

# YOGA

Year 9 Issue 2

February 2020

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Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar, India



## Hari Om

YOGA is compiled, composed and published by the sannyanasin 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.

**Editor:** Swami Gyansiddhi Saraswati

**Assistant Editor:** Swami Yogatirthananda Saraswati

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Plates: 1–4: Bal Yoga Diwas (Children's Yoga Celebration)



## GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

### Life and Meditation

Meditation need not necessarily mean sitting in a lonely corner or sequestered spot and thinking over Rama, Krishna, Jesus or Mohammed, or pouring forth verbal or mental prayers. Actions that tend to purify the grossness of the individual are to be collectively treated as meditation. Life is thus meditation coupled with ajnana, ignorance, to an immeasurable degree in the case of an ordinary individual. If meditation is deliberately taken up on the instructions of a Guru who ought necessarily to be a more evolved soul, man cannot but perform good and selfless actions. Thus, life and meditation are intertwined.

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

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# YOGA

Year 9 Issue 2 - February 2020  
(58th year of publication)

## Contents

This issue of YOGA is dedicated to Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati on the occasion of his *Shastyabdapurti*, sixty-year anniversary.

4	Manas Putra	26	For a Balanced Lifestyle
6	First Assignment	31	Pratyahara
8	The Conductors of Prana	35	Towards Beauty, Balance and Harmony
10	The Practice of Om	38	Mouna and Discipline
12	Scientific Yoga Therapy Response	41	Follow the Sequence
15	International Yoga Fellowship Movement	46	Sadhana
17	World Yoga Convention 1993	50	World Yoga Convention 2013
20	Harmony	52	Yoga Chakra - The Wheel of Yoga
22	Yoga for the Army	54	Padma Bhushan to Yoga
24	The Most Important Yogas		

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 ॥



# My Manas Putra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



*Dharmashakti, the jewel that you will receive by the grace of God will help remove the ignorance of so many. (1.1.1960, Mumbai)*

*Dharmashakti, you are Niranjan's nurse and I am his lord, his creator. If he improves he is mine and if he spoils, then my possession will be spoilt. How does it concern you? From your side, you must only give him the right education. Having risen above your attraction and attachment, your only task is to raise him. Any concern for his future is my responsibility. (24.5.1961, Munger)*

Many years ago I went to Gangotri with Dharmashakti and Satyabrat, Swami Niranjan's father. At that time, he said to me, "Swamiji, please give her something." I said, "There is no child in her destiny, but there is one in mine." However, he kept asking me; it was purely a joke. So I said, "Okay, make a resolve that you will give that child to me and not keep it for yourself," and so the resolve was made. If they had taken Niranjan, then he would not have survived, because Niranjan is my *manas putra*, mind-born son.

As a child, when Swami Niranjan slept, you could remove his bed and take him anywhere, and he would not know. He slept like a log! When he was asleep, the swamis would take him off his bed and carry him from one side of the ashram to the other. They were very mischievous, but not in front of me. I knew all about it, but I never considered this childish mischief to be something very negative.

I used to teach yoga nidra to Swami Niranjan because I was doing research, not because I wanted to make him something. Gold is gold, a diamond is a diamond and iron is iron by birth. It is no use polishing iron in the hope of converting it into gold. Swami Niranjan is Swami Niranjan by birth. I did not make him Swami Niranjan. I taught him yoga nidra because I was trying to observe its effects on the subconscious mind. I was doing an experiment and it proved successful. I had read in psychology that suggestions given in a state of sleep enter the deeper layers of the mind. To test this, I used to read the Vedas, Upanishads and other texts to Swami Niranjan during yoga nidra.



I did not do it to make him into something outstanding or because I was worried about his future. What would he have done with those achievements? A sadhu needs only two rotis. He is never bothered about becoming something. If a sadhu achieves something along the way, well and good. If not, it is equally good. He is happy just being a mendicant, smoking his chillum and chanting 'Bam Bam Mahadev'. We believe it is the will of God. Ultimately, it is God's will and not mine that will prevail. In the *Ramayana*, while consoling Bharata, Sage Vasishtha says:

*Destiny is too powerful to be resisted,  
Loss and gain, life and death, infamy and repute,  
All are in the hands of the Almighty.*

—4 December 1994, Rikhiapeeth

1970s

## *First Assignment*

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



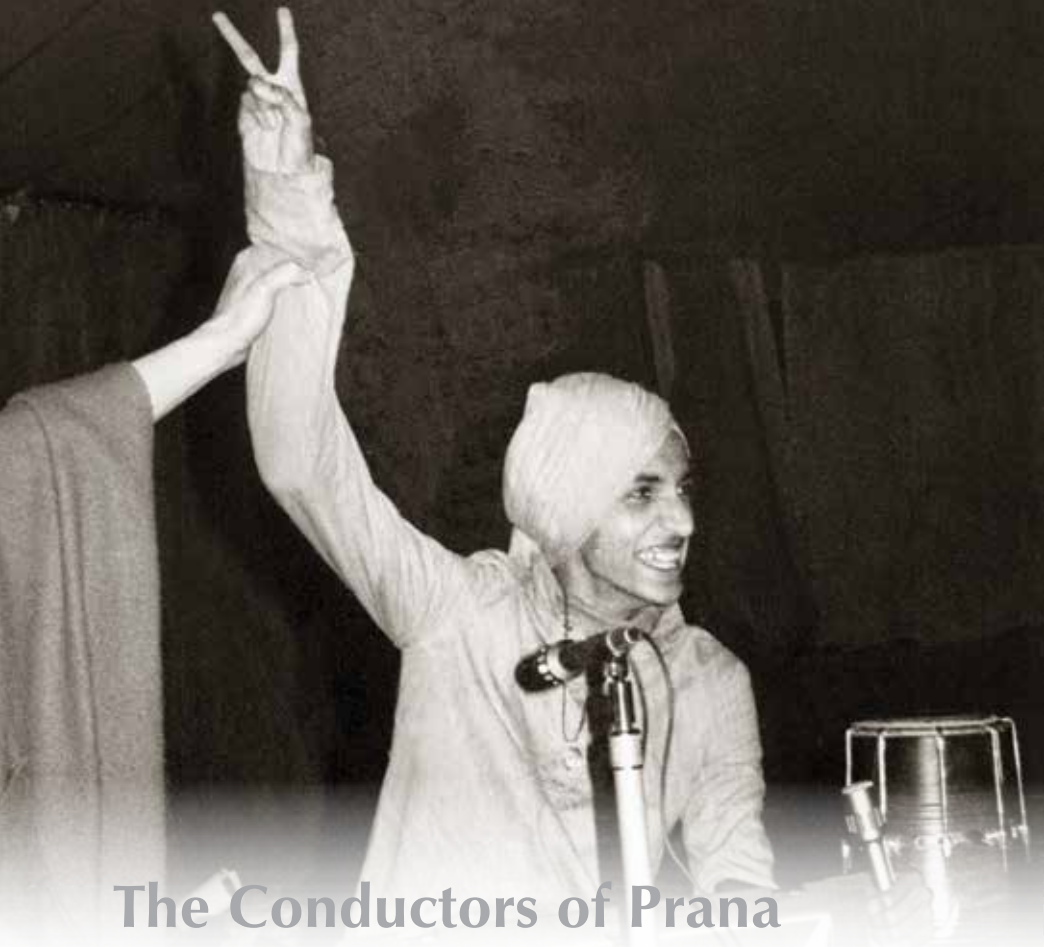
Swami Niranjan never attended school in his life. He only saw a school when he went to teach yoga. Swami Niranjan's first assignment was Northern Ireland when he was ten years old. I took him there and on the way the plane first stopped in Tehran. I went to the bathroom and when I came out Swami Niranjan was fighting with somebody. He was a very naughty boy, always playing tricks on everyone. He would even pull somebody's dhoti off from behind and run away with it.

I took Swami Niranjan to Belfast in Northern Ireland. He used to teach yoga in a Catholic school. When he came out, the Protestant boys would threaten him, saying, "Why do you go to the Catholic school? Don't go there!" He would say, "I have to teach yoga." They would reply, "Come to our school and teach us." So the next day he would go to the Protestant school and on the way the Catholic boys would threaten him, saying "Why are you going to that Protestant school?" Northern Ireland was a great problem. The Protestants would say to the swamis, "Don't stay here, this is a Catholic area. Come and stay in our area." If the swamis went to the Protestant area, the Catholics would say, "No, no, you must come to our area."

If the swamis didn't go to that area, the windows would be broken. Every now and then they would break the windows and in an hour the room would become very cold. The City Corporation would have to be informed. Northern Ireland is not like India where the Hindus and Muslims are comparatively cordial to each other. The situation in Northern Ireland is a very difficult one.

Northern Ireland was Swami Niranjan's first assignment, where he had to live like the tongue between two sets of teeth! There he learnt how to live life, what to expect from life and how to conduct himself if he expected to be successful in life. Every morning there was graffiti on his door: "Yogi bear lives here. Yogi bear has no hair." He was ten years old.





## The Conductors of Prana

Very few people can meditate. What most people experience when they sit for meditation are the activities of the subconscious and unconscious mind. The mind works on four levels: conscious, subconscious, unconscious and superconscious. Meditation occurs when one makes contact with the superconscious. But to do this, one has to get through the subconscious and unconscious.

The subconscious mind acts as a censor for the untold millions of pieces of information which are fed to the brain by the senses every second. Very often the subconscious suppresses information which would cause the conscious mind stress or strain. These suppressed impressions are buried in the unconscious mind where they can, and often do,

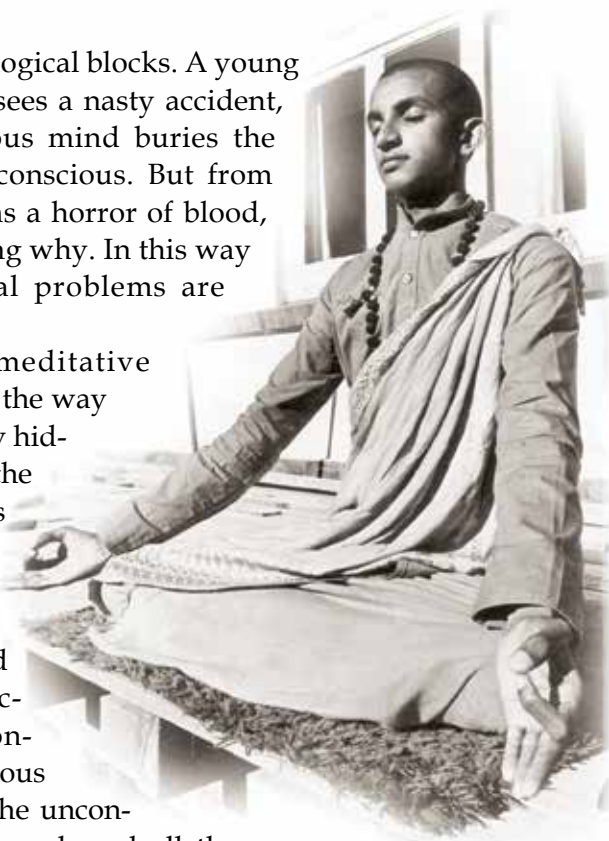


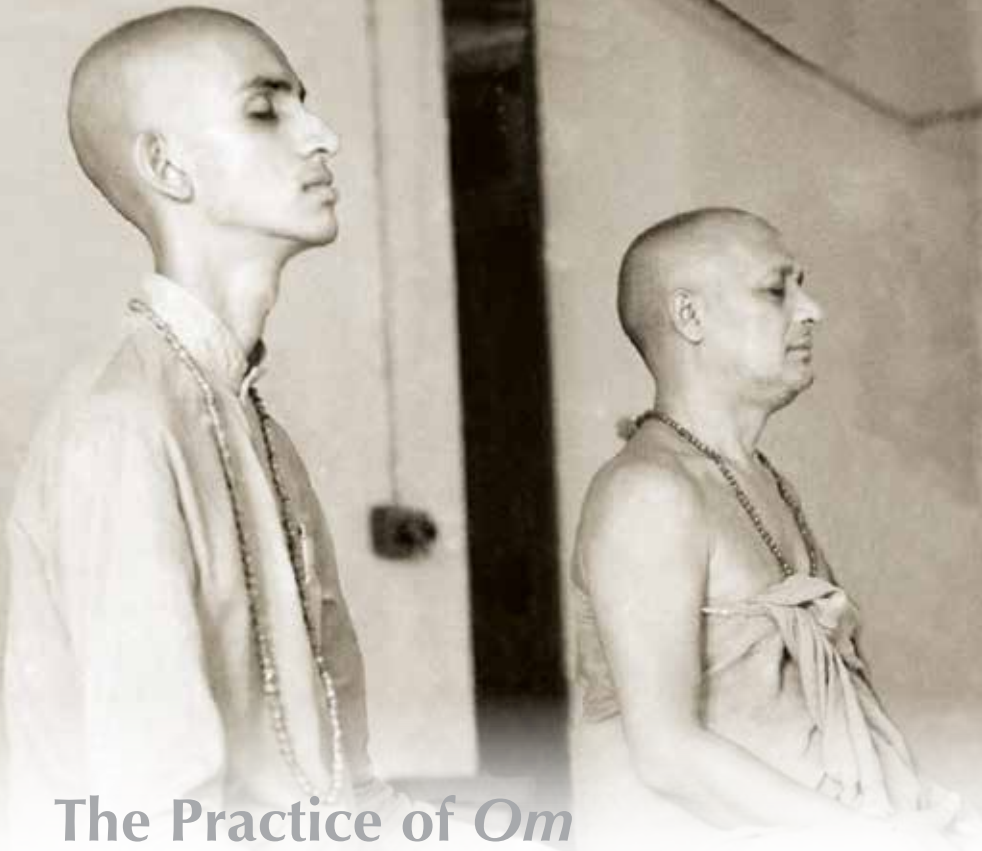
create many psychological blocks. A young child, for example, sees a nasty accident, and the subconscious mind buries the nastiness in his unconscious. But from then on the child has a horror of blood, without remembering why. In this way many psychological problems are created.

To reach the meditative state one has to find the way through these deeply hidden road blocks to the superconscious. This is why some people have unpleasant experiences during deep relaxation and pre-meditative practices. When the conscious and subconscious minds are relaxed, the unconscious is not suppressed, and all the buried unpleasantness comes up to the conscious level. Very often this takes the form of horrible visions, monsters, strange auditory effects, or other disturbances. These should be welcomed, not feared. Remember that they come from within, and can do no harm. On the other hand, many people have pleasant experiences during this process.

Meditation occurs when the barriers of the conscious, subconscious and unconscious minds have been passed, and the superconscious mind is reached. Asanas and pranayamas are therefore as important as meditation itself. They are the keys by which the doors of the energy store are opened, and thus they are named the conductors of prana.

– 1977, Munger





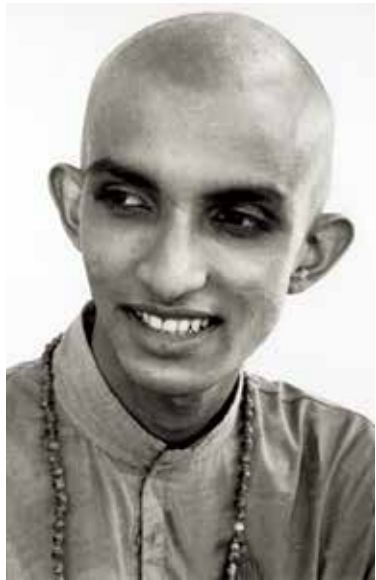
## The Practice of *Om*

In 1979, I was living in Barcelona, Spain. One day I was invited to a hospital as somebody there had a brainwave to teach a simple yoga technique to people coming for operations, as a pre-operation preparation. Generally, when people come for surgeries, for operations, they are very nervous because they think, 'We are going to be given anaesthesia, our body is going to be cut, we are not sure whether the operation will be successful'. All those different kinds of fears are there and how they are going to survive, and it is a terrible condition. I am sure even in your hospital similar conditions exist; people are very nervous, seeking assurances from the doctors all the time.

When this doctor called me, he said, "Swamiji, we want to do some research on a very simple technique of yoga which people can do in five minutes, which will lower their mental resistance, make them stronger, optimistic

and positive when they are to undergo surgery. What do you suggest?" I said, "Let us get ten people, any person who has no background of yoga, and monitor them with different biofeedback instruments like the GSR, the EEG and the ECG, while for five minutes they chant the mantra *Om* with their breath."

That was no problem; I was probably the only person in the hospital with a yogic background. They were all Christians and they were

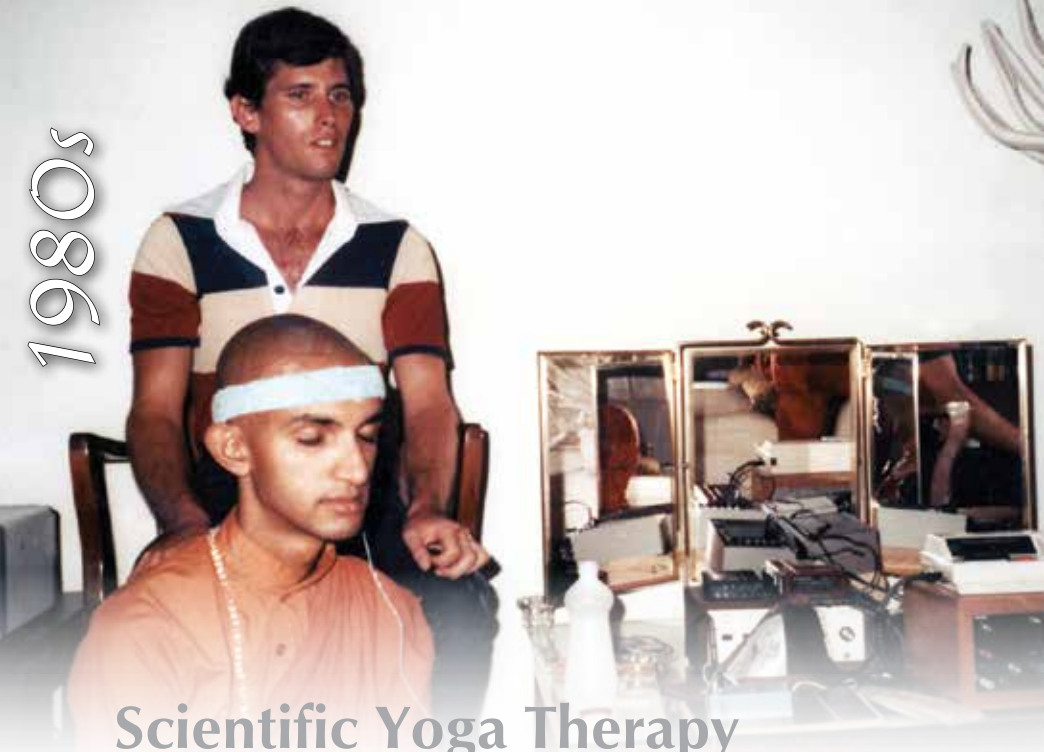


practising this mantra *Om*, and we were watching the graphs in the other room. The graphs showed their brainwaves and which brainwave pattern was more active. When the patients first came into the room, they were very nervous. Not only for the reason that they were going to do something new and unknown to them, but due to the underlying anxiety, 'We have to undergo this surgery and we are unsure if we are going to survive or not'. You could imagine the state of their beta brainwaves.

In five minutes of this *Om* chanting, delta became predominant. Their facial expression changed and they came out of the room with a more positive state of brain; I don't know about their minds, but definitely in a more positive state of brain: more relaxed, more tranquil. And believe it or not, since then, whenever people are admitted for surgery, for major or minor operations, they are still practising five minutes of *Om* chanting at that hospital. It has become a routine pre-operation care for the patients.

– 1979, Barcelona, Spain

1980s



## Scientific Yoga Therapy Response

When man came to know that within him there was an organ which controlled his physical actions and reactions, called the brain, he decided to investigate it. When he realized that he had a power within him which controlled his brain, body, actions, emotions, feelings etc., known as the mind, he decided to investigate this also. Yet there are very few pioneers who have made a systematic investigation on the whole physiology and psychology of the human being.

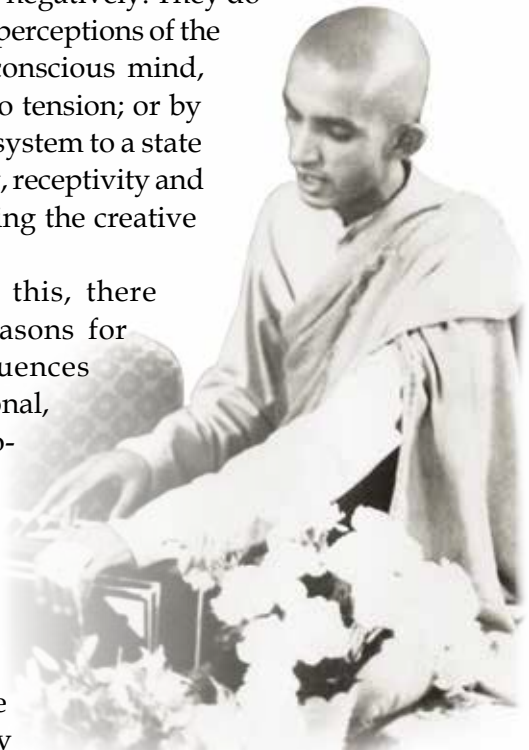
One of the important needs of today is to lead a tension-free life. Man wants to be happy, but still he is not capable of unburdening himself from frustrations, stresses and anxieties. He wants to manipulate the world to suit his needs, desires and ambitions. As a result, phobias, complexes, inhibitions and psychological traumas manifest. It is in this area that man has to divert his attention, if he is to integrate the various phases of human personality and overcome terror, insecurity, passions,



fright, uncertainty, suspicion, etc. which constantly influence physiological, emotional, mental and psychic behaviour patterns.

All the various systems of the body and the activities that go on in them are directed by the brain. The mind as conscious and subconscious has direct influence on the brain's activity, and this can be seen in the form of brain waves. When the conscious mind directs the activity of the brain, then beta and alpha rhythms predominate, reflecting in a state of mental activity, alertness and relaxation. When the subconscious mind directs the activity of the brain, then theta and delta rhythms predominate, reflecting a state of concentration, one-pointed perception, awareness and introversion. When there is intense activity in an emotional, physical or mental frame, then brain waves can in some ways influence the whole system positively or negatively. They do this by blocking the perceptions of the conscious and subconscious mind, which then turn into tension; or by bringing the whole system to a state of intense sensitivity, receptivity and activity by developing the creative capacities in man.

Apart from all this, there are many more reasons for the unknown influences on physical, emotional, mental and psychological behaviours which bring problems and diseases in man's life. But one point to remember is that diseases, ailments, or any type of problem on any



level of human personality originate with a state of imbalance. Physical body and brain are affected by the mind and vice versa. It is the sentiments, emotions, feelings, objectives, passions, stresses, desires and ambitions in the mind which create physiological changes. A thought can and does influence the body, and a limb pain caused by a minor or major injury can and does project tension into the mind.

Recent investigations prove that within each individual lies the key to relief from mental, physical, psychological and emotional disorders. Awareness, harmony, mental clarity and inner balance are the principal factors in establishing a state of balance in man. Yoga techniques such as asanas, pranayamas, relaxation, concentration and meditation help the individual to attain awareness, balance and harmony.

Within the body are currents of energy, which travel from top to bottom, circulating all throughout. These are known as bioplasmic energy channels, nadis, electromagnetic currents or pranic passages. The whole body is a composition of prana and mind. Subtle pranas are responsible for our physical actions and motions in life, while mind is responsible for



thinking and feeling. These are the two great twin forces in our system. If they lose their balance, then corresponding imbalance is created in the physical and mental behaviour. The practices of raja yoga and hatha yoga are based on these twin forces. Through the practice of asana and pranayama, the energy or pranic force is balanced, and through the practice of concentration, relaxation and meditation, the mind is balanced.

– 1980



## International Yoga Fellowship Movement

Many years ago, our Guru Swami Satyananda had a vision. He saw yoga-minded people from all over the world coming together and creating a direction in the practices of yoga and their application in daily life. He realized the fact that we all need to grow up in different areas of our personality according to the situations, circumstances, country and lifestyle. This movement which was created initially with the ideal of bringing yoga-minded people together for their physical, psychological and spiritual development was known as the 'International Yoga Fellowship Movement'.

This Movement represented the mission of Swamiji, still it represents today the fellowship of yoga on an international level dedicated to the upliftment, not of humanity but of our own selves. By doing this service to ourselves, by overcoming the difficulties and conflicts that we face in ourselves, maybe we can help create a better society. However, it is not practical to think about changing the society without changing ourselves.

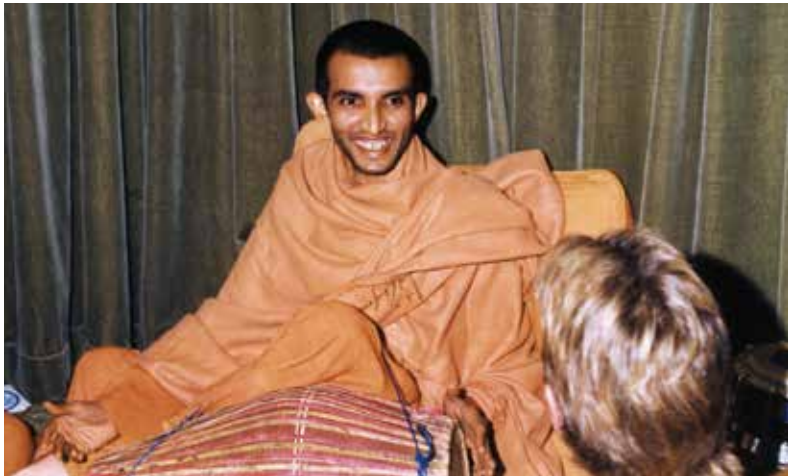
The various aspects of human personality were involved. We had the method of yoga which originally was an obscured

word not known to many. When Swamiji had come to Sydney in 1976 for the Inauguration of the International Yoga Convention, one of his statements had created a few thoughts in the mind about yoga. His statement was, 'Yoga for health and beauty was in the 1960s, and yoga for meditation is the yoga of the 1980s'. Until then the concept of yoga was, if you were involved in it, it was for body, beauty and health. Loosening up, toning up of the muscles, feeling good, floating on the seventh cloud and then coming down with a crash.

When he made the statement, many people started to think in Australia and in other countries as to the real meaning of yoga. They found that it could be used in the different areas of life, so that the three distinct personalities of body, mind and spirit could be experienced, and their potentials and qualities awakened.

With this idea many of the swamis, friends, karma sannyasins opened centres all over the world and dedicated those centres to Swami Satyananda as a mark of their respect for this stand which he has taken in the field of yoga. These institutions are dedicated to the ideals of the 'International Yoga Fellowship Movement'.

*– 1988, Sydney, Australia*







## World Yoga Convention 1993

In the last four days the environment of this town and the land of Munger has been vibrant with yoga. This land has already been sanctified by the pious goddess Ganga, who constantly washes away our sins and purifies our minds. It is the pride of Munger to have the northward flowing mother Ganga as its deity. In the form of her blessings, the 'Ganga of yoga', has been flowing here for the last four days and will continue to flow in the future, to contribute continuously to the welfare of the masses. This is the aim of yoga because everybody wants peace, spiritual peace, internal peace. Man always searches for peace, but that search is externally oriented towards the attractions, to objects of sensory pleasure.

As our most our most respected Swami Vidyanandaji Giri Maharaj, Acharya of Brahma Vidya Peeth, put it yesterday, "If you want real peace and internal bliss in your life, then first of all conquer the mind." This sentence of his can in fact become a guide for us all. Also our respected master Paramahansa Satyananda used to say, "There is no peace in the caves of the Himalayas and no chaos in the main Munger market." If you cannot control your mind, you will find no peace in those caves and forests of the Himalayas, and if you can keep your mind



still, then you will maintain and feel peace even in the middle of the chaotic main market. The message of yoga is the same.

In the last few days, so many saints, thinkers, intellectuals and scientists have come here to deliver only one message, which is that the objects of sensory pleasure will continue to exert their attraction in the world, that can never be eradicated. As long as we fail to develop control over the mental faculties, we shall continue to experience duality and as long as we experience duality we will have to face pleasure and pain, peace and chaos.

Engrossment in worldliness ultimately leads a man to physical sickness and makes him diseased. It also makes his mind sick and his thoughts shallow. As a result his behaviour is directed towards the fulfilment of selfish motives and not towards evolution. As long as he is desiring the fulfilment of selfish interests, he can never be healthy, contented, balanced and at peace, physically, mentally and spiritually. Therefore, for the alleviation of all kinds of sufferings, whether they are psychosomatic, physical, heaven-sent dooms or even spiritual sufferings, we will have to adopt a singular path. That path is of awareness, of endeavor, *purushartha* and karma, the path of yoga.

If you study the *Narada Bhakti Sutra* you will find that bhakti has been mentioned as a part of yoga and yoga is mentioned



as part of bhakti. If you study the *Gita*, you will discover that karma is mentioned as a part of yoga and yoga is mentioned as a part of karma. If you study Patanjali *Yoga Sutras*, there also you will find meditation and sadhana. This denotes that yoga is not a practice which is separate from our life stream. It is intimately related to the human lifestyle.

This path is what is being taught throughout the whole world, and humanity will never forget the services of those dedicated to such a mission. This is a unique gift to humanity. This is an unparalleled system of thought, unmatched endeavor of purushartha and karma. These were the goals and teachings our paramguru, most respected Swami Sivanandaji, pointed towards when he instructed Paramahansa Satyananda to spread the message of yoga from shore to shore and from door to door. He told him, "Remember, do not involve yourself in the job that you do and expect the fruits of your actions like worldly people do. Perform your actions, but renounce their fruits. Do the actions but renounce the actions also. Do not keep an attachment with them." This message glowed brightly like a flame in the entire life of respected gurudev. The fruits of actions have to be renounced but also renounce any attachment to action itself. That is why, to remember this great resolution of renunciation, we are celebrating this Tyag Golden Jubilee Convention.



## Harmony

Harmony is the meaning of yoga. People say yoga means union but can there be union without harmony? If there is no harmony, there cannot be any form of union. Union is the outcome of this state of harmony. If the body is sick then it has to be made well, and health is the harmony in this context. If the mind is unbalanced it has to be brought into balance and mental health is harmony in this context. Harmony is the actual meaning of the word yoga and harmony has to be felt at every stage of life. So we first have to consider the areas of life where we need to create inner harmony.

Yoga begins with the practices of the body because body is something with which we can identify very quickly and deeply. If there is a pain, stiffness or disease in any part of the body we know that it is there. We can even say that the majority of our awareness revolves around the physical condition. Since we identify intimately and deeply with the body, in the initial stages of yoga we work with our body with the help of asana, pranayama and other hatha yoga practices.

Once physical harmony is obtained then we automatically become aware of some mental needs. We begin to feel the pressure of the stress and tension in our minds, so that becomes



the next area of work in yoga – how to release tension, how to release stress, how to experience inner relaxation. In this process we also learn how to focus ourselves, so in this way we see the practices of yoga gradually evolving from body to mind.

The practices can also evolve up to the spiritual level but we stop after coming to the superficial awareness of mind because we think we have completed and attained everything that we wanted or needed to attain. We lack the understanding of the other areas of life which in subtle ways continue to guide the performances of our life. So, we have to begin by developing an awareness of the different structures and areas of life. We have to develop awareness of the different dimensions of life and use the practices of yoga to harmonize these different dimensions and the activities which happen in these different dimensions.

The concept of human personality is vast and broad in yoga. Yoga is not concerned with the body nor with the spiritual nature of a person. Yoga is not concerned with individual aspirations and desires, though of course they are fulfilled in the course of time. The main concern of yoga is with the development of the total human personality.

Yoga has felt that human beings interact on different levels which have been defined in the form of dimensions or states of mind. They start with the most physical level and include the most subtle, encompassing psychic and spiritual areas also. We will have to look into the theory of human personality in order to know the depth of yoga. We shall try to look at the various aspects of human nature because it is only after we have become aware of the different stages which govern and direct our life that we will be able to apply yoga and attain our goal. The goal, according to yoga, is to find perfection in life. Realization or union with God may be the outcome of that perfection. The perfection which we attain is the result of knowledge about ourselves.

– 1994, France

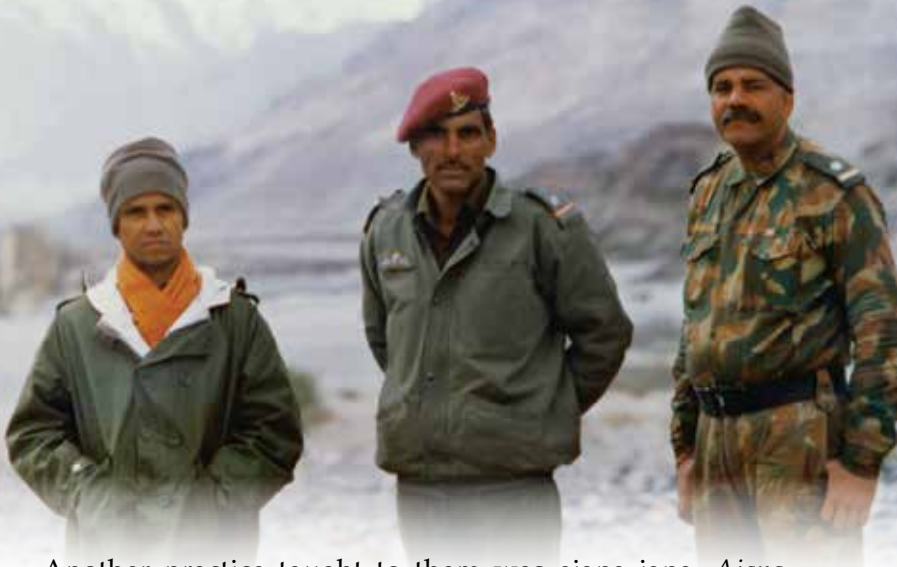


## Yoga for the Army

Our late General Joshi had approached the Bihar School of Yoga for training the army personnel, especially in the Siachen glacier area and in the Bikaner desert area because of the extreme climactic variations. Two swamis went and conducted specific training programs in Leh, at the base camp in the Siachen area and in Bikaner. While the swamis were conducting those training programs, they underwent similar exertions as those the army personnel undergo, to experience for themselves what happens, how one can manage and how we can teach the military to cope with it.

The results were incredible, especially in the Siachen base camp. You are well aware of the difficulties that soldiers face in such harsh conditions, where their worst enemy is isolation due to the complete disconnection of communication; they suffered a lot from mental and emotional stress.

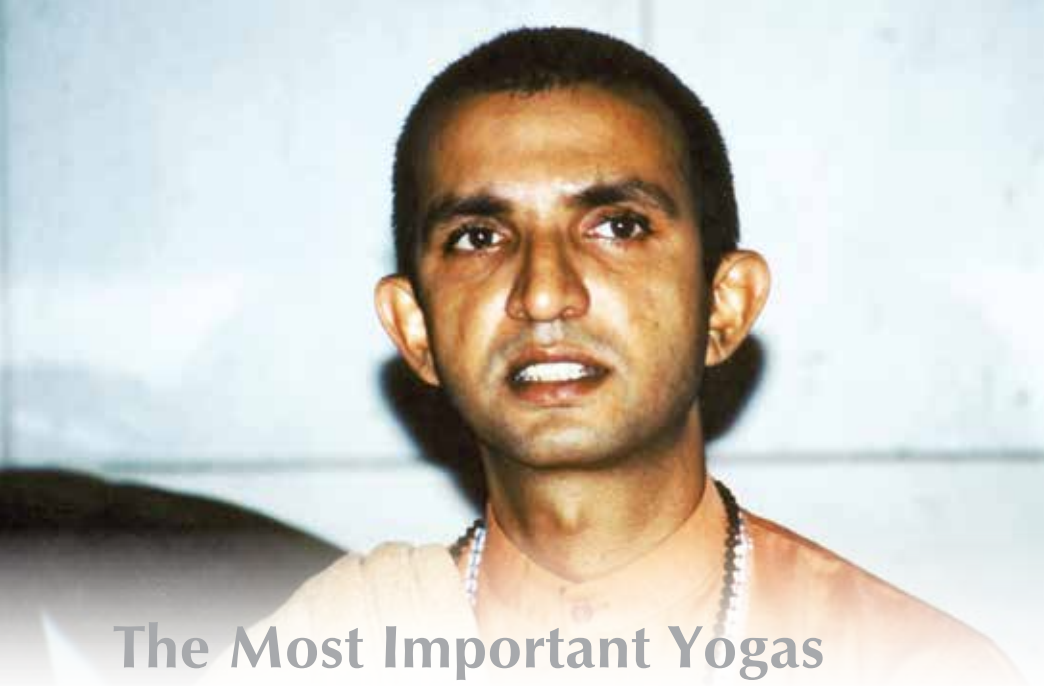
At that time, what helps their mental condition and state? They were taught a few practices of concentration. The first practice was of *trataka*, fixing the gaze on a point of light, like the tip of a candle. Normally we use *trataka* to improve concentration, to improve one-pointed awareness, yet in those conditions, it also helped stop the dissipation of their emotions and thoughts, reduced the level of fear, insecurity and the level of anxiety.



Another practice taught to them was *ajapa japa*. *Ajapa japa* is the practice of repeating a mantra with inhalation and exhalation. To give you an example of *japa*, repetition, we chanted the mantra *Om* three times before the start of this discussion. Now for many of you, it might have seemed like religious chanting. I can assure you, it is not a religious chanting; it has a scientific background.

– 1995, Delhi





## The Most Important Yogas

Jnana, bhakti and karma yoga are the three non-physical yogas. They do not involve the practice of postures or breathing techniques, and they do not involve meditative concentration. They are based on the principle of awareness and management of the human faculties, trying to improve these faculties and making them more creative. It is the integration of the faculties of head, heart and hands, and it becomes part of the transformative process that we experience in our lives. They are the most important yogas.

It is not necessary to practise hatha yoga and raja yoga in order to become a better human being, but it is necessary to practise these three yogas to become a creative human being. The other yogas simply help the process of these three yogas. Postures keep the body fit and healthy, breathing techniques vitalize the personality, and the cleansing techniques detoxify the body and personality. They are aids to the perfection of the three yogas.

Of all the yogas, bhakti yoga, jnana yoga and karma yoga are more mental than physical. We know of hatha yoga as a series of physical practices. We know that raja yoga involves



a series of practices to understand one's personality. We know of kriya yoga as a series of techniques that can awaken the dormant potential in each person and we know that kundalini yoga is a group of practices that can awaken the primal energy. It is difficult to develop a concept of jnana yoga, bhakti yoga or karma yoga because they are non-physical and do not involve a group of practices like asana and pranayama. However, these three yogas deal more deeply with the awakening of the human personality.

As human beings we need to integrate and utilize properly the qualities of head, heart and hands. These three yogas deal with our head, our heart and our hands. The head represents the human intellect, the faculty of knowing, observing, analyzing and thinking. The heart represents human sentiments and feelings. The hands represent the ability to perform an action and to interact with the environment and with life. There are two dimensions of yoga: one is physical and the other is mental. In the physical aspect of yoga, there are physical practices: postures, breathing techniques and cleansing techniques, including certain forms of meditation.

In the mental or non-physical aspect of yoga, there are techniques of awareness which give us a deeper insight into our personality, our nature and our behaviour. The human intellect has a nature, a recognizable pattern. We think in a certain way, we believe in a certain way and we observe and analyze in a set way.

Our intellect is subject to the conditioning of society, culture, religion and lifestyle. Society decides how our head is going to act; our culture decides how our intellect is going to function; and our religious beliefs decide what we are going to accept as true intellectually. All these represent impressions in the mind at the level of intellect. They are also known as conditioning. We are conditioned by society, by our lifestyle, by our culture and by our environment. Our intellect is a process of expressing this conditioning.

– 1997, *Slovenia*

# For a Balanced Lifestyle

The two dimensions, the spiritual and the material, are like the two wings of a bird or the two legs of a human being. Both wings are necessary for birds to fly. In order to walk, both legs are necessary. If you try to walk on only one leg, you will stagger and fall. This need for the material and spiritual dimensions has been explained in yogic philosophy.

Yoga does not denounce the material or the physical aspect, yet at the same time, it informs and warns everyone that materialism without spirituality leads to suffering, and spirituality without material fulfilment leads to dissatisfaction. Therefore, the yoga inherent in our vedic and tantric traditions has stated that every individual who wishes to excel in life and develop his intellect, talents and brilliance must not only consider the material, physical, extroverted self, but also the



internal, spiritual self. It is only then, that with the practices of yoga we can attain physical health, mental harmony and spiritual realization. It is for this purpose that the seers and sages of ancient India developed the science and the metaphysics of yoga.

Let me remind you that yoga is not only a group of practices that you do to alleviate yourself from physical disorders and obtain mental peace. It is not a collection of techniques that lead you to self-realization. It is a balanced lifestyle where you are aware of the values of human life and express them creatively and constructively.

– 1999, Chennai

## Bal Yoga Diwas

In 1995, Swami Niranjanananda established the Bal Yoga Mitra Mandal, the yoga movement for children. He gave three sankalpas to the movement: *samskara*, connecting with positivity in life; *swablamban*, independence; and *rastra sanskriti prem*, love and respect for one's culture and heritage. Every year on Swamiji's birthday, 14 February, the children celebrate with great joy the Bal Yoga Diwas, the Childrens' Yoga Day. They conduct havan and present their talents and skills in performances of dance, chanting, karate, asana and public speaking. It is always a beautiful and inspiring tribute to Swamiji.















## Pratyahara

Meditation will have no meaning if you are not able to direct your mind positively and creatively. People who have been practising meditation for the last thirty or forty years are still unable to control their emotional reactions, their anger and jealousy. Despite meditation, they are not able to direct the activities of the mind in the right direction. Is the fault in the meditation, or in our preparation and understanding of the mental processes? The fault lies in our understanding of the process that transforms and sublimates the mind.

We are not masters of the mind; the mind is the master of our life. Therefore, we need to look at pratyahara and dharana in relation to bhakti, because although the mind and emotions are identified separately, they function in conjunction with each other. A thought carries a sentiment, an emotion and a feeling with it. A desire carries an emotion, a sentiment and a feeling. Logic carries with it a sentiment and a feeling. Logic and emotion are interrelated activities. In pratyahara and dharana, although we work with the mind, we also need to be aware of the emotional input.

The clearest definition of the influence of the senses on the mind is given in the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Five thousand years ago, on the battlefield, Arjuna asked Krishna, "What can I do to control and guide my disturbed mind?" Krishna's answer is a definition of pratyahara: "The mind is disturbed when it is unable to find satisfaction and fulfilment in its association with the sense objects and the world." Therefore, in order to balance and tranquillize the mind, it is necessary to disconnect the mind from the senses and the material world. This disconnection is not rejection or renunciation of the connection, but having the wisdom to know when to connect and when to disconnect.

Krishna further tells Arjuna, "Just as a turtle withdraws its limbs into its shell when it encounters danger, in the same way, when we encounter danger, we should be able to withdraw our senses into our shell." The biggest dangers we face in life are dissatisfaction and lack of fulfilment, because these states create a change in the human personality and perceptions. They create obsessions in the human mind, which restrict the vision of wisdom. When we lose our connection with wisdom, it is definitely the death of the human character.

Krishna further defines how the external associations can induce altered negative states in the mind. Association with the sense objects leads to attachment. Attachment gives birth to expectations and when those expectations are not fulfilled, frustration arises, which restricts the clarity of mind. Frustration gives birth to obsessions and we forget what is right and wrong. The desire becomes the focus and the fulfilment of that desire is the drive. In this drive towards fulfilment we ignore the existence of others, we ignore our interactions with others, and this leads to confusion. Confusion leads to the death of logic, which leads to death of the personality.

This is the sequence Krishna has defined in the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Krishna tells Arjuna that we have to become aware of our connections in the world of the senses, and recognize which connection has a negative influence on



our nature and which connection has a positive influence. Then we have to learn how to manage the negative influences. This is also the theory of pratyahara.

Pratyahara has been translated as withdrawing the senses from the sense objects. That is the definition, not the process. The process begins with becoming aware of the activities and interactions that occur at different levels of the mind, recognizing their usefulness, deciding if they are conducive to growth, then incorporating them into one's life. But know that these influences exist within you. Pratyahara is managing

our reactions. We are disturbed if there is a fight in the family, or if there is tension in the workplace and we are unable to attain our goal.

There is tension because we are living in a competitive society. There is tension because we seek security at all levels, social, financial, familial, personal and spiritual, and if we do not find it, we become disturbed. All these factors lead to mental disturbance. Now, what do we renounce, from what do we disconnect and to what do we stay connected? We do not disconnect from our social needs, our financial needs or our personal needs. In yoga there is no rejection of the material world anywhere in this approach. There is an understanding of what is needed and what is not needed. We need to recognize our real needs, and disconnect from needs that do not lead to personal fulfilment and a feeling of security.

This process of understanding begins with thought observation. You are familiar with the practice of *antar mouna*, inner silence. In the technique of *antar mouna* there are seven stages. First, we simply become aware of the thought processes as and when they manifest in the mind. In subsequent stages we follow the thoughts back to their source. When we find the root cause of the thought, we become aware of the expectation in that thought, the feeling in that thought, the emotion in that thought, the security or insecurity in that thought. That way we are able to know the connection between the logical expression of the mind and the sentimental expression of the heart. Together logic and emotion weave a tapestry, that is the dress we wear.

Through the *pratyahara* techniques, we try to go to the source of our mental and sensorial manifestations. Just as *antar mouna* is observation of the thoughts, *antar darshan* is observation of the interaction of human emotion with logic. *Pratyahara* is simply a discovery of the human nature and mind, recognition of the extent of the mind and its functions.

– May 2001, Spain





## Towards Beauty, Balance and Harmony

In books on philosophy, yoga or spiritual subjects, various authors often say that to be a winner in spiritual life, an aspirant has to be like a warrior who fights and overcomes negativity, shortcomings and weaknesses. However, this idea goes against the spiritual precepts and principles of yoga, which say: "Be a farmer, not a warrior."

It is no use gaining at the expense of death, destruction and suffering, but there is beauty in being a farmer because you plant seeds, care for them, ensure their security and growth, and later on enjoy the fruits. In yoga, spiritual life is becoming the farmer of our own lives. A farmer converts a barren piece of land into a beautiful garden through effort. That is the spiritual aspect of yoga.

You have to look at your life and make it into a garden. Sow the positive qualities, the inner strengths and convictions, willpower, understanding, wisdom, compassion and love, and the desire for service and purification, which define progression in spiritual life. Remember that life is not suffering or survival, but a sequence of moments of happiness, joy, peace and bliss. If you capture these moments, then you live a full life because you have created a sequence and continuity, but if you think of life as suffering, struggling and surviving, then

you do not see the beauty. When you begin to plant positive seeds, they convert the quality of your life, and that makes you a yogi.

In Sanskrit, there are three words: yogi, bhogi and rhogi. A yogi is a practitioner of yoga, a *bhogi* is the enjoyer and a *rhogi* is one who is sick. In normal life we are on the middle path, searching for bhoga, enjoyment. As long as the enjoyment is balanced, you become a yogi, but if it is unbalanced, then you become a rhogi. A bhogi is one who enjoys, lives and acts, one who is part of the whole world. We are all bhogis, enjoyers. As the drive for pleasure increases, we become more materialistic and move into a state of imbalance, which leads to ill health of the body, mind, emotions and spirit. But if we are able to regulate our enjoyment, if we are able to direct our efforts towards balance, then we become a yogi, one who experiences harmony in life.

In the entire system of yoga, the effort is not to make you enlightened or spiritual. Enlightenment or realization is an outcome of a balanced, harmonious personality, which is not in conflict with itself or with other people, situations or conditions, but is equipoised. Enlightenment is not the ultimate goal of life. Mind management is the goal because the rest is just an outcome of the inner harmony one is able to experience through the yogic practices of meditation, awareness and contemplation. This is the aim of yoga, because at this point yoga does not only remain a practice, but becomes a lifestyle.

If yoga is only a practice, something you do in a classroom, you do not carry it with you outside, but if yoga is a lifestyle, it remains within you twenty-four hours of the day, wherever you are or whatever your circumstances may be. You live yoga. That is the culmination, the grand finale we wish to see. We do not wish to see somebody who can practise meditation for eight hours without moving their body, because that is useless. All you do is waste your time in mental imaginings and fantasies. By applying yourself, you will receive more returns than by simply closing your eyes. Therefore, it needs to

be understood that yoga is not escaping from life, but running into life with open arms and an attitude of acceptance, and with the attitude of improving one's ability to perform, to think and to understand.

This is the basic foundation of yoga. We begin with the purpose of improving the wellbeing of the body, attaining peace of mind and experiencing spiritual awakening. These three aims have to be taken together in order for the roots of our life to be strong and able to withstand every kind of storm or tempest that comes our way.

Spiritual and mystical experiences are the outcome of a trained mind, a mind that has been disciplined and awakened by the input of different attitudes and qualities to uplift human consciousness. The general trend is to talk a lot, love a little and hate a lot. Let us talk less, love more and hate less. How long are we going to subject ourselves to the agonies which are self-created by our ego, ambitions and dislikes? We have to connect with the positive self some time.

Yoga provides the instruments to connect with the positive, creative self. This creative, positive self is nourished and nurtured by the qualities of love, compassion, purity and understanding. We need to cherish these qualities because they make us a real human being. This has been the teaching of all the spiritual traditions.

Yoga allows us to conquer our inner space. This is the teaching of our tradition and also the teaching we encounter in the ancient pre-Columbian culture. There are many countries in the world where yoga is practised, but only a few that have the potential to experience yoga and live yoga. India is one of these countries, Colombia is another, and possibly other South American countries too, because the yogic culture extends to the Andes and is not restricted to a geographical location. Just as energy moves in the spine, in the same way yoga has moved through the Andes to the South American countries. Here we find very pure and sincere seekers who, if given the right opportunity, training and teaching, can again live a yogic

way of life and experience union with other beings and the cosmos. This union is an expression of love and compassion because union without love and compassion, empathy and oneness, purity and service, is not union. It is an attitude of mind, a selfless, positive and constructive attitude of mind.

In a nutshell, yoga is a process of sublimating the normal and natural behaviour to a point where it becomes universal. Yoga teaches us to come out of the personal shell. Before a seed can sprout, it has to die. Only when the shell of the seed is broken will the sprout be seen. In the same manner, yoga helps us to break the shell of selfishness and egocentricity in order to allow spiritual sprouting to take place where there is beauty, calmness and peace. This is what we look for in our life in today's society.

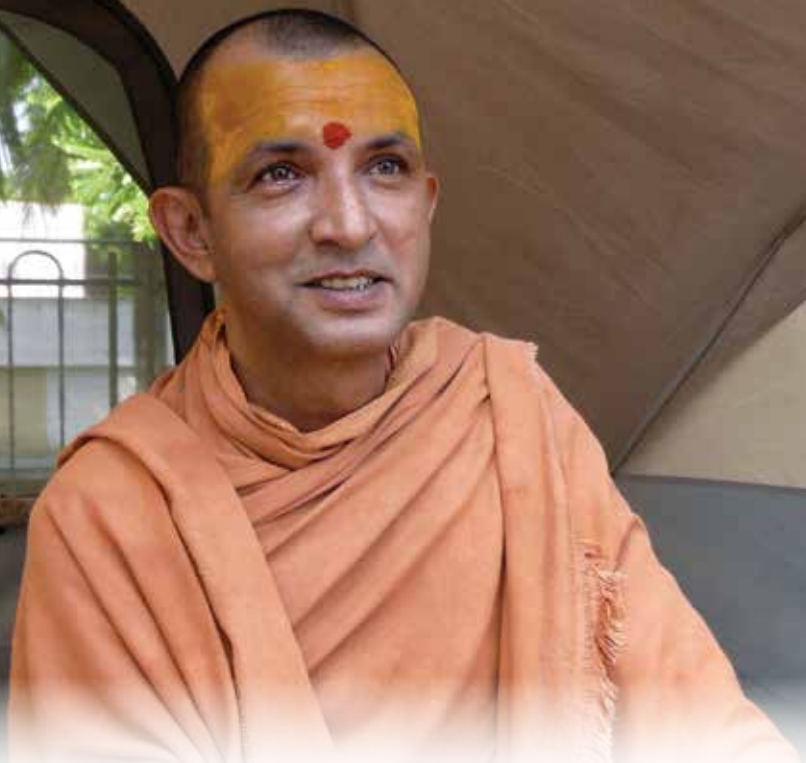
– 2005, Colombia

## Mouna and Discipline

If possible, practise mouna one day per week. Mouna is generally thought to mean silence; however, the word '*mouna*' comes from the Sanskrit root which means 'to measure'. Mouna means measuring, limiting, confining or balancing the mental activity, the mental behaviour and the mental expression. The mind is directly linked with the tongue, as whatever happens in the mind, is expressed through the tongue in the form of speech. If you are frustrated, depressed or elated, the tongue will express it.

Whatever you feel in the mind, speech expresses that. However, when you practise mouna, you are cutting off the connection between mind and speech, and that forces you to observe the mind. If you cut off the connection between mind and speech, if you stop speaking, you become more intently and intensely aware of the activities of the mind.

In the ashram, during the evening, those people who follow mouna are aware of what they are thinking, feeling,



expecting and desiring, as the entire focus goes to the mind. Mouna functions in a systematic way. You begin to remove the layers like peeling an onion. You remove one layer, then you remove another layer, then another, until you come to the point in the centre. You will discover the same thing with yourself at home.

The purpose is to measure and balance what is happening inside the head. Therefore, one day of mouna should ideally be practised each week, or at least half a day. If even that is not possible, then a minimum of three hours. Choose a day according to your convenience.

What is discipline and what is indiscipline? Discipline means to become responsible; indiscipline means to become irresponsible. It is as simple as that. If you are responsible and you act in a responsible manner, you are disciplined. If you behave in an irresponsible manner, then naturally you will be labelled as undisciplined. The problem is that people want 'rights'. 'This is my right. That is my right.'



People are more aware of their rights and less aware of their responsibility – the basic idea is forgotten. People want rights without responsibility. However, if you become responsible, then naturally you get rights.

Discipline is nothing but being responsible for oneself. Discipline does not mean that you have to act according to this time or that time, within these parameters or limitations, or in this area. All that can change: today you are here, tomorrow you will be some place else. However, if you become responsible for yourself, your development, your wellbeing and your peace, then that responsibility will be seen as a discipline – in action, behaviour, attitude and mentality.

What is responsibility? I do not have to define that. You know what responsibility means. There is a greater sense of responsibility when you feel that you belong. For example, a piece of rubbish has been thrown on the path. Somebody goes and picks it up, and puts it in the rubbish bin. It did not tax anyone; it was a simple act. If you leave the rubbish and wait for somebody else to remove it, are you being responsible? If somebody tells you, “Please pick up that rubbish,” a reaction happens.

Discipline is not a structured method, system or lifestyle – that in the morning you do this, in the afternoon do this, in the evening do this. Routines change from place to place. In your home you also have a routine, but by following the routine you do not become disciplined; it is by becoming responsible for your development that you become disciplined.

When you are responsible all rights come to you naturally; nobody can deny you any rights. On the other hand, if you want rights and you do not want responsibility, you will struggle with everyone, whether it is your family members or the government. Therefore, take responsibility for your growth and development. That is the best form of discipline, which will also make you free from your own mental hang-ups, reactions and bondages.

– 2008, *Ganga Darshan*



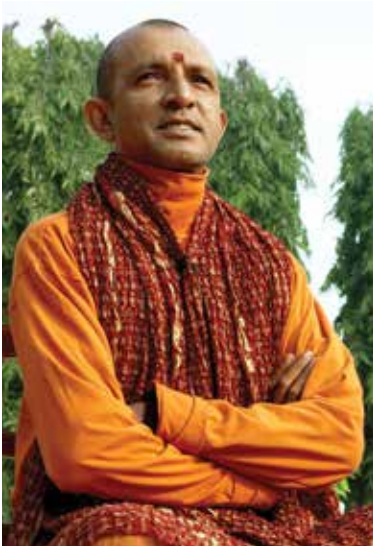
## Follow the Sequence

The first practice of internalization that is taught in pratyahara, is yoga nidra. Even during this preliminary practice people are not able to control their mental states. How can such people move into the higher levels of meditation? The teacher instructs, “Don’t sleep,” and no sooner are the words uttered than the student is snoring. In the early days when I used to give classes, I would find that despite my instructions, people would go to sleep in yoga nidra. I tried many tricks.

Once in Colombia, I said, “Today we are going to practise yoga nidra standing up.” That was a mistake because about thirty people stood up in a line and the last one went to sleep and fell. It had a domino effect! I realized that people do not have any control over their mental states. If somebody can go to sleep standing up and then fall, I don’t think that person can ever practise meditation. Anyhow, yoga nidra is the first practice of pratyahara in which de-stressing takes place.

### **Entering into deeper mind: antar mouna**

After de-stressing in yoga nidra, to go into the deeper mind, different practices have to be adopted. One of the most important among them is antar mouna. The expressions and



behaviours of ahamkara, chitta and buddhi first manifest in manas, the playground for the three. In antar mouna, when you begin to observe the inner states and see something, a thought or an experience, you hold on to it and go to its source. You use the thought as a string to go in. Sometimes you go to buddhi because the thought has come from buddhi. Sometimes you go to chitta because the experience has come from chitta. Sometimes

you go to ahamkara because instinct has influenced the behaviour of manas. Through antar mouna you can access buddhi, chitta or manas according to the thought in the mind.

This is what makes antar mouna such an important practice. People think that antar mouna is only a practice of inner silence where one has to observe the thoughts, but that is only its first stage. It is because you have not progressed beyond the first stage that you have not been told about the second stage.

Very few take that next step because everybody thinks of the practice in terms of 'observe the thoughts, accept them and then let them go; keep your mind blank'. Nobody progresses beyond this stage. It is a practice which can be the most direct method of accessing buddhi, chitta or ahamkara, if done properly. Therefore, one aspect of the mind is dealt with through antar mouna. We are discussing only a few practices which are simple and known to everybody, but you have to understand their importance.

### **Observing attachments: SWAN**

When you come to the conclusion that buddhi is attaching you to an object or person, that an attachment is being created, then

buddhi, as intellect, plays another role. It begins to analyze: this is good for me, this is not good for me, this is acceptable, this is not acceptable. You ascribe an identity, a form and a shape to your attachments. When attachment becomes strong, there is identification with the object of attachment as if you own it – the feeling of ‘It is mine’. When this idea comes in, it is difficult to become the observer, *drashta*, of the experience.

The first rule of yoga is: cultivate your awareness to such a degree that you can become the observer of everything that occurs around you or within you. The *Yoga Sutras* state (1:3): *Tada drashtu swaroope avasthanam*. The seer, the observer, the individual has to establish himself or herself in the state of mind where nothing escapes the internal vision. Everything is observed. Nothing occurs in a subtle way or any other way. Every event, thought and moment is observed. This happens in a very natural and spontaneous way. You don’t have to create tension, repeating to yourself, “I have to be aware.” When it happens spontaneously, with ease, you can be the observer all the time.

When you struggle with yourself, the observer state is experienced only for a few moments while you are struggling. There must not be struggle in yoga, only cultivation of awareness. With cultivation of awareness, you analyze your attachments while they are being created. “Is it infatuation? Is it need? Why am I associating with this person? Why do I desire this object? Is it need or infatuation?” Eighty percent of the time you will discover that it is not your need, just an infatuation, a selfish, desire to possess something.

Analyze buddhi by using the SWAN principle: Strength, Weakness, Ambition, Need. What are the strengths of your mind and what are its weaknesses? What are its aspirations? What are your actual needs in life? If you are able to classify your expectations and desires in these four categories and understand yourself in the light of your strengths and weaknesses, ambitions and needs, you can be free from the bondage of attachment.

People say, "I have to be detached." How can you be detached? There is no need to be detached from anything. Just try to analyze and realize the value of things in relation to your need and ambition. If your attachment is based on need, it is valid. If your attachment is due to ambition, you will have to rethink it, because it will not bring you satisfaction. It will not provide you with fulfilment. Rather, ambitions and infatuations will only give rise to more ambitions and infatuations. In this way, using the SWAN principle, you can cultivate awareness and manage the behaviour of buddhi.

### **Accessing chitta: ajapa japa**

Chitta is the storehouse of impressions, samskaras and karmas. Chitta is one aspect of the mind to which you do not have easy access to. It is very difficult to know what your samskaras are. It is difficult to know what the karmas are that you are living. It is difficult to know what your future expectations are according to the samskaras and vasanas that exist in chitta. Chitta can be accessed by using another practice of pratyahara and dharana: ajapa japa. Ajapa japa is the practice of mantra with breath awareness. Sit down quietly, and observe the breath moving from the navel to the eyebrow centre. When you inhale, feel the breath come up from the navel to the eyebrow centre; when you exhale, observe the breath going down from the eyebrow centre to the navel. Then add a mantra to the movement of the breath: *So-Ham*. It is the mantra of the breath.

As you continue with the practice, you will gradually feel drowsy, as nervous tensions are released by breath regulation. When nervous tensions are released, cerebral tensions also ease. When cerebral tensions ease, the mind becomes introverted. When the mind becomes introverted, the connection with the senses is cut off. When the connections are cut off, you feel drowsy. At that moment, you still have one tool with you to help you remain alert and awake. That is awareness of the mantra.



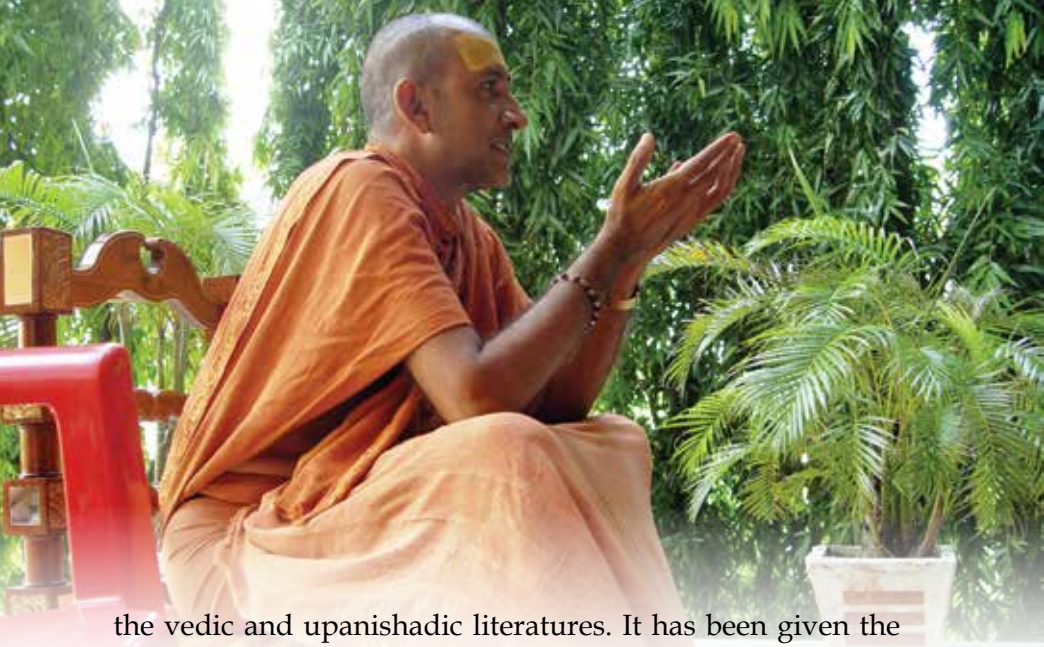
When you keep on repeating the mantra with the breath, *So-Ham, So-Ham, So-Ham*, for fifteen minutes or twenty minutes, the mind moves into a state which is similar to, let us say, a catatonic state. It is a state where nothing moves, you become still. In that stillness, impressions and memories of the past come to the surface. I will give you an example of a true incident to indicate how ajapa works.

Many years ago, an asthmatic person came to the ashram. He had tried every kind of therapy to find relief from his asthma. Bronchial dilators did not work, inhalers did not work, no other medicine worked, and the intensity of his asthma was strong. Sri Swamiji was in the ashram at that time. He said to the young man, "Practise ajapa meditation and stop taking all medication. If these medicines have not worked on you until now, they are not going to work for the next few weeks. Stop the medication and practise ajapa meditation." This man started the practice as instructed, as he had trust in the words of the guru.

He stopped the medication and started the meditation. After about a month or so, he had a vision in his meditation related to his childhood. It was something that he had forgotten about completely and, during meditation, that distant memory came to the surface. From that moment onwards he was free of asthma. Since that day, that person has not had a single attack of asthma, and this incident took place about twenty-five years ago.

When the person went back to his country, he underwent a test to check whether he was actually cured of asthma or not, the Ventolin Challenge Test. It indicated that he was in the clear. Where medication did not work, meditation did work. It worked because the process was able to bring up a memory which had been the cause of the problem. After acknowledging that memory, acknowledging the suffering and pain in that memory, the person was freed.

Ajapa japa is a good practice for drawing out the memories, impressions and samskaras which are affecting your external behaviour. Ajapa japa also centres you in your own spirit, heart and mind. It is a practice which has been eulogized in



the vedic and upanishadic literatures. It has been given the most prominent place in the spiritual scriptures because of its ability to clear the inherent and latent impressions, samskaras and karmas.

– October 2010, Ganga Darshan

## Sadhana

The process which takes you from tamas to sattwa has a name, and that is sadhana. Generally, when we use the word 'sadhana', people identify it with a spiritual discipline, a spiritual practice. However, sadhana means attainment of perfection in that which you do.

When you were learning to write ABC at school, you had to fill many pages by writing each letter repeatedly. After three or four pages of writing 'A,' you had to write 'B', and so on. You were given lined pages and you had to write in between those lines. That is sadhana for a child, and the result of that sadhana is received. If you write properly, you get plus marks, you get a gold star, and if you do not write properly then you get a red 'x'. The sadhana of a child gets results then and there. The more you write, the more fluent you become, the more clarity there is in the writing, and the letter is recognized the more easily. The

result of any sadhana you do well is attainment of maturity. Through sadhana you get plus marks in life. Those who do not do sadhana get minus marks, become lazy and stay ignorant.

Another form of sadhana is found in the story of Arjuna, friend and disciple of Sri Krishna. When he was young, he was an avid archer. Once, while he was eating his dinner at night, the candle blew out and there was pitch darkness in the dining room. Arjuna kept on eating and suddenly he realized that his hands were going automatically to his mouth; they were not going to his nose, or to his eyes, or to his ears, but straight to his mouth. He recognized that even in absolute darkness, if the senses are trained, they will follow their course of action.

With this in mind, he started training himself to shoot the arrow at night without seeing where he was shooting. Of course, this sadhana had its own problems, but he overcame them all and became the greatest archer of his time. The story indicates that if you train your senses and your mind, then there is nothing that you cannot achieve; everything is achieved naturally and spontaneously.

Training regulates the behaviour of the senses and the mind. This is the kind of training you lack in your life. This regulation of sensory and mental behaviour is known as sadhana. Sensory education takes place at the physical level, the sensorial level and the interactive level. It is an interactive process: you and the world. Mental sadhana is practised to pacify mental agitation and to develop concentration and focused awareness. Emotional sadhana takes place in the form of bhakti, intellectual sadhana in the form of jnana and spiritual sadhana in the form of pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and absorption.

Spiritual sadhana takes place in form of developing an understanding of your own nature and managing the problem areas in the mind. Sadhana means a process that leads you to mastery and perfection. It is also a type of discipline, as without discipline no sadhana can be achieved or fulfilled. Therefore, the main subject and focus of sadhana is the preparation of the mind.



The mind is always being directed outward, and this mind has to be retrained. Sri Swamiji says never to fight with the mind, but to always guide it. If there is a fight at home between husband and wife, there is disturbance; there is emotional pain and suffering, intellectual confusion and conflict. That is happening between two people who may be a couple, may be friends, may be parents, that is it. If you fight with your mind, however, the mind lives with you twenty-four hours of the day. The mind is with you in the same bed when you go to sleep; it follows you around when you eat, when you shower, when you brush your teeth, when you work and when you visit your friends.

The association with the mind is much greater than the other associations. A problem, a fight, a conflict in the family

can disturb the environment at home. What would happen when you confront your own mind? When you fight with your own mind? Who gets disturbed? It is not the mind that gets disturbed, it is you.

Sri Swamiji says, "I never disturb my mind, as then the mind will disturb me. It is always better to be a friend to the mind and keep it happy all the time." Keeping the mind happy does not mean that you allow it to follow its whims. It means you do not come into direct confrontation or conflict with the mind. You guide your mind just as you would guide your child to do certain things, to behave and act in a certain manner. In this way you guide your mind, but do not fight with the mind. The moment you fight with your mind, you become the loser; you get disturbed and you lose your peace, your *shanti*.

It is mental training that allows you to discipline the mind and, after that discipline, to embark on the path of sadhana. This has been explained to some extent by Sage Patanjali and by other rishis who have developed the subject of yoga. Sage Patanjali says that the management of mental moods is yoga. He uses the phrase *chitta vritti*; I use the expression 'mental mood'. It is the mood in the existing environment of the mind that influences your thought process, behaviour, performance, responses, everything. If the mental mood is happy then the whole world is happy; if the mental mood is depressive then the whole world is dark and depressing. If you are fearful then you will experience fear everywhere. If you are angry, you will find cause for anger everywhere. If you are kind, you will find ways to express your kindness everywhere.

It is the predominant mood of the mind which becomes the *vritti*, and it is the management of those *vrittis* which is the purpose of yoga. The *vrittis* colour the mind, and yogic sadhana, which is aimed at cultivating spiritual awareness, begins with understanding the *vrittis* of the mind.

– April 2011, Ganga Darshan





## World Yoga Convention 2013

These celebrations are not limited to the city of Munger. Globally, people are watching our sessions at Polo Ground. In fact, many people travelling to Munger yesterday, were watching the proceedings on their mobiles phones and iPads in trains and cars. We have been receiving phone calls from places like Singapore, Australia, America, South America, Europe, saying, “We wish we could be there! Everything looks superb, gorgeous, beautiful and inspirational, and we wish we were there physically.” The eyes of the world are on Munger for these five days.

Everyone is awaiting a message to be transmitted from this World Yoga Convention. Everyone is waiting to hear what the message of yoga will be, and they should. For, yoga is a science, a process, an experience of unity; a unity not only of body, mind and spirit, but a unity of the creative faculties of the head, heart and hands, as stated by our paramguru, Sri Swami Sivananda. This is what we are experiencing here: the multidimensional aspect of yoga. Despite its multidimensional aspect, yoga is a science of consciousness.

Consciousness is the main factor for the development, growth and evolution of every individual, not the senses, or the body, but the mind and consciousness. Therefore, yoga becomes the science of mind and consciousness to cultivate the creative and positive faculties, and to cultivate spiritual



awareness while living in the material dimension. Just as a bird needs two wings to fly, materialism and spirituality are the two aspects which allow the growth of an individual in life.

Spirituality is not religion. I wish to make it clear that spiritual experiences and religious experiences are two different things. Here I am talking about spiritual experience. A spiritual experience means to bring out the creative within you, to bring out that which is virtuous, true and beautiful within you. It helps you to express the qualities of *Satyam*, *Shivam* and *Sundaram*, truth, auspiciousness and beauty. These are the three aspects of the human mind which have to be nurtured and cared for, and this is the attempt of yoga.

– October 2013, Ganga Darshan



# Yoga Chakra – The Wheel of Yoga

When Sri Swamiji established the Bihar School of Yoga, he developed a system. This system is divided into *bahiranga yoga*, outer or external yoga, for self-perfection, and *antaranga yoga*, inner yoga, to express the spiritual attainment. External yoga is that which you do to improve the quality of your body and mind, the expression of your senses and behaviour. It is the effort that you make. Internal yoga is the attitude that you cultivate, the change that you bring into your ideas and perceptions based on your experience, understanding and practice. In outer yoga, you are preparing yourself, reconditioning yourself, fine-tuning yourself.

The purpose of *bahiranga yoga* is to manage, guide and harmonize the conditions of the senses and the mind. The purpose and aspiration of *bahiranga yoga*, the outer yoga, is to endow you with *sanyam*. After the outer has been managed – discipline is attained by the body and the mind through a series of sustained practices, the emotions are better harmonized through a series of sustained practices – then the mind takes on a different understanding. Subsequently, you begin to live a harmonious, peaceful, creative life. The moment you begin to live the peaceful, harmonious and creative life, your inner self becomes soft. Your inner self begins to experience the change of its radical behaviour in the realm of the senses and realize its pure nature in the realm of the spirit.

In outer yoga, which allows you to attain the discipline of the koshas and to move from physical to mental to spiritual, Sri Swamiji defined three: *hatha yoga* for the body and *prana*; *raja yoga* for the mind; and *kriya yoga* to go through the awakenings in consciousness and ultimately experience the luminosity of the self from consciousness to spirit. *Hatha yoga* is for *annamaya kosha* and *pranamaya kosha*; *raja yoga* is



for manomaya kosha; and kriya yoga is for vijnanamaya and anandamaya kosha.

These three yogas constitute the discipline to transform the human nature, personality and identity. Even if you live these three yogas without jnana yoga, karma yoga or bhakti yoga, even if you live these three yogas in your home, in your day-to-day life, it is enough. The appropriate, correct and sustained practice of hatha yoga, raja yoga and kriya yoga is enough to take you from point A to point E: A is annamaya, B is pranamaya, C is manomaya, D is vijnanamaya, and E is anandamaya.

Once sanyam has been attained in your life – which is external, physical, psychological and emotional – then the behaviours of the mind change and the natural attitude is different. It becomes purer and untainted, and that natural expression of your inner, enlightened behaviour, is known as bhakti yoga, jnana yoga and karma yoga.

– October 2015, Ganga Darshan





## Padma Bhushan to Yoga

This honour has been received for the work in yoga, and the work in yoga and the propagation of *yoga vidya*, the knowledge and science of yoga, was commenced by our paramguru, Swami Sivananda, in the decade of the 1940s. At that time no one knew what yoga was, and Swami Sivananda ploughed and prepared a barren land for cultivation.

After that, our guru, Swami Satyananda, sowed the seeds of yoga vidya and spiritual awareness in the soil that had been prepared by Swami Sivananda, and nurtured the saplings as they grew. Thus, the important work was done by these two visionaries, and we in the third generation are merely distributing the harvest in society. It is not our hard work. We are only trying to continue the work of our paramguru Swami Sivananda and our guru Swami Satyananda. Therefore this honour has been bestowed upon them, and we are receiving it on their behalf, since they are not present here. The honour is theirs, the achievement is theirs, the recognition is theirs, and in humility we accept it on their behalf.

The Padma honour also brings the responsibility to continue the sacred work of yoga and spirituality in the best way possible, so the vidya continues to reach all. I pray that God and guru give us the strength to achieve this.

– May 2017, Munger





## Yoga Publications Trust

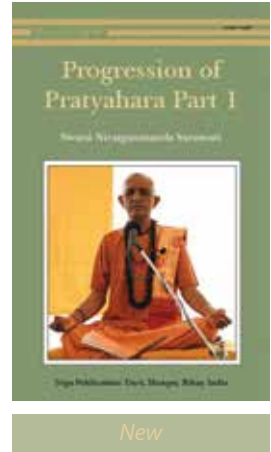
# Progression of Pratyahara Part 1

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

123 pp, soft cover, ISBN: 978-81-938420-6-5

The third Progressive Yoga Vidya Training 1 held at Ganga Darshan Vishwa Yogapeeth, Munger, in 2017 focused on pratyahara – the origin, development, purpose and practical application of the fifth limb of raja yoga. Swami Niranjanananda introduced the participants to an extraordinary understanding and experience of pratyahara.

The practices relating to the body, the senses, mind and prana make pratyahara come alive as never before and encourage one to 'delve deeper'. This book is an inspiration to all serious, sincere and committed aspirants who wish to enhance the quality of their life and being with yoga.



**Yoga Publications Trust**, Garuda Vishnu, PO Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger, Bihar 811 201, India, Tel: +91-06344-222430, 9162783904



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## Websites and Apps

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

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

### Satyam Yoga Prasad

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

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

### Bihar Yoga Wiki

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

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

### YOGA & YOGAVIDYA Online

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

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

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

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

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

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## Yoga Peeth Events & Yoga Vidya Training 2020

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 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:**

Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger, Bihar 811201, India

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

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