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Hari Om

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Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

The mind gathers experiences through the body and works in conjunction with the prana, senses and body. The mind has an influence over the body. If one is cheerful, the body will be healthy and strong. When one feels depressed, the body cannot work. If the body is healthy and strong, the mind will be happy, cheerful and strong. If one has a stomach ache, the mind cannot function properly.

Thought takes the form of action and action reacts on the mind. The mind acts on the body and the body reacts to the mind. The mind is the subtle form of the physical body. The physical body is the outward manifestation of the mind. When the mind is rough, the body is rough.

—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 ॥

Real Metaphysics

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

God and creation are not different. Matter and energy are inseparable. For the layman, God is the creator of the universe in the creation. But in the ultimate analysis, creator and creation are not two. God is not a human being. God is not limited to one place. God has no form. He is the universal law. Therefore, time, space and object are his manifestations.

When you see the world outside, you feel that it is different from the creator because you see the matter with your eyes, and you understand it with your mind. But your mind is infirm, subject to relativity, and therefore the perception which you have through your mind and senses is imperfect.

First of all, we have to establish whether there is creation at all, is this an experience or a reality? Philosophers have been trying for hundreds of years to establish that this experience is real, but they have not yet been able to do it. If your experience is real, then it should not be subject to any change. What is the definition of reality? That which cannot be counteracted by any other experience is reality.

How can you say that this waking existence is reality? If it is reality, then it should continue in the night also. But when night comes, you sleep and dreams become your reality. You forget you are man or woman. In the waking state you are all right, but in dream you find someone is coming to stab you. Therefore, since your experience undergoes a change, it cannot be regarded as reality and what is not reality is unreality.

After the advent of the great scientist Albert Einstein, physics has been blending into metaphysics. Is mind real? If mind is real, then what is the basis of the mental experience? The basis of mental experience is time, space and object. Bereft of time, space and object there is no experience. Therefore, what is the reality of matter? Does matter exist? Or is matter

an experience? You must read physics and metaphysics. You will find that they are now moving parallel to each other.

Philosophers in India have been discussing the nature of the creation for thousands of years. Even in the most ancient text, the *Rig Veda*, there is a beautiful passage: 'Is there a creation? And is there a creator? Or, is the creation there and the creator gone?' The text says it is a mystery. Oh, it is a mystery, because your concept of creation is a product of your mental knowledge. As the mind changes, the experience will also change.

Sometimes, we receive conflicting information about God and creation. It is said, 'Father in heaven.' A little later it says, 'Thy kingdom come.' And a little later, 'I and my father are one.' Which of the three are true? I think all three. There is a state of mind when the father is in heaven. There is another when his kingdom comes here. And the last point, no heaven, no kingdom, 'I and my father are one.' If I and my father are one, why don't you ask, 'the creation and the creator are one?'

So that is the answer.

– 28 September 1982, La Spezia, Italy
Printed in YOGA Vol. 20, No. 12 (December 1982)



We Need Yoga Too

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Medicine is indispensable for those that are ill. It becomes a must for the patients. Likewise, yoga sadhana is also a must for those who feel something missing from their life, be it physical, mental or personality error of their being.

Yoga sadhana, in fact, is a collective name of all those techniques which are deliberately adopted to remove the imperfections of the personality. Man is restless because he feels the absence of virtues in his life. Rather, he is more conscious of his vicious nature and habits which do not permit him to realize his own glorious and powerful self in the image of God himself.

Yoga sadhana is a Hindi word meaning 'practising yoga'. It is indicative of undergoing some self-imposed discipline to weed out physical and mental errors. The disciplinary exercises of yoga are meant to condition the mind, intellect, emotions, body and its group in their proper perspectives.

Doctors who are at home with the science of physiology, anatomy and medicine are available in our society for treatment of the physical body. But very few are available in society, who know the causes and cures of mental, emotional and supramental disorders. Western psychology, no doubt, is progressing towards this end; it is yet in its infancy.

Let us therefore examine how yoga is an advanced system of psychotherapy too and discuss the points useful from both the spiritual and psychological angles.

When we talk about a man we do not think about his physical body alone. With the thought of the physical figure of a man, there comes at the same time remembrance of the nature of his inner personality also with all the evils and goodnesses. This idea of inner personality may not be very clear at first-hand but to us a man means definitely his body and appearance along with his virtues, vices and learnings. Thus, when we recollect the qualitative figure of a particular man, it is known as his inner personality which has preferred to make the cave of the physical body its abode.

Sometimes these two personalities of man - the outer and the inner - are not at peace within. A man thinks, speculates, desires, imagines something which is quite alien to his physical habits. He expects and aspires for something which he can never get. He imagines and dreams of what is really beyond his reach. It is here that he begins to develop a nature which causes personality conflict. Unconsciously and unknowingly he becomes a victim of frustration, weak will, indecisiveness, fluctuating emotions and desires, indetermination, inferiority complex, etc. Many other things like environment, wrong advice and guidance of friends, failures at enterprises shatter his personality to pieces. And ultimately he is left behind in the race and competition of success and evolution.

To overcome or compensate these weaknesses, assertion of lower-self (indeed a part of the inner-self) begins to manifest in various wrong points, anti-social and anti-moral.

Success brings confidence and strength, failures weaken the personality in toto. Then what to do? Can man get all he wants and aspires? No, nature cannot allow man to have his own choice in picking pleasures and leaving sorrow and failures. A man born on this earth has to taste life in its entirety. Amidst pains and pleasures he learns the lessons of life.

Life is sweet and painful both, and that is why man loves life. One who has seen the bright light of the day cannot avoid the darkness of the night, nor is it desirable in the interest

of man himself. This is the law of nature and she makes no concession. It treats all alike. The wheel of karma must go on rolling and rewarding each physical and mental action of life.

It is therefore very essential to culture and develop the inner personality of man which is still in its period of formation.

It is believed that after passing through 84 lakhs (8.4 million) of births life comes to acquire human form. The various stages through which life passes are mineral, plant, animal and lastly human life. Coming to human life means that matter and the form have reached the stage of perfection. And now the subtle power of inner personality, residing within has to grow and reach the stage of perfection where a man becomes a deva or the superman. The gross, coarse and undeveloped mind of animal life has now to grow more subtle, refined, sensitive, dynamic and all-powerful.

Human life is the most blessed one as it is a signal indicating the beginning and the growth of divine life within. In animal life, we are compelled to learn the use and control of limbs and forms. In human life man learns the use and control of mind, and develops latent mental powers to the extreme.

The potentialities of mind are not known to every man. Man is in fact unaware of the dormant faculties which lie within his reach. These potentialities are just like unexcavated nature-preserves. Through the practice of yoga man unearthes the hidden powers of his mind which could be utilized in the following three directions.

1. for successful living;
2. for acquiring siddhis, and
3. for spiritual realization.

The first and the third are desirable and harmless. Through yoga sadhana one acquires equanimity, serenity, one-pointedness of mind and strong determination. He also regains his lost confidence. All these qualities are essential for successful living in all spheres of life, provided one knows how to utilize the energies generated by yoga sadhana.



For acquiring siddhis one has to crush and demolish his whole physical and mental structure by vigorous practices and divert all his mental faculties in toto towards achieving one siddhi only. These siddhis though hard earned, have no permanent value. You cannot utilize them in this world for your own sake nor can you do good to others by its demonstration.

Man is since birth chained with strong iron wires of desires and anadi vasanas. No siddhi can ever cut his bond of ignorance and avidya. Exhaustion of karmas is possible only by one's own effort of sadhana. Through meditation alone past samskaras and bad karma can be burnt. Through the practice of meditation the light of knowledge dawns which burns out all samskaras.

Yoga sadhana is good for self-realization, because all generated and unconsumed energies of mind and emotions are directed towards one healthy end - the realization of the Supreme Self, which is the ultimate goal of life. All emotions and mental powers are thus deposited in the safe account of self-realization. But for proper practice of yoga an adept's advice and guidance is always necessary for a beginner, otherwise he may get lost in psychic wilderness.

– Printed in YOGA Vol. 7, No. 9 (September 1969)

Strengthen Your Faith

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Beware of obstacles. Overcome them with faith. Intellect (not intelligence) is a great obstacle. Transcend intellect. Intellect creates dissipation, initiates doubts and discouragement, while faith heals, soothes, strengthens and illuminates. It materializes divine experience during meditation. Whatever might be the intellectual futility of faith, believe me, it is faith alone which is capable of emptying the mind of all inherited and cultivated thoughts and its modifications. When the mind is rendered blank of all thoughts in the highest range of meditation (even the thought of the object of meditation) then something natural, something inner (neither inherited nor cultivated), something spontaneous, something impossible of sense expression arises. So, you understand that wisdom finally is quite independent of the object of meditation, I mean uninfluenced by the name and form you meditate upon.

Life is really a means for divine vision. Who knows what we shall be in the future. Every evening is a calling bell of our Lord. Blessed are those who answer that call.

Faith is the basis of sadhana. Let not faith waver. Laziness is the greatest of all enemies. Faith in God can overcome any amount of laziness. Laziness is a clear indication that the sadhaka lacks in faith.

Logically and thoughtfully God can't be denied at all. Those who deny his existence are illogical, thoughtless and therefore obstinate. Every man of somewhat deep reasoning faces great difficulties in denying God. That is to say, he can't help believing in Him. Expressed denial of God, amidst friends, need not be taken as a sincere and faithful attempt, for every man fails, while thinking deeply, to disbelieve His existence. So initiate thought culture.

A sincere and faithful atheist is a most insincere and faithless student of thought and logic. Beware of such a fellow in your daily dealings. A sincere atheist is psychologically understood to be a person wholly charged with conflicting thoughts, decisions and behaviours.

Disbelievers too are our friends, no doubt, but we want to awaken their suppressed and dormant belief for their own good and welfare.

Atheism is an abnormal state of suppression, hence opposed to natural laws; while belief is a sublimate expression of latent ignorance and abnormalities; hence it is in accordance



with the natural laws. An atheist struggles amidst indecisive thoughts of various shades; while a believer moves with decisions, confidence, faith, certainties and hope.

A believer is never confronted with a question or problems which he can't explain. In other words, a believer has a solution for every blessed or dammed problem, while a disbeliever has to face many odd questions to which he can't find a satisfying answer. That is to say, an atheist finds many doors of revelation and explanations closed to his reasoning. A believer easily replies to the question within; while a disbeliever struggles to weave them or rather makes the replies.

In practice everybody believes in God; no exception to this dharma. It is only in theory that one denies or accepts His existence in the shade of his own conceptions.

If one were to disbelieve in Him in practice, there would have arisen horrible doubts, uncertainties, mysteries and frustrations in life.

The simple fact that one is very certain about a definite line and law of behaviour or events in plants, men, women, animals, planets and in other things that he sees and deals with, proves that he 'really' believes in an orderly 'Law' and its 'Controller' and 'Creator' as well. It is based upon his belief in 'some system' that he works for an unseen result, hopes for a 'particular' culmination of events and is sure that a particular action would be surely resulting this way or that way.

It is devoid of such belief that one admits frustration and ideas of uncertainties in his mind. Devoid of such a belief one entertains ideas of negative nature, of death and failure, of disease and suppression. Lacking in such a faith and belief one loses confidence and willpower and mental equilibrium.

So, let us correct our personalities by entertaining or strengthening the belief-faith.

– Printed in YOGA Vol. 10, No. 6 (June/July 1972)

Spiritual Diary

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Along with psychic sleep, I will tell you another method of correcting your habits, remodelling your behaviour and cultivating more virtues.

This is the method of writing the Spiritual Diary. Spiritual Diary is of immense aid to self-analysis and spiritual progress.

Let me explain here the method of maintaining it. In the beginning, it is a mechanical and slow process. You are not supposed to analyze yourself. For, self-analysis can create a complex in the mind of a beginner and there is every possibility of his becoming abnormal. Therefore, I do not advise spiritual aspirants to approach psychoanalysis. They may give you a way to know yourself, but this in itself causes abnormalcy.

How to make a spiritual diary? Take a fullscape paper and draw as many as thirty perpendicular lines and make it like a sheet of a roll-call register.

These are a few items which need some explanation.

“When did you get up in the morning?” In this column you should write down the time of rising from bed. Here the purpose is not to compel you to rise earlier by launching a fight against your habits, but to refashion the underground structure of habits itself. You should just write down the time when you leave your bed and take out a monthly average of the time of rising.

Another column is “How many hours did you sleep?” People are confused at this question, because they are unable to decide minimum and maximum hours of sleep. We need as much sleep as is needed for proper de-carbonization in the system, which may differ from individual to individual. Six hours for intellectuals, eight hours for manual labourers, four hours for sadhakas of yoga and ajapa. He who has attained samadhi does not sleep at all, he does not even need it. Those who sleep in excess must be having accumulated toxins in the system. If not, then there might be psychological suppressions or deeply engrained tensions, maybe due to failures in their career. So long as a person is normal or near normal, I am sure, he cannot oversleep. He who takes to excess in sleeping has got some wrong somewhere in him. You can minimize the hours of sleep by taking recourse to sattwic diet, asanas, ajapa japa and meditation.

Then there is an item regarding asanas. Practise asanas for fifteen minutes daily. You can select a few asanas for yourself or have them selected by your guru.

Regarding pranayama, the only point to be noted is the duration, which is from five to fifteen minutes.

“How long ajapa?” Some practise meditation, some namasmaran, and others say prayers. Let the aspirant attend to this item according to his daily practice. If you are doing all this, write down everything.

“How many malas of japa?” is an important item. Take a resolve that you will do a certain number of malas daily, Resolve for minimum and maximum number, according to

your convenience. Overenthusiasm is no good. Japa should be done on guru mantra and not from a book as many aspirants do.

The mind deceives. It will suggest, 'What is the use of doing japa, all this is mechanical, it is just hypocrisy'. Then this devil mind quotes Kabir, Nanak and other saints.

Therefore, one has to resolve positively and stick to those resolves. One mala of *Om Namah Shivaya* mantra is finished in two minutes. It takes about twenty minutes for *mahamrityunjaya mantra*, while the mantra of *Om* takes one minute. Therefore, according to your capacity and circumstances, make a sensible resolve, and stick to it at any cost.

Do more japa, for instance on Rama Navami, Gokulashtami, Good Friday, Christmas and such other holidays. Spend your birthday, marriage anniversary and such other memorable days in japa, prayers and self-checking and self-auditing, instead of wasting money and time.

There are positive as well as negative resolves. For one negative resolve you should make a corresponding positive resolve. Otherwise the negative resolves will cause unwanted complexes. If you make a resolve that you will not visit pictures on sacred days, you should also make a corresponding resolve that you will spend such days in sacred kriyas.

Make as many resolves as possible. There is no use saying that resolves should be made according to one's capacity of practice. Nor is it absolutely necessary that one should be after fulfilling every resolve at any cost. One does not become perfect on the very day he makes resolves. This bitter but actual fact should not be forgotten at any time. Failures in resolves is no failure in life. Rather failure in making resolves is irreparable failure in life.

You will have to note down all the difficulties and complexes you face and preserve such notes in the pooja room. Whenever you are restless and depressed, you should go to your pooja room, meditate for a while and look at your resolves. You will get peace of mind.

In the resolve you should write that you will do minimum twenty and maximum seventy-five malas of *Om Namah Shivaya* or any other mantra. If you miss to act according to your resolves, it only means that you lack sufficient willpower.

“How long did you do karma yoga?” Whatever work you have to do at home or in the office, write the total hours of work. What is the difference between karma and karma yoga? If you do every act mindfully and consciously, that becomes karma yoga. It is karma, when you do it mechanically. You do many actions in your life mechanically. You just do it. But a raja yogi is aware that he is doing a particular action. This is karma yoga. His actions are called karma, who does not have mindfulness.

By this practice, you will handle the technique of detachment. You will not be affected by alien influences. I know that detachment is very nice, because by its practice we complete the work and feel peaceful. This is the only way of handling the intricate detachment: every word, action, thought, breath, should be accompanied by perfect awareness. If you practise awareness, the art of detachment will be available to you in no time; success and failure, pain and pleasure, defeat and victory, all these and others will leave no trace in the mind.

“How many times did you get angry and with what self-punishment?” If anyhow you get angry, you must punish yourself. As a token of self-punishment, the dearest thing must be given up. If you do not punish yourself for undesirable actions every time, you can impose cumulative punishment for a month’s negligent acts. There is no benefit in getting angry. For this act of indiscrimination and foolishness, you must punish yourself. You must beg pardon and assure that you are definitely going to correct yourself. You have to decide for yourself the form of self-punishment.

“Which good quality are you trying to cultivate?” First of all resolve to cultivate one good quality, but that should not be a difficult one. For instance, you can resolve to speak less and avoid irrelevant, useless, sensational and futile talks.

Then month by month you can go on with one virtue to be cultivated.

“Which bad quality are you trying to eradicate?” Do not take up a difficult one. Take for example, “I shall not speak harsh words.”

Selfless service purifies the soul. It is because of selfishness that the entire personality is lost in darkness. If we practise selfless service, life will grow in happiness and mind will become strong and powerful.



Something should be said about satsang. Because, satsang plays the first role in making one's life and personality. There is nothing as powerful as satsang in changing thoughts, moods, sentiments and actions of an individual. If you have any mind to change the broken and disorganized patterns of your life, please go through a course of satsang for some time. Reading of sacred texts, dwelling in pious thoughts and thoughts about atman, company of saints, hearing of devotional songs and divine stories, all these are various forms of satsang.

Satsang is the surest cure for the dire disease of loneliness. Even in the midst of thousands of people, there are people who feel lonely. To relieve your loneliness you may play badminton, mix in society and do similar things. But this is not the ultimate remedy, my friend. That is self-hypnotism. There is every possibility of self-deception and self-hypnotism. So sit alone and think of God. Make Him your best friend and talk to Him mentally.

You can add your own new items. Write the diary every month and compare it with the earlier entries. After some time, by the grace of God you will give up bad things, and holiness, peace and happiness will be experienced by you.

Form of Spiritual Diary for Self-Elevation

For the month of: _____

1. When did you leave the bed?
2. How many hours slept?
3. How long asanas?
4. How long pranayama?
5. How long pooja, prayer or dhyana?
6. How many malas of japa?
7. How long in satsang?
8. How many times angry?
9. What self-punishment?
10. What virtues cultivating?
11. What bad qualities eradicating?
12. Salt free diet/fasting
13. Selfless service
14. How many hours of karma yoga?
15. Likhit japa
16. Charity
17. Scriptural studies
18. When did you go to bed?

*– February 1963, Cama Hall, Bombay,
printed in YOGA Vol. 2, No. 1, 1964*



Satsang on Kutir Lawn

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Suppose a householder doesn't or cannot wake up easily, then how can he do his sadhana or how can he manage to work hard?

Sometimes sadhana is necessary, but up to a certain level. Some people consider worship as sadhana or meditation as sadhana or karma as sadhana or seva as sadhana; some even consider suffering as sadhana and some the sensual pleasures. What is the interpretation of sadhana?



Another fact is that you cannot proceed with sadhana unless you are familiar with your mind. Are not kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada and matsarya the characteristics of mind? If you have no experience of these then how will you be able to discriminate maya? People say anger is no good, but have they the experience of it? They all say 'Do not desire, desires are bad!' but have they experienced them? All preachers of religion talk in this way and that's why you and we repeat it.

Until and unless you have experienced the different characteristics or patterns of mind you have absolutely no right to say this is bad or that is bad. You can't say that anger, desire or greed are bad because you don't know it, nor did you have to suffer on its account. Has anger caused you some harm or has desire caused you unhappiness or frustration or have you received some sort of knowledge or something different still?

You cannot renounce anything you consider insignificant or about which you have no experience at all. You get knocks and blows in your daily battle of life on account of your anger, on account of your passion, on account of your greed, ego or some other experience. That is why the life of a householder is known as grihastha ashrama. It is an ashrama, it is a place where you are making certain efforts in order to clear the passage for self-realization.

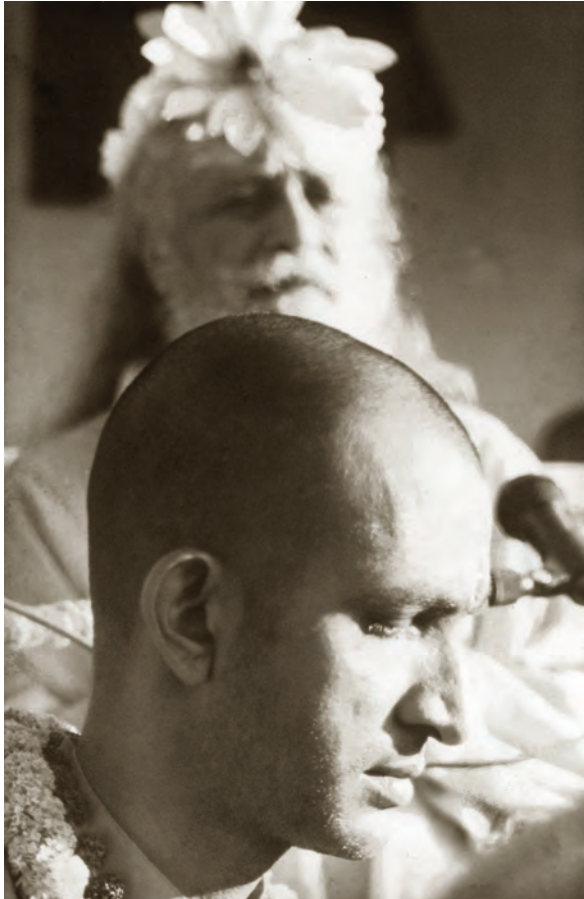
Grihastha ashrama is a way to self-knowledge, of which kama, krodha, etc. are necessary components which keep on harassing you; you try to overcome them and at the same time you try to enjoy them. Every effort to enjoy them results in bitter experiences and you say 'This is the last time; I won't have it anymore!' But the next time you become aware of this fact all of a sudden is when you find yourself in the same situation once again. You may get angry fifty times and still be thinking it is bad or harmful or makes you restless and causes the family relationships to deteriorate. No, until you realize this will continue; the same with passions, greed, ego, etc. – you need to realize them too. You will have to be able to realize that these things are not able to give you either peace or happiness in life; then only will you be able to quit them, otherwise it is very difficult to leave these experiences. To renounce passion is very difficult.

Therefore every man should spend his life with religious love. Fulfil your wishes and desires, but within the framework only. Some people go beyond the framework of dharma to fulfil their desires; overcome greed, anger, passion within the framework of righteousness. If you go beyond its limits then you will spill your inner rubbish. If, one by one, all of us go on spilling our rubbish beyond the framework of virtue then what will become of your society? This is exactly the situation which is faced by society today. Everything can be achieved within the framework of virtue, righteousness and dharma.

– 19 November 1985, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Take Care of Your Future Generation

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



We have provided our children with everything for their fullest knowledge and development. We love them and want them to be happy and to grow into fine, well-balanced individuals. But something has gone wrong. Our generation is living in

a vacuum. As parents, we do not know how to develop and harmonize all the aspects of our own being, so how can we teach our children to do so? In the educational system also the child is not considered as a whole. The leaders give food and games to the workers and rule them; we do the same with our children. But the future of humanity rests with the child and he has to be cast into a sublime pattern.

Yoga and education

As it was in the past, yoga must again become a part of the education system. In ancient India, yoga was taught to little children in gurukul as a science. *Gurukul* means the family of teachers, and definitely, children belong to the family of teachers. But later on the science of yoga degenerated into a religion; it was interpreted as a form of mysticism and equated with witchcraft and magic. For hundreds of years, so many erroneous interpretations were prevalent. Now, however, the intellectuals of our time are rethinking, and they are going to fill up this great generation gap.

For decades I have been working to promote these principles around the world. I have met educators everywhere, and finally things have born fruit. The Danish government was perhaps the first to arrange yoga teaching officially, at the rate of 120 kroner per hour for yoga teachers. It was the first government to issue brochures on yoga and send them, once a year, to all its citizens. That was followed by the Educational and Health Departments in Northern Ireland. The Sports Council there provides regular training for yoga as part of its activities.

Similarly, in the United Kingdom, local governments have introduced yoga into the night schools. Two years ago, I received official information from the Sports Ministry of Czechoslovakia that they were also introducing yoga. This means that not only the educators but also the governments have started to think along yogic lines. If the community realizes the need for yoga, then the government will have to follow suit and provide facilities for teaching yoga.

Revival of the yogic science

In India, we have been working towards this end for many years. During the dark periods of Indian history, yoga suffered a serious decline. Well, the loss is not only India's but the whole world's. It is now vital that the governments of every country concerned with raising the social standard of its people do everything possible for the revival of this science. But this must be undertaken in a very concrete way.

Thousands and thousands of teachers have to be trained. At the same time, the syllabus has to be made ready for different classes. Children of the primary, middle and higher secondary schools all have different needs for physical, emotional and mental development. They can be taught the same practices, but in different ways, with different emphasis, according to their intellectual grade and capacity.

Asanas have to be presented to children according to their particular level. It is not necessary to divide them according to class. The same exercises in the pawanmuktasana series can be done at different grades, however, we must take care that the way we teach and the way they practise is not detrimental to their growth. You can carry a child to the state of Patanjali's seventh step, but how will this influence his development?

Role of mandala in teaching children

Adults can be given nadi shodhana pranayama: inspiration, retention, expiration, in a straight technique because they have very stable minds and imaginations. The child, however, is at different stages of growth and does not have a stable mind or imagination. Therefore, in teaching children a proper basis must be given from which the practice can be developed.

I will give you an example. Draw an inverted triangle. Now start from the apex at the bottom, and inhale up to the left corner. Stop and pass over the base of the triangle to the right corner. Exhale and come down. This is the triangular mandala which can be given during nadi shodhana pranayama.

You should understand that children have the capacity to express archetypes through the medium of mandala. This is difficult for adults. The subconscious mind of the child has a very delicate opening while ours is behind the iron curtain. Further, the child's subconscious is wide open to both positive and negative influences.

Now the educators will have to decide what kind of mandala should be selected for the particular grades, because the child's mental and emotional level is different to ours. Similarly, their capacity of imagination is also different. But, what is more important, the structure of the brain and its responses to external objects is completely different.

Become a child again

As adults we have forgotten how to think and feel like a child. But it is necessary to experience the world of the child once again before we start to teach yoga to children. This does not just mean to try and behave as a child, but to think and feel and imagine as children do. Listen to their fantastic stories in the same way as they do. All children believe in fairytales, but we don't. How then can we enter their world and stand at one with them?

I have been working to establish a system which will be useful for all teachers, not only in Europe but all over the world. Recently I wrote the following three lines to one great world leader, and I hope they will be remembered in history.

“There is turmoil throughout the world today.

You can do nothing to eliminate it.

Take care of your future generation.”

– 11 August 1980, Zinal, Switzerland

Printed in YOGA Vol. 21, No. 8 (August 1983)

Self-Awareness

Your inner Self is the witness of
your mind and its activities.

Your inner Self is the witness of
your dreams and sleep.

Do you not feel that someone
is observing the dream affairs?

Do you not feel that someone
is aware of your process of thinking?

Do you not feel that someone
is aware of your physical existence?

Behind all experiences of life, you will
realize that someone is observing them
from somewhere. Once you dive deep
in meditation, you will come to see
that witness of all affairs.

That is self-awareness.

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Silence and Seclusion

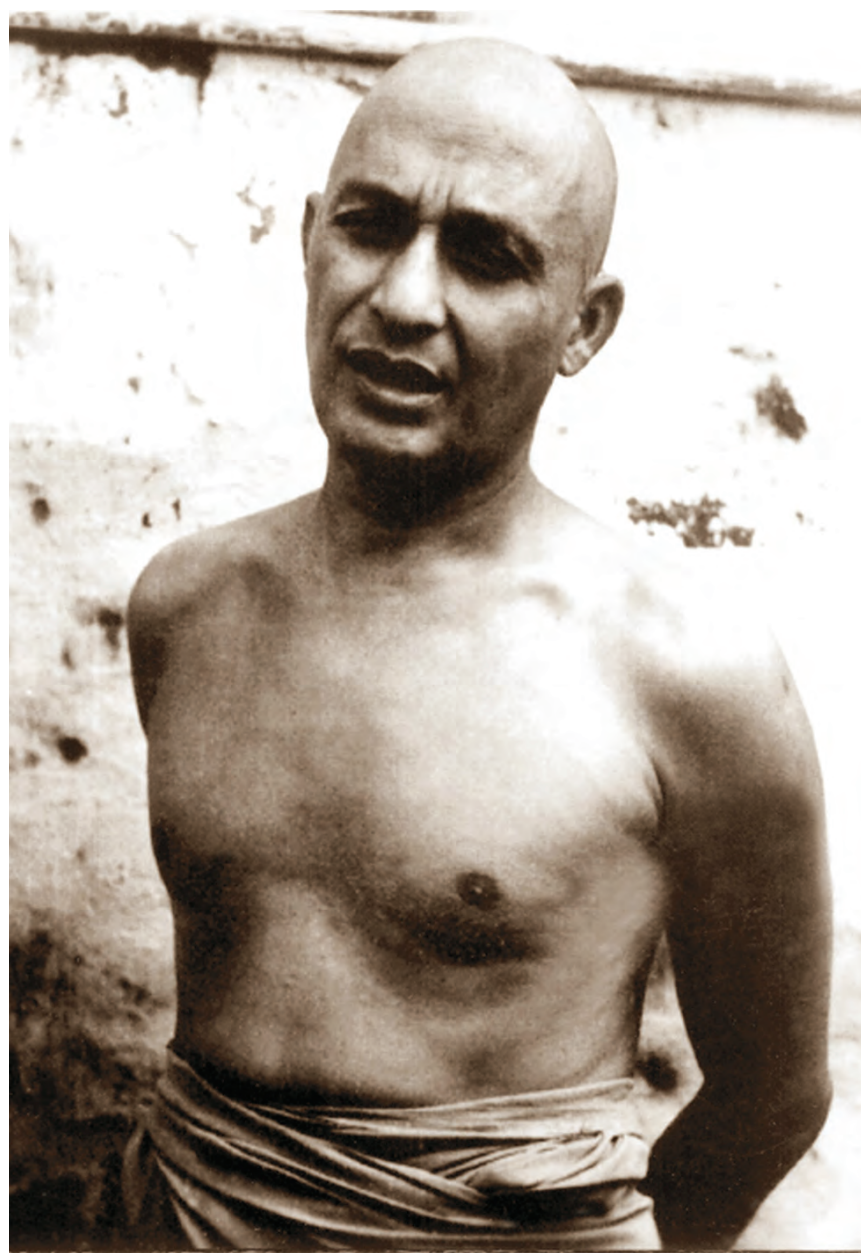
Swami Satyananda Saraswati

If you retire into seclusion with a spiritual purpose, it is intended to avoid the unwanted and unnecessary association with society and the family. That is the purpose. There are so many things in society we do not like, we do not want, but still we have to do them because we are part of it. So people retire into seclusion to avoid it all and practise sadhana earnestly. The advantages of seclusion so far as spiritual practices are concerned, are supreme. Even someone who is not spiritually evolved will make quick progress if he goes into seclusion under the guidance of a guru with a definite program in mind. In seclusion, the spiritual progress that would normally take six years takes six months.

When a sincere sadhaka is in seclusion for many years without meeting anyone, the world becomes almost non-existent for him. All the values are lost and his subconscious mind becomes very powerful. All the things one usually sees in life, he can see within himself.

When I was practising pranayama in silence and seclusion in Gangotri, I had a different kind of perception. The way I used to hear the sound of the river was not the same as the sounds I hear now. If any bird made a sound even in the dead of night at the distance of two or three miles, I would hear it. My senses had become so keen that even inside my room, I knew from which direction the wind was blowing. I could tell, not by feeling it, but by sensing the vibrations from the walls. My sense of smell was so sharp that from my room I could tell when the mahatma, who lived half a mile away, put water on the fire to boil his potatoes. I smelled him mashing the potatoes and adding brown sugar to them. The sense of sight had also become more developed. At night, when I looked out of my window, I could see far away how high the snow had come









and which stone had been submerged.

Now it is not possible for me, but my vision improved a great deal at that time. Nowadays I think in the form of thought, just imagination without images, but then images used to just form themselves. Whatever I used to think in my mind, would come to me like a flame. Once I was thinking about the mythological descent of Ganga, and the image came to me so clearly that I could actually see a man with broad



shoulders, King Bhagirath and the flow of Ganga River falling on him. It was not a thought but a vision.

That is the effect of silence and seclusion. The mind has a very great capacity, but in society we use it up in so many different ways. We are using our energy from moment to moment. That same mental energy is conserved during long periods of silence and seclusion. During that period nothing is earned from outside, but you save what is already within you. There are some people who have found the perennial source of energy and are connected to it. In order to tap that perennial source you must retire into seclusion, otherwise it is not possible. It is like playing a tape recorder when the battery is flat.

The reactions of various people to seclusion are different and it is hard to generalize. Buddha and Mahavir emerged with a tremendous capacity for work. Swami Sivananda said that when he was leading a secluded life, he used to chant *Om* loud at night, he had so much energy. In the dead of night, he used to leave his kutir and stand in the Ganga, which was icy cold. There he would practise japa and come back full of

energy. If the sadhaka is earnest, seclusion gives him so much energy he can practise sadhana for hours together without any exhaustion or depression, without any difficulties at all. Yet there are many sadhus who go into seclusion without a sadhana, and after a few days they cannot bear it any longer.

There was a sadhaka who went to Gangotri, high up in the mountains. He used to live there on potatoes and khichari, only once a day. Suddenly he felt that his whole spinal cord was full of heat, and visions of all dimensions came to him. He was aware of the outer world, and the inner visions at the same time and he could not manage it. It was too much for him; he thought he had perhaps gone mad, and he had to leave.

It depends on what the sadhaka is like. There are some spiritual aspirants who are all right as long as they are in society but the moment they retire into seclusion, fear creeps in. All insecurities, all kinds of passion, every damned and blessed thing comes up into the mind. They become so confused and afraid that they come out of seclusion and go back into society.

Once I took to seclusion in Rishikesh. I don't think it was even for as long as three months. I had a program; I knew what to do: japa, dhyana, but still I could not do it. Lethargy and indolence took over because I was not prepared for seclusion. In the morning I would take my mala and go to sleep. When it was nine o'clock I used to go to the kshetra for my rotis, come out, take my *Brahma Sutra*, start one sutra and fall asleep. I'd get up at three o'clock, take a shower, go to the kshetra for rotis, take my mala and sleep. I knew what I was to do, but I could not do it.

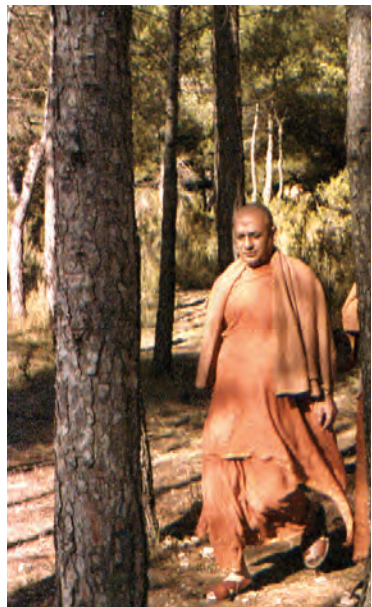
Reactions take place differently according to the individual's stage of evolution. Great men like Christ, Buddha, Mohammed, Mahavira and others went into seclusion before their self-realization. Of course it is possible to realize yourself even in the world, but if you are very keen about self-realization, some time has to be spent in seclusion, in absolute silence. There you are not compelled to see other people.

In seclusion and silence you are nearer to yourself. The seclusion must be complete. Some sadhus I have come across retire from their homes and have a building in Rishikesh and another in Gangotri or Haridwar. They have a servant who cooks for them and an account in the bank. They themselves go to the shops to choose their vegetables and if a mahatma comes to the district they go to visit him. This is not seclusion.

Seclusion means cooking your food yourself and trying to avoid the company of other thinking people as much as possible. Just as a thief avoids the company of policemen and moves in the dark, in the same way, one must check the socializing tendencies of the mind to meet and exchange greetings. If you go and stay at Gangotri you will know what I mean. I was there for nine months. One day I went to see a mahatma. He was sitting quietly and I stood expecting him to call me, but he did not. After a while, I said, "I have just arrived here." He said, "Don't waste your time, go back to your own place. I'm not interested in you." This is the sort of attitude these people have; they never meet anyone.

There was another mahatma in the Krishna Ashram who was so old, about 130, that when people used to come to Gangotri on a pilgrimage, his disciples would carry him up higher until the people left.

Seclusion has to be done as a stage of sadhana. Much of Christ's life is not recorded, but it is written in the Bible that he retired for forty days into the wilderness. Buddha retired for some time and Mohammed and Mahavira went into the mountains. In the *Bhagavad Gita* too it is said, you should try to





enjoy seclusion and keep yourself away from the company of any kind of person.

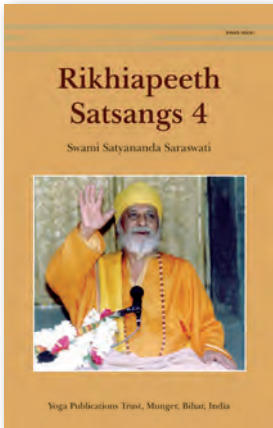
After a long period of silence, the physical activities of the brain become absolutely calm. You find that your taste for life becomes extremely weak. But there is something else I can tell you with absolute authority, that even after fifty years of silence and seclusion everything in life can become weak, but not the will of God.

By going into seclusion for a long period, you can reveal your unconscious personality. As a result of your practice, the conscious personality becomes more and more introverted while the subconscious personality is expressed in the form of visions and other experiences. Ultimately the unconscious personality reveals itself, which is the same as the awakening of samadhi. In seclusion you will also find that thoughts gradually diminish. Ultimately, you will not be at all interested in thinking. It is not that you check the thoughts, but you are not interested in them; you just feel quiet. And then unconsciousness comes, it is a state of mind that lasts for a certain period of time. Paramhansa Ramakrishna would be unconscious for six days, sitting in exactly the same position, and after that time his disciples would sing kirtan before him and he would get up, otherwise he would stay in samadhi.

*– 27 August 1979, Satyanandashram, Barcelona, Spain
printed in YOGA Vol. 18, No. 8, (August 1980)*

Changing Times

From Rikhiapeeth Satsangs 4, Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Whether or not you agree, in the changing India of today, many social beliefs will have to change. One of these is whether marriage should be for love or it should be a socially-arranged match. In the coming age, children will raise the question of choice, "It is I who am marrying, not you. Why are you so concerned about it?" This is one matter.

Premarital sexual relations is another matter. Today, there is freedom in everything, and girls and boys discuss the matter of premarital relationships freely. There is yet another subject: the unwed mother. In the social conditions of today, there is no choice given to an unwed mother except abortion. However, abortion is not good for women's health. Abortion can cause tumours, cancer and infections of the uterus. How can this be stopped? Either accept abortion or accept the status of unwed mothers. Children have their own thoughts and views about many things. They have opinions about clothes, about food.

Society has to change with the times. In India, many centuries exist simultaneously. The twenty-first century has arrived in Delhi and Bombay, and here in Rikhia, we live in the seventeenth century. Look at the world around you and you will realize that you cannot function in isolation. A simple calculation illustrates the point.

What is the population of the world? Five billion. Out of that five billion, ninety crore, or nearly one billion, are in India. Out of these ninety crore, twelve crore are Muslim, and the remainder is seventy-eight crore. Out of that, two crore are

Christians, which leaves seventy-six crore. From that number there are twenty crore of *adivasis*, or tribal people. That leaves fifty-six crore. From the fifty-six crore, subtract the number of the *shudras*, or lower caste people, and the remainder is only twenty crore. This remaining minority represents the number of brahmins, kshatriyas and vaishyas. The ones who are called shudras, the service class consisting of the washermen, potters, cobblers and sweepers, constitute about forty percent of the population of India. These people are the workers. They do the manual work in the mills and in the farms. Today, if they united politically, they would overpower you.



Only the twenty crore of brahmins, kshatriyas and vaishyas believe in caste, and they also handcuff their girls. There is no such thing as caste anywhere else in the world. The Muslims do not believe in it, the Christians do not believe in it, nor do the Jews, the Parsis, the Chinese, the Japanese or the Russians. However, you all say that the tradition of caste and creed is written in the Vedas. No, it is not written anywhere. To say, "This person should not eat in the house of that person" and "That person should not marry into the family of this person", is wrong. Nothing of the sort is said anywhere in the Vedas. When you look at the whole world, you will see the truth of it.

Every individual must decide upon their own future. Parents will always be the parents. After all, the tree that one

comes from has to be acknowledged. Yet, the child must look after its own future, and one needs to think about this. It does not matter if you have no interest in a serious subject like science. The famous poet Rabindranath Tagore did not study science, but he received the Nobel Prize. The author Arundhati Roy is not a scientist, yet she was awarded the Booker Prize. There are many people like these, who are doing excellent work in the fields of literature, art and music. One can excel in any sphere today.

The field of sannyasa, however, remains restricted. It has remained very limited. Any community that has too many rules does not progress much. Rules should be flexible. One has to face many obstacles in a society that has excessive rules and regulations. Maybe one or two like me can overcome them and attain their goal, but the rest perish in between. This is not such an easy road. The field of sannyasa has many possibilities. Still, there are some rules and prohibitions that not everybody would be able to withstand. Suppose a person takes sannyasa, and after a few years he has an urge to drink liquor or eat meat, what will he do? Society will not tolerate this.

In the future, after ten or twenty years, relaxed rules within sannyasa may be possible. I have given birth to a tradition where even a married person can live like a sannyasin; two married sannyasins can live together and do the work. If society were to accept this, it would indicate progress. There is some possibility of introducing this change among educated people, but the common man would just say, "What kind of a sadhu is that, living with a woman?" In the olden times, no one commented on such a thing; at that time, it was a civilization of *rishis*, realized sages who were married. Arundhati and Vasishtha were married, Agastya and Lopamudra were married. Rishi Vishwamitra had a relationship with the celestial damsel, Menaka, but nobody objected to all this.

There has been much conflict on this point in Christianity. Catholic priests are not allowed to marry and Martin Luther

objected to this. As a result, Christianity split into two, Catholic and Protestant. Catholic priests are forbidden to marry. If they do, they are excommunicated, ostracized and not given a grave. On the other hand, Protestant priests can marry, have children, and continue to preach and give sermons. If everyone agrees that married life does not destroy the spirituality of a person, then why forbid marriage? Celibacy is not possible for everyone. However, our society is not mature enough to accept this flexible perspective. It will take at least another twenty years to mature in this direction. In the same way, everybody condemns alcohol socially, yet it is taken in the Juna Akhara. The sannyasins at Juna Akhara drink brandy and people make them an offering of it too.

– 24 October 1997, Rikhiapeth, India



Stop Thinking, Stop Wishing

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



So far, you served the world with your emotions. What after all did you get? You know it too well! Try these emotions for Him. Sing before Him! Weep only for Him! Eat in order to live for Him! Become sad because of the separation! Become unhappy just because you are away still! In short, utilize every emotion for Him – only for Him, and you will be blessed with the Divine Grace.

Spiritual life is absolutely an inner process of ‘no thinking’ by following a method of ‘blissful thinking’.

Thinking too much over anything is not a solution. Solution lies in not thinking about it!

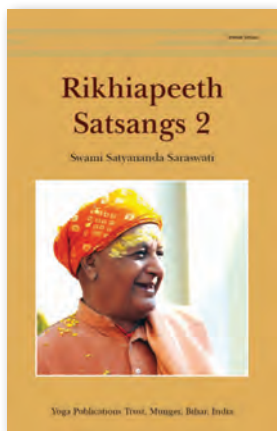
There are many things in life, which are solved by stopping all activities of body and mind!

There are many things in life, which become knotty problems by trying to solve them.

My experience is that most of the things would go smoothly if only we stopped wishing for them.

Of Time and Space

From Rikhiapeeth Satsangs 2, Swami Satyananda Saraswati



This is the first birthday I am celebrating because I believe that man is born only once. The astronomical position in 1923, the year I was born in, was the same as it is today, 24 December 2008. I was born on 24 December 1923, at four minutes past midnight. Four minutes past twelve is actually the 25th December, but according to the *gyotish shastra* or Indian astrology, which is based on the movement of the moon, it was the 24th.

Making the correction

Today is the morning of the 25th and the full moon already commenced at 12.04 am, when you were fast asleep. This is known as Aghan Poornima, the full moon that occurs in the month of Aghan, which is also known as Marga Sheersha. At 12.04 am, the exact time of my birth, the Poornima had already passed a few steps ahead, and this position of the moon is known as *Pratipada*. The next day is the first day of the dark fortnight of the month of Paush. According to Western astrology, the sun is passing through Sagittarius at this time.

Of course, many of you are Christians, so don't mind it when I say that sometimes I doubt if Christ was a Sagittarian. Was he really born in December? By all the literature that I have read and all that I can conceive of, he was born in September and was a Virgo. Often, when I think about it, I find it a bit confusing because history says one thing and the traditions say something else. But we are born in a century where we can think independently.

I can have my independent thinking, which can be different from yours. When I begin to think, I begin to doubt. When I begin to think about it, I begin to ponder: was he really born in December or was he born in September? Was he a Virgo or was he a Sagittarian? The two astrological signs depict two totally different natures. The astrologers can tell you better than I can. Maybe you already know it, as many of you here may be astrologers.

Sagittarians have a definite nature, don't they? Virgos have their own nature. The symbol of Virgo is *kanya*, the virgin. Christ's mother was also a virgin. This is a very good coincidence. From a virgin mother a virgin child is born. If you ponder over it and think with an independent mind, not coloured by history, tradition or religion, then you will know that the nature of a person born in the *Kanya rashi*, Virgo, and the nature of Christ are perfectly matched.

So, 12.04 am was the time of my birth in the month of Aghan in 1923, and the same astrological conjunctions occur in my life today, after eighty-five years. The same astronomical situations are there which were there in 1923 when I was born. And why was this birthday declared by me? Well, I will tell you a story. When I was in Munger, some people began to say that I was born on 26 July 1923. They did not just think or say this; it was also printed in many books. 26 July! No, no, because I am not a Leo. I am not full of vanity or proud like a lion. Moreover, lions eat only one thing, but I can eat anything. I can eat idli, dosa, sambhar, chutney, puri-aloo, so how can I be a lion? No, I am not vain like a Leo; I am one-pointed like a Sagittarian. I think of only one thing, not two things.

I told Swami Niranjan that it is necessary to make the real date of my birth known, before the wrong date becomes a part of tradition and history, and maybe a part of the church also, who knows! Of course, Hindus do not say 'church', they call it *sampradaya*. So, in the course of time, the sampradaya may record that Swami Satyananda was born on 26 July, and all of you will be saying, "Swamiji was a Leo."

The explosion of birth

Now, the date of my birth has been corrected. The time and date of birth is very important, because we are human beings. God has created human beings with a purpose. We are not accidents. Human birth is not an accident. It has a purpose. What is the purpose of human life? What is the purpose of this human body? What is the purpose of human incarnation?

First of all, you must know that every human being, born in a particular time and space, is an object. You are born at a particular time, you are born in a particular space, and you are an object. Time, space and object are the three categories of nature, they are the three categories of mind, and they are the three categories of the entire science. Time and space are the two realities inherent in every substance, every object, every matter, including your body and mine. Without time and space, there would not be the creation of any object. For an object to exist, it requires a time-space continuum. Time and space are the two arms of nature present in all creation and they always travel opposite to and against each other.

Actually, there are two movements of time and space. They either move away from or towards each other. When they move towards each other, that is called yoga. When they move against each other, that is called bhoga. When time and space move towards each other and meet at a particular point, an explosion takes place. Your birth is the result of an explosion in time and space. Of course, you are born through the physical union of your mother and father, but is that the only process at work in the birth of a human being? Not at all. This body, which, apart from flesh, blood and bones, is composed of the *pancha tattwas* or five elements, operates on a highly refined energy system and houses the *atma* or soul, is created by multifaceted processes that are cosmic in nature.

The same explosion between time and space takes place in your mind too, when you are successful in *dhyana* or meditation, and the movement of time and space is reversed and made to converge at the nucleus. As a matter of fact,

the same explosion takes place in nuclear science as well. Scientists developed it when they realized that the atom is not indivisible and exploded it to discover atomic and nuclear energy. Those who are aware of nuclear science may know about the process of fusion, when time and space are brought together.

In fact, one of the biggest experiments of this kind is being done in Switzerland, where over twenty-five countries have sent their best scientists to develop an artificial condition where the movement of time and space can be reversed and they are made to travel towards each other at terrific speed. Science replicating Nature or rather, trying to replicate Nature, as their first attempt failed. The process created such intense heat that they had to abort the experiment to avoid a mishap, which could even mean annihilation of Earth!

Human birth is important. Why is it important? You cannot see God. You can only talk about Him. Go on talking. He is omnipresent, He is omniscient, He is omnipotent. But that will not give you the experience of God, because just by talking about him you cannot see Him. You cannot experience Him. It is not possible to conceptualize an eternal, infinite object by a finite mind. It is not possible by your finite mind to conceptualize an infinite and eternal thing. The body is finite and you are finite. You are mortal. You are limited by time and space. How can you conceptualize Him? How can you experience Him?

It is possible

It is definitely possible to experience the cosmic being in yourself. Therefore, God has created you, so that you may find Him within your heart, deep within yourself, beyond the body consciousness, beyond the mental consciousness, beyond the intellectual consciousness. Beyond all forms of consciousness of which you become conscious, there is a consciousness which is called Brahman, Paramatma, or the Absolute, which is hidden in you.



The totality of humanity can be experienced in this physical body, which is here, and that is precisely the purpose of human birth. *That is why I was born on this day, on a certain date and at a certain time.* Now it is up to you how you celebrate your birthday. To celebrate your birthday, you have to remember one thing: you are born as a human being not just for the purpose of living the life of a human being. You are born as a human being in order to realize the depth of consciousness, the height of consciousness, that magnanimity of your soul within yourself. You have something in you and you have to realize that. That is why the Vedas proclaim, *Tat Twam Asi* - "You are That", about which you have been talking, that God, that eternal God. You are that God.

The God of whom the Vedas talk, the God of the Bible, the God of the Koran, the God about whom people have been talking since eternity, that God, that reality, that cosmic reality - you are That. Only as a human being can you conceive of that consciousness. No other incarnation can conceive of that. Not that there is nothing in them. A dog also has the seed

of eternal truth in it. A donkey, a cobra, a monkey and even a rock has a spark of that divine truth we call God. The truth, eternity, God, is inherent in everything, but they cannot realize it. You can realize it. A dog cannot realize it, a donkey cannot realize it, a tree cannot realize it, the oceans cannot realize it, the mountains cannot realize it, the lakes cannot realize it. You can realize it because you have become aware.

It is not only Swami Satyananda who says that there is God in you. The Bible also says, "I and my father are one." In the Bible, they first speak of "Our Father who art in Heaven." That is similar to the theory of Vishishta Advaita or qualified monism of Vedanta. Then they say, "I and my Father are One." That is also a dictum of Vedanta, *Aham Brahmasmi*. So, it is not me who says it, but the people who have had that experience have reiterated it time and again in all the sacred texts. And what was the experience they had? "I am not this body, I am not this mind, I am not the senses, I am not this mortal object; Immortal Self am I." While I am talking of my birthday, I am also telling you to celebrate your birthday with this in mind. The purpose of your birth cannot be enjoyment or bhoga.

I will give you a small example. When you go from here to Kolkata, what is your aim or destination? It is to reach Kolkata. But on the way, you take tea, breakfast and sometimes you smoke as well. You may also sing in the train, talk to your co-passengers, make new friends, enjoy the scenery, but that is not the purpose for which you are on the train. No, your purpose for being on the train is to reach your destination. In the same way, your purpose for being in this world is to discover yourself, discover who you are. Of course, you can enjoy your journey of life, have children, have lots of money, a good house and all kinds of luxuries that science, society and company can provide you with. Enjoy them, I am not against that. But that is not the purpose for which you are born.

I am not against having good clothes, cosmetics, looking nice, having a boyfriend or a girlfriend. No, I am not going to tell you that you must not enjoy all that. Have it if you want to,

but that is not the purpose for which you have been ordained. That is not the purpose for which you have been given this precious human life. He has given you a body, a very precious human body, and it is a perfect design of God. Sometimes, God makes better designs like Ramakrishna Paramahansa and others!

God's desire

God has designed human beings out of His kindness. After creating humans, He must have thought, "How can I become known to this human being?" He must have said, "Yes I am, and I want to reveal Myself to you." Please listen to me very carefully. God is saying, "I want to reveal Myself to this chap. But this chap is not looking at Me. He is only looking at his wealth or girlfriend or comfort and enjoyment."

It is like there is a ghost, a spirit, in my room who wants me to talk to him, but my mind is on a different wavelength and that spirit is in a different incarnation. He can see me, he can see Swami Satyananda seated. And he says, "Swami Satyananda, wake up." But Swami Satyananda does not listen to him. He just cannot listen to him because he operates on a different wavelength. Similarly, God says, "I want to reveal Myself to these guys." He tries in many ways, but He does not get any reply because you are not tuned in to Him. To hear what he is saying, you require tuning.

He has been working this way patiently since eternity, until somebody like a Christ or Ramakrishna or Vasishtha or Vishwamitra, hear him. Christ exclaimed, "O Father who art in Heaven" when he realized God. Ramakrishna realized God in Ma Kali. He used to speak to the goddess and she used to reply to him. There are many others who have had this experience. They came to know that it is possible to realize God.

It is possible that one can listen to Him. When they started conversing with God, He must have given them the duty to tell others, to convince others as well. God said, "Look here, Ramakrishna, you please tell these guys so I can talk to them."



That is why he sent Christ as a messenger. He said, “Christ, Ishu, you please go and tell all these *bandhus*, brethren.”

Christ was a messenger of God, but the poor man was crucified like an ordinary criminal. He was born in Israel. Had he been born here, he would not have met that fate, because in India we don't crucify saints. We will wash their feet, we will put sandalwood paste on them, and if necessary, we will give them a lot of dollars and Euros for their mission. The sannyasins, the saints are sponsored and patronized here. Am I wrong? We are sponsored, we are patronized, we are worshipped. They won't crucify me, mind you. Even if I say, “Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Shaktism is all nonsense,” they won't crucify me. No, they will still worship me.

God sent Christ as a messenger. In India, we call him a messiah. When God spoke to Christ, Ishu, he must have told him, “Now that we are able to talk, I will tell you the way to experience Me and you should act as My messenger on earth.” God has spoken to many people. They say he spoke to Mohammed Hazarat. Devi spoke to Ramakrishna. You know the story of Ramakrishna Paramahansa? Devi, Kali Mata spoke to him. The point is this, God is so kind that He wants to reveal Himself to you, but you have to tune yourself. God wants to

talk to you. God is very keen to reveal Himself to you because He is also very lonely, He is all alone. He wants to have a talk with you. In the Upanishad it is written, *Ekoham* – “I am One”; *Bahusyam* – “Let me be many.”

Purpose of birth

If that is a truth, then my birthday is very important. It reminds me today that, eighty-five years ago, God created me, so that I may talk to Him, so that He may reveal Himself to me. I was born. My mother kissed me, gave me milk, loved me so much that if I said, “Mummy, I want to talk to God, I want to talk to God,” she would be very afraid. She would say, “My God, after so many years of marriage I’ve got a son, and he too is running after God. I will lose him.”

I came to earth for Him and if I run after Him, I am only going back to Him who sent me here in the first place. God is our ultimate home. God is our ultimate abode from where we came and where we go, and my mother is so afraid and terrified that her little boy will leave her for God. She should be happy that I am so wise, but instead she is ridden with fear, because children are toys for their mothers. They ignore the reality or the purpose of birth. They just get caught in *moha*, delusion, and *asakti*, attachment. They tremble with fear when they think that their child will not marry, but will go away, shave his head and become a sannyasin. So, they do a big cover-up, they keep him in delusion as long as they can. That is what they did to Buddha.

You know the story of Buddha? If not, please read it. Buddha was born under such celestial conjunctions that the astrologers had predicted his rise to enlightenment. Therefore, his parents kept him in utmost luxury and comfort, away from the realities of life such as death and disease. They made beautiful palaces for him where he lived in the intoxication of material life, wine, women, song and dance twenty-four hours. He was married to a beautiful princess, Yashodhara. But ultimately, Buddha walked out and went in search of God.

No one could stop him, even the newly-born son that had just arrived. He went away. You know the whole story.

That is what most of us are doing. The purpose of human life is not to run after luxury, fleeting beauty and fleeting objects. They will be granted to you, they will come to you, yes, you will have them. But the ultimate destination is not the peanuts, tea, cigarette, gossip or newspaper that you indulge in on the train. No, that is not your destination. That is just passing time. The ultimate purpose is reaching the destination you set out for, which was Kolkata.

The ultimate purpose of life is realizing your own self. You are not the body. Swami Sivananda said, "You are not the mind, you are not the indriyas, you are not the pancha tattwas, you are not the three prakritis, you are beyond all that, you have to transcend the duality." How can one transcend this duality that is experienced day in and day out?

Step by step

First of all, have a guru, then have a mantra. Now go on practising it. A B C D, A B C D . . . First, the alphabet, then words, then sentences, paragraphs, essays, the whole subject. How do you learn a language, how do you learn mathematics, how do you learn things? You have to develop in spiritual life in the same way – step by step, starting with the mantra of a guru, which is the kindergarten of spiritual life. And don't be in a hurry.

It may take a year or two, or five or twenty, or thirty or forty or fifty. It is possible that you may not even get it in this lifetime, but the next time you can start again, because God has given infinite lives. Just as your education system has given infinite classes. Take this level, then that level, and then graduation, post-graduation, research. In the same way, God has also given you many lives. Do not doubt that.

I tell you not from my knowledge, but from my experience. There is life beyond this life; this is not the only life. This is not the first time I am born, and this will not be the last. I will

be born again and you will be born again. That is the truth. Karma is real. Life is real. There is a continuity of time, there is a continuity of space, there is a continuity in object. Why should there not be a continuity of life?

– 25 December 2008, Rikhiapeeth, India

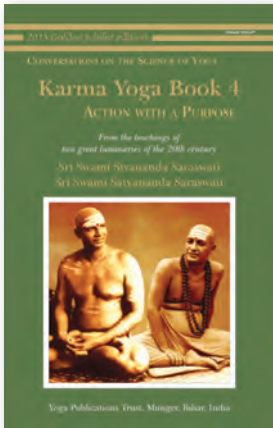


Sometimes God, out of mercy,
And without any reason for his affection,
Bestows a human body on someone.
The body of a man is like a ship,
Crossing the ocean of the world,
And the grace of God becomes a favourable wind.

Ramacharitamanas, Uttarakand, doha 43

Sri Krishna's Teaching

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



What is the basic difference between karma and karma yoga?

Swami Satyananda: When one acts with the feeling that one is the doer, it is called *karma*. When action is done with the involvement of ego, and one becomes attached to the results of the action, this karma creates further karma and that karma creates more karma. In this way one creates a big chain of karma, and this chain never comes to an end. Just as one sows a seed

and a plant grows, again one gets seeds and again one sows them. More plants grow and they give seeds. One sows them and again more plants grow. That is how continuity of karma takes place through desires, and there is no end to it. When the personal ego is involved with the performance of duties, karma or samskara are acquired, which are again responsible for birth and rebirth. Therefore, some new approach is required in between the karma and the accruing result.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna. In the midst of the battlefield, Sri Krishna instructed Arjuna about performing his duties without ego. If the ego is isolated from the duties and obligations, one becomes free from every type of attachment. When actions are performed without attachment, they become karma yoga, which, in the course of time, frees the soul from past karmas. The karmas are automatically resolved by the practice of karma yoga, but most people practise just karma and play with their desires, ambitions and passions. It doesn't matter which job one does

or which family one belongs to, but if one is playing with the mind and the *samskaras* or impressions, one is not terminating them but just adding more and more. Through karma yoga, however, one expresses the *samskaras* and exhausts them.

While practising karma one acquires *samskaras*, but while practising karma yoga one eliminates *samskaras*. Karma is action performed through the mind and body, and everyone performs it. However, karma yoga is more than this. Some people do karma to produce; others to enjoy. But for a karma yogi, the object of performing karma is self-purification. By involvement in karma, one gives expression to the inner *vruttis*, modifications of the mind, or *samskaras*, and expels them.

It is the noble attitude of the aspirant that transforms an ordinary karma into karma yoga. In karma yoga hard work is performed, but the purpose of karma yoga is purification of the self and renunciation of attachment or involvement. When one renounces personal attachment and purifies the mind, karma yoga is considered to have become successful.

If the aim of karma yoga is freedom, why is this pursued through involvement in the world?

Swami Satyananda: The path of karma yoga accepts the material world and the need to function in it. However, it aims at using the objects, thoughts and actions that bind an individual in a constructive manner in order to eventually break the bondage and attain freedom and knowledge. This is achieved progressively by acting in everyday life with full awareness to the best of one's ability. The aim is to become perfectly free in the fullest sense of the word, to become liberated and in tune with the consciousness. One becomes free by knowing, confronting, using and eventually transcending the limitations of the world. This is the purpose of karma yoga.

A butterfly does not become free and able to fly immediately. First of all, it must pass through the trauma and bondage of being a caterpillar and living in a cocoon. Eventually, the cocoon is discarded and the butterfly emerges to the bliss of



freedom. Similarly, each person must fully experience and understand the world before being able to transcend it and experience spiritual bliss and freedom. The world of karma, actions, thoughts, situations and circumstances is a testing ground where one can find out about oneself. It is a workshop, where the mind-body instrument can be sharpened and made receptive to the influx of higher knowledge and awareness. Through the world of everyday experiences the mind and awareness can be sharpened to cut through the veil of ignorance. The world is a means of tuning the mind-body complex.



Message to the Sadhaka

In fact, the power is in you.
What you need is confidence,
And a little practice.

Even now, you have that power,
Though it lies unseen.
Realize that power

Through direct intuition.
Within you is the wisdom.
Dive deep, go in,
And you will realize the pearl.

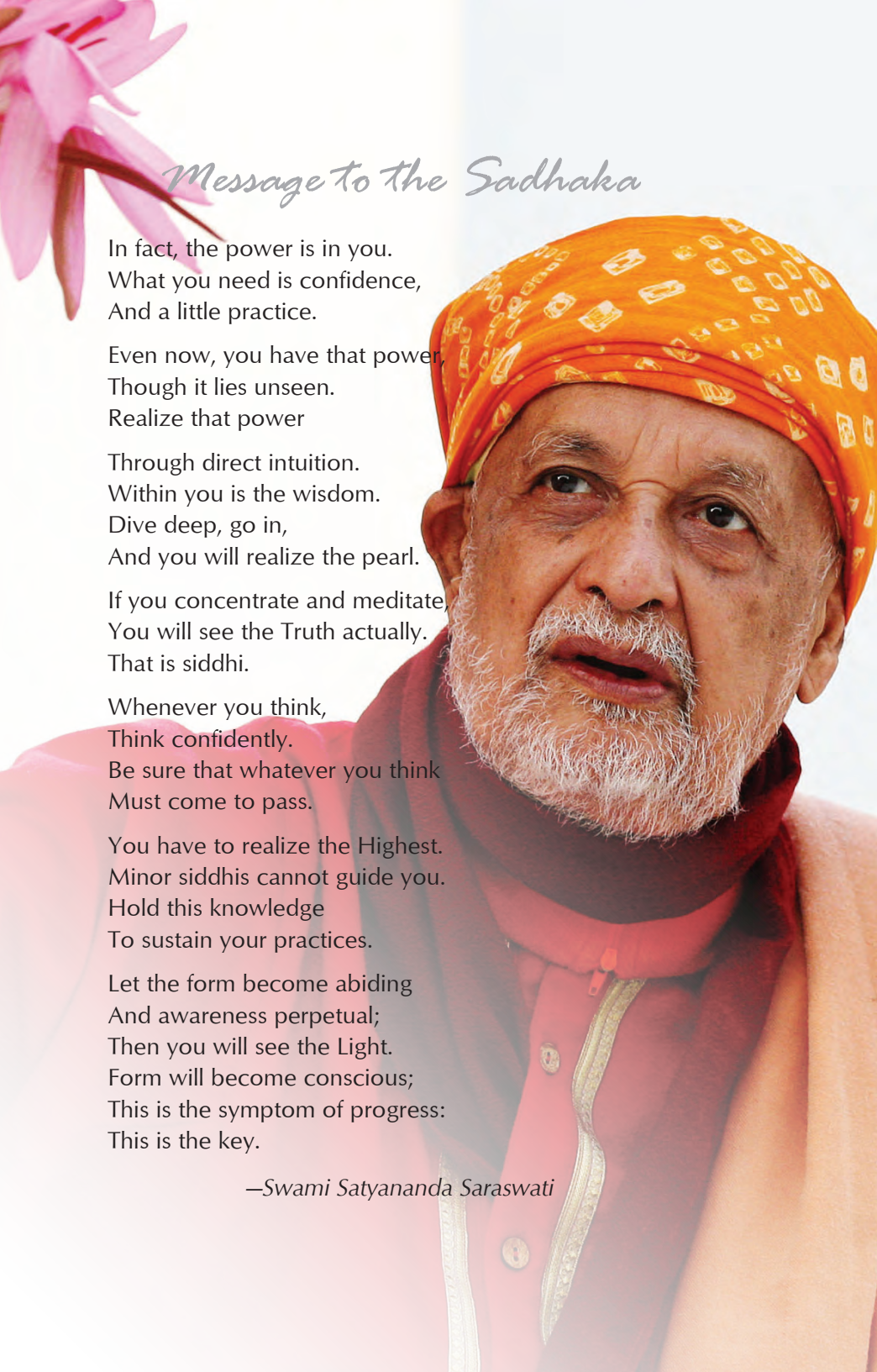
If you concentrate and meditate,
You will see the Truth actually.
That is siddhi.

Whenever you think,
Think confidently.
Be sure that whatever you think
Must come to pass.

You have to realize the Highest.
Minor siddhis cannot guide you.
Hold this knowledge
To sustain your practices.

Let the form become abiding
And awareness perpetual;
Then you will see the Light.
Form will become conscious;
This is the symptom of progress:
This is the key.

—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 prasad 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:

<http://www.biharyoga.net/bihar-school-of-yoga/yoga-magazines/>

To access YOGAVIDYA online:

<http://www.biharyoga.net/bihar-school-of-yoga/yogavidya/>

For IOS users both the YOGA and YOGAVIDYA magazines available as downloadable app:<https://itunes.apple.com/us/developer/bihar-school-of-yoga/id1134424786>

For Android users the YOGA magazines are available as downloadable app:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.biharyoga.yogapeeth.app.emag.android.yoga>

For Android users the YOGAVIDYA magazines are available as downloadable app:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.biharyoga.yogapeeth.app.emag.android.yogavidya>

To access the online encyclopaedia of YOGA and search the archive:

<http://www.yogamag.net/archives.shtml>



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Yoga Peeth Events & Yoga Vidya Training 2019

<i>Feb 6-8</i>	Sri Yantra Aradhana
<i>Feb 4-May 26</i>	Yogic Studies, 4 months (Hindi)
<i>Feb 9</i>	Basant Panchami Celebrations/Bihar School of Yoga Foundation Day
<i>Feb 14</i>	Bal Yoga Diwas, Children's Yoga Day
<i>Feb 18-24</i>	Yoga Capsule - Respiratory (Hindi)
<i>Feb 18-24</i>	Yoga Capsule - Arthritis & Rheumatism (Hindi)
<i>Mar 1-30</i>	Yoga Training, 1 month; (Hindi, for nationals)
<i>Mar 9-17</i>	Total Health Capsule (Hindi)
<i>Mar 11-17</i>	Yoga Capsule - Digestive (Hindi)
<i>April 2-6</i>	Yoga Lifestyle Capsule (Hindi/English)
<i>April 22-28</i>	Hatha Yoga Yatra 1, 2
<i>May 13-19</i>	Hatha Yoga Yatra 3, 4
<i>Jun 2-6</i>	Yoga Lifestyle Capsule (Hindi/English)
<i>Aug 16-22</i>	Raja Yoga Yatra 1, 2
<i>Aug 23-29</i>	Raja Yoga Yatra 3, 4
<i>Oct 1-30</i>	Progressive Yoga Vidya Training 1, 2 (English)
<i>Oct 1-Jan 25</i>	Yogic Studies, 4 months (English)
<i>Nov 4-10</i>	Kriya Yoga Yatra 1, 2
<i>Nov 11-17</i>	Kriya Yoga Yatra 3
<i>Dec 18-22</i>	Yoga Chakra Series
<i>Dec 25</i>	Swami Satyananda's Birthday
<i>Every Saturday</i>	Mahamrityunjaya Havan
<i>Every Ekadashi</i>	Bhagavad Gita Path
<i>Every Poornima</i>	Sundarkand Path
<i>Every 4th, 5th & 6th</i>	Guru Bhakti Yoga
<i>Every 12th</i>	Akhanda Path of Ramacharitamanas

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