

# YOGA

Year 8 Issue 4

April 2019

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## Hari Om

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## GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

### Mix a little, move a little

You should be ever vigilant and avoid negative company ruthlessly. Negative company is the main obstacle to devotion and destroys all virtues such as purity, truthfulness and compassion. Friends waste your time in idle talk for they have no idea of the value of time. Run, run, run quickly to solitary places like Rishikesh. You will be safe on the spiritual path.

The world needs good, healthy, strong boys and girls. There are different exercises to suit different people. An ideal system is that which requires the smallest amount of energy to be spent in order to secure the greatest amount of benefit. Yogasana is the perfect system of physical culture. It is simple, exact, efficacious, economical time-wise and suitable for self-practice in the home. It is the king of all exercise systems.

—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 ॥

# I, the Devil or God?

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Whenever you are critical or negative, remember it is the devil or the evil inside you which is raising the head. Whenever you are in a happy and joyous and light mood, supportive and cooperative, happy and content, then that is God's influence in your life. People who are always seething about something: Why should I, why this, why that? Then it is the devil who is speaking through them, not God. The language of God is different. The devil is in you and God is in you, and it depends on you with whom you connect during the day. The power of negativity is stronger. People become negative; sannyasins, householders and students become negative. To find positivity in that negative condition is next to impossible.

It is difficult to be good. It is easy to be bad. It is difficult to be cooperative, it is easy to put obstacles in another person's way; it is difficult to accept another person, it is easy to criticize another person. So where is the devil? In the mind of people who are negative. And where is God? In the hearts of people who are always happy and positive.

It is a great challenge for everybody to recognize: Who is speaking through me, the devil or God? If you are screaming at somebody, remember that it is the devil and you have become the agent of the devil. When you sympathize and support somebody, remember that God is manifesting through you.

It is as simple as that, but the most difficult thing to follow. It is through self-effort that the *banjar bhoomi*, the barren land, can be made into a beautiful garden. You are the person who can do it, not God.

– 25 September 2016, Ganga Darshan, Munger

# What is Yoga?

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

I tell everybody that a certain state in yoga involves hypnotism and it must because it gives relaxation. When you are trying to withdraw your consciousness, when you are trying to negate your consciousness at that moment there is a certain amount of hypnotism involved and there is no harm in it. But when your consciousness is being withdrawn from outside to inside and when it is just slipping, it is at that moment that you will have to carve some symbol for your consciousness, so that when you go into the subconscious, your awareness does not die, dim and set. Yoga is not hypnotism, yoga is a process of awareness and knowledge. This is how we define yoga.



## Defining yoga

First definition is that yoga is an art, through which you have complete mastery over all the patterns of awareness; second, it is an art by which you become a spectator of all the experiences of awareness; the third is that it is a process of dehypnotism of all the processes of consciousness. Now coming to the literal meaning of yoga, the word in Sanskrit means 'to join, to act, to meet, to yoke'. When two things separate in Sanskrit, it is called *viyoga*, de-communion, or separation. And when two objects of the same likeness meet with each other, it is called union, communion and it is yoga.

Now the problem is who meets who and who unites with whom. What we exactly see when we practise yoga is not a practice of union, but it seems almost a process of disunion, because when we practise meditation we are separating ourselves from the external consciousness. It is not union, but

separation from the outer consciousness: we fail to see, we fail to hear, we fail to think, we fail to move and to understand. So it is union or is it disunion?

It is said in different books, not only in the *Yoga Sutras*, but also in the *Bhagavad Gita* and in the great book on yoga *Yoga Vasishtha* by Rishi Vasishtha, that when the individual awareness becomes free from the sense experience, from the objective world, it finally becomes one with the cosmic awareness in man. According to Vedanta philosophy, this awareness through which I see and understand, you see me and understand, and this awareness through which we see all that is around us, this awareness through which we experience everything of the past and present, is a small fractional part of the cosmic power, or the cosmic consciousness.

## **Vedanta**

In Vedanta they have used two words which you will kindly understand, the *jiva*, the individual awareness, and the *atma*, the cosmic awareness. These two words have been used in Vedanta to indicate this awareness and that awareness. The awareness when it functions through the mind, the intellect, the senses and the medium of the body is known as individual awareness. When you withdraw this consciousness by the process of negation from the mind, from the body, from its associates, and when it is completely free from the association of prakriti, from the associations of the lower mediums and functions without any mediumship, it is called cosmic consciousness.

When consciousness functions through the senses, it is called sense consciousness, when consciousness functions through the body, it is known as body consciousness, when that consciousness functions through the intellect, it is known as intellectual consciousness. When the consciousness functions in a diminished condition, it is called subconscious, when the consciousness functions without any name, without any form, without any knowledge, it is known as unconsciousness.



However, when the consciousness functions without any mediumship of the body, mind, intellect, subconscious or unconsciousness, and when this consciousness functions in its natural way, in its original form, without any filter in between, then it is known as cosmic awareness, divine awareness, or transcendental awareness.

Knowledge is a pattern of consciousness, wrong knowledge is also a pattern of consciousness, and absence of knowledge is also a pattern of consciousness. Right knowledge, wrong knowledge, past knowledge, or absence of knowledge are the lower forms of consciousness and these forms we experience every day, and they are called individual consciousness. You are listening to my speech and your awareness is functioning through the auditory medium, I am looking at you and you are looking at me. My consciousness is functioning through the ocular medium. I am thinking about the subject, my consciousness is functioning through the individual thinking medium. In this way the pure awareness, the formless awareness, the nameless awareness has a name. You know what we call it? We call it ocular awareness, auditory awareness, mental awareness.

Who experiences pain, who experiences pleasure, who understands things, who makes mistakes? The individual awareness, but through the mediums. This consciousness in man is like formless light, in front of which is running a film of perception, feeling, moving, understanding, false knowledge, and we see everything that is taking place in front of us. This life is an experience of expressions, it is an expression of consciousness through the mediums, through the filters. You remove the filters and there is no experience. There is only one experience about which I will tell you later. This consciousness does not die, even if you cannot see, this consciousness does not die, even if you cannot hear. This consciousness does not die, does not cease to exist, even if you cease to exist. Under all conditions, with medium or without, with filter or without, even if you don't exist your consciousness will exist and your consciousness is existing in spite of the fact that you are not.

### **Defining once more**

Yogis knew this fact, they knew the possibility of existence of consciousness, in spite of our non-existence. They saw perhaps, or they discovered in every man, that there was something that could exist without any mediumship, and they started thinking about creating that state at will and voluntarily. Thus the definition of yoga: yoga is a process by which we can make our consciousness free from its limitations, free from its mediumship of knowledge, and yoga is a process by which consciousness can function with all knowledge, without any mediumship, with all experiences, without any limitations. This is the fourth and I think the highest definition of yoga. Therefore, it has been said in the yogic texts that the superconsciousness which is not subjected to time, not subjected to an object, is infinite and it is everywhere.

Yoga is an art or yoga is a method of wrestling with your own mind; it is a process by which you make your mind free from the limitations; and finally with the help of the freedom, with the help of the state of liberation, you can be known



as someone having more peace, more understanding, more concentration and more of infinite joy.

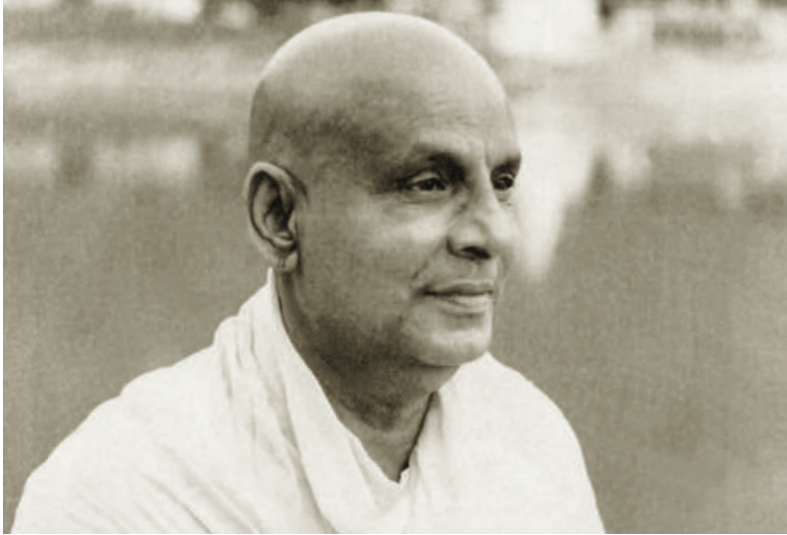
For a man in the world who is being struck by emotions, by frustrations, disappointments and all sorts of mental errors, for him yoga should be a method of balance of mind. For a man who is active in a competitive activity, in a business, or in politics, who has to pass sleepless nights and anxious evenings and mornings, but who must sleep and breathe peace, for him yoga should be a way of relaxation. And for the man who is trying his potential, for him who is trying for self-mastery, self-control, self-discipline - the highest aim should be this. And for one whose devotion is high, yoga should make him more successful in his prayers.

*– World Tour 1968, Germany*



# Your Greatest Friend

*From the teachings of Swami Sivananda Saraswati*



About 150 miles above the sannyasins' colony of Rishikesh, in the Himalayan interior, there is an outpost, Chaumali by name. Here people have built a sort of dam or barrier across the flow of the Ganga. One fine day something happened there, and the flow of the water was likely to get out of hand and burst out in an excessive flow. At once, wires began to hum. A telegram was sent to all the lower regions, warning them of a likely flood of the Ganga, and asking everyone to shift to higher up the Ganga bank.

The Ganga water is the very life and soul for the people living by the side of the Ganga bank. So what is this strange phenomenon that people are now fleeing away from its life-giving waters? So long as its flow was within limits, so long as its volume was restrained to a safe margin, it was most beneficial and very desirable. When the self-same natural and legitimate function of the dam (of supplying waters) was

exceeded, these same waters became dangerous and terrible. Thus excess rendered a blessing into a menace. Now, consider a similar state of things in human life.

### **Sleeping and eating**

The average person is a slave of the senses. For instance, sleeping is normal for all creatures. Animal and human, sinner and saint alike, all do it, but there is a limit within which it is a desirable and beneficial necessity. Too much sleeping makes you lazy, lethargic, dull and ultimately useless to both society and yourself. For the sadhaka, it is one of the most dangerous habits. Habitual oversleeping increases *tamas* and nullifies *sadhana*, retarding your progress.

Eating is recognized as an indispensable necessity so long as the physical sheath lasts. From the lowest vermin to the highest realized saint all take food. But overdo it, then directly and indirectly it becomes wrong, improper, unethical and positively criminal. It is a wrong and harmful practice from a health and medical point of view. It is improper from the point of social etiquette, which regards gluttony with disapproval. It is unethical, for by overfeeding one becomes gross and sensual; and it is criminal from the economic point of view, for the wanton overfeeding of a section of people transgresses all canons of distribution and deprives the starving masses of their sorely needed food.

Now, it is precisely here that we perceive the vital role of restraint in giving the proper balance, proportion and direction to such functions. It is the presence or absence of self-control and restraint that makes the act of eating praiseworthy in one and blameworthy in another. Restraint provides the guarantee and insurance against overindulgence.

### **Conquer the senses**

When the quality and nature of the things taken in through the senses is *sattwic* and does not excite, then this establishes a rhythm in the system. This state of harmony is of immense

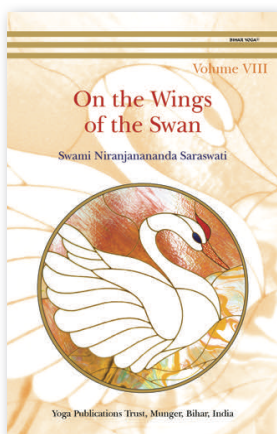


help in maintaining restraint, for restraint is dependent upon an inner strength; and the greater the sattwa, the greater the development of this inner force. Likewise, habitual adherence to the principle of moderation keeps the body and mind light and free of toxins. In such a state of health and purity all faculties are keen and alert, facilitating the exercise of *viveka* and *vichara*, discrimination and enquiry, upon which wise selection and restraint depend.

Thus restraint is the greatest friend. Restraint plays the important part of keeping the processes of consumption and indulgence within bounds. Make full use of this factor and you will reap a harvest of health, wellbeing, progress and spiritual attainment. Restraint makes life worth living. Be restrained and become a *Jitendriya Yogishwara*, Lord of Yoga, by victory over the senses. Restraint makes you really the emperor of the three worlds. Restraint leads to realization of the Self.

# The Aim of Yoga and Life

*From On the Wings of the Swan, Volume VIII, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



Different people have different aims in life. Some have said that God-realization is their aim, some have said self-realization, some samadhi and some freedom. In this way, each person, each philosopher, each master, each yogi has given an indication as to the purpose of life. These purposes have changed from time to time, as you have to remember that no answer is an eternal answer. Questions are created due to changing circumstances, and solutions have to be given according to the circumstances.

In the past, when people said self-realization was the goal of life, it was true, and circumstances were able to lead one to experiencing realization. However, self-realization is not an appropriate aim for the present situation, circumstances, or even inclination of people today. Our association, our relationship with the environment, with nature and the world has to be defined first before we find out how to experience the higher realities of life.

After all, we cannot ignore the world in which we are living, just as you cannot ignore the house in which you live. You prepare your own house so that it is pleasant and comfortable for yourself. In the same manner, you can consider the whole world to be a club of which we are all life members. So while we are associated with this club, what is expected of us and what do we expect from ourselves? Let's start with that.

## **First get a grip on yourself**

What is expected from us is that we should excel in whatever we do – professionally, socially, physically and psychologically. People should have a grip on situations, circumstances and events, and when people have a grip on life, their direction is clear and they can move forward without any questions or confusion. On the other hand, when the grip on situations and circumstances is not there, distress sets in, and distress becomes the cause of confusion and disharmony in life.

Globally, what does every society, every nation, every civilization aspire to? To prosper socially, to experience peace personally, to utilize wisdom for the homogeneous and integrated development of life as a whole. Everything that is done is geared towards achieving or experiencing this excellence. Why do people work? For prosperity. What is everyone looking for in life? Balance and peace. What can be done to enhance the quality of life? Cultivate wisdom. This is the need of today, not samadhi. If you wanted self-realization you should have taken birth about five hundred years ago; since you have taken birth now it is the search for excellence in life that has to become the aim. The journey in yoga and in life begins with this purpose.





### **Then tune in to spiritual life**

Spirituality is an integral part of human experience; that cannot be denied. External success indicates one's achievement, mastery and command over a situation, an event, people or circumstances. In the same manner, one's spiritual drive indicates the development and the awakening of the inner personality. The inner personality and outer intellectual personality then merge to become one awakened personality. That is the aim of yoga: the merger or conversion of the gross material mind into a positive spiritual mind.

Even Sage Patanjali, in his statement on yoga, says that yoga is control over the dissipated nature of mind, *chitta vritti nirodhah*. Therefore, one must manage the dissipations, one must work to reorganize and restructure one's life from an external routine to an internal discipline through restraint, control and governance. It is fine-tuning the human nature and personality that, according to Sage Patanjali and other yoga exponents, becomes the path one has to walk in order to perfect yoga. This is the aim of yoga in the modern context; maintaining spiritual qualities in life is the practical aim of yoga.

– 18 August 2008

# Life from the True Angle

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*

To serve the less fortunate man is the greatest form of worship of God, to repeat his name and constantly remember Him is the surest and quickest way to achieve success and attain eternal peace, to regulate life according to the shruti injunctions is the greatest cure of the malady, to meditate daily for two hours is the only way to soothe the nervous mind.

To waste time in extracurricular activities is the greatest of all earthly sins, to wreak the faith of God is an untold mishap, to idly waste time is the worst form of liability.

Life is the mysterious phenomena – hence only needs to maintain measure of a great precaution to deal with it. The mysteries of life unfold to one who regards it as the greatest of gifts from God. Life no longer remains a ‘magical box’ if one takes to the sadhana sincerely. To those who have had implicit faith in God, life became a happy celebration of festivities.

Neither the temples, nor the mechanical repetition of stotras, nor even the supernatural forms could help your country so long. Where was Somnath temple’s so-called miraculous deity when Mohammad Gaznavi plundered and broke it eighteen times? Where was the supposed divinity of Kashi Vishwanath when it was the centre of aggressive wars? Where were the siddhas and yogis (of your description) when the conflagration of war was bringing down the heart of India to ashes? It was the priests, the credulous masses, the super materialistically defied persons – the forerunners of destiny of yours and mine – who did more harm to us than was done by Nadir Shah and Taimur Lang jointly.

And if you wish to rise, stand and walk, take it from this sadhu, that not but your own material efforts would work out your long and cherished plan. No god and goddess, no priest and ascetic can help the material prosperity of a nation. Because



of our dilapidated spiritual attitude, we have been suffering so long while the rest of the nations have gone much ahead in material advancement.

The 'living saints' of every time and history and nation have served the cause efficiently. Buddha was the man who revived the conditions of our country of his time. Shankar was the person who changed the integral structure of India. Tulsi was marvellously successful in bringing about a thorough revolution in the aspirations and expressions of our countrymen. He undoubtedly eliminated the face of ghosts, devils and evil forces from the masses. It was he who discouraged the malpractice of siddhis. It was Ramakrishna who prepared India to fight for her real cause. Today it becomes our duty to pay our due unto them – the champions of human cause.

Simplicity is the scientific way of life. Good speech is the most precious of all ornaments. Service is the salt of life. Japa is the soap. Asanas purify the body. Name purifies the mind, dhyana strengthens willpower. Work strengthens the future. Study makes one perfect.

Life without devotion has no meaning at all. Peace comes not in the absence of 'God Faith'. Verily peace is granted to those who have a refined culture – keen sense of duty, faith in good and God. Peace be to them who are pure at heart, intensively courageous in action, serviceable to the low and fallen, meditative before they take up any work.

### **God helps those who help others**

Most of our aspirations are woven around our little family, business and whims. We do not come to take notice of theirs, especially those who need be noticed, rather who are lying unnoticed. When you take care of others, God and nature will take care of your welfare. This law is historically tested and found correct. God helps those who help others too (not only to themselves). If you were ablaze with a fiery determination of helping others too, then, take this from me, you are going to be endowed with capacities.



It does not, however, mean that you should stage a drama of your ideals. What Satyam has in his mind to say is that one should at least have a great ambition and a burning aspiration to help others. It is not necessary that you should consider material and non-material help alone as one form of service. Sweet speech, sympathetic utterances too, are one of the aspects of service.

Help old widows, the blind and leprosy stricken fellowmen, this is a service. Love untouchables. Do not ill-treat sweepers. This too is a service.

Do not misbehave with beggars. Beggars are your unfortunate brothers. I cannot help reiterating to analyze the plight of a beggar whom you are facing.

But mind you, it is not compulsory to necessarily give him a coin, you may please do this, but do not rebuke him and thus break his innocent and already broken heart. Well, a margin also may be maintained for such purpose.

The religious feelings, therefore, are that 10 percent of the income should never be utilized for the family, 20 percent must be reserved for the emergency need, such as sick aid, marriage and other accidental commitments, 10 percent at least should go for education of poor children, 10 percent is the margin, and 50 percent for the household needs and other

regular allowances. This distribution is according to religious sanctions. In practice, of course, it may need a proper sense of adjustments.

### **A course in history**

What exactly a businessman needs is daring initiative and enterprise. But, you know, enterprise needs a great deal of self-confidence, a proper sense of self-reliance. Who are those well-qualified in self-confidence? Look at the Americans and Englishmen. What made them this?

By the end of the 17th century the revolution there had completely broken the backs and fronts of the priesthood, witchcraft and supernaturalized tendency of the masses. Astral utilities were declared as dangerous. Extra phenomenalism was confined to scientists only, masses had nothing to do with super-physical realities whether or not they are real.

When I peep back into the pages of Russian History, I find the Russian condition of pre-Lenin era just the same as it is in India today. When the old history underwent a red revolution, the old religion could no longer stay and sustain the blows. And the results? Russia has outbeaten most of the nations in powers and prowess, in duty and character, in art and religion. Well, there are no churches which feed and maintain the practice of a nation.

The conclusion, therefore, which I draw is that Indians must deal with the Maths, religion with the religion and nature with the nature. Let us not create a confusion and perform irrelevant ceremonies. When the malady is material, do cure it materially – when it is spiritual, do treat it spiritually, when the afflictions are supernatural, please bear in mind, no force whatsoever can avert them. This conclusion, which I assert, is in accordance with the text of our scriptures.

### **Now the religion**

Religion means a proper sense of duty, which helps an individual to regain his lost glory, to decipher the lost track.

Dharma, hence, means a stable platform, which retains our essential values of life, our character, aspirations and ambitions. Since it upholds or keeps us firmly established in a settled position, it is called *dharma*. Since it calls us to a 'Return', it is called 'Re-ligion'. Now then the religion must have an integrated space and scope in our daily life. Now then the Religious Code must excommunicate the parasites which are flourishing in the name of religion. Now then the religion should be disintegrated from the so-called social ceremonies and buffoonery, with an impartial judging – and under no chance should the religion be taken to be the totality of templeterianism, churchianty, mosqueshness. On the other hand, religion should form the fundamental basis of our attitude to varying motives, actions and emotions in our day-to-day life. Thus everyone of our motives, actions and emotions can be concerted and spiritualized in the fraction of a second without the least tinge of tamasha, spectacle, and clownish demonstrations.

### **Regulation is the song of life**

Get up at 4 am. Practise yogasanas, meditation, japa, swadhyaya, mantra writing and prayer, thus get ready for the day with a mind filled with tranquillity, a body with smartness, a soul with positive ideals, a day with a lot of hours. This is the best time when you can not only meditate, but commune with yourself also. This is the opportune moment when God ideas occur to the mind and elevate your entire life and career. Brahmamuhurta, from 4 to 6 am, will very ably, rightly, silently and efficiently inaugurate the day's functions. You know that 'Well begun is well done'.

In the beginning the task will appear somewhat difficult – rather inconvenient, but gradually everything will be all right. Similarly at night from 8 to 10 pm, one should try to review, analyze and criticize the accomplishments of the day. But bear in mind this practice should not be held seriously – simple recapitulations of various engagements and commitments alone

will do. Gradually this two-hour practice will do immense good to you. This will cast away your prejudices, develop memory and the power of judgement. This will also bestow upon you a special 'psychic personality' through which you can help yourself and help others too.



Too much brooding over and excessive planning weakens the mental strength. It is followed by inertia, however dynamic the person may appear, brooding is an extremely unhealthy condition of life. Therefore, one must efficiently eliminate inertia. To eliminate the habitual inertia one needs heavy preoccupations. But it is true that one can't have day-long heavy preoccupations. Hence the hour at our leisure should be spiritualized. The easiest way to spiritualize the idle hours is to repeat the Ishta mantra in the beginning so long as you have not developed a religious-cum-philosophic temperament. Of course, after a certain stage when you have held a proper sway over your mind you may pull on with religious thinking, *manana*. But at present mere repetition of the name will do to render the mind peaceful, calm, sharp and strong. Don't you think, please, that name is merely a blind ideology. No and never. It is a tried technology in religion.

Kirtan is the most important and potent of all known methods of sadhana. Do kirtan at night along with your family members. It will not only produce a positive atmosphere in your home, but it will train up the psychology of your children too. Children fear and shrink before a strict and grim-faced father, while the religious-minded father creates in them a sense of regard and initiates in their lives a process of evolution.

Pray when you get up. Pray before you go to bed. Pray before you sit for eating. Pray when you have done the eating. Prayer spiritualizes, energizes and revives the art of living.

Aim high and work hard. Recreation is a baseless excuse for the sadhana. Indians do not need recreation. We have been recreating and sleeping for more than eight centuries. Now the time of need has come that we shall recreate our potentialities, revive our own culture and assert the sanctity of our soul.

Regulate yourself if you wish to regulate your family affairs. Regulation is the song of life. Regulation is the law of life. Regulation regulates self-committable irregularity. Regulation is real religion. It is a rare commodity nowadays but no amount of feverish efforts will bring desirable results in material and spiritual region as well as a well-regulated life will enable you to master the success in all spheres of life.

— Printed in YOGA Vol. 8, No. 8 (August 1970)



# Pranayama

*From The Science of Pranayama, Swami Sivananda Saraswati*

*Prana* may be defined as the finest vital force in everything which becomes visible on the physical plane as motion and action and on the mental plane as thought. The word *pranayama*, therefore, means the restraint of vital energies.

It is the control of vital energy which tingles through the nerves of persons. It moves his muscles and causes him to sense the external world and think his internal thought. This energy is of such a nature that it may be called the vis viva of the animal organism. The control of this force is what is aimed at by the yogis by means of pranayama. He who conquers this is not only the conqueror of his own existence on the physical and mental plane, but the conqueror of the whole world.

For prana is the very essence of cosmic life, that subtle principle which evolved the whole universe into its present form and which is pushing it towards its ultimate goal. To the yogi the whole universe is his body. The matter which composes his body is the same that evolved the universe. The force which pulsates through his nerves is not different from the force which vibrates through the universe.

## **Pranayama while walking**

Walk with head up, shoulders back and with chest expanded. Inhale slowly through both nostrils counting *Om* mentally 3 times, one count for each step. Then retain the breath till you count 12 *Om*. Then exhale slowly through both nostrils till you count 6 *Om*. Take the respiratory pause or rest after one pranayama counting 12 *Om*. If you find it difficult to count *Om* with each step, count *Om* without having any concern with the steps.

Kapalbhati can also be done during walking. Those who are very busy can practise the above pranayama during

their morning and evening walks. It is like killing two birds with one stone. You will find it very pleasant to practise pranayama while walking in an open place, when a delightful gentle breeze is blowing. You will be invigorated and innervated quickly to a considerable degree. Practise, feel and realize the marked, beneficial influence of this kind of pranayama. Those who walk briskly, repeating *Om* mentally or verbally do practise natural pranayama without any effort.



### **Pranayama in shavasana**

Lie down on the back, at ease, over a blanket. Keep the hands on the ground by the side and legs straight. The heels should be kept together, but the toes can remain a little apart. Relax all the muscles and the nerves. Those who are very weak can practise pranayama in this pose while lying on the ground or on a bed. Draw the breath slowly without making any noise, through both nostrils. Retain the breath as long as you can do it with comfort. Then exhale slowly through both nostrils. Repeat the process 12 times in the morning and 12 times in the evening. Chant *Om* mentally during the practice. If you like you can practise the 'easy comfortable posture' also. This is a combined exercise of asana, pranayama, meditation and rest. It gives rest not only to the body but also for the mind. It gives relief, comfort and ease. This is very suitable for aged people.



# The Life of Dharma

*From Satyam Jyoti, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



The world has always been blessed by super beings who have taken different forms and used their ability and skills, their strength and wisdom to help others around them. This is the concept of being powerful. The powerful person is someone who can help, guide, inspire everyone with compassion, kindness, wisdom, forgiveness, guided by the principles of correctness and farsightedness. Today the understanding is different. A powerful person is that person who is able to effectively manipulate others for personal gains. It was not so in the vedic times.

Super beings come to inspire and encourage humanity; to give people's lives a direction, to give their life a path, a goal and aim. The form of protection of dharma and the

form of human upliftment varies from age to age. There were times when muscle power was needed to establish dharma, the righteous living. There were times when the wicked had to be overpowered to establish the rule of dharma. There were times when new ideas were promoted to change the stagnation in life to establish the rule of dharma. There were times when methods, practices, systems, disciplines, lifestyles were prescribed by seers to live a life of dharma. Yoga vidya is a lifestyle practice established to help people live the life of dharma.

### **The path of dharma**

By reading yoga books people think of samadhi as the attainment of yoga. If you look at the people who have attained higher states; what have they done, how have they lived, how have they thought, you will discover that they lived the life based on the principles of dharma. In Kali Yuga, people live the principles of adharma, backbiting, criticizing, expressing the negative dark mood, the aggression, the jealousy, the hatred, the greed, and spreading that negativity all around. Everyone has the nature to demonize another person. Nobody can acknowledge and appreciate a good, positive, constructive quality that the other person expresses or lives in life. Demonization is easy, appreciation is difficult and that is the path of adharma which spiritual aspirants also walk.

I am not saying anything incorrect. Look at your own life, speech, thoughts and deeds. What kind of filth comes out of your mouth during the day and yet you believe yourself to be a spiritual aspirant following the life of dharma! You may practise meditation, asana and pranayama. You may live one of the yamas or niyamas but that does not mean that you live the life of dharma. Twenty minutes of asana practice does not indicate a change in your behaviour for the remaining twenty-three hours forty minutes. The practice of a few pranayamas in fifteen minutes does not indicate a qualitative change for the remaining twenty-three hours and forty-five minutes.









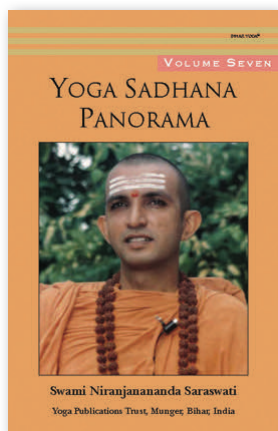
Daily yoga nidra for thirty minutes does not indicate attaining stress-free living for the remaining twenty-three hours and thirty minutes. Thirty minutes of meditation and mantra does not stop the dissipative vrittis from creating misunderstanding and restricting wisdom and positive expressions for the remaining twenty-three hours and thirty minutes. But, the filth one generates in the mind, spoken from the mouth and acted upon by the senses goes on for the full duration of time and becomes part of daily normal behaviour. Desiring compassion and kindness for one's self but not giving to anyone else, finding fault in others and being aggressive towards them, is that the path of dharma that you wish to walk?

In order to live the precepts and the principles of dharma, the aspirant has to make the effort, sustain, be serious, sincere, committed. How many people practise their mantra daily? You took the mantra, you were motivated for a few months, you practised the mantra sadhana. Then, one day, lethargy set in and gradually the periods of lethargy increased. Today many don't even remember what their mantra was. This is the commitment of aspirants to improve themselves and to follow the path. One has to remain true and connected to the inspiration and the motivation to live the spiritual life.



# Self-Discovery

From Yoga Sadhana Panorama, Volume Seven, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Self-discovery begins with self-observation, which changes into self-awareness, which changes into self-discovery, which later on changes into self-realization. Observation, awareness, discovery and realization – these are the stages described in yoga.

How do we go about observation? There is an innate potential of mind, which in Sanskrit is known as *chitta*, and this potential or this aspect of mind is continuously observing, witnessing, seeing and absorbing, retaining information that it receives through the senses. Now, if we are able to observe the impressions that have been received by the senses and by the mind in our life and analyze them, then awareness grows in the course of time.

I will give you one example. At night, when we go to sleep, let us not just think about the problems that we have faced, things that we need to do tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, or our aims and ambitions. Let us, for ten minutes only, observe the events of the day from morning, the time when we got up, until the time we actually went to bed. I have experimented with this system and it has helped me tremendously. Remember: 'I woke up at such-and-such time, my first movement was . . . , the first thing that I saw was . . . , the first thing that I heard was . . . ' Try to remember it. Then how you got out of your bed, and went about your daily routine.

When I practise, I see everything happening in the eyes of my mind like a movie, as if the entire proceedings of the



day has been recorded. I had my breakfast, this is what I ate, this was the taste, then I spoke to this person, I communicated with that person, I was dressed like this, I changed my clothes, I read the newspaper, I looked at some papers, I looked at some files, then I spoke to this or that person. Then I went to the office, and not only 'went to the office', but I got in the car and this was the route that I took and these were the things that I saw. I mean, every moment has to be re-lived.



After a week, you will see a great difference in your perceptions and insight. If you find that there are times when you come under stress or become stressed, and you react to situations or circumstances or people, even those reactions will be controlled eventually.

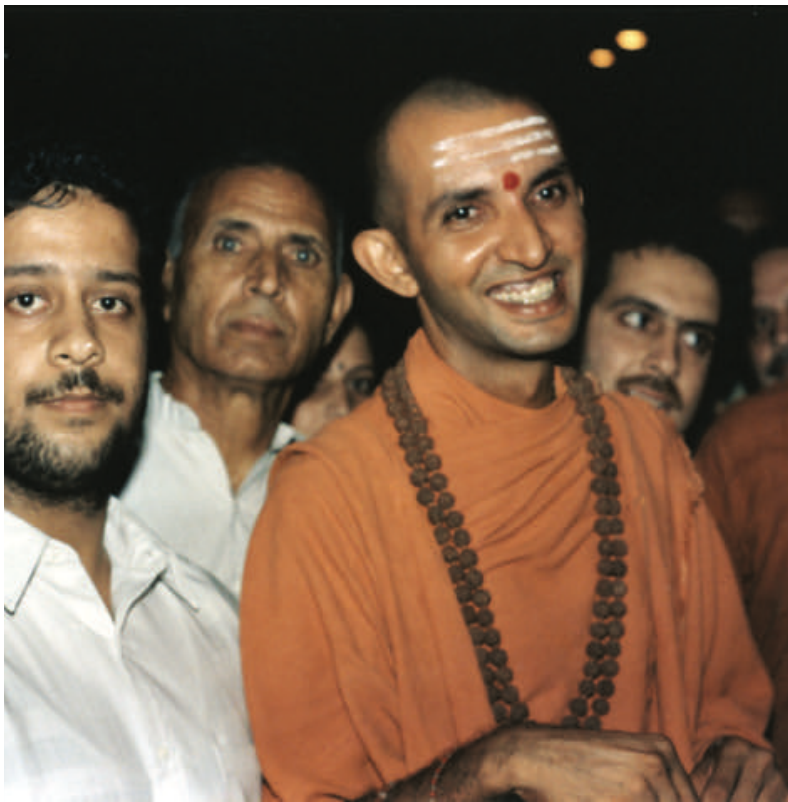
I am not talking of minute to minute self-observation of what is happening now – like I am moving my arms, I am looking at you, the lights are on, people are outside, there are different sounds everywhere. No. That would be too much dissipation of awareness, and maybe we could do it for a few minutes, but not for long. I am only asking that you practise for ten minutes, remembering, observing things that have happened to you from the time you woke up until the time you got into bed to sleep.

This will develop an unconscious awareness of your activities, your interactions, your behaviour, your thoughts, your expressions, and in the course of time, you will find yourself holding back and not reacting instinctively, negatively, to situations, people or events as you would have previously. Instead, an inner awareness, a warning goes on, 'Hey, you are

committing the same mistakes that you made in the past – hold it'. Use your better judgment, and you will find that your total life-pattern changes. It all begins to happen at an unconscious level, then later on it begins to manifest. This awareness will develop and develop and develop until it becomes a process of self-discovery: this is my nature, my prakriti, this is my action and the area of my activity, this is how I approach people, this is how I receive information, and so forth.

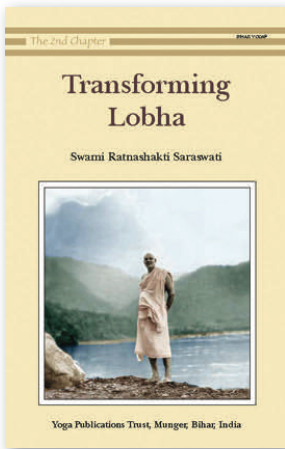
You will come to know the subtle aspects of yourself and as you come to know them, you will realize your own nature. You will improve those expressions of your nature, and improving the expressions of the nature is known as self-discovery.

– 1995, Delhi, India



# Identifying Lobha

From Transforming Lobha, Swami Ratnashakti Saraswati



Spiritual life is only possible when you share your material wealth with others, when you distribute your wealth equitably. You have to share your joy, your money, your happiness with everyone.

– Swami Satyananda Saraswati

The word *lobha* is translated in English as greed. In the yogic tradition *lobha* is differentiated from *kama*, or desire. *Kama* is the drive that motivates you to interact in the world for personal gain and is a necessary aspect of life. Without the driving force of *kama* there would be no creation. *Lobha* is something different; the inordinate desire for excess. Excess is never necessary and therefore *lobha*, unlike *kama*, is an unnecessary reaction to life. It is also harmful and detrimental. Why then are people greedy and always wanting more? Why is it so difficult to be satisfied and content with what we have?

There are two explanations for *lobha*. One is indulgence or *bhoga* and the other is *bhaya* or fear. *Lobha* is the pursuit of excess combined with the inability to discriminate between necessity and indulgence. This lack of discrimination is caused by fear that underlies and stimulates *lobha*. According to yoga, there are four instincts: *ahara*, craving for fulfilment and satisfaction; *nidra*, desire for relaxation, disconnection, sleep and comfort; *bhaya*, insecurity and fear; and *maithuna* or sensual passion. *Bhaya* is the catalyst or the ignition switch for *lobha*. *Lobha* is the *vritti*, or the frequency of mental energy

and pattern of thoughts arising in response to subterranean currents of fear that are generally unacknowledged. The desire for more alleviates fear and insecurity and this is the only positive contribution that lobha makes to the personality.



The tree brings forth fruit for others. Have you ever seen a mango tree eating her own fruit? Grains, vegetables, flowers and fruits grow in abundance for others to eat. Look around and you will see that everything lives, thrives and grows for others. It is only man who lives selfishly for himself.

– Swami Satyananda Saraswati

### **Psychological experience of lobha**

At a psychological level the inability to discriminate between need and desire is driven by a fundamental sense of deprivation. When this feeling of lack is particularly strong, a person can become utterly fixated on seeking what they 'need', always trying to get hold of the one thing that will finally eliminate the deep-rooted feeling of not having enough. The concept of something lacking in life can be sourced in early childhood experiences that have affected negatively upon the personality, or a lack of love or attention. Lobha becomes the mechanism to protect the self and hide the feelings of insecurity and weakness by projecting the ego as successful, competent, powerful and in control.

The problem is this mechanism does not work. Firstly, there is no evidence to suggest that earning more money and having more things actually makes you happier. Recent studies show that people are happier as they earn more money only up to a certain point. There is no doubt that the ability to satisfy the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, education, comfort and

stability contribute greatly to levels of happiness. But after that point, there is a clear case of diminishing returns in terms of happiness, and a new set of feelings, such as anxiety, stress, insecurity and loneliness caused by social isolation set in. This is called the 'Futility Limit.'

Secondly, the imbalance created by lobha exacerbates the underlying feeling of need and insecurity. Lobha can never bring about a feeling of satisfaction and fulfilment. Lobha exhausts the energy and positive qualities in a person through an endless effort to compensate for something, without ever attaining satisfaction. Objects which are pursued out of lobha are temporary and devoid of intrinsic value. In themselves, objects do not bring happiness, and they do not change the basic programming of the mind which keeps seeking something it does not have.

The focus of lobha can be anything: money, power, status, sex, food, attention, love, knowledge, something concrete or abstract, real or symbolic. At the emotional level the focus is in relation to other people, and expressed as a parasitic need for constant attention and support. Emotional manipulation, excessive demands, hypochondria, lies, threats, and histrionics to get attention, recognition and preferential treatment are all examples of lobha at the emotional level. In the short term emotional lobha may get results in terms of eliciting extra attention, but in the long term it is not likely to be sustained. When the support is withdrawn the result is crisis and a return to the perpetual cycle of lack and longing.

At the mental level, lobha expresses through self-oriented interaction in the world in order to feel secure and stable, or through ambitions and a competitive attitude in life. Everyone and everything is seen in comparison to oneself. 'Does that person have more than me? I should have more than they do.' Lobha is like a goad that keeps poking and pushing, and the individual is repeatedly propelled into action to fulfil the self-oriented desires. To obtain the external trappings of material success requires more and more wealth, and financial gain

becomes the obsession in life. Spending time with family and friends, emotional connection through experiences of love, kindness, and compassion are relegated to the background, and lobha takes over the lifestyle.

### **Environmental**

We need to recognize the impact that greed has upon the world we live in. Put simply, the environmental crisis has lobha at its source. Unsustainable resource consumption is nothing other than greed. Humans are the species that experiences and expresses lobha. A tree does not eat its own fruit. Seasonal abundance is shared with all freely and balance is maintained. Animals do not take more than they need. The human species is responsible for the unprecedented consumption and destruction of resources, because of our selfishness and inability to restrain greed.

Unrestrained lobha is poisoning the planet. For life to continue, lobha has to be restrained. Restraint of lobha has to happen in a way that will have a positive impact on the planet before it is too late. That means every individual has to make a decision about how to live life. Whether it is climate change, water scarcity, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, or any aspect of environmental degradation, ultimately the future will be determined by the attitudes we have towards nature and the choices we make. As long as greed is the paramount motivation, there will always be manipulation, exploitation and destruction.

The tendency to collect and amass property gives rise to wrong conduct; it leads to undesirable thought processes and unholy attitudes. However, the tendency to give brings about a complete change in our behaviour, our way of thinking, our way of expression. This is the statement of our sages and seers.

– *Swami Satyananda Saraswati*

The background of the page features a photograph of two monks in orange robes sitting on a balcony. They are looking out over a cityscape at sunset. The sky is a warm, golden color, and the city buildings are visible in the distance. The monks are in the foreground, slightly out of focus, with their backs to the camera. The balcony has a metal railing and is decorated with yellow garlands.

## *Balance and Peace*

There is one sentence of Sri Swami Satyananda which has always inspired me very much, 'There is no peace in the Himalayas, and there is no noise in the world'. Whatever is there is within you. If you are unable to find peace within yourself, you won't find peace in the Himalayas, and if you are able to find peace within yourself, you won't hear the noises in Chandi Chowk.

Sometimes it becomes trying for people who live in one environment to accept, adapt and adjust their mind, their desire and their lifestyle to a different form of living. At that time, through the process of meditation we should try to realize our nature. After seeing our involvement and role in society and after understanding our obligation to the maintenance of nature, we can find a point of balance. Of course, we have to go through the process of meditation and attain this realization in meditation.

We need to see the relationship that can exist between an individual, nature and human society. I feel it is a matter of re-educating our mind, our belief and our thoughts, in order to come to a point of understanding and realization and in the meantime, meditation can definitely help.

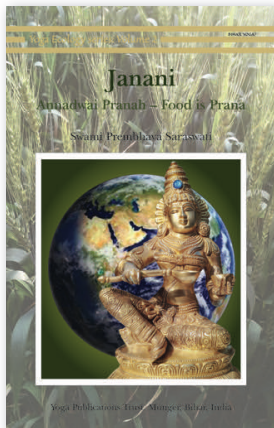
—Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

# The World Today

From Janani: Annadwai Pranah – Food is Prana, Swami Prembhava Saraswati

We see an ascending pattern everywhere in nature. A progressive, evolutionary movement from the mineral to the vegetable world, and an upward trend which is said to culminate in man. We thus consider ourselves to be the supreme peak, and fail to think of any further evolution. He busies himself with external objects and tries to capture nature for his own ends. This is very sad. He forgets that he still has a long way to climb, and that he is still unfinished material.

– Swami Satyananda Saraswati



In today's modern society people are driven and obsessed with food. There seems to be a new diet or a new superpower food on the market every few months. In a world where every kind of food is available all year round, even seasonal fruits and vegetables, and every form of cuisine is available just a phone call away, one can lose the understanding of what kind of food is best for one's body and mind.

The lives of most people have become so busy there is little time to think, plan and prepare the daily meals. What used to be a major part of life has been narrowed down to an activity that is processed, packaged, quick and easy to use, and meals are eaten at any time of day. For this reason, many people are suffering from diet-related disorders that could be easily cured with nutritious food and the correct





attitude to food and eating. The food we consume should be carefully chosen and eaten with understanding and awareness. Meals must become a part of one's holistic lifestyle, behaviour and philosophy.

### **The affluent and the non-affluent**

There are many different kinds of diets around the world and the people who have the luxury to make a choice of their diets are lucky and should consider the millions of children and families around the world who barely eat one meal a day. Millions of people around the world do not have the luxury to choose what they eat but rather survive on what they can find available in their local area.

While 20% of the world population struggle with diets, obesity and obesity-related diseases, nearly 80% of the population live in poverty, struggling to find one meal a day. Even in countries like the USA, one person in six is 'food insecure', people who do not know where their next meal will come from.

There is enough food for everyone's need but not for everyone's greed.

– Mahatma Gandhi

### **Food waste**

Modern society wastes enormous amounts of food, approximately one third of the food produced globally is wasted, an amount that could feed millions of people three meals a day.

Along with this huge amount of waste, all the natural resources used for growing, processing, manufacturing, packaging, transporting and marketing that food are wasted. The agricultural land used for growing food is also wasted. It is estimated that the water used for the production of the globally wasted food could provide enough water for all the world's household water use.

A large portion of the wasted food is thrown into landfills. Landfills of food waste release methane, which is a significant contributor to greenhouse gases and ten times more potent as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. Studies have shown that if food waste was a country it would rank third in the list of countries emitting most greenhouse gases.

### **Food consumption**

Food consumption has become an obsession in the modern world. People are eating too much in quantity and poorly in quality. Nature has provided the vitamins and minerals, the proteins and carbohydrates, the fats and oils, everything we require. We do not have to eat processed and fast foods, but we choose to. Our consumption of processed and packaged food, excess meat eating and food waste has led to our species literally changing the face of the earth. We have cut down forests to graze cattle for meat, we have turned deserts into highly productive greenhouses. We have polluted oceans and deserts alike with the waste and plastic of our throwaway

society. Even in the deepest rainforest a plastic bottle can be found.

Improving distribution, reducing waste and reducing consumption of processed and fast foods should be a priority, if we wish to feed all people on the planet and protect our valuable natural resources. With speedily increasing populations and heavily polluted and depleted natural resources like soil and water there has to be a change in our relationship with food and diet.

What is required is a new attitude and respect for the food we ourselves and all people and beings on this earth require for health and survival. This can only begin with our own personal eating habits and attitudes. We must make the correct choices of what we eat and how much we eat. This is yogic living. Yogic lifestyle offers us a way to live a healthy, balanced and happy life with respect towards Mother Earth, our provider and sustainer of life.

Help your neighbour and do not try to harm anyone. I think that is how God would like His family to live, because we are all His family. He who lives for others truly lives.

– Swami Satyananda Saraswati



# Sadachara or Right Conduct

*From Easy Steps to Yoga, Swami Sivananda Saraswati*



All aspirants commit mistakes now in jumping to samadhi and dhyana all at once as soon as they leave their houses without caring a bit for ethical perfection. The mind remains in the same condition although they have practised meditation for fifteen years. They have the same jealousy, hatred, idea of superiority, pride, egoism, etc. Meditation and samadhi come by themselves when one has the ethical perfection.

*Sadachara* or right conduct is the foundation of yoga. Yoga is rooted in virtue. Ethical discipline is very necessary for success in yoga. Ethical discipline is the practice of right conduct in life. One should be well established in sadachara to begin with. Sadachara is the practice of yama-niyama. Yama and niyama are the two moral backbones of yoga, which the aspirant must practise in his daily life. These correspond roughly to the ten commandments of Jesus or to the noble eightfold path of Lord Buddha. The practice of yama-niyama will eradicate all impurities of the mind.

The mind becomes pure by cultivating habits of friendliness, compassion, complacency and indifference towards happiness, misery, virtue and vice. Whosoever shows friendliness towards all those who are found in the enjoyments of pleasures, the dirt of envy leaves him. When the mind shows compassion towards those who are suffering from pain and the wish to remove the miseries of others as if they were his own, the dirt of the desire to do evil to others is removed. Whoever shows complacency towards those who are virtuously inclined beings, the dirt of envy is removed from his mind. Whoever shows indifference towards the vicious and taking to the middle path and not taking sides towards the viciously inclined, the dirt of impatience is removed from his mind.

By this removal of the characteristics of the qualities of disturbing energy or *rajas*, and inertia or *tamas*, the characteristic of essential purity or *sattwa* manifests itself. He becomes possessed of a very high manifestation of essential purity. His mind becomes inclined to the side of restraining mental modifications, because this enlightenment is natural to that state. When the mind becomes pure it attains the state of steadiness and becomes one-pointed. If these moral qualities are not cultivated, the means cannot lead to steadiness. Therefore, one should be well established in sadachara if one wants to attain perfection in yoga. When one is established in it perfectly, then samadhi or nishtha will come by itself.

To speak the truth; to practise ahimsa; not to hurt the feelings of others in thought, word and deed; not to speak harsh words to anyone; not to show anger towards anybody; not to abuse others or speak ill of others and to see God in all beings is sadachara. If you abuse anyone, if you hurt the feelings of others, really you are abusing yourself and hurting the feelings of God only. *Himsa*, injuring, is a deadly enemy of bhakti and jnana. It separates and divides. It stands in the way of realizing unity or oneness of Self.

That act or exertion which does not do good to others, or that act for which one has to feel shame should never be done.

That act, on the other hand, should be done for which one may be lauded in society. This is a brief description of what right conduct is.

It is by conduct that one acquires a long life, and it is by conduct that one acquires riches and prosperity. It is a means to attain the goal of life. Without good conduct no one can achieve the goal. Good conduct brings in fame, longevity, wealth and happiness. It eventually leads to moksha. It is conduct that begets virtue, and it is virtue which prolongs life. Conduct gives fame, long life and heaven. Conduct is the most efficacious rite of propitiating the celestials.



# Sadhana of Happiness

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The lifestyle yamas of yoga are not commonly known for no one has studied them. Even the yamas and niyamas of raja yoga would not be known if one had not read the book *Yoga Sutras*. Similarly, the yamas and niyamas of other yogas are not known to people as everybody is focusing on the body. "I am focusing on my body and I don't care for yamas and niyamas," that is what people state, yet then they should also realize that they are not practising yoga.

In the absence of yamas and niyamas, yoga is only physical exercise. If you bring in yamas and niyamas in your life, you are connecting with the good, the positive, the constructive and the creative and you are allowing the space for them to manifest and improve your life. Therefore, the lifestyle yamas begin with happiness. That is the first yama of yoga. The first niyama of yoga is japa.

## **East and West**

Religion connects spirituality with awareness of God. Yoga connects spirituality with awareness of purity and correctness. That is the main difference between the idea of spirituality prevalent in society and the idea of spirituality in yoga. In yoga it is purity and inner awakening. Spirituality from a religious point of view is awareness of God. There is a difference in understanding between cultures, although we use the same word 'spirituality'. When I use the word spirituality, Indians will have a certain idea and westerners will develop a different idea. These two thoughts, these two ideas will never merge.

For western society the understanding of spirituality is based on religion. The understanding of spirituality in Asia is not based on religion but on personal experience of people who have gone through the process and have realized something different - that we are all part of the same universe, same family. Religion says 'you have to believe' for it is based on belief system. Spirituality is based on 'you have to discover' for you have to see what lies within the dirty mind and the impure heart. The dirty mind is an expression of greed, passion, aggression, infatuation, arrogance and jealousy. The pure mind is wisdom, understanding, so totally the opposite. If we realize what is underneath the layers of the dirt in our mind, the purity, then that is spirituality, according to Indian or yogic thoughts. This is what we have to discover within ourselves.

## **God's wish**

There is no use talking about peace if we are unable to experience peace ourselves. There is no use talking about happiness if we can't remain happy for the majority of the waking time. Happiness should become the natural nature of personality, not worry and anxiety. Yet the opposite has taken place. Worry and anxieties have become the natural expression of every human mind, and happiness has taken a backseat. It should change. The majority of the time happiness and at certain times, when there are tensions and problems,





then worry and anxiety is okay. However, twenty-four hours worry and anxiety with a few moments of happiness thrown in between, that is not how God wanted his children to develop and grow. God wants all children to be happy and not worried and anxious.

So why can't we make the effort and how can we become happy? By seeing what is the cause of our pain and suffering: Is it me, my expectation, my ambition, another person who creates blocks and barriers? Discover that and try to manage it. If it is you, then change yourself so that you can become more happy. It won't happen overnight but it will happen.

The month of October, as a rule in this ashram, we call the happy month. Everybody has to try to be happy, even sannyasins. Unhappiness is a condition that exists in everybody's mind. In that condition of unhappiness, we close ourselves, internalize ourselves and brood on what is happening to us, feel depressed and dejected, feel aggressive and exert and express our ideas, so there is always mental agitation, disturbance.

## **The incense of happiness**

Meditation is good to help observe the mind. After you have observed the mind, can you consciously and wilfully change the expression of the mind? In meditation you can observe, you can practise antar mouna and say, 'Okay, I am going to pick this thought up and discover from where it is coming'. Fine. You have discovered that, you have picked up the thought, and you might have cleared the thought also, but then you have cleared only one aspect, one corner of the room. What about the lingering smell of dejection, depression and anxiety that moment has left behind? You cleared the room but did you light the incense to get rid of the lingering odour? And if you light the incense to remove the lingering odour of negativity, then that incense has to be of happiness.

That incense has to be that of happiness, not of anything else, not even mantra, for with mantra you will be again withdrawing in. In this manner, you have to understand the expressions of your mind and make the effort to positively change the expressions of the mind every instant, every moment. This is the most difficult sadhana. When we think of yoga we think of classroom training, 'I am going to do this and this and this,' 'I am going to be taught this and this and this,' 'I am going to learn this and this and this.' However, after and beyond the classroom situation, I live my normal life, not my yogic life.

How can a person who involves for a few hours during the day with yoga expect that they are cultivating spiritual awareness? Don't expect that. Don't put on a mask of righteousness and correctness on your face when you know that what you are doing is not correct. You have to do that sadhana.

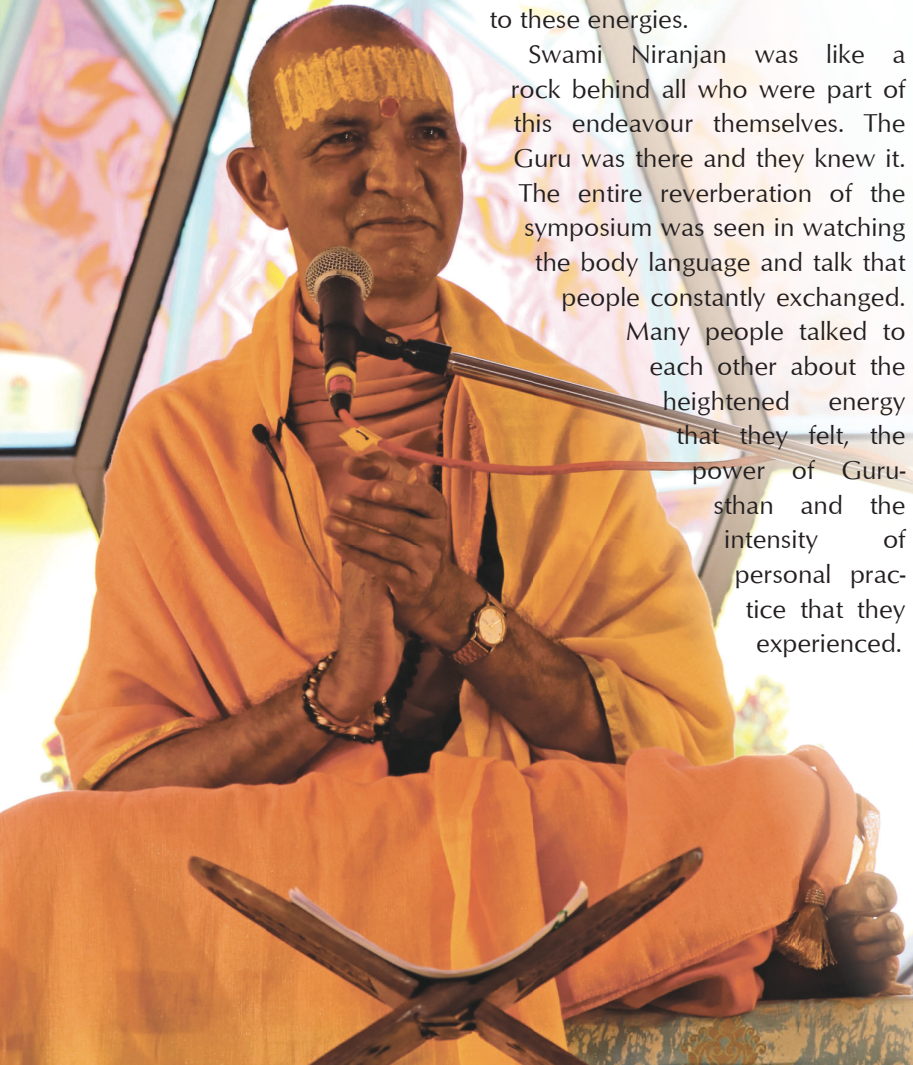
*– 25 October 2018, Munger Yoga Symposium*

# Munger Yoga Symposium Impressions

The symposium was more an initiation than an academic session that many of us expected. So much of tremendous activity went into its organization and running it so seamlessly, it was as if a higher energy was moving the people on the ground. The residents of the ashram did a marvellous job, quietly and unassumingly without looking around to be feted or appreciated. It was an example of authentic karma seva which could have been inspired only by a leader who himself opened out his heart to these energies.

Swami Niranjan was like a rock behind all who were part of this endeavour themselves. The Guru was there and they knew it. The entire reverberation of the symposium was seen in watching the body language and talk that people constantly exchanged.

Many people talked to each other about the heightened energy that they felt, the power of Gurusthan and the intensity of personal practice that they experienced.





People from various countries mingled with such comfort, joy and ease that boundaries were dissolved. Swamiji's spiritual energy unified everyone in a one-pointed trust in the authenticity of his being and most people left feeling privileged to have been in his presence and inspired to walk this path with faith.

I don't know if I am saying all I want to. It is not easy to put into words what was uplifting of one's Spirit. Listening to Swami Niranjan speak – the depth of his knowing, the clarity of mind and the ease with which words flowed through his lips reminded me of Sri Swamiji and a realization flooded me as I remembered Paramahamsaji saying, "As people Niranjan and I are different but he is my completion."

The larger reassurance was that despairing humanity would not be abandoned. There was a pure and great power here that could not be quenched. Everyone who came here took a bit of that power back with them to love and to serve all beings. Truly it is said, *moksha moolam guru krpa*.

—Swami Dharmakeerti, Bangalore

# Connected or Not Connected

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*

Hundreds of children go to school. They all study the same subject, yet the intention of many is to learn enough to pass the class so that they can finish school quickly. The intention of few is to study the subject to master it and become an expert in it. Those who study to move on, they don't remember or imbibe – they have short-term memories. Those who want to have mastery over the subject, they convert the short-term memory into long-term memory and develop an affinity with the subject. They develop a connection with the subject. There are many stories to indicate that this has happened to many different scientists around the globe who have become so engrossed in their own calculations that they have forgotten what exists around them.

In yoga too, there are two types of people. One is the public who come to yoga for general wellbeing. They are concerned with their stress management, pain management, sleep management, and that is also what they need. They don't need to develop a connection with guru. They need a relief to their condition. Those people who try to become gurus to such people will always be a failure for that connection will never develop; it will be a connection of selfish wants. Then there is this other group of people who want to master, understand and apply what they have learnt in life. These people pursue a topic, a subject, and it is this group that develops a connection with the vidya and with the master, not everybody.

## **For the experience**

When Sri Swamiji started the yoga work, he conceived a fellowship of people. If you look at the logo of ajna chakra, it says underneath – International Yoga Fellowship. It is a fellowship of yogis, meaning those people who want to master, learn, imbibe and apply; they want to live yoga. It is those

people who will ultimately make a qualitative change in their own life, in their own family, in their own society and in their own nation. Not the random practitioners of yoga who for a few months come to your class, then for a few months go to someone else's class, then for few months they join some other club, another ashram, another mantra from another guru, comparing this system with that system.

The fellowship is created by people who are connected to the vidya, for they want to explore, understand and master the subject. This second group of people nurture and nourish the vidya. They don't practise the vidya; the practice of vidya is for the first group. They come, they learn the practices: pawanmuktasana, pranayama, yoga nidra, meditation for three months they associate with you, and then no longer.

Their purpose with yoga is over. They got what they were looking for. They are not interested in deepening their experience, or in following your aspirations. The connection develops between people who have similar aspirations, not between people who have different aspirations. When aspirations are different, there is no connection. When aspirations are the same, then there is deepening of connection. That is what Sri Swamiji envisioned: that our aspiration should be to experience and explore yoga vidya, and our connection has to be with that - to experience.

It is this relationship we need to cultivate. When the person is not there, we connect with the spirit which has motivated us to find that path of richness and goodness. If you are interested in deepening your own experience, your own understanding, you are connected - so be sincere, committed and truthful to that.

*- 20 October 2018, Munger Yoga Symposium*





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## Yoga Chakra 7

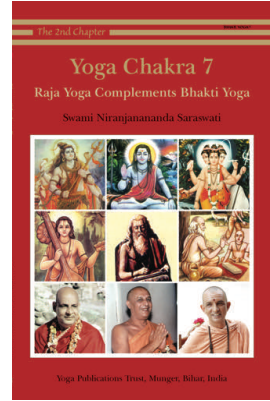
### Raja Yoga Complements Bhakti Yoga

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*

63 pp, soft cover, ISBN: 978-81-938918-4-1

The theme of the satsangs was raja yoga and bhakti yoga. Swamiji explained how raja yoga and bhakti yoga complement each other in the yoga chakra and should not be perceived as stand-alone systems. He took the participants on a parallel journey in both yogas so they were able to truly experience the process of creating harmony between mind and emotions.

Swamiji clarified many misconceptions on the subject and encouraged the participants to develop their own understanding and experience so they may become emissaries of this knowledge and of the 2nd Chapter of yoga which is unfolding before us.



*New*

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## Websites and Apps

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

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

### Satyam Yoga Prasad

Available at [www.satyamyogaprasad.net](http://www.satyamyogaprasad.net) and as apps for Android and iOS devices.

The collected publications of Swami Satyananda and Swami Niranjanananda are being presented online on the occasion of the Munger Yoga Symposium.

### Bihar Yoga Wiki

[www.yogawiki.org](http://www.yogawiki.org)

An online encyclopaedia of the Bihar Yoga system was launched on the occasion of the Munger Yoga Symposium 2018 with an aim to make the yogic teachings available to all in an accessible and easily understood way.

### YOGA & YOGAVIDYA Online

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

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

YOGA and YOGAVIDYA magazines are available as free apps for Android and iOS devices.

### Other Apps (for Android and iOS devices)

- *APMB*, the bestselling yoga book from Yoga Publications Trust, is now available as a convenient, easily browsable mobile app.
- The *Bihar Yoga App* brings to the user ancient and revived yogic knowledge in a modern medium.

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## Yoga Peeth Events & Yoga Vidya Training 2019

<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 &amp; 6th</i>	Guru Bhakti Yoga
<i>Every 12th</i>	Akhanda Path of Ramacharitanas

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](http://www.biharyoga.net) (applications for events and trainings available here)

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