

YOGA

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Hari Om

YOGA is compiled, composed and published by the sanniyasin disciples of Swami Satyananda Saraswati for the benefit of all people who seek health, happiness and enlightenment. It contains information about the activities of Bihar School of Yoga, Bihar Yoga Bharati, Yoga Publications Trust and Yoga Research Fellowship.

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2019, Paduka Darshan, Munger



GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Reflect a little, do vichara a little

Analyze your thoughts. Scrutinize your motives. Remove selfishness. Calm the passions. Serve and love all. Purify your heart. Cleanse the dross of your mind. Hear and reflect. Daily spiritual diary is an indispensable requisite and of paramount importance. It is the eye-opener. It develops the *manana shakti* or the power of reflection. It will help you to destroy all your evil qualities and to be regular in your spiritual practices.

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

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(57th year of publication)



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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 ॥

Prime Minister's Award 2019

to Bihar School of Yoga
for Outstanding Contribution for Promotion and Development of Yoga





Blessed Self,
Hari Om.

On 21st of June 2019, Bihar School of Yoga was selected for the Prime Minister's Award for Outstanding Contribution for Promotion and Development of Yoga, in the national institution category. It is with great pleasure that we inform you of this award bestowed in recognition of the work of Bihar School of Yoga.

While the award has been given to Bihar School of Yoga, the real recipients are Sri Swami Sivananda and Sri Swami Satyananda, the spiritual luminaries who had the vision of yoga, and dedicated their lives to the realization of that vision. The seed of yoga vidya that Swami Satyananda sowed in Munger over fifty years ago, today has brought forth a bountiful harvest, providing spiritual and yogic sustenance to thousands across the globe.

As we accept the award in humility and gratitude for what we have received from our masters, we also express our appreciation for the contribution you have made to yoga over the many years. Sri Swami Satyananda sowed the seed of yoga, but it is your effort, enthusiasm and commitment that has protected, nourished and watered that seed. Your dedication over the decades, has made Sri Swamiji's vision a reality, not only in your lives but in the lives of the countless students and seekers who you have been able to inspire.

Across 27 states of India and across the globe from the United Kingdom and Europe to South Africa, from the Americas to Australasia, the members of the Satyananda Yoga family are united in their commitment to the yoga vision of Sri Swamiji. To all of you, Bihar School of Yoga extends its heartfelt gratitude.

To the new generation we convey our hope and prayer that you will honour and cherish the seeds of yoga vidya, as the generation before you has done. Work together in the spirit of yoga, for the mission of our Gurus. Through your effort and commitment water the seeds. With the light of inspiration and enthusiasm they will grow, and with sanyam and samarpan reap the harvest so that all who come to you may benefit.

Swami Niranjan

Experiencing the Koshas

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



First, the purpose of asana is not to do physical exercise, but to create a condition, a *sthiti*, a state in the body which you can sustain for an extended period of time. So, whatever asana you do, even if it is a dynamic asana, you have to focus on two ideas: *sthiram*, stability, and *sukham*,

comfort. No matter what asana you do, you have to make the effort to experience stillness and comfort in it.

Second, asanas are not just physical exercises; they are the means to access other dimensions of human nature and personality. The other dimensions include, apart from the body, prana, mind, consciousness and spirit. They are known as the *koshas*: annamaya kosha, pranamaya kosha, manomaya kosha, vijnanamaya kosha and anandamaya kosha. Sri Swamiji taught us that asanas are not merely to experience the body, but to go progressively through the experiences of annamaya, pranamaya, manomaya, vijnanamaya and come to anandamaya, and he defined a process, a sequence for this advancement.

At first, focus on the physical body in the asana: the movement, the posture, the muscles and the joints which are being used, extended, flexed, etc. Focus the entire awareness on the physical experience, how you are moving, where is the tension or the tightness, how far can you bend, where is the stiffness, the pain, the ache, discover all those aspects of annamaya kosha.

Once you have cultivated the annamaya kosha awareness of the asana, move into the pranamaya kosha, by linking the

breath with the posture. Now eliminate the body awareness, let it dissolve, let it drop, and just become the breath which is moving. As the breath moves, the body comes into the posture. The breath is guiding the body, not your effort and not your awareness. The focus is not on the body while you are doing the asana but on the breathing, and letting the breathing bring you into the state of asana.

The third stage is visualization. You have to visualize the perfect posture in your mind. If you are bending forward and can only bend five inches, it doesn't matter. If you are three feet away from the floor, it doesn't matter, but visualize the correct posture in your mind. The stronger your visualization of the correct posture, the more the body will adjust and adapt to move into that correct posture.

First, it is body awareness: annamaya kosha; second, it is breath awareness: pranamaya kosha; third, visualization: manomaya kosha. After you have gone through the process of visualization, then you focus on a chakra, a psychic centre, and feel the activation of the chakra while you are doing the posture. Deepening the awareness of chakras will lead you into vijnanamaya kosha. The fifth component is mantra awareness in the posture. Becoming aware of a mantra while you are practising the asana and allowing the mantra to predominate will lead you into anandamaya kosha. In this way, one practice can take you from annamaya to anandamaya by following this sequence and balancing all the different dimensions of the personality.

Two ideas should be clear. One, the sequence that Sri Swamiji taught us. Asanas are not physical exercises, they are postures which, when performed correctly, will give you the experience of annamaya kosha to anandamaya kosha. Each asana will do it, no matter how insignificant you consider them. Two, the practice is not mechanical, it is always done with awareness and relaxation in the posture.

– 25 October 2019, Munger Yoga Symposium

Being a Responsible Yoga Teacher

Swami Vedantananda, Portugal

Society today faces many illnesses: physical illnesses, emotional distress, mental problems, fears, and so on. People have fears that didn't exist before, such as terrorism, crime, fear of losing jobs. Therefore they are turning to yoga to find answers to their problems, and they know that they need more than asana and pranayama. I have a quote from Sri Swamiji:

Through asanas and pranayama, you develop and maintain a sound and healthy body. Through selfless service you exhaust your vasanas and karma. Through devotion and self-surrender, you stabilize your emotions. Through mental control, you increase your mental capacity. Through self-analysis and self-enquiry, you sharpen your discriminative faculty. Through meditation, you expand your consciousness. Thus, all the layers of your personality are properly developed and you become an integrated personality. This is the task of yoga.

Through regular practice of Satyananda Yoga techniques, people are finding ways to live more harmoniously and healthily, and to be more tranquil. It is with the aim of helping people to live like this that we teach yoga. By staying true to the purity and the integrity of the tradition, we can help people and also help realize our gurus' vision to take yoga out into society.

Now we come to the responsibility of taking care of our students' mental, emotional and physical health. A responsible yoga teacher knows his or her own limitations and capacity, and never teaches beyond his or her experience or competency.



At the same time you should know the limitations and capacity of your students, and not go beyond that. Our system is designed to progress in a slow and systematic way so that the development takes place in a balanced way.

The responsibility applies also at the mental and emotional levels, and this is particularly relevant when you are teaching pranayama, yoga nidra and meditation. Some people come to yoga just for the physical side of things, they just want to be a little bit more flexible, relaxed and calm. They won't realize that by letting go of tensions on the physical level, one is also going to be letting go of emotional and mental tensions. They may not be ready to handle that, but you as the teacher must be ready and able to handle that. It is your responsibility to pick up the pieces, for the practices will take people to places that they may not have been to before. Therefore, it is a duty to look after them.

If students have problems and want to speak to you, you need to be available for a relaxed and friendly question and answer session. If you find that your students have problems that are beyond your experience, then you need to know more experienced yoga teachers or therapists whom you can pass them on to. You may need to develop some listening and counselling skills. But remember, you are a yoga teacher, not a therapist, so know your limitations when you are trying to help people in that way.

– 21 October 2019, Munger Yoga Symposium

Going with Determination

Sannyasi Vivekamani, New Delhi, India



The Munger Yoga Symposium 2018 has been a path-breaking event in the lives of all of us who witnessed and participated in it. The immaculate execution of the program indicated that the vision of a sage cannot be anything but Satyam-Shivam-Sundaram. It felt like Swamiji envisioned everything in one glimpse in his meditation and conceptualized the whole of yoga vidya in a language that would make it available to people of the present age. The mystical wisdom of yoga was taught to us in a manner that made those deep, ancient concepts crystal clear.

We are so fortunate to receive this great vidya directly from the masters, and there is a commitment to inculcate it in our lives. All of us go with determination to follow the mandate of our Swami Niranjan to turn our lifestyle into a yogic lifestyle by integrating the six yogas of the Yoga Chakra into our daily life. The practices have been given and are further made accessible through Satyam Yoga Prasad. We go bathed in blessings, love and inspiring energy created during the Symposium to do our best in living the life of a true practitioner of yoga vidya.

In the Splendour of Geru

Swami Yogabhakti, France



To me, coming to Munger and coming to a seminar like this is being in the splendour of geru, something which I don't always wear because I live and work in the city. I have been working for decades, but I never give a yoga lesson or a talk without wearing geru. To me it means being in the lineage of the yoga that is so wonderfully concentrated here through Swami Niranjan, Swami Satyananda, Swami Sivananda. And behind them is this huge world of great sages.

I am sure that when children see a sage, they remember the fairy tales of magicians and fairies, but they also perceive the glory of the wisdom of all ages coming back to them. That is something I saw here in the beautiful presentations which the children of Munger exemplified before our eyes. They had a message: to protect the planet. It was not just dancing and

singing, they had something to say to us. That is why I believe in the hidden doors of Intelligence, with a capital 'I', and the children have the secret of it.

Like children, we also should open our imagination and think of what we have received here. It is the original, traditional yoga set up by those elegant figures dressed in geru who simply greet us and make everything so easy that you wonder how it was possible. They exemplify high thinking which is in them, maintained and increased every day through their sadhana. At the same time, they represent the principles of precision and organization. In them we realize the relation of extremes when they are adjusted, as yoga advises us. Even the blue and red of the logo tells us that ida and pingala are in us, but they have to be adjusted so that the third force rises which is not the addition of ida and pingala, but something else. To realize this you have to come to Munger, you have to come to Rikhia, you have to imbibe the atmosphere and see the real master coming in front of you. He can be playing and joking, yet during the practices when he adjusts the postures of the crowd, there are no mistakes except when, for a joke, he passes from three to twenty-five.

I am amazed every time at the possibility that we have to make opposites come together. That is the force exemplified in this pandal. The way it grew out from the lawn, I don't know how, because the last time I was here, I didn't see it! Then, after the force of creation, there comes the beauty, decorating the place with the flowers and trees, so that even though the air might be polluted outside, here we breathe fresh air, we receive prana. Prana for physical health, but also prana for the mind, the emotions, the deeper dimensions of our beings. We are recharged by this force and the beauty that we find here. Since we have been here for this unveiling of the second chapter, we will be able to say in the future to our friends and children, "I was there!"

Funny Jokes

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



If you become what you wanted to, you will always remain restless. Real, eternal peace will descend upon you only if you become what He wants you to become. Always pray to the Almighty to make you aspire for your real aim.

* * *

You have to change - entirely, fully and wholly. The topsy-turvy centre of gravity will have to be shifted. Replace your aspirations. Think anew. Act anew. Talk in a new way.

* * *

Let me tell you that human life is full of funny jokes. One complains of the lack of opportunities, but do you know how many times enlightenment comes and knocks at your door but returns disappointed, finding you in the sleep of unawareness? Understand this and rise above these funny jokes of life.

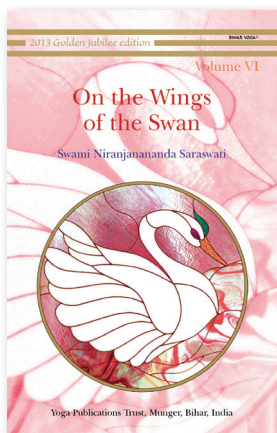
* * *

Go in and search for real peace. Go in and find out the pearl of bliss. No, not outside! Not in the fulfilment of your whims, cravings, desires. Futile search, dear child! Go in every now and then, like a moneyed passenger who feels his pocket every now and then.



Sanyam

From On the Wings of the Swan, Volume VI, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Sanyam is usually defined as ‘restraint’ in English, yet ‘restraint’ does not convey the exact meaning. The word sanyam is composed of the two Sanskrit roots *sam* and *yam*. *Yam* is like *yama* in the *Yoga Sutras*: a state of mind that you hold and are able to cultivate and develop. *Sam* means total: the total personality, the total expression, the total behaviour, all the dimensions of human nature. Therefore, *sanyam* literally means that all the dimensions of the human personality are taken through a process of transformation and beautification, and that state is maintained and developed.

Sanyam works at various levels: first the sensorial level, second the mental level, and then at the psychic and spiritual levels. Sanyam, or the process of transformation, applies to each and every expression in life, including behaviour, attitude, speech and thought.

What is the purpose of sanyam? The psychoanalysts of the past and modern ages have described different states of consciousness. The mind is the interactive consciousness, the surface of consciousness. There are further classifications according to the intensity of experience: conscious, *jagrat*; subconscious, *swapna*; and unconscious, *sushupti*. Yet, what is the conscious mind, what is the subconscious mind and what is the unconscious mind?

We can describe the experience of *jagrat* and how one responds to the activities of the conscious mind. Right now



you are outside and there is light everywhere, everything is illuminated. You can see as far as you want to see, there are no obstructions in the way: that is the conscious dimension. However, you cannot be aware of the entire conscious dimension at the same time, just as you cannot be aware of your total surroundings or environment at the same time. You don't know what is happening behind you, yet you are not sleeping. You don't know what is happening beside you, yet your eyes are open. You don't know what is happening below you, yet you are aware. So where is the focus?

Here is an example. You are looking at me, the torch light of your attention is on me, yet many things are happening around you. There is the sound of birds singing and the noise of cars and music. There are objects, trees, flowers and buildings around you and behind you. You know they exist, yet if you want to bring them into focus, you have to consciously listen to them or look at them. The focus, the torchlight of consciousness, is awareness, attention. If you

look somewhere, the consciousness shifts. You are awake, you are not sleeping, you are not dreaming or fantasizing, yet if you simply look away, the focus shifts. Therefore, even in the conscious dimension, the awareness is limited to the present experience that the senses are attached to.

The senses have their own limitations; they cannot be aware of the entire creation all at the same time. You can look north, east, south or west, yet not in all four directions simultaneously. That is the nature of jagrat consciousness. Everything is illuminated, yet the focus of awareness is only on one object, which is highlighted due to its involvement with the senses. What happens in this process? While you are watching that building, someone behind you gets out a gun and takes aim at you. The same thing happens in the mind also. All these various expectations and ambitions that you cannot face develop. They manifest while you are looking the other way. You do not even know where they have come from, yet suddenly you find yourself confronting that obsessive passion, that obsessive aggression, for no apparent rhyme or reason. One minute ago you were at peace with yourself and one minute later you are disturbed. All this play happens in jagrat, the conscious level.



What is swapna, the subconscious? Inside the building there is light, but no direct sunlight. It is dim, and if you need to work there, you turn on the light. The light in each area of the building illuminates a particular area only. The subconscious is like the conscious mind, but instead of being fully illuminated by the all-pervasive sunlight, it is now illuminated in parts by individual bulbs, which represent the memory, the impressions, the thoughts, ambitions, strengths, weaknesses, desires and passions. All these areas are being illuminated independently, not by homogeneous lighting, but by individual bulbs which only illuminate that particular area. Therefore, when you go to swapna, it is neither bright nor dark. Each bulb represents an individual experience, memory or quality. That is the subconscious.

The characteristic of the unconscious is absence of light, absence of awareness, absence of knowledge or experience. Everything exists, yet there is no connection, no relationship, just as the colours and forms of trees and flowers exist at night, but you don't see them. Everything continues to exist, waiting for the light to shine. This is the unconscious.

The activities and contents of the conscious, subconscious and unconscious are reflected in our life and in our character. In each individual, the limited conditioned nature is tamasic. The purpose of sanyam is to transform these tamasic states of consciousness, which at present are focused only on association between the senses and the object, so we can derive the appropriate wisdom and experience.

If you want to generate electricity from a flowing river, first you need to contain the flow by building a dam that holds it, lets it build up and gradually, in a controlled manner, allows it to pass through an outlet with force, thus creating another type of power, hydro-electric power. You are not drying up the entire riverbed; you are ensuring that the normal flow in the river becomes the cause of a greater energy source for a particular purpose. This controlled and guided action is known as sanyam.

The practice of sanyam is firstly sensorial. The association with the senses: visual and tactile impressions, smells, sounds, taste, has to be curbed, as it is the senses that give birth to cravings and desires. The eyes look at a flower. They recognize and appreciate the beauty, the colour, the smell. Suddenly a desire comes: "It's beautiful, I want it!" It is natural for this desire to come up. However, this desire has two parts: the first part is recognizing that the flower is beautiful, the second part is wanting to possess it. The association of the sense organs with the object has given birth to a desire to possess it. The beauty was seen by the eyes, yet the idea of possession came after the beauty was appreciated by the mind. This applies to everything: luxuries, houses, cars, stereo sets, TV sets, boyfriends, girlfriends, everything comes in this purview, and then emotional and intellectual responses are evoked.

Managing these emotional responses is the next item of sanyam. If you stop at the point where you say, "The flower is beautiful," that is sanyam. If you bring to the second part, "I wish to possess it," then it is no longer sanyam; it becomes *swartha*, selfishness. Sanyam is appreciation of beauty; *swartha* is the desire to possess it. Sensorial sanyam has to come first. There is nothing wrong with a desire for pizza, but if you think about it every day, the desire becomes an obsession. Therefore, first the senses have to be managed through sanyam.

After the senses, the four instincts: *ahara*, craving for fulfilment and satisfaction; *nidra*, craving for relaxation, sleep and comfort; *bhaya*, insecurities and fears; and *maithuna*, sensual passions, have to be managed through sanyam. We become so caught up in our own instinct-generated thoughts that we bind ourselves to different ideas, objects, environments and climates, both external and internal. If we can learn not to bind ourselves through the tiny proddings and associations of the instincts then a lot of mental and psychological problems can be solved.

One simple idea can become an obsession and become so powerful that it can change your mental attitude and



behaviour completely. This is known as instinct and often there is no conscious control over it. Many people's behaviour is compulsive; they are compelled to behave in a certain manner. Some people cannot live without being negative; they will always find a way to pass a snide remark, yet they don't realize they have done so. This absence of awareness of one's own actions, behaviour and attitude is also changed by sanyam.

It can be said that food is required for the body, pleasure for the mind and sanyam for the soul or *atma*. The body cannot survive for long without food. Food nourishes and vitalizes the body, therefore we exist. Food creates prana, which maintains the physical structure. If you don't eat, the prana will gradually become depleted, the vitality will go and the body will become weak and sick.

Pleasure plays the same role for the mind. If one is continually under pressure and tension, the mind gets bogged down in a very black state from which it cannot extract itself. To remove that state, pleasure is necessary. It refreshes the mind; it refreshes the mental pranas. If you read a good book, the mind changes. If you watch a good movie, play, joke and laugh, there is a temporary shift. These temporary shifts take the mind away from its areas of frustration and anxiety, and revitalize it.

Sanyam plays the same role for the soul. The soul is an energy. It is a shakti like the mind is a shakti; however, it is more subtle than the mind. The body is the gross manifest form of this shakti, the mind is the subtle form of this shakti, and the spirit is the causal form of this shakti. Are we looking at the body and mind and ignoring the soul? We take care of the body and mind as we identify with them, and they are more visible, tangible and understandable, yet the spirit is the real Self within us, and that energy becomes affected by the states of mind and body.

The only way to release the energy of the spirit is through sanyam. In this context, sanyam means to hold a balanced attitude so that the instincts, obsessive desires and dim, unlit areas of the psyche that drag us away from expressions of the heart or soul can no longer distract us. We restrain selfish impressions that the mind or the senses would naturally gravitate towards. In this way, sanyam helps realign the consciousness so we express the energies of the soul.

The body, mind, emotions and spirit have to be seen as one unit. In this way, we can understand how to reach the dimension of the spirit by using the body and mind to express compassion and love, the language of the heart.

Sanyam in itself is a complete sadhana that can take a whole lifetime to perfect. You can perfect any posture in one month. You can learn kriya and kundalini yoga and have good experiences in six months. However, to master sanyam can take a whole lifetime of persistence every day, fine-tuning the radio of the head, fine-tuning the radio of the emotions and fine-tuning the radio of the sensorial experiences.

Real yoga is sanyam, not asana, pranayama and meditation, as sanyam transforms and beautifies the entire dimension of the human personality. Asana, pranayama and meditation are only pastimes, fun and games, ways to enjoy life; the real yoga is sanyam.

– 22 October 2004

The Way of Ancient Living

From May I Answer That, Swami Sivananda Saraswati



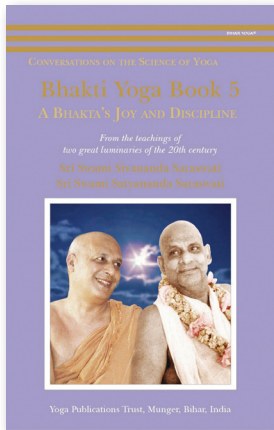
Our ancestors used to have a well-regulated, a disciplined life. They were not slaves of their senses as the modern people are. They used to do japa, pranayama, sandhya vandana and *swadhyaya*, study of books like the *Gita*, the *Bhagavata* and the *Ramayana*. They used to do charity and selfless service, and observe *vratas*, vows like Ekadashi, Sri Rama Navami, Sri Krishna Ashtami and Dattatreya Jayanti. They used to conduct spiritual conferences and pray for world peace and not for their own individual selves.

They used to take plenty of physical exercise in the form of walking ten to twenty miles a day at a stretch. They used to observe yama and niyama very rigidly. They used to live mostly in villages and not in congested areas. They were self-reliant and not dependent on others even for trivial matters. They used to have Kaya Siddhi as well as Vak Siddhi.

When the present-day generation realizes the value of the way of ancient living, surely it will achieve all that it desires with the *prasannata*, the grace, of the devas.

A Bhakta's Way of Life

From Conversations on the Science of Yoga – Bhakti Yoga Book 5,
A Bhakta's Joy and Discipline



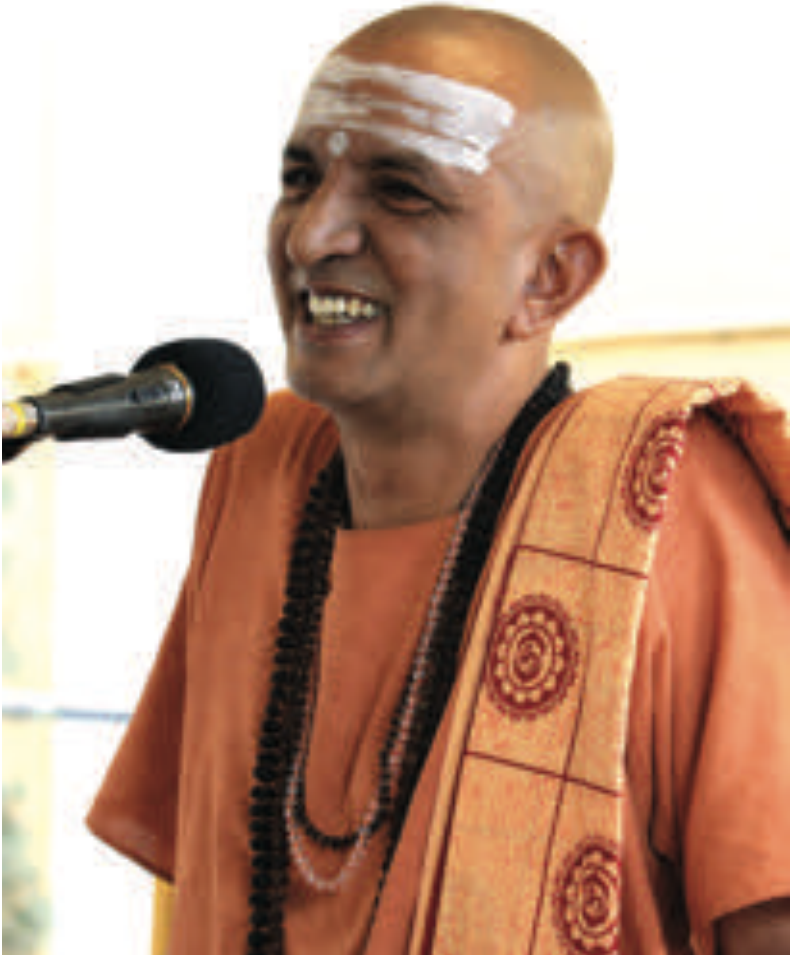
How did bhakti yoga become a lifestyle?

Swami Niranjanananda: Bhakti is not a philosophy, not a religion, not devotion; it is a way of life. The concept of bhakti yoga started as a way of life, not as a way of devotion. According to the Indian system, time is classified in four ages: Satya Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dwarka Yuga and Kali Yuga, the present age.

From ancient records, scriptures and the history of the world, it is clear that most of the religions have come about during the time of Kali Yuga. In the other three ages there were no religions, instead only one religion – the Bhagavat religion or dharma. *Bhagavat* means 'god', so it was the religion of god. The idea was that an individual who has taken birth has to connect with the higher, the supreme, the transcendental nature. The human being is finite and the transcendental nature is infinite.

God was in his transcendental form as G-O-D, having the quality of generation, organization and destruction. Connecting with this power, this force is the aim of bhakti yoga. The desire, the drive to know where one is connected is the desire to know oneself, the transcendental nature and God.

One realizes one's inner nature or transcendental nature when one is able to maintain equipoise, serenity and peace within. When there is distraction and dissipation, there is no awareness, no focus, no attention, but with awareness and focus, realization can take place effortlessly. Therefore,



to maintain equilibrium in life became the basic teaching of bhakti yoga.

Whether the text on bhakti and bhakti yoga was written by Sri Krishna, Narada and Sandilya or others, only a few concepts were given. First, to have faith in God, *Ishwara pranidhana*; second, to maintain inner purity, *atmashuddhi*; and third, to be equipoised, *samatvam*, when confronting the opposites or duality in life. These three concepts were the main ideas for bhakti yoga to become a lifestyle.

The Yogic Way of Life

From Teachings of Swami Satyananda Saraswati, Volume III

Whichever way of life we adopt for ourselves, we expect some outcome from it. Whether it is a moral lifestyle, a religious way of life or even if we want to live like a vagabond, everybody, if he is intelligent, has to understand why he chooses that particular way of life for himself.

In this context, I would like to say that many people in the East and West have adopted a new way of life called the yogic life. This, of course, needs explanation and clarification. It does not mean that when we choose the yogic way of life, we adopt a new religion, or that we become a puritan overnight, or change our external lifestyle, and so forth.

Why would we want to adopt a particular way of life? Is it because we accept it as a needed change for ourselves, or as a religious way, or do we believe that by adopting that way of life we will be able to express our awareness much better?

Sometimes we reflect during the serious moments of our life and we begin to find out our relationship with time, space and creation. This, of course, I think animals don't do. Then we try to discover if there is a greater and higher consciousness within us which we have to realize and express.

The style of life which we have adopted so far does not seem to be helpful in discovering this deeper and basic consciousness that I am talking about. It comes to every individual as a realization, but that realization alone is not enough – one needs to have some deeper experience. To have that experience, one must adjust many items that relate to one's life, and it is in this context that the yogic way of life has to be understood.

*– 27 August 1982, Old Cabell Hall, University of Virginia,
Charlottesville, Virginia, USA*



Impressions and Experiences

Yogic Lifestyle Capsule, 2 to 6 June 2019

The Yoga Lifestyle Capsule was the best experience and I got all the solutions to my problems. I am looking forward to succeeding in the challenge of living a yogic lifestyle.

– *Leena Chauhan, Nagpur*

The experience at Bihar School of Yoga has been surreal and probably the greatest spiritual experience of our lives. All the gurus had one thing in common and that is 'positivity'. The main take-home message that we learnt in a week's time is to be aware and to be always positive.

– *Shruti Singh and Sudha Sindhu, Munger*

I feel blessed by the opportunity to attend the Yoga Lifestyle Capsule. The course is perfectly and beautifully designed taking into account the needs of people. In five days the course has given what the experience of a whole life cannot give. Deepest gratitude to Swamiji and all at BSY.

– *Vivek, Thane*



The message of the 2nd Chapter of Yoga, to inculcate yoga in our daily life, made me wonder if this chapter is meant for high level yoga practitioners who have perfected asana and pranayama. This five-day power-packed yoga lifestyle capsule busted this myth. It made me realize that even for a layman like me it is possible to implement yoga in daily life. I was truly fascinated by the holistic yet simple approach of yoga that was presented to us. I have been able to discover myself a little and hope that this self-discovery process continues and that one day I will be able to see my true reflection. I pray that I develop the strength to live the teachings and grow holistically in life.

– Shudhvidya, Dhanbad

After this capsule a lot of clarity has come and I am very grateful to Swamiji and Bihar School of Yoga for developing such a course. For me the key learnings were: 1. Theoretical and practical knowledge of the four components of a yogic lifestyle: *swasthya*, health, *sanyam*, transformation, *sadbhavana*, positive emotions, and *seva*, selfless service. The purpose of each component is to fine-tune them to lead a happy, enriching life. 2. A better understanding of asana and pratyahara practices and their role in maintaining health and fine-tuning the mind. 3. How to become the personal guide of my own development with the Review of the Day, SWAN analysis and a Spiritual Diary. I have a better understanding of yoga, how to fine-tune the threads of life and incorporate the changes within me.

– Jyotimitra and Govinddas, Dhanbad









How to Avoid Nervous Breakdown

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Mind tricks you every moment. You are duped by this mischievous mind every moment. You should have an intelligent understanding of its ways. If you turn the searchlight of knowledge on this mind, it will disappear just as darkness will disappear when the lamp is brought.

You must be a psychologist, too, if you want to lead a happy and healthy life and if you want to progress on the spiritual path. Most of the physical ailments spring from a diseased state of mind. Kindly remember this. Emotional imbalance leads to all sorts of nervous troubles and physical illness also. That is the reason why a real sannyasin, even though he is starved, homeless and friendless, is happy and full of vigour. He has inner strength.

You should all lead a well-regulated life. Proper hours of work and rest are necessary. Then alone can you be healthy and peaceful, and have ample time for sadhana. Then alone can you achieve success in all your undertakings. Go to bed at 10 pm and get up at 4 am You will have strong nerves.

Another reason why most people suffer from nervous breakdown is that they do not know how to utilize the holidays. They are more busy on holidays than they are on working days! They waste more energy on holidays, in the name of recreation. There is in fact no re-creation but a double destruction. Observe mouna on all holidays. Devote all your time to sadhana. Do this for six months from now; you will yourself experience the truth of what I say.

If you want to enjoy sound health and peace of mind, then give up indulging in useless wasteful activities. You should discriminate and analyze each action: 'Is this necessary for me



to achieve the goal of life? If the answer is 'No,' then refrain from that action. Restrain the mind. The mind will revolt. You have given it too long a rope. You should find out intelligent methods of weaning it away from its wonted ways. You can conserve a lot of energy by avoiding gupshup, idle-gossip and aimless wandering. Once you cultivate a healthy habit of engaging your body and mind in useful activities, you will find you are more peaceful, more healthy and you have more time for sadhana.

The worrying habit is the biggest drain on your nerve-power. A bhakta or real sadhaka can never worry himself. He has perfect faith in God and His Goodness. He has self-confidence. He is serene. He is bold. He is cheerful. He takes things as they come, as the Lord gives him. He achieves a lot, while a man who worries drops from his hand the golden opportunities that are put into it by the Lord.

The secret of healthy life

Very few people realize that evil qualities like hatred, jealousy, anger, touchiness and impatience are harmful to themselves rather than to those towards whom they are directed. A fit of anger that lasts ten minutes takes away more energy than would working at the plough for two days without food. The slow gnawing jealousy eats away nerve-power more rapidly than white ants eat through dry wood. Over-sensitiveness, impatience and worry bring on grey hairs scores of years earlier than they are due.

Be serene. Look within. Strive. Exert. Give all your thought to the eradication of your own evil qualities within; you will never get angry. Look into the good qualities of others – you will hate none. Learn to admire others' achievements – jealousy will disappear. You will try to emulate; you will try to grow and achieve; and you will not be impelled by jealousy to hold back those that are marching forward. Jealousy will create an inferiority complex, will disable your mind and ruin your health. Jealousy is at the root of the nervous breakdown of millions of people all over the world.

Another important rule if you are to lead a healthy life is: live in the immediate present. Concentrate all your attention on the work on hand. Live this day well. Yesterday has joined the hoary past, a finished product on which you need bestow no more attention. Tomorrow is yet a long way off; and it will bring with it time enough for its work. Forget the past; ignore the future. Live in the present. The future will take care of itself.

If you adopt this wise method, you will never work with tension. You will be calm, serene, concentrated and efficient. You will achieve more than your fretting brother who, when he has work to do now, thinks more of the past or future than the present. Time passes by this inattentive man, and he has less time to do the work in. He is always in hurry. He lives on the edge of his nerves. His mind rules him; its whims and fancies are his hard taskmasters. How can he achieve anything?

However difficult the work, if you have to do it now, take it up, apply all your energy to it and finish it. Let it not act as a dead weight to bear your nerves down. Application and completion make the impossible possible. Do not vacillate. Take things easy. Let no task frighten you. Make up your mind quickly. Take quick decisions. You can do so only if you have a calm mind. Men of vacillation have never achieved anything.

Learn to master your mind. Solve your own problems. Jump over the hurdles on your path. Do not carry your miseries to others. Give up the complaining-habit. One who complains of this and that spends all his life in complaining; he has no energy, nor the willpower to achieve. His mind is eager to find out a cause for complaining; his life is a series of failure; and every time he blames his failure on somebody or something. He becomes an easy prey to nervous breakdown.

Wisdom lies in accepting those things over which you have no control. Do not grumble. Accept them cheerfully and willingly. And, you should also equip yourself with the courage to change the things that are under your control. Apply yourself. You should bring your mind under your perfect control. You should change your angle of vision, alter your mode of thinking, stop all waste of mental energy, turn the rays of the mind within and realize the Self.

(From Sivananda's Lectures, during All-India and Ceylon Tour – 1950, chronicler Swami Venkatesananda, address given on 23 October 1950, Hyderabad)

How Can I Change Habits?

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The stereotype answer is that habits cannot be changed as they are never eradicated. However, if we are able to harmonize our mind and if there is clarity of mind then many of the habits which are formed in life can be effectively managed. Habits come up in order to fill a vacuum that we feel in ourselves.

Why do people resort to alcohol, to different drugs? Just to get high? No. There is a compulsion: avoiding something, rejecting something, feeling the vacuum of something. Something is not correct and people don't know how to deal with it, they want to forget it, they want to move into some other zone. So they resort to different substances, which alter the state of their nerves, brain, thinking, behaving and for the duration of inebriation, they live a different mind. A habit is actually our response to a situation which we are not able to deal with properly, positively, correctly, constructively.

From the yogic perspective, if the mind is kept light, happy and luminous, habits can easily be managed. If the mind goes into the dark space of self-pity, self-anxiety, then habits begin to form to escape from the condition of anxiety and pity. Remaining positive, is one way to overcome the detrimental habits of life. Connecting with the strength of the mind is another way to deal with habits, for in a situation where a habit is projecting itself, the mind becomes weak. If the mind is strong the habit can be altered and changed. There are people with a strong mind who can take a decision, 'From today I won't smoke', and then they don't even think about it for they have that mind and nature. There are people who plan on leaving the habit of smoking but their hands always go to pick up a cigarette. Although the mind has taken a decision, 'No', the hands and the senses still keep on going there: one more, one final one, one last one. That is lack of willpower also.

The weakened state of mind becomes the repository for destructive habits, and strength of mind makes it possible to cultivate the different positive qualities which also become habits. Sensorial habits are smoking, drinking, drugging, and so on. A mental habit begins with craving: 'I need that'. If this 'I need that idea' can be changed into something more constructive and positive, then a destructive habit will not emerge. The positivity and strength will wean you away from your destructive habits.

– 30 September 2018, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Become a Glorious Man

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



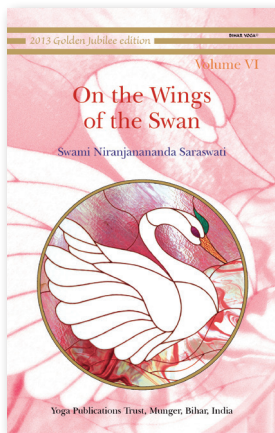
Wherever you see, you see cigarettes only, however, wherever you see, you must see Brahman! People nowadays advertise Capstan cigarettes with electric lights and all sorts of posters. Don't be tempted by these. Even if you are a confirmed smoker, throw your packets away just now this very moment. The money that is wasted in smoking can be utilized in charity.

What a glorious man you will become! If these evil practices are stopped, there will be more money, more joy, more peace, more happiness, more health in the world than you find now. There will be peace, plenty and prosperity everywhere.

(From Sivananda's Lectures, during All-India and Ceylon Tour – 1950, chronicler Swami Venkatesananda, address given on 2 November 1950, Premabai Hall, Ahmedabad)

Yoga: A Way of Life

From On the Wings of the Swan, Volume VI, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Whilst yoga has undergone changes in understanding, the tradition of yoga itself has not changed. Today we are still doing the same practices as Patanjali, without any modifications. We are still doing the same hatha yoga practices that sages Gorakhnath, Matsyendranath, Swatmarama and the literature talk about as they were practised thousands of years ago. The only change that has taken place is in our way of living, our way of knowing and perceiving things.

If yoga practitioners thousands of years ago used to live in mud huts, today the yoga practitioner lives in a house or apartment in Manhattan, Sydney, London, Rome or Moscow.

Yoga has not changed, the tradition is the same; only the way of understanding it has changed. What in the past was known subjectively through experience, we can know today through scientific means. If a person was ill, practised an asana, felt better and found that eventually the illness disappeared, it was a subjective experience, and the person said, "For this illness, this asana is beneficial." If you do the same thing today, the result will be the same, as the condition of the human body is the same and the asana is the same. However, today we can also verify the results using scientific methodology, therefore our appreciation has changed.

Levels of knowing yoga

There are different levels of knowing yoga. The first is the ordinary yoga practitioner who learns from any yoga teacher,

in any centre, school or ashram, returns home and is satisfied with practising yoga for limbering and toning up the body.

The second level is developing some affinity with yoga, wanting to go deeper into the practices, so you become known as a novice or sadhaka. If kundalini yoga attracts you, you may decide to try all the practices to awaken your kundalini, go and live in an ashram, and develop some form of affinity with yoga. Or you may take a book, go to a farm or a community and do your practices there, in retreat, in seclusion. That is the novice yoga sadhaka.

The third level of yoga is experimentation. You experiment with the changes that you feel and experience through yoga. When you practise yoga you find you relax, you feel better, more optimism or pessimism is experienced, or more awareness comes, or more depression, or more anxiety. These are the experiences that can guide one further into the investigative process of yoga. Either you investigate it subjectively, alone or in a group, or you investigate in it a laboratory with instruments, with knowledgeable people whose expertise you can rely on. In this way, another step is experimenting with the change and trying to understand the change that is happening when you do a practice.

Another level beyond that is going into a tradition and seeing the relevance of yoga from the beginning until the present, and seeing yourself as a part of that stream of thought. There have been many such household yoga teachers. BKS Iyengar is not a sannyasin, yet his entire life is devoted to the propagation of yoga. Dr Nagendra from Vivekananda Kendra is not a sannyasin, yet his whole life is devoted to yoga. I am talking here of the yogic traditions, not of the sannyasa traditions. Deshikacharya, T. Krishnamacharya and Iyengar represent a tradition of yoga. People such as Swami Abhedananda and Swami Vivekananda represent another tradition of yoga. The tradition of Babaji, Sri Yuktेशwara, Lahiri Mahashaya and Paramahansa Yogananda is yet another tradition of yoga. There is the tradition that emanates from Swami Sivananda through

Swami Satchidananda, Swami Vishnudevananda, Swami Satyananda, Swami Venkateshananda, Swami Chidananda, and others of the Sivananda lineage. There are many traditions of yoga and many people have made such traditions or paths a part of their lifestyle, profession and expression in life; and then there have been some who have made yoga into a sadhana.

Yoga as a sadhana

There are many people who live alone and practise yoga, who describe the whole process, who are exponents of yoga. Yoga is not only the practice of asana, pranayama, kriya and kundalini techniques, hatha yoga and shatkarma; it is also imbibing a way of life, improving the quality of life, as indicated in the yamas and niyamas.

What are the yamas and niyamas? They are the awareness of and adherence to certain qualities and ideas that can uplift the human mind, emotions, character, psyche and personality. You become and are recognized as being a good person. If you develop the quality of *ahimsa*, non-violence, you will emanate compassion. If you develop the quality of *satya*, truthfulness, you will emanate love. If you imbibe the quality of *aparigraha*, non-possessiveness, you will express simplicity and innocence. Each yama and each niyama will highlight a character of the human personality. When that character is highlighted then it becomes part of your expression, understanding, actions, behaviour, attitude and life. Therefore, yoga is not only techniques; it is also a lifestyle, known as the yogic lifestyle.

Beyond being a lifestyle, yoga is also a philosophy of life that gives strength to your mental character; a hope to hold on to and a motivation to experience something better than what you have experienced until now. In this way, it becomes a philosophy as well. Therefore, yoga is a technique, a way of life and a philosophy. The underlying current of all these three aspects of yoga is the personal effort that one puts into the sadhana. The sadhana is a willingness to act.



Clarity of mind

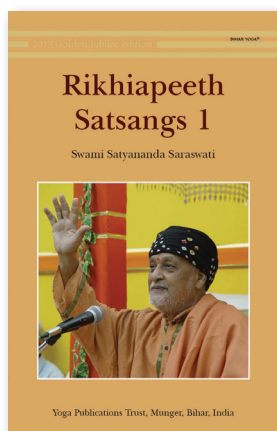
If one follows the sadhana of yoga, there are great possibilities, provided one does not measure everything in terms of money and power. It seems that today, due to the environment, everybody thinks in terms of money and power. Yoga is not anti-money and power; yoga is pro-you. It is not against materialism, for why renounce materialism? You can say it diverts the mind, yet who allows the mind to be diverted? If the mind is diverted, it means there is no mental clarity. If there is mental clarity, the mind will not be diverted. If you know where you have to go, then no matter how many stops you make on the way, you will be aware at every stop that you still have to go further.

You have to set a goal. You have to travel from this city to that city. You have looked at the map, you know where the good spots to stop are, but eventually you have to reach the city. Therefore, no matter where you stop, you will still want to continue moving forward. You do it as there is clarity in your life. If there is clarity, how can even materialism distract anybody? To obtain that clarity, sadhana is a must.

– 27 January 2000

Future of Yoga

From Rikhiapeeth Satsangs 1, Swami Satyananda Saraswati



When you have a car, you need fuel to run it. However, fuel itself is not enough; you also need a mechanic to repair it from time to time. Similarly, the body needs a mechanic. The various parts of the human mind need a mechanic. If you don't find a mechanic for your mind, mental disaster will follow. However, if you do find a good mechanic, you will feel peaceful, there will be shanti. Yoga will play the role of such a mechanic in the years to come.

We are coming to a point where economic problems have been taken care of, and many other problems that our ancestors had do not exist any more. We are living in the age of comfort, affluence, possibility and freedom. When all these things are achieved, the mind becomes free like the devil. In ancient days, to buy a small thing you had to walk for half an hour to the market. To go from Paris to another European country you rode a horse. Now you can reach India from France in five hours. So the mind has very few material problems now. And when the mind has few material problems, it creates psychological problems. That is what the West as well as the East - India, China and all the countries that are now developing - will face.

Yoga has a great promise to keep. The stalwarts who know about the mind and body should devote a lot of time to thinking about yoga in relation to the body and mind. I am not talking about the spirit. That may come after two hundred years perhaps. It came in India once upon a time when everybody became mad about enquiring after the spirit. During Buddha's time, everybody was searching for the soul and spirit. Food,



bed, money were not considered necessary, one's self was the only concern. That time will soon come again when most people, especially young people, in the developed countries will say, "Who am I? Where have I come from? What is the cause? What is my ultimate form?" However, to delve into all this will be the last mission of yoga, not its first mission. The first mission of yoga is the body and mind.

– 2005, Rikhiapeeth, India

Improve Your Karmas

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati



When Swami Satyananda went to Rishikesh to live with his guru, his guru did not tell him, “Close your eyes and meditate.” He said, “Work hard, purify, and the light will reveal itself.” So he said, “Ok, then I go back home and I work hard and I’ll be purified.” Swami Sivananda said, “No, you have to do selfless work, only then you will be purified.”

Sri Swamiji lived in his guru’s ashram for twelve years. He worked hard. He did not sit and meditate or learn the Upanishads and Vedas or practise kundalini yoga or learn about chakra sadhana, no. Swami Satyananda taught many things, he taught chakra sadhana, kundalini yoga, hatha yoga, raja yoga, but what did he himself practise that made him an enlightened being? It was karma yoga.

It was karma yoga which he practised all his life and that was his main teaching actually and that was the last message of his, “Improve your karmas; it is by improving your karmas that you can uplift your life.” How do you improve your karmas? By thinking about others. That is how he lived his

life, by thinking about others. Kriya yoga, chakra sadhana, kundalini he perfected in five minutes. His guru gave him that knowledge in five minutes, what it takes us lifetimes to learn. It is not difficult to learn these sadhanas but it is difficult to think about others.

At the end of this Chakra Sadhana seminar, I feel that I should tell all of you, that along with your sadhana of the chakras and trying to improve the quality of your mind and the quality of your experiences, and trying to awaken your own power within you, also include this aspect of yoga. Then your experiences will be much richer and you will have very good and quick result. If you don't know how to do that, you are welcome to Rikhiapeeth, because that is how we live; we live there for others.

One question

I asked my guru one question, mind you, we don't usually ask guru any questions, but we get all the answers. I asked him, "Is it possible to have that highest experience, which they write about in books?" He said, "Yes, it is." I asked him, "What is the way?" He said, "Serve others selflessly, that is the way." He said to me the same thing his guru had told him, in other words. He said, "That is the way." That is why I'm doing what I am doing. If he had said anything else, I would not be doing what I am doing, but he said, "That is the way to have that highest experience: live for others. Serve others, serve selflessly those who don't belong to you, from whom you will get nothing in return, serve without expectation."

Swami Satyananda was a very frank person, he used to say things straight. He said, "No matter how many books you write, no matter how many yoga seminars you give, that will not get you that experience. But serving others will give you that experience."

Twenty years, from 1989 to 2009, that is what I did, with body, mind and soul, forgetting everything, even forgetting myself. I can tell you, that what he said was correct. When you

live your life in that way, it is like meditating with your eyes open. If you want to go high, your awareness immediately catapults up, it does not take long, because, through selfless service, all the dross, all the garbage, all the rubbish that we have been collecting, gets cleaned. I don't know where it disappears, yet that is the only thing that is standing between you and that experience of that light.

If you want to know more about this, you should read the *Bhagavad Gita*. There this philosophy is very clearly defined and explained. So along with your own practices which you have to do – it is not that you should not do the practices, you have to do that – but side by side also incorporate, maybe once a week, maybe twice a week, maybe once a month, spend time for others. Wherever you live there is that opportunity: there are old age homes, there are sick homes, there are children who need help. Many people need help and you can give one hour in a week. I'm sure that you have that much time – one hour in a week, four hours in a month, you can easily give for helping others who do not belong to you.

– 19 June 2011, *Chakra Sadhana Seminar, Bulgaria*



My Experience with God's Children

Sannyasi Yoga Sharan, Chennai

Sri Arunodhayam Charitable Trust is an NGO serving the needs of abandoned children with special needs for the past 20 years.

I have been blessed to work with these divine children for almost two years. While the boys are of varied ages from 4 years to 40 years, the girls are from 6 months to 17 years. Almost all of them have some intellectual disability while some are autistic, some have cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and many have a lot of complications, disabilities and physical deformities.

We progressed very gradually and cautiously since many of the children were at first unable to even move on their own and could just manage to crawl. Many of them were very aggressive and some of them were totally unpredictable with a lot of mood swings. Many children had no control over their emotions and would often start crying or laughing. They also have no control over their natural urges.

Initially it was a little difficult to make them sit in one place and so we had to keep trying different techniques each time. In order to attract them, we tried jumping together, clapping together, crawling together, squatting together and various other games to slowly bring the kids closer to us. Slowly they started coming closer, touching us, hugging us and wanting to sit next to us.

Gradually, we started giving them the practices one by one, and each time it was a different experience and it still continues to be so. They all felt that they were getting closer to our Gurus touching their photos and trying to talk to the Gurus. They became very fond of our beloved Guru, Swami



Niranjanananda, by listening to his childhood stories and they keep asking to see him in person.

While the boys got distracted very soon with the practices, the girls were found to be a little receptive. We started working with them slowly, starting with simple movements, observing the breath, chanting, kirtans and yoga nidra in the form of stories. We have been giving them pawanamuktasana series, TTK, makarasana, bhujangasana, vajrasana, shashankasana, trikonasana, eka pada pranamasana. We also started giving them surya namaskara very slowly. Since they could not understand and follow properly, it took us a while to make them do nadi shodana pranayama. They all thoroughly enjoyed bhramari pranayama as it was fascinating to hear the sound coming from within.

Slowly, bit by bit, practices were added and the rhythm of yoga started to flow naturally. Kirtans were a big hit though the words were not coherent, the effort to participate made them all join and attempt to sing in unison with tal, rhythm, clapping of the hands and a little dance from time to time.

They also enjoyed short wave *Om* chanting, *ulta* or reverse chanting of Rama nama with the chant of *Mara, Mara, Mara*. They were fascinated to find themselves saying *Rama, Rama, Rama*. We also made them chant *Om aim klim sau*, the bija of Bala continuously and until date they are doing it regularly. *Gan Ganapathaye* is a favourite and almost all are able to sing it correctly. We also made them chant the three daily mantras slowly and are hopeful that they will be able to chant properly in the near future.

Yoga nidra was added and it was woven around a different story line each time, yet not digressing from the basic principles. These kids were made to fly with the birds, eat with the monkeys, dance in the rainy forest, paddle a canoe and climb a mountain apart from visualizing psychic symbols.

We also made the teachers, caretakers and physiotherapist be part of the sessions. Taking the cue from the physiotherapist, we started working with the young girls specifically as many could hardly move, yet were trying enthusiastically to imitate all the practices in their own seated positions.

Sai Lakshmi is one such divine child aged 8 now, who could barely move. She is affected by cerebral palsy and intellectual disability. She is a very vibrant kid who imitates tadasana, surya namaskara and other asanas in her seated position by herself. We suggested to the home that we needed to work on her specifically and started focusing on her. Slowly the chanting, her indomitable willpower, the relentless effort of the physiotherapist and the teachers combined with our attention started yielding results and the power of the practices of Bihar School of Yoga started to shine bright.

We are really excited and happy to place on record that Sai Lakshmi is now able to stand up, walk a few steps on her own and is in fact trying to do eka pada pranamasana. We have identified a few other children and are planning to work on them one by one.

We humbly dedicate this magic expression of yoga to our beloved Gurudev Swami Niranjanananda whose inspiration and invisible divine presence made this possible.



The Path of Freedom and Happiness



After three years of hatha yoga sadhana, I realized what 'hatha yoga leads to raja yoga' means. Three years ago when my mind became angry, I became angry, my body became stiff and my breath short. The results of my yoga practices were few and frustrating. With the sadhana of the Hatha Yoga Yatra, I started experiencing some of the conditions that hatha yoga creates in us, like harmony, stability, stamina and lightness.

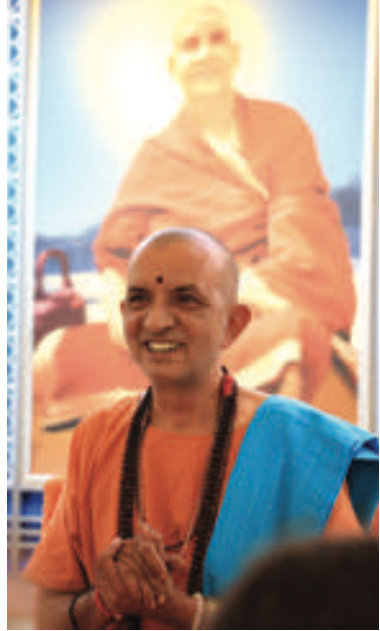
Now I could have the Third World War in my mind but I remain calm, my body relaxed and full of energy and my breath long. So thank you Swamiji for taking us along this path of freedom and happiness.

– Sannyasi Sadhashakti, Italy (Hatha Yoga Yatra 3, Munger)

Happy

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Listening to the impressions of the Hatha Yoga Yatra participants, not only today but also in the past, makes me happy, thinking that the revival of the Yoga Chakra has been a positive event. For the last fifty years the Bihar School of Yoga was involved in yoga propagation, around the world. The practices that were taught were mainly physical in nature, and we saw that yoga was becoming more like an aerobic exercise and getting away from the true intent of harmonizing and developing the qualities and the faculties of head, heart and hands.



Keeping this thought in mind, Yoga Chakra contains the original teachings of Sri Swamiji from the 1960s. When I listen to the impressions of people, I feel happy that as aspirants we are able to go deeper and experience what yoga desires of us, not what we desire from yoga. That is the main difference between yoga practice and yoga sadhana.

I am happy that with this exposure to yoga we can make the effort to improve the quality of our life, our appreciation of life and to begin to appreciate life as beautiful and not as struggle. How long are you going to live in this body? Eighty years average, if you pull a little bit more, ninety. These few years that we live, we should live in a manner which is appropriate, correct, skilful and creative.

Participation

When we came to the ashram in the early days, we learnt everything. From plumbing to electricity, to carpentry, to yoga, to asana, to pranayama, to meditation, to kitchen, to office, to keys, to correspondence, everything we learned, not only asana and meditation. Today we have the confidence that no matter where we are in the world we will survive; even in the forest and jungle we will survive.

That participation has to come in life, which people are lacking. They avoid participation. You have to move into participation in order to develop your own skills, your creativity, your understanding of life and your own appreciation of life. Yoga opens a doorway by which we can begin to explore our own nature and personality, know our limitations and strengths, overcome the limitations and use the strengths to attain success in life. That is more important to live as a human being. Yoga and ashram environment give that opportunity.

In the ashram everything is not peaceful, it is always chaotic. Just as in a hospital everyone is not healthy, everyone is sick. In the health-care centre, nobody is healthy, everybody is lying on a bed, sick. They don't call it 'sick care centre', they call it health care centre. It is the same in the ashram, everyone who comes to the ashram is not a balanced spiritual person. People are struggling in life, they are struggling with themselves, with their body, their mind, their ambitions and struggling their stress.

When we come to the ashram, we come in a state of struggle and we are trying to overcome and manage that. While managing that we are also trying to look at the other aspects of our nature which can enhance our creativity and productivity. All this happens, yet the start of the journey is important. Yoga and especially these Yoga Yatras indicate that with this yogic journey we can explore ourselves and the possibilities that yoga provides for us. I am happy that *Hatha Yoga Yatra 3 and 4* have concluded successfully.

– 19 May 2019, *Hatha Yoga Yatra 3 & 4*, Munger

Attitude Towards Sadhana

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

What personal qualities are needed for success in sadhana?

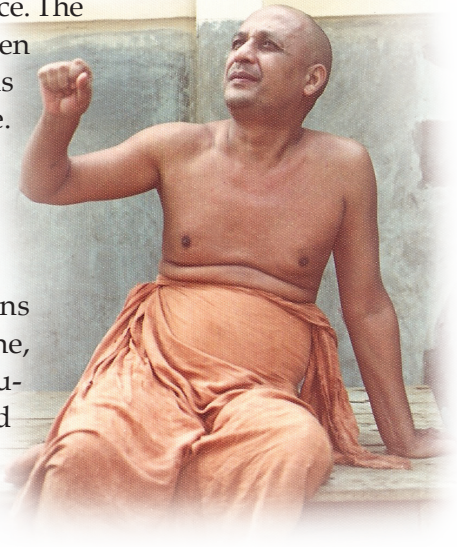
Swami Satyananda: Yogi Swatmarama is very clear about the qualities needed for success in hatha yoga. These six qualities are listed in *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* (1:16i):

*Utsaahaatsaahasaaddhairyaattattvoajnaanaashcha nishchayaat;
Janasangaparityaagaatshadbhiryogah prasiddhyati.*

Enthusiasm, perseverance, discrimination, unshakeable faith, courage and avoiding the company of common people, are the six which bring success in yoga.

To succeed in yoga, enthusiasm, or it could be said, 'a positive attitude', is absolutely essential. Constant inspiration and the ideal of attaining perfection generate energy and help to maintain regularity in practice. Every day should seem like the first day of practice. The same zeal should exist between a sadhaka and his sadhana as between a newly-wed couple. Then the sadhana will be invigorating and exciting. This spontaneously generates perseverance.

No matter what happens externally, rain, hail or shine, sadhana must be done regularly. Whether one is afflicted with material losses or acquires valuable possessions, whether there are visible



signs of progress in one's sadhana or not, the effort of sadhana must continue. Even if one has practised for fifteen years, one must continue until the final goal is reached. It may take only one more month of practice, or it may take a whole lifetime. Everybody evolves at a different rate, so it is useless to compare oneself with others. No matter what, the attitude should always be optimistic.

Discrimination is the third prerequisite for success in yoga. Everything that is done and every aspect of one's life, including the diet, clothing, company, material necessities and conversations, should be conducive to sadhana. If something is going to be detrimental, leave it.

Unshakeable faith in guru and the ultimate truth or reality is the most important tool for a sadhaka. If one doubts the guru, how can there be success in what he has taught? If faith is lost in the guru, there is no hope for success in yoga. Absolute faith in whatever he says and does is the only key to unlock the door to higher experience. One may doubt one's own ability to achieve, but if there is faith in guru and he says you can move a mountain, you will do it. Even if faith in guru and the ultimate goal is the only thing in one's favour, that person will surely succeed.

Courage is also recommended for fulfilling yoga, courage to face the inner visions and realizations as they dawn. Courage, perseverance and faith go hand-in-hand, not only in the face of internal hardships, but the external ones also. During the period of sadhana it can be detrimental to mix with people who have lower aspirations. At that stage, the less one is involved with others the more the inner knowledge can grow. Of course, a sadhaka should not consider the others to be inferior, but until his physical, mental, emotional and psychic resistance have developed, it is better to stay away from social interactions and negative influences. These six factors can be cultivated anywhere, whether living in a city with your family or alone in a hermitage. A householder should modify them to suit his lifestyle.



Yoga Publications Trust

50 Years of Yoga Chakra

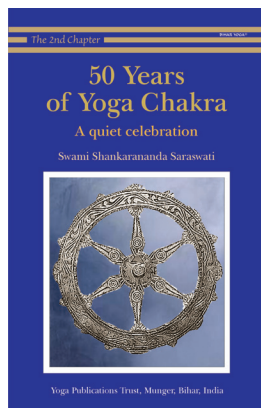
A quiet celebration

Swami Shankarananda Saraswati

36 pp, soft cover, ISBN: 978-93-84753-48-1

The story of the yoga chakra is told in *50 Years of Yoga Chakra*. The reminiscences of a wise man take the reader back to the 1960s when in Munger, a small town in Bihar, the ancient science of yoga, the *yoga vidya*, was presented to spiritual seekers, aspirants and sadhakas who had come from all corners of the globe.

Swami Shankarananda Saraswati, one of the first associates and dedicated supporters of the Bihar School of Yoga, saw the birth of the yoga chakra, the hallmark of Satyananda Yoga. He was part of the first teaching, the first courses and the first publications. To make yoga the culture of tomorrow for the welfare of humankind – that was the intention, purpose and vision of Sri Swami Satyananda.



New

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Websites and Apps

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 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

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/>

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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>Oct 1-30</i>	Progressive Yoga Vidya Training 1, 2 (English)
<i>Nov 7-Jan 25</i>	Yogic Studies, 3 months (English)
<i>Nov 4-10</i>	Kriya Yoga Yatra 1, 2
<i>Nov 11-17</i>	Kriya Yoga Yatra 3
<i>Dec 18-22</i>	Yoga Chakra Series
<i>Dec 25</i>	Swami Satyananda's Birthday
<i>Every Saturday</i>	Mahamrityunjaya Havan
<i>Every Ekadashi</i>	Bhagavad Gita Path
<i>Every Poornima</i>	Sundarkand Path
<i>Every 4th, 5th & 6th</i>	Guru Bhakti Yoga
<i>Every 12th</i>	Akhanda Path of Ramacharitamanas

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

For more information on the above events contact:

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Website: www.biharyoga.net (applications for events and trainings available here)

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