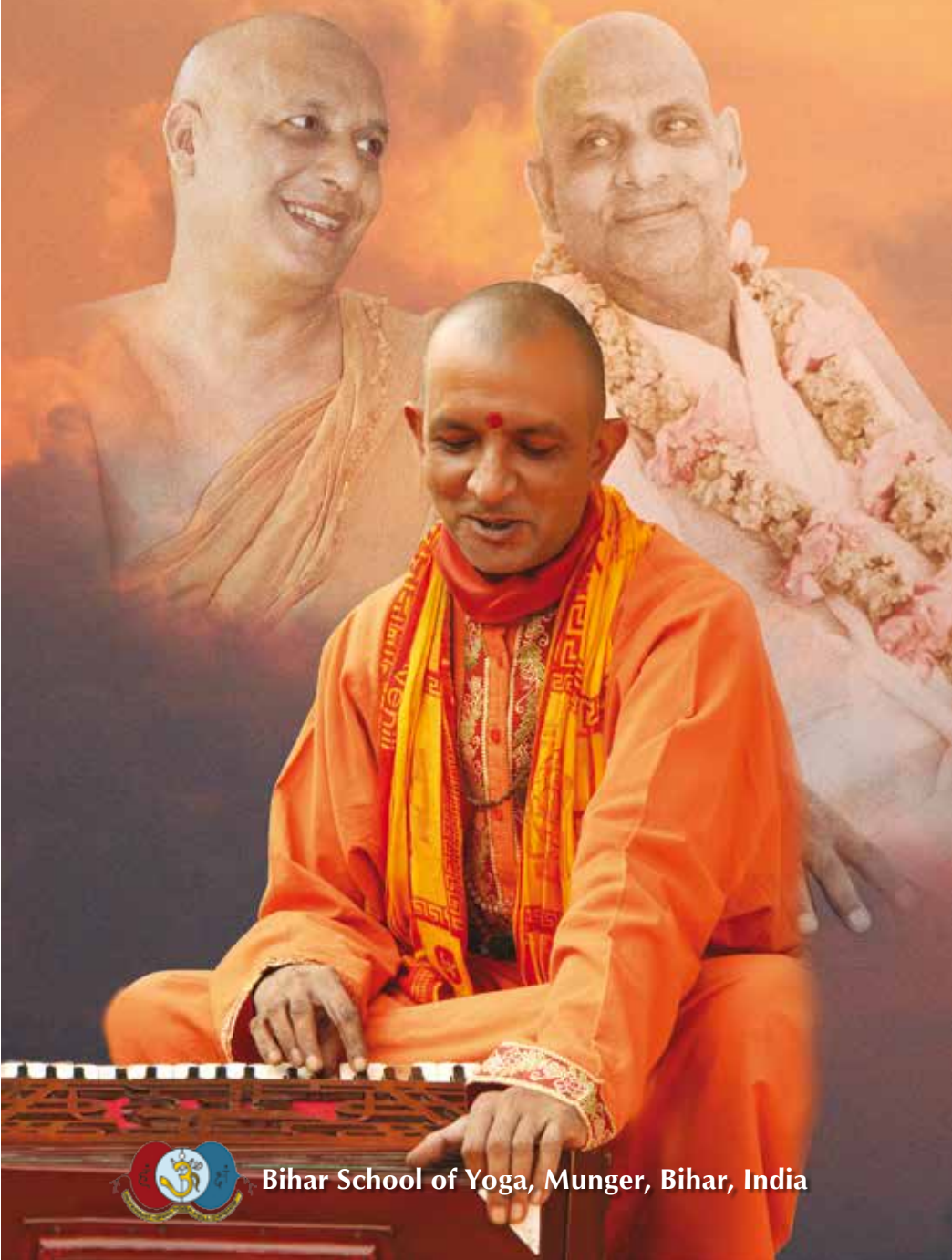


# YOGA

Year 9 Issue 6

June 2020

Membership postage: Rs. 100



Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar, India



## Hari Om

YOGA is compiled, composed and published by the sannyanin 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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Fort, Munger, 811201  
Bihar, India

✉ A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be sent along with enquiries to ensure a response to your request

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Front cover: Swami Sivananda, Swami Satyananda and Swami Niranjanananda

Plates: 2020 Holi celebrations at Ganga Darshan, Munger



## GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

### Sadhana

There is no use of praying to the Lord by fits and starts or every now and then. Do japa and meditation regularly without any break even for a single day, just as you do not give up tea and meals even for a single day, just as you do not forget your meals, so also do not forget sadhana, whatever little you can, and then only take your meals. This is a sure and potent way of goading and compelling the mind to penetrate itself deeply and unavoidably into the spiritual practices. Read the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* with meaning. You will have a clear understanding of the remedy for setbacks in sadhana.

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

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# YOGA

Year 9 Issue 6 • June 2020  
(58th 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 ॥

# Yogic Lifestyle Sadhana

*In April 2020, Bihar School of Yoga launched the Yogic Lifestyle Sadhana online. Inspired by Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati, this holistic yoga sadhana is specifically designed for a world in lockdown. The virtual world, however, is open to one and all, and this sadhana, with its hyperlinks to books and audio, is a valuable addition to Satyam Yoga Prasad ([satyamyogaprasad.net](http://satyamyogaprasad.net)) for these challenging times.*

YOGA magazine is pleased to publish the content of the Yogic Lifestyle Sadhana with the humble request to its readers to share it and the website links with family, friends, neighbours that all may benefit by introducing yoga into their lives.



Blessed Self

Hari Om

The power of hope and faith shines most brightly in the darkest of times. The simple hope of today, that things will improve tomorrow, can become a guiding light and a force of illumination in life. The ability to change, to improve and to transform lies within every person, and this transformative force is enhanced through yogavidya. Yogavidya is the catalyst for positive change in life. Now we have ample time to apply the principles of a yogic lifestyle in our daily routine, to help, support and inspire each other to attain physical and psychological health and wellbeing, and ignite the flame of hope and positivity all around.

For the benefit of people across the globe, following the inspiration of Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati, Bihar School of Yoga is pleased to release a complete yoga lifestyle capsule, with techniques of sanyam, yamas, niyamas, chantings, asanas, pranayamas, relaxation, japa and meditation. Please share this website link with all aspirants, to avail of this opportunity to discover Satyam, Shivam and Sundaram in life.

With prayers for health, harmony and peace.

Hari Om Tat Sat.

## LIVING A YOGIC LIFESTYLE PROGRAM

Today, when we are spending more time at our homes with families or alone, the question comes “What do I do the whole day?” and “How do I spend my time constructively?”

This time of lockdown is a golden opportunity for us to reflect on how we live, what we want in life and how we can improve ourselves and our lifestyles now and for the future. It is a chance to adopt a spiritual yogic lifestyle and create a good structure for the day. This can be achieved by living our normal daily routines with a focus on:



- acquiring good physical health to boost the immune system
- good mental and emotional balance to maintain clarity, happiness, harmony, contentment, positivity and creativity
- developing a spiritual culture in life.

Swami Sivananda Saraswati says:

*Now is the perfect time to sow a thought, reap an action,  
sow an action, reap a habit, sow a habit, reap a character,  
sow a character and reap a destiny.*

In order to achieve the above one needs to develop the idea of sanyam. *Sanyam* literally means restraint, but it also indicates a process by which all dimensions of the human personality and lifestyle are balanced and beautified. A yogic lifestyle is based on sanyam, along with a continued effort to improve and do better.

It will be a time of positive change for all of us if we apply ourselves. If we can acknowledge and accept our faults, and see our positive and supportive contributions to the problems we face. We as individuals can change our lifestyles to live more simply, more harmoniously with ourselves, our family and friends and our home – Planet Earth.

## YOGIC LIFESTYLE SADHANA

A comprehensive yogic lifestyle sadhana is being presented here designed for this time of restricted movement from and even within the house. You are free to incorporate one, two or more components of this lifestyle sadhana to your daily routine. Select the components that you can easily follow and are inclined towards, adjust them with other daily commitments. Balance your family, social, professional, personal and spiritual yogic aspirations. Remember an opportunity like this is rare, so make the most of the day to improve and tweak your lifestyle. Connect to yoga and live yoga from moment to moment.

Please remember that this is NOT an anti-Corona yoga routine. The aim of this sadhana is to improve and enhance the physical, mental and pranic health of the individual and develop an immunity to ward off all future debilitating situations.

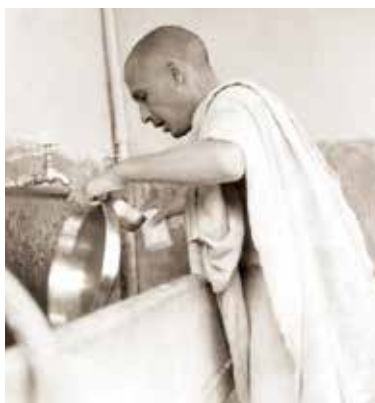
Please practise the yoga lifestyle sadhana safely according to your level of health, fitness and experience. Maintain awareness of physical movement and breath to ensure that you do not strain or overexert.

### **Yamas and niyamas**

Apply the following yamas and niyamas of yoga in your life and routine gradually and as convenient.

*Shaucha and swasthya, hygiene and health*

Focus of personal, house and environmental hygiene. Keep all areas clean and prepare individual sets containing towels, soaps, toothbrush, tooth paste, shaving sets and other necessary items for the bathroom. At home do not encourage common use of soaps, towels, pastes and



creams etc.; and similarly sets of cups, plates, spoons, forks, glasses etc. should be kept separate for each member of the household.

Focus on regularizing your practice of yoga asanas, pranayamas, exercises, meditation etc. to attain good health, immunity, vitality, relaxation and total wellbeing.

#### *Santosha and aparigraha, contentment and minimum needs*

Observe yourself and try to remain content and peaceful in all situations and times.

Cultivate the habit to live happily with minimum comfortable requirements and needs. Don't be greedy, insecure and uncertain – for today's restrictions are tomorrow's freedom.

#### *Kshama and namaskara, forgiveness and humility*

Manage pressure, irritation and uncontrolled outbursts of emotions by forgiveness. Forgiveness helps in keeping a cool and clear decisive mind.

Develop humility in speech, interaction and behaviour. Humility is an antidote for many situations related to ego, arrogance and anger.



#### *Danti and indriya nigraha, guiding the behaviour of the mind and the senses*

Whenever an idea, thought or desire for anything crops up in your mind, ask yourself: Do I want it? Do I need it? And separate the fanciful desire from the actual need.

#### *Manahprasad, gift of happiness*

Be happy and make others happy. If you depend on external circumstances to make you happy, you

will always swing from happiness to unhappiness. You have to tap into positivity that comes from within.

### *Niranjan challenge*

Extend and live the moments of joy, happiness, harmony, humility and cooperation from few minutes to one full day and night – to 24 hours.



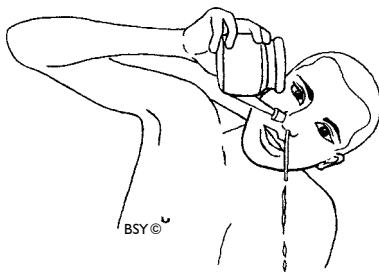
### **Early morning on waking, if possible before sunrise**

#### *Three mantra sadhana*

- Mahamrityunjaya Mantra x 11
- Gayatri Mantra x 11
- 32 names of Durga x 3

#### *Shatkarmas\**

- Neti every third day
- Kunjal once a week
- Laghoo shankaprakshalana once a month
- Drink 1 glass of water in the morning upon waking with a twist of lemon, then shower.



### **Morning sadhana**

#### *Daily chantings*

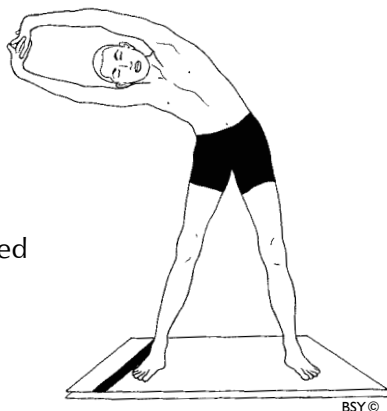
- Ganesh Atharvashirsha x 1–4
- Hanuman Chalisa
- Guru Stotram

## Morning practices

### *Asana capsule\**

To strengthen immunity, release tensions, awaken the vital forces

1. Pawanmuktasana part 1
2. Pawanmuktasana part 2
3. Pawanmuktasana part 3
4. Tadasana
5. Tiryak tadasana
6. Kati chakrasana
7. Surya namaskara
8. Shavasana, whenever required



### *Pranayama capsule\**

1. Kapalbhathi x 10 rounds
2. Bhramari x 15 rounds
3. Nadi shodhana 1:1:1:1 x 15 rounds
4. Deep yogic breathing, 10 minutes

### *Diet*

Learn how to cook and eat home cooked meals safely and minimally. A yogic diet is a simple natural diet.

- Breakfast – toast, poha, porridge (oats, dalia, suji) with dried fruits served with milk and sugar.
- Lunch – khichari super food.
- Dinner – soups or dal, chapatis, bread if available, potatoes, or locally available vegetables.

Do's and don't's before meals:

- Incorporating mantras or prayers before meals encourages gratitude and respect for the simple food we are lucky to have.



- Try and come together as a family for at least one meal a day. Share each other's experiences and lift each one up in positivity and joy.
- Avoid soft and hard drinks with meals.
- During the day drink at least six to eight glasses of water.

### *Morning grih seva yoga routine*

- Collectively clean up the kitchen after breakfast.
- Collectively clean, tidy and organize bedrooms, bathrooms, living area, the house.
- Clean a different area each day with full efficiency and creativity.
- Write a list of projects for the house and things to be done and start working down the list.
- Finish the strenuous projects in the morning before lunch while mental and physical energy is high.
- Take time to actively and efficiently participate in and finish your professional, official, social and family obligations. Don't put off things for later.



### *Gardening*

- If you have a terrace garden, front or back garden, a plot of land, a green house, a farm, growing vegetables would be a valuable hobby. Even a small vegetable garden on a terrace can provide some simple daily requirements, such as tomatoes, lemons, herbs, eggplant, capsicum and other seasonal vegetables.
- Look after and beautify your garden or terrace. Create a place where you want to spend time. Let your relationship with your garden and nature grow and find peace in your creation.



## Afternoon

- Rest after lunch for 40 minutes and practise yoga nidra.
- Or set a time for yoga nidra practice daily at a specific time (morning or afternoon.) This sadhana is 30 minutes long and helps in de-stressing, relaxing, recovering, recharging. Use your sankalpa wisely.
- Contribute to bettering of the vegetable and flower garden.
- Help prepare dinner as fun and game with mantras, happiness and love.
- Encourage participation of all family members in food preparation as well.

## Evening



Develop a hobby such as music, painting, writing, crafts and creative innovations. There is creative power within us all, you have to discover and utilize them properly. Now is that time. Read a book that inspires you and increases your inner knowledge bank.

Share your evening meal together. Do not share cutlery and plates. Start your dinner with mantras or prayers of gratitude for the food you are lucky to have by chanting the following mantras:

*Om brahmaparnam, brahma havir,  
Brahmagnau brahmanahutam,  
Brahmaiva tenagantavyam,  
Brahmakarmasamadhina.*

After dinner clear away the meal and clean the kitchen together.

Sri Swamiji says that music has great power. Through mantras and music, the vibrations around us and within us can change and elevate our mood. Music can help us to become more positive and creative. Swami Sivananda would put music to all his teachings, to uplift, inspire and help us remember his words and wisdom. There are many recordings of different mantras available, use them throughout the day. Play and listen to the *Annapoorna Stotram*



and other mantras, chants, kirtans, bhajans, stotrams, classical music, folk and traditional music as you prepare and cook dinner and/or even at other times of the day to create a positive and contented ambience in your place. Sing and play kirtans, stotrams and songs with family or alone.

### *Chanting of Mahamritunjaya mantra daily 108 times*

The Mahamritunjaya mantra is a very powerful mantra for protection strength and healing. It should be chanted 108 times or one mala every evening. Try to maintain this as a regular daily sadhana. If there is only one sadhana you can maintain during this time, let it be the japa of Mahamritunjaya mantra.



### *Mahamritunjaya havan every Saturday*

For those experienced practitioners who know the process of havan and have the training, havan kund, havan samagri and space

required for havan should perform the Mahamritunjaya mantra havan every Saturday evening in the home as per the tradition of Ganga Darshan Vishwa Yoga Peeth, Munger. This havan has the power to purify the internal and external environment. All ingredients used should be pure and natural and the system as per the training given at Ganga Darshan Vishwa Yoga Peeth. The ash from the fire can be used in the garden.

If you do not have the training in how to perform a havan, simply chant the mantra 108 times.

### *Personal mantra japa*

You can do your own personal mantra as per the number of rounds suggested at the time of initiation or use one of the meditation recordings every evening as daily meditations. (Mantra japa can be done at other times also, as time permits).



## **Meditations**

Meditation can be practised anytime during the day, however as a routine it is often easiest to perform meditation when the family have gone to bed and the house is peaceful and quiet. Meditation before sleep leads to a deeper and more relaxed sleep.

### *Yoga nidra*

If you do not know how to practise yoga nidra, you will find original beginners, intermediate and advanced yoga nidra recordings by both Swami Satyananda and Swami Niranjanananda as well as basic yoga nidras in over 25 international languages at [satyamyogaprasad.net](http://satyamyogaprasad.net).

### *Ajapa japa*

Ajapa japa is an ancient and simple meditation practice involving the awareness of breath, mantra and prana in the psychic

pathways of the body. It is a powerful meditation for calming and stilling a turbulent mind and helps to access deeper creative and peaceful aspects of ourselves. Ajapa japa balances and clears the mind and the pranas to discover our true potential. At this time when the mind is full of fears and anxieties, ajapa japa is a soothing balm to calm the mind.

### *Antar mouna*

Through this pratyahara practice one becomes aware of inner thoughts and thought processes. We become the observer, the witness or the drashta of the mind. Witnessing is the ability to take a step back and observe thoughts, reactions and conditionings. Through antar mouna meditation you see yourself clearly and can improve or change your limiting, restrictive, tamasic mental conditionings and direct the mental energy towards more efficient and productive applications. In these stressful and anxiety filled days, managing the mind and its responses is a valuable aspect of your life. Your life is what you live in your mind This practice will help reduce the useless anxious thoughts and bring in more constructive and positive thoughts. It is all within your power, all you need to do is take time to be aware, observe and let go of those conditions that restrict you from becoming creative, innovative and happy.

### *Samiksha or Review of the Day*

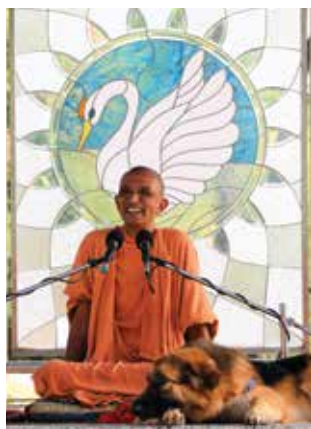
Samiksha or Review of the Day should be done in bed before going to sleep. In this practice reflect over the day like a movie in rewind from the time you woke up in the morning to the time you go to sleep. It is a review to see how you have lived your day; the actions, reactions, behaviour, interactions, prominent thoughts



and habits. While reviewing the day you will come across problems or difficulties with people or situations. Through this meditation you observe those situations and analyze how you could have dealt with them in a better manner, what could have been a better way and if it happened again how could you go about to bring more balance and harmony into your life.

This practice is a process of observing, adjusting and ultimately changing your behaviour.

### *SWAN Analysis*



Whenever possible take the time to write on a sheet of paper:

1. what you perceive and know to be your **STRENGTHS**;
2. what you perceive to be your short-comings and **WEAKNESSES**;
3. what you perceive to be your desires and **AMBITIONS** for yourself, your family, your life; and
4. what you perceive and know to be the **NEEDS** for yourself and your family.

Look at, analyze and edit the list daily by being truthful to yourself and gradually an inner picture of yourself will emerge. Now pick up a strength and develop it even more for some time; pick up a weakness and work to convert it into its opposite, positive strength; look at an ambition and realistically, objectively, analyze the ambition to know its nature, is it fantasy and imagination, desired but not achievable or achievable; look at your needs and the opportunities or procedures to achieve your needs.

### **Sleep**

- Have one glass of water before sleep.
- Try to sleep early so you can wake early. This will allow your body and mind to rest and rejuvenate properly. The physical biorhythms harmonize with the natural biorhythms of the

sun and earth. *Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.*

- Avoid wasting hours in late night television or internet and social media. Keep yourself educated and up to date on current affairs and the global situation, but avoid negative input and media. Spend time reading inspiring books, articles and quotes of spiritual masters and inspiring people.
- The Review of the Day should be done in bed before going to sleep

## FINAL WORD

Swami Satyananda envisioned that yoga would emerge as the culture of tomorrow and guide the course of world events. As our society continues to face unprecedented and unexpected challenge after challenge, one can now see how prophetic his words are. Yoga provides every individual with the tools required to live healthy, constructive, positive and contented lives. Through yoga one learns how to contribute to society in a positive

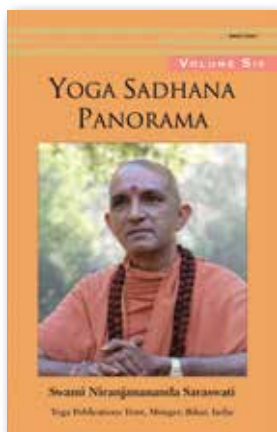


way by focusing on ourselves and our own lifestyles. We must improve ourselves, only then will a positive change be seen in our society. Every little improvement and every small change one makes does make a difference. Every attempt one makes to live yoga moment to moment will be felt by all, even the Earth. Infections can spread quickly but so can positivity and smiles.

The sadhana provided for you here is a beginning and a thorough way in which to establish yourself in yogic awareness for all times to come. Invest this time to try and live yoga moment to moment, you will be rewarded for life. Smile and spread some happiness and joy around. Yoga is the greatest gift to humanity; it is as relevant now as it was thousands of years ago.

# Shifting to the Heart

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



People come to yoga for different reasons, but ultimately the practices will guide the individual towards balance. Enjoyment happens when we are contented, happy and at peace. That is the direction of sadhana. One of the strongest sadhanas to lead us in this direction is mantra and music because they affect the emotions and sentiments, not the intellect. Intellect can cause confusion, comparison, assessment, analysis, create questions

and create answers, but mantras open the energy of the heart and explode the energy of the emotions and bring out that power. There is power in everything. There is inherent strength in the body, but it manifests only when we need to use it, whether it is to pick up a small stone or a large rock.

Energy is also inherent in emotions as well as in the mind. Mental energy is known as *buddhi*, emotional energy is known as *bhava*. As long as we are stuck to *buddhi*, there is no salvation. When we come to *bhava*, the air clears immediately. A classic example of this situation is two people who are madly in love and living together. In the course of time, there is strife and one incident destroys their connection and relationship completely. What happened to that feeling of love which was overpowered by greed, jealousy or anger? If we reconnect with love, jealousy, greed and anger will have no place.

Maintaining emotional balance, the *bhava* balance, leads to enlightenment, or evolution of consciousness. Enlightenment is evolution of consciousness. Mantra becomes the process, the tool by which the energy of *bhava* is elevated. Right now

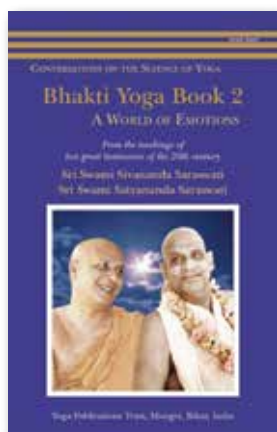


our bhava energy is not elevated. We have good IQs but very disturbed EQs. All our EQs are at different levels and are distorted and depressed, because we are craving and searching for something. Bhava becomes the energy, the force, for ultimate self-awareness and self-realization. The mind is transcended, or left behind.

So we have to actually shift from the head space, buddhi, to the heart space, bhava. The heart space is the connecting force. It does not see any division or difference in anything or anyone. The people who have been inspirers in the course of the human journey have awakened their bhava, their heart space. Intellectuals have been appreciated, they have written good things, but inspirers are those who have shown the way to follow the path of the heart. That is an indication that if we follow the path of the heart, we can change ourselves and help other people to come out of their limitations and to grow.

*— April 2009, Rocklyn Ashram, Australia,  
printed in Yoga Sadhana Panorama Volume Six*

# About Love



## Why is everyone capable of love?

*Swami Sivananda:* The innate nature of all beings is to love an external object. One cannot but love or cherish something in the heart. The Absolute alone exists. Love for external things is an unconscious internal urge to become unified with everything. For in reality man is everything, the Absolute Itself. Man is only an ego, apparently separated from it. Love is the forerunner of experience. Love is

the craving, experience is the fulfilment of it. None can live without love for something.

## What is love and what does it mean to love?

*Swami Sivananda:* Love is the law of life. To love is to fulfil the law, and to fulfil the law means eternal peace and everlasting happiness. This world has come out of love, it exists in love and it finally dissolves in love. Love is the motive-power of the universe. Love is life, love is joy, love is warmth. Love is the golden tie which binds heart to heart, soul to soul. Love is constructive and creative – it binds and builds. Love is the principle of regeneration. Love is an actual substance one can use with confidence. Love is a positive, concrete thing.

One who applies the law of love with scientific precision can work wonders. The law of love is a far greater science than any modern science. The law of love prevails among saints and good men. To live is to love. To love is to live. One lives that one may learn to love. One loves that one may learn to live in the Eternal. A life without faith, love and devotion is a dreary waste; it is real death.

There is no virtue higher than love; there is no treasure higher than love; there is no knowledge higher than love; there is no dharma higher than love; there is no religion higher than love; love is Truth; love is God. God is the embodiment of love. In every inch of His creation, one can verily understand His Love.



Close the gates of the senses. Shut the door of the mind.  
Light the lamp in the inner chamber of your heart and  
stand face to face with the Lord.

– *Printed in Conversations on the Science of Yoga –*  
Bhakti Yoga Book 2, A World of Emotions

# Recent History of Yoga

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



Bihar School of Yoga has been involved in yoga propagation since 1963. When we were propagating yoga, we saw the various changes that the human society faced globally. When we started teaching yoga, there were only three or four prominent yoga teachers in the world. In the decade of the 1960s, yoga was seen as a way to develop a better body, to have a more curvy body, slim hips, wider chests, bigger biceps and to be a yogi man. It was a physical-oriented practice. 'Trim the waist lime' used to be the slogan in the west.

In the 1970s, it was the psychic discoveries in relation to yoga, which people looked into. How can the heartbeat be stopped voluntarily, consciously? Swami Rama was able to stop his heartbeat for 15 minutes, and after 15 minutes, the heart would start to pump again. This research was conducted in America in the Meninger Foundation – how can yogis have control over the autonomic functions of the body?

Swami Nadabrahmananda controlled his breath for one hour. Today people can hold their breath for seven minutes maximum with proper training; he was holding the breath for one hour. Similarly, many other researches were conducted. People looked into yoga as a means to enhance mental powers like telepathy, clairvoyance and clairaudience.

In the decade of the 1980s, yoga became meditation. Everybody used to think of yoga as meditation and used it to meditate for stress management, for change in the cardiac behaviour, to regulate hypertension and blood pressure, and for psychological stress management.

In the 1990s, we applied yoga in many areas, like in halfway homes, drug addiction centres, old age homes, in clinics for physically and mentally challenged people, catatonics, prisoners, railways, the army. We worked with armies in Germany, Columbia and India. In the 1990s, the neti lota used to be part of the standard pack in the German army. Soldiers always carried a neti lota in their bags; the same in Columbia and India.

When late Dr Abdul Kalam, who became the President of India, was still a scientist, I used to advise him and Dr Selvamurthy in yoga practices to bring yoga to the army and to the defence areas. We had made a plan to go to the Antarctica and to do experiments with yoga in that climate. When he became the President we had to drop the plan. It was at that period that yoga was developed in different areas in society and many courses were conducted for stress management, business management and for various groups in society.

At that time, we also did one of the biggest researches on respiratory problems involving ten thousand patients globally, from different countries, backgrounds, dietary and cultural habits. It was a massive program. For the first time a global sample of respiratory disorder was collected by a yoga centre and a program developed to help manage respiratory problems.

What had started in the 1960s to the 90s continued in the first decade of 2000 and gained much more momentum. By



this time there were many yoga teachers in the world. When we started there were only four or five brands – Iyengar Yoga, Satyananda Yoga and Sivananda Yoga, Yoga of Great Universal Fraternity and a few more brands. By 2010, there were thousands of yoga teachers in every country. In France alone, Satyananda Yoga had trained 70,000 school teachers to teach yoga in the classroom environment. I had gone to the UNESCO in the year 2000 with a research conducted by the Bal Yoga Mitra Mandal, Munger. After seeing one presentation, within one hour the UNESCO adopted a yoga syllabus for 17 countries.

After 2009, the need of propagation was over, and in 2013, during the World Yoga Convention held in Munger, we declared that the time of yoga propagation had come to an end. On 21st June 2015, the first International Day of Yoga was celebrated. After that we embarked on the second chapter of yoga training. Due to the International Day of Yoga, people have become aware of yoga and are adopting the physical component of yoga, which is good. It is a journey that is starting for them and as the interest develops in their life, they will explore yoga more deeply.

– 19 January 2020, Ganga Darshan, Munger

# Sunday Satsang

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*

**Is it compatible to be a politician or a public representative and also lead a sattvic life? What advice would you give to a person who is going into politics?**

Aren't politicians human too, with the need and the right to experience the benefits of yoga practice? Politics is a profession. It is not a bad or a good thing. Unfortunately, politics today is taken negatively. The positive aspect of politics has to be highlighted by becoming more considerate, aware, active and thinking of the development and betterment of the human culture and human society. And the profession of a politician is guided by the mind. The clarity of thought, intention and the direction of one's action should be clear.

For that, some meditation, reflection, the practice of SWAN, some asana, pranayama and yoga nidra will help. Therefore, become a practising yogi while you are a politician and you will find it will help you become a better person and also a better politician.

**How does one remain in a state of equilibrium without raga or dwesha and still manage to do all work exceptionally well? If you're not passionate how is it possible to remain highly functional?**

There are two things – knowing and acting. You know and you decide not to act, or you know and you decide to act. Which one is better? The one who knows and decides to act. Knowing is an intellectual process, acting is the actualizing process. Some people say, 'Why should one act, when everything is unreal? Why should one participate in any karma?' That is a lopsided attitude. The same people eat, they don't stop that karma. They won't cook, they stop that karma but depend on somebody to cook for them, declaring that cooking is not their karma.

The people who know and act follow their dharma and kartavya which is part of the yogic culture and tradition, and the Sanatana culture and tradition. There is no negation, rejection, renunciation, repulsion, instead there is acceptance of dharma and kartavya. What I need to do, I will do. I eat, I go to the bathroom, I talk, I don't stop that. I do everything that I please, yet I decide that there is something that I am not going to do, that is incorrect, for you are stopping your own dharma and kartavya. Knowing is one thing and actualizing the dharma and kartavya is another thing. When they both converge, then one becomes a yogi. When they both are dissected then one is a *bhogi*.

### **Is there anything considered as a spiritual sin?**

Yoga and the Indian belief system do not believe in sin. There is no word which denotes sin and therefore Indians are not used to the word sin. *Paap* is not sin, it is the unvirtuous act. *Punya* is virtue and *paap* is non-virtue.

According to Swami Sivananda, it is the expression of your nature. If you are tamasic, your expressions will be negative, destructive, and this can be considered sinful. If you are sattwic, your behaviour, action and performance will be helpful, considerate, kind, compassionate, uplifting, and that can be considered virtuous. You are what you live in your mind. If you are living negativity, then in everything you do, you are experiencing negativity.

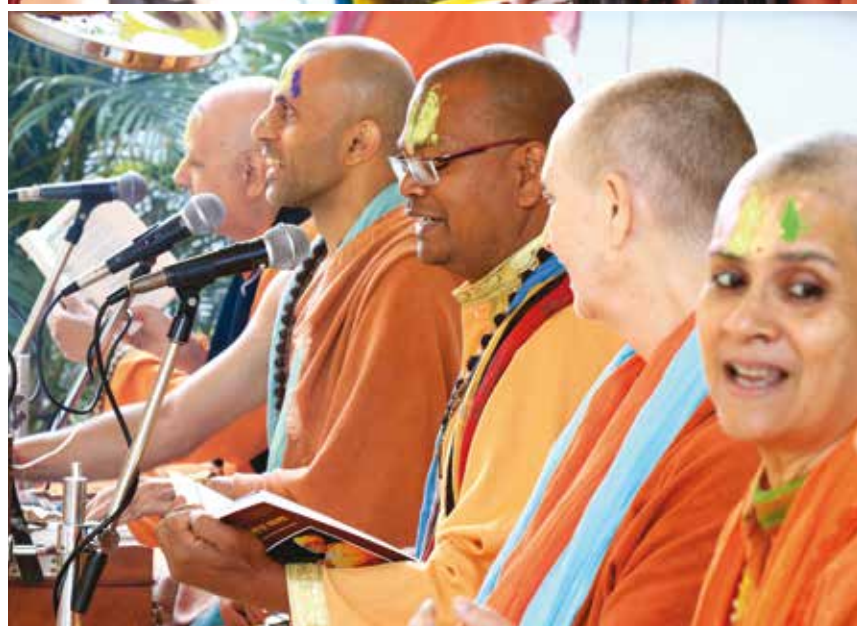
If you think, 'I am committing a sin', it is a sin; if you feel guilty about it, you will feel guilty about it. Also due to your upbringing, mind-set, cultural, social and religious background, different thoughts and ideas will be formed. However, as an individual, one only lives and one has to live the positive of the mind, and then there is no sin.

### **Is enlightenment possible?**

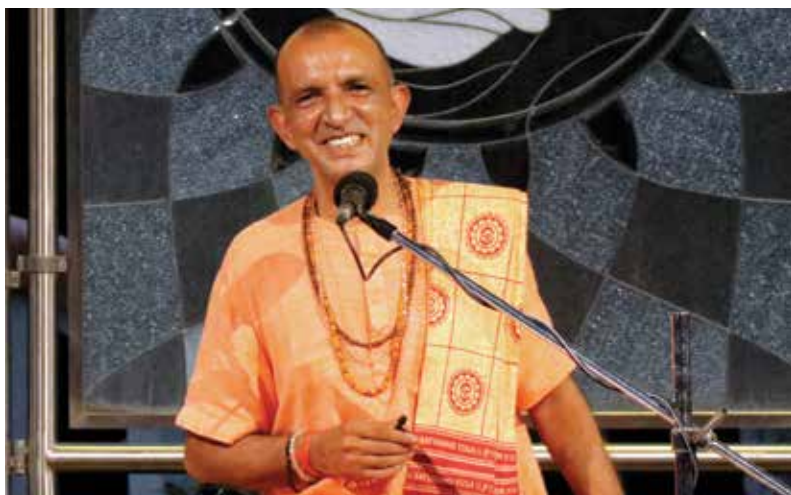
The individual's effort counts, not the teaching of the teacher, remember that for all times to come. Vidya is vidya, knowledge











is knowledge. How you understand it, how you apply it, that is your mind and you have to look at that aspect.

As far as enlightenment is concerned, somebody once asked Paramahamsaji, "Is it possible to become self-realized?" He said, "No." The reporter said, "Why? Because everyone is saying, self-realization is the destiny of humankind and you are saying self-realization is not possible. That means all the religions, scriptures and saints are wrong?" Paramahamsaji said, "Listen, self-realization is a transcendental experience. Mind is not transcendental. How can a non-transcendental mind experience the transcendental condition? It is not possible."

Therefore, self-realization is not possible for anybody with a non-transcendental mind, however it is possible that you prepare your mind, increase the capacity and purity of the mind, the container aspect of the mind. If you improve your mind the transcendental reality will come. If you think, 'I want self-realization' and you sit down, it is never going to happen.

### **What does 'everything is divine' mean?**

It is said that everything in life is divine. This depends on the coloured glasses you put on to see the world. If you put on

red coloured glasses, everything will be seen as red. If you wear black glasses, the tint will be black. In the same manner, everything is divine as everything is made from stardust – the body, the planets, even the car and bicycle. The material used in making the car is the same stardust which we are made of, and therefore the car is not a 1920 model, it is a billion-year-old car because it has the same stardust.

Vedanta and all spiritual traditions have said that everything is divine. This is a cross-cultural statement, which you find in Islam, Christianity, in Chinese, Indian, African, Celtic and Druidic traditions. The *Ishavasya Upanishad* states (mantra 1):

*Ishaavaasyamidam sarvam yatkincha jagatyaam jagat;  
Tena tyaktena bhunjeethaa maa gridhah kasyavid dhanam.*

All that exists in this ever-changing universe is the abode of the Lord (in which the Lord resides). Enjoy whatever the Lord gives you. Do not covet, for whose indeed is wealth?

Therefore, live your life with dignity. If you visited the Prime Minister's or President's house you would live with dignity and refrain from doing anything naughty and unjust. In the same manner, why don't you live your life with dignity on this Earth and refrain from doing anything naughty and unjust, for this is the house of God? When you come to live in the ashram, there is a discipline to follow and when you come to live in the house of God, there is a discipline to follow. This world is the house of God according to the statement of the *Ishavasya Upanishad*.

### **What is the biggest challenge in life?**

The biggest challenge in anybody's life is negativity. If you can manage negativity your spiritual life is open. If you cannot manage your negativity, then what is the purpose of living? The purpose of living is to experience the positive. That is the

effort you have to make every moment. Making the effort to live the positive every moment is yoga from moment to moment.

Negativity has to be managed, the rest are just expressions of the mind. *Ahara*, *nidra*, *bhaya* and *maithuna* are the four basic instincts. *Ahara* is physical and psychological craving. Food, happiness, joy, anything that keeps you happy and healthy is *ahara* and you desire and crave it. *Nidra*, sleep and disconnection, is the second instinct. *Bhaya*, fear of the unknown, is the third and *maithuna*, sexuality, procreation is the fourth instinct.



These four instincts have to be managed, not only sexuality. When people highlight one and negate others it indicates that they do not know the reality of life which is governed by the four instincts. The four have to be brought under control and have to be balanced. It is not a barrier; it is a *sadhana*. Just as you fast on certain days as *sadhana*, or control your fear and become strong as part of your determination and will, in the same manner, sleep, sexuality, fear and craving have to be managed. You need to have control over and govern the instincts.

Nothing is seen as a barrier; your *sadhana* is developing the appropriate and right skills, to manage the instincts most effectively, efficiently and properly. Therefore, the biggest challenge in spiritual development is negativity.

### **I want to know why I am here in this universe.**

This question has been there for ages and everybody has tried to give an answer to it or satisfy themselves with an answer. If it was a simple answer, then only one question and one answer

would suffice for all ages to come. It seems that this question is not a simple question – why are we here? People have tried to explain this in form of karma, destiny, God’s will, or God’s *lila*, the Divine play.

While we are here, what can we do, what purpose can we give to our life? The enlightened beings of the past have said that the purpose we can give to our life is to acquire excellence, to be ace of all and master of none. Ace of all, master of none; that is excellence.

This is the goal in my life, to become ace of all and master of none. This means I will achieve excellence in everything I do whether I speak, walk, drive, fly or ride – in whatever I do I develop excellence. This is my focus and not God. Today if somebody asks me, “What is your focus in life?” I will say, “Excellence,” and not God or spiritual enlightenment. I am sure that if I excel in everything, I will be promoted fast as that is the learning – to master myself and to express the most beautiful me. I like to think that is why I am here. If you can bring a smile to another person’s face, you have fulfilled the purpose of your life.

– 19 January 2020,  
*satsang to Yogic Studies students, Ganga Darshan, Munger*



# Maintain a Positive Attitude

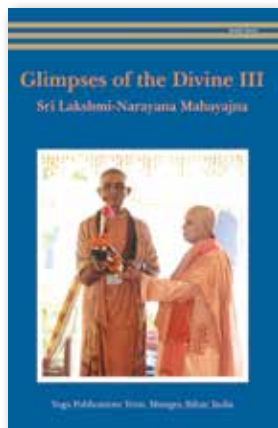
*From the teachings of Swami Sivananda Saraswati*



Try to acquire the power of closing yourself to all detrimental or undesirable influences by making yourself positive. By doing so, you will be receptive to all the higher impulses of the soul within and to all the higher forces and influences from without. Give a suggestion to yourself, 'I make myself positive to all things below and receptive to all higher influences'. By adopting this kind of attitude consciously now and then, it soon becomes a habit.

In the mind there exist both doubt and reality. When a doubt arises as to whether there is a God or not, whether one will succeed in self-realization or not, it should be dispelled by affirmations such as: 'It is true that I will succeed. There is no doubt about this'. Auto-suggestion consists of powerful assertions. The formula, 'I am becoming better and better every day, in every way', will confer upon you health and success. Repeat it mentally throughout the day. Dwell on it constantly. You will become as you think. The mind has the capacity of making hell out of heaven and heaven out of hell. It is the cause of both heaven and hell, of liberation and bondage. May God grant you the strength to conquer your mind and enjoy eternal peace and bliss!

# The Purpose of Mantra



*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati:* In the yogic spiritual tradition, mantras are used as internal practices, but in the Indian religious spiritual traditions, mantras are used as external practices. This does not negate or accept one or the other form of application of mantras, rather it is an indication of the two aspects of mantras. One aspect is to manage the agitations of the chitta vrittis and the other is to create a form in the consciousness of the power that

is being invoked by repeating the mantra.

What is a mantra? Mantras are made up of vowels and consonants, which independently have no meaning except that they are part of an alphabet body. Language first begins with letters which have no meaning at all. Then these letters combine, the *aksharas* combine, to create a word. That word defines a meaning to the collection of letters, and then it is spoken through speech. If speech were not there, the word would not be spoken. Speech emerges to vocalize, to express the intent of the word through the combination of consonants and vowels. When the speech vocalizes the word, an image is created in the mind.

The idea which was there in the word is transferred to the mind as an image, and you see the image of the word. For example, the word 'animal', a-n-i-m-a-l. These are all consonants and vowels, separately they don't mean anything, but together they create an idea: animal. Yet, that idea is not experienced until you say it through your speech. Then it creates an image in your mind of an animal. Therefore, what is spoken is a flow of consonants and vowels coming together to

create an idea. As you speak, they create an image, an identity; they give you an awareness of a quality, a form, a name. This is applicable to mantras as well.

When you have been through this process and continue chanting the mantra, it intensifies the density of mind. What do I mean by the phrase 'density of mind'? Right now there is air all around, but you cannot see in which direction it is flowing. If you light an incense stick and hold it, the smoke will provide the indication of the flow of air. The current, the intensity, all this will be known when you see the smoke moving in the air. In the absence of the smoke, although the air is moving in different patterns, you are not seeing it. What makes the flow or the current of air visible? A denser form of air, which is smoke. In the same manner, right now the mind is in a state of dissipation, the vrittis are all active, they are pulling from one sense object to another sense object. As the vrittis pull you, an idea, a desire, a need, an awareness, an understanding is created.

### **Peace of mind**

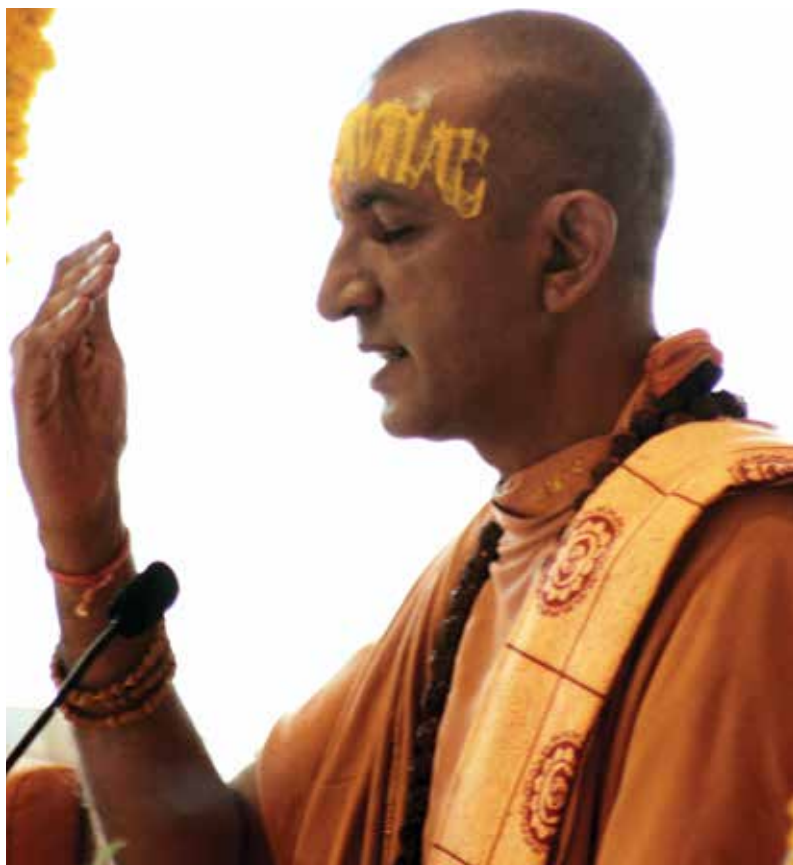
There is so much happening in your brain every moment. You don't even realize the amount of information that is going in your brain every second. A lot is filtered out before you become aware of what you have observed, received, understood and experienced through your senses, brain and mind. There is a big gap between the moment of experience and the moment of realization, due to the filtering. Billions of things are being processed every moment and you are aware of one, two or three. That is the dissipation of vrittis, and you have to catch that mental activity so your mind does not go from one thing to another.

The mind moves from one sense experience to another for the satisfaction of the senses. When you experience a sense object, you are identifying with it. The moment you identify with a sense object, you are seeking sensory gratification. There are people who seek sensory gratification from guru, not

spiritual gratification. There are people who seek emotional gratification or intellectual gratification. Each person seeks gratification in an area they believe will give them some happiness, some fulfilment. Therefore, the connection that you have with your God or guru is to seek gratification in areas where you lack it.

You think you are spiritual, but you are not. You are only seeking gratification. If you were spiritual, you would be connected with each and every person with love and compassion. How can that spirituality remain confined inside you while with other people you are cranky, angry, jealous, hateful, and not able to communicate? In such a state if you say "I am spiritual", it is a fallacy. Spirituality is not an individual, personal and internal experience. Spirituality is an expression of what you become. If you are cranky the whole day, you are an expression of what you have become. If you are jealous the whole day, you are an expression of what you have become. If you are compassionate and kind, you are reflecting what you have become. If you are happy and joyous, you are reflecting what you have become. Therefore, ask yourself: do you want to be a bad reflection of life or do you want to be a good reflection of life?

Mantra helps in discovering this by pacifying the mental jumps from one sense object to another sense object. For the ten minutes that you focus on your mantra, perhaps five times your mind disappears and you lose awareness of the mantra, but an effort is definitely there so that the mantra binds your mind and keeps it focused. The agitated chitta vrittis become more peaceful and quieter. For a moment in those ten minutes, you experience a different you, a peaceful you, which you have not felt even in your sleep. Even in your sleep or when you go to bed at night, your mind is agitated. However, when you are practising your mantra, your mind is focused for those ten minutes. Agitations are cut by ninety percent. You experience the ten percent in the form of missing the moment: suddenly you realize that you have gone someplace and you forgot to



do your mantra, so you pull yourself back and again become aware of the mantra. Then again you realize that you have gone someplace else, and again you pull yourself back. In this way, mental pacification, *mananat trayate*, happens through mantra.

### **Invocation**

Mantra also gives form to that power which is being invoked. If you say the mantra *Om Namah Shivaya*, the combination of the vowels and consonants are such that they are creating the image of Shiva, and creating an emotion, a feeling, in connection with Shiva. When you chant it, you develop the imagination or visualization of Shiva in the form of auspiciousness and

perfection, in the form of a power that transforms your lower life into a higher life, your material life into a spiritual life. If you say the mantra *Om Namo Narayanaya* or *Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*, the collection of the consonants and vowels have created an idea. As you say it, that idea, that energy is taking shape in your mind. Sometimes you can even see the shape in the form of light, luminosity, angel, guru, deity, an abstract image or an experience. Then people say, "I had that beautiful experience once, but I am not having it anymore."

At that moment, everything had converged together to give you that beautiful experience, and that convergence of mind does not come about because you will it, but because there is strength in it to experience and express the Satyam, the Shivam and the Sundaram. There is appreciation of beauty and not possessiveness of or demanding beauty. There is appreciation of goodness, but not demanding that 'this goodness be directed only to me'. There is appreciation of truth, not that it becomes a medium to separate you from the person who has told you the truth.

Thus, you have to become aware of the effect of the mantra, the passivity of the mind, and allow the emergence of the positive, the sattwic expressions of your deeper mind. Don't block it by superimposing your ambitions, thoughts and ideas. Allow it to develop, then your feelings will become universal, unconditional and pure. Your thoughts will become universal, unconditional and pure. Your expressions will become universal, unconditional and pure. That is the effect of the mantra, if one follows it in the right manner.

Here we are seeing two applications of the mantra: the internal and the external. The internal is to pacify. The external is to invoke and give form to the concept, to the sankalpa, to the power of the mantra.

– 9 September 2015, *Paduka Darshan*, Munger,  
printed in *Glimpses of the Divine III*,  
Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna

# Mantra

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



*Mantra* is a vehicle for expansion of mind and liberation of energy. In order to awaken, to purify; or rather to remove the blocks of energy in human life, the mantra has to be used.

Mantra has to be practised with bhakti, with concentration and faith so that the aspirant becomes one with the mantra. Then the mantra awakens in him the higher existence.

Mantra is a part of your soul, a part of your mind, a part of your spirit. The purpose of the mantra is to pierce the totality of the mind.

Mantra is not the name of a particular god; it is the potential sound vibration. When you produce it more and more, it gathers momentum and it increases its wavelength.

Imagine there is a lake, calm and quiet, and you throw a small pebble in it. It will produce ripples and waves in a circular pattern. If you throw a bigger pebble into the water, it will produce bigger ripples and bigger circular motions. Exactly the same thing happens in the ocean of the mind.

You do so many things in life which apparently have no value. So why don't you continue with the mantra for an extra five minutes?

# Body and Mind

*Swami Sivananda Saraswati*



Just as you take physical exercises, play games such as tennis and cricket in order to maintain physical health, you will have to maintain mental health also by taking sattwic food, mental recreation of innocent and harmless nature, change of thought, relaxation of mind by entertaining good, ennobling and sublime thoughts, and by cultivating the habit of cheerfulness.

The nature of the mind is such that it becomes that which it intensely thinks upon. Thus, if you think of the vices and defects of another man, your mind will be charged with those defects and vices at least for the time being. He who knows this psychological law will never indulge in censuring others or in finding fault in the conduct of others. He will always praise others. He will only see the good in others. That is the way to grow in concentration, yoga and spirituality.

Good physical health can be achieved and also maintained by observing rigidly the laws of health and the rules of hygiene, by taking wholesome, light, substantial, easily digestible, nutritious, bland food or a sattwic diet, by inhaling pure air, by regular exercise, by daily cold bath, and by observing

moderation in eating, drinking, sexual intercourse and other activities.

Good mental health can be attained and maintained by japa, meditation, brahmacharya, practice of yama and niyama, by right conduct, right thinking, right speaking and right action, change of thought and relaxation of mind by the mind dwelling on pleasant thoughts, mental recreation and the practice of cheerfulness.

### **Towards health**

The body is internally associated with the mind, rather the body is a counterpart of the mind; it is a gross visible form of the subtle, invisible mind. If there is pain in the tooth, the stomach or ear, the mind is at once affected. It ceases to think properly; it is agitated, disturbed and perturbed.

If there is depression in the mind, the body also cannot function properly. The pains which afflict the body are called the secondary diseases or *vyadhi*, while the *vasanas* or desires that afflict the mind are termed mental or primary diseases or *adhi*.

Mental health is more important than physical health. If the mind is healthy, the body will necessarily be healthy. If the mind is pure, if your thoughts are pure, you will be free from all diseases, primary and secondary.

The best medicine or panacea for all diseases and for keeping good health, is entertaining divine thoughts. The waves released by divine thoughts, by kirtan, japa and regular meditation will electrify, rejuvenate, vivify, energize the cells, tissues, nerves.

May we all work unselfishly with perfect harmony and healthy cooperation for the wellbeing of the world and for our own upliftment! May our limbs and organs grow strong and healthy! May we live to the normal length of our earthly days – a hundred years – doing selfless service, studying the Vedas and developing all sattwic virtues! May we shine with the knowledge of Brahman, radiating joy, peace, bliss and knowledge to the different corners of the world!

# Pranayama

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



Everybody has distinct limitations and capacities. It is not the whimsical practice of pranayama which helps, but the regulated and disciplined practice. Since people have started practising pranayama at any odd hour, morning, night, anytime, and at any season summer or winter, I am introducing the times and seasons to do pranayama in the right manner. In winter months practise heating pranayamas, in summer months practise cooling pranayamas and on a regular basis practise the balancing pranayamas.

Balancing pranayama is interesting. A few days back, one person came with a piece of equipment to measure the brain waves, and I tried it. And, he said, "You meditate," but I was in no mood to meditate. I was watching the instrument. I was seeing what was happening. For five minutes the reading was taken, and, when the map was created of the reading, it was an interesting map. Something that this person had never seen before.

A very interesting pattern emerged. How that pattern emerged and relate to what I was thinking at that time, because

even thoughts have the influence to change the brain waves. When we look at that image, we suddenly realize that whether it is meditation or thinking or pranayama or any physical exercises, everything is changing our energy system, the *pranic* system, the pranic output and input.

Anxiety is common. When somebody is under stress, tension and anxiety, their breathing is shallow and short. Somebody who is relaxed takes long and deep breaths. In people sleeping at night, the breath is regular and proper. In states of relaxation, the breath becomes even and agitation is reflected in how you breathe. So the balancing pranayamas are the most important ones. This is where the focus has been given in yoga: inhale, exhale, hold or retain use the mantra, use the count. Yogic practices focus on the balancing pranayamas.

The cooling and heating ones are used to manage the level of prana in different conditions and environments.

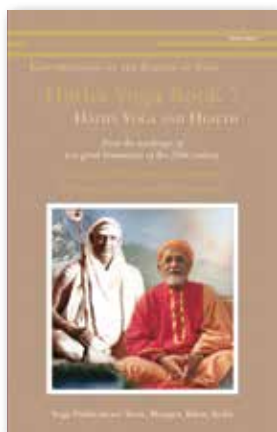
They are good to create physiological change to adapt to a particular situation, environment or climate. Some *sadhus*, monks in the mountains sitting naked in the snow can melt the snow with their own body heat. They don't feel cold as in that situation they are practising the heating pranayama. Having mastery over prana, they can generate that heat.

There was an experiment with the army in the desert deployments where soldiers go in tanks under extremely hot conditions. Nowadays tanks are made with air-conditioning inside, but previously there was no air-conditioning, the tank was just a heat box. We tried cooling pranayamas and some soldiers in that heat actually started to feel cold for ida nadi was activated and that cooled the whole system.

If there is proper practice, the heating and the cooling pranayamas can be used to survive. For advancement in meditation and spiritual life, the balancing pranayamas are practised.

– 24 October 2019,  
*Progressive Yoga Vidya Training 1, Ganga Darshan, Munger*

# Correct Breathing



## What is meant by correct breathing?

*Swami Satyananda:* Most people breathe incorrectly, using only a small part of their lung capacity. The breathing is then generally shallow, depriving the body of oxygen and prana essential for good health. The first practices taught to pranayama students are preparatory techniques which introduce correct breathing habits. In addition, they help focus the awareness on the breathing process, which is otherwise normally

ignored. Although it takes some time to learn, it is possible to control the actions of respiration. Once the breathing has been corrected, one feels much better. When one breathes in, the stomach should inflate; when one breathes out the stomach should contract. Abdominal contraction and abdominal inflation should be synchronized with the breathing process. This is seen in all animals. Observe a dog or cat or any other animal. The breath is both gross and subtle. The gross breath is perceptible and the subtle breath is imperceptible. When the breath becomes subtle it improves the quality of awareness. The ingoing and outgoing breath should be uniform. It should not be thick or thin, broken or in waves.

## Why does yoga teach correct breathing?

*Swami Satyananda:* Before learning pranayama, yoga students must develop sensitivity to the respiratory process and retrain the muscles of the pulmonary cavity, enhancing their vital capacity and preparing them for pranayama. Rhythmic, deep and slow respiration stimulates and is stimulated by calm, content states of mind. Irregular breathing disrupts



the rhythms of the brain and leads to physical, emotional and mental blocks. These, in turn, lead to inner conflict, an unbalanced personality, a disordered lifestyle and disease. Pranayama establishes regular breathing patterns, breaking this negative cycle and reversing the debilitating process. It does so by giving one control of the breath and re-establishing the natural, relaxed rhythms of the body and mind.

### **What are the physical advantages of breathing deeply and slowly?**

*Swami Satyananda:* Deep breathing allows maximum intake for each respiration and slow breathing allows optimum exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide. Time is required to transfer oxygen from the lungs to the blood, and for carbon dioxide in the blood to be transferred into the lungs for expulsion into the air. If one breathes rapidly, then the optimum oxygen and carbon dioxide exchange is not reached in the lungs. If the respiration is slow then the optimum transfer can be achieved. This is why depth and speed of breathing are so important in relation to each other.

### **Why is the science of breathing so important for wellbeing?**

*Swami Satyananda:* Pranayama has a two-sided effect. It helps to keep the physical apparatus pure and in good order, and also to control, regulate and channel the mental-emotional being. Pranayama involves controlled, rhythmic and regular

breathing. Prana is the gross manifestation in the physical body of the subtle, universal, cosmic force. It is this cosmic energy that gives life to all sentient beings. Pranayama is the technique of conservation and distribution of this life force. While inhaling, oxygen is taken in, and while exhaling carbon dioxide is discharged. Oxygenation of the system makes the body pure, light and active. Unless the science of breathing is properly understood and correctly practised, there is a likelihood of imbalance in breathing, which may result in various types of mental and emotional conflicts and impulsiveness. The world with its innumerable joys and sorrows makes a violent impact upon the individual, and one often fails to find a realistic way of adjusting to life. The effect of prana on the human being and the correlation between the mind and the body are fully realized in yoga.

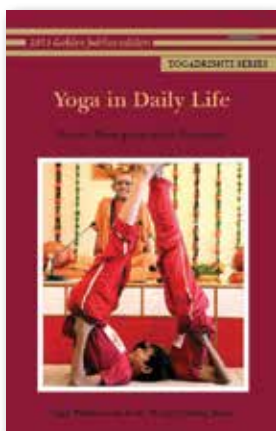
### **How does the way of breathing influence the length of life?**

*Swami Satyananda:* In addition to influencing the quality of life, the length or quantity of life is also dictated by the rhythm of the respiration. The ancient yogis and rishis studied nature in great detail. They noticed that animals with a slow breath rate such as pythons, elephants and tortoises have long lifespans, whereas those with a fast breathing rate such as birds, dogs and rabbits live for only a few years. From this observation they realized the importance of slow breathing for increasing the human lifespan. Those who breathe in short, quick gasps are likely to have a shorter lifespan than those who breathe slowly and deeply. On the physical level, this is because the respiration is directly related to the heart. A slow breathing rate keeps the heart stronger and better nourished, and contributes to a longer life. Deep breathing also increases the absorption of energy by pranamaya kosha, enhancing dynamism, vitality and general wellbeing.

– *Printed in Conversations on the Science of Yoga –*  
Hatha Yoga Book 7, Hatha Yoga and Health

# Beyond Conditioning

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



When the waters of a lake are still, you can see the clouds, the sky, the trees, the mountains, the sun or the moon reflected in it. However, when the water is disturbed nothing can be seen in it. In the same way, when your mind is at rest the world is reflected in it; the inner excitement, restlessness and stimulation have been quietened. As the mind rests and finds peace, it discovers sattwa, the quality of truth, but when it is restless, you lose clarity

of mind. The yogic journey started from this idea.

The sages taught that through yoga, it is possible to overcome the restrictive conditionings of life: the restrictions in the mind, energy and body. It is possible to have an understanding and experience of the higher nature, the transcendental nature beyond the range of attraction and the gravitational pull of maya, which is very strong. In order to harness that energy and realize that consciousness, and then become free from the conditionings of life and the world, a system was developed. This system included physical practices, mental practices and many other types of practices, which could become the tools to transform the expressions of the faculties and energies that you normally express outwardly in your life.

## **Integration of head, heart and hands**

The basic philosophy of yoga has been that it is a system by which one can integrate the faculties and the qualities of head, heart and hands. This was the statement of Swami Sivananda. Swami Satyananda says that the intellect, the emotions, the

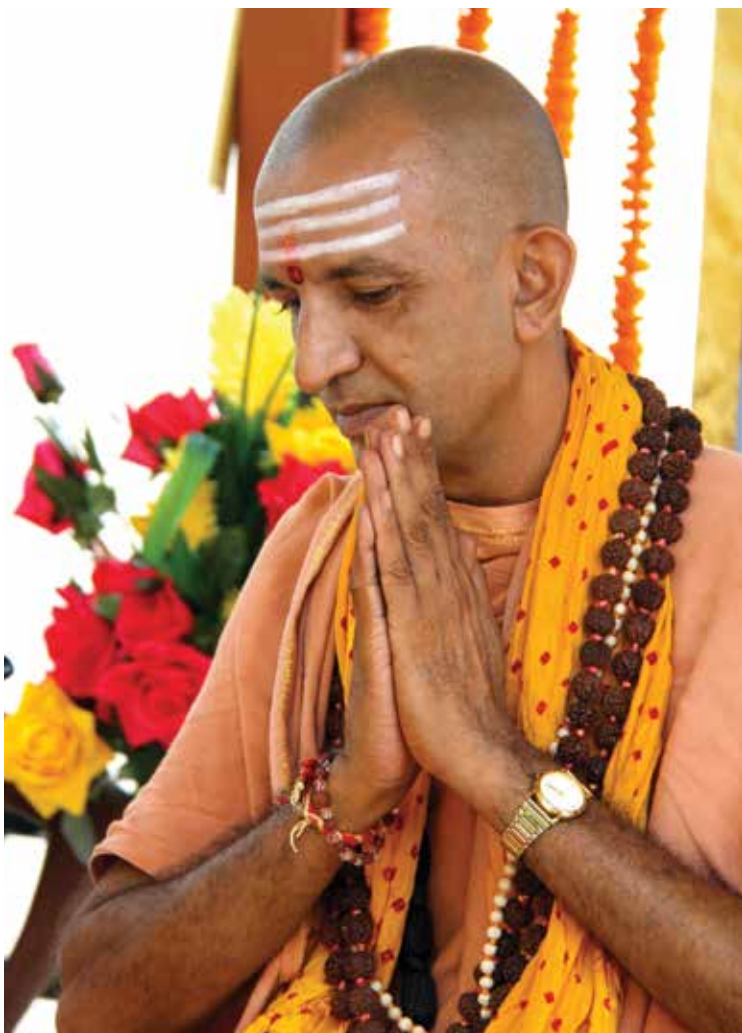


spiritual aspirations and the physical interaction with the world and society have to take place, and they will continue to take place. They can, however, occur in a better, more harmonious and selfless manner, rather than the dissipated manner in which you are living right now.

The dissipated nature of the mind is the cause of grief in everyone's life, as the mind always has to attach and associate with something or somebody. People may have problems at home: a discord between husband and wife, a fight with the daughter-in-law or son-in-law, and grief is experienced. Why? It is because of an association, an attachment, an expectation. There can be discord in the office and you will feel the anxiety, grief and tension due to that. Everywhere, the mind becomes the cause of grief and tension, frustration and agitation. Therefore, yoga came upon a very simple process. The yogis said, "The mind is affected first; therefore, first manage the mind." This is how Sage Patanjali also started: learn to manage the expressions of your mind. Learn to balance and harmonize the expressions of your mind.

In this manner, the subject of yoga evolved and developed as a way to move away from the conditioned nature of life, which causes grief, to the unconditioned nature where freedom and transcendence from conditionings are experienced.

– 19 August 2011, Ganga Darshan, Munger,  
*printed in Yogadrishti Series: Yoga in Daily Life*



*Namaskara* means salutation, and salutation means that you are connecting with, respecting and honouring the other person. You are controlling your arrogance and ego and expressing your humility. To be able to smile and drop your aggression, that is forgiveness. The moment you drop your aggression, the other person will also drop their aggression. That is the power of forgiveness.

—Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

# Summer in the Village

*Sannyasi Atmarpan, Bulgaria*

Usually in the summer, I stay in the countryside in a small village. Last year, I decided to practise namaskara. So every day, as I was walking my dog, I greeted everyone I met with a big smile and the thought, 'I bow to the Divine in you'.

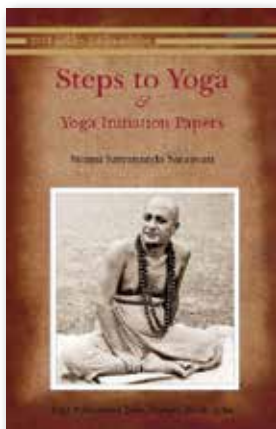
People looked surprised, but usually they smiled back. After one week or so, I began to feel awkward. Unknown people from the village began to ask me to drop in for a coffee or a chat. They started to give me cucumbers, tomatoes and other vegetables from their gardens. They wanted to talk to me, become friends and have contact. Slowly I realized that this must be the result of the practice of namaskara.

To tell the truth, I did not feel like being so close with all the people in the village. I decided to continue with the big smile, yet I greeted the Divine only in those who looked angry and sad.



# Letters to Vishwaprem

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



4 September 1959, Bandha Bazaar

No one who has experienced meditation will be attracted by the pull of maya. No one who has experienced meditation will be lost in the whirlpool of desires and passion. The senses can't see the chamber of meditation. Experiences of meditation are undying. Pure reason alone can peep into that chamber. No wise man will like to renounce meditation. The eyes see diversity.

The ears hear diverse sounds. Similarly so do the other senses. Not so in dhyana. Because the senses can't exist in meditation. Then who to see and whom? Who to talk and with whom? Even as various clothes are known as nothing but cotton, even as various houses are known as nothing but mud, even as various ornaments are known as nothing but gold, likewise all are seen in the atma.

Even as an intoxicated man also discharges his duties, even as a mother engaged with her baby doesn't miss her duties, likewise a dhyana yogi works; of course, the spirit is different. A crow might fly anywhere; let him. However, let him not lose sight of his only support. Even as storms disturb the ocean, winds disturb the lakes, abuse disturbs the mind, quarrels disturb the peace, so do the senses disturb the mind. Even as a snake charmer tames snakes, so do you tame the mind. Mantra is a tamer. Herbs are tamers. Weapons are tamers. All of them fail to tame the mind. Love of God is the last, fastest and best and the only tamer of mind. So I have given you a few glimpses of that ananda which is born of dhyana, and which you had asked for.

Take mental rest. Remain a witness. However, don't be a pessimist. Throw away the self-styled yokes of worry and anxiety. Everything takes its own course. In fact, divine law operates uniformly over all. Perfect mental peace is a life rejuvenator.

Life is a divine sport, let us play it accordingly. Life is a wonderful display of sorrow and elation. When everything has been said, then life is nothing but a product of our own mind. Merge the mind in its source. This is the way to real happiness. There is a garden with flower plants in it; again, honeybees on them. All beauty and all grace. Lo, the gardener sees the beauties fading and flowers falling. He hurries to collect the valuable seeds. Let one meditate on this

– *Printed in Steps to Yoga & Yoga Initiation Papers*





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Swami Prembhava Saraswati

151 pp, soft cover, ISBN: 978-81-943598-1-4

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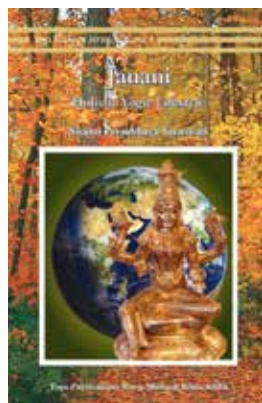
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## Websites and Apps

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The official website of Bihar Yoga includes information on: Satyananda Yoga, Bihar School of Yoga, Bihar Yoga Bharati and a listing of titles published by Yoga Publications Trust.

### Satyam Yoga Prasad

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[www.yogawiki.org](http://www.yogawiki.org). An online encyclopaedia of the Bihar Yoga system.

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Blessed Self  
*Hari Om*

This is to inform you that due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and lockdowns affecting all, the Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, has not printed or dispatched the YOGA and YOGAVIDYA magazines after April 2020 issue.

However, all current issues of YOGA and YOGAVIDYA magazines are available online on the **Bihar Yoga, Satyam Yoga Prasad** and **YOGA magazine** apps and at [www.biharyoga.net](http://www.biharyoga.net) and [www.satyamyogaprasad.net](http://www.satyamyogaprasad.net) free of cost.

The current paid subscribers to the printed YOGA and YOGAVIDYA magazines will receive their back copies when the situation becomes normal.

Please check out the new books, video and audio recordings which are uploaded and available in [satyamyogaprasad.net](http://satyamyogaprasad.net). Use this special time to discover old and new treasures of spiritual yogic wisdom and live yoga moment to moment.

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With prayers and blessings of Sri Swami Satyanandaji for your health, wellbeing and peace.

*Om Tat Sat*  
The Editor