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Hari Om

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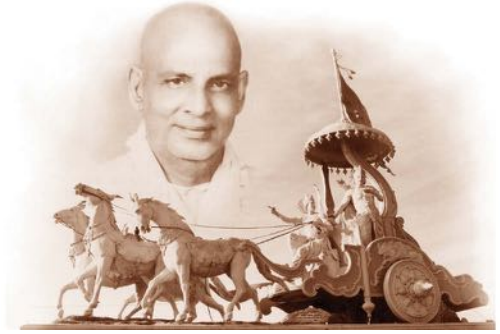
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Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati



GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Surrender

Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you give, whatever you practise as austerity, O Arjuna, do it as an offering unto Me!

—*Bhagavad Gita 9:27*

He who tries to live in the spirit of this verse will be able to surrender to God. His greedy nature is slowly dissolved. He always gives and is not eager to take. His whole life with all its actions, thoughts and feelings is dedicated to the service of God.

There is not a bit of egoism and his nature is transformed into divinity. The individual will has become one with the cosmic will. This is the simplest method of yoga.

—*Swami Sivananda Saraswati*

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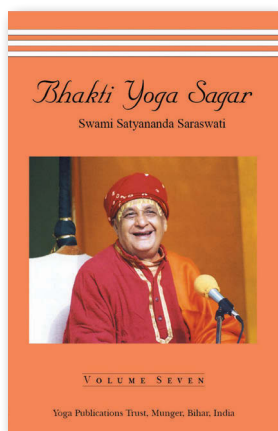


The Yogi is superior to the ascetic. He is deemed superior even to those versed in sacred lore. The Yogi is superior even to those who perform action with some motive. Therefore, Arjuna, do you become a Yogi. (*Bhagavad Gita VI:46*)

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

Christ, India and Yoga

From Bhakti Yoga Sagar, Volume Seven, Swami Satyananda Saraswati



When I met the Pope at the Vatican, he asked me how I would fit yoga, an oriental philosophy, with an occidental culture. He was speechless when I told him that Christianity was an oriental philosophy. Christ lived in India for twelve years – and the Pope asked me how an oriental science would fit with occidental culture!

Christ was not a European, Christ was a Jew. Christ was not a Christian, Christ was not a Protestant or a Catholic. Christianity is an oriental philosophy. Two thousand years ago a great man was born in the orient. His name was Jesus Christ. Most of you know the story. Near Christ's birthplace there was a monastery belonging to the Essene sect. Fifty years before Christ was born that monastery had closed, but five years before his birth it began functioning again.

Jesus was the son of a carpenter named Joseph. His mother's name was Mary; we call her Mariam. One night Joseph had a dream that Jesus had been born from Mary's womb without any sexual interaction having occurred. Ordinary people are born as a result of sexual interaction. But there are exceptions. Sri Rama was immaculate. We call such people incarnations of God. They are the effulgence of divinity, they are personifications of divinity. The divine light entered into a woman's womb and a son was born – Rama, Krishna or Christ.

Christ was immaculate like Sri Rama and Sri Krishna. Sri Rama was not born as a result of sexual interaction between Dasharatha and Kaushalya. Rama was born after Dasharatha performed the Putresthi Yajna in Ayodhya. Rishi

Shringi conducted that yajna, as a result of which Sri Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna were born. So when you say 'incarnation of God' you mean that the child was born without sexual interaction between a man and a woman. That is how Christ was born.

Christ was not a European, he was a Jew. Buddha was not a Buddhist, he was a Hindu. Mahavir was not a Jain, he was a Hindu. I have studied history. I have studied Persian and Arabic. I have studied the Koran and the Hadith. I am a Hindu sannyasin. I have read the Bible many times. I have read all the bibles, oriental and otherwise. Knowledge is always beyond religion, beyond sex, beyond nationality, beyond civilization, beyond history. Knowledge is knowledge. Learn everything. Don't say, "I am a Hindu, I won't read the Bible." Don't say, "I am a Muslim I won't read the Gita." No, if the Bible has knowledge have it! If the Koran has knowledge have it!

Just as the philosophy of Christ was given to Europeans, similarly I gave yoga to Europeans. I did not do anything unusual. The spirit of Christ, the teachings of Christ, the knowledge and the message that he gave emerged from Varanasi. Christ spent time in Varanasi, in Kathmandu, in Puri. He spent time in Chennai, in southern India. There are written archives, but they are a part of history you will never be taught. We are not taught the right history, we are taught the history which is recognized and stamped by the ruling clan for their own political gain. This is the truth. What harm is there in saying that Christ lived in India? Why shouldn't we



get the credit for having a great man on our soil? I am talking to the church. Why don't you give us the honour of having a great man, a historical personality, in our country? After all, geographically the world is one. Nationally, India is India, Italy is Italy, Germany is Germany, but geographically it is one earth. We have divided it.

Spirituality and Westerners

In South America the devotees go to church, light a candle and bow their heads. I went to the churches and spread the message of yoga. The church leaders came to see me and serve me. I gave them geru and spiritual names. They accepted and recognized me as a yoga guru from India. The flag of yoga started fluttering over South America. I had complete and unchallenged sway there. I repeat once again that victory is not achieved only by the sword.

There was a time when the sword was the most powerful weapon. Kings and chieftains used to establish their political supremacy on the strength of the sword. But Swami Vivekananda never used a sword and he registered his spiritual supremacy over the western world. Adi Shankara also established spiritual supremacy without using weapons.

Only a magician has the power to hypnotize the people but the art of magic is not unreal. What you see is not actually there. I was a different type of magician. I hypnotized the people by giving them something tangible. What is digvijaya? To hold sway everywhere amounts to wielding territorial power over a vast area. But in the present context sovereign power means the dominating of spiritual culture.

People from western countries wallow in wealth; they possess huge material wealth, they have scientific knowledge and are well equipped in all spheres of life. They are satiated; they have enough of everything. They are fully employed and don't suffer from material want. In every respect they are affluent people, they have an excess of everything. They have nothing to worry about. Then what do they do?

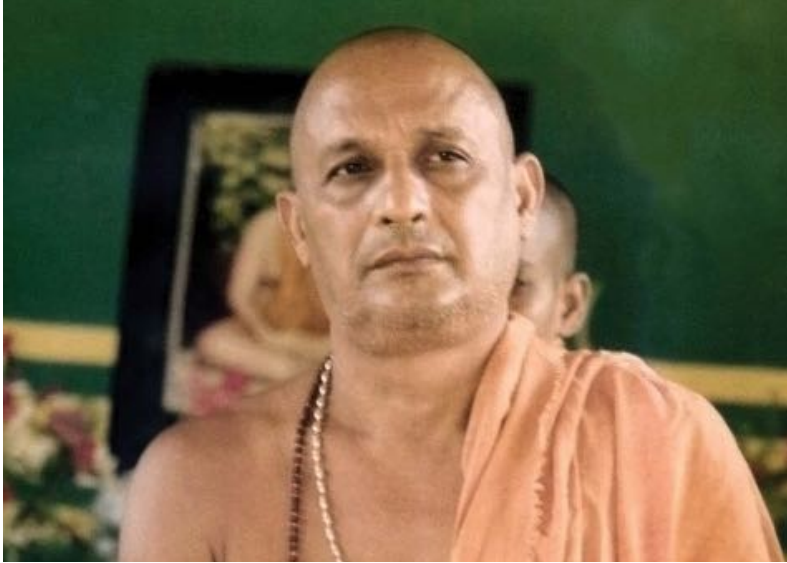


After excessive material enjoyment they develop distaste for it all. Spiritual thoughts preoccupy their minds. Western people had become allergic to worldly enjoyments and were in dire need of something higher. They were in search of an alternative source of enjoyment. I understood their problem and took up the cudgels. I undertook the task of teaching spirituality to westerners and my efforts were successful.

– 19 December 2001, Rikhiapeeth

If You Want To Be Victorious First Conquer the World Within

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Today in this battle arena one soldier is addressing another. You are a soldier and so am I. There are two kinds of wars which man must fight – one is waged on the battlefield of life and the other is fought within. The first is waged against external enemies and the second against internal foes. Military men are trained for the outer battle, while I train people for the inner. If we are not adequately prepared to face our external enemies, they will take advantage of our weaknesses and we will lose our independence. We are all aware of this. Similarly, if we are unable to control and master our internal enemies, they are bound to make us their servant and bring about much imbalance and disharmony.

Science of defence

Today, in every part of the world, mankind is in a state of suffering. Every individual feels imprisoned within himself, defeated, dumbfounded, oppressed and bewildered. He wants to liberate himself from his limitations, but he cannot. He has lost the fight even before he faces the din and roar of the battlefield. The science of yoga frees man from his self-defeat. It is a highly developed science of defence containing a wide range of weapons which are limitless in their scope and application.

Until man is able to liberate himself from his inner shackles, he will never be able to breathe the air of real freedom. Our biggest enemy is our own limitations. In our ancient literature, these limitations were referred to as evil forces, demons and devils.

By purifying ourselves through yoga, we become like the general who controls and directs his own forces. We can also command our willpower to overcome our own limitations. We have certain in-built strengths of endurance, stability, poise, concentration and self-discipline. They are like the commanders of an army. When we know how to manipulate these inner strengths, then we can mobilize and gear them into achieving our desired objectives. This, in essence, is man's true victory over himself. To fight the extraneous forces, we must first develop the ability to conquer within. The fortifications must be strong on both fronts.

Importance of discipline

Discipline is the path of yoga and the backbone of the army. Discipline is of two kinds: organizational and personal. Personal discipline is essential for spiritual progress in the same way as organizational discipline is necessary for the progress of society and the nation.

The country which has a disciplined army has no fears. Similarly, the person who has disciplined his senses is guaranteed success. How can one reach his destination when



the horses of the chariot have no reins and the driver is restless? An alert driver who is clear about his destiny, and is able to command and steer his senses is bound to attain his goal.

That is why I mentioned here that one soldier is addressing another. The real goal lies within oneself. What I have mentioned to you is the path which leads there. This inner life is more real than the outer life, which is transitory, empirical, subject to time and space and objectivity. One who has experienced the inner life can face the outer life with equanimity and ease. To enable us to experience the inner life without cutting off the outer life, our ancestors have developed the practices of yoga.

By regular practice of yoga we can achieve and gain control over our bodies and minds. It is very simple and clear. The path of yoga has to be understood and incorporated into our lives. A few asanas, pranayama and meditation techniques to develop the concentration of mind form the daily program.

Asanas are not merely gymnastic exercises or body building techniques. Pranayama is not breathing exercises, and meditation is not 'going out'. Asana is a posture in which you can remain steady and comfortable in body and mind. Asana and pranayama are important preparation for concentration and meditation.

Concentration and mental stability

Our mental power increases when we develop concentration. A piece of paper will not burn simply by holding it up to the sun, however, when the rays of the sun converge in a convex lens, the intensity of heat at the focal point enables the paper to catch alight. Similarly, when our mental energies are not channelled in a proper direction, they become dissipated very quickly and weaken the mind. A wavering, unsteady, restless mind is prone to all types of hallucinations, phobias and complexes.

A wavering mind is a sick mind. When we fix the mind on an inner point, like the jyoti or bindu, what we are trying to do is control the oscillations and fluctuations. We have to fix the mind on an inner point so that the consciousness revolves around it. After considerable practice of meditation the mind becomes concentrated and stabilized at the given point.

When concentration is achieved, mental energies are conserved. There is no tension or dissipation, and peace and inner strength are gained. When the mind is free of distractions, the higher intuitive faculties are revealed and begin to guide the individual. Confidence increases, imaginary fears vanish, and one is able to face the realities of life. This is yoga.

Yoga makes the mind strong, enabling it to endure pain and unhappiness. After regular practice of yoga, equilibrium and vitality become the normal state of mind. With the stability of mind, one is able to radiate strength and confidence. When the mind is dissipated, it becomes weak, thus hindering its progress.

Efficacy of the mind is as essential as the efficacy of the body. Exercises and drill, which all soldiers no doubt do, are good for the body, but this is not enough. A strong body with a weak mind is of no use. True strength lies in the mind. Only with this strength of mind will you be able to achieve something worthwhile in your civil life.

To achieve this mental stability, keep aside ten minutes for meditation every morning. Decide where to fix your mind. If

you want to fix it on a candle flame, then just be aware of that and nothing else. When the mind is concentrated and one-pointed, even for a second, then one undergoes a wonderful experience.

True soldiers

In meditation we discipline our mental thoughts, just as the scientist has disciplined the forces of nature. Your mind is a force, thought is a force, emotion is a force, memory is a force. When you feel happy or unhappy that is also a condition of energy. Mind therefore is not a devil or a sinner. In the science of meditation we have to understand a few basic things and change some of our basic beliefs. How will we define the mind? Is mind a thinking machine or is there more to it than that? The ultimate definition I have concluded is that 'mind is energy'.

Some people have been able to discipline this energy, but most have not. Mind is such a powerful force in man. Those who have tamed this mind have tamed the worlds. They have become great statesman, prophets, artists and scientists. All these are miracles of the mind. Those who have been feeling unhappy in life, depressed, frustrated, pessimistic, full of conflicts within themselves, have not been able to master this mind. Therefore, we have to find a way to harness the energies of the mind.

A great man in any field is not a product of destiny. He is not an accident or a combination of astrological or planetary conditions. A great man, who is able to handle the mind, is able to handle the world. This was realized by the rishis in India thousands of years ago. Then they decided to find the best way to achieve this. In the course of experimentation, they discovered innumerable techniques, but each one had its limitations.

These techniques which the boys and girls use now, LSD and hashish, were used in India thousands of years ago. During the vedic period, people used to take soma, a hallucinogenic drink, and go into trance, but going into a trance is not the

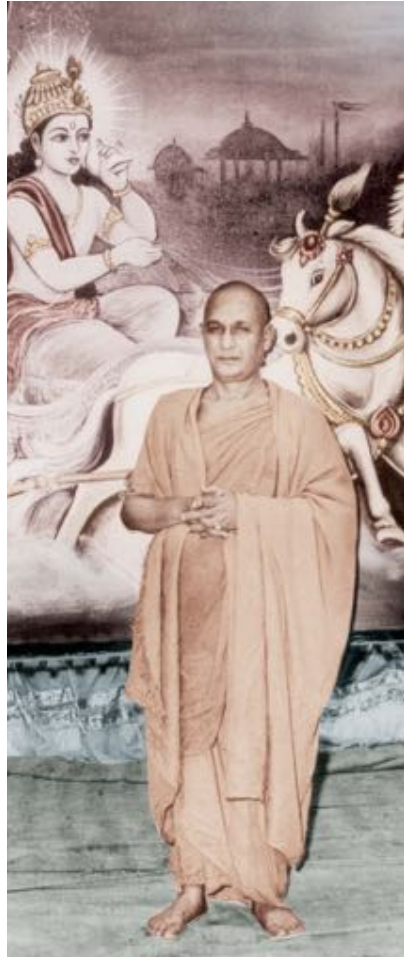
ultimate thing. You must practise meditation in such a way that it transforms the quality of mind. When you change the quality of mind, you change the quality of actions also. And when you change the quality of actions, you change the quality of experience.

This mind is capable of expressing itself in very many ways, so much so that if the mind is held under control it can give you mastery over events and circumstances. This is what we are trying to explain. I don't believe in any particular sect, or in preaching my own tradition, but I know that yoga is a great interdisciplinary science.

By following the path of yoga, one day you will become a true soldier. You will defeat your inner

enemies and achieve real freedom. You are not liberated now, because you are not your own master. You get easily swayed by emotions and passions, anger and worries. You are not able to endure pain and sorrow, and you become easily frustrated by difficulties. Neither are you able to rule your thoughts nor command your actions. You are enslaved by your own mind. You will have to reverse this situation and attain mastery over it. Only then can you become true soldiers.

— Printed in YOGA Vol. 19, No. 11 (November 1981)



Hatha Yoga and Kundalini

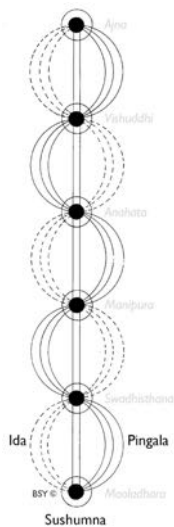
From the teachings of Swami Satyananda Saraswati

The conductor of the mental energy is known as *ida*, which flows up the left side of the spine. The conductor of vital energy is *pingala* which flows on the right side of the spine. Both of these channels emerge from the bottom of the spine and cross each other at junctions situated in the sacral, solar, cardiac and cervical points. From these points thousands of nerves spread out all over the body distributing the two forces of energy.

These two forces are necessary for existence, but actually this is a lower energy system. It is not powerful enough to maintain the total functioning of the brain. Therefore, only a small portion of the brain is participating in the activities of human life; the rest is dormant. If we had a greater system whereby the whole brain could be brought into conscious action, perhaps mankind would achieve a higher creative level. Therefore, the awakening of kundalini is a most important subject for modern man.

Ida and pingala

The four junctions which supply energy and life throughout the body are blocked. Energy doesn't flow through them because they are disconnected. Therefore, yoga means connecting the source of energy with the distributing channels. The name of the distribution channel for the higher energy is known in tantra as *sushumna*. These three nadis - *ida*, *pingala* and *sushumna* - should be understood in an absolutely technical sense. They are not religious or symbolic expressions, but actual physical structures.



The nerve on the left controls the functions of consciousness, and the nerve on the right controls the functions of vitality and mobility. They function serially and not simultaneously. You must have observed your nostrils – one of them is freely flowing while the other is blocked. When the left nostril is open, the lunar energy is flowing. When the right nostril is open, the pranic energy is flowing.

It has been noted by investigators that when the right nostril is free, the left hemisphere of the brain is more actively functioning than the right. Similarly, when the left nostril is free, the right hemisphere of the brain is more actively functioning.

This finding has great significance as the left and right hemispheres of the brain govern all of our linear and spatial faculties. In addition, investigators found that the left nostril is cooler than the right. This is how these two nadis control the events of life. If they could be made to function simultaneously rather than serially, then both the hemispheres of the brain could participate and regulate the mental and vital processes. But this simultaneous function only occurs when sushumna nadi, the central nerve channel, is connected with the source of energy.

Kundalini shakti

Kundalini is the source of energy. If it can be connected with the physical body, it will reactivate the brain cells, create a new physical structure, and explode the archetypes existing at the depths of human consciousness.

Kundalini shakti has been variously described. Its awakening is considered to be an important event in man's transition from lower to higher life, from inability to ability, or from ignorance to knowledge. The ultimate purpose of yoga is to awaken kundalini.



The yoga postures, no doubt, are good for physical and mental health; pranayama gives a lot of alertness and vitality, but the prime purpose of hatha yoga is the awakening of man's potential. In the course of evolution this energy will come to the point of illumination. That is the destiny of man. It will explode itself but by that time millions of years might have passed.

The great seers and sages in their intent application to the truth found out the way by which a person could become aware of his potential in this life. Now the path of yoga that is spreading all over the world is the kundalini way. People are talking about tantra and yoga like never before.

Whenever people ask me about asanas I tell them that the yoga postures are definitely very good for health but that is a by-product. The real purpose of these practices is to give a mild stimulus to the chakras. For instance, we have *sirshasana*, the headstand pose. That is good for many diseases, particularly the ovarian disorders or hormonal imbalances. At the same time, it has an impact on the plexus at the top of the head – sahasrara chakra.

Take *shashankasana*, the hare pose. This is excellent for stimulating the adrenals thereby clearing respiratory congestion and helping to accelerate circulation. But the prime objective of this posture is to create a mild awakening in manipura chakra, the solar plexus behind the navel. So the yoga postures are intended to regulate and stimulate the various chakras and plexuses in the body. When these are awakened through the practice of yoga postures then the energy can start to flow freely.

Experiencing the final sphinx

Man today is suffering both physically and mentally from a blockage of energy. This is very difficult to understand because people have become so materially minded. They know many things about the physical nature, but very little about the spirit, the final sphinx.



When people hear music they start jumping because it affects their gross body. The mind is limited to the material base of experience, so they are unable to perceive the subtle sound vibrations of the music. How to break this addiction to materialism? Man should begin to see the mind behind the mind, the matter behind the matter. Scientists could see, so they came up with the concept of energy. For the ordinary man, matter was just matter, but for the scientist it became the base of energy. Therefore he could liberate energy from matter. In the same way, we should conclude that mind and consciousness are final and absolute and that it is impossible for man to transcend this realm and have a wider range of experience.

Perhaps all of our frustrations, illnesses and emotional problems are due to the limitation of understanding. We no longer care for our husband or wife or children; we feel fed up with life and want to commit suicide. This particular behaviour of the mind is due to the inability to have better experiences. There seems to be a cataract on our inner vision and due to that we are unable to experience life as it should be experienced.

Improper experience creates pain. Experience depends on the quality of consciousness. How can we improve the quality of consciousness? This must be done practically, not intellectually, through the practice of hatha yoga.

Preparing the Mind

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Yoga means karma yoga, bhakti yoga, raja yoga and jnana yoga, and each yoga has something to complete in your life.

Bhakti yoga channels your emotions. It should be practised before raja yoga or with raja yoga. Karma yoga helps you to balance the impurities and distractions of the mind. If you practise the yogas systematically, then you will never come across the problems created by the mind and emotions in your practices of meditation.

We face the mind in meditation because we have not treated the mind through bhakti yoga and karma yoga. In yoga, meditation is considered to be the highest point, but still I think, in modern countries, meditation is overemphasized and

incorrectly emphasized. Meditation is a very high stage and therefore it needs a lot of preparation. If you do not practise the other forms of yoga, then you will have to face difficulties in meditation.

Karma yoga and bhakti yoga

Karma yoga is the philosophy of your relationship with life. What is your relationship with everything around you and what should be your attitude to your work, family, children, problems, enemies and everything else? And how should you react in success and failure, love and hatred, victory and defeat? This is very important. Karma yoga is the philosophy which fixes your relationship with everything else in the world in such a way that nothing disturbs your mind, at any time, no matter what has happened to you.

In the same way, bhakti yoga is so important that without it, you cannot properly balance your emotions. Therefore, we have to find out whom to love, who can accept all our love and would not react in a bad manner, and at the same time, it would not be boring. Most problems which we people suffer from today are the problems caused by love or the absence of love.

It is necessary to train your emotions, as you train your mind. Untrained mind, untrained emotions and untrained drivers make accidents. Therefore, in bhakti yoga the emotions are channelled to a divinity, in the form of god, in the form of deva, in the form of guru.

When you have practised karma yoga and bhakti yoga, and you practise raja yoga, or you may say yoga, the mind automatically becomes quiet. Because you do not practise bhakti yoga and karma yoga, in meditation there are emotional and mental problems, so, you must say, 'Okay, let them come'. Don't stop them, because stopping them will be the greatest disaster.

— 19 September 1982, Sansicario, Italy

Children and Ashram Life

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Many of our ashrams all over the world now hold children's courses during the school holidays, and all of them accept children of all ages and backgrounds throughout the year on a long or short-term residential basis. The purpose of this is not only to teach them yogic techniques, but to reintroduce ashram life as the most effective way of training young minds.

It is not easy for children to develop their potential and retain their high ideals in this modern world. Without a positive direction in life, boys and girls float around like rudderless boats, going from one distraction to the next. They are unable to stick to anything or carry anything through. Of course this leaves them dissipated, negative and defeated. Parents and teachers try to give them guidance and encouragement but it is of no use. Their advice is limited by past social and moral

conditioning and young people reject it immediately. What these boys and girls desperately need is a broader based, more supportive environment where they can develop self-discipline and a positive outlook on life. The ashram is ideal, and if these children can spend a few weeks or months in this charged and stimulating atmosphere, a complete transformation generally takes place within them.

At the ashram they find many channels for their dreams and aspirations. At the same time, they learn to become useful, not only to society, but to themselves. Here children are taught to live simply and to think high, to work hard without any selfish motivation, and to relax and play without inhibitions. Even those of a tender age quickly learn to help themselves and after that to help others.

Very busy people

All children have an intense need to express themselves, to prove themselves, to experience their independence, but too often this vital urge is stifled right from the very start by dominating parents who won't let them do anything for themselves. In the ashram children are given independence. Of course supervision is there, but the child is always responsible for himself and his own work. Children are never encouraged to waste time and energy in senseless games and useless pursuits. Instead they are given work to do which will not only help their own development but will also be of some practical help to others.

Children are spontaneously creative. Their natural energy level is so high that unless it is properly harnessed at an early age, and used positively, it either dissipates in erratic ways or else turns back on the child causing him endless mental and emotional torment. This is why children in the ashram are very busy people. They have many duties from sun up to sun down which require them to think for themselves and act with awareness. Here every day has a purpose and every action a meaning. The satisfaction, self-confidence and one-pointedness

of mind gained from this constant creative activity removes many frustrations and psychological problems in a very short time.

We have many children living in our ashrams on a permanent basis, and without exception they are all superior sadhakas. They work with a will and a dedication that is impossible to surpass. They are excellent managers and wonderful teachers. They are wise and thoughtful, not just in a superficial way, but in a deep and spiritual sense.

In the ashram a child is never forced to learn or do anything. He just naturally takes to positive ways such as good diet, regular activity, creative thinking, simply because self-discipline grows within him. The child is not free to run wild, but no rules and restrictions are imposed on him. The whole community lives within the ashram discipline and the child naturally adapts. He learns by living with others who are doing much the same thing as he is. His self-discipline evolves spontaneously through the intensity of ashram vibration and the example of others, especially guru. How the ashram education takes place is largely dependent on the child. Thus over a period of years of visiting the ashram on and off, maybe even living here for long periods of time, the child will develop a very sure knowledge about his place in the world. His purpose in life will be known to him, and he will definitely be able to express it.

We have found that ashram life is excellent therapy and training for all types of disturbed and difficult children. However, they must be prepared to remain in the ashram for at least six months if the benefits are to be lasting. Normal children with simple health disorders will benefit very well from shorter periods – one to three months is generally sufficient. The child needs to change negative patterns and incorporate positive ones if he is to recover health and emotional stability.

Actually the ashram is tailor-made for training children as it has been serving society in this way for thousands of years. In the past children were always educated in the ashram

environment. There they lived as members of the guru's family often for a number of years until they had mastered all the arts and sciences and were ready to embark on their chosen or destined path of life. This was called the gurukul system and it still exists in many ashrams. It is this system which we are reintroducing in our ashrams today.

If parents were to ask me what is the greatest gift they can give their children, I would say to all of them, "Give them the ashram life for a number of weeks, months or years. This is the best way to train your child, to create great men and women, to increase the strength of the nation and to make the world a better place in which to live." If you are not able to live the ashram life yourself, at least give your child this opportunity.

—Printed in YOGA Vol. 17, No. 4 (April 1979)



Parents and Children Grow Together



There are many among us who cannot raise their heads without a cup or two of tea in the morning. We then look forward to going through the daily newspaper as some would look forward to reading the religious scriptures. Some children may pity us for having become such slaves of habit but most children copy what the parents do and it is no use telling them not to do this or that.

Removing the weeds

Here example is better than precept. If for that moment it is not so easy, then let us take them along with ourselves to the Bihar School of Yoga in Munger. There we find that all the inmates get up at 4 o'clock in the morning. We soon join the others in our gratefulness for a new day of life by prayers chanted together. After that everyone is free to complete their morning routine. The chirping of birds reaches the ears. The coolness

of the dawn is felt inside out. While moving about the beauty of leaves and trees, the colour and fragrance of flowers, the splendour of the rising sun is noticed. One cannot help closing one's eyes to thank the Creator.

There is such a good healthy feeling because of the asanas and pranayamas. We realize we have missed much by getting up late. Now a quota of so many hours has been added to our daily life. We discover we can do so much and enjoy the satisfaction of doing it well at our own pace without being pushed or hustling others. It is possible to do things which we otherwise took for granted we could never do, thereby helping or relieving others. We increase our chances of improving even a crooked tree without much heartache.

Thus a good habit lifts us from the mire while a bad habit drowns us completely in it. It is never too late to have such good habits which can compensate for any lapses in the past, which not only improve the body and mind, but heal as well. Force of habit helps in self-examination and concentration, whereby slowly and steadily, layers of dust, impurities are removed from the mind.

Whereas the house and its surroundings have to be kept clean, yet that alone is not enough. No municipal authority will come to remove the refuse from the mind. Thus the yoga teacher helps each one to clear away, and the weeds in the mind are turned into flowers. As the weeds are removed, the force of good habits makes work less difficult for us.

To use all opportunities

Children tell untruths for fear of punishment, but where an understanding and loving teacher shows there is nothing to fear, the children become cheerfully obedient. This conditions them to be so with their parents also. Later they learn to abide by what nature has in store for them, because an ideal of good habits has been set before them.

When force is used in handling children, the results are not good. An understanding teacher knows their weakness

and fully realizes their difficulties. That the teacher cares and feels for them is a great working force. It becomes a very strong unseen motive power to make them listen. The result is that they do their work well and cheerfully. They feel a certain satisfaction and happiness when it is well completed.

The ideal the teacher has and expects of the students makes them both work with patience, thus filling what is lacking and making them whole and complete as far as possible. With the love and affection they receive, they radiate more love and work intensely in unity. Because of greater receptivity and awareness they are easier to teach how to keep the good and throw aside the useless.

As they gain confidence in themselves, they rise higher and higher, until they find vast inner sources of strength and power within themselves. They are being trained in endurance, relieving and in helping themselves when there will be no relation to guide them.

Belief and faith in the teacher's love makes them remember what is good for them and forget the bad. The good in them becomes a habitual behaviour in all spheres of life. If life hits hard, it is faced cheerfully, though all may not give it the same reception.

Parents and children who were easily upset at one another's behaviour, now find they have more self-control and are patient in the face of annoyance. There is an all round adjustment and development, because the mind has opened to new work, new surroundings, where slipshod ways are given up.

This change and effect is the result of an ordered mind. It can be made more and more beautiful and used to reach the highest ends of life. The least we can do is to reflect the good that God has given us and not allow any opportunity to slip by uselessly.

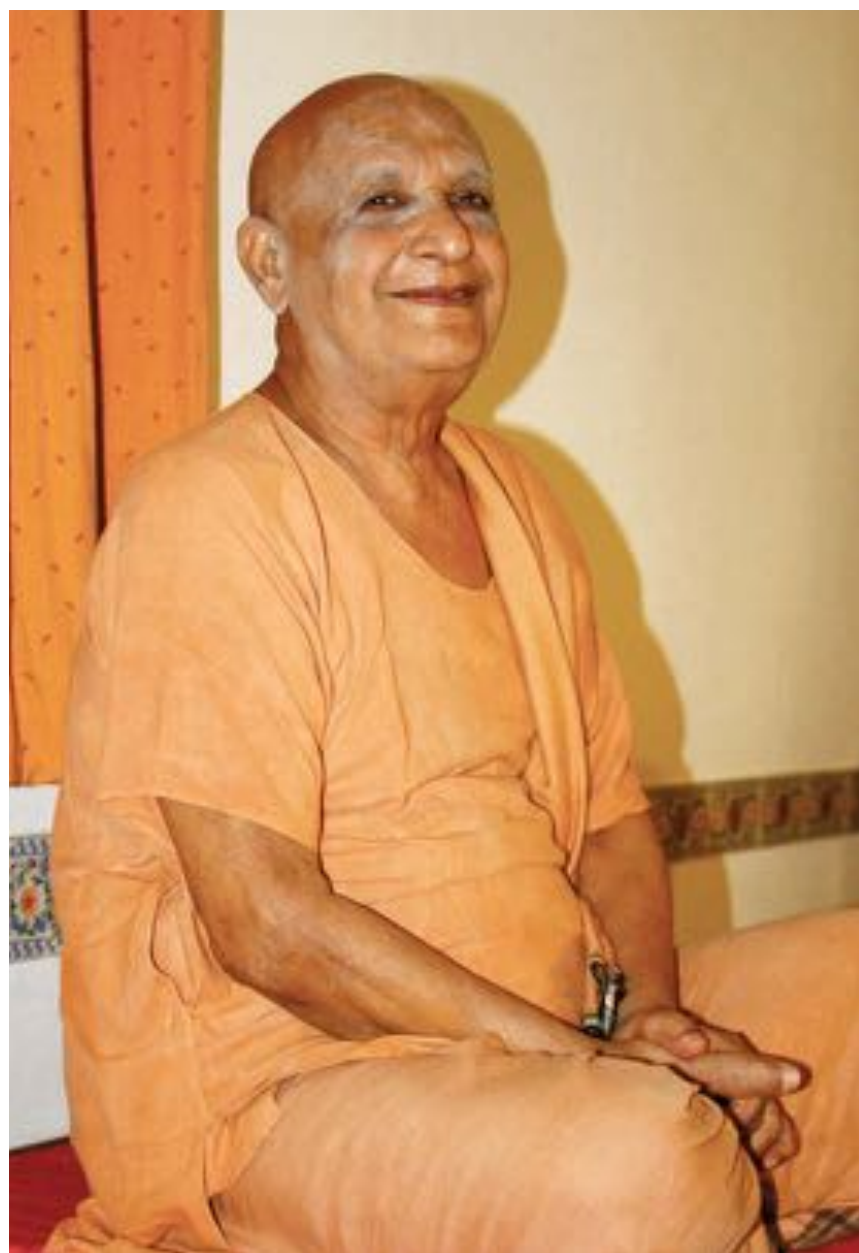
– Ishwari

printed in YOGA 1965, Vol. 3, No. 3 and 4 (March/April)









Responsible

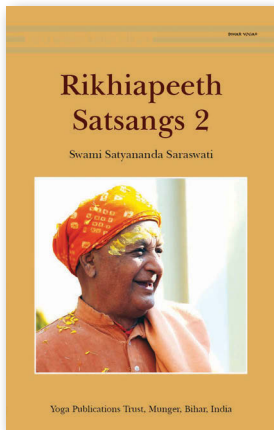


If we hold ourselves responsible for the future, our own and our children's, then we will ensure that the evolution of man is along positive lines. Only then will wars cease, only then will man be able to love his fellow man, and only then will adults understand the young and the young understand the old.

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Satsang

From Rikhiapeeth Satsangs 2, Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Can you speak to us about the education of children? Nowadays, the culture which children are being exposed to in cities is just music, dance and glamour. What can we do about their spiritual exposure?

As far as spirituality is concerned, each child will have to decide for himself. Parents cannot decide that for the child. They can only give samskaras to the child and inculcate good habits in him. They may train the child on how to live in society and what disciplines to follow for the body, mind, family, home and ultimately, for the larger society in which he lives. They can give him health tips, education tips, career tips, marriage tips and religious exposure.

This much the parents can do, but as far as spiritual life is concerned, the child will have to discover it for himself, because spirituality is the seed of human life. It is in everyone, regardless of gender, nationality, class, creed or religion. Whether it is a child in Mumbai, New York or Mongolia, or even the remotest recesses of the North or the South Pole, the spiritual seed is in one and all. What is that spiritual seed? The root of the spiritual seed is awareness of the Self, or rather, the divine awareness of God, which is there in everyone.

Do not equate or confuse social qualities with spirituality. For example, you teach your child to be good because it is good for society. Your child should be good because he has to live in society. You impress on your child the need to be educated because he has to have a career. You insist on marriage because that is the way society is structured. You can only guide him

in the avenues which will make him capable of surviving in the society into which he is born. However, apart from all this, without any guidance from you or anyone, sometime or the other, he will discover for himself an invisible presence of God.

In fact, that is the only thing that parents should be able to teach a child, but they cannot. It is not at all possible for parents to teach a child the invisible presence of God. They cannot fulfil that role. Therefore, children should be allowed to follow a free career in life. Children should be given freedom by parents to pursue a career, hobbies and interests of their choice. Children should also be exposed to music. Music is one way through which a child can enter into spiritual life. If the child likes yoga, pooja and worship, reading the scriptures, well and good. But if he does not, don't force him. Instead, push him towards music, because nobody dislikes music. Even a venomous cobra snake likes music. Once you push a child into music, whether it is folk, pop, disco or classical, any kind of music where there is rhythm, his journey of self-discovery will start and the seed will begin to sprout.

Power of music

Music is not just holding a mike and singing. Music is a powerful medium by which the mind directly deals with sound. Music is the system in which you deal with the mind through sound. Whether it is vocal, instrumental, fast or slow, sitar, veena, violin, guitar, tabla or drums, they all emit sounds of different frequencies and intensities. Once the mind deals with sound, a definite change takes place in the level or sphere of the brain waves. Altered brain waves produce an altered state of mind that is more harmonized, balanced, homogeneous, and in tune with the self. This results in a highly subtle and refined awareness. The moment your mind alters from gross to subtle, you are spiritual. That is why people who deal with music are always highly spiritual and very close to the awareness of that unseen presence, God. In the Puranas,

when Lord Vishnu is asked by one of his most ardent admirers, Narada, "Lord, please tell me where do you reside," he replies, "Look Narada, I do not reside in Vaikuntha (paradise), I don't even reside in the hearts of the yogis. I reside in the place where my bhaktas sing my name."

*Naham vasaami Vaikunthe, yoginaam hridayena cha;
Mad bhakta yatra gaayante, tatra tishthaami Narada.*

It is a definite fact that music, dance and the fine arts can help in developing your spiritual personality. It is music, dance and art that distinguishes man from animals and other forms of life. Music and dance are expressions of a refined mind, a mind that can dive deep into inner experience.

So, don't blame Mumbai and Chennai for cultural decadence. Let the children listen to all kinds of music because it is the rhythm in music that influences the mind. That is why everyone likes kirtan. Rhythm is the heart of a kirtan. It is not the words or the singer, but the rhythm or the beat the kirtan follows that does the magic of transporting the listener to the dimension of *ananda* or bliss.

— October 2007, Rikhiapeeth



Kriya Yoga Yatra 1 (Pratyahara Kriyas) – Impressions



Kriya yoga, only taught in the Munger ashram, is a unique chance to go beyond and lighten up our hearts through enhanced awareness. My deepest respect to Swami Niranjan and the Satyananda tradition and their generosity for opening up the doors for us in this second chapter of yoga. Kriya yoga is a necessary key for all of us seeking a glimpse of the divine, beyond time and space.

– *Cristina Gamboa, Columbia*

Kriya yoga course and ashram life – a whole new experience for me, a chance to learn a new branch of yoga and discover deeper parts of myself. I know that there is a long and not so easy path in front of me. I will continue my kriya yoga sadhana with seriousness and gratitude in my heart. Special thanks to the teachers for sharing unselfishly their knowledge with us, with guidance and protection of Swamiji. Hari Om Tat Sat.

– *Savitri, Croatia*



Being my first time in the ashram, I had a very good experience. The way the kriyas were taught was very clear and systematic. I am inspired to do my sadhana at home. I think it is very good to have one year of practice before we learn more kriyas. It is a smart system. The teachers were excellent, clear and precise in their instructions.

– Lars Andersson, Sweden

I feel very lucky and grateful for having the opportunity to learn and practise kriya yoga from the Satyananda tradition. The instructions of each of the kriyas were given by the teachers in a very clear and precise way. We built up the practice little by little every day and had the chance to practise the kriyas several times guided by the teachers and getting from them accurate corrections and suggestions so that each kriya was learnt and done correctly. Then we had the chance to go deeper in the practice, doing them at our own time and experiencing the effect of the practice.

The sadhana given for the year is manageable; I have already incorporated it and I look forward to deepen the practice and the experience of it and come back next year to continue on the path guided by our beloved Guru Swami Niranjan! Thank you very much! *Hari Om Tat Sat!*

– Siddhi, Peru

Kriya Yoga Yatra 2 (Dharana Kriyas) – Impressions



Swamiji, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to be part of kriya sadhana. Your satsang and sadhana given last year was life changing. It worked on me as a resolve to bring transformation within myself. These changes are:

- Discipline
- Interest in meditation
- Quality of concentration
- Visualization
- My health and strength
- I have experienced spontaneous indriya nigraha after kriya sadhana.

The experience of Kriya Yoga 2 was enjoying kriya sadhana further. It is very intense, but after a year of training, body and mind are adopting both kriya and tattwa shuddhi gracefully.

– *Devatma, Bengaluru*

Kriya Yoga 1 gave me the glimpse of the higher truth. Kriya Yoga 2 seems to be promising enough to give me the experience of this higher truth. The kriyas come closer to me every time, I practise them in our daily class. I can see them becoming a part of my life and routine and with every passing day commitment towards it becomes stronger and the foundation for this dedication comes for the kriyas and dharana.

– Meenal Nigam, Bengaluru

It was a journey of going into self and consciousness. I enjoyed every bit of the training realizing more and more of my innate tattwas, 'that is me'. Though a very powerful course, it was gradually built up with the protection of the guru and hence was a liberating experience.

– Daisy Bastian, Bengaluru



Om and Gayatri

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

According to the science of mantra there are four kinds of sound waves: standing waves, reverberant waves, oscillating waves and transcendental waves. The mantra *Om* produces all of these waves. *Om* is a combination of the three sounds 'A', 'U', and 'M'. 'A' creates the standing wave, 'U' the reverberate wave, 'M' the oscillating wave. The fourth wave, being transcendental and beyond the sense of hearing or speech, is created by meditating on *Om* in the heart centre.

When you transcend the external sensory world, you become aware of high frequency waves which have no rest period. Ordinary waves have a rest period. When you chant the mantra *Om*, it begins and it ends. The beginning and the end are the rest periods for the sound wave. But when you transcend the mind, then you come to a high sound frequency which has no rest period.

The first three sound waves belong to the three dimensions of human consciousness and are interconnected. 'A' represents the waking or sense consciousness, 'U' the dream or subconsciousness, and 'M' deep sleep or unconsciousness. The fourth wave represents the unlimited dimension of consciousness which is beyond the mind and the senses. Therefore, we can say that *Om* has four bases: the sensual world, the mental world, the terrestrial world and the ultimate state.

Exploding the creative force

According to the Vedas, *Om* is the ultimate and first mantra. It has no name and no form, and is considered to be the creative force of the universal mind. The concept of universal mind is very difficult for us to comprehend. In the scriptures it is called *hiranyagarbha* which is compared to an egg. In the centre

of this egg is the ultimate point from which sound emanates. *Nada* literally means sound, but here it refers to the ultimate point of resonance. This point is a transcendental point where the sound *Om* is unmanifested form. There is no vibration, no rhythm, no wave, and everything seems to be completely silent and potential. It can be imagined as total inactivity.

At opposite poles of this universal egg are the forces known as time and space. Space is the positive energy force and time is the negative. When you produce the mantra *Om* with your mouth, or recite it in the realm of your mind, these two psychic forces attain a state of polarity and try to project themselves towards the centre nucleus. When union occurs, there is an explosion of force, which results in the whole universal creation. Therefore, the mantra *Om* represents the creative force, the centre in which time and space unite, and where infinity is split into a multitude of infinities.

The mantra *Om* is written in a particular fashion. Many have it engraved on their lockets. It consists of four curves, over which there is a crescent moon with a *bindu* or point. Bindu is the centre or focal point of *Om*. Each curve represents infinity in its different aspects of time, space, object and transcendence. Therefore, *Om* has within itself the other force known as *prakriti* or nature, as well as the spiritual force.

The yogis meditate on this symbol of *Om* in order to develop the spiritual and mental force within themselves. There are two manifestations of this energy: one is fulfilment which belongs to the material plane; the other is transcendence belonging to the spiritual plane. *Om* is a very powerful mantra for the purpose of transcendence.

Gayatri

Om is the first mantra which was amplified in order to form Gayatri. The 24 syllables which make up the Gayatri mantra are:

Om Bhurbhuvah Svah Tat Savituroarenyam.

Bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayaat

From the 24 syllables of Gayatri, the oldest books known to man, the Vedas, emanated.

Gayatri is the symbol of spiritual consciousness in man. This consciousness has three stages: the time when it dawns, when it is fully fledged, and when it enters eternal space. The sun rising at daybreak symbolizes spiritual life, and the sun setting in the evening symbolizes the total matter of consciousness. When there is no sun, no light, this is the 'dark night of the soul' according to the Bible, or Sivaratri, the dark night of Shiva, to Hindus.

Gayatri has to be practised at sunrise. After years it can be repeated mentally, but at first it must be chanted aloud. Being a vedic mantra, its chanting is controlled by certain accents, not as you chant any Sanskrit mantra. According to the Hindu system, those who are pure vegetarian should practise Gayatri on a tulsi mala, and those who are non-vegetarians should practise on rudraksha.

For the practice of Gayatri, there are no restrictions concerning diet, drinking, or marital status. The only restriction is that you must receive the mantra from a guru. The practice of Gayatri is the roadway to spiritual regulation. It has a powerful and simultaneous effect on the body, mind, senses, and spiritual life. Whenever you practise Gayatri mantra, you should concentrate on the form of *Om*, the symbol of the four dimensions of human existence: consciousness, subconsciousness, unconsciousness and superconsciousness.

Transcendence follows development

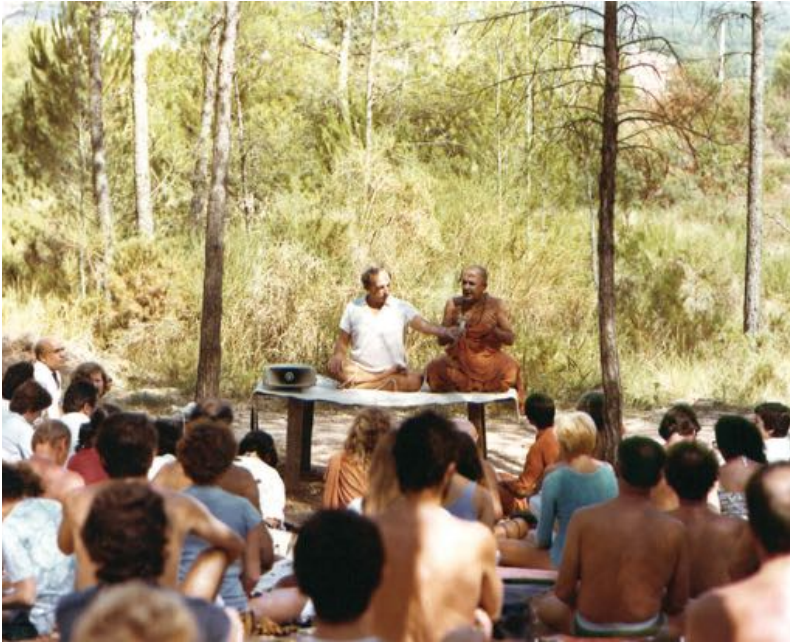
Gayatri and *Om* are equally powerful, but the action of Gayatri is not as speedy as the action of *Om*. Gayatri was intended for the general masses and the reason for this is clear. The consciousness of man is simultaneously existing in seven different planes. The purpose of mantra is to transcend the first three realms: the physical, mental and astral. This means that I am not only existing in this physical form; I have a duplicate and triplicate existence. Then there are three higher or spiritual planes followed by the ultimate state.

When man is able to evolve, he transcends each body until he arrives at the seventh plane. However, those people who are not able to cope with their psychic or emotional situation will find this transcendence quite a problem. Everybody does not want to transcend, and even if one desires it, he may not have qualified himself.

Transcendence without illuminating the first three realms is a very impractical affair. The different states of human intelligence are reflected as necessities in our day-to-day life. Recognition, perception, recapitulation, and so many other forms of intelligence have to be developed before you try for transcendence. The Vedas are very clear in their concept. They say that one must transcend the material consciousness, but they place a condition; you should transcend the material consciousness only after you have developed it.

The whole evolution is passing through three different stages. The lowest is tamoguna, inertia and potential energy. Above that is rajoguna, dynamism and manifestation. This is followed by sattwa guna, knowledge, light and equilibrium in the forces of creation. If the individual transcends prematurely, his evolution stagnates. Therefore, the Vedas have a very clear concept. The ego must be dissociated from tamoguna. Potential energy must become dynamic and manifest.

When this occurs one has desires, passions, imagination, cognition, feelings, happiness, unhappiness, fears, insecurities; one knows so many things. There is a total panorama of action, the five sense organs, motor organs, all aspects of prana, all levels of elements talk together on the playground as if all the players have come to play in a football match. Nothing is potential, nothing is in seed state. The expression of cognition is at its fullest. Sense and motor organs are given complete freedom of expression. The mind can think endlessly and infinitely. When this full expression takes place, evolution is at the point of rajoguna. At this time, if you try to transcend, it has some relevance and meaning.



Therefore, *Om* is considered right only for a few, not for everybody. Gayatri is meant for the general masses because its purpose is to create a process of expression, to illuminate the different states of human consciousness.

The consciousness is in total darkness, as though it were the dark hour of midnight. Out of that dark night comes the dawn of day, and inner vision, inner perception or awareness begins to take place. This is the concept of Gayatri. Therefore, the Hindus teach this mantra to their children at the age of 7, 8 or 9 years; before, they are not allowed to practise it. When they have fulfilled all the obligations and desires of life, when a type of distaste dawns in their minds, they discontinue the Gayatri mantra and begin to practise *Om*. The mantra *Om* is for yogis, because it is the shortcut for the fulfilment of spiritual transcendence.

— *Talk given at the Yoga Teachers Seminar in Collbato, Spain, August 1979, printed in YOGA Vol. 18, No.6 (June 1980)*

Progressive Yoga Vidya Training 2017 – Impressions



In the first satsang Swamiji said, "Be good students, do not be lazy!" It is easy to be good students when the teacher is extraordinary! Swamiji is giving us the great opportunity to experience the yoga that is beyond the yoga we have known until now. (And it was a shock to find out that I have known yoga very little!) The exhortation not to be lazy, to commit ourselves, to be sincere and serious is like a lighthouse

that guides us into the darkness of our ignorance. An immense, beautiful, breath-taking panorama of knowledge emerges. It is not to be contemplated but to be crossed. It is up to us to complete the journey to the end. There is a long road ahead but we have a remarkable sankalpa. In my heart, besides all the teachings, I will bring home the TRUST I have received and I will leave to honour it with great gratitude.

– *Sannyasi Sadhanashakti, Italy*

Hari Om. During this PYVT Swamiji has definitely made us all question our motives for joining the course, teaching and practising yoga. He has made it clear that there is a big difference between yoga for sannyasins and yoga for householders. After this statement I think most of us wondered which one are we ready for. Are we able to imbibe the true yoga vidya and make a deeper plunge into the ocean of yogic experience.

Upon hearing about the differentiation between pre-Patanjali's and Patanjali's raja yoga, all the different types of

pratyaharas, Samkhya and vedantic point of view, a thought came to mind: 'Have we ever touched the surface of the water with the tip of our toe?' The stories about Sri Swamiji's initial yogic training were truly inspiring, both from the memories of Swamiji and Swami Shankaranandaji.

Recalling how much the daily practice of yoga nidra has helped me on different levels - healing, achieving, sport results, releasing tensions, pains and fears, balancing pranas, expanding the awareness and changing perception, I started to appreciate even more the efforts and experiments of Sri Swamiji to create the best possible version for our needs.

I was also amazed by the patience of Sri Swamiji and Swamiji, which was definitely required to keep the wheel of yoga still for 50 years, and wait for this planet to be ready for the movement of the yogic wheel which may bring us greater awareness, knowledge and experience of ourselves our bodies, breath, pranas and mind. There was always a desire to go deeper into the experience of koshas, pranas, different pranayama ratios, combined with bandhas with emphasis on kumbhaka, but my feeling was that the next step shouldn't be attempted without Guru's grace and guidance.

I am deeply grateful and feel truly blessed to be able to participate in this year's PYVT, and have the opportunity to experience the great variety of practices.

– Sannyasi Madhuri, Serbia



Stupendous Role

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Should a yoga teacher take an initiative to make others interested in yoga or teach only those who come with a genuine interest in yoga because then the receptivity will be better?

The responsibility of a yoga teacher has become much more important and much greater than it was a few years ago. Even now there are people, at least in this country, who feel that yoga is just a physical exercise and has much less to do with the self-formation and social renaissance.

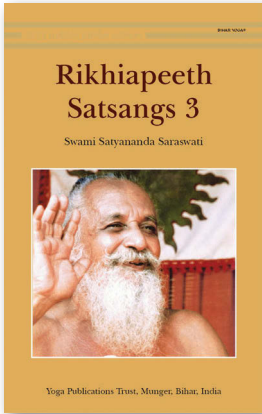
When you will realize that yoga deals not only with the body but also with the mind, that it does not merely deal with the conscious mind but also with the subconscious and unconscious mind, then you must be convinced that the practice of yoga can go much deeper in the reformation of yourself and of society.

Therefore, the role of a yoga teachers is a stupendous one. They have to take up this work very aggressively, in true earnest. They can definitely make it a profession if they like but there has to be honesty and sincerity and total devotion in this profession as well.

— 10 June 1987, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Soften Your Heart and Prana

From Rikhiapeeth Satsangs 3, Swami Satyananda Saraswati



There are two sides to social work; one involves doing good for the sake of others and the other involves performing service for your own purification. Whatever you do for others, in the end it reaches God. You dedicate it to God, not to human beings. You are just a medium; God is the One who gets it. Hindus, Christians and Muslims all hold this same view and say the same thing.

Social responsibility

A householder who is only interested in family and children in his life can also be an agent of service. However, what should be the main concern in life for a person who has left home and has nothing to do with spouse, children or family? If he does not care about food, soap, toothpaste or blankets, if he has no worry or necessity, then he should become a medium for all others. This is a very important point. People do not have a responsibility just to their family; they also have a responsibility towards society. I am not just responsible for my institution; I also have a social responsibility.

We must accomplish that social responsibility either from the spiritual perspective by becoming a medium of God or by working for the welfare of others by using our wealth. This choice depends on your belief. Those who are spiritually inclined will think according to the first perspective, and the modern people will think, 'Okay, a part of my income will go towards the welfare of others.' This is all right for householders since they need to keep a balance between social and family

obligations. A sannyasin, however, does not have any family responsibility. He should not have any friend; he should have no relationship with anyone. He should care only for others, especially those who do not have anyone to look after them. A young person can look after himself, but a sick, old person cannot look after himself. Social responsibility should begin with such people.

Social responsibility is necessary because we have an obligation towards society. In ancient times, this was called a *rina* or karmic debt: a debt to God, a debt to the sages, a debt to the parents, a debt to all forms of life, and a debt to humankind. These five debts are called social obligations in modern language, and you will never be free from them. Every individual is indebted to society. If there is no society there will be no safety. You will have to pay your debt to society, but what will you do and how will you do it? There should be a way, a medium. The lofty souls, the wise ones and the sadhus are the mediums. We can fulfil our societal obligations through the sadhus. I am sitting here. If you want to give cattle, who will you give them to? I know who needs them. If you want to give a bicycle, who will you give it to? You do not know, but I know which girl should be given one. Since the time I arrived here, all the girls have started studying. They have become so enthusiastic.

Purifying the mind

The biggest mistake in our society is that five hundred litres of milk will be offered in a temple, yet no one will give five litres of milk to a sick man. A person thinks, 'I will not be blessed by giving this sick man milk; however, if I offer five hundred litres of milk to Shiva, he will be pleased and my case will be dismissed from court.' This is the faith! People's faith has lost direction. Faith can also be channelled in the right direction.

My guru, Swami Sivananda, used to say that helping others does not just mean that you are giving them medicine or clothes. The real meaning of helping others is that you are



cleaning yourself. When you help someone, where does this act take place? It takes place in the mind, which becomes purified. It is only when your mind is pure and your mirror is clean that you will be able to see your face.

The one that you worship in the temple, in stone, in paper, is no one else but you. However, you aren't able to forget yourself; you aren't able to forget that you are an old woman, a shopkeeper, a businessman, an industrialist, or an employee. You won't be able to see yourself as God, because you are convinced that you are an old lady. That is why you worship Shiva, because you are convinced he is God. However, when your heart becomes clean, a mirror begins to shine and shows that the God in that rock is false, and that the truth is that He is no one else but you.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Vedas, the Upanishads and in countless holy books, this is what is written from beginning to end. Our religion says the same thing. I do not criticize worship of the form, for that is also one way. Gods, goddesses,

asana, pranayama, meditation, concentration, self-control or whatever you do, that is a way. I do not criticize the path, but it is a path only, and not the destination. It is a means, not the end.

When we worship Shiva, Rama, Ganesha or Devi, we do so not as the means but as the end. It is necessary to do so. By believing them to be the goal, eventually their true nature is understood. We are unable to see the truth. Why? It is due to an absence of affection, love, compassion and devotion: the affection that exists between brother and sister, the love between man and woman, the compassion that a happy man feels for an unhappy one, and the devotion that we feel for the power of God. Affection, love, compassion and devotion, the four of these soften life. The way iron melts when it is heated and can be given any shape; in the same way, to melt this hard heart, to soften it, these four are necessary.

Rabindranath Tagore said, "Soften your prana with affection, love, compassion and devotion." Here the word *prana* means your entire life, not the breath. Your prana is not soft, your life is not soft. If your children, spouse or close relatives were in pain, wouldn't you worry about them? Of course you would, yet you would not care about your neighbours. If you heard about their problems, you would say, "Do you want me to call the doctor? Should I telephone him?" You may give money or lend him your car, you may do a lot of things, still you would not have the same feelings you would have for your spouse and children.

In Vedanta, to be able to see yourself in all living beings is called *atmabhava*. *Atmabhava* is explained in the *Ishavasya Upanishad*, the *Kathopanishad* and all the Upanishads. It is also written in the *Bhagavad Gita* (6:29):

*Sarvabhutasthamatmanam sarvabhutaani chaatmani;
Ikshate yogayuktaatma sarvatra samadarshanah.*

The impartial individual, immersed in yoga, sees all living beings in himself and himself in all living beings.

This is the way to atmabhava. However, it is very difficult to practise. Usually you think, 'I have no connection to others; she is not my wife, he is not my son or my brother, he is not from my caste or religion, nor from my village, and I have nothing to gain from him.'

To feel the pain of another man in distress is possible only for the great souls. Their hearts are moved, *Sant hridaya navanita samana* – "A sage's heart is as soft as freshly churned butter." An ordinary person's heart is moved only by those they know and love, or those they have been friends with for years. If someone has obliged you in some way, then it is natural to care about that person. However, if you feel that way for someone who has never belonged to you, then that is *paropkara*, working for the welfare of others, and it purifies the soul.

–17 September 1997, Rikhiapeeth



From Dark to Light

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



All over the world, there has been a period of darkness, not only in the west but also in India. Political intrigues, wars, the shifting of empires, the killing of people, soldiers rampaging countries, Alexander, Napoleon and so on. For about one thousand to two thousand years there has been a very, very dark period in the history of mankind, of accessions, conquests, armies and of kings and monarchs becoming too powerful.

In ancient times the kings and monarchs ruled the countries, but they were not the ultimate powers. The ultimate powers were the wise men. You may call them sages, swamis or yogis. They decided the course of many important events concerning society. Somehow it happened that the tradition of wise men underwent a process of decadence. Then these emperors, kings and later on the military generals became autonomous and very, very powerful. They wielded their might without wise men, without a controller. So, they brought about a society which only fulfilled its own economic needs. All the traditions, all the laws were framed in such a way that they tended to accelerate

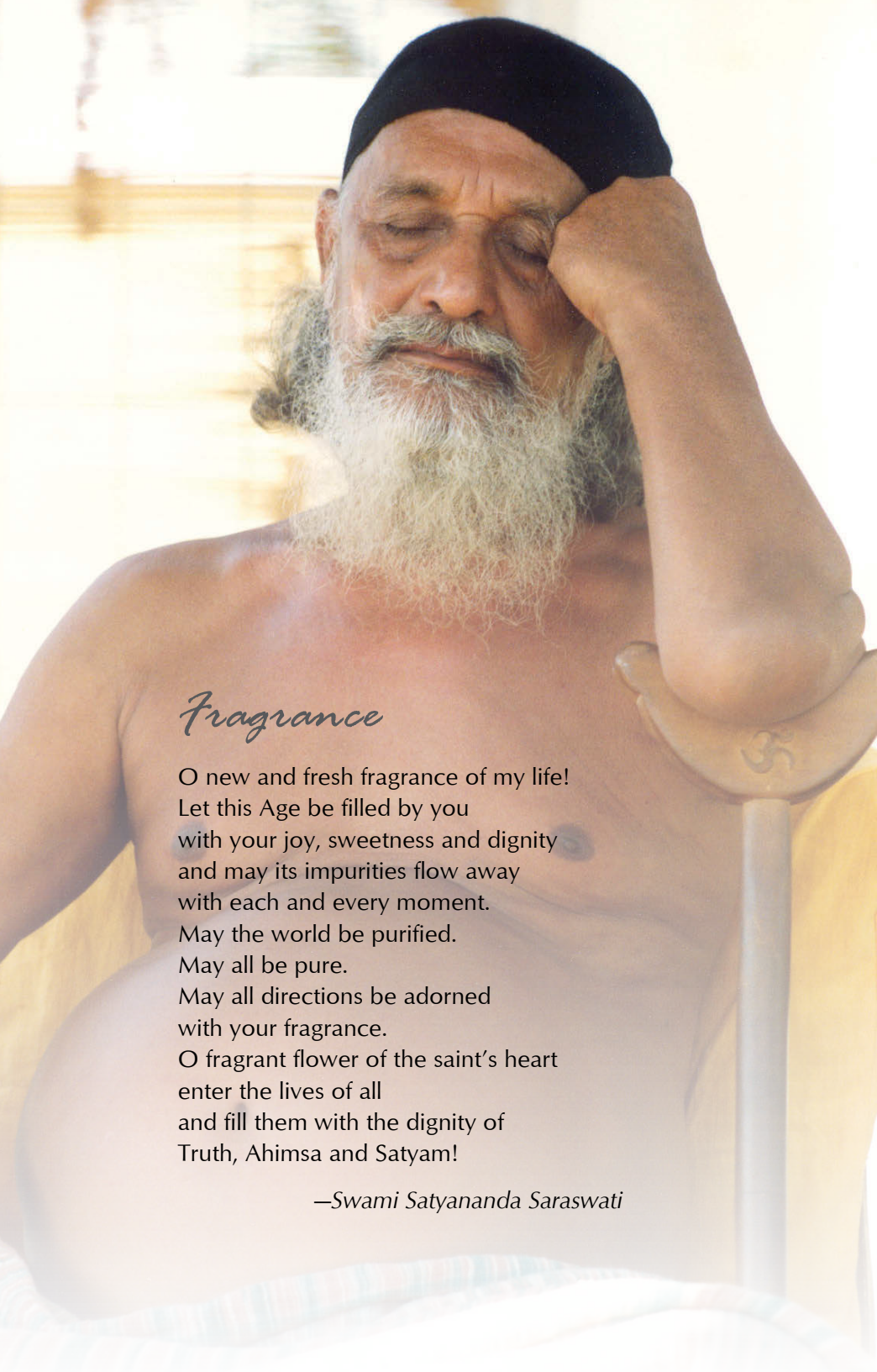
the motion of materialism not spirituality. They did patronize religions, but only to have total control over the religious followers. If you patronize me, you are not only patronizing me, but you are also holding all my disciples under your control. That is why they patronized some of the religions.

They patronized the religions and made temples, mosques and churches. They set up the religious organizations, but it was all part of the material aim. They wanted to be more powerful. For instance, in the earliest days of communism in Russia, the government ignored the churches. They are not doing it now, because they have realized that if they ignore the churches there is going to be an underground movement against them. Now they think that it is a better idea to at least help the churches, even if they do not patronize them. So, in Russia, Poland and Yugoslavia they don't interfere with the churches very much now, and they give them a little money for repairs, whitewash and all that, to bring them within the fold of their power.

After this great gap of darkness for one or two thousand years, during which period many religions came into existence and to power, the time is coming when people will have to realize the old culture which once existed the world over. This culture held a balance between the material and the spiritual needs of man. The guardians of this culture, whom you may call the Essenes, the saints or the swamis, did not emphasize any one aspect, neither the spirit nor the matter. They held a balance between the two. That is coming back now.

Perhaps we will have to retell many stories from the *Bible*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana*, all over the world. These stories have to be re-read and re-told to our children. If they are not re-discovered and re-cast our next generation is going to be totally agnostic, because they will not be able to understand their true meaning. The great scientists of our time, the physicists, neurologists and many others, are thinking along these lines, but somebody has to take up the work.

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Fragrance

O new and fresh fragrance of my life!
Let this Age be filled by you
with your joy, sweetness and dignity
and may its impurities flow away
with each and every moment.
May the world be purified.
May all be pure.
May all directions be adorned
with your fragrance.
O fragrant flower of the saint's heart
enter the lives of all
and fill them with the dignity of
Truth, Ahimsa and Satyam!

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati

YOGA AND YOGAVIDYA PRASAD

In 2013 Bihar School of Yoga celebrated its Golden Jubilee, which culminated in the World Yoga Convention in October of 2013. This historic event marked the successful completion of 50 years of service, dedicated to the one mandate, to take yoga from shore to shore and door to door. Achieved over a 50-year period with the help of yoga aspirants and well-wishers all over the world, a yogic renaissance has taken place.

The World Yoga Convention also heralded the beginning of the second chapter of Bihar School of Yoga. The hallmark of this second chapter is a new vision, which serves to both revive and uphold the yoga vidya in the tradition of Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda for the benefit of future generations.

As one of the aspirations of the second chapter, Bihar School of Yoga is offering the YOGA and YOGAVIDYA magazines as prasada with the blessings and good wishes of the spiritual parampara. As society moves into the digital era, to facilitate the dissemination of yoga vidya, both YOGA and YOGAVIDYA are available as a downloadable pdf copy and also as a free app for both Android and IOS users.

To access YOGA online:

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Yoga Peeth Events & Yoga Vidya Training 2017-18

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
Jan 19-21	Sri Yantra Aradhana
Jan 22	Basant Panchami Celebrations/ Bihar School of Yoga Foundation Day
Feb 22-Jun 10	Yogic Studies Course, 4 months (Hindi)
Feb 14	Bal Yoga Diwas, Children's Yoga Day
Apr 8-14	Hatha Yoga Yatra 1 & 2
Apr 22-28	Hatha Yoga Yatra 3
Aug 6-11	Kriya Yoga Yatra 1 Kriya Yoga Yatra 2 & Tattwa Shuddhi
Aug 20-25	Kriya Yoga Yatra 3 & Tattwa Shuddhi 2
Sep 17-23	Raja Yoga Yatra 1, 2, 3
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

* Indicates training for overseas participants

Please be aware that mobile phones are NOT permitted in the ashram.
Ensure that you do not bring your mobile with you.

For more information on the above events contact:

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Website: www.biharyoga.net

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