

# YOGA

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## Hari Om

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## GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

### Song of Govinda

Serve, love, give Govinda  
Serve the poor Govinda  
Serve the parents Govinda  
Nurse the sick Govinda  
Do charity Govinda  
Be kind, be pure Govinda  
Be good, do good Govinda  
Be cheerful Govinda  
Be courageous Govinda  
Be tolerant Govinda  
Be patient Govinda  
Be forgiving Govinda  
Be liberal Govinda,  
Be moderate Govinda  
In eating, drinking Govinda  
in sexual matters Govinda  
In everything Govinda,  
be regular Govinda  
Get up at 4 am Govinda  
Brahmuhurta Govinda  
Enquire, Who am I? Govinda  
Do vichara Govinda  
This is very important Govinda  
To attain success Govinda  
There is no pleasure Govinda  
In the sensual objects Govinda  
This is the world Govinda  
Of pain and death Govinda  
Do not be duped Govinda  
By the mind and senses Govinda.

—Swami Sivananda

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# YOGA

Year 4 Issue 9 · September 2015  
(53rd year of publication)

## Contents

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

- |  |                            |  |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| 4 Take Care of the House<br>You Live In      | 22 Karma Yoga              | 35 Delhi Yogotsav: The<br>Presence of a Master |
| 7 Sanatana Dharma and Yoga                   | 24 Delhi Yatra Impressions | 38 Women in Society                            |
| 9 Antaranga Yoga                             | 26 Question and Answer     | 41 Material Journey                            |
| 16 Awakening a Greater<br>Potential (Part 1) | 28 Satsang with Children   | 50 Material and Spiritual                      |
|  | 31 What is Brahmacharya?   |  |
|  | 34 Cause of Insomnia       |  |

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 ॥

# Take Care of the House You Live In

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Indian culture has gone through many difficult phases, yet it is still alive. Civilizations of the world have vanished and live only in the pages of history. Various tribes of the world are slowly vanishing, and the culture of the world is coming to an end. The impact can also be seen on India. However, as oil separates from water, similarly the impact of western civilization will remain separate from Indian culture. The essence of Indian culture will always remain pure, for the definition of culture in India is: *samyak kriti iti sanskriti*.

*Sanskriti* is translated as culture. Dancing, singing, music, and so on, are projected as cultural presentations and programs, yet they are not cultural. They are the programs of a community. Every community has its own music and art. People call the programs of the community cultural programs, and they think of culture as dancing, singing, music, as in the western world. People go to nightclubs as a part of western culture. The culture of the western world is accepted.

## **Idiotic phase**

If a person is unable to take decisions, and lacking faith in himself, instead adopts the beliefs, character and behaviour of others in his life, thinking that the others are better and more advanced, then there is no bigger fool than him in this world.

Today India is passing through this foolish and idiotic phase, yet it is similar to the oil which floats on water. After the oil floats and flows away, the water can be seen once again.

*Samyak kriti iti sanskriti* means that when the karmas of one's life can be discharged in the most harmonious and balanced way, then that expression of karmas is called sanskriti. As long as sadhus and sannyasins are in society to disseminate their teachings, sanskriti of India will never be a thing of the past and only found in the pages of history books.

The day there will be no sadhus and no sannyasins, Indian civilization will definitely come to an end. One hundred people can be materialistic, yet one spiritually awakened soul can manage these hundred materialistic beings. Even if only one sadhu is present in India, sanskriti will not die.

## **Role of sadhus and sannyasins**

Sadhus and sannyasins are the great souls who walk on this path, know this path, understand this path and are continuously striving to re-ignite this tradition. Sadhus and sannyasins have no family so when they die no one is there to cry for them. Nobody will know where they died. In a family when someone comes and leaves, it is a matter of joy and sorrow respectively. Sadhus and sannyasins keep themselves away from these social vrittis. They study society and at the right time propagate the right teaching.

At different periods in history are great souls become the motivators for society, who are the guides and bring the directionless, lost society back onto the right path. India belongs to avatars, siddhas and sadhus, it is a country where the spiritual tradition is still alive and active.

To earn money people go to America and other countries. To attain spiritual knowledge people from the whole world come to India. For spiritual knowledge nobody goes to Africa. There is only one place where people say that their sanskriti is deteriorating. The necessity of the hour is to express this feeling and concern. If people want shining and good days to come and prevail in India, they must give a place to sanskriti in their lives. They must keep striving. Those who say that sanskriti is coming to an end, yet do not do anything about it, express their personal weakness.

### **Be responsible and wise**

If you see your own home falling apart, and you do not try to stop it, who is at fault? The person who built the house or the person who lives there? The people living in the house are at fault, for taking care of the home is their responsibility, not the responsibility of the architect or the contractor.

You live in this country so the responsibility lies on your shoulders. If there is deterioration and disintegration of your sanskriti in your country then you are responsible for it. If you want to develop your country then make an effort. Making an effort is also your responsibility.

Everybody has the habit of blaming and abusing others, and people do not look at themselves. Only a person who can look at himself is capable of maintaining sanskriti.

As for a person who sees faults only in himself and righteousness in others, and who wants to follow others, it is better to forget himself. He is already forgetting himself; he has no faith in himself, in his line of thought and his ideology. He is simply copying others, he is a copycat.

If you have *buddhi*, intellect, there is no need to copy others. The water decides its own flow of direction, and in the same way you need to use your intellect and wisdom.

– 20 September 2014, Tyagaraj Sports Stadium, Delhi, India

# Sanatana Dharma and Yoga

*Swami Sivananda Saraswati*

## **Lecture at Birla Mandir, Delhi (Extracts)**

At 7.30 am the Meerut Express reached the New Delhi railway station. The Tourist Car was then received at the famous President's Platform by special arrangement. The Secretary of the Birla Temple took Siva in his own car direct to the Birla Mandir.

After giving darshan to the devotees assembled in the hall just beneath the flat which Siva was occupying, Siva went to the pandal erected opposite the Mandir for the public reception. After prayer Siva was introduced to the audience. Then Siva spoke as follows:



"I rejoice heartily because I am in the midst of members of the Sanatana Dharma Sabha, because I am amidst men of great learning and wisdom.

Sanatana dharma and God are one. Bhagavan is an embodiment of dharma. The world is upheld by dharma. The sun, the moon, the stars are kept in their places by dharma.

Dharma has various connotations. There are those codes of conduct which apply only to certain yugas or periods of time. There are others which apply to certain countries; other countries have their own codes of conduct. There are others

which are universal. Yamas and niyamas are universal. They are unaffected by *desa*, place, and *kala*, time. Sanatana dharma is eternal dharma. It is based on the Vedas. The principles of sanatana dharma apply to all people of all times. It represents the fundamental code of righteousness.

### **The West, too, has taken to yoga**

The West is generally considered the home of materialism. But today even in European nations and in America you find thousands practising yoga. Hundreds of Americans and Europeans write to me regularly. They are all sincere, diligent and vigilant sadhakas. Go to Sweden; go to Stockholm. How many ladies are practising yoga asanas! How many people are repeating *Om Namah Shivaya!* In Latvia several groups of men and women have formed Branches of the Divine Life Society and sing the *Dwadasakshara Mantra* of Lord Krishna, *Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*, side by side with the worship of Lord Jesus.

Besides, in the West there are orders of monks and nuns who practise intense austerities. But India, the home of spirituality, the only country where God-realization has always been regarded as the goal of man, is being invaded today by various godless 'isms': Men and women in India are falling victim to the allurements of *maya*, of materialism. This is indeed a sad state of affairs. This Sanatana Dharma Sabha and other spiritual organizations are rendering inestimable service to humanity by spreading the gospel of dharma among the people of this country and of the world at large."

The function came to a close at 11 pm and Siva retired for the day.

– 4 November 1950, Delhi,

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



# Antaranga Yoga

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



The Yoga Chakra or Wheel of Yoga consists of six branches of yoga. Hatha, raja and kriya yoga are the external practices and disciplines, the *bahiranga* yoga. Karma, jnana and bhakti yoga are the inner yoga, the *antaranga* yoga

## **Karma yoga**

Karma yoga is not just working without expectation as defined in the scriptures. Karma yoga is one's involvement to create a beautiful effect in one's life. Karma yoga is a process of cultivating the garden of life and a yogi is always a gardener. People say a yogi is a warrior. Movies have come out such as 'Spiritual Warrior'. That is not the correct idea, for after all a warrior attains victory after a lot of death, destruction and spilling of blood. In that victory there is no happiness and no peace.

A gardener who can work the barren piece of land and convert it into a most beautiful garden is the person who succeeds in life. Therefore, I suggest, "Don't try to become a warrior and fight with yourself; try to become a gardener and plant the seeds of good intention, good samskara, good thought and good behaviour in your life." Ultimately this will carry one through on the road of success, peace and prosperity. If one is not able to cultivate the positive in life, the negative will pull one back. The positive propels one forward, the negative holds one back. It restricts the onward journey.

The concept of karma yoga according to yoga is that one's expressions have to be harmonious. One's expression, performance and action have to lead one to the attainment of success, peace and prosperity. Actions can take one to prosperity, yet if there is no peace one will not be satisfied even in prosperity. Actions should lead one to prosperity and peace, together and at the same time. If one is only seeking prosperity in life and not peace, one will always have tension. If one is only seeking peace in life, there won't be enough in the pocket. It is as simple as that.

There has to be balance, and karma yoga allows one to achieve this balance. Right performance gives one 'wisdom full' action. Prosperity and peace are attained through action and that is the idea of karma yoga.

## **Jnana yoga**

The second component of antaranga yoga is jnana yoga. It should not be seen from a philosophical perspective, asking oneself the question, 'Who am I?' Jnana yoga should be understood in practical terms.

The best quality one should cultivate in this life is understanding. Not love, not sympathy, not cooperation, only understanding, *samajh*. With understanding there can be no problem between two people. It is lack of understanding which creates problems: I do not understand you, you do not understand me, we come to loggerheads. However, if I

understand you and you understand me, there is cooperation, sympathy, closeness and strength.

Therefore in the beginning, one should not search for love, compassion or kindness, but for a better understanding of oneself and other people. Then through understanding one can connect to help others in an appropriate manner. That is jnana yoga.

People think jnana is knowledge of the divine, the transcendental. According to yoga, jnana is the knowledge that uplifts. Every kind of knowledge uplifts a person. After all, when one becomes an engineer, a doctor, a professional person, then it is that knowledge which helps one to excel and succeed in life. If one did not have that knowledge, one would not excel or succeed. Just as material knowledge becomes the means to prosperity for a human being, in the same manner spiritual knowledge becomes the means to develop a better personality, character and nature.

This has been the statement of the gurus of every tradition throughout the ages: try to develop understanding, try to develop your role in life and try to connect with other people.

Sri Swami Satyananda spent his last years in seclusion, in sadhana. He would meet people maybe once or twice a year during major events. Then he used to say, "I'm not seeking emancipation or liberation. I have only one desire: I want to be born again and again to wipe the tears of suffering and unhappiness from the eyes of people. The work of my life will be over when I can ensure that there are no tears of suffering in the eyes of people, but the joy of confidence and attainment."

This was his statement and he said, "I'm waiting to leave my body. I have received a one-way ticket, but I don't want a one-way ticket. I want a return ticket. The day I get my return ticket confirmed, I will leave this place to come back again, because I don't want emancipation."

And this is what he did. One day, a bolt from the blue. Ten o'clock at night in perfect health he calls one swami and says, "I am leaving my body now. I am leaving my body now." And

he sat down in meditation. He said, "I have received my return ticket, I know I will come back. In order to collect my return ticket, I have to get on the train right now, for only then will I catch the connecting return train."

Within half an hour, consciously, wilfully with the chanting of *Om* he lifted his pranas and left the body. In history and in mythology I had read of people attaining samadhi, yet I had never known how they would do it. I had seen these tamasha wallahs at the Kumbha Mela and other places who go underground for a day or so and say that this is samadhi. Now, for the first time I understood what samadhi actually meant. It is the conscious, wilful withdrawal of pranas and the conscious withdrawal of the soul from this dimension into the transcendental. A person who can do that is definitely able to ensure that the tattwas can again take birth.

Sri Swamiji's mahasamadhi indicates the jnana aspect. With jnana, which is uplifting for everyone, one becomes selfless. In *ajnana*, ignorance, one is selfish, whereas in jnana there is no other choice but to become selfless, if not one hundred percent at least one percent. With jnana one has no choice but to extend a helping hand to somebody in need. In *ajnana* one can withdraw that hand and not bother about the other person, however samajh, understanding and wisdom will always ensure that one extends a hand. One does not put one's hands behind the back. That is the concept of jnana yoga, not the question, 'Who am I?'

### **Bhakti yoga**

The third expressive aspect of antaranga yoga is bhakti yoga. People think bhakti yoga is the yoga of devotion, but it is the yoga of emotional management. Emotions are connected with the world, yet when the same emotions are connected with the inner self they are identified as and become bhakti. When one sees a person whom one likes there is the experience of passion. When one sees a child one experiences love and affection. When one sees a bag of money lying on the ground one experiences

greed. These emotions arise due to the senses connecting with a sense object. Between the money bag and greed there is a connection of the sense with that sense object. A beautiful girl is sitting there and passion is felt. There is connection. My adversary is sitting there, there is connection, animosity is felt. With connection an emotion comes to the surface, yet without connection that emotion becomes redundant and has no meaning.

For an emotion to have meaning, connection is important. Whether it be greed, envy, jealousy, hatred, compassion, love, sympathy or anything else. Without connection no emotion can rise. These emotional connections are flowing outwards. When the same emotion flows in, and seeks to discover one's peaceful self, that is known as bhakti.

Bhakti yoga is not the yoga of devotion. Only devotion is bhakti. Going to the temple is bhakti, however bhakti yoga is the discovery of the pure emotional sentiment within. The pure sentiment within connects one with one's transcendental self and transcendental nature. When one is connected with the transcendental nature one's sentiments are not limited to oneself only, they touch each and every person.

When that pure sentiment touches people all around, others will say, "Oh, in the presence of that person I felt *shanti*, peace, in the presence of that person I experienced love, in the presence of that person I experienced quietness."

People express such sentiments from time to time when they encounter people they consider different or special. When emotion is purified, it connects one with everyone and that is known as *atmabhava*. The real bhakti and aim of bhakti yoga is *atmabhava*, the ability to see oneself in other people.

If *atmabhava* can be applied to everybody and one is able to look after and care for the other person with the same intensity and in the same manner that one would look after one's own son, that is pure emotion. This pure, selfless emotion is bhakti yoga. The apex of bhakti yoga is *atmabhava*, to see one's reflection in each and everyone. If one sees one's reflection in

each person then one cares for each person. If one does not see one's reflection in the other person then one does not bother about that person.

When atmabhava is cultivated, the suffering of other people reduces, for one looks after strangers as if they were one's family. This bhakti, this atmabhava comes with love and sacrifice.

### **'I also' and 'We too'**

Karma yoga, jnana yoga and bhakti yoga are the expressive aspects of yoga. With hatha yoga, raja yoga and kriya yoga one transforms one's nature, transcends its limitations and discovers a new, better aspect of oneself without being affected by jealousies, hatred, anger, frustrations and dejections.

An effort has to be made to come out of this grim situation and experience the beauty that life has to offer. Even in spiritual life people are fighting with each other, however if there is atmabhava, a feeling that all are on this journey together, then the thought arises: let us help and support each other, let us walk the path together so that our unity will transform humanity.

When you walk your own path and denounce another's path, differences are created. Therefore, a change of attitude is important. Sri Swami Satyananda used to say that the reason for unrest and lawlessness in society is that you see yourself as a singularity, 'Only I'. You should see yourself as part of a whole, 'I also'. If you proclaim yourself as alone and apart, everyone will point their guns at you, they will make you their common target. When you see yourself as an entity among others, you become part of the integrated whole.

Religions proclaim, 'We are alone', thus creating bitterness and strife between faiths. They are caught in an endless round of bickering. If they were to say 'We too' instead of 'We alone', there would no longer be any scope for quarrel and the squabbling would die down. Dispute arises when one imposes one's beliefs and overrides the beliefs of others. Reconciliation

is possible when people recognize and understand what is common in their ideas, and relate to that.

### **One request**

Yoga is a subject which allows you to discover yourself, which allows you to become a gardener of your life and which allows you to explore and express the beauty that life has to offer. That is the message of yoga with which we have come to Delhi.

The idea of this gathering is to introduce, in a simple manner, what yoga has to offer and what you can apply in a small dosage to experience the benefits yoga. I am thankful to the organizers for the opportunity to come on this journey; they have helped me to propagate and bring the message of my masters and the tradition to you. Finally, I have one request – Give yoga a chance in your life!

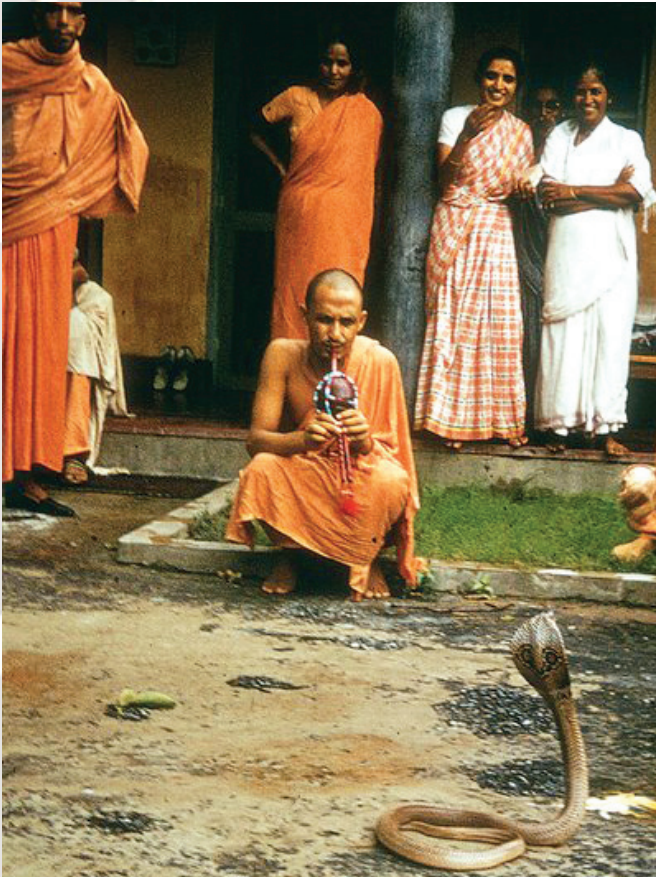
*– 19 September 2014, Punjab Haryana Delhi  
Chamber of Commerce, Delhi, India*



WINDOW TO THE PAST

# Awakening a Greater Potential (Part 1)

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



To speak about yoga is to speak about kundalini yoga. In the last two or three decades yoga has become very popular because scientists and philosophers have interpreted yoga as yoga therapy. But therapy is a by-product, a side effect of yoga. That is not the main purpose of yoga. It is by no means that I



criticize yoga therapy, because I teach yoga as yoga therapy. But we have to know the purpose and the theme of yoga. In this great country and by our great ancestors, yoga was discovered in order to discover the higher domains of man's evolution. By our ancestors' own experience and by their own methods of discovery, they could know that the human consciousness could be enlarged beyond the frontiers that are now known.

### **The subject of yoga**

Therefore, for many, many centuries the subject of yoga was discussed and practised in this country and also in other countries for the discovery of higher consciousness which is dormant within the framework of individuals.

The awakening of spiritual powers, the transcendental or higher consciousness was the purpose of yoga that our ancestors spiritualized with their practices. These practices were known as yoga, of which hatha yoga is one path. It does not mean that hatha yoga alone represents the whole cycle of yoga. Raja yoga, jnana yoga, bhakti yoga, karma yoga, all these are forms and aspects of yoga. When I talk to you about yoga, I mean the whole of yoga, not one aspect of yoga.

In the last two or three decades we have been hearing from all over the world that yoga is a panacea. It can cure diabetes and hypertensions. There is no doubt about these things, but that alone is not the ultimate purpose, attainment or achievement that man has to go through. It is the very expression of man's incompetence to handle life and situations.

Once you are able to advance to the light, you are able to handle diseases. Diseases do not drop from the body, originate or live in the body, but they play a part. Disease comes up from the depth of the human personality, from the depths of human awareness.

### **Ida and pingala of hatha yoga**

Let us see how yoga talks about it. Hatha yoga makes it very clear. It says there are two material forces in the form of shakti

in this physical body. They are known as *prana shakti* and *manas shakti*, the vital power and the mental power. Everybody can understand it. You have light in your body first and therefore live, move and are able to act. You have a mind, you have thinking ability and you have awareness.

These are the two great forces also known in yoga as *ida* and *pingala*. These are the two main roads. *Ida* represents the mind in total. *Pingala* represents the stamina and vitality. Harmony between *ida* and *pingala* is harmony between *manas* and *prana*. Disharmony between *ida* and *pingala* means disharmony between *manas* and *prana*. *Ida* represents the mind, the consciousness and if *ida* represents the consciousness, *prana* represents the life.

These two forces interact with each other at every level of human existence. This harmony takes place between the two. When *ida nadi*, *manas shakti*, is predominant, the *prana* is subservient. The mental diseases show up in the body. When the *prana* is predominant, and the mind is subservient then the physical diseases come up in the body. These physical and mental diseases are known as *adi* and *vyagi*. *Adi* means psychic disorder and *vyagi* means physical disorder. When put together these two are known as psychosomatic disorders.

### **Third nadi**

*Ida* and *pingala* are the two nadis that flow within the framework of the spinal column. These two nadis flow from the bottom of the spinal column to the top of the spinal column in the medulla oblongata behind the eyebrow centre. They distribute *prana* and consciousness. They distribute life and the thinking process throughout the body. Thinking is one of the most important processes of the body. Similarly *prana* is also life.

In between the two nadis *ida* and *pingala* there is a third nadi known as *sushumna*. *Ida* and *pingala* operate constantly. For one hour *ida* operates and for another hour *pingala* operates, simultaneously and singularly sometimes. *Sushumna*

is a dormant nadi, there is no function. It is known as the sleeping consciousness in man.

With the advent of man the sushumna has come into existence. In all other living beings, sushumna is not present. With the evolution of this human brain and this human life, sushumna nadi has come into existence. Sushumna nadi flows from the bottom of the spinal column and goes right up to the top. There is no concern with the body. In time there is a psychic awakening, also known as dhyana awakening. Sushumna nadi is known by various names. Some say it is kundalini and others say it is Devi and Durga, but it is a force that awakens within the framework of sushumna nadi. The purpose of yoga is to awaken this sushumna.

### **Mild awakening**

Thirty years back when I was living with Swami Sivananda, my guru, I was typing some of his articles on yoga asanas and pranayama. There was one passage that I had to type which stated, 'In sarvangasana awakening takes place in vishuddhi chakra.' I did not believe that so I went to him and asked him, "Asanas are physical in nature, Swamiji, and sushumna and kundalini are not physical in nature, so how can you say that sarvangasana awakens vishuddhi chakra?" He just said to me, "They give a mild awakening."

Years have rolled by and during these later years I have witnessed many fantastic scientific experiences on the awakening of chakras and have found that when you practise asanas there is an awakening in the chakras in the sushumna passage.

The electrical impulses can be registered when you practise sarvangasana, bhujangasana or sirshasana or any other asana, almost in all of them. During these postures scientists have recorded the electrical impulses issuing from these particular centres.

The lowest centre is mooladhara chakra and the highest is ajna chakra. In between these there is vishuddhi chakra,

anahata, manipura and swadisthana chakra. Now, these chakras are psychic centres and awakening has to take place in these centres, and awakening takes place with the practice of asanas, pranayama, mudras and bandhas.

It is true that with the practice of dhyana yoga, meditation, awakening takes place with greater force. But the purpose of hatha yoga is to assist you to practise raja yoga in a more efficient way. There are people who believe that hatha yoga is merely physical in practice and has a physical effect. It is not so. Pranayama is not a physical practice and it is not a breathing exercise. It brings total purity, it brings total awakening in these nadis. So when we talk about the awakening of kundalini, we are talking about the awakening of sushumna. The purpose of all the yoga practices is to effect this awakening.

### **Another vehicle**

In the last ten or twelve years while we have been teaching yoga in India and other countries, a lot of observation has been going on. In those days people used to believe that awakening of kundalini is something of a crazy experience. They said, "What is kundalini, oh you go crazy." But now the whole situation has changed. Man has different varieties of intelligence. There is a higher form of intelligence which can be expressed, and this intelligence is buddhi, it is chaitanya, it is guru, it is pragya.

Man can transcend the limitations and barriers of the mind. Our senses are limited. Our eyes can only see a particular distance. Our mind can think to a certain point, beyond that it cannot. That does not mean that man can go to that point and not go any further.

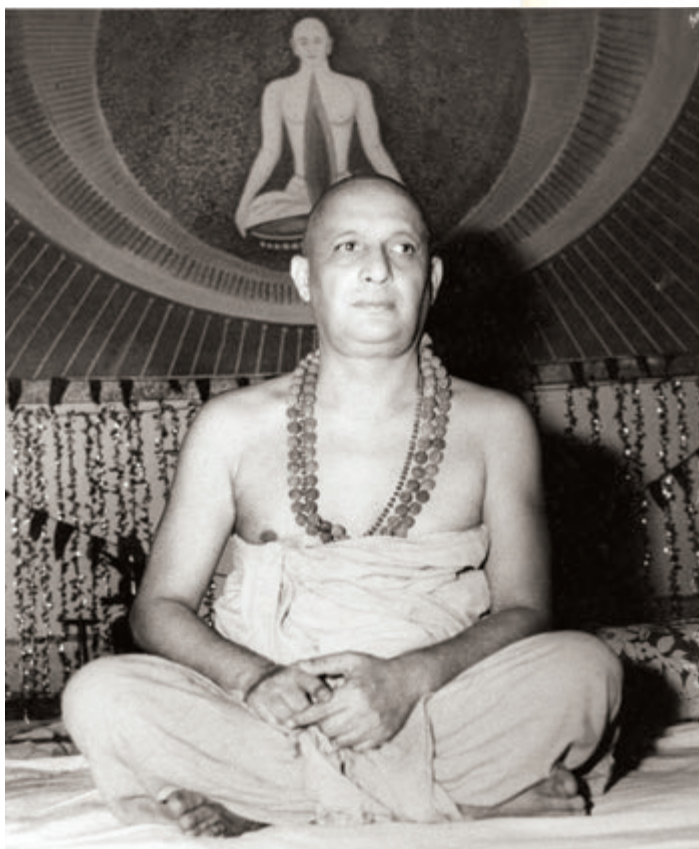
Is mind the ultimate boundary of man's vistas? Is mind the ultimate attainment of man? Is it not possible to go beyond mind? Is it not possible to exist without this mind and live a different life? In order to function in life you have one vehicle, the mind. You have another vehicle, the body and the senses.

But can't you have any other vehicle? Should you travel only by bullock cart? Can't you take a train, a car or a boat?

In order to achieve things, in order to experience life, in order to know the dimensions of time and space, it is possible to do away with this vehicle and have another vehicle. What is that? That is what yoga talks about. What has happened to the west in the last twenty to thirty years? The thinkers there have come to the conclusion that man can have a much more efficient way than thinking through the mind.

*– 27 April 1980, Constitution Hall, Delhi, India*

*To be continued in YOGA, October issue.*



# Karma Yoga

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Karma yoga is an attitude. People think it is work yet along with work there is an attitude. The way in which one does one's work is determined by the attitude towards it. If one has a good attitude then the work is good but if the attitude towards the work is not right then one will not have any interest in doing it. It is this attitude towards work that is managed through karma yoga.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna talks about karma yoga and defines it in a manner that is simply viewed as (2:47):

*Karmanyevaadhikaaraste maa phaleshu kadachana;*

Thy right is to work only, but never with its fruits;

However, Krishna did not say only this sloka in the *Bhagavad Gita*, for he continued (5:11):

*Yoginah karma kurvanti sangam tyakva atmashuddhaye.*

Yogis perform actions for the purification of the self.

## Atmashuddhi

When there is equanimity in the face of success and failure, when gain and loss are both taken in the same manner with balance, when one is affected by neither defeat nor victory, there is purification of the self, *atmashuddhi*. Retaining one's mental and emotional clarity during the performance of actions leads to the purification of the self. This is the true description of karma yoga.

One can say about karma yoga that it is about doing one's duty, about not desiring the fruits of one's action, however it

is just a topic for lectures without practical application. The practical aspect of karma yoga is that one should try to be balanced in the face of success as well as failure. The person who succeeds in this attempt attains the state of purification of the self, unaffected by karmas, not too dejected nor too elated. The person knows the true purpose of the work being done.

Dejection and delight both are a result of a selfish connection with the work. If there is selfish interest and expectation, the possibility of dejection is inherent within it. If there is selfish interest and expectation happiness will also be experienced. However, if one is free from dejection and elation, loss and profit, one has as a consequence a calm and still mind which inspires one to move ahead and progress in life.

### **No limit to growth**

The upliftment of a person lies in achieving happiness, peace and plenty. If happiness, peace and plenty are the goal of life then that is a selfish interest, a desire which gives birth to a selfish attitude. If one can work without this selfish attitude and carry out one's duties properly then happiness, peace, success or plenty come one's way regardless.

The concept of karma yoga is not external performance but the attitude and the awareness which one has while interacting in life and with society, and with one's own ability to perform.

Raja yoga and hatha yoga are specific practices. Bhakti yoga and karma yoga are attitudes. Through these two practices and attitudes one is able to transform the body, mind, emotions and actions, and awaken the creative potential with each of these four aspects. One is able to fulfil the purpose of life for there is no limit to one's growth, development and success.

This has been the sankalpa of Swami Sivananda and Sri Swami Satyananda: through the medium of yoga one can create an easy and simple way to fulfil one's aspirations and move ahead on the path of goodness, divinity, attainment and creativity.

*– 21 September 2014, The Railway Officers Club, Delhi, India*

# Delhi Yatra Impressions



The Delhi Yatra was an amazing experience for me. One of the things that I noticed was the variety of people that attended the Yatra, from poorest to richest, and from the youngest babies to the oldest; and they were all seated right next to each other, no VIP seats, everybody was together united by the same call – the call of yoga.

They came in huge numbers, around 1000–1500 people at every session. Seating those people for morning classes was very interesting. As the hall was getting full and people were still coming, we had to place them in any available spot – all around the stage, even in blind spots. The hall was a big sports hall, so some people were seated on chairs, and the spaces above and around chairs were also full. An incredible number of people were coming from 5 am till 8 am. Some would travel long distances and had to leave home at around 3 am in order to reach the venue on time.

Morning classes were a beautiful sight to see as one thousand people would move like one, as if in one single breath, creating a stunning dance with every synchronized movement, with Swamiji's voice guiding them, his voice creating the musical rhythm. In one of the sessions, Swamiji gave them one challenging asana, ardhha baddha padmottanasana, which



people were courageous enough to try, having complete trust in Swamiji's guidance. To my big surprise most of them managed to perform. Also the vibrations created by over one thousand voices doing bhramari pranayama, chanting the Mahamrityunjaya mantra and repeating *Om* resonated inside and far outside the Tyagraj Stadium.

Swamiji spoke on a huge variety of subjects in 'shuddha Hindi', in pure Hindi, in length and depth. One of the swamis was wondering what Swamiji was going to talk about in the next couple of days, when he had covered so many topics already on the first day. But the wisdom just kept pouring from him.

On the last day of the program Swamiji was continuously talking and interacting with people from 6 am till 11 pm. Can you imagine yourself talking that much, with every word, act and movement in its right place? Fascinating! It was lovely to see how the pure and true light naturally shone wherever Swamiji went and whatever activity he was engaged in.

Of course, the crowd was enchanted by Swamiji. All the faces seemed like sponges trying to take in every word he said. Many of them decided to take diksha on the last day.

There was one part of the program in which Swamiji was answering the questions from a group of children in English, which brought blissful tears to many eyes. They even asked Swamiji about his formal education, about which he hasn't spoken so often. He explained how he had completed the whole of high school just in one year at the age of ten, in order to get permission to travel abroad. At that time he was invited by Oxford University, and if he would have accepted their invitation, he would have been the youngest Asian attending Oxford.

At the end I just wonder how many lives were influenced and changed, or inspired to change during those four days.

I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to witness and participate in this magnificent program. Thank you very much Swamiji!

– Sannyasi Madhuri, Serbia

# Question and Answer

*Swami Sivananda Saraswati*



## **Visit to Birla House**

From here straight to Birla House. Seth Jugal Kishore Birla Ji was waiting to receive Siva. As soon as Siva stepped into the house, Seth Ji offered flowers at Siva's feet and took him inside.

The following is the gist of the conversation that took place between Seth Jugal Kishore Ji and Siva.

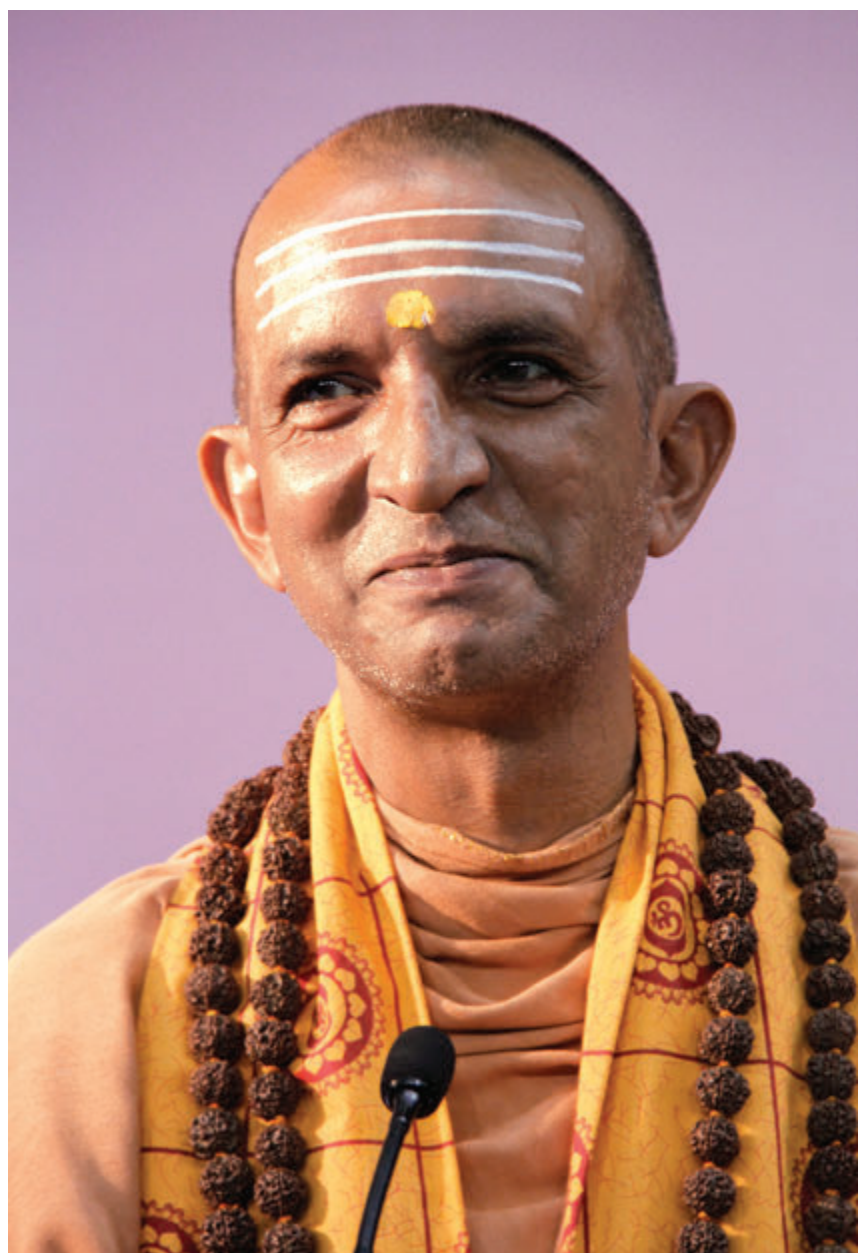


ल्ली महानगर के अधिवासियों तथा बिहार योग विद्यालय द्वारा आयोजित

Jointly organized by: Citizens of Delhi and Bihar School of Yoga







**Swamiji, kindly tell me of an easy sadhana for the attainment of *moksha*.**

*Namasmaran*. Constant remembrance of the Lord is the only easy sadhana for God-realization.

**Swamiji, the mind does not like it. It does not want to be fixed on the lotus feet of the Lord. It runs away. Success seems far off.**

That is true. But continuous practice for a long time is the only solution to this. The mind will gradually be weaned away from the objects and will finally get fixed on the feet of the Lord.

**Swamiji, do you think that stones have chaitanya?**

Yes. Yet, and in the case of images, there is a special shakti in them. There are some *archa avatars*, special murtis or images, of the Lord which are specially intended for worship by the devotees in the Kali Yuga. Certainly, we should have the fullest faith in them.

**Do you think it is possible to have darshan of the Lord?**

Yes, yes certainly. The Lord danced with Mira and ate butter from her hands. Girdhar Gopal was a reality to her. To Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Kali was more real than anything else in the world. He could talk to Her, eat with Her, and play with Her.

**Are these avatars and these great experiences restricted to this country or are there avatars in other lands, too?**

Why: Jesus was an avatar of the Lord. So was Mohammed. So are the prophets of the various lands and religions. All are avatars of the Supreme.

– 5 November 1950, Delhi

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

# Satsang with Children

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

**When you were our age, what did you want to become?**



When I  
was of your  
age, I wanted to be-  
come an army general.

Instead of becoming an army  
general, I became a sannyasi general.

**Why have you chosen yoga as your lifetime mission?**

With yoga I can serve and help many more people than through any other profession. Doctors only look after their patient, other people only look after their associates, but a sannyasi is connected with everyone in society. Therefore as sannyasi I have a better chance to serve and to love everyone.

**What are the favourite things you like to do in your free time?**

My favourite thing which I like to do in my free time is to sing, play music and dance. Even Krishnaji used to love music and he used to love dancing. So, I try to follow the teaching of Krishnaji.

**What makes you really happy?**

When I see everybody smile, I become very happy.



### **What makes you angry?**

Indiscipline makes me angry. When people are not disciplined and misbehave with every other person – that makes me angry. I feel that nobody should misbehave with anyone, rather we should learn to respect everyone. So when there is no respect and people misbehave then I become angry.

### **What have you put on your forehead? What does it mean?**

This is, you know, like you have a One Star General, Two Star General, Three Star General, I am a Three Stripe General. These stripes mean that I am making an effort to conquer myself, to become victorious over myself, over my negative and restrictive behaviour and tendency. They remind me that I have to become good, I have to become better, I have to become happy, I have to become joyful. These stripes are a constant reminder for me to always be happy.

### **What has been your greatest source of knowledge, your guru or travelling around the world?**

Both. My guru gave me knowledge yet I was able to put that knowledge into practice and gain much more from experience when I travelled around the world. At school, the teacher tells you what is happening here and there and everywhere, however when you travel and experience it makes your life richer. So, the source of my knowledge was my guru and the human society of the world.

### **What thought or saying has been an inspiration for your life?**

My Guru once told me that when people have problems, they are looking for solutions. Then he said that in life there are no simple solutions, only intelligent choices.



### **What habit of your guru did you like best?**

I loved my guru without observing his habits. Just as you love your parents and don't care what their habit is. In the same manner I also loved my guru and I never noticed what his habits were, for I was not looking for that; I only wanted to love him and receive his love.

### **Did you know that you will become such a famous Swamiji and teach yoga to lakhs of people?**

Yes, I did.

### **What is diksha?**

Diksha in English is known as initiation. This is a way by which we can become a genius in life by awakening the power of the mind. So, we can become a genius like Einstein and that is diksha.

### **Do you have any message for the children?**

Yes, one small message for you.  
Do you know how to laugh?  
Hm? You know how to laugh?

*Children:* Yes.

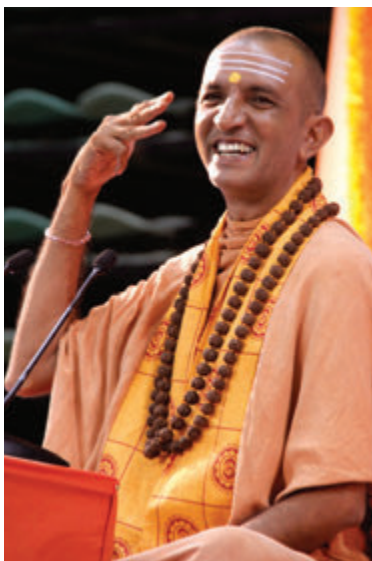
Then promise me one thing:  
you will laugh every day. OK?  
Do you know how to love?

*Children:* Yes.

Then promise me one thing:  
that you will love everyone  
every day. And do you know  
how to live?

*Children:* Yes.

So, laugh daily, love daily and  
live properly.



*– 20 September 2014, Tyagaraj Sports Stadium, Delhi, India*

# What is Brahmacharya?

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The word for celibacy in Sanskrit is brahmacharya. *Charya* means conduct and *brahma* means proper, appropriate. This appropriate conduct has to be seen in relation to an individual's passions. When there is passion and desire inside, then to maintain balance of mind at that moment is brahmacharya.

## **Pratipaksha bhavana**

When the mind is affected by passions, the best way to maintain balance of mind is pratipaksha bhavana. Pratipaksha bhavana is a teaching of our Paramguru Swami Sivananda. It means to cultivate the opposite positive thought, and not connect with the negative thought.

If an idea comes 'I don't like this person', the pratipaksha bhavana would be 'I like this person because of this quality'. When you say 'I don't like this person', you don't really mean the person, you mean something that the person has done or expressed which you have not liked. It is a quality that you do not like.

You like the person yet you do not like the quality which he or she has displayed. So the opposite thought of that is 'Ok,

I did not like this particular expression or behaviour, however I do appreciate the better behaviour that this person can have'. To change negativity into a positive thought is pratipaksha bhavana.

The same can be done with inner passions. There is passion, yet it is negative, self-oriented, selfish. It is desiring and infatuated. The pratipaksha bhavana is to convert that selfish passion into divine passion, to focus and offer it to one's ishta devata. Surdas, Mirabai, Eknath and Tukaram were able to do it. Bhaktas and people living a normal householder life have been able to do it.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa was a brahmachari and he was married. His feeling and attitude was, "My wife is devi and she is with me. My Kali is with me in form of Ma Sarada. Socially I am married to her yet my feeling is eternal and divine, for in my wife I see the cosmic mother."

Ramakrishna Paramahansa did not see Sarada as his wife but as a manifestation of Mother Kali. That was the pratipaksha bhavana of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, where mundane awareness was converted into divine awareness. This is also brahmacharya.

### **The better brahmachari**

In *Manusmriti* and other smritis of yore, it has been stated that grihasthas who engage in sexual relationships can live a brahmacharya life, provided they are able to harness and control their passion and sexual activity. Husband and wife can live brahmacharya, if they are free of passion but full of love and oneness.

Brahmacharya does not mean negation of sexual life. That becomes part of life for those people who have renounced a certain type of lifestyle. For them there are sadhanas to sublimate sexual energy. Through asanas one can control that urge. Through bandhas one can sublimate the shakti. Through meditation one can develop pratipaksha bhavana and change one's whole attitude.

There is the story of two sadhus who were wandering beside a riverbank. It was evening time. A beautiful girl was trying to cross the small river. One of the sadhus walked up to the girl and said, "Let me help you across." He picked her up in his arms, took her across the river and put her down on the ground.

The other sadhu became furious and thought, "How dare he break our discipline?" They both came to their guru. The second sadhu started to complain, "Guruji, you know what he did today? He carried a beautiful, young girl across the river." The guru asked him, "Then after that what did he do?" The sadhu replied, "Well, he left her there." The guru said, "He left her there, but you are still carrying her in your head even now."

Who is a better brahmachari? The person who helped a young girl across the river, who did his karma and was then finished with it? Or the one who was getting jealous thinking, 'He got the opportunity and I did not?' and who complained to the guru? Brahmacharya is a discipline, an attitude and a lifestyle.

### **Much more than celibacy**

The literal meaning of the word brahmacharya is 'one who is connected with the positive, with the uplifting'. That person is a true brahmachari.

Celibacy is actually a word which has come from the western tradition. It is not a word of the Indian tradition. In the Indian tradition brahmachari has a vast definition. In the western language the idea of celibacy is associated with the Christian belief. In Christianity celibacy has a particular, specific meaning.

According to the Indian tradition a person who lives brahmacharya is connected with the positive in life and is uplifted by that positive force. This positive force has no ties that limit a person's progress, growth and evolution of the individual.

*– 18 September 2014, Tyagaraj Sports Stadium, Delhi, India*

# Cause of Insomnia

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*

There are two reasons for the inability to sleep – one reason is worry and the second reason is desire. If you have a desire or a worry you will be unable to sleep. If you do yoga nidra before sleeping you can free yourself from worry and the mind will attain the state of sleep.

What is the effect of yoga nidra on the human brain? In the human brain four kinds of electrical waves are produced, beta, alpha, delta and theta waves. Beta waves are produced when there is restlessness in the brain. At that time the tendency of the person is extroverted. Currently the beta waves are prominent in your brain, for you are extroverted and in that state the senses and the mind remain restless.

When you go to bed in the evening or afternoon, and you close your eyes and make an effort to relax yourself for five minutes, the beta waves are reduced and the alpha waves increase. The state of physical relaxation is indicated by alpha waves in the brain.

The state of physical agitation is indicated by the emergence of beta waves in the brain. At the time of worry and anxiety when you are passing sleepless and restless nights, worry and anxiety are keeping your beta waves active in the brain, and you are unable to sleep. If you practise yoga nidra you are able to convert the beta waves into alpha waves.



You will see that before you complete the practice of yoga nidra you start another practice which is known as snore nidra. Therefore, start with yoga nidra at night and move into snore nidra.

*– 21 September 2014, Tyagaraj Sports Stadium, Delhi, India*

# Delhi Yogotsav: The Presence of a Master



Despite having a good yoga discipline – I have resolved to do yoga every day for the rest of my life – I was feeling discontent because of a lack of growth in my practice. When I heard about Swami Niranjana gracing Delhi with his presence I was thrilled. The only other time I had heard him live was in Delhi in August 2005. His charismatic personality had left an impact on me even then. But this time, he presented us with the gift of a lifetime – in keeping with the busy schedules of householders and city dwellers, Swamiji gave us very easy to follow practices to purify all the panchakoshas.

On the first day of the Delhi Yogotsav, Swami Niranjana came across as a stern yogi, who seemed to be on a mission to draw people away from the modern, gimmicky ways in which yoga is being taught to the masses. Many practitioners of yoga seem to think that the longer and harder they practise, the more evolved they are. But Swamiji very clearly and simply explained the importance of tradition and the effectiveness of seemingly simple practices, once done regularly. In short, he

stripped people of various pretensions. He also elucidated that a rigorous physical practice is just that – a physical exercise!

Conveying instructions articulately in Hindi as well as English, Swamiji attempted to reach out to as many people as he could. I also felt that he connected to the wide audience at multiple levels. Such was the information that he shared with the audience of over one thousand people, that everybody could gain something whether amateurs or professionals, people new to yoga as well as those who may have spent decades studying yoga from various gurus.

Over the four days he guided us very clearly in simple practices to adopt daily. “A practice focused only on asana and pranayama is incomplete,” he said. He thus left us with a *dinacharaya*, daily routine, starting with mantra sadhana comprising Mahamrityunjaya Mantra, Gayatri Mantra and the 32 names of Goddess Durga first thing in the morning to activate the vijnanamaya kosha; then five asanas (including tadasana, tiryak tadasana, kati chakrasana, utthanasana, and any inversion such as sarvangasana) and surya namaskara to benefit the annamaya kosha; followed by sheetali, sheetkari, bhramari and nadi shodhana techniques of pranayama to cleanse the pranamaya kosha; yoga nidra to be done in the evening after work to remove tension and reactivate the manomaya kosha; and finally the Omkara or *Om* chanting before sleeping to reach the anandamaya kosha.

On the fourth day, before he tied it all together in the aforementioned daily routine, as Swamiji guided us to chant *Om*, and the entire stadium was resounding with the powerful energy of the mantra, he himself chanted the *Swasti Vandana* for everyone’s wellbeing, enveloping the whole space in his own aura and protective energy. I was overwhelmed and tears streamed down my face, as if some cleansing happened deep within my being. Over the course of the four days, the yogi who had seemed ‘stern’ to me at the beginning came across as a loving guru – accessible through his knowledge, yet elusive as a personality.



It has been a month since I attended the Yogotsav and I feel a world of a difference in my own practice, despite cutting down on the complicated asanas that I was doing earlier. My day starts with mantra sadhana, followed with the asana sequence as prescribed by Swamiji. This really sets a very happy positive note to my day, and I feel a general sense of wellbeing. And all this despite cutting down on the time I used to spend on asana practice. The holistic routine really permeates the deeper levels of my being and I almost feel my practice touching the different koshas or sheaths. Such a profound impact can only come from the blessings and teachings of a real Master. I feel blessed to have been able to attend the yoga camp in Delhi and can only hope that we are blessed with Swamiji's visits more often than long nine-year gaps.

– *Shibani Bawa, Delhi*



# Women in Society

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



## **Indian women are idealized to play a passive role. Is it desirable?**

This is circumstantial. If you look at ancient history, women in India were always the other half of the male component. In the vedic and upanishadic times, women held the same post, position and respect as men had. They were the gurus, leaders and inspirers of society.

Over a period of time the situation changed. When India was invaded the men took the women away from the limelight and confined them to the home in order to protect womankind. However, they did not make any effort to liberate themselves from the invading forces, and the invaders ruled India for hundreds of years. During this period, for reasons of safety and security, women were not allowed to come out. Today this is a social bent of mind, as for generations Indian women have been living in the same manner and environment, in the confined enclosure of the home.

Something similar happened globally, not only in India. Patriarchal society became powerful and matriarchal society weak. Men took away all the power and womankind was given the duty to look after men by looking after the home, the family and raising children. Over hundreds of years over many generations this has become the trait of Indians.

It was a similar situation in the West too. A change took place during the First World War when the able-bodied young men went to the frontlines and were killed in thousands and millions. The women had to look after society back home. They became nurses and took on professions and jobs. The western 'women's liberation' started at that point.

After a few years with the start of the Second World War, again the men went to the front and the nations were managed by women. They took an active role in nation making and proved that they were better than their male counterparts. The nature of men is hard and tough and the nature of women is soft and emotional. When the mind is hardened and toughened, there are many things that simply skip over the surface of the mind and one is not aware of the small things. However, when one is sensitive, one picks up all the little things, observes them, analyzes them and tries to rectify them. In this manner, as far as work and identification of little details is concerned, womankind is better. For hard labour men are better.

In India the environment is gradually changing. Through education children are being exposed to many conditions, situations and opportunities which they did not have before. One generation ago, girls and women were restricted to staying at home; today they are all moving forward in society. In Indian society now, women cannot be limited to the home. They take their own decisions and say, "Look, whether you like it or not I am going to go there." Today they can take their own decisions.

It cannot be said that Indian women are idealized to play a passive role. It is a misconception and misunderstanding. It is not a social, cultural or religious concept. It is a personal concept.

**If a woman does not want to marry but lead an independent spiritual life, what decision should be taken if there is social pressure?**

It should be understood that marriage is not a requirement for everybody. There are many people who do not need marriage and there are people who need marriage. This decision has to be made by each individual. The individual is pressurized by family and society due to the stereotyped culture they live in. Parents may say, "Everybody gets married, so you also have to do it, otherwise we will become the object of social ridicule." When people fear ridicule they impose restrictions on their own family members and pressurize their children so that they are not ridiculed at the fag end of their life.

This is based on a lack of understanding: there are people who need male-female companionship and there are people who do not need it. It is a choice that everybody can make. If one has made the choice, 'I will marry', there is nobody in the world who can stop one from marrying. If one has made the choice, 'I will not marry', nobody can force one to get married.

A person becomes weak and allows situations to dominate and govern life, out of fear for oneself and one's family. There is insecurity for oneself and one's family.



The truth is that marriage is not compulsory for anyone. If there is a physical, emotional or intellectual need then one should get married. If there is no physical or emotional need, why should one get entangled in marriage? One should live life independently and freely.

– 20 September 2014, Tyagaraj Sports Stadium, Delhi, India

# Material Journey

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



People understand Shiva and Shakti in the form of a god and goddess. In yoga the Shiva tattwa is the symbol of higher consciousness and the Shakti tattwa is the expression of life. The Shiva tattwa is the conscious element and the Shakti tattwa is the power of action. They are also known as Purusha and Prakriti, or Brahma and Maya. The search for the Shiva tattwa is a truth of life. One may not understand the name, yet the search in life is indeed for the Shiva tattwa.

The word tantra is a combination of two words: *tanoti* and *trayati*. 'Tan' and 'tra' together make 'tantra'. The meaning of *tanoti* is 'evolution of consciousness', and the meaning of *trayati* is 'liberation of energy, Shakti'. Therefore, the meaning of *tantra* is the process, the system that brings about the evolution of consciousness and the liberation of energy.

## Principle of transformers

In kundalini yoga the abode of Shiva and Shakti is Brahmastrandha, the location of the thousand-petalled lotus, sahasrara. Here, the Shiva and Shakti tattwas reside together. When in the Shiva tattwa the thought arises, *Ekoham Bahushyama* – “I am one and I wish to express myself as many,” then Shakti is activated to give this sankalpa concrete form. When Shakti is activated, she is separated from Shiva. In the course of this separation from Shiva, various tattwas arise and as a result a body is acquired. This primal energy, *Paramshakti*, is trapped in the material body.

At the place where hydroelectric power is being generated the voltage is high, 11,000 Kilo Volt amperes. It cannot be put to use for ordinary requirements in fields, homes and industries. Through a transformer this energy is converted from 11,000 to 440. Through another transformer 440 is converted to 220, and again a transformer converts 220 to 110. In this way as the energy passes through each transformer, the power is modulated to conform to certain limits. When this energy enters one’s house, it can be used to run fans, the fridge and TV. It is now suitable for home use. If the same energy were to enter one’s house in the 11,000 KVA form, it would destroy the house.

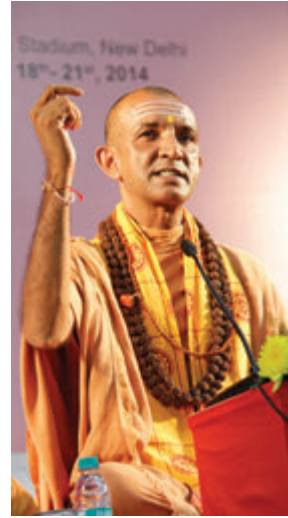
This is the principle of the chakras in kundalini yoga. The primal energy is in its highest potency. Its modification is seen when, passing through several transformers, the same energy is made suitable for use in one’s life.

The first transformer is ajna chakra. When the primal energy comes to ajna chakra, its form is that of the mind, then lower down at the throat is the second transformer, vishuddhi chakra. Here it takes the form of *akasha tattwa*, the space element. In the heart is anahata chakra, where the energy is transformed from akasha tattwa to *vayu tattwa*, the air element. In manipura chakra behind the navel, the form of energy is *agni tattwa*, the fire element. When Shakti is in swadhisthana chakra, she is in the form of *jala tattwa*, the water element. In mooladhara

chakra, Shakti's form of energy is matter, *prithvi tattwa*.

The expression of life is in the material state. The energy that has reached the material tattwa, and has given birth to matter, goes to sleep in matter and does not move any further.

This is the evolution of life: development from the supreme energy to the material condition. At this point one becomes aware of life and the experience of life. These transformers in the human body give birth to particular behaviours.



### **Mooladhara chakra**

According to the yoga shastras, in mooladhara chakra one searches for stability in life. The sense of insecurity arises, so one wishes to move away from this insecurity to stability. Fear arises, and with freedom from fear one wishes for peace.

In relation to the material state, the negative, tamasic actions that one engages in have a relationship with mooladhara chakra. Whatever feeling of insecurity one experiences in life, concerning family, property, one's dear ones, society, or circumstances, is within oneself. It is the experience of mooladhara in life.

The mental state that one derives from each transformer is guided by the chakra into a certain mode. The connection of prithvi tattwa is with the feeling of insecurity and the lack of steadiness.

When the shakti is awakened in mooladhara, the positive expression of prithvi tattwa is the end of the sense of insecurity in one's life. One has become victorious over that mental state. The mind, by becoming free of a bondage, by becoming free of a certain state and negative experience, achieves a positive experience, one in which insecurity and fear is absent.



## The mind

Kundalini has been awakened when the energy reaches swadhsthana. Swadhsthana is the expression of the unconscious mind, symbolized by the water element.

People who swim in the ocean know that the light of the sun is only on the upper surface of the ocean. As one descends into the depths, the light of the sun will become dimmer and dimmer, until finally, at the bottom there is total darkness. There is no boundary line which defines the specific areas of light, dimness and complete darkness. A diver can tell from his own experience how far the light of the sun penetrates into the water. At what depth the light becomes dim, when darkness begins, only the diver knows.

The mind is conscious and subconscious, yet there is a definite boundary which indicates that this much is conscious, this much is subconscious, and this much is unconscious. Consciousness is where the light of intelligence reaches. As long as the light of intelligence is present one remains conscious, aware; one tries to know oneself and others, one remains engaged in the world through the light of intelligence.

If intelligence is absent, consciousness is absent, and one has no knowledge of what one is doing. So this condition of inertia, where there is no movement, no action, no progress, is the state of the mind in ordinary life, for only as far as the light of intelligence penetrates, one has the experience of



knowledge. Where the light of intelligence does not reach, one has the experience of dullness and there is no knowledge.

Consciousness is that state of the mind which shines by the luminosity of intelligence. When one shines a torch in a dark room, only one portion is lit up, the whole room is not lit up. The beam does cast a light in the rest of the room to a small extent, yet the light of the torch remains confined within a limited area. Wherever the light of the torch falls is the scope of one's intelligence. Where there is darkness, one cannot see anything until the light of the torch shines there. In the same way, the intelligence of one's life lights up only one area of the mind. That area is called consciousness.

Where there is intelligence there is knowledge, but where intelligence begins to be obscured, one cannot maintain contact with clarity, and there is confusion and doubt: "What I thought, is it right? What I wanted, is it wrong? What I have done, is it appropriate, What I wish to do, is it inappropriate?"

This kind of mental conflict arises in the mind when the light of intelligence does not reach there. With the light of intelligence there is no mental conflict in a person's life. This state is called subconscious, for the light of intelligence becomes dim. That area of the mind where the light of intelligence does not reach at all is called unconscious.

### **In whose light?**

There is another state called the superconscious, or *turiya* state. What is the form of the *turiya* state? Here is a story: Maharshi Yajnavalkya asks Gargi, "In whose light does a man do his work?" Gargi replies that a man does his work in the light of the sun. Yajnavalkya asks again, "When the light of the sun is absent, then how does a man do his work?" Gargi replies, then the man can do his work under the light of the moon.

Yajnavalkya continues, "If the light of the moon is also absent, then how?" Gargi argues, then man can live his life in the light of the stars. "What if the stars are not there, under whose light will he perform his actions and live his life?"

Finally Gargi says that if there is darkness everywhere, and no light outside, at that time man can discharge his duties only through the light of the soul, the self or *atman*.

The luminosity of the atman can neither be found in the sun, the moon or the stars. In the same way, in the conscious state is the light of the sun, in the subconscious state is the light of the moon, in the unconscious state is the light of the stars, and in the turiya state is the light of the soul. This is the message of the Upanishads and the dialogue between Yajnavalkya and Gargi.

### **A gift of God**

This light is accessible only to human beings and not to other creatures. Animals do not have intelligence. The consciousness that is attained and experienced by means of intelligence is obtained only by humans. This intelligence is a quality, a faculty given by God only to human beings, and not to any other creature.

Through intelligence one is able to make one's own decisions, reconcile with and confront one's circumstances, and fulfil one's karmas of life. If intelligence is not used the animal quality or instinct comes alive, and the individual becomes like an animal. Intelligence is the medium to obtain knowledge with which one is able to move ahead.

### **Swadhithana chakra**

In swadhithana chakra there is a lack of intelligence, as it is the domain of unconsciousness. What is in the unconscious?

Kabir Das explained spiritual truths in a symbolic manner. He used to say that in this mud pot are the seven seas. This body contains seven seas, within which are jewels and diamonds. These seven seas are swadhithana chakra. There are hidden jewels in the seven seas, hidden in the unconscious.

According to yoga, the unconscious mind is the place where the basic instincts take birth. Hunger, sleep, fear and the sexual drive take root and germinate in the unconscious,

then grow and gather strength. The instinct of hunger, sleep, fear and sex is the basic nature, and its place is in swadhisthana chakra. The desires, the state of separation and isolation from the world at the time of sleep, and the situations causing fear are hidden in the unconscious. That is the reason why it has not been possible for any psychologist or sage to understand or resolve the problems created by the instincts.

According to yoga, karmas are also hidden in the unconscious. When these karmas are expressed, they make or break one's life. These are the karmas of prarabdha, which come from one's past. In this life one is reaping the fruits of past karmas. The results of karma and the birth of instinct are in swadhisthana chakra. When the upward-moving energy comes to swadhisthana chakra and passes through it, one is freed from these instincts, and one is released from the bondage of karmas and enters manipura chakra.

### **Manipura chakra**

Manipura chakra is the domain of fire, the centre of the rajasic quality. Rajoguna decides one's action.

Sattwaguna, rajoguna and tamoguna are the qualities of the mind. According to Samkhya, tamoguna means inertia, rajoguna means action, and sattwaguna means luminosity. Luminosity or the nature of light is sattwaguna. The state of activity is rajoguna, and the state of immobility is tamoguna.

Here is an example: A potter wants to make a vessel. So he takes clay. The clay has no shape, no form. Using the clay as a basis the potter can create any form. This formless clay is like sattwaguna. When the potter takes the clay and prepares it with water and kneads it for the task of moulding an object, then the condition that prevails is of rajoguna, the nature of activity. When the image is ready and a form has been expressed, then the state which the clay has acquired is tamoguna, the state of form and inertness.

Everyone is of the nature of tamoguna, as everyone has a form, an identity, a name, attributes and qualities. When name,

form and attributes are present, it is tamoguna. When form and name are together it is rajoguna. When attribute is alone without form or name, it is sattwaguna.

The field of agni tattwa, manipura chakra, is believed to be the centre of rajoguna, whose nature is action. When through spiritual effort the kundalini shakti is brought above manipura chakra, then one rises above the gunas, and establishes oneself in sattwaguna.

### **Anahata chakra**

When the energy reaches anahata chakra, one experiences universal empathy towards all. This empathy expresses the gentle emotions of the heart, such as love and compassion. There is a connection with the tender and soft emotions. People's emotions are always hard, their nature is never soft. Only when this nature recognizes the goodness in others does it become soft. As long as one cannot recognize the goodness of another person, one can never be soft towards that person, one will always remain distant and unable to connect. The attainment of tenderness and the cessation of harshness are the consequence of the awakening of anahata chakra or the vayu tattwa.

### **Vishuddhi chakra**

Vishuddhi is the domain in which everything becomes pure. When kundalini shakti reaches vishuddhi chakra no form of impurity, no flaw or defect remains in the expressions, thoughts and karmas of life. When the karmas of one's life are fulfilled and purified in the right manner, when the pure karmas help others to progress and evolve, when one is able to relate to others, then love and compassion emanate spontaneously from a one's expressions and behaviour.

Such a person is loved by all. The person, who has harsh emotions, is not liked by anybody. Whatever distortions arise in one's mind are ended in vishuddhi chakra and only a state of purity, balance, peace and harmony remains.

## Ajna chakra

In ajna chakra one comes in contact with one's inner self, the *antaratma*. That inner self is called guru tattwa. The inner self is not the individual soul, *jivatma*, but the guru tattwa. Ajna chakra is the reflection of the guru tattwa and the door between the material and the spiritual world. One side of ajna chakra is the world and the other side is Ishwara, the Divine. Ajna chakra is the abode of the guru tattwa.

With the guru tattwa darkness never enters one's life. Darkness is dispelled, which means that there is no place for ignorance and lack of wisdom in one's life. Only fullness is experienced, and through the experience of fullness one attains sahasrara.

In sahasrara, Shiva and Shakti are once again united. Therefore, the material journey is from the top down, and the spiritual journey takes one from the bottom back to the top.

– 19 September 2014, Tyagaraj Sports Stadium, Delhi, India



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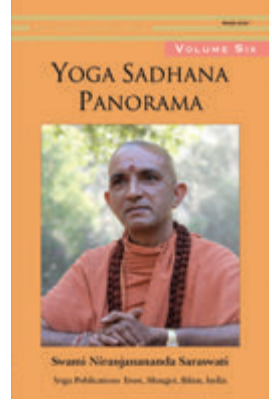
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<i>Oct 1-Jan 25 2016</i>	4-month Yogic Studies Course (English)
<i>Oct 3-20</i>	Yoga HMC*: Diabetes (Hindi)
<i>Dec 25</i>	Swami Satyananda's Birthday
<i>Jan 1</i>	Akhanda Path of 108 Hanuman Chalisa
<i>Feb 1-May 25</i>	Yogic Studies Course, 4 months (Hindi)
<i>Feb 9-12</i>	Sri Yantra Aradhana
<i>Feb 13</i>	Basant Panchami Celebrations/ Bihar School of Yoga Foundation Day
<i>Feb 14</i>	Bal Yoga Diwas, Children's Yoga Day
<i>Feb 21-27</i>	Yoga Capsule: Respiratory (Hindi)
<i>Mar 20-Apr 3</i>	Total Health (Hindi)
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