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## Hari Om

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**Editor:** Swami Shaktimitrananda Saraswati

**Assistant Editor:** Swami Yogatirthananda Saraswati

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## GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

### Abhyasa and vairagya

Undoubtedly, O mighty-armed Arjuna, the mind is difficult to control and restless, but by practice and by dispassion it may be restrained.

—*Bhagavad Gita* 6:35

The constant effort or repeated effort to keep the wandering mind steady by constant meditation on the object of meditation is abhyasa or practice – the same idea or thought of the Self or God is constantly repeated. This constant repetition destroys vikshepa or the vacillation of the mind and desires, and makes it steady and one-pointed.

Vairagya is dispassion or indifference to sense objects. One must make the mind realize the transitory nature of the worldly enjoyments. Gradually the mind will be withdrawn from the external objects.

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

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# YOGA

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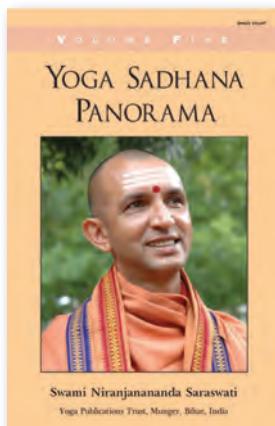
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The Yogi is superior to the ascetic. He is deemed superior even to those versed in sacred lore. The Yogi is superior even to those who perform action with some motive. Therefore, Arjuna, do you become a Yogi. (*Bhagavad Gita VI:46*)

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मत्तोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

# Transcendental Brain First

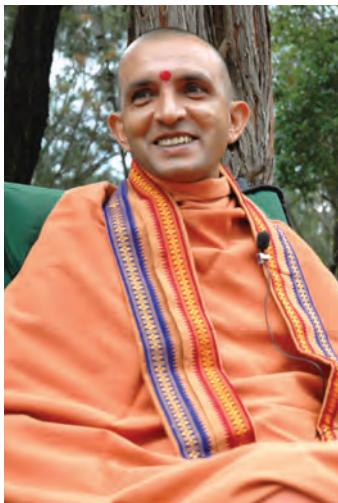
From Yoga Sadhana Panorama, Volume Five, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



There are two main traditions of kriya yoga in the world today: Paramahansa Yogananda's tradition and Swami Sivananda's tradition. Paramahansa Yogananda's is a simplified version of kriya yoga. Not all the techniques or theories are taught because the entire concept of kriya yoga, energy and chakras can become too complex to grasp. So they teach a simplified version which is very effective, but not complete. It takes you to a point where

you can get in touch with your internal energies. The kriya yoga of Swami Sivananda, as developed by Swami Satyananda, is the classical, unmodified kriya yoga that has been taught in the tradition throughout the ages.

The purpose of kriya yoga is the synthesis of all the yogas; there are components of hatha yoga, raja yoga, kundalini yoga. Our body and mind are not yet adapted to practise this kriya yoga. Before starting kriya yoga, first you need to perfect hatha yoga, then you need to achieve a certain state in raja yoga, mind management, so that as you practise kriya yoga and psychic experiences begin to happen, you are able to handle them more



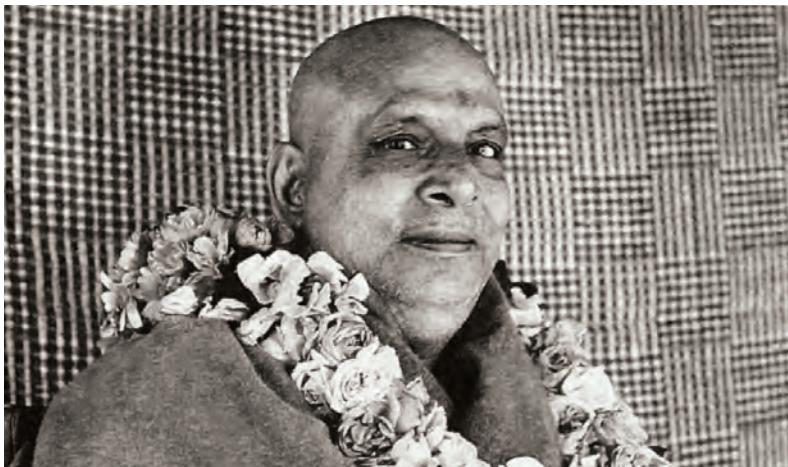
efficiently, effectively and easily, and to understand them. Each experience of kriya yoga is a map of your spiritual journey. Therefore, kriya yoga has always been treated as a sacred and secret subject, mainly because our non-transcendental brain is incapable of experiencing the transcendental reality. So, before practising kriya yoga, practise the other yogas to change your non-transcendental brain into a transcendental brain.

*— International Yoga Convention,  
20–22 May 2005, Bogota, Colombia*



# My Advice

From Practical Lessons in Yoga, Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Develop virtues like generosity, forgiveness and so forth. Mere yogic kriyas alone will not help you much. Do self-analysis and eradicate your faults and evil habits. Rectify your defects like selfishness, pride, jealousy, hatred. Develop your heart. Share what you have with others. Do selfless service. Then alone you will get purity of mind.

In these days aspirants neglect these things and jump at once to do yogic kriyas for getting siddhis. It is a serious Himalayan blunder. They have the hopeless downfall sooner or later. Therefore be careful. Mere yogic kriyas cannot bring in much results. Purification of the heart is very necessary. Without it no success in yoga is possible. You should free yourself from lust, anger, greed, jealousy, hatred, egoism, vanity, attachment, delusion, etc. This is more difficult than the control of the heart or the practice of nauli or the uniting of prana and apana.

Kundalini can be awakened by various methods such as japa, devotion, *vichara*, enquiry of 'Who am I', asana,

kumbhaka, bandhas, mudras, and above all by the grace of the Guru. You must become perfectly desireless and free from all earthly longings.

Many persons jump with curiosity and expectation of acquiring occult powers and rousing the kundalini. They do sirshasana and various other asanas and pranayama. But no one sticks to the practice for a sufficient length of time. They leave off the practice after a few months. This is not good. Application and tenacity, patience and perseverance are essential for sure success and acquisition of siddhis.

My advice is: Never care for siddhis or quick awakening of the kundalini. Have devotion to God. Have perfect trust in Him. Have the spirit of service to humanity. The kundalini will awaken by itself.

Awakening of kundalini is not so easy as you may imagine. It is extremely difficult. When all desires die out, when the mind becomes absolutely pure, when all the senses are subdued, when you attain one-pointedness of mind to a considerable degree, when all the ideas of egoism and 'mine-ness' melt away, the kundalini will awaken by itself. Then alone awakening of the kundalini is also beneficial.

Therefore purify yourself first. Have full trust and faith in the Mother. She will do the needful for you at the proper time. Be not troubled. Be not anxious, my dear friends and brothers! A glorious day is waiting to dawn on you. You will shine with full powers, nay, you will become God Himself. Laugh at all troubles and obstacles and keep your eye on the kundalini shakti all the twenty-four hours. Do all you can in order to rouse her up. If purification is ordained, purify you must. What other alternative is there? Therefore do purify yourself.

O Mother Kundalini! Having pierced the six chakras, Thou sportest with Thy consort Paramashiva in the thousand-petalled lotus of the sahasrara chakra all alone! Salutations unto Thee! Guide me. Give me light and knowledge!

# Kriya Yoga

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



Kriya yoga is one of the most important, practical aspects of tantra. Therefore, when we talk about kriya yoga, we must know something about tantra as well. In the science of tantra, the body, mind and spirit are comprehended as a continuous process of evolution and movement. This physical body is a manifestation of consciousness. It is not different from spirit, but a state of spirit.

Within this physical body flow the channels of energy or shakti. On the material plane shakti is known as prana and mind. Mind is one form of energy and prana is another. These twin energies are known in tantra as Shiva and Shakti, and in hatha yoga it is ida and pingala. Ida and pingala represent the mental and pranic energies permeating through and through this body. It is by these energies that we think and move.

The energy of ida and pingala flow through two nadis or passages within the framework of the spinal cord. These two

nadis emanate from the base of the spinal cord at a point known as mooladhara chakra, and they terminate at ajna chakra in the medulla oblongata. These nadis are not merely psychic in structure, they are also physical. In the same way, mental energy is not only psychological, it is physiological as well. Similarly, the pranic energy is not only material energy; it is also higher energy.

Besides pranic and mental energy there is a third energy in this human body which is conducted to higher centres through sushumna nadi within the spinal cord. Whereas pranic and mental energy are physiological, psychological and biological, this third energy is spiritual. When pranas predominate we are physically active, and when mind predominates we are mentally active. However, when kundalini awakens and this energy is conducted through sushumna to the higher centres, we become spiritually active.

Therefore, the purpose of kriya yoga is twofold: i) the awakening of *kundalini*, the spiritual energy, and ii) the awakening of *sushumna*, the channel for the spiritual energy. The awakening of sushumna is very necessary because if sushumna is not awakened, then this spiritual energy may be conducted through the wrong channel. So it is not merely the awakening of kundalini which is important, but more important is the awakening of the channel through which this energy has to be conducted. You may be able to awaken the energy in mooladhara chakra through the different yoga practices, but if sushumna is not awakened at the same time, then this energy can be diverted or misdirected through ida and pingala as well. When this happens, the practitioner has many difficulties until the energy is properly channelled. Therefore, in the practice of kriya yoga we are very careful about this twofold awakening process.

### **Befriending the mind**

One of the reasons for so many mental problems in the east and west is the way people try to control the mind. The practices

of kriya yoga are designed in such a way that we do not have to confront the nature of the mind. The control of mind is an intellectual process, and it is against the very principle of spiritual evolution. Therefore, the entire range and background of kriya yoga is different from those schools of thought which stress control of the mind.

Let's talk about the mind. A thought is not the mind; an emotional upsurge is not the mind. Those people who are trying to control the mind do not know exactly what the mind is. Mind is like an iceberg; a little bit is seen and a lot is not seen. Most people do not know what thoughts or emotions they have; they are totally unaware of their mental state.

Mind is a very powerful tool, and you must be very careful about how you deal with it. If you do injustice to the mind, if you fight with the mind, it becomes weak. Most of you think of the mind as a monkey, demon or monster, and when you meditate, you fight with yourself, you hate yourself. You don't understand this, and therefore the type of meditation you have been doing leads to a process of negation and self-hypnotism.

Meditation has to be done with the mind and for the mind; it is not necessary that you forget all about yourself. We are not talking about the extinction of mind; we are talking about expansion of mind. The area of the mind evolved so far has to be extended further. We have developed the external, sensual, mental consciousness. We recognize a form, we hear a sound, we can feel a touch, that's the area of the mind so far. Now we have to extend the internal area, the possibilities of the mind within. When we are aware and able to extend the possibility of mind internally, we should be able to maintain the external awareness at the same time. It is something like standing at the threshold and being able to look at the interior of the room and the exterior at the same time.

Therefore, in the practice of kriya yoga, the first and foremost thing is not to control the mind, because this is not at all necessary. Spiritual awareness can dawn in a man no matter what condition the mind is in. Spiritual illumination is

not a condition of mind, it is different from the mind. You have been wasting your time fighting with the mind, you do not know the mind. If you knew the totality and the homogeneity of the mind, you would be surprised at what an error you have been making. The depth, the infinity, the power of the mind is so great that you can't even think about it. Therefore, in kriya yoga, an absolutely friendly attitude towards the mind must be maintained. It is possible to evolve without the aid of the mind, but it is better to evolve through the mind.

### **The practices**

Another important factor to consider is that many of the thoughts which you are trying to control in your spiritual life are biological products. Such thoughts need not be controlled by a process of counter-thinking. If you can properly balance your nadis, and hormonal secretions, 95% of the thinking process with which you have been fighting will be magically eliminated. When there is an imbalance between the pranic and mental systems, the mind is agitated, and when the mind is agitated you fight with yourself.

In kriya yoga we use mudras, bandhas and pranayama. For example: one of the important practices in kriya yoga is called khechari mudra. This can help us utilize a type of secretion or nectar in the body which creates a spiritual attitude. From bindu chakra in the cranial passage, this nectar flows, and it has to be tasted by the aspirant through the practice of khechari mudra. You may not taste it every day but you may taste it sometimes. When this happens, then you have no mind at all. Thoughts evaporate and tranquillity comes automatically.

When you practise kriya yoga the whole physical body is immediately controlled. Afterwards mental control comes by itself without trying to eliminate the conscious tendencies of the mind. Higher awareness can be apprehended even when your awareness is external. Homogenous awareness is a potential in everyone, but in order to have that experience we must widen the capacities of mind and consciousness.



## Total experience

In all the kriya practices you are asked not to worry about the behaviour of the mind. There is no emphasis on steadiness and tranquillity because the practices are dynamic by nature, not static. There is no passivity as you have in other systems of meditation. The mind and consciousness must remain active, not inactive. This is the difference between hypnotism and yogic experience. When the elements of the body and mind are directed towards inactivity, you are headed towards the hypnotic state.

Through the practices of kriya yoga, you are not deactivating the mind, you are stimulating the mind and pranas as well as each and every organ. Therefore, you don't feel the same type of tranquillity which is created in the hypnotic state. Most people want to escape, and they are trying to find the easiest way, but I'm not for that. I know that the mind is troublesome, but we can channelize its dynamism.

There should be no effort at controlling the behaviour and tendencies of the mind. In kriya yoga, you are not aspiring for a state of absolute shoonya, but a state of absolute existence.

You want to be spiritually evolved and, at the same time, aware of the entire creation. Sensory, mental and spiritual experiences are a composition of one experience, but when you go inside and block off sensory and mental experience, that is an incomplete experience.

So let us have total experience, not partial experience. When you sit in an asana, close your eyes, switch off your mind and go into meditation – this is a partial experience. But when you are aware of the outside and the inside simultaneously, this is complete and total experience. This is the way for modern people, because you want to live this life as well, no matter how much you aspire for that life. Therefore, this life and that life, this consciousness and that consciousness, this awareness and that awareness must be intermingled.

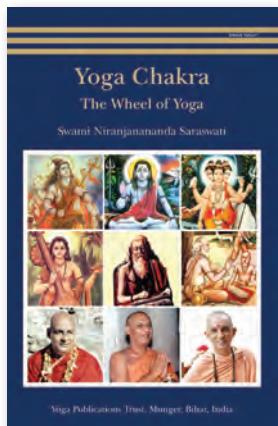
So, in fact, kriya yoga does not lead to shoonya samadhi. Kriya yoga leads to expansion of consciousness and liberation of energy. The energy is in mooladhara. It is dormant and it has to be liberated. The purpose of kriya yoga is to awaken the kundalini and when awakening of kundalini takes place, the totality becomes superb and beautiful. You have a new sense, a new awareness and a new perception.

*– printed in YOGA Vol.18, No. 4, (April 1980), talk given  
9 September 1979 at the Zinal Conference in Switzerland*



# The Beginning of Kriya Yoga

From Yoga Chakra, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

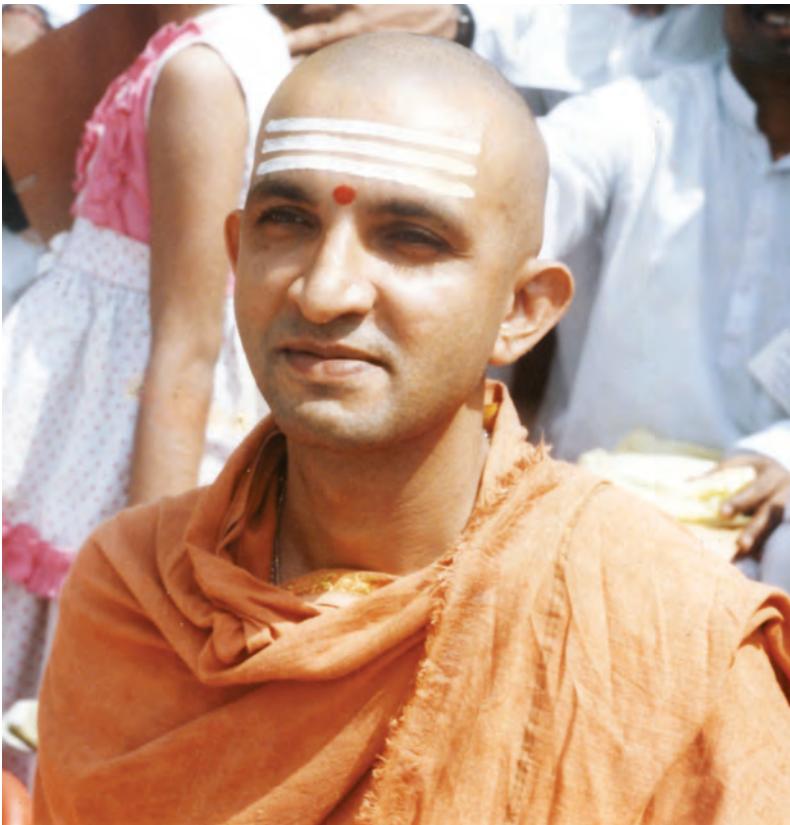


In kriya yoga the component of psychic awareness emerges, in which you enter into your psychic dimension, *vijnanamaya kosha*. It is a confronting dimension, as everything that is unknown to you is lying there. Everything that is limitless within you is there. Everything that is luminous within you is there. Outside of it is your interaction with the world where everything is diluted and mixed. The purity lies in *vijnanamaya kosha*.

The experience and the purity of realization that you gain with the practice of kriya yoga allows you to move into *anandamaya kosha*. Accessing *vijnanamaya kosha*, however, is a challenging situation and condition of life; it is a challenging dimension. Therefore until now kriya yoga has been a secret tradition, and it will continue to remain so. It will not become as popular as hatha yoga or raja yoga. It will remain in the zone of selected spiritual seekers who are willing to take that jump into the spiritual unknown.

For other seekers, up to raja yoga is enough. They deal with their mind and they live happily ever after. There is a difference. For a normal person in society who does not have spiritual aspirations, drive or motivation to even realize their nature, up to raja





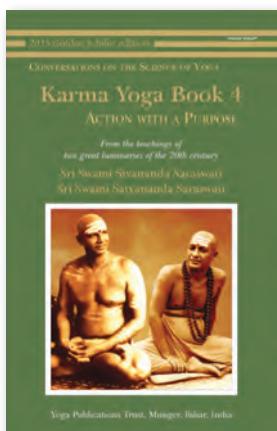
yoga is fine. De-stress yourself, relax yourself, enjoy yourself, and live in the best manner possible.

If you come to kriya yoga it is an indication of your desire to discover your inner spiritual dimension. This inner spiritual dimension can only be realized when you have cultivated the drashta state, the state of observer in your mind. Not only at the time of meditation, but twenty-four hours the awareness that 'I am witnessing myself', remains constant.

It does happen. If you can maintain the drashta awareness that 'I am aware of myself' for twenty-four hours during the periods of activity and inactivity both, then the mind is elevated to another level and it is not gross any more. Here kriya yoga begins.

# Be in the Inner and Outer World

From Conversations on the Science of Yoga – Karma Yoga Book 4:  
Action with a Purpose



*Swami Satyananda:* Most people must combine their daily work, in the form of karma yoga, with daily sessions of meditation practices. There must be acceptance, integration and understanding of both the inner and outer environments. For this reason, it is essential that each person with spiritual aspiration should practise introverting techniques, such as raja yoga, kriya yoga, pranayama and so on, combined with and supplemented by methods of harmonizing the interaction with the external surroundings, such as karma yoga.

Only in this way can one start to effectively harmonize both the inner and outer worlds. Only in this way can one really start to tread the path and know the complete oneness of everything that exists, both internal and external. It is for this reason that karma yoga is so important, and why Swami Sivananda urged everyone to work and play in both the outer and inner world.



# The Moving Awareness

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

People think that when they practise yoga, they will experience silence, peace and quiet. That may be the final result, but the entire process from step one to the last step is not an experience of peace but continuous motion. As long as there is motion there is no peace: you will experience peace when you reach your final destination and stop your motion. When you are walking there is continuous motion rather than peace. Once you arrive, you can sit down quietly and admire the beauty of the sunset. That is the procedure that yoga adopts in dealing with the mind.

Even in kriya yoga you continuously move up and down the arohan and avarohan passages, to keep yourself engaged. That engagement allows you to focus on many different activities that happen simultaneously, which in a normal situation you would not be aware of. Even right now, you are performing many activities through your body and senses, but are you aware of them all? No! In kriya yoga, you become aware of multiple activities within one practice.

For example, in the first practice of kriya yoga, vipareeta karani mudra, you have to maintain the awareness of the correctness of the posture, the balance, the weight on your hands and shoulders, everything has to be properly adjusted, and through that you come to a proper *sthiti*, stable condition, of the body. After adjusting yourself physically, you focus on the stability of the body. Thereafter you become aware of the breath, but instead of feeling the breath in the throat, you visualize it flowing in a smooth and gentle manner. Visualization also helps the physical condition: you do not focus on the contraction of the throat and feel choked as your throat is compressed; rather the breath becomes a way to lead the awareness to different areas of the body. Then you focus

on the chakras. That awareness at specific points in the body triggers centres that are located in those areas.

In this manner, you are simultaneously becoming aware of and managing conditions that are both physical and mental. In this process, is the mind relaxed or engaged? It is engaged. It is not a fixed awareness, it is a moving awareness. You have to move your awareness up from manipura to vishuddhi to bindu, then come back down again. This builds up *dharanas*, or areas of focus, areas of developing the awareness and engaging the mind to create a particular type of experience, which may or may not be sensorial.

### **The safety valve**

If kriya yoga is done right, it leads to certain psychic experiences and awakenings. For these awakenings and experiences to happen beneficially, you need to have gone through the proper sequence, which includes balancing of ida and pingala in hatha yoga and chitta vritti nirodha in raja yoga.

The way to stabilize the vrittis begins in hatha yoga with the balance of ida and pingala, the solar and the lunar activities of life, and the clearing of vrittis continues in raja yoga. If these two processes are not done, you will not be able to practise kriya yoga. No matter how hard you try to meditate and concentrate, with imbalanced energies you will not have sufficient depth and with disturbed vrittis you will not be able to go deep into your psyche.

With dissipated mental behaviour, you cannot derive the benefit from kriya yoga or even practise it; you will get bored after some time. That is the beauty of kriya yoga: many people learn it yet very few people practise it, as they are not psychologically inclined or ready for it. After a few weeks, days or months, it fades into the background and they return to their asana practice.

This, in fact, is one of the biggest boons of kriya yoga: that those who are not ready for it, even if they learn it, will not be able to use it. Those who are ready, by learning it in the

right manner, will have quick results. They already have the necessary education from previous classes and have gone through the training of hatha yoga's ida-pingala balancing and raja yoga's *chitta vritti nirodha*. Their mind is already geared to go beyond annamaya, pranamaya and manomaya into vijnanamaya and anandamaya. There is no dissipation of annamaya, pranamaya or manomaya, as all the vrittis are stabilized. This is the inbuilt safety of kriya yoga.

Kriya yoga is not a common practice or learning, as not many people are able to fulfil its two basic requirements: balance in prana shakti and chitta shakti, and management of mental dissipations and distractions. It is possible only for those who have followed the proper sequence, which ensures that one's progress in hatha yoga has taken one through the first two koshas: annamaya and pranamaya. Then, in raja yoga, one works with pranamaya kosha and manomaya kosha, and gains access to vijnanamaya kosha, the dimension of consciousness as a meditative experience. Thereafter, in kriya yoga one is able to access the depth of vijnanamaya and have the experience of anandamaya. Therefore, the practice of kriya yoga is dependent on the perfection of hatha yoga and raja yoga. It is not a standalone practice; its foundations are hatha yoga and raja yoga.

— Kriya Yoga – Module 1,  
7 November 2016, Ganga Darshan, Munger



# Kundalini

*From Kundalini Yoga, Swami Sivananda Saraswati*



The word kundalini is a familiar one to all students of yoga, as it is well known as the power, in the form of a coiled serpent, residing in mooladhara chakra, the first of the seven chakras. The other six are swadhisthana, manipura, anahata, vishuddhi, ajna and sahasrara, in this order.

All sadhanas in the form of japa, meditation, kirtan and prayer as well as all development of virtues, and observance of austerities like truth, non-violence and continence are at best calculated only to awaken this serpent-power and make it to pass through all the succeeding chakras beginning from swadhisthana to sahasrara.

*Sahasrara* is otherwise called the thousand-petalled lotus, the seat of Sadashiva, the Parabrahman or the Absolute. It is separated from the kundalini or the Shakti which lies at mooladhara, and in order to unite, the kundalini passes through all the chakras, as explained above, conferring liberation on

the aspirant who assiduously practises yoga or the technique of uniting her with her Lord, and who gets success also in his effort.

In worldly-minded people, given to enjoyment of sensual and sexual pleasures, this kundalini power is sleeping because of the absence of any stimulus in the form of spiritual practices. The power generated through such practices alone awakens the serpent-power, and not any other power derived through the possession of worldly riches and affluence.

When the aspirant seriously practises all the disciplines as enjoined in the shastras, and as instructed by the preceptor, the veils or layers enmeshing kundalini begin to be cleared and finally are torn asunder and the serpent-power is pushed or driven, as it were upwards. Only a person in whom the kundalini has already been awakened and reached its abode or Sadashiva, and is blessed by this achievement alone becomes entitled to act as a *Guru* or spiritual preceptor, guiding and helping others also to achieve the same end.

Supersensual visions appear before the mental eye of the aspirant, new worlds with indescribable wonders and charms unfold themselves before the yogi, planes after planes reveal their existence and grandeur to the practitioner. The yogi gets divine knowledge, power and bliss, in increasing degrees, when kundalini passes through chakra after chakra, making them to bloom in all their glory, which lies concealed from the eyes of worldly-minded people who would refuse to believe of their existence even. Before the touch of kundalini, they do not give out their powers, emanating their divine light and fragrance and reveal the divine secrets and phenomena.

When the kundalini ascends one chakra or yogic centre, the yogi also ascends one step or rung upward in the yogic ladder; one more page, the next page, he reads in the divine book. As the kundalini travels upwards, the yogi also advances towards the goal of spiritual perfection in relation to it. When the kundalini reaches the sixth centre or the ajna chakra, the yogi gets the vision of the personal God or *Saguna Brahman*.

When the serpent-power reaches the last, the top centre, the sahasrara chakra or the thousand-petalled lotus, the yogi loses his individuality in the ocean of *satchidananda* or the existence-knowledge-bliss absolute and becomes one with the Lord or Supreme Soul.

He is no longer an ordinary man, not even a simple yogi, but a fully illumined sage, having conquered the eternal and unlimited divine kingdom. He is a hero having won the battle against illusion, a *mukta* or liberated one, having crossed the ocean of ignorance or the transmigratory existence, and a superman having the authority and capacity to save the other struggling souls of the relative world. Scriptures hail him most, in the maximum possible glorifying way, and his achievement. Celestial beings envy him, not excluding the Trinity: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

### **Kundalini and tantric sadhana**

Kundalini yoga actually belongs to tantric sadhana, which gives a detailed description of this serpent-power and the chakras, as mentioned above. Mother Divine, the active aspect of the existence-knowledge-bliss absolute, resides in the body of men and women in the form of kundalini. The entire tantric sadhana aims at awakening Her, and making Her unite with the Lord, Sadashiva, in sahasrara, as described in the beginning in detail. Methods adopted to achieve this end in tantric sadhana are japa of the name of the Mother, prayer and various rituals.

### **Kundalini and hatha yoga**

Hatha yoga also builds up its philosophy around this kundalini and the methods adopted in it are different from tantric sadhana. Hatha yoga seeks to awaken this kundalini through the discipline of the physical body, purification of nadis and controlling the prana. Through a number of physical poses called yogasanas it tones up the entire nervous system and brings it under the conscious control of the yogi. Through

bandhas and mudras it controls the prana, regulates its movements and even blocks and seals it without allowing it to move. Through kriyas it purifies the inner organs of the physical body and, finally, through pranayama it brings the mind itself under the control of the yogi. Kundalini is made to go upwards towards sahasrara through these combined methods.

### **Kundalini and raja yoga**

Raja yoga mentions nothing about this kundalini, but proounds a still subtler, higher path, philosophical and rational, and asks the aspirant to control the mind, to withdraw all the senses and to plunge in meditation. Unlike hatha yoga which is mechanical and mystical, raja yoga teaches a technique with eight limbs, appealing to the heart and intellect of aspirants.

It advocates moral and ethical development through its yama and niyama, helps the intellectual and cultural development through *swadhyaya* or study of holy scriptures, and satisfies the emotional and devotional aspect of human nature by enjoining to surrender oneself to the will of the Creator. Raja yoga has an element of mysticism by including pranayama as one of the eight limbs. Finally it prepares the aspirant for unbroken meditation on the Absolute through a penultimate step of concentration.

Neither in philosophy nor in its prescription of methods does raja yoga mention kundalini, but it sets the human mind and chitta as its targets to be destroyed as they alone make the individual soul forget its real nature and brings on it birth and death and all the woes of phenomenal existence.

### **Kundalini and Vedanta**

When we come to Vedanta, there is no question about kundalini or any type of mystical and mechanical methods. It is all enquiry and philosophical speculation. According to Vedanta the only thing to be destroyed is ignorance about one's real nature, and this ignorance cannot be destroyed either by study,

or by pranayama, or by work, or by any amount of physical twisting and torturing, but only by knowing one's real nature, which is satchidananda or the existence-knowledge-bliss.

Man is divine, free and one with the Supreme Spirit always. This he forgets, and identifies himself with matter, which itself is an illusory appearance and a superimposition on the spirit. Liberation is freedom from ignorance and the aspirant is advised to constantly dissociate himself from all limitations and identify himself with the all-pervading, non-dual, blissful, peaceful, homogeneous spirit or *Brahman*.

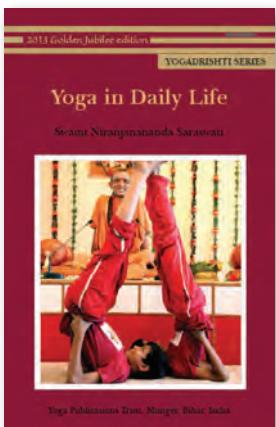
When meditation becomes intensified, in the ocean of Existence the individuality is blotted or blown out completely. Just as a drop of water let on a hot frying pan is immediately sucked and vanishes from cognition, the individual consciousness is sucked in by the Universal Consciousness and is absorbed in it.

According to Vedanta there cannot be real liberation in a state of multiplicity, and the state of complete Oneness is the goal to be aspired for, towards which alone the entire creation is slowly moving on.



# Awakening the Spirit

From Yoga in Daily Life, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The people who have perfected kriya yoga have become siddhas, as they have attained the spiritual illumination. You may have heard of Babaji, the ever-youthful saint. He was the master of kriya yoga. Once that spiritual awakening takes place, you have power to control the energy flowing in your body.

You can rejuvenate the dead cells through that prana shakti and not allow the body to decay; it is a natural

outcome. After having perfected kriya yoga; the whole body changes, as there is mastery, control and governance over the laws of nature which regulate the normal behaviour of the body.

When you arrive at that state of realization, where you are able to use the faculties of your consciousness and shakti, even the body does not know old age or decay. However, the purpose of kriya yoga is not to stop old age and decay of the body. This is a natural outcome of having perfected kriya yoga; you can live a long life.

Kriya yoga has to be understood as a sadhana, not as a practice: "Oh, Swamiji said kriya yoga is wonderful, I can extend my life span, so now every day I practise kriya yoga, and I check myself, 'Have I aged today? Are there more wrinkles on my face?'" No. That is a futile exercise. If you do that you are not a yogi, you are a narcissist.

A yogi is a person who practises for the sake of perfection and realization, not to check the quality and condition of the body in front of a mirror to be more appealing and attractive to other people.

# **Yoga Capsule (Respiratory) 2017 – Impressions**

The ashram has a vision and it is apparent on the face of every swami and every student - the understanding that they are part of a larger message. One can see the guru's touch and grace in all activities and areas within the ashram. It is apparent in the attitude of seva, *prasannata* or happiness, equanimity, the cheer; people are inspired here.

This course is taught systematically, methodically and with great practical knowledge of the teachers' own understanding of prana.

– *Sandamini Chandra, New Delhi*

The Yoga Capsule is very useful and effective. I felt a significant difference in my respiratory problem during the course. I am benefitted not only physically but also mentally/psychologically. New built-up strength will power in my mind and make me happy.

I had also a chance to interact with other attendees from different parts of India which helps me to be more strong and positive by sharing experiences.

– *Chitra Chhantel, Nepal*











Situated at a quaint environment on the banks of Ganga Bihar School of Yoga has been dedicated to a noble cause.

The teachers are dedicated and make the subject understandable. Most of the topics in pranayama are hypothetical but the teachers make it real by making the students imagine the course of action correctly. They ensure that the learning process is correct and emphasis is given on suitability of the yogasanas and pranayamas for each particular participant.

— *Satyanarayan Mohapatra, Maharashtra*



Now I understand that yoga is not only physical exercise but also proper balance and relaxation of mind and body. If you do yoga with a peaceful mind then it will be more effective and will support to heal your problem quickly and efficiently.

— *Sibendra Baidya, Nepal*

I entered the ashram to join the Respiratory Capsule deeply sceptical that a short program of seven days could cure the deep-rooted issues I was afflicted with.

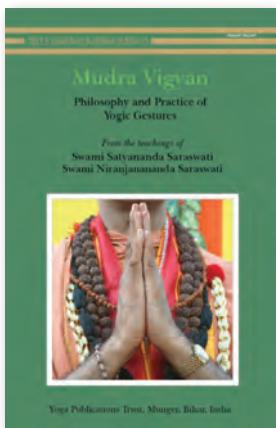
Seemingly minor modifications in the posture, such as widening the hands in some asana, made the practice better suited for respiratory wellness. Other tips ranged from the type of water to drink to how to straighten the back while sitting in a meditative posture.

At the conclusion of the program I feel significantly healthier and firmly in control of my healing process. And for that I cannot thank Bihar School Yoga enough.

— *Sanjeev Shukla (Sivarupa), Maharashtra*

# Khechari Mudra

From Mudra Vigyan, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The practice of *khechari mudra* (gesture of the tongue lock) exerts a controlling influence upon the network of endocrine glands throughout the body. This is achieved by regulating the production of the powerful secretions of the brain itself. These secretions are produced in tiny amounts to control the functions of the pituitary gland, thereby controlling the whole orchestra of glands associated with the centres below ajna. These dependent glands include the thyroid, mammary, thymus, adrenal and reproductive glands, as well as many other dependent processes which continually go on in the body.

*Khechari mudra* also influences the centres in the hypothalamus and brainstem which control involuntary actions such as autonomic breathing, heart rate, emotional expression, appetite and thirst. The hypothalamus has a strong connection with the thalamus and the RAS (reticular activating system), which assumes a vital role in the sleep and waking mechanisms and all degrees of central nervous system activities, including the ability to concentrate. The practice also influences the salivary gland and the faculty of taste, which are connected to the lower nerve plexuses involved in the digestive and assimilative processes, in turn allowing for some control over one's sexuality. In *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* the effects on the body are described (3:38–39):

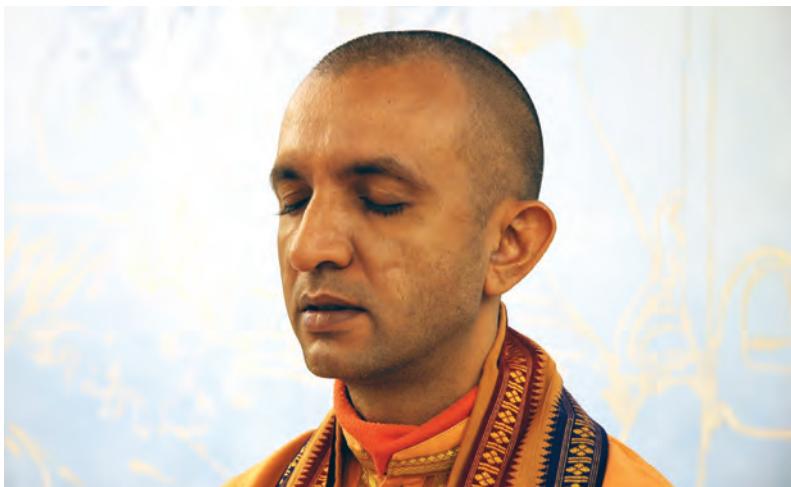
The yogi who remains with the tongue going upwards for even half a second is freed from toxins, disease, death,

old age, etc. One who accomplishes this khechari mudra is neither troubled by diseases, nor death, lassitude, sleep, hunger, thirst or unconsciousness.

This sloka concerning the powerful effects of khechari mudra on human psychophysiology and destiny is better understood when one knows about certain neuroendocrinial functions of the brain. During the practice of khechari mudra, a number of pressure points located in the back of the mouth and the nasal cavity are stimulated. These points influence the whole body. As the tongue is inserted into the nasal cavity, many tiny nerve endings are activated that allow for greater autonomic control.

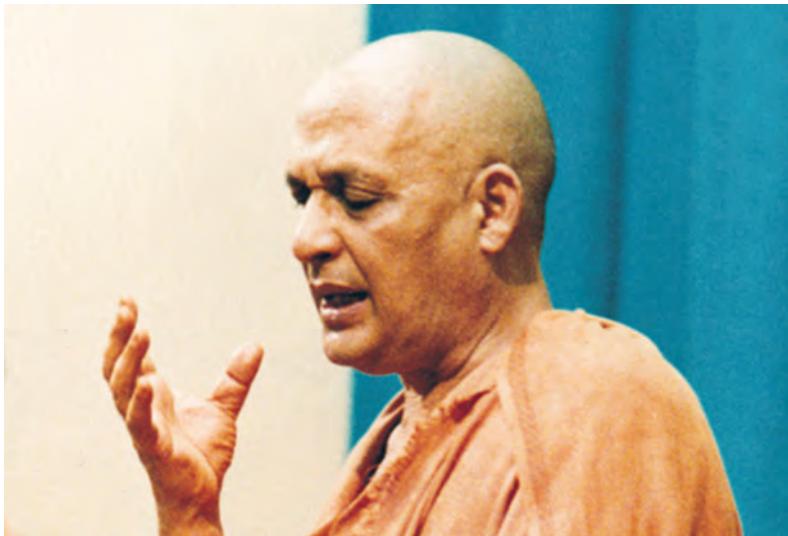
Even in normal life, with continuous practice of the simple version of khechari called *nabho mudra*, the sensations of hunger and thirst are reduced. One does not feel like eating or drinking and gradually the body adjusts accordingly. This can be experienced by experimentation.

Khechari mudra is just one example of how mudras, when practised properly for some time, can affect the physiology of the body and brain, in turn allowing access to parts of the brain and to human potentials that have previously remained dormant and unknown.



# Kriya and Kundalini

*From the teachings of Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



Although there are varieties of practices for awakening the inner power, most of them have brought man into conflict with the mind. Right from the beginning, man has not been able to make any tangible progress in spiritual life, because most of his time has been spent in fighting, controlling and suppressing the grosser tendencies of the mind. Since the tendencies of the mind are endless affairs, man has had continual problems with the mind. Even if one is able to control and pacify the mind for a period of six months, it is no guarantee that the mind will not lose its gales once more. After many years of quiet, the mind again becomes restless over petty matters. Therefore, it is necessary to discover a way which does not involve and confront the mind.

With this purpose in view, the ancient yogis designed a way for bypassing the nature of the mind in spiritual life, which was known as the path of kriya yoga. This path is a combination

of powerful practices based on hatha yoga. In the practice of kriya yoga you try to influence the mind through the body, just as you influence the mind through the ingestion of certain chemicals.

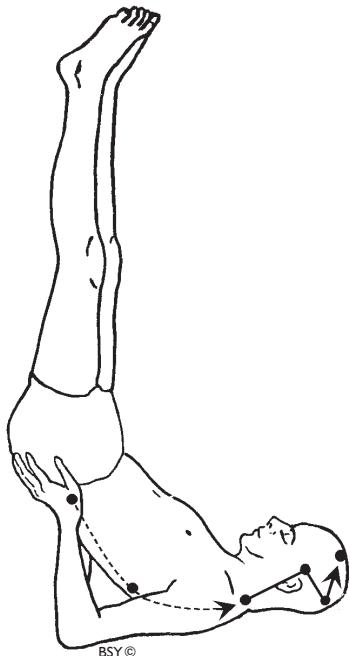
People have always known that the mind can be influenced. When you try to change the mind through the mind, it is raja yoga. When the mind is influenced by self-enquiry, it is jnana yoga. When you transform the mind through emotion, it is bhakti yoga. When you try to change the mind through selfless service and detachment, it is karma yoga. When you change the nature of the mind through mantra, it is part of tantra yoga. When you try to influence the mind by adjusting and balancing the chemicals of the body, that is hatha yoga.

In the practice of kriya yoga you are not at all concerned with the distractions that are tossing within your mind. If your mind lacks the fundamental qualification of concentration, and is swayed by passions, depressed by worries, psychotic or neurotic, even if you are on the worst of mental planes, it makes no difference in kriya yoga. Whether you are tamasic, rajasic or sattwic, it makes no difference.

In raja yoga you have to be constantly aware of the functions of the mind. You have to make your mind consistent and one-pointed, otherwise you will fail. But in kriya yoga the constancy of the mind is not important; you are concerned with the practices only. The practices are done on the physical plane and the mind has minimum involvement. It is not necessary to be consistent and one-pointed, but you have to practise the kriyas in the manner specified.

### **Vipareet karani mudra**

For example, in vipareeta karani mudra, the first practice of kriya yoga, you must be able to maintain the correct position. While practising the physical posture, you have to inhale in ujjayi from manipura chakra up to vishuddhi, stop there, and then breathe out without any passage. In vipareeta karani mudra the inspiration has a passage from manipura



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to vishuddhi, but the expiration has no passage. You may expire in any manner you like, and then start the second round from manipura to vishuddhi. Practise this 11 times.

Now what is the science behind the practice? The texts on hatha yoga say that the moon secrets nectar and the sun consumes it. Thus the yogi loses his spiritual power and death overtakes him. Therefore let him send the nectar back to the moon and become immortal. This is the basis of *vipareeta karani mudra*.

Here not only the flow of nectar and prana, but even the blood circulation is reversed to

the brain. If you enrich your brain with a surplus of these three, then you can realize the higher self. *Vipareeta karani mudra* is a means of enriching your brain and preparing yourself for further practices.

By the practice of *vipareeta karani mudra*, you are able to stimulate the sahasrara chakra, known in modern science as the pituitary body, which is located in the higher centre of the brain. From different areas of the pituitary, powerful hormones are secreted which control all the other glands of the body, thereby influencing the functioning of all the organs and systems as well as the mind and emotions.

Of these multiple hormones the most important are the sex hormones. In yoga these hormones are known as *retas*, and it is said that they are responsible for arresting degeneration. As long as the body is saturated with *retas*, one remains young and the body emits a pleasant odour. The preservation of this hormone is known as *brahmacharya*. When this hormone goes

down to the navel region, it turns into *veerya* or semen and leaves the body by emission. As a result of this, restlessness is created in the mind and one becomes mentally and physically broken. This cycle of degeneration is prevented by the practice of *vipareeta karani mudra*. Before the retas turn into *veerya*, you reverse the whole process and send the hormone and prana back to the brain.

In order to be tranquil in mind, you must have ample force in the brain. When there is ample force in the brain, the mind stops and kundalini wakes up. When the brain is weak and has no prana, the mind grows restless. Many people sit for *dhyana*, but instead of becoming peaceful, their minds become anxious, fearful and nervous. The reason for this is very simple: there is not ample prana shakti in the higher centres. If you practise *vipareeta karani mudra* for nine minutes every day and are able to reverse the process of prana, there is no reason why your mind should not stop. Therefore, *vipareeta karani mudra* is the first practice of *kriya yoga*.

### **Chakra anusandhana**

Here is another example of how the awareness can be awakened without involving the mind. In this practice the consciousness is rotated through the chakras and their contact points. All the chakras except for mooladhara and bindu have contact points at the front side of the body which are parallel to the chakra points in the spine. From mooladhara to bindu you ascend through the contact points, and from bindu to mooladhara you descend through the chakra points. The upper terminal is bindu and the lower terminal is mooladhara.

As you ascend through the contact points in the frontal passage, say the name of each one to yourself and touch it mentally: mooladhara – perineum, swadhisthana – pubic bone, manipura – navel, anahata – sternum, vishuddhi – throat pit, bindu – top back of the head.

As you descend through the chakra points in the spine, again say the name of each one mentally and touch it

mentally: bindu – top back of the head, ajna – top of the spine, vishuddhi – behind the throat pit, anahata – behind the sternum, manipura – behind the navel, swadhisthana – coccyx, mooladhara –perineum, and terminate.

In this practice concentration is not necessary, but the awareness should keep moving from centre to centre as quickly as possible. If you are slow the mind will wander out. Practise nine rounds of chakra anusandhana.

### **The tradition**

Kriya yoga is a compilation of practices taken from hatha yoga and different sources in tantra. For example, vipareeta karani mudra is a posture of hatha yoga, but in hatha yoga we do not teach the other details. Similarly, maha mudra and maha bheda mudra, the two important kriyas, are also taught in hatha yoga, but not in detail. In the same way, naumukhi mudra is also taught in hatha yoga, but not in its complete form. In hatha yoga it is called shanmukhi or yoni mudra, in which you close the seven gates: two ears, two eyes, two nostrils, and the mouth. In naumukhi, however, all nine gates including the urinary and excretory orifices are closed. This leaves only the tenth gate open for the passage of prana and kundalini. So, in kriya yoga we teach a little more than we teach in hatha yoga.

In our century the practices of kriya yoga are being taught by many people, but they have been simplified to a great extent. I do not want to simplify these practices, however, because if I do, future posterity will not know what kriya yoga really is. Although many people today are unable to practise kriya yoga in its complete form, they may be ready to practise it in a year or two, providing they know what it is.

### **Relationship between kundalini and kriya**

Kundalini yoga is not a practice but a system, just as hatha yoga is not a practice but a system. Kriya yoga is one part of kundalini yoga; it is a practice and not a system.

The word kundalini has to be explained properly. According to the modern writers, kundalini is a coiled serpent, but according to tantra, the word *kunda* means 'a deeper place'. When you make a fire sacrifice you make a small square hole in the ground in which you put the fire. When the fire is burning you offer oblations. When you offer oblations the fire blazes, so the word *kunda* literally means 'a fireplace in a hole'. Kundalini is shakti; fire is shakti. Kundalini yoga is the science of fire in the kunda. In this deeper fireplace the fire burns in dormant potential form. This is the sleeping kundalini. This fire is not physical fire; it is known as the yogic fire, which is also generated through pranayama. The external fire is only a symbol.

In the deeper place, in mooladhara chakra, there is an oval shaped, astral lingam. The word *lingam* has two meanings: phallus and causal body, but most people only understand the first meaning. The lingam in mooladhara is the causal body or you can say the unconscious of modern psychology. This is the total libido. In kundalini tantra and in kriya yoga, we conceive of three places for the shivalingam – in mooladhara, ajna and sahasrara. In mooladhara the lingam is hazy; in ajna it is smoky, and in sahasrara it is luminous. The word *shiva* here means the 'individual soul'. This is the relationship between kundalini yoga and kriya yoga. Kriya yoga is a practice of kundalini yoga.

Kundalini yoga has many more practices, not only kriya yoga. But the practices of kriya yoga are the easiest, the best and the most powerful. Furthermore, kriya yoga is most suitable for the people of these times because it does not lay down any restrictions regarding food, habits, marital life, etc.

By following the path of kundalini yoga and practising kriya yoga, you can awaken your spiritual personality without interfering with your mind. Let your passions, jealousies, pride and prejudice continue. Live with your depressions and elations, pleasure and pain. They do not stand as obstacles on the path of spiritual awakening.

# Pratyahara Kriyas: Contemplating the Senses

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



Kriya yoga begins with a simple principle, indicated in the first group of kriyas known as pratyahara kriyas. Many people believe that pratyahara in raja yoga is meditation. However, from the kriya yoga perspective, pratyahara is not seen as a meditative state but a contemplative state. You contemplate on a procedure. You contemplate on the links created by an experience, whereas meditation is a fixed visualization.

Antar mouna, for example, leads to the stopping of thoughts. When the thoughts stop, then meditation begins. You begin with mental blankness in meditation, not with mental chatter. Dhyana is the absence of chatter, and that to an ordinary person would be perceived as blankness of mind. That blankness does not indicate absence; only instead of speaking

loudly or screaming your thoughts, you are whispering them. Thoughts are there, but it is as if they are dispersed in the wind. Right now they are loud speeches in your mind, and at that time they are dispersed whispers in the wind. You don't even hear them, you have to try hard to pick on a thought; their frequency, intensity and potency is so low. Instead of high peaks, there are more flat lines on the graph. The activity goes on, yet the intensity and the dissipation is reduced by ninety or ninety-five percent. Something has to remain for the body to survive, but the lessening of dissipation opens the possibility for the anandamaya experience to filter through.

Pratyahara, in the context of the kriyas, is continuity of a sequence, contemplating on each procedure, each step. Generally, the meditative state is: 'I am there', fixed, 'I am being', 'I have become the experience'. The contemplative practices are: 'I am aware of the process of becoming', 'I am aware of how I become', 'I am aware of the steps that I take'.

**Pratyahara kriyas: exploring the subtle aspects of the senses**  
If you observe how your senses gradually withdraw in pratyahara, then you will find that the whole process follows a sequence. Kriya yoga defines this sequence, these stages and steps of sense withdrawal. In the first group of kriyas, the pratyahara kriyas, all the senses are engaged, yet the practices lead you to experience their subtle nature.

### Eyes and vision

In the first two practices, you close your eyes to induce a certain level of introversion. Introversion here means lessening of the visual inputs to the brain. When you shut your eyes, at least seventy-five percent of the visual inputs going into the brain through the eyes are cut down. Only twenty-five percent remains active. Imagine a torch light which can be turned on to shine in its full potency and which also has the possibility of being dimmed. When you close the eyes, it is similar; you don't need as much brain battery and introversion takes place.



The eyes are closed in the first two kriyas. In the next seven they are partially open and different mudras are practised with the eyes open. Unmani mudra is one of these; it blanks the mind from any conscious activity, as you instantly move into a blank space. It is the same with shambhavi and other mudras of the eyes; they all induce a still behaviour in the mind.

## Ears and hearing

The auditory senses are also engaged fully in practices like shabda sanchalana. One is encouraged to hear the inner sounds. Yoga perceives sounds from different perspectives: the sensorial, the mental, the psychic, the spiritual. Sensorial sounds come in through the ears, from zero decibel to the highest level of sound that you can hear. Mental sounds can be memories. You are talking to your friend in your mind; you are articulating sounds in your mind, your friend is articulating sounds in your mind. They are part of the sound-memory. Other impressions, like the noise of a bomb, may also be imprinted on the memory. Everything that you have heard in the past is imprinted on your memory, and therefore even when the outer senses are inactive, even when you plug your ears, the inner chatter continues.

The psychic sounds are beyond the mind, and are known as anahata sounds. Non-psychic sounds are known as *hata* or struck sounds, which means two objects coming together to create sound, like the lips come together to make the sound of 'p', or the tongue and the upper palate come together when you say 'two'. Speaking combines physical, sensorial and mental memory. The third level of sound, *anahata*, unstruck, is something that is already there. It has not come into the bank

of information in your brain and mind due to any external factor. A person who has no awareness of music suddenly begins to hear music. Such abilities and skills that surface from the psychic dimension represent psychic sounds. In deep meditation sometimes you hear music, you hear the sound of a flute or bells or conch. These are all psychic sounds.

The highest level of sound is spiritual sounds; they represent an experience where words and sentences appear in your inner perception to guide your progress on your path.

In kriya yoga, when you follow and then shut the sensorial and the mental levels, the psychic sounds begin to develop. The catch is that you may be able to practise physical restraint up to a point but mental restraint is difficult to attain, therefore most people are not able to reach the level of psychic sounds. Any mental chatter is part of a vritti, so you have to revert back to raja yoga to overcome the mental chatter and then you can experience the purpose of kriya yoga.

### **Nose and the sense of smell**

When you practise mudras such as the manduki mudra in kriya yoga, they sensitize the nose and you are able to experience subtle smells. In your meditative practices you might have come across an experience where suddenly there is a smell; you are not burning any incense yet there is a smell of incense, or there is nothing rotten near you yet there is a putrid smell. These are called astral smells.

The nose functions at two levels: one as a sense organ to pick up outer smells, and two as a subtle perceiver where the same sense of smell is so refined and sharpened that you can even identify something or someone merely through smell, like animals do. A sniffer dog can smell a cloth and locate its owner five kilometres away by following the trail. It has the ability to experience smell like you see colours; its nose can sense smell like your eyes can see colours. This ability cannot be compared to your faculty of smell; it is another faculty altogether where the sense is sharpened to a high degree.



The sense of smell is also experienced at another level, where nothing is destroyed. In the physical or sensorial level, all smells can be destroyed; however, at the astral level no smell can be destroyed. The purpose of kriya yoga is to access that level.

### Tongue and taste

For the sense organ of tongue, the practice is that of khechari mudra. Its purpose is to refine the taste so you are able to taste *amrita*, nectar. Even the sense of taste is refined in kriya; it is not the sensorial taste but something inner. Those who have experienced that taste say that it is intoxicating. That indicates perfection of khechari mudra, which, according to the yogic texts, leads to freedom from all diseases and to longevity.

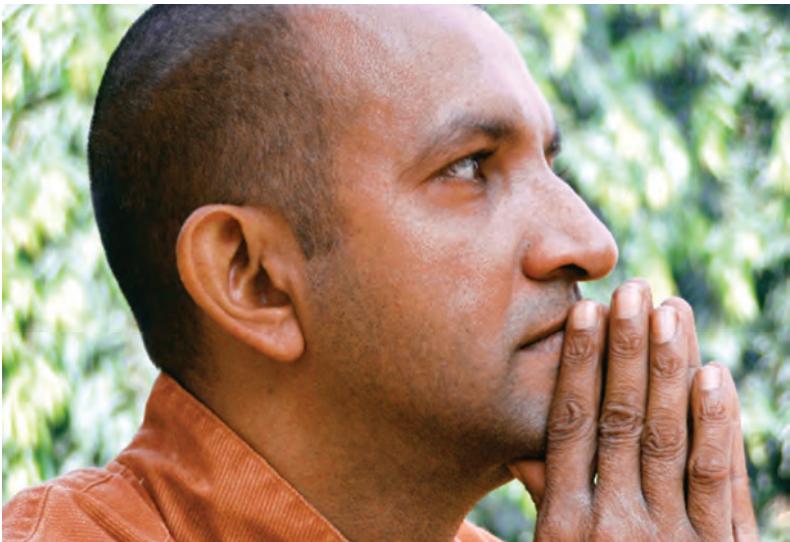
### Karmendriyas

If you analyze the pratyahara kriyas further, you will find that all the karmendriyas – the excretory organs, the sexual organs, the feet, the hands, the organ of speech – are also engaged in the practices. Along with this, you also explore the chakras and the psychic passages, which deepens the awareness by focusing your attention to non-sensorial, specific inner experiences. This combination of sensorial engagement and inner exploration leads to the experience of the subtle or psychic dimension of the senses.

– Kriya Yoga – Module 1,  
7 November 2016, Ganga Darshan, Munger

# Pratyahara Kriyas

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



The first group of practices in kriya yoga are known as pratyahara kriyas. In order to understand the pratyahara kriyas, you have to understand what pratyahara is. This term appears in raja yoga, where it is defined as the ability to disconnect from outside and turn inwards. According to this concept, pratyahara does not mean concentration or meditation; it means reversing the flow of awareness. From connecting with the outside world, you begin to connect with your internal experiences. This is the basic concept of pratyahara.

At present, your senses and all the attributes of your mind become active when you are connected to the outside world. As long as the eyes are open, the body and the brain are active and the mind is functioning, you are awake, alert and dynamic. However, when the mind shuts down, when the brain slows down, when the eyes shut themselves and the body becomes inactive, what happens then? You go to sleep. In pratyahara,

the concern is not waking or sleeping, but knowing which systems have to shut down.

You have to consciously shut down different systems which divert and distract the awareness from realizing the inner nature. Therefore, pratyahara is known as withdrawal of the senses and the mind from outside to focusing them inside. This withdrawal means knowing when to shut down which department of the body.

Shutting off is the system of pratyahara. You look at yourself and say, "This I need to shut off," and you pull out the plug. "This I need to close," and you pull out the plug. "This light I don't need," and you turn off the switch. Instead of lighting a thousand lamps in your mind and wasting the electricity of the brain, you use only the five lamps that you need to illumine the place you are in, and shut off the other 995. This results in an immense saving of energy, there is no wastage, and that is pratyahara. When you shut down all of the thousand lights except the five you need to use, then you have 995 less distractions, and the focus of your mind gains in potency 995 times.

During this teaching of the pratyahara kriyas, along with the kriya techniques, instructions and guidelines will also be given on how to maintain the pratyahara state. There are two practices, a yama and a niyama, which enforce the state and the condition of pratyahara. The yama is danti and the niyama is indriya nigraha.

### **Indriya nigraha**

The niyama is *indriya nigraha*, observing the direction where the senses are flowing to, and then withdrawing them from there. "Oh this flower is very nice, so colourful, so beautiful . . ." and one picks the flower. In *indriya nigraha*, instead of plucking the flower to take it with you, you recognize that it is a flower, that it is beautiful, and you move on. You attach, and then you withdraw. It doesn't even remain as a memory, it is cleared. If it remains as a memory, then even in deep meditation it

will be triggered, the flower will be there and it will distract you. Therefore, indriya nigraha is not just withdrawing the awareness, but also cleaning and clearing the impression. You recognize the associations of the senses, withdraw them, clear the positive and the negative aspects both, and become neutral.

There are ten senses: five jnanendriya and five karmendriya, so indriya nigraha takes place at ten different levels. It is not just one thought, 'I am controlling myself and here I am.' No. Indriya nigraha, sensory observation, has to happen independently, individually, with all the senses. One by one you pull in the strings. You have ten fishing rods and all the ten are bitten. You don't grab the ten sticks together and go; first you take one fishing rod, reel it in, then the next rod, reel it in, then the third and reel it in: one by one, one by one, one by one. That is the concept of indriya nigraha, or sensorial restraint.

### Danti

The yama is *danti*, mental restraint. Indriya nigraha is sensorial restraint and danti is mental restraint. Here you have to deal with six conditions of the mind that are detrimental and destructive to being high on life. These are: *kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsarya*: passion, anger, greed, infatuation, arrogance and envy. These are the six basic tamasic traits of mind that have to be reined in. For example, when you feel the rise of anger and you are able to nullify the anger with your own peace, then that is danti, mental restraint. In this manner, at the mental level six traits have to be dealt with.

Indriya nigraha and danti constitute pratyahara sadhana. Even in kriya yoga, it is the application of these two that will help you perfect the first aspect of the pratyahara kriyas. Thus, at the first level of the practice of kriya yoga, while you do the practices, you have to also understand the concept of pratyahara and try to deepen its experience in your life.

— Kriya Yoga — Module 1,  
4 November 2016, Ganga Darshan, Munger

# Be Busy

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



**How do we use the energy that we get from the kriya yoga practices effectively into our daily life?**

By good hard work. Don't be lazy at home, don't be lazy at work. That's all. Keep yourself engaged; keep yourself busy, physically and mentally. In this way you will find that you will be more active, creative, focused and things will flow with greater ease. If you use the energy in meditation then you will get imbalanced.

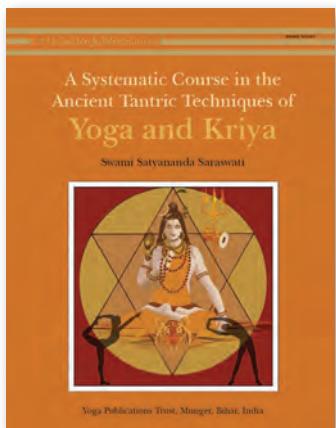
A psychic energy has to be used through physical exercise. The energy which you develop in kriya yoga is psychic and that has to be used up through physical movements, through physical work, through physical involvement, through mental involvement, through external involvement. If you use that energy to deepen your meditation you will build up more energy and at one moment it will explode mentally, and then you are fit for a psychiatric case.

Therefore I am repeating that kriya yoga energy has to be managed through physical activity. On the day you do your kriya, you become more active physically and if there is not much physical activity, go for a long walk. Take a one-hour walk in the evening, a half-hour or a forty-minute walk. Move the body, move the body, move the body. That's it.

– 11 August 2010, Ganga Darshan, Munger

# The Lantern of Kriya Yoga

*From A Systematic Course in the Ancient Tantric Techniques of Yoga and Kriya, Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



It was late at night in the monsoon season. The sky was dark and cloudy. There was an atmosphere of gloom. A lone sannyasin was slowly walking along the road looking for a quiet place to sleep. Though his possessions consisted only of a small bag, a blanket and a lantern, he was blissful and carefree.

Suddenly he heard a motor cycle behind him. The cyclist was travelling very fast along the dark road, but he had no light. The sannyasin knew that he would have an accident, so he immediately decided to give his lantern to the motor cyclist. He rotated the lantern in a circle to signal the cyclist to stop. However, the motor cyclist did not stop . . . he went straight past and nearly killed the sannyasin. The sannyasin called out: "Stop! I want to give you this lantern, otherwise you will injure yourself." The driver shouted back: "What's the point, I haven't got any brakes either!"

This story is an analogy of the life of modern man. The dark road is the path of life, generally lived without joy and wisdom. The motor cycle represents the human body-mind. Most people live a life that is like the reckless and thoughtless motor cyclist driving along the road; all aspiration and effort is directed towards attaining fame, wealth, luxury and other things that satisfy the ego, with little thought of the consequences and harmful effects. People tread the path of life without knowing where they are going.

The light of the lantern represents wisdom; the brake represents self-discipline. The motor cyclist had neither a brake (self-discipline) nor light (wisdom). He was certain to meet with a serious accident. It is the same with any person who walks the path of life without wisdom and self-discipline - he will pay the penalty in the form of frustration, illness and despair.

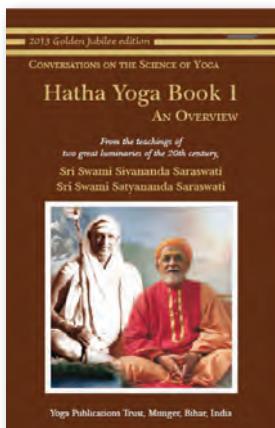
The sannyasin on the road tried to give a light to the motor cyclist, but it was not accepted because the cyclist was unable to apply his brakes. It is the dharma (duty) of a sannyasin to guide other people along the path of life, so that they avoid accidents in the form of disease, fulfil themselves and gradually tread the correct path to self-knowledge. If you can apply a brake in your life, then you will be ready to accept a guiding light.

The light that a sannyasin can give to others is yoga. There are many different types of light, just as there are many different paths of yoga. One of the brightest lights is the ancient and powerful system of kriya yoga. In this book we are making an offering - a light to those people who are now living in darkness, but who are willing to accept a lantern and willing to apply the brake of self-discipline. We offer you the lantern of kriya yoga.



# Which Yoga Should We Practise?

From Conversations on the Science of Yoga – Hatha Yoga Book 1:  
An Overview



*Swami Niranjanananda:* Yoga begins with hatha yoga: preparation and purification of the physical body and the pranas. Hatha yoga – the shatkarmas, asanas, pranayamas and pratyahara – belong to the primary education of yoga. Everyone is aware of the body because it is something which is physical, visible, and can be touched, felt, experienced.

## Levels of education

When the primary education is passed, a student progresses to the next level, the higher secondary, which would be raja yoga, mantra, dharana, dhyana. This level must also be passed. After the body comes awareness of the mind. The mind is something that cannot be seen, touched or felt, but one can have glimpses of the mind because of the thoughts and desires that come up, and the various mental behaviours that manifest when one encounters these mental expressions. Then one realizes that there is something beyond the body, and it is known as 'the mind'.

Next, the university level of yoga education would involve combining the components of karma yoga – yoga of action; bhakti yoga – channelling of emotions; raja yoga – mind management, and jnana yoga – developing wisdom in life. The university level of yoga is where all these yogas merge in one act.

Then come the higher yogas like kundalini yoga and kriya yoga. All the preparation of the body, nadis, senses and brain takes place in hatha yoga. All the mental behaviours are adjusted through raja yoga so that by the time one comes to practise kriya yoga there are no worries about anything which is physical or mental, and the experience of developing kriya yoga can be properly focused on.

Kriya yoga's function is not to make a better personality or a better yogi. Rather, it is to give access to the layers of consciousness which have not yet been tapped, or experienced. That is the psychic dimension of the human being. So when a person is learning kriya yoga it is because they have already gone through the processes of hatha yoga and raja yoga, they have had a glimpse of jnana yoga and bhakti yoga, and then, at the end, comes kriya yoga.

Beyond mind, there is another dimension of experience, and that is consciousness. The mind has been experienced, but not the consciousness. Even in the highest states of samadhi, one is pacifying and stilling the mind, but there is no direct cognition of human consciousness. Human consciousness is infinite, it is not confined to time and space, it is just a continuity of existence, it is just a continuity of experience.

With the practices of kriya yoga that point can be reached where one begins to access the dimension of consciousness. The energy, the strength, the force, which we encounter in *that* dimension is used to improve the quality of life in *this* dimension. So, kriya yoga is a practice which stands by itself, and it does not tinker with the personality, or the mental behaviour, or attitudes, rather it brings about an awakening of the dormant centres of personality.

### **Perfection is necessary**

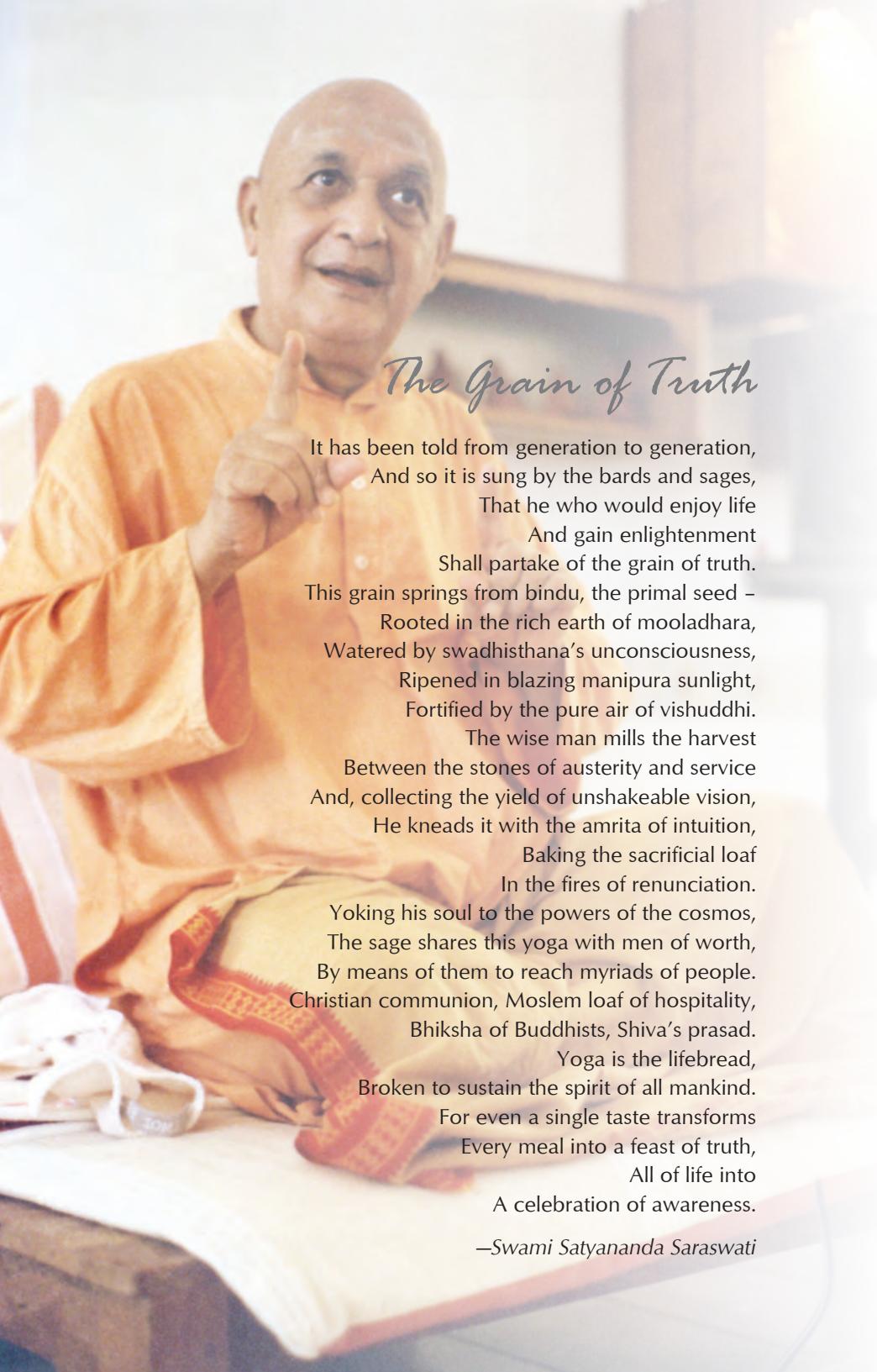
One can't expect a university degree by only completing primary education. No amount of hatha yoga, no amount of asana and pranayama is going to lead to that destination. Yes, one will feel good, the blocks will be removed, the stiffness

will go away, the muscles will become more flexible. But just because the blocks have gone away and one has become more flexible does not indicate that the aim will be reached. In fact, people in the circus perform better postures than yoga practitioners. They can perform better asanas than all those who are still trying to touch the nose to the knees after twenty years! So asana is not going to give one darshan of God. Pranayama is not going to give one darshan of God, no.



They have their purpose and once the purpose is over, it is time to move on to the next set of yoga practices. When studying at university, a student does not sit everyday learning how to write 'a b c and d', no, that phase is finished and done with. At that stage the mind must be applied in different ways. The same thing happens in yoga. Hatha yoga – asana, pranayama, the shatkarmas, the preparation of body and the preparation of mind – represent primary education in yoga. Raja yoga, mind management, represents the higher secondary level of yoga and the other yogas that merge into one to bring out a creative nature, a creative personality, represent the university training of yoga. In this way one can decide which class to be in, primary, secondary or university.

So how do people find the light to remove the darkness from the mind? Reality is not one, there are many realities, and each aspect of yoga is a stepping stone into another subtle yoga. Once a level has been perfected, then one dimension of a person's nature has been covered, and it is time to move on to another class. The important thing is that one must attain perfection in the previous stage before moving on to the next. Until a stage of yoga has been perfected, it has not been mastered and no matter how hard one tries, the next level cannot be experienced.



## *The Grain of Truth*

It has been told from generation to generation,  
And so it is sung by the bards and sages,  
That he who would enjoy life  
And gain enlightenment  
Shall partake of the grain of truth.

This grain springs from bindu, the primal seed -  
Rooted in the rich earth of mooladhara,  
Watered by swadhisthana's unconsciousness,  
Ripened in blazing manipura sunlight,  
Fortified by the pure air of vishuddhi.

The wise man mills the harvest  
Between the stones of austerity and service  
And, collecting the yield of unshakeable vision,  
He kneads it with the amrita of intuition,  
Baking the sacrificial loaf  
In the fires of renunciation.

Yoking his soul to the powers of the cosmos,  
The sage shares this yoga with men of worth,  
By means of them to reach myriads of people.  
Christian communion, Moslem loaf of hospitality,  
Bhiksha of Buddhists, Shiva's prasad.

Yoga is the lifebread,  
Broken to sustain the spirit of all mankind.  
For even a single taste transforms  
Every meal into a feast of truth,  
All of life into  
A celebration of awareness.

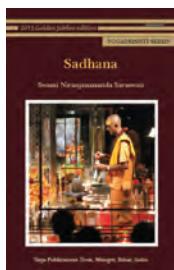
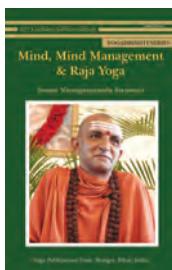
-Swami Satyananda Saraswati



# Yoga Publications Trust

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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.



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Apr 9-19	Total Health Capsule (Hindi)
Oct 1-30	* Progressive Yoga Vidya Training (English)
Oct 2-Jan 28	* Yogic Studies, 4 months (English)
Oct 16-20	* Kriya Yoga – Module 1 (English)
Oct 16-20	* Kriya Yoga – Module 2 & Tattwa Shuddhi (English)
Nov 4-10	* Hatha Yoga – Module 1: Shatkarma Intensive (English)
Nov 4-10	* Hatha Yoga – Module 2: Asana Pranayama Intensive (English)
Nov 1-Jan 30 2018	* Yoga Lifestyle Experience (for overseas participants)
Dec 11-15	Yoga Chakra Series (English)
Dec 18-23	* Raja Yoga – Module 1: Asana Pranayama Intensive (English)
Dec 18-23	* Raja Yoga – Module 2: Pratyahara Intensive (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 Ramacharitamanas

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

Tel: +91-06344-222430, 06344-228603, Fax: +91-06344-220169

Website: [www.biharyoga.net](http://www.biharyoga.net)

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