

YOGA

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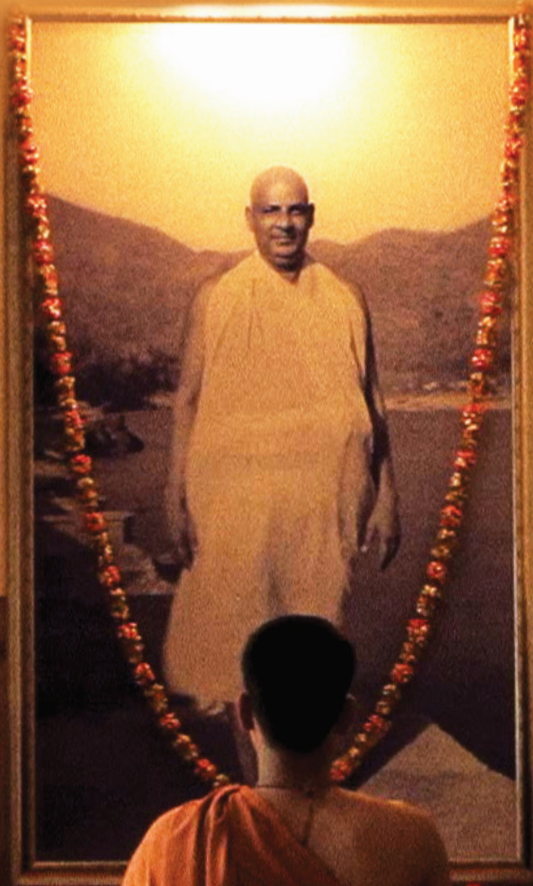
PURIFY

LOVE

MEDITATE

GIVE

REALISE



Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar, India



Hari Om

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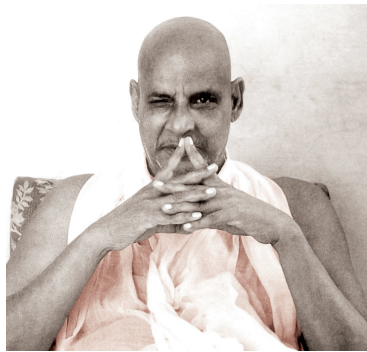
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GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

OBSTACLES TO SADHANA

Sleep

Tandra is a half-sleepy state; alasya is laziness; nidra is sleep. These three are great obstacles on the spiritual path. Sleep is a strong, old habit, and it takes time and demands great strength of will to remove it. Reducing sleep is a troublesome practice in the beginning, but it will be pleasant in the end. Sleep should be reduced carefully and gradually.

When drowsiness tries to take hold, one should stand up, do japa and dash cold water on the face and head. A balance must be found to avoid nervous tension from lack of sleep and lethargy caused by oversleeping. Common sense must be always applied.

—Swami Sivananda

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

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

Yoga In Daily Life

From Yoga In Daily Life, Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Cultivate indomitable will. Practise self-control and self-mastery. Have self-confidence. Develop independent judgment and do not argue. Strive ceaselessly for self-realization. Kill this little ego. Develop pure love and rise above all distinctions of caste, creed and colour. Give up the idea of 'I-ness', 'Mine-ness'. Look within for the happiness which you have sought in vain in sensual objects.

Moksha is the summum bonum of life. It is freedom from births and deaths. It is not annihilation. It is annihilation of this little 'I'. It is obtained through knowledge of the Self. You will have to know the Truth through direct intuitive experience. You will have to cut asunder the veil of ignorance by meditation on the Self. Then you will shine in your pristine purity and divine glory.

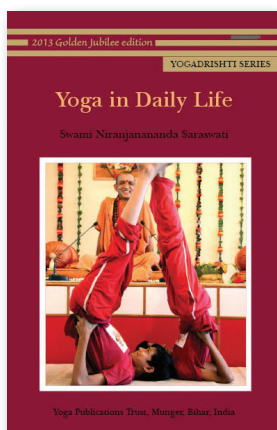
Do not try to drive away the unimportant and irrelevant thoughts. The more you try, the more they will return and the more strength they will gain. You will only tax your energy and will. Become indifferent. Fill the mind with divine thoughts and the others will gradually vanish. Become established in nirvikalpa samadhi through meditation.

Without perfect Brahmacharya, you cannot have substantial spiritual progress. There is no half measure on the spiritual path. Control the body first, then purify your thoughts through prayer, japa, kirtan, reflection and meditation.

Constant study of the lives of saints will enable you to lead a virtuous life. You will imbibe noble qualities. You will be gradually moulded on the spiritual path and draw inspiration from them. There will be an inner urge in you to attempt for God-realization. Pray to the Lord that you may become a saint.

Yoga In Daily Life

From Yoga In Daily Life, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Today, when people come to yoga, what are they seeking? They come for relief from disease. They come due to illness. This is the truth. In today's world of hustle and bustle, you cannot find time for yourself. As you wake up, the day's worries and jobs consume you and they stay with you until you lie down again at night. If you find time for yoga, you will do it for a day, a week, a month, a year. For how long will you sustain it? Eventually, you will drop it.

The purpose of yoga is not therapeutic. If someone tells you this, they are wrong. If yoga is adopted as a lifestyle disease will disappear. Consequently, becoming disease-free is an outcome of yoga, not its objective. Your yoga practice should not stop when the physical ailment is cured; you should continue with your practice.

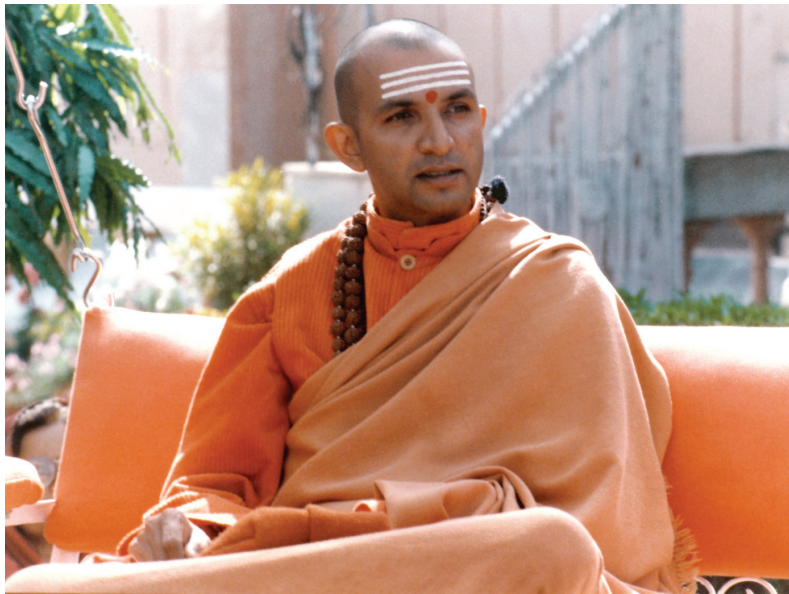
You come to yoga because of your troubles, whether they are health related, stress related, emotional or familial. Your purpose is relief from difficulty. As long as the problem exists you will do your practice, but when that problem is resolved, you drop yoga. Five to ten years later when the problem resurfaces, you think of yoga again. You start your practice again. This is not yoga sadhana. It is not even yoga practice. It is yoga for alleviating a problem. There is no attempt to understand what yoga stands for, to understand its objective.

What kind of sadhana should you perform so that yoga becomes an integral part of your life? The biggest obstacle in this attempt is that you believe you need to take time out to be able to practise yoga. Not at all. To learn yoga, yes, but not

to live it as a lifestyle. As a lifestyle, it becomes a regular part of your behaviour, something that you do not even need to think about. A musician will hear music in the hammering of a nail into the wall. Someone who is proficient in a subject will bring it into every experience of his life. Slowly, as you practise these yogas, little changes begin to come into your life, which will eventually lead to a change in your lifestyle. Then, you will begin to live yoga as a lifestyle.

When you go to school, you study and pass your exams, your lifestyle changes. As you grow up, your thoughts, intellect and viewpoint change. This is called maturity. You say that the person has become an adult. It is the same with yoga.

When you perform your actions with patience and endurance, and your behaviour reflects these qualities, then you are called a karma yogi. Similarly, when you use your common sense and are practical in life, then you become a jnana yogi. When you do not get carried away by your emotions, then you are called a bhakti yogi. This is yoga sadhana. That is how yoga has to be experienced in life.



Yoga Science

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

The basis of science is knowing and understanding and the foundation of yoga is also knowing and understanding. All scientific discoveries do not happen in a lab, but they begin with a thought process and an idea. Newton did not discover gravity in a lab but by observing the fall of an apple. Observation, analysis and understanding form the basis of scientific knowledge. The same principle is applied to yoga - observation, awareness, recognition, modification, alteration.



It is incorrect to think of science as lab-oriented and machine-oriented research. It is only one aspect of scientific research and understanding. The major component of scientific understanding is mental, based on observation and analysis. There is no separation between science and human nature and there is no separation between yoga and human nature. After all, science is a sequential process of understanding and yoga is a sequential process of experiencing the positivity within oneself.

Through understanding the material science, one can have an insight into the spiritual science. Material science is still in its infancy and spiritual science is an old person. The age of spirituality is over five thousand, six thousand years. The age of modern science is only two hundred years. How can a child of two hundred years understand the lifestyle, philosophy and direction of a person who is five thousand years old? It is not possible. We see the beginning of science yet in yoga we see the maturity of spiritual life.

Science of life

How each person incorporates and understands yoga is a different matter. Whether you think of yoga only as hatha yoga, physical practices, only as pranayama, relaxation or meditation is your individual perception. However, yoga is not what you think it is. Yoga is a whole subject of life, it is a science of life. Your understanding of yoga is partial and limited, either as a physical practice, a meditative practice, or as a practice which gives you the feeling of peace and tranquillity. Beyond that you do not see the other aspects of yoga.

You have to understand what yoga is, in relation to your life and in relation to the evolution of mind. Science is an aid to the understanding of yoga. Not only certain measurements validate a state of life, but also the human experience of becoming better.

To compare science and yoga is useless. They are not different. The science that you think of is the material science, just as when you look at yourself you see the body. Within the body, there is also mind and spirit. Can you experience that? You can be aware of the mind because of your thoughts, desires, emotions, sentiments and feelings which are non-physical. Therefore, there is an experience or realization of a subtle mental process which is defined as mental activity or the mind.

Someone looking at you, does not see the mind. Only you are the experiencer of your mind. Someone looking at you, does not see your spirit. Yet everyone has a mind and a spirit. Why can't you see it? Why can't you experience it? In the same way people look at yoga. They see the outer aspect of yoga which is only physical, yet within that physical aspect there are also the mental and spiritual aspects.

The moment you go through the physical, mental and spiritual aspects or components, yoga becomes a scientific process of personal development and evolution as envisaged by the rishis and munis.

– 26 June 2016, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Satsang on Koshas and Bodies

From the teachings of Swami Satyananda Saraswati



What is the relationship between the bodies and koshas of Samkhya philosophy?

In Samkhya there are five koshas. The first is known as annamaya kosha, the second is pranamaya kosha, followed by manomaya kosha, vijnanamaya kosha and anandamaya kosha. They are all empirical worldly bodies.

Annamaya kosha is built by the food we eat. Pranamaya kosha is composed of pranas. These pranas are five in number, with five chief functions and five subsidiary functions of prana. Manomaya kosha is composed of four items: thinking, analyzing, feeling and the ego. In Samkhya they are known as *manas*, *buddhi*, *chitta* and *ahamkara*. Manas means thinking

and counter-thinking. Buddhi is analysis or comparison between different objects. It is an instrument of rationalization. Understanding the difference between hot water and cold water, is the action of buddhi. Chitta is the feeling of time, space and object. Remembering, dreaming and awareness is chitta. The fourth one is known as ahamkara. It is the knowledge of one's own existence. 'I know I am,' is the action of ahamkara.

Vijnanamaya kosha is the psychic body, corresponding more or less to the subconscious mind. The word *vijnana* means special or detailed knowledge. Through the mind one knows objects, sounds, touch, one cognizes the form, one feels the taste and understands the smell. This is known as sensory knowledge, which takes place in the mind. Vijnana is special knowledge, which means extrasensory perception. One becomes aware of unknown forms. One is able to perceive different colours, and to feel mental vibrations. When vijnanamaya kosha becomes active one no longer has to depend on the mind and senses for knowledge. Anandamaya kosha is the fifth dimension. *Ananda* means no vibration, no movement. There is absolute status quo, it is motionless.

These five koshas represent the five lower sides of the bodies. Finally, there are two more bodies, one belonging to the jivanmukta, the other to the videhamukta. The sixth body jivanmukta is one who has attained liberation or emancipation in this physical body. *Jivan* means life, living, *mukta* means emancipation or liberation. The person is in the body but has nothing to do with it, like the light of a star which has been destroyed, but the light is still travelling. Jivanmukta is a higher state of human evolution. When a coconut becomes ripe, it separates itself from the shell. In the same way, when one attains the state of jivanmukta, the self and the body are completely separated from each other.

The last body is known as videhamukta. *Videha* means disembodiment. When the final emancipation has taken place then the videhamukta, the spirit, does not live anymore in the body at all.

What are the seven bodies of a human being?

The seven bodies are known as invisible bodies. Out of these seven only one is visible to us. The pranic body, mental body, psychic body and the unconscious body are all invisible. Then there are two more higher spiritual bodies. The physical body is known to everyone. We have studied it in science.

The pranic body consists of vital energy, which is within the body and outside the body. In the same way as heat has radiation, or light has an aura, the pranic body is also within and outside. When we develop the pranic body its area becomes greater, just as a high powered heater has a greater area of effect.

The mental body is the third layer. It is much more powerful and more subtle than the pranic body and can be stretched even further. Sometimes the mental bodies of two individuals can join each other. Beyond this there is the fourth circle, the psychic body, which is much more powerful than the mental body. It can extend up to hundreds of miles. The fifth and most powerful one is the blissful body, known as the unconscious.

Finally there are two more realms, they are higher, divine or cosmic bodies. These seven bodies belong to everybody, but in most people they are undeveloped. The pranic body, the mental body and other bodies are very narrow. Through the practice of pranayama, the pranic body becomes wider and greater. Through the practice of meditation, it is the mental body which becomes greater. Although we use the word body, they are not actually bodies. They are an aura or radiation, in the same way that a candle radiates light. If we analyze this radiation, we will find many, many items.

In the physical body there is the shakti power, trying to express itself. The different bodies are the different spectrums of this shakti. When we try to remove the barrier, the light becomes greater. Animals live only in the physical body, but when we practise yoga or spiritual life, we transfer from the physical body to the higher bodies.

In our time it appears that man is living in the mental body. Although we have a body, we don't live in the body, we live in



the mind. Then there are many people, such as yogis, Christian saints, Muslim saints, many bhaktas and God-intoxicated people, who do not live in the body or mind; they live in the psychic body or higher bodies. Then there are even higher bodies where the liberated saints like Buddha and Christ live. They had a body like you and I, but they did not live in it. They lived in the higher bodies. These bodies are emanations of the spirit.

Please explain how the koshas relate to the different bodies.

In Samkhya philosophy three different bodies are elucidated: the physical, subtle and causal. Speaking and other physical activities belong to the physical body. The mind, intellect, subconscious and ego are the content of the subtle body. The causal body is homogeneous consciousness and nothing else. These three types of bodies have different layers. The physical body has two, annamaya and pranamaya kosha, the food and pranic body. The subtle body also has two, manomaya and vijnanamaya kosha, the mental and psychic body. The causal body has only one, the anandamaya kosha, bliss body.

How do the astral body and the emotional body function, if they exist?

The emotional, the astral, the causal, the psychic, pranic and physical bodies exist, but it is the physical body which we see. We experience the pranic body, we do not see it. It is the same with the mental body. The psychic body we experience in dream, but we do not see it, nor do we see the emotional body. These bodies should not be equated with this body.

We make a mistake when we think about a body as this frame of a human body. Our mind is conditioned. When we think about the emotional body, we think that we have also two feet, two hands, two eyes and a nose, we never see the emotional body like that of a horse or a donkey. All the different bodies we are talking about have a different shape.

Now, to give an example, the occult body, the unconscious body has a snake's body. It is like a snake in three and half coils. In the same manner, all the bodies do exist and are forces. We have a light force, radioactive force and an electromagnetic force. These bodies have a different range of existence, beyond ordinary cognition.

In short, we can say that beyond this physical body there are powerful forms of radiation and these are the different bodies. Each body has its composition. The pranic body is composed of charged electrons, protons and other molecules. The emotional body is charged with thought waves of great currents. The occult body is composed of unconscious matter which is the base of our life. Nothing more needs to be said about it.

What are the granthis? It has been said that when the brahma granthi is opened, creativity is liberated. Please explain this.

The granthis are psychic knots which hold all of creation within them. Everything is contained within the embryo of these knots, even the acts of destruction and regeneration are embedded there. Brahma granthi is the seat, centre and source of creativity. When it is opened, all the powers of creativity are released with a great force. Although Brahma granthi is connected to every part of human existence, when it is closed it is completely insulated from everything and merely existing. If an electrical generating station has not been connected to a city, the city remains in darkness even though the generator is functioning. But if you connect the generator with the transformers and the main electrical stations, the whole city

becomes illuminated. So the gross life is not connected to Brahma granthi, but insulated from it. However, when yogis practise and awaken this knot, it becomes associated and connected with the rest of the creative miracles of life.

The body is a vehicle of creation. Eyes, nose, ears, feet, hands, brain, thought, emotion, etc. are the tools of creation. However, they are incapable of creating anything in the common man, because they are operating on the instinctive level where they can express only as much as the animal nature can manage. However, when Brahma granthi is connected with the light, the eyes become creative, the brain becomes creative, the whole dimension of thought, intellect and emotion becomes creative.

What are siddhis?

Siddhis can be classified into eight categories. For example, there are people who have certain healing powers because of the development of their pranic body. It is a very preliminary stage. Then there are people who are telepathic, clairvoyant or clairaudient as a result of vijnanamaya kosha having developed. There are people who are able to materialize their bodies at different places, or who can materialize objects. This is possible when anandamaya kosha has become active.

The different siddhis are accomplishments of an individual at different stages of transition in the body. For example, if pranamaya kosha is developing you have the power of healing. If vijnanamaya kosha is developing you have extrasensory perceptions. So these eight siddhis belong to the development of the lower five bodies.

When you are nearer to the higher spirit, then you have nothing to do with these siddhis. Once you transcend these five bodies, and become a jivanmukta, you transcend the siddhis and move nearer to the divine.

Necessity for Exercise

From the teachings of Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Exercise is necessary at all periods of life and particularly during childhood and early adulthood. It is essential to keep up good health, vim, vigour and vitality. It preserves the healthy tone of the body. Exercise bestows a general efficiency of body and mind, with a better social spirit and cooperation with your fellows. You learn to control the weak side of your nature and give fuller freedom to the best spirit that is in you. It checks overgrowth and develops the weak person. It quickly restores convalescents to better health. During growth it corrects deformities. It removes debility and obesity.

The many benefits

Exercise is essential for the different organs of the body to function easily and effectively. It is necessary to promote the formation and repair of tissues, and excite the demand for

oxygen needed for utilization of food. Without exercise there will be no health. The whole system will refuse to function. The stomach will refuse to digest food properly and the intestines will decline to function efficiently. The blood will be loaded with poisonous matter.

The heart cannot work efficiently without definite exercise. If you do exercise regularly it will drive the blood more vigorously. The lungs will take in the air with deep breaths. The chest will expand. More waste and used air will be driven out. When the action of the heart is improved by exercise, local congestions vanish. The blood is equally distributed and the circulation of blood in the lungs is improved. The amount of oxygen inhaled and of carbon dioxide exhaled is greatly increased. It supplies more oxygen. The increased output demands increased supply of food and fresh air. It is best to take exercise in the open air because you get more oxygen to purify the blood.

Exercise gives a healthy glow all over the body. Because it gives a more rapid supply of blood, the kidneys, the lungs and the skin, which remove the waste material, are stimulated. They do the function of cleansing more energetically and more efficiently. Muscular exercise has a beneficial effect on the body as a whole. It removes constipation and produces a regular action of the bowels. It leads to better mental efficiency and better performance of mental work. It promotes the action of the skin. There is increased perspiration. It reduces and regulates the temperature. After exercising, the body should be covered and protected from undue loss of heat.

All the movements of the body are done by muscles. Exercise increases the nutrition of the muscles. This contributes to their growth and energy. If you have well developed muscles you can turn out more efficient work. If you do not exercise the muscles will go to waste. You will be lazy and weak. You will have no power of endurance. If any organ or part of the body is not used it gradually becomes smaller and less liable to work. For instance, if a broken limb is fixed with splints, the

limb will be found to be much smaller than the other when the splints are removed at the end of two or three weeks, because the muscles have wasted through lack of use. But if the muscles are much used, they increase in size. A gymnast, an athlete and a labourer in the field have strong well-developed muscles in the arms and chest. They have a wonderful and beautiful physique. However, strength and size are not always the same. Either a thin wiry or a heavy built person may be strong.

Some guidelines

You should have a well-built body without adiposity. Fat hinders work by its extra weight, by giving rise to additional heat during work and by greater fatigue due to the accumulation of waste. Reduce the fat through regular and systematic exercise.

Exercise should be regulated and adjusted to the needs and capacity of the body. Violent exercise should be avoided. It is better to have recourse to graduated exercise.

Exercise should be systematic. Every muscle of the body should share in the exercise. Be regular in your exercise. Do not fatigue yourself or go beyond your capacity. If there is fatigue you have gone beyond your capacity. Reduce the number of exercises and the period of exercise. There should be perfect exhilaration of spirit after exercise. Infrequent, severe exercise is not beneficial. It may do more harm than good. The following rules for exercise should be observed:

- Exercise should be taken in the open air whenever possible.
- It should be repeated daily or regularly about the same hour. It should never be taken just after or just before meals.
- The amount of exercise should be regulated according to the age, physical development or capacity of the individual.
- Exercise should be regular and systematic.
- Every part of the body should partake in the exercise.
- Chills should be avoided after exercise.
- After exercise the body should be washed or sponged.

Muscle and Strength

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



What is the difference between chitta shakti and prana shakti? How about looking at muscles and strength? Just think that prana shakti is the muscle and chitta shakti is the strength. Can you separate muscle and strength? No, they cannot be separated, but they can be spoken about individually. Wherever there is a muscle, strength is supposed to exist in that muscle. It is an integrated part. Muscle is the material part and strength is the invisible part.

In the same way, prana shakti is the material component and chitta shakti is the immaterial component. Just as muscle and strength in the muscle coexist, prana shakti and chitta shakti coexist.

If you understand this idea, this concept of muscle and strength, and analyze prana and chitta shakti, the concept will become clearer to you through your own investigation and thought process.

– 10 April 2016, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Action and Inaction

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



In the *Bhagavad Gita*, the sloka on action and inaction has caused confusion and misunderstanding. In Chapter Four Sri Krishna tells Arjuna (4:18):

*Karmanyakarma yah pashyed akarmani cha karma yah;
Sa buddhimaan manushyeshu sa yuktah kritsnakarmakrit.*

He who sees inaction in action and action in inaction, he is wise among men; he is a yogi and performer of all actions.

The main subject is to know when to be involved in karma and when to be detached from karma. One cannot be without karma in this life, just as the body cannot survive without food. It needs something. Even if it is only an apple or some grapes, the body needs something to destroy the pangs of hunger. That something has to be eaten.

In the same manner, life is nourished by karma. The moment you stop karma, life ends. Life cannot exist without

karma, just as you cannot exist without spirit. If the spirit leaves, you are gone and dead. If karma goes away from life, you are also gone and dead. Spirit is the transcendental element which keeps you alive in this world and karma is the material element which keeps you alive in this world. Therefore, karma is as important as spirit.

The presence and existence of karma in your life is as important as the presence and existence of spirit in life. Without karma, there is no realization, transformation, growth and progression in life. However, this karma has to be seen as a means to fulfil the dharmas in life. When it is seen as a way to fulfil your dharma in life, you experience inaction in action for there is no self-projection, self-craving, only the fulfilment of a dharma.

Action is happening, yet the lower self is inactive. When dharma is not there, you are identifying with the action performed, and there is involvement. It is the idea of dharma, the righteous condition of life, the righteous thinking and behaviour, which has to be developed to give you an awareness of the karmas which bind you and the karmas which liberate you.

The karmas which liberate you are seen as static in nature in an active zone, inaction in action. The karmas which bind you are seen as active in nature in a static zone. This is something that has to be understood not intellectually or philosophically, for this will create more confusion. The simple understanding is to follow the path of dharma to experience stability in movement, inaction in action.

– 18 October 2015, Ganga Darshan, Munger

By following his duties, a person of subdued self and having his senses under control succeeds in raising himself and gladdening others.

–Mahabharata (12:105:9)

Sunday Satsang

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Is there a difference between duty and responsibility?

There is definitely a clear distinction between duty and responsibility.

Duty is towards one's work, profession, specific area, or department. Responsibility is what you believe in. If you believe that you are a sannyasin, then is that a duty or a responsibility to live like one? You decide. If you believe that you are a grihastha, are you living your duty or are you living your responsibility?

Responsibility is always related to lifestyle and duty is always connected to profession. If you say, 'I have done my duty,' it means you have done your professional duty, but it does not mean that you finish your responsibility along with your duty. Responsibility continues twenty-four hours, 365. Duty happens during office hours, five days a week, six days a week, depending on your professional situation.

Here is an example: mouna. Many times you say, "It is not my duty to tell others to keep mouna." Maybe it is not your duty, yet it becomes your responsibility, for you are a sannyasi and you are part of a vision and a mission. Therefore, it may not be your duty, but definitely it becomes your responsibility.

How should one understand the meaning of power and why is it so easily misused, misinterpreted and expressed in an incorrect manner?

Power is always an expression of ego. Without ego you cannot express, use or show your power.

I remember one sentence by Paramahamsaji, when he said that powerful people should never use their power. Powerful people should always be the most humble in every situation. That was his teaching to me.

When I was the president and I used to take some rash decisions, he would say, "No, don't use your power. If you have power, never use it." Many times I thought, 'Why is he telling me this? I am the president. I need to take certain steps.' Today, I realize the value of what he told me. The moment you identify with power, you are identifying with your arrogance and ego, and you move away from your sense of responsibility, clarity and duty.

Power is only sought by those who seek to have the social recognition that 'I am all powerful.' Otherwise, quietly also one can do everything without expressing one's authority, right and power. If somebody is given a duty, they feel that 'Now I can do it. Now I have been given the authority. Now I have the right and the power.' 'This is actually an expression of ego. The same help can be provided without power in a simple, innocent and humble manner.

With power comes rigidity. When in power, you take wrong decisions for you do not want the other person to bypass you. Somebody is suggesting something and you feel that you should be the one to make the suggestion, and you say the same thing. Trying to be one up, is projection of ego

and power. Ordering people around is an expression of ego. It is not power, it is an expression of ego.

Power feeds the ego and the ego then uses the power to assert itself. There are times when certain instructions are given. The person asks, "Who gave that instruction?" Suddenly the person becomes the focus and not the idea. There is a clash of identity, position, post and power. Who says when and how is totally irrelevant. You have been given an instruction, so do it.

This resistance to a simple instruction, principle or system of discipline happens when there is identification with ego. Power is the most misused and misunderstood word in human life.

Not a curse

It is said that due to a curse Hanuman forgot what he could do. Yet, was that really a curse or was it an understanding? It was an understanding, that 'Ok, don't use too much of your power, and only when needed.' It was an understanding that had to be given to Hanuman. If it had been written in the story that Hanuman was told not to use the power, people would question 'Why?' Therefore, it is written that Hanuman was cursed and forgot his power, and beyond this nobody can ask any question.

Don't use your power. Just be humble, do your duty, live a life being simple, innocent, hard working. Eat well, sleep well, be happy, enjoy and live.

That was the instruction given to Hanuman and from that time he stopped using his powers. He was told, "If you use your powers you will attract demons who will try to counteract your power with their negative power. Do you want to do that? Do you want a clash of powers?" Hanuman answered, "No. I want to live for my Rama." Therefore, if you want to live for your Rama, don't use your power. Just be humble. Forget that you ever had any power, and when time comes, you use it.

This is not a mythological story, it is a story of one's own life for those who have wisdom to understand, for those who

have ears to hear, and for those who have eyes to see. Those who don't have any of three things, they are caught in the whirlpool of power which sucks them down; and eventually they will destroy themselves.

When I am reading or chanting a text, hundreds of thoughts come into the mind, yet I go on reading. So who is the one who is reading?

The mind functions in a multi-dimensional way. Even now there are thousands of sensory inputs, information, impulses coming into your mind. Everything is being filtered. Out of the billion impulses that your brain receives of sensory inputs, there are only a few that are relevant to you at present. The other billion must be stored somewhere. The information must be going somewhere, that impression is being imprinted somewhere.

The mind is actually a multi-faceted, multi-levelled body of experience. While reading, the mind is somewhere else yet still you continue reading. The mind is somewhere, but you are reading the book, you are turning the pages, and maybe ten pages later you ask yourself, "What did I read?" Then you go back.

The question is, 'How come these ten pages were read and I don't know what the content is?' At that moment the awareness, the focus of awareness has diverted from the reading to some other thought at an unconscious level. At the conscious level your effort in turning the pages continues. Your eyes are still scanning the lines but there is no connection between the eyes and the intellect. The intellect is focusing on something else.

This is known as attention span. For everything there is a perfect attention span. If anything is less than that span, if anything is more, it is difficult to imbibe and absorb.

When you are training dogs, you cannot train them for one hour or two hours, by pulling and pushing the leash. Five minutes, ten minutes, as long as their attention span is there. Once the attention span goes away, it is better to play

with them and not teach them anything. If they don't have the attention and you continue with your training, they are not going to listen to you. Therefore, you play with them, you break the training, and when you see that they are again becoming responsive to you, you go back to giving instructions.

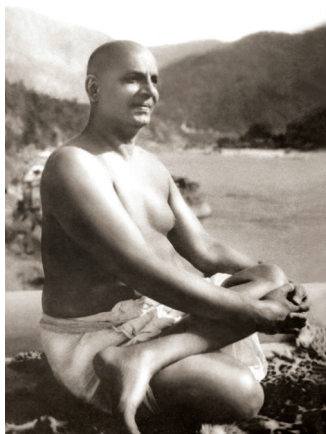
With the outside we do that, but inside we don't do that. Inside we force ourselves, we force the dog of our mind, "Sit, sit, sit." After five minutes, the dog says, "Okay, now I want to move." Again you say, "Sit, meditate." During the whole of your meditation, you are fighting with your mental dog, "Sit, sit, sit."

– 19 June 2016, Ganga Darshan, Munger



How to Develop Virtues

From Mind – its Mysteries and Control, Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Examine your character. Pick some distinct defect in it. Find out its opposite. Let us say that you suffer from irritability. The opposite of irritability is patience. Try to develop this virtue by meditation on the abstract virtue of patience.

Regularly, every morning, sit down at 4 am in padmasana or siddhasana in a solitary room for half an hour and begin to think on patience, its value, its practice under provocation, taking one point one day, another on another day and thinking as steadily as you can, recalling the mind when it wanders.

Think of yourself as perfectly patient, a model of patience and end with a vow: "This patience which is my true self, I will feel and show from today."

For a few days, probably, there will be no change perceptible. You will still feel and show irritability. Go on practising steadily every morning. Presently, as you say an irritable thing, the thought will flash into your mind, unbidden: "I should have been patient." Still go on with the practice.

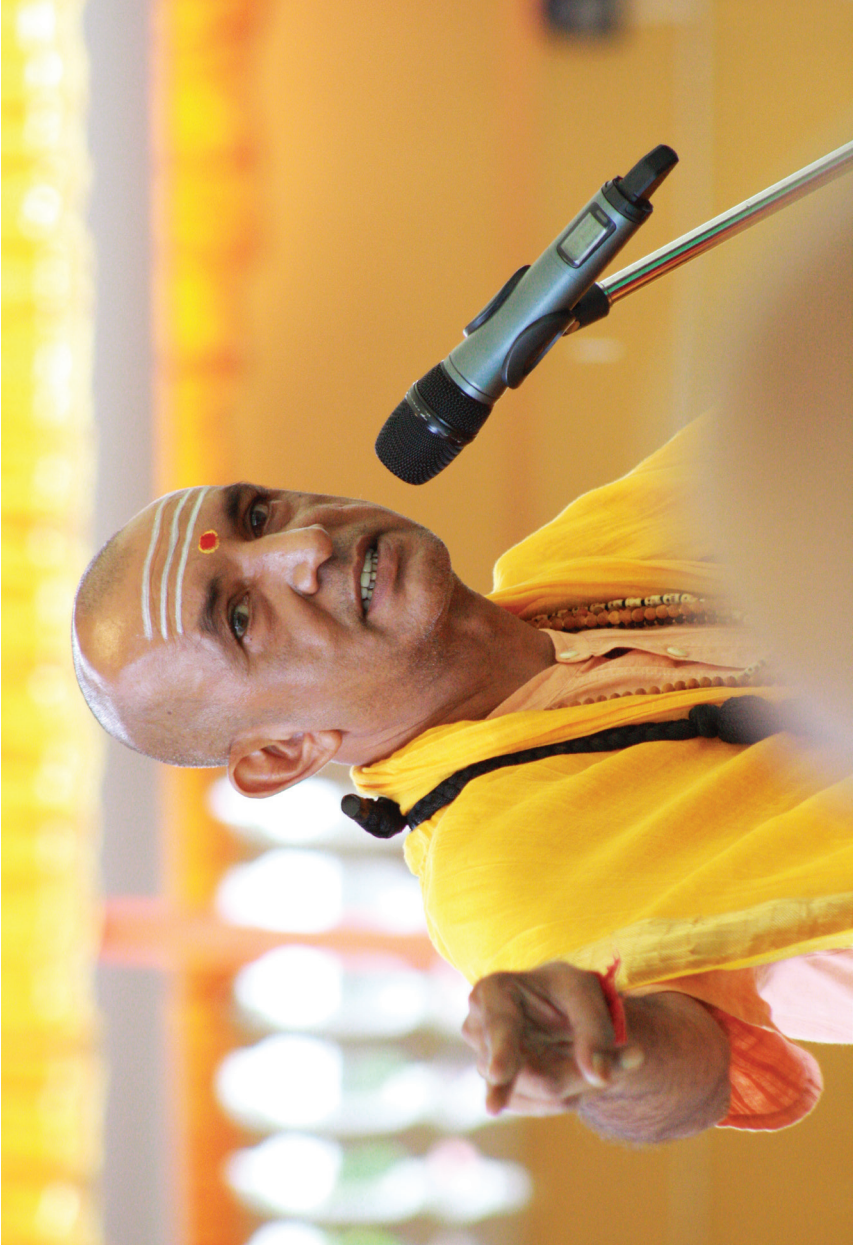
Soon, the thought of patience will arise with the irritable impulse and the outer manifestation will be checked. Still go on practising. The irritable impulse will grow feebler and feebler until you find that irritability has disappeared and patience has become your normal attitude towards annoyances.

In this manner, you can develop various virtues such as sympathy, self-restraint, purity, humility, benevolence, nobility and generosity.









Yoga in Schools – Process, Efforts and Implementation



I feel greatly honoured to have been invited to the plenary session of this International Conference on Education. I have another reason to rejoice when I compare the times we live in today to the epoch of my first experiments in school in 1973. Then, I would never have thought that an official agreement from the French Government would be granted to our innovation. It would take decades to happen. However, from the start I did believe that this would benefit all students and educators. My fellow speakers here present can testify that yoga, the treasure of India, has its rightful place in educational systems around the world.

First experience in a French high school

I used to be an English teacher in a Paris high-school. One morning, according to the schedule, I was waiting for my 11 to 12 year-old pupils who were coming from a gym class. They arrived sweating, running and out of breath. It dawned on me that they needed a sort of break, a pause before commencing work. I had been practising yoga nidra for a few years and it had brought me a lot of good. Wasn't it a means to help the tired band recover their stamina? I told them to drop their bags and do nothing for a while, to just sit down quietly with their elbows on the tables and their hands over their faces or, if they preferred, with their arms on the tables and imagine they were like birds, putting their heads down under their wings when resting or like half-filled sand bags.

We must remember that children are not miniature adults. They are endowed with a special nature calling for a certain language. The words we use must appeal to their imaginative states of mind and be appropriate to their various ages. In these particular circumstances, I had to improvise and use expressions adapted to the context of tables and chairs. The children were surprised, yet they complied. It was probably the first time a teacher was telling them to relax in a classroom. Silence prevailed, a rare opportunity. They knew it was an event. They were all ears. So was I. An occasion to revise the day's lesson, why not?

At a slow pace, I read the page leaving a space for them to repeat mentally sentence after sentence. They did it and I was sure that nobody had been sleeping. When this short break was over, I told them to sit up and I asked them questions about what they had just been listening to. Calmly, they would all raise their hands to answer. This unanimous enthusiasm made me understand that the pause had two obvious effects: first, a loosening of tensions and second, an increase of receptivity.

From this great 'première' I experienced the potential value of yoga in the field of learning. I needed to gather a circle of like-minded friends around this new concept. That was the nucleus

of our research, and thus the idea of RYE was born. During the preceding years, I had met other primary and secondary school teachers who also practised yoga. It was easy to instil in them a desire to start the experiment. We decided to meet every week and exchange ideas about creating exercises that could be applied to pupils in different grades. Note that at the time, there existed no precedents, unlike today where we can find a host of 'Yoga for Children' books.

In the 1970s, there was nothing of this kind. The renowned IQ (Intellectual Quotient) still had precedence over any other mode designed to test a child's intelligence. Through our own practice and study, we knew the koshas were affording another vision about the multidimensional structure of human beings. Men, women and children had other layers to nourish and educate besides the intellect.

In 1981, the Nobel Prize winner Roger Sperry had shed light on the specificity of the two cerebral hemispheres. It was a shock for specialists of pedagogy to realize without doubt that western educational systems were mostly based on the logical linear faculties of the left brain, often to the detriment of the right brain, bent on heartfelt perceptions. It explained why the school syllabus put so much emphasis on subject matters like maths, facts and figures, grammar, science, and deemed insignificant such pursuits as music and art. In fact, the two sides of our head have got to blend their specializations in order to link rational efforts with flashes of intuition. Thus, a new trend would balance, facilitate and regenerate the ways to acquire knowledge. With these new notions in view, we did not fail to tap the imaginative side of children, by using songs, games, sketches, intriguing sounds, stories and jokes when needed, in order to revitalize attention.

By attention, I don't only mean the pedestrian conscious capacity to imbibe knowledge, but also the 'floating attention' at work in small children when they start speaking their native language at home. It is still alive in older children and adults, however it has to be awakened. Our classes were improving

and parents and educators both were taken aback by our innovative approach.

Supports and obstacles

In spite of our successful experiments, we met with obstacles, but the way we coped with them might have surprised many outsiders. When we were misunderstood or felt attacked, we thought that any novel initiative whatever it might be, was bound to be criticized. We could not escape rejection. This was a necessary part of the journey. We had to be patient, allow time for the collective consciousness to ripen and sustain our vision.

During the decades preceding our recognition, we did not engage in any lobbying. We would rather publish articles, give lectures and organize seminars aimed at yoga-minded school teachers. More and more people were becoming increasingly aware and informed about the benefits the immemorial discipline had to offer. In fact, our policy amounted to the creation of a new branch of yoga. New days, new ways. Our RYE techniques were based on Patanjali's ladder. It was the spine of our method.

Meanwhile, our confidence rested on the support of great masters like Swami Satyananda. He said that yoga was to be the culture of tomorrow. That tomorrow has become today. I once heard him stating: "One day, yoga will be introduced in all schools." I also had the chance to meet a Tibetan Master called Lama Gwendun who handed me a white scarf as an encouragement to continue, a token of approval. These wise supporters no doubt helped us to keep steadfast and determined, while fronting some lions on the path.

Adjusting to the times

When the word began to spread that yoga was starting to enter some French schools in Paris, we were invited to various European countries, even to other continents. The miracle of international yoga was starting. In the 1980s and 90s, I travelled far and wide during weekends and holidays. Our research, anchored the heart of society, was beginning to have more

and more of an impact. RYE (Research on Yoga in Education) founded in 1978, was replicated in many South American countries. I travelled to the United States, to Lebanon, initiated a teacher training course at Tel Aviv University.

In the year 2000, RYE grew to become an international federation, launched at a conference at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris in the presence of Swami Niranjan. Many intellectuals helped us make it clear that yoga was neither a religion nor a cult. We drew on the scientific literature, validating the fact that in school we were using simple techniques that induced calm and attentiveness. The children were our best ambassadors with regards to parents, school boards and policy makers. We found that adolescents in our classes responded very well to scientific explanations concerning the effects of postures, correct breathing, relaxation, brain waves and positive thinking. We felt proud when they reported how some exercises had helped them pass their exams.

What exactly do you mean by 'yoga'?

The media were quite interested in our approach. Journalists visited our classrooms and declared in their newspapers that yoga helped students and created a nice ambiance in the relationships. Yoga in school made for a good news story. Once, the magazine *Paris Match* published an article illustrating caricatures of children in the lotus pose, levitating with closed eyes over their tables! The cliché had nothing to do with reality, but it certainly painted a picture that readers had never dreamt about before.

With regards to my university professors the word 'yoga' was questionable. There was a controversy about it. Someone once suggested I had better refer to what I was doing as 'the Flak method' or, 'a toolkit of self-regulating exercises' for children. I wrote an article that did not use the word yoga – it read terribly and I never did this again.

Then someone chimed in, "Why not use the word 'relaxation' instead of the word yoga?" That was a bit closer



to the point but I objected to the concept. In the eyes of many, relaxation is synonymous with laziness. I would rather equate yoga with *dharana* or focus, a notion acceptable both to yogis and university professors, and an essential quality to succeed in all paths of life. Through ups and downs, continued reflections and actions, we evolved toward national recognition.

Yoga in school open to all

Let's note another essential point. In RYE, we accept all yoga practitioners. We are open equally to every authentic yoga school. RYE training requires years. That way, we ensure faithfulness to our sources. Some guidelines should be respected. We developed an approach that was compatible both with committed educators and the secular principles of public education in my country. Thus RYE is flourishing now in France, paving the way to some international research. Since 2013, there are yoga workshops in schools across France. Optional yoga classes are offered to students who themselves are in training to become schoolteachers. In doing so, in our own modest way, we helped to pave the road towards the kind of research into yoga that this present Conference on Education is featuring.

— *Dr Micheline Flak PhD, (Swami Yogabhakti)*
28 December 2015, at the Plenary Session of 8th International
Conference on Yoga and Education at Kaivalyadham, Lonavla

Towards Higher Awareness

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati



At some time in our lives, it is necessary to rise above the mundane experience that we have from birth until death. The culture in which we live, the times in which we live, the technological culture in which we live and that has completely paralyzed us holds a big power over our minds. In India, with the technological advancement and development that is taking place, people are swayed by it. In the West people are steeped in it, but in India, even though people are overtaken by the technological culture, they know and really do believe in their hearts, that along with this technological culture, man has to face a new set of problems. Even experts, psychologists and thinkers have accepted that with this technological culture, modern man will have to face new problems.

Lazy mind

With the technology that we have at our finger tips, life has become very easy. We have a lot of time. How do we spend it? We spend it with different types of amusements which titillate us, which make us very excited and agitated. That is

how we spend our time, all our time. The free time that we have, because of technology, we spend in amusing ourselves, entertaining ourselves, finding new ways to excite ourselves.

That is how we spend our time, and problems keep piling up one by one: economic problems, family problems, social problems, emotional problems. So much so, that modern man is very restless, agitated and excited. He has so many different gadgets at his disposal for his amusement and comfort. He lives in luxury and comfort.

He may have all the luxuries and comforts, but does he have the appetite for them? Can he really enjoy them? You have the best house, the best bed, but you don't get sleep at night. You have the best food, the best cuisine, but you can't digest it. You have everything at your disposal, but do you really enjoy everything that you have? There was a time when the civilization in India was at its peak and people had all the luxuries and comforts, and they came to this one conclusion: that luxury and comfort make man lazy.

Luxury and comfort stagnate the mind. The mind becomes lazy, it loses the power of awareness. Struggle and difficulties awaken the mind, they awaken the power within you; they make you alert and aware. This is very simple logic. It is nothing great which I am telling you. If you have everything, naturally you are not going to be very alert and aware about things, but if you don't have anything, every moment will be spent being alert for survival. But is survival the only thing in life? There is something else more than that, which is awareness.

Shiva and Shakti

In tantra, there is a word *chitta*. The translation in English is consciousness, awareness. It is this awareness which is functioning in us, through which we see, taste, hear, think, cognize, understand, respond, feel. This awareness, although it is giving us all these experiences, exists independent of the body and mind. It is pure; it is a pure substance, but when it

associates with the body and the mind, it gives us all these experiences.

You can say that awareness is trapped in the body and the mind, just as butter is trapped in milk. The butter is there in the milk, but you can't see it. In the wood, the fire is there. In the wood, fire exists. It is trapped in the wood, but you can't see it. In the same way, awareness is in you, but you don't know it.

Everything is happening due to awareness, even the function of understanding what I am saying, remembering it, analyzing it, applying it to yourself. That is only happening due to awareness. Awareness is a modern term and I prefer to use it, but you can call it consciousness and in tantra it is called Shiva. Shiva is the principle of chitta, awareness, consciousness.

Shiva, that is awareness, operates through another principle, and that is called Shakti. It is Shakti that carries this awareness throughout your body, to your mind. It is Shakti that is expressing this awareness through your emotions, through your thoughts, through your feelings, in your body, in your organs. There are two principles, one is awareness and the other is energy: Shiva and Shakti. It is the interaction between these two which gives rise to the manifestation of experience.

Right now that experience is manifesting through the body and the senses. But you must know that even without this body and without the senses, you can still experience. Awareness and energy do not require the medium of body and senses for expression. When they express themselves through the medium of body and senses, it is a very limited experience.

I am sitting in front of you and with your eyes, your senses, you can see me, with your ears you can hear me. But when you transcend body and mind, even if I am not sitting in front of you, you can see me and you can hear me. That is the experience of awareness and energy without the body, and that is the aim of yoga and tantra.

– 17 June 2011, Bulgaria

Yantra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Yantras are not geometrical diagrams imagined by some artist. They are the mathematical or scientific equations or scientific symbols of everything that is existing in this world, in this universe, in this material form.

This body is my gross form, but I have another form in this universe. That is called yantra. I have a yantric form. Every element, every visible and invisible thing, the sun and the moon and the planets, the great oceans and the mountains, the forest and the animals, say anything you like, everything has a different form, and that form is known as yantra. Yantra therefore represents matter and space at the same time.

– 9 March 1985, Conway Hall, London, UK

Mantra and Yantra

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Mantras are sounds and yantras are visual symbols. These two tools are much used in tantra. Yantras represent maps of consciousness, maps of the mind. Mantras represent the essence of the final element.

The five elements - earth, water, fire, air and ether and the five indriyas, the senses, are connected. Sound and speech are connected to *akasha tattwa*, the ether element. When nothing of matter exists, only sound exists. Sound, the vibration in space lingers on and on and on.

The basic nature, the basic quality, the basic expression of the space element is sound. Therefore, mantra represents finality. After having gone through all the elements, there is merger into the space element, the *brahmandiya* element, the universal element.

When you are chanting the mantra in your meditation, you are only focusing on the sound and nothing more. In order to focus the mind and stop its wavering, you use a visual form, the symbol. That symbol can be anything. It can be a triangle, a flame, a drop, the moon, sun, or a flower.

The symbol which you have visualized, is the yantra on which you are focusing the mind. A yantra can be complex like the Sri Yantra, with many little triangles and pieces. It can also be as simple as a single triangle with three lines, or the shape of a flame.



Anything visual, in which you are holding your mind for an extended period of time, becomes the yantra. Ultimately what you are observing creates a mirror image in the mind, and that is your psychic symbol.

iPads and iPhones

When I see children playing their games on iPads, iPhones, and computers, and when I see that their attention span is becoming shorter and shorter every passing day, then I imagine the kind of mind they are expressing at that time: it is a visually cluttered mind. Even when these children are dreaming, they are dreaming of *Age of Empires*, in their sleep. Even when they are dreaming, they are dreaming of a computer game, Batman shooting *bang bang* in their sleep or something coming to eat them.

These images become the symbols in the mind of a young child, for that is what they see when they sleep at night. They see themselves playing the game. Grown-ups, who have had a different background, have different visual impressions. They are not watching a game, but they will be watching their stresses in their dream; the difficulties that they had during the day, at work, with the job, the pressure, stress, anxiety and tension. That becomes the visual in their dream.

Anything that becomes visual is like a release from within, it is being acknowledged and released from the rubbish bin. Therefore, visual inputs and sights as yantra observation play an important role in tantra.

Sight and sound

The sense organ that is used to the maximum is sight. Through your eyes, through your sight you can see wherever you want to see. You cannot taste twenty kilometres or twenty feet away, but you can see twenty kilometres or twenty feet away. You cannot touch twenty feet away, but you can see twenty feet away. You cannot smell twenty feet away, but you can see twenty feet away. Eyes are the most active sense organ that connects you to the world, and then comes sound.

Mantra and yantra are the tools which are used to transcend the gross dimension of form and sound. Yantras represent the transcendental form, and mantras represent the eternal sound principle that continue to exist even when creation does not exist, when matter and manifestation does not exist, when elements do not exist.

The best form of visualization during the chanting of any mantra is according to one's inclination. Some people select as their symbol, an abstract symbol. Some people select a figure. Others select an image of saints, sages, gurus and avatars. There are people who select nature images such as water, a star, the moon or sun, a flower, a blade of grass or a leaf. Some people choose religious symbols and motifs such as an *Om*, a cross, Christ, Prophet Mohammed. Anything can be used for visualization.

In yoga the best type of images recommended for visualizations are those which do not carry any emotional content; and for that reason, the abstract symbols are used more often.

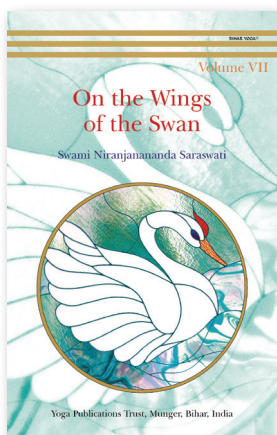
Mantra and yantra together become a powerful tool to take one from the gross to the subtle dimensions of human experience.

– 17 April 2016, Ganga Darshan, Munger



On Awareness

From On the Wings of the Swan, Volume VII, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



In the absence of awareness yoga does not fructify in life. You can practise hatha yoga for forty years and you can practise meditation for forty years, but that is not yoga.

There is a beautiful statement by Swami Sivananda. Somebody asked him, “Can I go to the caves and practise my meditation in isolation, in silence?” Swami Sivananda said, “It is not necessary, because once you go to the cave, you will be spending your time sleeping and fantasizing, building castles in the air during meditation.” This is a very appropriate and true response, because what would you do when you are alone with nothing to divert your mind, with nothing to extrovert your mind? You would be falling asleep in meditation, and when you sit to meditate, you would only be building castles in the air because there is nobody to guide you.

What has been your achievement until today? You cannot control your anger, you cannot control your moods, you cannot control your behaviour, you cannot control your expressions. Is that the outcome of meditation? You are negative, you are aggressive, you are violent, you are not at peace with yourself, and you are destructive to yourself. Therefore, meditation is not yoga, hatha yoga is not yoga, raja yoga is not yoga, karma yoga is not yoga, bhakti yoga is not yoga.

The cultivation of awareness is yoga, the cultivation of wisdom along with awareness is yoga, and the cultivation of the appropriate qualities of life along with sadhana, qualities

which can help you grow and develop, is yoga. The different yogas, whether hatha, raja, kriya or kundalini yoga, are only an aid to the development of this yogic awareness, nothing more than that. They are not the final aim.

Live yoga

In this way, you are yoga teachers only. You can say that you are a yoga teacher, but not that you are a yogi, because you have not experienced yoga. You have practised yoga, you have taught the postures and techniques of yoga, but yoga is not embodied in you. It has to come to that point. Your real achievement in life is when you can imbibe yoga as awareness, as positive qualities flowering within you, as wisdom dawning and expressing itself through you.

What stops you from developing awareness in your life? Your habits and conditionings do, because they create barriers in the development of awareness. It is very difficult to overcome a habit or a conditioning because you never give your attention to it. You are always trying to take and take, without trying to change yourself internally.

Until you are able to clean the blackboard, to change your conditioning and habits, nothing can be written on it. Therefore, yoga initially has to become a method of cleaning the blackboard, not writing on top of what is already there. People want to write on the blackboard without wiping out anything because they are attached to what is there: sensuality, sensorial awareness, intellectual ideas, emotional expressions, beliefs – these are all conditionings. If they bind your mind, if they bind your personality, then how can there be an experience of freedom?

Undoing the knots

In order to experience freedom you have to release those bondages, you have to release those knots called 'conditionings' and 'archetypes', those *samskaras*. Therefore yoga has to become a way to improve the quality of the *samskaras*, not just a way

to improve the quality of body, the quality of thinking, or the quality of meditation. It has to become a process through which you can improve the quality of the samskaras that you express in life. That is the practical yoga.

Meditation is not the answer, because you have not trained yourself to meditate. You think closing the eyes and visualizing something is meditation, or closing the eyes and concentrating on something is meditation, you think that meditation is internalization of mind, but no, it is not. Meditation is a state of mind. Just as passion or fear is a state of mind, meditation is a state of mind as well.

As generally practised, asanas are also irrelevant. Today you have an ache in your knee, tomorrow you have ache in your shoulder. After all, the body will follow its own dharma and if you practise today to remove the pain in your knee and tomorrow to remove the pain in your shoulder, then the entire focus of asana becomes physical, reduced to stretching to feel good. When I travel, I see those aerobic exercises on TV, with music and dance, passing for yoga. What is actually happening to the body at that time? You move the body, loosen it, and feel energetic for a while – that's all right too, but beyond that, what?

In the *Yoga Sutras*, comfort and stillness is defined as asana (2:46):

Sthirasukhamasanam.

Steady and comfortable should be the posture.

That comfort and stillness is not only physical, but it is psychological and spiritual as well. It is multidimensional. Asana has to lead you to that multidimensional level of comfort, stability and stillness which includes the mind, the emotions, the human psyche and the expressions of the human psyche. In our tradition we do not consider asanas to be physical at all. There are many yoga teachers who read from a book, gather ten people and become a 'Master'. I call those people the 'uneducated' yoga teachers, because an educated

yoga teacher will teach hatha yoga in a totally different way: not for stretching the body, but as a process of experiencing the subtle dimensions of the personality. Awareness plays a very important role in this process.

The attainment of awareness, wisdom, inner harmony and the appropriate samskara is the actual practice of yoga. If you have a headache you can take a pill that will help you remove the headache. Some people have a reaction to aspirin, so they need to find another medicine. Each body responds differently to each chemical. In the same manner, even in yoga each person responds according to their nature and attains a different level. Therefore it is important to find the right combination of yoga for oneself. Yoga is not a universal practice; it is very much a personal sadhana. One can learn some general practices in a class, but as sadhana one has to have the right program, a proper program designed to overcome the limited conditioning and samskaras of the mind. These techniques, practised with awareness, give birth to insight and harmonious behaviour in life.

– 23 March 2007, Ganga Darshan, Munger



Two Stepping Stones

From the teachings of Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Learn this great secret: Put yourself in the place of others. What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others. How can one who knows that each and every being is his own self harm anyone? No one tries to harm himself.

You are not the doer. Do not think of the good deeds you have done and do not expect any thanks for what you do. If you help someone, never remember it and if someone helps you, never forget it.

Failures

The world is for your education. You learn many lessons daily. If you learn all the lessons you can, if you use all opportunities

to the best advantage, in the spirit of yoga, your capacities and willpower will develop. You grow, you evolve and you expand.

There is eternal development and you are moving forward towards the goal. You receive more and more divine light, knowledge, peace and spiritual strength.

Difficulties exist so that you may become strong by overcoming them. Therefore, overcome all difficulties, one by one, patiently. If you fail ten times, do not despair. If you fail a hundred times, do not be disheartened. If you fail a thousand times, rise up and march on boldly. Failures are indeed stepping stones to success.

... Shall I fall on bended knees
And wait for someone to bless me
With happiness and a life of golden dreams?
No. I shall run into the desert of life with my arms open,
Sometimes falling, sometimes stumbling,
But always picking myself up, a thousand times if necessary,
Sometimes happy.

—From Sankalpa, Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Love

Love God with all your heart and your neighbour as yourself. Love breaks down all barriers. Feel that another's difficulty is yours and relieve him of his difficulty. Then alone will you grow in cosmic love. Love is an actual substance that you can use with confidence. Love is a positive, concrete thing.

Love vibrates in the form of service, generosity and benevolence. Love of one's nation, one's own race, one's own religion is but a limited kind of love. Human love is but the stepping stone to universal love.

Love knows no fear. Love is the divine force of this universe. The purer you make your heart, the greater will be the power of your love. Be kind, humble, tolerant, just and natural. Love the eternal in every being. Make no distinctions between one being and another. Love is the dew drop of divine grace.

Atmabhava

From Sankalpa of a Sannyasi, Swami Satyananda Saraswati



I never tried evolving, moulding or developing myself. Everything has happened of its own accord, but the main reason was my guru's entry and presence in my life. Without him stepping into my life, the transformation would never have taken place. I was a hard and heartless person, but by guru's grace I began to soften. The association with my guru brought about this change within me.

A tender heart

Swami Sivananda would call all the sweepers and scavengers, feed and clothe them, give them tea, wash their feet, and ask me to do the same. My response was negative. I found it useless and irrelevant for spiritual evolution. However, being his disciple I cleaned, cooked and fed the scavengers. He also started a leper colony for about two hundred and fifty patients behind Kailash Ashram on the banks of the Ganga. I was given the duty of going amongst the lepers and the sick to narrate the *Ramayana*, but my heart was not in the work. My guru built them huts with thatched roofs and gave them goats to rear because lepers are forbidden to raise cows. He forbade them to beg in the streets and would even send them bundles of bidis.

There were thousands of incidents like this in Swami Sivananda's life, which I saw with my own eyes. He believed that those who think well of others have soft, tender hearts. I used to accompany the doctors and distribute drugs and medicines among the lepers. I performed all the duties, but not from my heart. One who thinks ill of others has a hard heart

which needs to be pounded. Prakriti breaks hard core hearts. Your heart should be so sensitive that it responds immediately to another's pain.

Feel the tragedy

Before you are able to experience Brahman or the Lord, to see the light or experience enlightenment, you must be able to feel the tragedy in another's life. Otherwise you cannot attain peace. A compassionate and sensitive heart attains knowledge effortlessly. The more distant you are from the suffering of others, the further Brahman will be from you. God, Shiva, Rama, Devi will all be beyond your reach.

Compassion should flow from you. You should experience other people's pain as your own. Those who are unmoved by the sorrow of others and insensitive to their feelings are unworthy of being called human. They share the four instincts of food, sleep, sex and fear with animals and their lives rotate around them.

Now my teaching is that for a generous person the entire world is their family. 'This is mine, this is not mine' are the thoughts of a limited mind. The sum and substance of spiritual life, the best teaching of Vedanta, is *atmabhava*, which means feeling the pain and distress of others as if it were your own, feeling the poverty, sickness and calamities of others as your own.



God is here and now among human beings. Look for Him where He is most needed, not in the temples where people are pouring wealth on His idol. That God is very rich, but the God living among the poor and the downtrodden in the guise of a lame or blind person is needy. Go and look for Him in destitution, hunger and starvation. Go to those houses where there are no hearths.

*Jale Vishnuh thale Vishnurvishnuh parvatamastake
Jvaalaamaalaakule Vishnuh sarvam Vishnumayam jagat.*

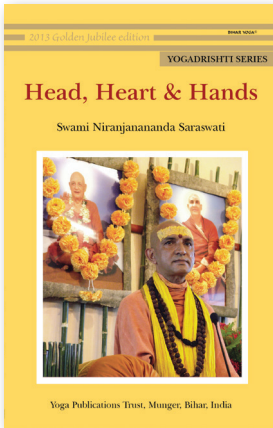
Vishnu is in the waters, in space, on the mountain tops, in the garland of flames, in every nook and corner of the world.

This is a fact, not a theory. We who have enough of everything should develop the philosophy of atmabhava in our lives. When God inspires you to serve others, you take it as His blessing.



Be Thou a Yogi

From Head, Heart & Hands, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Through meditation, pratyahara and dharana, the faculties of the head are awakened. Through bhakti yoga, the lower qualities of the heart are removed and the emotions are diverted and made free from the external influences which distort their fluidity. Through developing more and more creativity, the faculty of the hands is realized.

Awakening the faculties of the head, heart and hands means that you have to develop and discover a better you.

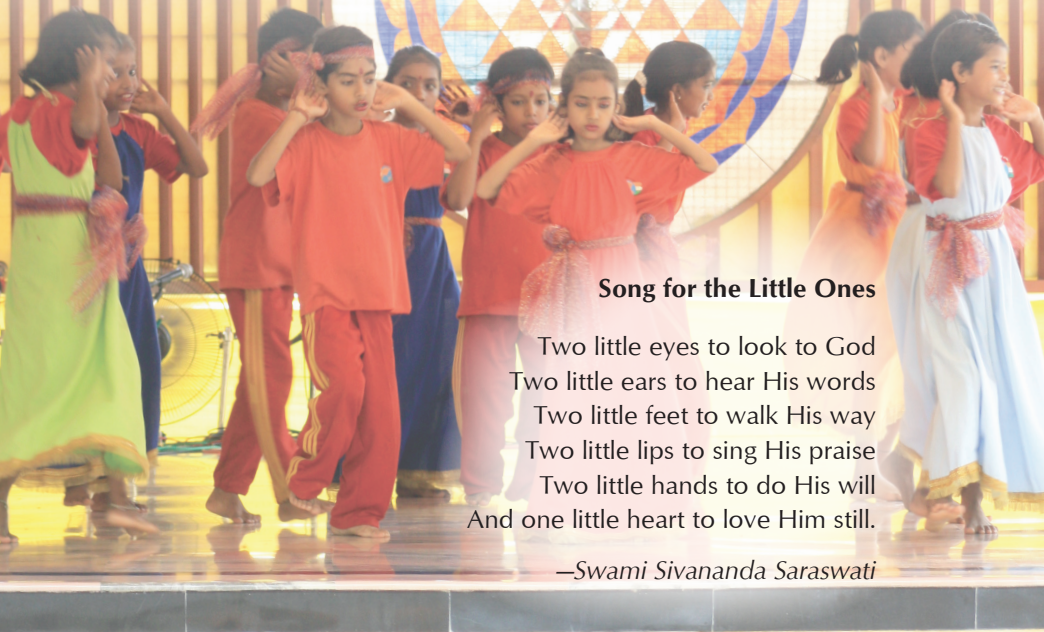
The possibility to become better is already there in you. The possibility of improvement is constant and continuous; it never ends. You think, "I can't improve any more" only when your mind becomes stagnant. If you can remain optimistic, positive and creative, balanced in emotions and thoughts, then a new you emerges from the ashes of the old you.

That new you is the yogi you. You become a yogi. You do not become enlightened or a siddha, but a yogi who has been able to transform the qualities of life, transcend the weaknesses of life and become established in strength of character and understanding of the spirit. This is the yogic journey that Swami Sivananda spoke about, and this is the yogic journey that Swami Satyananda has started us on.



Continuation

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Song for the Little Ones

Two little eyes to look to God
Two little ears to hear His words
Two little feet to walk His way
Two little lips to sing His praise
Two little hands to do His will
And one little heart to love Him still.

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

This song was originally sung by our paramguru Swami Sivananda and you might have heard his voice in the beginning.

The inspiration of Swami Sivananda inspires so many countless generations of children. To see them perform to his song is such a feeling of satisfaction and fulfilment that the samskara that he gave is being carried forward by all these people and is going to become part of their life.

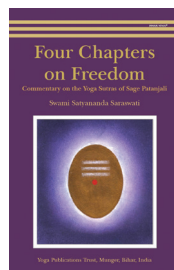
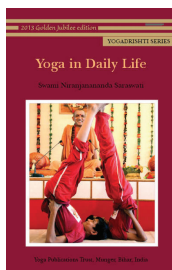
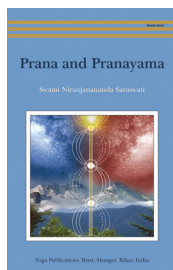
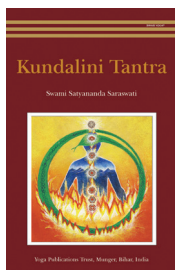
—Guru Poornima Program, 17 July 2016,
Paduka Darshan, Munger



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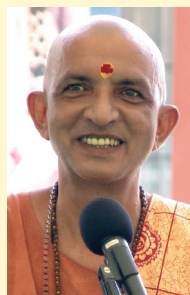
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Websites

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The official website of Bihar Yoga includes information on: Satyananda Yoga, Bihar School of Yoga, Bihar Yoga Bharati and Yoga Publications Trust catalogues.

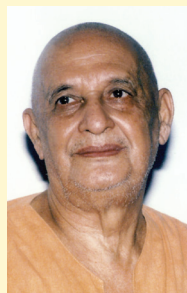


www.yogamag.net

The official website of Yoga magazine contains an archive of over 30 years of the magazine. This archive is fully searchable and ever expanding.

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

provides online access to *Satya ka 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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Sep 24-30	* Hatha Yoga: Shatkarma Intensive (Hindi/English)
Oct 3-30	* Progressive Yoga Vidya Training (English)
Oct 3-Jan 29	* Yogic Studies Course, 4 months (English)
Oct 22-28	* Raja Yoga: Asana & Pranayama Intensive (Hindi/English)
Nov 5-11	* Kriya Yoga: Preparatory (Hindi/English)
Nov 7-Feb 7 2017	* Yoga Lifestyle Experience
Dec 19-23	Yoga Chakra Series (Hindi/English)
Dec 25	Swami Satyananda's Birthday
Every Saturday	Mahamrityunjaya Havan
Every Ekadashi	Bhagavad Gita Path
Every Poornima	Sundarkand Path
Every 5th & 6th	Guru Bhakti Yoga
Every 12th	Akhanda Path of Ramacharitanamas

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Ensure that you do not bring your mobile with you.

For more information on the above events contact:

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