civilization.

Unity is important and this unity begins in the family, therefore, begin to understand your own family first. You do not know the aspirations of your partner. What is the aspiration of your wife? What is the aspiration of your husband? What is the aspiration of your child? You keep imposing your own views, opinions and ideas on everyone else.

The practice of the Mahamrityunjaya mantra gives an opportunity for families to come together in a pious and positive environment without thinking of problems and difficulties. Rather with only one purpose: let us come together. When you come together in normal situations you sit together, yet your thoughts are not together.

The Mahamrityunjaya sadhana forces you to bring your thoughts together as well; for one sankalpa, one idea. For one aspiration: let there be strength and unity, let there be cooperation and understanding in the family. It is a good practice to create a positive environment in one's own mental and family environment. If it catches like fire then even the social environment will change.

Many things can be treated with the right form of living and the right form of thinking. Not everything can be treated



through medicine, however, many things can be treated through common sense. Do you depend on medicine or do you depend on common sense? You depend on medicine. Yoga teachers are asked to depend on common sense by creating harmony, unity, support within the family and social structure.

The world is being connected through technology, no doubt.

You are not connecting human nature in any form. You are not able to connect with anybody in a positive manner and that is the death bell of humanity: isolationism. The more you isolate yourself from other people, you become subject or a slave to the whims of your own mind. There is nobody who can inspire you to have a different vision and perception according to their understanding and awareness of life and the journey they have undertaken in life. With the advent of technology there is a decrease of human wisdom. That is the truth and the reality, whether you accept it or not.

There has to be a balance between human wisdom and your outer life. This balance between your quest for comfort, prosperity, peace and happiness, combined with your samskaras and wisdom will make you successful in life. If you ignore samskaras and wisdom there will always be strife in life. Therefore, give yourself and give your children the opportunity to cultivate good samskaras.

– 11 April 2014, Worli, Mumbai, India



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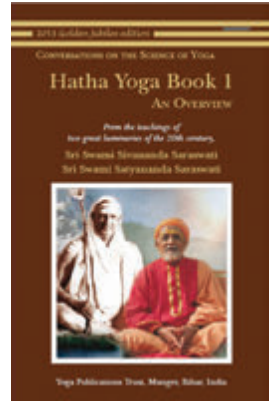
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www.rikhiapeeth.in

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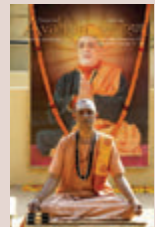


www.biharyoga.net/living-yoga/

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 2015

<i>Jan 1</i>	Hanuman Chalisa
<i>Jan 2-11</i>	Kriya Yoga Course (Spanish & Italian)
<i>Jan 21-24</i>	Sri Yantra Aradhana
<i>Jan 24</i>	Basant Panchami Celebration
<i>Feb 1-May 25</i>	Bihar School of Yoga Foundation Day
<i>Feb 14</i>	4-month Yogic Studies Course (Hindi)
<i>Mar 1-30</i>	Bal Yoga Diwas
<i>Mar 3-20</i>	Yoga Instructor's Course (Hindi)
<i>Jun 1-Jul 25</i>	Yoga HMC*: Asthma (Hindi)
<i>Jul 27-30</i>	2-month Orientation in Yogic Science & Lifestyle (Hindi)
<i>Jul 31</i>	Guru Poornima Satsang & Aradhana
<i>Aug-May 2016</i>	Guru Paduka Poojan
<i>Aug 1-30</i>	1-year Diploma in Yogic Studies (English)
<i>Sep 8</i>	Yoga Instructor's Course (English)
<i>Sep 12</i>	Swami Sivananda Janmotsava
<i>Oct 1-30</i>	Swami Satyananda Sannyasa Diwas
<i>Oct 1-Jan 25</i>	Bihar Yoga Training for Satyananda Yoga Teachers (English)
<i>Oct 3-20</i>	4-month Yogic Studies Course (English)
<i>Nov 1-7</i>	Yoga HMC*: Diabetes (Hindi)
<i>Dec 25</i>	Yoga Sadhana & Swadhyaya Week with Swami Niranjanananda
	Swami Satyananda's Birthday
	*HMC: Health Management Course
<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

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