

YOGA

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Hari Om

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GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Do kirtan a little

The harmonious vibrations produced by the singing of the names of the Divine help devotees to control their mind easily. They produce a benign influence on the mind. They elevate the mind at once from its old ruts or grooves to magnanimous heights of divine splendour and glory. If one does sankirtan from the bottom of the heart with full bhava and prem, even the trees, birds and animals will be deeply influenced. They will respond. Such is the powerful influence of sankirtan.

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

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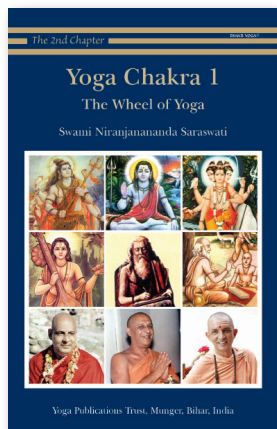
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The Yogi is superior to the ascetic. He is deemed superior even to those versed in sacred lore. The Yogi is superior even to those who perform action with some motive. Therefore, Arjuna, do you become a Yogi. (*Bhagavad Gita VI:46*)

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

Fusion of Action and Intention

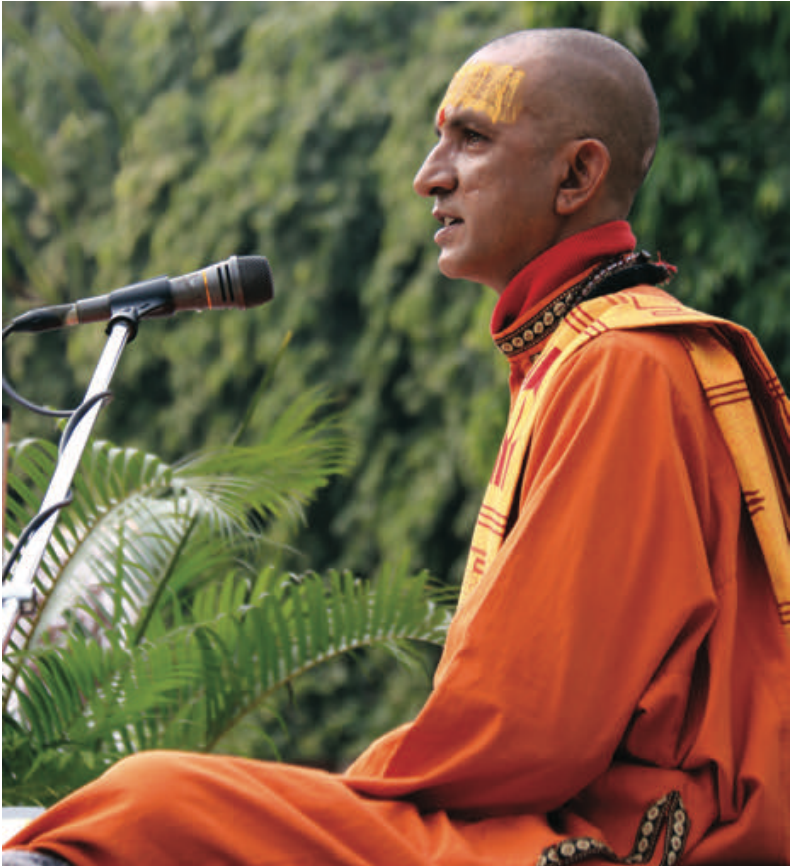
From Yoga Chakra 1 – The Wheel of Yoga, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Why is it difficult for you to feel a sense of belonging and a sense of duty and responsibility? In theory everything sounds good to you, however, in practice there is resistance. Sri Swamiji says, “There is always a split between what people think and what they do.” This is the cause of conflict, frustration, tension and anxiety. There is a difference between what you think, what karma yoga you believe in and how you perform and act; they are

never compatible. When idea and action get fused in the life of an individual, that person becomes a model from whom others take inspiration.

Therefore the learning in ashram life is the union or coming together of intention and action. If the intention is cooperation then action has to be cooperative and should not be guided by your mind, ego, ambition, negativity or positivity. Just as an arrow flies true to its mark without deviation, without turning left or right, human intention and action should have a clear focus when performed. Action has to be like an arrow, based on wisdom and understanding; not on ambition or on petty thinking. Thinking in life should be: ‘God, help me to maintain my true direction in life. Let me begin my day like a new day that I’ve never lived before, and not carry the memories of the past, which restrict my happiness and joy today.’ That is my prayer.



If you observe yourself objectively and cultivate humility and understanding, then you can consider that the purpose of ashram life is attainable: just simple understanding, simple cooperation and a simple smile. Swami Sivananda says, "Eat a little, drink a little, smile a little, frown a little, laugh a little, dance a little, sleep a little, meditate a little, do asana a little." For him everything was in little doses. In your case you take a big dose all the time. When you are happy you want to collect all the happiness; when you are angry you want to collect all the aggression, not just a little bit. By cultivating little things, little by little you become big. After all, the ocean is made up of little drops of water.

Raja Yoga Yatra 3, 2018 – Q&A

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



What happens when we remove prana from smriti?

Smriti becomes like a collection of all the old pictures kept in your grandfather's trunk in the attic. You come across it one day and you don't recognize any person. You don't even know who they are though you look at the pictures of those old times. There is no involvement or participation from your side, you are only a witness. That is the stage you reach when you remove prana from smriti.

The image remains. The involvement, association and the feeling associated of hatred, anger, love, kindness or compassion comes down. The intensity comes down. The pictures remain as a good record of your journey in life, but they don't take you back to the same moment to create the same condition.

You told us that pratyayas should be wiped out at once. Can the review of the day be a means for that?

Yes, that is the whole purpose of the review of the day practice. You identify those moments in your day when your mind was disturbed. At night, when you are able to relax and analyze these events without reacting, then you can say, 'Okay, now get out of my head.' So review of the day will definitely go a long way in clearing the daily pratyayas. Just as you clean your room every day, in the same manner, the mind has to be cleaned every day of the pratyayas by practising five or ten minutes of review.

Thoughts are stored in the brain in the form of electro-chemical signals, according to science. In what form do ahamkara, chitta, buddhi and manas exist? Do they have some physical existence at all?

All experiences are one in our body. If you mix sugar or colour in water, they will permeate every atom and cell of water, they will become part of water. Yet colour is not water, nor is sugar. They have become part of water, but they can be extracted through a process. In the same manner, manas, buddhi, chitta and ahamkara are part of the human experience, a totally integrated experience. Manas is not in the brain and it is not in the big toe. It is everywhere.

You think of the brain since your sight is located here. If your sight was in the stomach, you would be thinking that the brain is in the stomach. Therefore, everything is not defined and marked, for it is an integrated experience. Everything is contained and mixed in the water, yet you can see the colour, taste the sugar, smell the fragrance. In this body also you experience manas, buddhi, chitta, ahamkara, as they are contained in every cell.

No doubt they create some cerebral chemical reaction, some electro-magnetic impulse, but they are not dependent on the physical aspects to exist. Just as if you extract the salt from water, it will become separate; if you mix the salt in water,

it will become one. If you remove the mind from the body, it will have a separate identity. The mind will not cease to exist because the brain is dead. It is the same with buddhi, chitta and ahamkara.

In the Asian traditions, people believe in the theory of reincarnation. There is an American scientist in Charlottesville University, Dr Stevenson, who had done some research on the subject. He recorded the past-life experiences of people from every culture, including the Christian and Islamic. After a thorough investigation, he came to the conclusion that we do carry the impressions of past lives in this life.

If everything was merely mechanical and cerebral, there would be no carry-forward of anything, there would be no evolution as such. If everything was limited to the brain only, there would be no communal evolution or social evolution. Evolution would always stop at the death of every individual. It does not happen in that manner. This indicates that there is a faculty which is one hundred percent integrated in this life, but which can be separated from the body and from other connections and links. That is how yogis have seen the subtle bodies.

You mentioned that during fear we naturally contract the shoulders, the stomach or the perineum. What kind of practices can help release the chronic contraction that was the result of a traumatic fear in the past?

Contraction in these three regions represents malfunction of the three chakras: mooladhara, manipura and vishuddhi. You experience the effect as tightening up of the body at the physical level. You feel the tension in the neck region, the abdomen, or in the perineum. However, beyond the body, these three chakras have been affected. Now you have to wilfully, consciously release the tension. If the perineum has contracted, you have to consciously release that contraction. When you become aware of the abdominal contraction, you have to force or push the stomach out. When you feel the shoulder contraction, you have to force or push the chest out.

Also do some practices, depending on where the contraction is, to release the tension from the three chakras. For the shoulder contraction, the neck exercises and shoulder rotation are effective. Not so much pranayama but you have to use more of asana to stretch the contraction in the opposite direction. That will gradually release and allow the pranas to flow once again.



Can you clarify the difference between the self and the drashta, the observer?

You are the self and you are the drashta. When you become aware of yourself moving, acting, you become the drashta. When you do that without awareness, you are the self who is only responding.

Any normal activity that you do represents the self; however, if you become aware of that activity then you become the *drashta*, the observer of that activity. So remain yourself, and when need be become the drashta. Become the drashta when you are facing a crisis in life. You don't have to become the drashta when you are feeling peace in life, for peace is the natural outcome of overcoming a crisis. If you are the drashta at the time of crisis, then you find the ability to deal with the crisis more effectively and efficiently, rather than crying, "What do I do now?" If that sentence is uttered, "What do I do now?" it means that you are not the drashta.

You think that you have to be a drashta only during meditation with eyes closed. What do you watch then? Nothing, except some thoughts that come to the mind. That is only a training. The attitude, the drashta vision should be activated when you are facing conflict, confusion, crisis. It is

only through that vision that you will be able to extract yourself from that confining situation. Therefore, don't only be a drashta when you meditate, that is to train your mind, but make the effort to be a drashta when you are involved in the world. Be a drashta when you are active and facing situations that can disturb and distract you, and manage them by cultivating the aspect of observation.

In the practice of antar mouna when we are asked to create thoughts, can we project our aspirations about life?

No, you can't. That you do anyway when you sit alone by yourself. Meditation is not moving into the realm of imagination and fantasy. If you start thinking about your aspirations in life, you might as well lie down and think about those aspirations. You don't have to sit and meditate for that.

Your sitting down for meditation has a different purpose. It is not to go in the zone of fantasy; it is to observe and guide the behaviour of the mind. If you wish to 'storytell' yourself, then remember that is not meditation. If you wish to go on flights of fancy and imagination, remember that is not meditation. Even children do it lying on the grass, looking at the sky, seeing different shapes and images in the clouds. If you want to do that in meditation, that is your choice, but then remember that it is not meditation.

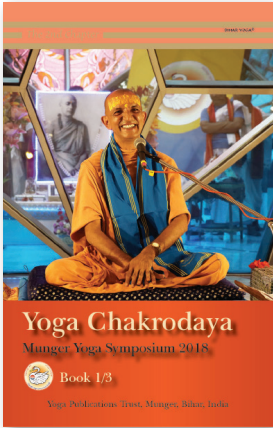
What are the methods and techniques to sublimate the six conditions into positive energies?

Only one: always smile, no matter what happens to you, and you will see that the six friends will never raise their heads again. A smile is the only antidote to anger, fear, hatred, jealousy. You don't need a highly philosophical theory, just follow a simple thing: keep on smiling. All the six conditions will fade away to you won't even know where.

– 16–23 September 2018, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Start in a Small Way

From Yoga Chakrodaya, Munger Yoga Symposium 2018, Book 1/3



Swami Sivamurti Saraswati, Greece: Sri Swamiji had sent me to Greece and told me to start in a small way. I started in a small, provincial, conservative town of Kalamata where the few people who had heard about yoga believed it was the work of the devil. They were supported by the bishop and priests there who spoke more about me than they did about Christ and the church, telling people not to go to 'that woman' because they will fall from grace. That

naturally stopped a lot of people, and the few who did come had a lot of reservations. The classes had to be segregated for women and men, as men did not want their wives doing yoga with another man beside them.

There were also a lot of private lessons as many well-to-do people in Kalamata did not want anyone else to know that they were practising yoga. I had to stagger the classes and put half an hour in between each class so they wouldn't meet on the stairs. Sometimes they'd overlap as someone came earlier and at that time, I had to put one person into a cupboard, settle the other person in shavasana, then give an 'all clear' sign to the first person.

I didn't speak a word of Greek. I prepared the lessons in English and had them translated by a very kindly lady, who translated everything, I



hope, into correct Greek. That was for many years. In this way, Kalamata was a real training ground and a learning experience in many ways. Sri Swamiji had said to me, “Don’t necessarily stay in one place. You have to go where the need is.” After some time I realized that a greater need may be elsewhere. I started travelling around, giving lectures in different towns and cities and eventually moved to Athens. I started there in a small flat. It was about fifteen by fifteen square metres, with furniture that was immovable. I had to sit and stand on the sofa and give the practices. The students had to manage under the immovable tables and chairs. I only had eight students, but they enjoyed it. When I meet some of them today, they say those were the best days.

– 21 October 2019, Munger Yoga Symposium



When we choose ‘yogic life’, we do not adopt a new religion or become puritan overnight or change our external lifestyle and so forth. By adopting that way of life, we are able to express our awareness better. We need to have a deeper experience and in order to have that, we must adjust many items related to our life – that is yogic life.

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati

The Guru's Mission

From Yoga Chakrodaya, Munger Yoga Symposium 2018, Book 1/3



Sannyasi Agniyoti (Maria Teresa Copete), Colombia: Sri Swamiji first came to Colombia in 1971. Then in 1972, Swami Niranjan arrived. After he had been in Colombia for a few months, the news came from India that Swami Satyananda is conducting a World Yoga Convention in 1973 in Munger, Bihar, India. And we were in Colombia, South America. They were a world apart.

Nevertheless, we were committed to work for the mission of Swami Satyananda to take yoga from shore to shore and door to door. We started thinking about how to do that. Apart from Swami Niranjan, Swami Amritananda and Swami Agnimitrananda were there, and Ignacio the translator. But there was a space in the car.



I was in high school at that time and Ignacio said to me, "Swami Amritananda said you are coming on the tour. We are going to do a Colombian tour by car." Colombia is in the Andes, a very mountainous area, and they were going to do the tour by car. I said, "How can I go on a tour? I have to go to school. My parents will never allow it." But things had to happen and Swami Amritananda said, "You go ask your parents." I went and asked, and my mum thought, 'Maybe this is

something good for her', and she made all the arrangements in the school. So there I was, going on a tour with three Indian swamis, Ignacio and myself, by car, to spread the word of yoga from shore to shore and door to door.

Remember this is 1973 and we are inviting people in the whole of Colombia, while travelling by road, to come to a yoga convention in India. When you think of it now, it was kind of crazy, but then it was the guru's mission, and we did it. We took a jeep, which somebody lent to us, printed some papers about the convention in India and started the tour. My mother had some connections with priests and nuns and convents, as she had two sisters who were nuns and one brother who was a priest. She called all the nunneries and said, "My daughter is coming on a tour with these Indian people and they are spreading the word of yoga." Yoga had never been heard of, nobody knew what it was. Anyhow, we were on a mission and we took off.

We had also asked the students at the Satyananda ashram at that time to help us with their contacts. Some people said, "Yes, I have an aunt who lives in the southern part of Colombia."

We said, "Please call her and ask if she will organize a lecture with her friends." In this way, someone organized a lecture at a school, at a friend's house, and other places. We would be on the road from four in the morning. In places we had no contacts, if we saw a sign 'school', we would knock and say, "Hello, good morning. We are on a tour spreading yoga with three Indian people from India, and we would like to give the students a talk on yoga." Surprisingly, they said, "Oh welcome. Can you give us ten minutes? We will fix everything for you." That was the way we did it.

Once, while Swami Amritananda was giving the lecture and Ignacio was translating, Swami Niranjan, who was twelve or thirteen at that time, started drawing hearts on a piece of paper: "Ignacio loves Maria Teresa; Maria Teresa loves Ignacio." This went on for a month. Then one day, we were in a hotel, and he said, "You know" - beware of the 'you know' - "You know, if you and Ignacio would get married, you would do great work for yoga." I did not pay much attention then, but to make the story short, we've been married for forty-seven years and we have been working for yoga.

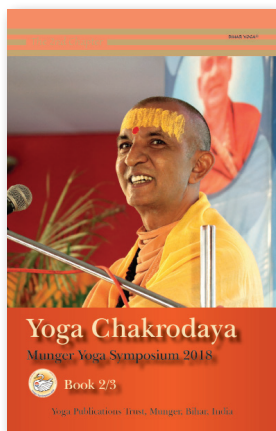
This is what it was like forty-five years ago when nobody knew what yoga was. This was the way we started spreading the word, sowing the seed. We were told, "Just go and sow the seeds wherever you can." In the remotest places we would give the leaflet and say, "There is going to be a convention in India in October 1973, from this date to that date, and we have come to invite you to it." Twenty-seven people from Colombia came for the convention.

Those were the most beautiful days of doing Sri Swamiji's work. After that convention, Sri Swamiji came to Colombia in 1975 and conducted a convention. In 1980, he conducted a second convention. The work continued and has continued non-stop for forty-seven years.

– 23 October 2019, Munger Yoga Symposium

Keep Moving with the Wheel

From Yoga Chakrodaya, Munger Yoga Symposium 2018, Book 2/3



Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati: This song (*Brahma Jnanavali*) is a beautiful song written by the founder of our sannyasa tradition, Adiguru Shankaracharya.

*Asango'ham asango'ham asango'ham
punah punah
Sachchidanandorupo'ham ahamevaham
avyayah.*

He talks here about the real existence that Vedantins and tantrics have always believed in. The materialistic outlook believes the world of the senses and sense objects to be real, as it is cognizable. However, the spiritual masters of all religions and traditions have maintained that this world is unreal and the realness is discovered elsewhere. The reason they give is that the nature of Prakriti is transitory; nothing ever remains the same here, it changes every moment. What changes every moment is not the Truth. What changes every moment is not the Satyam, for Satyam is the essence that does not ever change.

H₂O is the formula of water: two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen. With that water you can make tea, coffee or sherbet, you can change its taste and use it in any manner that you choose. Despite all the different uses, the essence is always the same: H₂O. In the same manner, we all come in different colours and hues, shapes and sizes, backgrounds and traditions, locations and religions. We all represent different cups of coffees, teas, sherbet, Coca Cola, Sprite, champagne, yet we have the same essence, and that is conveyed in the song.



The essence that is always there is the reality of existence, and what changes continuously cannot be the reality. It is only a transitory moment in existence, a moment in the journey. The wheel keeps on rotating, Prakriti keeps on moving and time does not wait for anyone. What is constantly mobile cannot have a permanent identity, therefore the sages and masters of all ages have said that we have to discover that permanent identity, our real identity.

How do we discover it? By seeing what is outside, for the real identity will be the opposite of what is outside. Outside

everything is transitory and inside everything is permanent. The state of permanency is known as Satyam, Shivam and Sundaram. The understanding and the knowing of the essence that permeates everything is the Truth, Satyam. Shivam is the correctness and the positive outcome of the correctness. It is the positive outcome of a proper, correct understanding, behaviour and performance in the form auspiciousness, joy, happiness and contentment. Shivam is that which uplifts the human nature, and with the upliftment of human nature you discover that everything is beautiful. That is Sundaram, the awareness of the underlying beauty. This is the reality, according to Vedanta.

In the song, Adiguru Shankaracharya, the founder of our sannyasa tradition, is telling us about the different aspects of the transcendental nature which do not change. *Nirakaroham Nirvadyoham Asangoham Shivoham*, 'What I am in reality is not this, I am the opposite of everything that I experience in this life.'

If we are the opposite of everything that we experience in the material life, if our spiritual life is the reverse, then somehow we have to find the means to rise from the material into the spiritual. A blend has to take place between body and prana, mind and consciousness, materialism and spiritualism. The process of developing the spiritual awareness is that blend. Yoga is that blend.

Yoga is the blend that allows the spiritual dimension to percolate down to the material dimension and enhance the life experience of the material dimension. The sadhanas of tantra vidya and of the vedantic vidyas, which comprise the yoga vidya contain in them the knowledge, the sequence and the understanding that can lead us from A to B, from B to C, from C to D, to keep on growing, progressing, evolving. The wheel keeps on turning and we keep moving with the wheel.

– 28 October 2019, Munger Yoga Symposium

Launch of Bihar Yoga in Cyberspace

From Yoga Chakrodaya, Munger Yoga Symposium 2018, Book 3/3



Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati: Today is a day of great happiness for all of us, for today we accomplish one mission to fulfil the vision of our master, Sri Swami Satyananda.

Many years ago, when I came here in 1983 to take over the management of the Bihar School of Yoga, as Sri Swamiji was stepping down from being the head of the institution, he told me, "Yoga is a vidya, and it should be shared with all." He told me to propagate this vidya freely to everybody. An instruction that he gave in 1983 is being fulfilled today.

The Munger Yoga Symposium is being held five years after the World Yoga Convention. The Convention represented the

end of a chapter and the Symposium represents the beginning of a chapter. As prasad of the Munger Yoga Symposium and as an inspiration for the second chapter of yoga, we offer you Satyam Yoga Prasad.

Do you know what is Satyam Yoga Prasad? You have visited the Satyam Yoga Prasad pandal and seen the collection of books, CDs and DVDs there. The same wealth of knowledge is today being launched in cyberspace.

This is part of the jnana yajna initiated by Sri Swami Sivananda in Rishikesh, which was the method to disseminate spiritual knowledge. At first Swami Sivananda used to write small pamphlets, have them printed and distribute freely. Then he started writing small booklets on every conceivable topic and distributed them freely. Then, with the advancements in the ashram, books written by him began to be printed. But he had a nature: nothing was ever sold. He would give everything freely to the aspirants, to the libraries, to the departments of human resources where people could read and understand about human life and spiritual life, about what our tradition says on evolving in life. He was a prolific writer and knew every subject in the world. In his life, Swami Sivananda wrote about 300 books and never cared for any kind of royalty or return. His books were translated in many languages and published around the world right from the forties. Yet he always used to give everything away, saying, "You want it, take it, because it will help you."

Sri Swamiji also followed in the footsteps of his guru. Prior to coming to Munger, during his travelling days he would publish five-page or ten-page booklets of chants, kirtans and spiritual anecdotes, and distribute them to everybody in the Yoga Fellowship. When the ashram was established, Sri Swamiji inspired people to write books on yoga, not because they knew how to write or had any knowledge of yoga, but because it would inspire and encourage them to deepen their own understanding by researching, practising and writing. He would give a topic to a disciple and say, "You study this



subject, discuss with me, discuss with other knowledgeable people, and write.” In this way he would teach the person the depth of yoga. That is why you will find that in the books here, the author may be someone else, yet it says, ‘Under the guidance of Swami Satyananda Saraswati’.

In the early days, the books became the means through which Sri Swamiji would help yoga aspirants deepen their understanding of yoga. It was his wish that the spiritual knowledge, the jnana yajna that was initiated by Swami Sivananda, should continue as a tradition of the Bihar School of Yoga, the centre which he dedicated to his guru and walked away from, for it was the mandate of his guru, not his own creation.

Today, the Bihar School of Yoga is proud and pleased to present Satyam Yoga Prasad as a continuing tradition in the lineage of Sri Swami Sivananda and Sri Swami Satyananda.

Through this effort, the entire library of BSY books and teachings are now available on the internet. There are separate sections, beginning with videos. There you will find 130 videos, lectures and satsangs of Sri Swamiji given in Munger, in other

parts of India and the world. There are a few videos of the next generation as well. Then there is a section on events, in which DVDs of different programs that have been conducted at BSY, including the World Yoga Convention, have been placed. There is a category of music, chants and mantras, containing all the music produced by BSY, including Sri Swamiji's *Tapovan Sangeet* and other bhajans sung by him. There is a section on practices, and the highlight here is the section on yoga nidra. One standard yoga nidra of Sri Swamiji has been presented in 28 major languages of the world. The section on e-books is divided in two parts: 'first chapter books' and 'second chapter books'. In the first chapter books, at present there are 144 titles in multiple languages. There is also the e-mag section, where the *Yoga* and *Yoga Vidya* magazines from the year 2012 up to present are available. This is the vision of Sri Swamiji which is being launched today in cyberspace, and it is just the beginning.

As the prasad of this occasion, we have produced a tablet called 'Bihar Yoga tablet', which contains five apps of Bihar Yoga: *Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha*, Bihar Yoga, *Yoga* magazine in English, *Yoga Vidya* magazine in Hindi, and the link and app of Satyam Yoga Prasad. This is the prasad to initiate the second chapter.

In addition, a special project has been undertaken: Bihar Yoga Wiki, an online encyclopaedia of the Bihar Yoga-Satyananda Yoga system, with the aim to make the yogic teachings available to all in an accessible and easily understood way. On this wiki, we will present the teachings of our masters, Sri Swami Sivananda, Sri Swami Satyananda, and also the classical scriptures and scientific views that emerge in relation to yoga. This will be an on-going collective effort.

Thus, Satyam Yoga Prasad, Bihar Yoga tablet, and Bihar Yoga Wiki are the three prasad of the Munger Yoga Symposium, dedicated to our guru, for it is his vision and his mission.

– 27 October 2018, Munger Yoga Symposium

❧ 5th INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA 2019 ❧

Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, presents

Yoga: improving and enhancing the quality of life

On the occasion of the fifth International Day of Yoga, we extend our greetings to all sincere seekers and aspirants of yoga. Since 2015 this day has become an opportunity for aspirants across the globe to come together in the spirit of yoga and strengthen their connection to this ancient vidya. The Bihar School of Yoga has wholeheartedly supported this global interest in yoga by inspiring aspirants to deepen their experience of yoga and adopt it not merely as a physical practice but as a harmonious lifestyle as well.

The lifestyle aspect of yoga is equally, if not more important than the practice aspect, and it involves moment-to-moment awareness and fine-tuning of one's thoughts, responses and behaviour. According to Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati, "If you want to make yoga a tool to improve your lifestyle, you have to start bringing the positive attributes into your life, beginning with thought. The moment you make your thoughts positive, marks the beginning of your yogic change. This process of making the thoughts positive is known as *pratiksha bhavana*. Swami Sivananda used to say, 'Sow a seed in your thought, nurture it, and it will become the tree of your destiny in the course of time.' Therefore, you have to sow the right seed in your thought, and that is always the positive one, the virtuous one. Whenever a negative condition, state, idea, thought or reaction appears, instantly counteract that with a positive one."

In keeping with this theme, the yama of *kshama*, or forgiveness, and the niyama of *namaskara*, or greeting others with bhava, has been added to this year's program. These positive virtues pave the way to experience peace and harmony in one's life. A conscious and sincere effort to practise these will transform the state of one's own mind as well as the environment around.



Your Program for the International Day of Yoga 2019

From 6 am to 7.30 am, people will gather on the rooftops, verandahs, courtyards and other open spaces of their homes and community centres and do the following practices:

1. Kaya sthairyam with a focus on experiencing harmony in body and mind.

Mantra

2. Shanti mantras:

*Om saha naavatu. Saha nau bhunaktu.
Saha veeryam karavaavahai.
Tejasvinaavadhheetamastu maa vidvishaavahai.
Om shanti, shanti, shanti.*

3. Mahamrityunjaya mantra with sankalpa for healing, energy, power, immunity and strength (11 rounds):

*Om tryambakam yajamahe sugandhim pushtivardhanam.
Urvrukamiva bandhanam mryyormuksya mamryat.*

4. Gayatri mantra with sankalpa for wisdom, inner clarity, intuitive knowledge and learning (11 rounds):

*Om bhurbhuvah svah tatsaviturvarenyam,
Bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayat.*

5. 32 names of Durga with sankalpa for overcoming distress in life and experiencing peace and harmony (3 rounds):

*Om durgā durgārtisamanī durgālpadvinivāṇī. Durgamachchedinī
durgasādhinī durganāśinī,*

*Durgatoddhārinī durganihantrī durgamāpahā, Durgamajñānadī
durga daityalokadavināśā,*

*Durgamā durgamāloka durgamātmāsavarūpinī, Durgamārgapradā
durgamavidyā durgamāśritā,*

*Durgamajñānasaṁsthānā durgamādhyānabhāsinī, Durgamohā
durgamagā durgamārthāsavarūpinī,*

*Durgamāsurasaṁhantrī durgamāyudhadhārinī, Durgamāṅgī
durgamatā durgamā durgamāśvari,*

Durgabhīmā durgabhāmā durgabhā durgadārinī.



Asana

6. Tadasana (9 rounds)*
7. Tiryak tadasana (9 rounds)
8. Kati chakrasana (9 rounds)
9. Shavasana**
10. Surya namaskara with surya mantras (5 rounds)
11. Vipareet karani asana (1–2 minutes)
12. Matsyasana, variation 3 (1 minute)
13. Marjari asana (9 rounds)
14. Simhagarjanasana (5 rounds)
15. Shashankasana (1 minute)

These asanas comprise a short and easy-to-practise capsule for maintaining good health and total wellbeing.

Pranayama

16. Sheetalī or sheetkari pranayama (10 rounds)
17. Nadi shodhana pranayama 1:1 (10 rounds)
18. Bhramari pranayama (10 rounds)

Yama-niyama

For a few minutes each, contemplate on and develop the yama of *kshama*, or forgiveness and the niyama of *namaskara* or humility.

19. *Kshama*: Bring to mind one situation from the past when you were not forgiving. Try to identify the feeling that memory generates, be it hurt, anger, frustration, sadness or any other. Analyze this feeling to understand the root cause of your lack of forgiveness. Observe your thoughts about the other person and consciously try to change your negative thoughts by focusing on the person's positive qualities. Now bring in the thought of forgiveness and try to genuinely forgive the person. After doing this, do you feel happy, can you smile at the thought of the person, and are you ready to meet that person with an attitude of goodwill and friendliness?
20. *Namaskara*: According to Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati, "Namaskara is an indication of humility. When you practise namaskara, humility is expressed and arrogance recedes to



the background. When you greet somebody, when you look at them and smile, you actually bring happiness into their life. In this way, with respect, honour and humility, the world will become a better place.* Review this week to identify how often you greet people. Also identify when you do it as a mere social greeting and when with feeling, *bhava*. Make a resolve to greet everyone with the *bhava* of greeting the goodness within them.

Pratyahara

21. Ajapa japa (So Ham awareness in frontal passage, 5 minutes)
22. Yoga nap (basic yoga nidra with stages 3 & 4, 10 minutes)
23. Chanting of the yogic prayer:
Asato maa sad gamaya
Tamaso maa jyotir gamaya
Mrityor maa amritam gamaya
Sarveshaam svastirbhavatu, sarveshaam shantirbhavatu
Sarveshaam poomam bhavatu, sarveshaam mangalam bhavatu
Loka samastaa sukhino bhavantu
Om shantih, shantih, shantih.

This final prayer is a resolution and contains the essence of yogic teachings. It represents the personal aim of attaining harmony, equilibrium and balance in one's own life and the social aim to reach out to everyone with a wish for their wellbeing.

* In the dynamic practices, awareness should be directed to the physical movement in the first 3 rounds, breath and pranic awareness in the next 3 rounds and mental visualization in the last 3 rounds.

** Shavasana may be practised as per the need of the group.

All sincere yoga aspirants are advised to follow the above practices for one year, and then reflect on their success and the changes experienced in the quality of life. We hope and pray that the inspiration of yoga remains with you and in turn, you are able to assist others on the path of yoga and yogic living.

Hari Om Tat Sat
Swami Sivadhyanam
Coordinator



PADUKA DARSHAN, MUNGER



MUNGER



INDIA



OVERSEAS



Glimpses of IDY 2019



On 21st June, Bihar School of Yoga conducted a program from 6 to 7.30 am at Paduka Darshan on the occasion of the fifth International Day of Yoga. More than 600 participants attended and were guided through simple practices of mantra, asana, pranayama, relaxation, concentration and a meditation on yama-niyama.



In Munger, 'the City of Yoga', similar programs were conducted by members of BYMM, YYMM and the Ramayan Mandali at over 100 venues, in which thousands of people participated.



Programs were conducted by ashrams and centres in Bihar, including Asarganj, Bariyarpur, Bhagalpur, Dharhara, Haveli Kharagpur, Lakhisarai, Patna, Saharsa, Sangrampur, Suryagarha and Tarapur; nationally in Amravati, Bengaluru, Bhilai, Bhopal, Chandigarh, Chennai, Delhi, Dhanbad, Golahat, Jaipur, Jabalpur, Jamshedpur, Kanpur, Lucknow, Mumbai, Nashik, Satna, Vijayawada and other locations.





... and around the world in many countries, including Bulgaria, Colombia, Greece, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Thailand and USA.



Janani Tour 2019 – South America

Swami Prembhava Saraswati

It's a beautiful morning in Casa de Guru, the Satyananda Yoga Centre in Brazil. The sun is shining, hundreds of birds are singing their different songs and tiny swallows fly around the house swooping and diving, making me smile in wonder at their agility and speed. The trees shine with many shades of green in the morning sunlight, and the gentle wind rustles through the sparkling leaves. I sit here observing prakriti in all her beauty and splendour and I feel blessed beyond words to have these glorious experiences in my life. Everything is guided by the grace of guru and without him, none of this is possible. I am reflecting on the last month and my experiences and impressions . . .



Colombia

The Janani Tour 2019 began in Colombia. Swami Satyananda and Swami Niranjan have always called Colombia their second home and I understand why. The people open their hearts and homes and care for us like family. I have many mothers in Colombia, who feed me and nourish me on all levels, physically, emotionally and spiritually. I have brothers who take me on adventures; this time we went to Iguaque, a sacred lake, that is believed to be the birth place of humanity by the Muisca people. It was a high mountain walk that pushed me to my limits but made me laugh the real belly laughs of joy. Together, we explored prakriti in all her beauty, the forests, rivers and



mountain flora and fauna. These sacred places are protected and nurtured by the indigenous people of the land, whose influence luckily has power over our modern materialistic society. In these sacred and divine places, we experience happiness. The happiness is spontaneous and natural and we experience it by simply immersing ourselves in the vitality, beauty and prana of prakriti-Janani, the mother to us all.

Around the world these natural environments are under threat by companies whose lives are inspired by financial and economic gain. As individuals we must do whatever we can to protect and nurture these environments as we do our own families, our gold and money. These sacred and natural places are essential to human beings, we need them not only for the clean air, water and biodiversity they provide, but we also need them to live happy and inspired lives. We owe it to ourselves and future generations to protect these places. Without them there is little meaning to our yogic and spiritual lives.

The Colombian Yoga Ecology program took place in a beautiful town called Villa De Leyva, about 150 km from the busy city of Bogota. To enter Villa De Leyva is to step back in time, to cobbled streets, small villas with bougainvillaea growing colourfully on the terraces and the smell of coffee, sweets and a creative mix of ancient and modern life.

This seminar was dedicated to *Janani 2 – Food is Prana*. It was guided by the grace of Ma Annapurna and together we enjoyed delicious healthy food, cooked khicheri, experienced good weather even though the weather-man told us otherwise. We chanted mantras, sang kirtan and danced in joy, we cleaned the gardens, laughed with the elderly and children alike, and for two days we lived a special yogic and ecological life.

It was a weekend of reconnection and commitment to natural yogic living and most people realized the effect and



importance of spending time in nature, away from the busy polluted city life.

The first generation disciples of Swami Satyananda who have been there since the beginning of the yogic mission united and connected with the new generation of the second chapter of yoga in a joyful and inspired spirit of yoga and the love of guru.

Along with the weekend seminar we had kirtan programs in the Satyananda Yoga Academy in Bogota, and people from the city came to sing and recharge their batteries. I realized that one thing you can always be sure of in South America is high energy, joyful and happy kirtan.

Argentina

This was my first time to Argentina, and as we drove from the airport in Buenos Aires, I was hit by a sense of suffering and pain. The streets were lined with plastic and rubbish, and the buildings were covered in rough graffiti that told a story of a nation in crisis. The psychic energy of pain infiltrated my mind and heart.

We had kirtan that night in the yoga centre, the room was crowded with warm smiling faces (mostly women) and I felt the warmth of these people amidst the pain I perceived in the city.

The weekend seminar was in a place about one hour from Buenos Aires. The weather on the weekend was cold but the sun shone most of the time keeping the cold at bay. The Argentinian people kept their distance from me, it felt like a weekend with a



big rough brother who keeps an eye on his little sister but doesn't fuss or spoil her. The seminar went well and we performed Ashwattha Aradhana, Jyoti Aradhana and havan. The Argentinian people love kirtan and it seemed kirtan was the soothing balm they needed most, to lift them from the difficulties of daily life.

Uruguay

Uruguay is a small country with a small population of three million, but the love and support I felt from this small country and its people was not small. I was greeted at the airport with flowers and instant affection, like meeting old friends and family. The Uruguayan people are warm, big hearted with open minds. The yogic movement is strong for a small country and the seminar attracted over one hundred people. This Janani seminar was to be the biggest in South America.

The weekend seminar was held in a place called Piriopolis, about a two-hour drive from Montevideo on the coast. It is a beautiful town, alive with strange history and architecture; some houses had thatched straw roofs and were surrounded by more modern housing. Our hotel was on a hill overlooking the water and city, and the sunsets were incredibly inspirational and beautiful.

Many subtle yet meaningful touches were given by the organizers during the seminar; ID cards made of seed paper, homemade origami love hearts containing the mantras for eating and sacred medicinal plants as prasad for each participant, these small efforts of the organizers showed the care, intention and feeling of the people.

The menu for the weekend was designed and prepared by sevaks of the group. In line with the theme 'food is prana', every meal was healthy, nutritious and tasty. We cooked khicheri together, sang kirtan and chanted mantras in the

kitchen while preparing food, it was a happy positive environment and the food reflected that vibration. The blessings of Ma Annapurna permeated the food with love and nourished us on all levels. How we prepare and cook food is as important as the ingredients. If we cook food with love and care the food will reflect that. Our diets in modern life have lost these values and we eat fast food and take-away food, with vibrations unknown to us. This can lead to many physical and mental problems.



We had *Mahamritunjaya* mantra havan in the horse paddock, far away from the eyes of prying neighbours, it was an adventure to settle ourselves amongst the trees, grass and rocks, but the night was alive and the energy of the havan was strong.

On the last day the weather was exquisite, the sky a radiant blue and the ocean reflected a calm serene beauty as if prakriti herself was showing her love and gratitude to the small group of people doing positive and good work for her. The children sang the sweetest kirtan with confidence and joy, and the adults danced in happiness. It was one of those moments in life where you feel 'things can't get much better than this!' We were happy simply because we were happy. It showed us how a few days away from the city, sharing inspiration, yoga practices, havan, mantra, kirtan, good food and good sleep in a natural environment leads to a simple and happy life. It is as simple as that and that is yogic life. We don't need much to be happy, but we spend our lives searching for happiness in such complicated ways that we miss the point. Living yoga moment to moment is appreciating the simple beauty that nature has to offer us in all areas of our life. How easy it is to forget our birthright of happiness!

The poornahoti of prakriti and the finale of the weekend, was the incredible geru sunset, a beautiful show of colour created by the divine shakti herself. It inspired in all of us the vision of our guru and his grace in our lives. His grace had blessed us all and filled us with love and inspiration. I am sure this weekend has transformed the lives of many, as I feel it transformed my own.

Brazil

Now, back to where I started this story . . . in Brazil. The sun is setting behind the mountains and a chill fills the air. Casa De Guru is an offering to the guru from the disciples in Brazil. It is a place of guru, yoga sadhana and lifestyle. The weekend attracted young and old, but unlike the other venues where we had to create a yogic environment and routine this place is already established as a place of yoga and yogic lifestyle so we started with high energy and inspiration.

The weekend began with kirtan and *Hanuman Chalisa*. Brazilians experience the joy of kirtan and mantra and the children and adults danced with spontaneity and happiness. The weekend was simply a beautiful weekend of living yoga in a natural yogic environment. It is an environment perfect for the practices of yoga ecology and the trees smiled and connected to the people through Ashwattha Aradhana. The small flames of the deepaks shone into the night and it seemed the devatas of the trees were smiling with happiness.

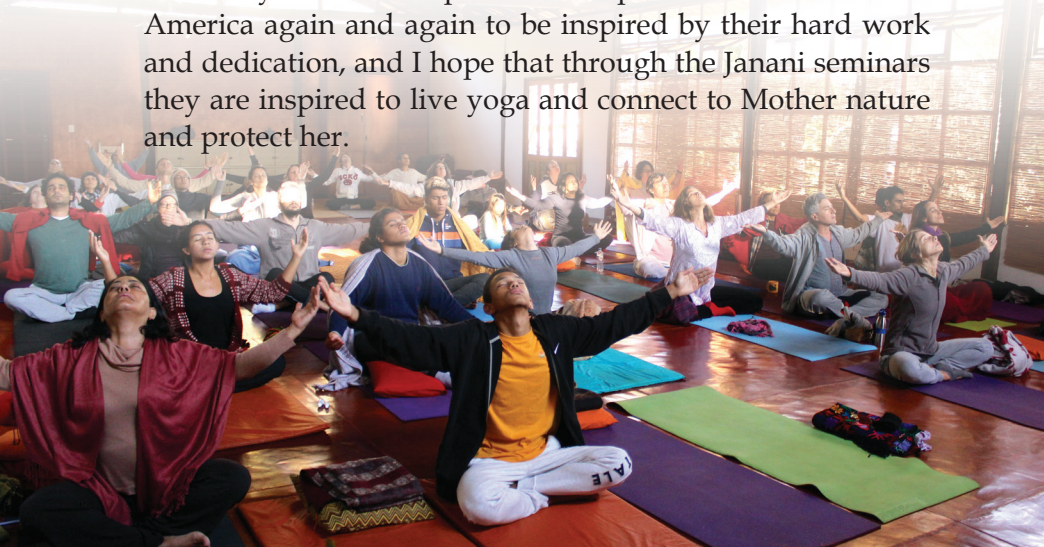
We performed the *Mahamritunjaya* mantra havan on Saturday night in the garden, the rays of the full moon were filtered through the trees, bathing us in a golden light, creating a very special feeling of being one with prakriti, with Mother Nature. The healing havan, mantras and kirtan were offered to Mother Earth to help her manage the stress of the human species and its devastating effects on her ecosystems and other species. The mantras echoed around the valley and not another sound was heard.

People were given a small clay havan kund as prasad and together were taught a small individual daily havan for healing

both the individual and the planet. These small daily sadhanas designed by Swami Niranjan give people a way to connect to nature and in their own small way heal themselves and the environment around them. They provide people with tools to do their little bit for the planet and to live yoga in a creative and constructive way. Through the power of Agni people connect to the divine within themselves and in the environment around them. These are the sadhana of yoga ecology, for people who care about Mother Nature and wish to connect to her and nourish her, whether in the city, the villages or farms.

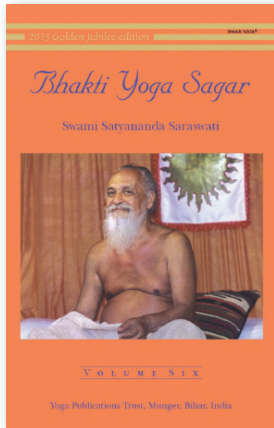
Brazil is a vast and beautiful country, with a great variety of special and natural ecosystems. We explored the local rivers and waterfalls and I was so happy to learn that there are still rivers on Earth where one can drink fresh clean water full of prana and vitality directly from the rivers. I pray that the Brazilian people have the strength to protect these pure waterways. We need them for life on earth.

I am proud to have met so many wonderful people on my South American Janani tour. The Satyananda Yoga tradition around the world maintains its purity, tradition and strength through these brave people who are determined not to be tainted by the material and commercial drive that has poisoned yoga around the world. It is not an easy task but they are doing the best they can with seriousness, sincerity and commitment as per the mandate of their guru Swami Niranjan. To them I offer my love and respect and I hope I can return to South America again and again to be inspired by their hard work and dedication, and I hope that through the Janani seminars they are inspired to live yoga and connect to Mother nature and protect her.



Yajna

From *Bhakti Yoga Sagar*, Volume Six, Swami Satyananda Saraswati



In the forests of South America I have seen rare sights from the pre-Columbian era. I found that the people of the pre-Columbian civilization practised yajna. Archaeological excavations throughout the world investigating the Stone Age, Bronze Age and various ages have given us evidence that they performed a ceremony in which natural herbs were offered into the fire with the chanting of mantras and dance rituals. Unfortunately, those traditions have become extinct throughout the world, except in India.

India has preserved this tradition of yajna for thousands of years. It has given various interpretations of yajna. What are the different forms of yajna? How does an individual perform a yajna? How does a community perform a yajna? And if at all the king or the sovereign of a country wants to perform a yajna, how does he do it? All these things have been preserved, maintained and kept alive in India even until today.

It is not only here in Rikhia that the Sat Chandi Yajna is performed. Yajna in India is not a rare event. It is a very popular event, like popular music in the West. The pandits, the acharyas, who will be coming to perform the yajna are booked years in advance. If you decide to perform a yajna, you can't do it tomorrow or the day after because there will be no acharyas available.

I am telling you this for a reason. Remember that the priests are Brahmins; they are not kshatriyas, the warrior caste, or *vaiśhyas*, the merchant class, or *shudras*, the working class of

India. Not all brahmins perform yajnas, only certain types of brahmins become the acharyas who perform yajna. Rich people, poor people and communities get together, collect some money and invite the brahmins, the priests, to perform the yajna. People in the vicinity are not invited to the yajna. There is no invitation; that is one rule here. When you perform a yajna you prepare it, then you just put posters and banners somewhere along the footpath.

Purifying the environment

People come in their thousands because yajna purifies the physical atmosphere, ecology as you call it. Yajna also purifies the *akashic* or subtle atmosphere, the atmosphere which influences your mind, but first of all it purifies that atmosphere which influences your body. Nowadays you know a lot about the environment, about the greenhouse effect, the heating of the earth, and so on. I don't have to tell you about that. Yajna is the cure, the remedy. First of all, lovers and devotees of the environment, all those who believe that the atmosphere should be purified, that carbon monoxide must be reduced, are the ones who must practise yajna, not only on this scale but also on an individual scale.

In the Vedas, there is a system of yajna which an individual can perform at home with his family. I come from an Arya Samaj family. My father was an Arya Samajist. Arya Samajis are reformers, just like Protestants in Christianity. Every morning, my father would position a few sticks in a copper pot and chant the *Agnihotra Vidhi Veda Mantra* for fifteen minutes:

*Aum shanno devirabhistaya aapo bhavantu peetaye
Sham yorabhi sravantu nah.*

*Om bhooragnaye praanaaya svaaha,
Idamagnaye praanaaya – idam na mama.*

*Aum bhuvaroaayave apaanaaya svaaha,
Idam vaayave apaarnaya – idam na mama.*

*Aum svaraadityaaya vyaanaaya svaaha
idamaadityaaya vyaanaaya – idam na mama.*

*Aum bhoorbhuvah svaragnivaayvaadityebhyah
praanaapaanaavyaanebhyah svaaha*

*Idamagnivaayvaadityebhyah praanaapaanaavyaanebhyah – idam
na mama.*

Svaahaa svaahaa svaahaa svaahaa – aahaah!

I still remember it from the time I was a small child. So an individual can perform yajna at home and purify the atmosphere. A community can perform yajna and purify the atmosphere of the community, the village or town.

More than purification of the physical atmosphere of the earth and its environment, it is now becoming more important that we should purify the mental atmosphere, the psychic atmosphere, the emotional atmosphere which has become corrupt. Your mind is full of bad thoughts. It is just like a monkey which has been stung by a scorpion. Imagine what will happen to it. Then add some champagne and you can imagine what that monkey will be like. You are that monkey. All the monkeys are here!

Now how can you silence that monkey? Our ancestors, your ancestors, everyone's ancestors said, "Perform yajna." *Yajna*



means offering. When you offer food to the poor and hungry, that is yajna. When you give clothes to someone who has none, that is yajna. To give and to give and to give is yajna. In Sanskrit the word yajna is a combination of three letters 'ya' 'ja' and 'na' – production, consumption and distribution. There has to be a balance between production, consumption and distribution. The *Bhagavad Gita* has also suggested various other forms of yajna and you should read it.

No Time for Quarrels

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Nowadays people are unnecessarily worried about the world. They make much of this little world. Study *Yoga Vasishtha* and you will understand that this Earth is but an infinitesimal speck of dust compared to the Infinite Satchidananda. Study *Mandukyopanishad Karika* of Gaudapada. Gaudapada has been a little more liberal; he has compared the Earth to the footprint of a calf. And, yet, how many divisions we find in it! How many nations, how many sections and factions! Where is Hindustan, where is Pakistan, where is Germany, where is America, in this speck of dust?

For a man of vichara there are no boundaries at all in this world. These are all man-made boundaries. The Earth is one. Divisions are created by man. Each man wants to display his vanity! Each man wants to rule others. Lust for power is at the root of all the wars. A mere idea, a mere vibration in the air, an illusory tempting bait of name and fame - they are at the bottom of all wars.

Boundaries have been changed times without number. Has the world got peace now? Every leader thinks that he has got world peace in his pocket. When he pulls out, you find that it is a fresh move for war. Vedanta alone can unite the world. Vedanta is not the monopoly of Hindus. You can find the truths of Vedanta are echoed in all the scriptures of all the religions of the world. Vedanta teaches you the religion of oneness. It is a religion of the heart. It is the religion of love.

Only if everyone practises this religion of love can there be peace in the world. No political 'ism' can ever solve the problem, and bring about peace. When autocratic monarchs ruled over the nations, people thought that democracy would shower peace, plenty and prosperity upon Earth. They dethroned the kings. Democracy also failed to yield the fruit of peace. Some people tried totalitarianism, socialism, communism – so many 'isms'. Each man thought that his reform should start with the individual. Then society would reform by itself. No 'ism' can bring any change overnight.

What vanity! And each new 'ism' created only more problems and more quarrels.

Reform should start with the individual

So also in the case of social reform. Self-styled enlightened men started interfering with the customs and manners of people, in an effort to 'civilize' them. The people lost their old moorings, and the reformers could not offer new sound ones. Masses of people drifted away into chaos. How can blind men lead other blind men? You must first acquire the supreme knowledge of the Reality. Then and then alone can you lead another on the right path.

This world is impermanent. Man's life here is still more fleeting. Even a thousand years is nothing compared to eternity; what to say of even a full lifespan of hundred years. People are merely wasting their life in worthless pursuits of political and social reform. Days, months and years are quietly slipping away. Death will snatch them away unawares. Beware.



Reform yourself. Society will reform itself. Get worldliness out of your heart. The world will take care of itself. Remove the world out of your mind, the world will be peaceful. That is the only solution. This is not pessimism. This is glorious optimism. This is not escapism. It is the only way to face the situation. If each man tries to work out his own salvation, there will be nobody to create the problems! If each man strives heart and soul to practise religion, to do sadhana and to attain God-realization, he will have very little inclination and very little time to create quarrels. Automatically there will be peace on Earth.

People will try to vie with each other in the cultivation of virtues. Imagine what a divine society they will form! Each man will have his own method of approach to the problem of life, but he will be content to work his own way up on the ladder of evolution. Each man will have his own idea of God; but he will be content to worship this God and attain Him. All boundaries will disappear as mysteriously as they appeared! All 'isms' will vanish into the mind of the people whence they originated.

*From Sivananda's Lectures, During All-India and Ceylon
Tour - 1950, chronicler Swami Venkatesananda,
Address given on 29th October 1950,
Dainik Jeevan Chaitanya Prabha Mandali, Mumbai*

Manahprasad Yatra – Journey into Happiness

Premdhara (Laura Gallagher), USA

Common Senses

I don't see what You see

But I do see You

I don't hear what You hear

But I do hear You

I don't feel what You feel

But I do feel You

I don't sense what You sense

But I do sense that You want what I want:

Understanding, Respect and a Joy-filled Life

Approximately eleven years ago, I was teaching hatha yoga in my home studio on Long Island, New York. I received a phone call from a director of an Autism Community Program, asking me if I would want to teach yoga to children with special needs. I said yes to a small group class although I had never taught this population before. Six mothers came to my class with their six sons. What I picked up on immediately was their deep longing and desire for their kids to be out in the community doing typical activities without being judged. These moms were so dedicated to finding a place for their sons. They completely won my heart.

I didn't have any plan for the class. I didn't know what to expect, but intuition took over and I let the little boys take the lead. I knew immediately I needed them to teach me how to teach. From that day on my fate or my lesson in life was set – I will take the cue from the student.

Over the next three and a half to four years, we met weekly in that small group. It worked like magic, performing simple

basic poses: cat, cow, cobra, yoga stories (invented by them), making magical invisible cakes, even sun salutations. Each child became the teacher and took turns by picking another to teach them. We created connections. In 2012 I took a small break but this path called me back again in 2014. The kids weren't kids now but young adults. No longer suitable to make pretend cat and cow animal games. The practice transformed into individualized personal instruction to adapt to their individual abilities. It was more appropriate to respect them with grown-up instructions. We no longer made imaginary cakes but baked the real deal and cooked nutritious food. These guys are grown-ups. More students were coming and classes were moving along over the next few years.

At the end of 2017, I was deepening my personal practice and increasingly interested in yoga nidra. I was ardently searching Youtube for true yoga nidra, not guided imagery, true yoga nidra. I landed on yoga nidra and ajapa japa by Swami Niranjana. I couldn't get enough of him, leading me to daily antar mouna practice, watching all his videos and then to the BSY website.

I could not wait to meet Swamiji in person. My husband Joe Hanshe and I signed up for Raja Yoga Yatra 1 and flew out to India to deepen our practice and also to ask how to best serve those with special needs including autism.

One step inside the ashram and my goal was met. BSY opened up more energy and positivity than I had hoped for or imagined. Swamiji has coloured my life with his brush of happiness and I know that happiness has influenced my next level of teaching and learning from the young adults.

My meeting with Swamiji was the greatest moment of my life. My husband and my daughter understand this! I am not going to make an attempt to find the words to describe it because then this paper will not be written! Swamiji did give me the support and blessing to return to New York to continue my work.

I brought home the practices of yoga – pawanmuktasana, TTK, yoga nidra, bhramari pranayama and yantra colouring for the next phase of working together with my fifteen or so students. Oh yes, I also brought back a never-ending supply of happiness.

The happiness factor

Yes, I came home with happiness, I deeply appreciate that this specific energy has transformed my centre. Within no time, the practice more than tripled. Just add happiness!

- Students respond to happiness and love.
- Students respond to the practices.
- Students respond to being comfortable in a stress-free zone.
- Students respond to a smile when they complete the task, like completing pawanmuktasana 1. They are confident that they are doing a typical class without judgement that their mothers longed for years ago.

These young adults are never spoken to like little children or as less than intelligent people. They are some, if not the most, intelligent people I know. They deserve to be shown care, respect and patience. They have been misunderstood long enough.

Let's remember that we all have special needs and may be easily triggered by some memory or expectation. What gets us through is a smile and comfort. They are no different than me. I am offered an insight into a world, a fascinating world and I owe them my gratitude and service. In fact, they are my heroes, courageously facing adversity moment by moment, somewhat trapped in a body out of sync with the mind. One young man describes it on his letter-board as 'we are tortured souls'. I am in awe of these folks.

It seems I have four year cycles. My vision for the next phase of the manahprasad yatra is to bring together their families for family-community classes. My sankalpa is to give, love and serve with positivity, courage and creativity.

Some testimonials from my friends

Dede (Down syndrome, transition challenged), background – Mom said D does not want to leave home once she arrives home after school. She will not get out of the car, she will not move. Now, on her yoga days, on her way to yoga class, she waves her arms in the car at the other cars to try and push them out of the way so she can get to yoga faster! When Dede arrives, she jumps out of the car to hurry to class.

(I hear this over and over from care-givers that the students are so happy when they pull into the driveway. They point at the centre and smile.)

Kevin (Autism/non-verbal, focus challenged) – His mother was called to a meeting at school because he was not performing tasks. Mom brought in a video of him at the yoga centre to prove that they were wrong and he is happily doing his tasks in yoga.

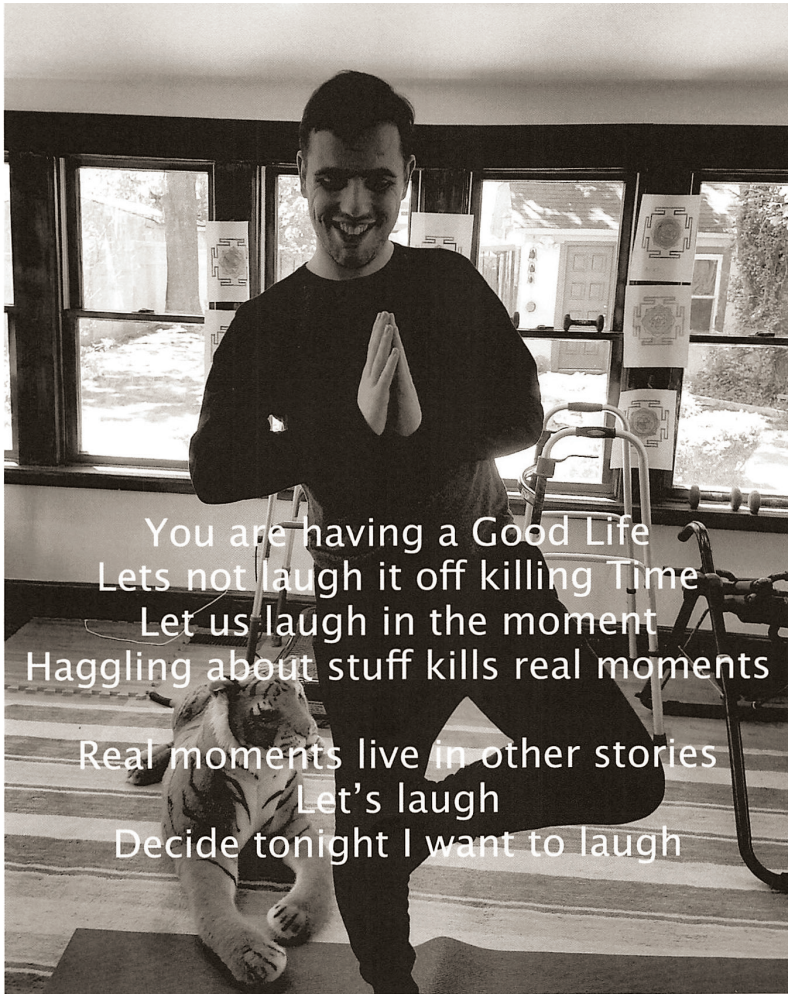
He himself wrote on a letter-board – ‘Yoga is wonderful because it makes me feel relaxed’.

Cathy (Autism/non-verbal, physical challenges) – She wrote on her letter-board that she loves Swamiji’s voice when listening to the ‘yoga-nap.’ Yoga makes her happy and relaxed.

Gary (Autism) – High functioning, he works as a janitor. He asked me to thank Swamiji for the yoga nidra. Gary took and failed his driving learner’s permit test twice. Before his third attempt, he stopped by the yoga centre for yoga nidra to help him relax. During the session, his support staff read him the study lessons. He left, took the test and passed. You go, Gary!!

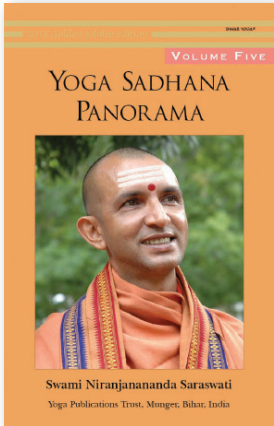
James (Autism, self-injuries challenge) – He wrote on his letter-board ‘Yoga keeps me from hurting myself’.

And following is a poem by Richie:



First Stage of Bhakti: Uplifting Associations

From Yoga Sadhana Panorama, Volume Five, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The first component of bhakti is associating with an uplifting environment. This means that you now have to decide on your associations. You associate with those who can transform and uplift your life, who can make your heart sing with their optimism, positivity and clarity. Of course, it is very difficult to find somebody in the external world who can make one's heart sing, so naturally one is diverted towards the Cosmic Self, God, because it is God's energy which makes our hearts sing.

Some people associate this feeling and experience with God, others associate this relationship with guru. There are people who associate this feeling or relationship with someone who is knowledgeable, well versed in wisdom. Whatever the approach adopted externally, the main idea is that you make the choice. You choose the association. The connection has to take place with something that will always keep us connected to the transformative energy. That is the first step of bhakti yoga. It begins in meditation.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, one of the spiritual scriptures of India, there is a beautiful statement about associations in the second chapter. When the mind associates with objects, it gives birth to desire. We all attempt to attain this desire. When we are unable to fulfil the desire, frustration is experienced internally. When frustration is experienced, the mind loses its clarity

and becomes obsessed by what it has not achieved or gained. There is a more intense drive to fulfil that desire or ambition. When the drive becomes more forceful, along with frustration and personal, self-oriented expectations, a split in the mind is created, destroying mental peace. The ability to discriminate disappears and the materialistic, obsessive nature becomes predominant, eventually leading to the death of the human character and human peace.

When a man thinks of the objects, attachment to them arises; from attachment desire is born; from desire anger arises. (2:62)

From anger comes delusion; from delusion the loss of memory; from loss of memory the destruction of discrimination; from the destruction of discrimination he perishes. (2:63)

We are not able to manage our associations because we are caught up in our own expectations and desires, too selfish and not selfless. It does not mean that everybody has to become selfless and ignore their own needs, but there has to be a balance between giving and taking. If you are fifty percent selfish, you have to be fifty percent selfless. It is as simple as that. A balance between selfishness and selflessness has to be achieved. If you renounce selfishness one hundred percent, then you become Swami Satyananda or Swami Sivananda, but if you are able to renounce fifty percent of your selfish nature and adopt fifty percent of your selfless nature, then you become a yogi. So in the first stage of bhakti yoga, we try to achieve a balance through meditation by reanalyzing and observing our associations and connections to allow the emotions to express themselves in the form of strength, not weakness.

– Extract of a lecture delivered during the International Yoga Convention, held from 20–22 May 2005, Bogota, Colombia



Yoga Publications Trust

Janani, Annadwai Pranah – Food is Prana

Swami Prembhava Saraswati

102 pp, soft cover, ISBN: 978-93-84753-67-2

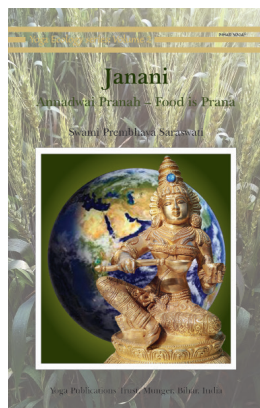
Janani, Annadwai Pranah – Food is Prana is the second volume of the *Janani* series, inspired by Swami Niranjananda Saraswati and dedicated to the ancient *vidya* or science of yoga ecology. It explores the nurturing aspect of *Prakriti*, nature, in our lives. We understand the relationship between the individual and the environment by looking at the many facets of food: its production, distribution, consumption and waste. The sadhana offers a simple way to change our attitudes and habits towards food, thereby enhancing our own health and that of the planet.

Concepts are presented in simple language and the practices are accessible to all aspirants who wish to renew their bond with Mother Nature on a daily basis.

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www.biharyoga.net

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[Satyam Yoga Prasad](http://www.satyamyogaprasad.net)

Available at 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](http://www.yogawiki.org)

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/)

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Yoga Peeth Events & Yoga Vidya Training 2019-2020

Nov 7-Jan 25	Yogic Studies, 3 months (English)
Nov 4-10	Kriya Yoga Yatra 1, 2
Nov 11-17	Kriya Yoga Yatra 3
Dec 18-22	Yoga Chakra Series
Dec 25	Swami Satyananda's Birthday
Jan 27-29	Sri Yantra Aradhana
Jan 30	Basant Panchami Celebrations/BSY Foundation Day
Feb 9-13	Yoga Capsule - Respiratory (Hindi)
Feb 9-13	Yoga Capsule - Arthritis & Rheumatism (Hindi)
Feb 14	Bal Yoga Diwas, Children's Yoga Day
Feb 23-27	Yoga Capsule - Digestive (Hindi)
Feb 23-29	Total Health Capsule (Hindi)
Feb-Mar	Yogic Studies, 2 months (Hindi)
Mar 14-20	Hatha Yoga Yatra 1, 2
Apr 1-30	Yoga Training, 1 month (Hindi)
Apr 4-8	Yoga Lifestyle Capsule (Hindi/English)
Apr 13-19	Raja Yoga Yatra 1, 2
Sep 19-25	Raja Yoga Yatra 1, 2
Oct 1-30	Progressive Yoga Vidya Training 1 (English)
Nov-Jan 2021	Yogic Studies, 3 months (English)
Nov 2-8	Kriya Yoga Yatra 1, 2
Nov 21-27	Hatha Yoga Yatra 1, 2
Dec 2-6	Yoga Lifestyle Capsule (Hindi/English)
Dec 25	Swami Satyananda's Birthday
Jan 3-6 2021	Yoga Chakra Series
Every Saturday	Mahamrityunjaya Havan
Every Ekadashi	Bhagavad Gita Path
Every Poornima	Sundarkand Path
Every 4th, 5th & 6th	Guru Bhakti Yoga
Every 12th	Akhanda Path of Ramacharitanamas

For more information on the above events contact:

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