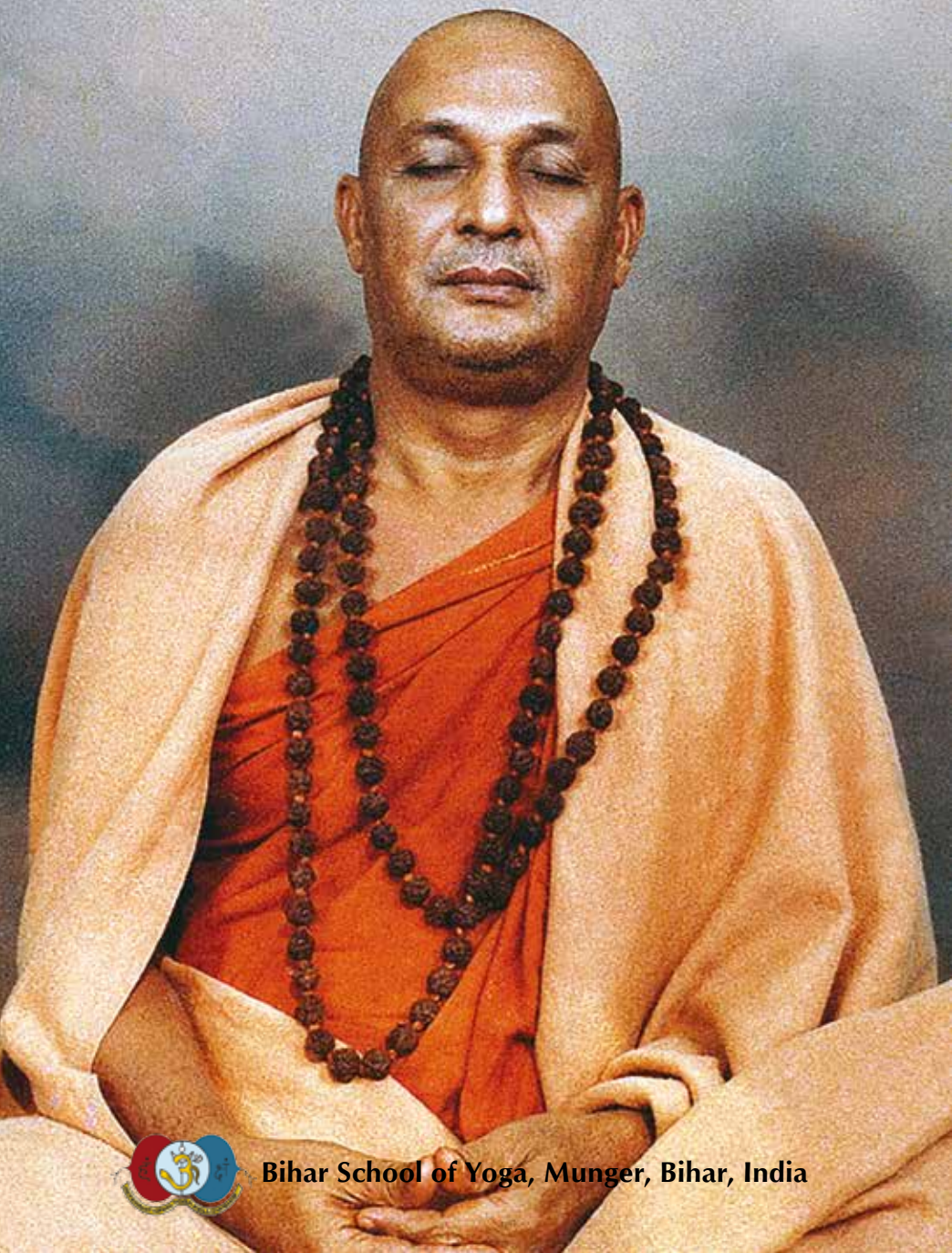


YOGA

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Hari Om

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Editor: Swami Gyansiddhi Saraswati

Assistant Editor: Swami Yogatirth-ananda Saraswati

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Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati



TRIBUTES BY GURUBHAIS AND DEVOTEES OF SIVANANDA ASHRAM, RISHIKESH, TO SWAMI SATYANANDA SARASWATI

Sri Swami Satyanandaji Maharaj is silent in speech, unostentatious in manners and kind in dealings. He is immensely obliging and remarkably stoic in his attitude towards others of 'Sri Sivananda Fraternity Home', I mean the ashram. He feels himself a sevak on a par with others serving under him, but never does he give in to any sense of superiority. That is why all the workers and sevaks in the press love him as their noble guide and worthy guru in their nishkaraya karma yoga.

—Sri Swami Srinivasananda

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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 ॥

Ashram Routine

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Introductory lecture by Swami Satyananda Saraswati for the Pan European Yoga Teachers Seminar held at Bihar School of Yoga, Munger

I am sure that during the period of your stay, you will learn a lot about yoga. During this time, we will arrange the classes in such a way that you will learn kriya yoga as well as other forms. The science of kriya yoga is a very important practice in the process of development. Right from the beginning, the ancient sages and saints developed their spiritual personalities by the practice of kriya yoga. It is at once a dynamic and practical system. During the period of your stay we will give you, stage by stage, the practices of kriya yoga for your personal spiritual evolution.

At first kriya yoga may sound difficult to you and you may feel that you are lost, but at the end of a week everything will be sorted out properly. During the first three days, we will have two classes of preparatory lessons in kriya yoga, two in raja yoga, and one of satsang. We shall wake you up at four am. After three days of preparatory practices, we will start with kriya yoga proper. We shall also devote one day to shankhprakashalana and one day to complete silence, but this will be done after two weeks. By this time, you will have imbibed a lot of yogic practice, and many things will be clear.

We shall also try to give you a taste of ashram life and I am sure that you will appreciate it. During this period, we will all be living together as a community and this will give us a chance to investigate our real personalities. Unless we come into association with each other, live together and face the idiosyncrasies of the human mind, we do not know the prejudices and prejudices we have in us. So during this period of living in the community, if you see a change in your mind, you must take

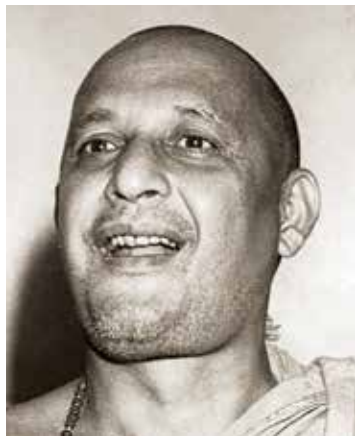
it as part of your experience. No matter how unpleasant it may be, it should be precious to you. This is how balance and peace of mind are developed so that outside, when you practise kriya yoga, the evolution of consciousness will proceed at great speed.

The evening program is community singing called kirtan, a part of nada yoga. When ten or twenty people sit together and sing in rhythm, it intensifies the alpha waves in the brain and acts like concentration. We have harmonium, drum and guitar players, and most people know how to clap. During kirtan you can let out your devotional emotions; you can get up and dance. The body follows the rhythm, the sound, and becomes the instrument. First the harmonium is the instrument, the drum, the guitar, the clapping is the instrument, then you become the instrument as you accompany the rhythm.

After five or six days, we shall set apart one hour for any of you who would like to have an individual audience either with me or with any of the swamis, for your personal, spiritual and training questions.

The teachers who are in charge of your classes will take special care of all of you. In fact, they represent me personally because I think that you must eat well, you must sleep well, you must get up on time and attend the classes on time. Everything in the class, in the rooms and in the bathrooms should be nice. So these personal feelings of mine will be represented by the swamis.

Our seminar is formally inaugurated today and you represent the whole occident. You are the cream of society, and I hope that in times to come you will be able to guide others in the same way.



– 6 July 1978

Kriya Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Right from the beginning man has been confronted with so many dazzling experiences in his mind. From that time, he has been trying to understand the rhythms of life, of the mind and of his inner experiences. He has seen various other creatures, birds and animals, and has been comparing himself with their states of mind. How does a man think? Why is there a difference in the states of mind and the experiences? Is mind a link in the great chain of evolution or is it something else?

In other words, does our present state of consciousness have any link with the past or future? Man has been confronted with many amazing events in the mind, like psychic experiences.

He has also experienced various states of mind from idiocy to dynamism, clairvoyance and intuition. What are all these states and why do we experience them?

In his society man always found some individuals with brilliant minds, prophetic minds, and others with limitations of mind. So naturally he wanted to know how to achieve a higher mind. Even today, if you hear about a good boxer, a good magician, a good actor or actress or a beautiful woman, you want to know how they became like that. In the same way, when man began to observe the different faculties, expressions and manifestations of a greater mind, naturally it occurred to him: How can I accomplish that?

Various reasons for an evolved state of mind were given by numerous people in different countries. Some said that a divine being had been conceived, therefore he obtained a fantastic mind. Another said, 'No, a spirit has entered into him and the spirit is talking through him.' Others said, 'No, God has descended in him. God is emanating and speaking through him.' Various definitions were expounded by people from time to time but they definitely could not get the acceptance of the intellectuals and thinkers.

From ancient times the people in India contemplated this subject: 'What is at the basis of man's evolution of consciousness?' For this purpose, the sages and thinkers kept on exploring different explanations. It is in this tradition of exploration that they came across a certain set of practices known as tantric practices. They used the word tantra not in the context that we understand it today, but in a different context all together.

Many modern people believe that tantra is just a form of practices which involves the use of the five tattwas, but those elements are just reflections of the people's personality and culture. *Tantra* just means two processes: expansion of mind and liberation of consciousness - the practices to expand the mind and consciousness is tantra, and the practices which ultimately lead to the release of the energy is also tantra.

Expansion of the mind means the capacity of the mind to experience beyond the limitations of the senses. Eyes can see the objects; ears can hear the sounds; these are called the sensory experiences. It is the mind which sees and hears. It is through the mind that all kinds of sensory perceptions are taking place. The eyes and the ears are the sensory mediums. For the sensorial experience, the mind is limited to experience within the capacity of the eyes and the ears and the other senses. The mind however can experience what the eyes cannot see. If the mind can experience what ears cannot hear, if you can smell something which is not there, if you can think something which is beyond the realm of logic, that is called the expanded experience of the mind. This is one important aspect of tantra.

Now, the expansion of mind clearly means experiencing something which the senses are not able to provide. These experiences are in the form of yantras, mandalas and sounds. When you can hear, even without the sound being produced, that is expanded awareness. When this inner experience takes place irrespective of the senses, what happens later is that a greater experience begins to take place. This is called release or emancipation of energy, or awakening of kundalini.

The word emancipation should not be understood in the religious sense. Hindus call it *moksha*, Buddhists call it *nirvana* and Christians call it salvation. These are all religious terms. I am referring very clearly to emancipation of energy in a purely scientific sense not in a religious sense. When you take matter and split it energy is released. This liberated energy is explained in physics. You take milk and churn it, the butter is released. I am trying to explain the exact meaning of the word emancipation.

At the root of matter is energy. Behind and at the base of all matter is energy. Matter is a gross manifestation of energy. Matter at one stage becomes energy, at another stage energy becomes matter. A thought is matter, an experience is matter, it is a base and it has a basis. You have to go behind the thought. You have to go behind the experience and you

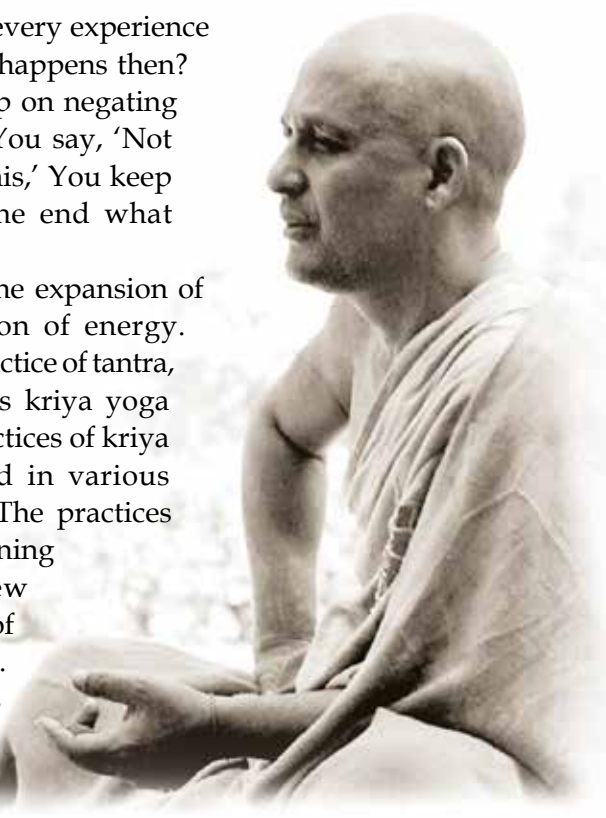
have to go behind every experience of existence. What happens then? Gradually you keep on negating every experience. You say, 'Not this, not this, not this,' You keep on negating. At the end what remains is nothing.

Tantra means the expansion of mind and liberation of energy. Therefore, in the practice of tantra, a system known as kriya yoga evolved. These practices of kriya yoga can be found in various tantric scriptures. The practices which you are learning here are just a few of the thousands of kriya yoga practices. Even the practices of hatha yoga are supplementary to that of kriya yoga.

Although hatha yoga is used now in the East and West for purifying the body, the practices of hatha yoga have an ultimate and different objective.

Therapy is not the purpose of hatha yoga. Therapy is a byproduct of the hatha yoga practices. The main purpose of hatha yoga is to bring about a union of the two forces within the body. If there is no harmony between prana and the mind, then the awakening of kundalini or of consciousness will not take place. Therefore, by the practice of asanas, mudras and bandhas in the kriya yoga practices we can ultimately awaken a state of harmony within the body and accelerate the pace of evolution.

– 13 December 1979



Paths of Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



There are six branches of yoga and each of them has many other branches. The techniques of yoga are innumerable and it is hatha yoga which is considered as a very physical yoga. That is not completely true because in hatha yoga, which certainly contains physical techniques, there are mental exercises also. It is said that yoga is for beauty and flexibility. Well, that is not a lie, it does help you to obtain beauty and flexibility of the physical body; through the techniques you obtain good health: physical health, mental health, spirituality.

When you practise some physical or mental techniques, the first point is it depends on how you practise them. Of course, when you have no physical or mental sickness, your body will certainly look healthy. When your mind is clear and balanced, certainly you will get more tranquillity and clarity of mind.

That means the beauty is inside, it is projected through the physical body. It is not that through the practices of yoga, the shape of your body changes. It is the mind that changes, the mind clears. When you relax, you look completely different to when you are full of nervousness and anxiety. These are the different things which bring beauty when you practise the techniques of yoga.

The rules and regulations, the discipline, the truthfulness, the orderliness, the cleanliness, always remembering the goal, being in a constant state of awareness, etc. this reverberation is not only outside – it is inside, a mental reverberation, sincerity. These comprise the different techniques of yoga, and there are certain ways in which to practise them. A teacher or master is necessary for proper guidance. People consider hatha yoga as a very low yoga, a very physical yoga. But this is not true. Certainly there are many physical exercises in hatha yoga, but through physical exercises you also obtain spiritual benefits. It is possible that you may obtain the ultimate goal through the practices of hatha yoga also.

I am not asking you to practise everything. You may learn everything, but practise those practices which are convenient and beneficial for you. If you practise for special benefits, if you have some complaint or disease, some asana, some *pranayama*, balancing of our internal energies through the medium of our breath, some mental relaxation, some form of concentration, you will be cured.

I am using the word 'curing'. I am not advocating any medicine or the use of herbs or injections, nothing outside, just a little of some yogic techniques, whether physical or mental. The hatha yoga techniques, whether physical or mental, are such a wonderful yoga which you can practise in any kind of life. Many times people misunderstand and think that yoga means to realize, or not to live a common life, not to marry, or not to eat something, so many foolish things people think which are not true. Through hatha yoga it is possible to reach the ultimate goal.

Karma yoga

Karma literally means action. It also means samskara. Samskaras are those things which remain in our mind. Everything that happens, those things we are thinking of, whether inside or outside, create an influence in our mind. Our internal consciousness, which is the subconscious or unconscious, registers these influences as impressions, and the main point is that we do not notice them. We cannot know them. If anything is happening, even when you are listening to me, it is impressing your mind and going deep into your consciousness. It is like a recording. Imagine a tape recorder, recording my voice, or any other voice, in the same way, your mind and even my mind is recording, all that goes on, twenty-four hours a day.

When a good thing is happening, there is a good influence in the mind; when a bad thing is happening, there is a bad influence in the mind. When you are thinking or doing good things, you have a good influence in your mind. When you are thinking or doing bad things there is a bad influence in your mind. That means psychology. These things are registered in our dreams, our thoughts, our visions. It is projected as happiness, unhappiness, a sickness, or an illness. That is how it comes. You are visualizing all the time, but the problem is without taking any notice, without any awareness of these influences or impressions going in. Therefore, they are making another impression in your mind. That is called samskara, karma, work.

When you say *karma yoga* it means action without expectation and with perfection. When we do anything, any kind of action, work, service or anything like that, not expecting any results, any fruits or benefits for ourself, that is karma yoga. In any kind of action, whether good action, whether mental action, physical action or a spiritual action, there should be no selfishness with it.

There is always expectation. The mind is always expecting; it is never that the mind is not expecting. However, the expectation also has three qualities as nature has the three qualities of rajas, tamas and sattwa.

When there is a higher kind of expectation, that is karma yoga. This expectation should be for no one. Expecting any results does not mean that when you are working, whether in the office, at school, in your home, or anywhere, you should not receive your payment or salary, not at all. It means that you should not expect. Certainly you will get the benefits as you are helping others, serving, working. You will receive the benefits, but what I am trying to tell you is, do not expect the benefits.

Not expecting the benefits is not expecting for yourself or for another person. This non-expectation ultimately helps you to make progress spiritually. When you keep no object in your mind of receiving, of giving for someone, then your mind becomes pure.

How is this perfection to be achieved? It requires the purity of love, doubtlessness, devotion, complete surrender, complete respect for whatever you do, for whatever you want. It is said that it is through the power of love that you can do anything possible which is not possible. It is through the power of doubtless devotion that you can cross the ocean. It is through the power of surrender that you can climb the highest mountain. Practically it is true, but only listening does not help, you have to practise.

I am not saying that you have to obtain love, devotion or surrender. Everyone of us has these qualities. We have the quality of devotion, we have the quality of surrender, but we do not know how to utilize them properly. That is what we need to learn. And we learn while serving and helping others and not expecting anything. Then the love and devotion becomes doubtless, gradually, of course. You will come to learn how you can utilize your love, devotion, surrender, more and more.

When you are doing anything anywhere, you have to surrender it. When you have devotion for your work, you become aware of what you are doing. You will learn how to do things without being taught. When you have surrender and serve humanity with devotion, you become aware of people's

thinking, reasons, feelings and that is how you come to know humanity. That is how you can know others' psychology and how you can help them.

It is not magic through which we can help others; there is the greater magician that we have inside which costs no money, for which we need waste no time. We can help others, we can cure others, we can make others satisfied, we can make others tranquil. Our own magician, which we have got, is our own devotion and surrender. When we do all with devotion and surrender there is no duality. There is no hatred, no jealousy, no anger. Of course, it is very easy to say but it is easy to practise also if you are very eager. Many people tell me, 'Swamiji, you are speaking so nicely, but it is very difficult to pronounce this word 'practice.' I tell them, 'No, it is rather difficult to pronounce this word, but easy to practise.' Easy to practise for those who are really eager to help. Help another person, and through that you are helping yourself.

This helping others is helping yourself indirectly towards your spiritual progress. This is how you become aware of your samskaras, of what is there in your subconscious mind. If you can know others' psychology, if you can know the inner side of others, you can know yours also. Then you can know what is the least and what is the most in you. What is wrong in you, you can correct. I am not saying that you can change your samskaras, I am not saying that you can remove your samskaras, but I am saying that you will know how to create them properly and convert them into a direction.

If you are feeling very angry, you just convert it into devotion, that will remodel it. Anger seems so terrible to others, and even to you, for later on you feel guilty and have such a bad reaction because of it and therefore you suffer over it. If you just convert it into devotion and devotion to others, you will feel better, you will be happy, and others will be happy. This is a kind of medicine through which you can cure others' sickness, not only psychological, even physical. Of course, the physical sicknesses are mainly related to the mind and when



the mind feels happy you can be sure that automatically the physical sicknesses will go away.

Therefore, to realize God you need to surrender yourself, you need to devote yourself completely. This is how while surrendering with devotion and serving others, you see God. What is God? God is everywhere, we are part of God. Everything is part of God. God means universal consciousness.

While awakening our little psychosis, while getting rid of this limitation we become unlimited. That means we emerge into this superconsciousness, into this universal consciousness and then we have universal perception. That is called God in religious language. For those who really know, it does not specifically refer to God, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Rama or Krishna because for them it is all one and the same, just a different name.

In books it is said that all are the same, but still people keep on thinking that I belong to this religion, I pray to this God

or that God. Well, I do not say that it is bad, but still people think he is higher, he is lower, Mohammed is higher, Christ is lower. Another one will say my God is higher. So why read? If it does not increase your knowledge, it is no use reading. You should read, but at the same time, if you practise some yoga techniques you will understand your religion better. You will understand what exactly religion is, because up to now religion is not explained. You will be able to explain it to yourself.

Karma yoga is such a wonderful yoga. It is an easy yoga which anyone can practise because everyone is doing action, whether internal action or external action. Even our brains and our nervous systems are acting. We are not only acting from outside, writing, working, digging or washing, they are external actions. Interior actions are thinking, the blood is flowing, the glands are working. It is through all kinds of action that we become aware of and realize this reality, this universal conscious, and obtain universal perception.

Anyone can practise karma yoga anywhere in any kind of life. There is obviously no need of renunciation, there is no need of giving up something and accepting something. It is only training the mind in a certain way. It is only mental renunciation and you can do mental renunciation while being a professor, a teacher, a photographer and so many other things.

Bhakti yoga

Bhakti means devotion. Bhakti yoga is the yoga of devotion. It is also considered as religious yoga. In hatha yoga, there is a principal branch known as japa yoga. *Japa* means repetition of mantra. *Mantras* are the sacred words or syllables which have good vibrations.

Everything that is existing has vibration, whether good or bad. It is in the voices and sound. Mantras are powerful, they have good vibrations because these words were heard by the ancient rishis and munis during deep states of meditation. There are certain syllables and words belonging to our personality which are called mantras. These specific words

and letters have such a positive vibration, that when we repeat them it gives us a good vibration.

The repetition of mantra can be repetition of the name of a god also, but it is not the same. The name of a god and mantra are not the same. Both of them are powerful, but here I am specifically talking about individual mantras. The individual mantras are according to the different personalities. There are different personalities, and for each of them there is a different mantra, though there are also collective mantras.

These individual mantras are secret and when you receive a mantra and repeat it, it produces a vibration, not only in your physical body, but in your whole being. It tranquilizes your mind, it calms down your mind while you continuously repeat it. When you sing the collective mantras together, you enter in such a kind of trance, where you can think what you want to think, you can reject what you do not like to think, you can visualize the things you want to visualize and reject the visions which you do not want. This means control of the mind – you drive the mind, the mind is not driving you.

Normally the mind is functioning automatically, thinking and thinking all the time. It keeps thinking even if you do not want to think. While repeating the mantra, usually you obtain the state where you can think about only the things you would like to think about. You can visualize only those things which you would like to visualize. That is why it is considered as a religious yoga, because all religious people repeat their god's name and they try to visualize the photo or statue of their god or their guru.

This devotion is never bad; it is always good, but through the practice of mantra, even if you have no devotion, even if you have no faith in something, it will bring real faith, real devotion, not blind faith. That means it will bring correct understanding. It will give you a positive and true idea of things; it will help you to study easily and understand easily.

– March 1980

What is Yoga?

Sannyasi Govind Das, Dhanbad

With our birth in the human body, natural evolution comes to an end, and spiritual evolution begins. We reach a threshold, the end of the biological evolution from animals and the start of spiritual evolution in human beings. To carry out this evolution, nature provides us with a special tool, called awareness. The awareness of one's own self in relation to time and space. When we are thinking, we know that we are thinking, and we know that we know that we are thinking. This ability is not there in animals.

This evolution takes a different curve, it continues on the level of the senses, mind, intellect, emotions and the self. Instead of nature controlling our evolution, we can take charge of our own evolution. Yoga helps to make the spiritual evolution much faster by developing these mental faculties with the help of a special tool of awareness.

What we understand by yoga

With our limited knowledge, we perceive yoga as constituting asana, pranayama and some meditation practices for gaining health and mental peace. It is impossible to understand yoga in totality. Without personal experience, it is not possible to really appreciate the higher aims of yoga. Yoga is usually defined as a union: the union between the limited self, *jiva*, and the cosmic self, *atman*. Actually, the union is already there, it is just that we are feeling separated, we have not realized that we are atman.

Origin of yoga

It is said that Devi Parvati poses a question to Lord Shiva: There is a lot of suffering in the world, can we control the suffering? The instructions that Shiva gave to Parvati about overcoming suffering in life are the instructions of yoga. In ancient times,



yoga was used to remove physical, mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual sufferings so that the sannyasins could achieve higher goals in life. It was limited to those who devoted their entire life to yogic sadhana practising several hours to transcend the limited mind and access higher consciousness, with the objective of self-realization. As such the yogic practices were limited to sannyasins. The knowledge was kept secret and not exposed to public view.

Yoga has evolved over thousands of years by contributions from various rishis and munis based on their personal experience. The Vedas, Upanishads, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* have all references to yoga but they do not deal with the methods because the yogic technique was passed from the Guru to their disciples by word of mouth.

It is only in this era that yoga has been brought to householders. Swami Satyananda Saraswati, the founder of Bihar School of Yoga, has been the pioneer in bringing yogic knowledge and practices in a structured, scientific way to the common person. The purpose was to give a yogic experience to a worldly person. A common person could start yoga to cure physical and mental ailments, and then aim for higher yogic goals.

Aims of yoga

Yoga starts with the removal of suffering of all kinds and culminates in making us realize our identity with the greater self. It is difficult to relate to the end result of yoga which is

realizing our identity with the greater self or also called the union of the self with the greater self. It is better to focus on the goal of removing the suffering from life, which automatically leads to the final goal of yoga. Different sadhanas suit different people depending on the stage of our evolution. We are born again and again to develop spiritually. The eighteen chapters of the *Bhagavad Gita* are based on different roles of yoga.

Physical level

At the physical level, most of us have a body that is continually in a state of disruption. The functions of different organs, muscles and nerves are not harmonized, the endocrine system is irregular, and the efficiency of the nervous system decreases with the outcome of disease. *Yoga aims at bringing all these different functions into perfect coordination so that they work for our overall wellbeing.* This objective is covered by hatha yoga. By balancing ida and pingala, the mental and physical energies, it makes the physical and pranic body healthy and prepares for higher sadhana requiring a focused, undissipated mind.

Mental level

Many of us suffer mental disturbances in the form of conflicts, neuroses, phobias which make us unhappy and depressed. Yoga aims to smoothen and eliminate mental problems, large and small, obvious and subtle. For them, yoga is coordination between mind and body. Swami Sivananda used to say that yoga is integration between head, heart and hands. This objective is covered by raja yoga, which overcomes the limitations of the mind and develops higher consciousness.

Kriya Yoga aims at raising the dormant shakti called kundalini so that one can connect with the higher cosmic consciousness. One transcends the body, the senses and the mind and gradually establishes oneself at higher levels of mind and consciousness.

Components of yoga

There are many branches of yoga, mantra yoga, kundalini yoga, laya yoga, hatha yoga, raja yoga, bhakti yoga, dhyana yoga, swara yoga, karma yoga, kriya yoga, japa yoga, jnana yoga. Swami Satyananda classified yoga in the *Yoga Chakra*, the wheel of yoga, having six spokes.

Bahiranga yoga – consists of hatha yoga, raja yoga and kriya yoga. One has to progress and perfect each yoga and move forward synchronizing and perfecting and fine-tuning the body, prana, mind and emotions. This is a sadhana of self-practice, self-evolution and self-perfection. The gain is personal, for you do not necessarily contribute to society.

Antaranga yoga – is concerned with how you express yourself in daily life and consists of karma yoga, bhakti yoga and jnana yoga. The internal expressions and attitudes are perfected and the purpose is to contribute more towards society rather than the self. This leads to the integration of the hands, heart and head, the elimination of the ego, and the realization of the Self.

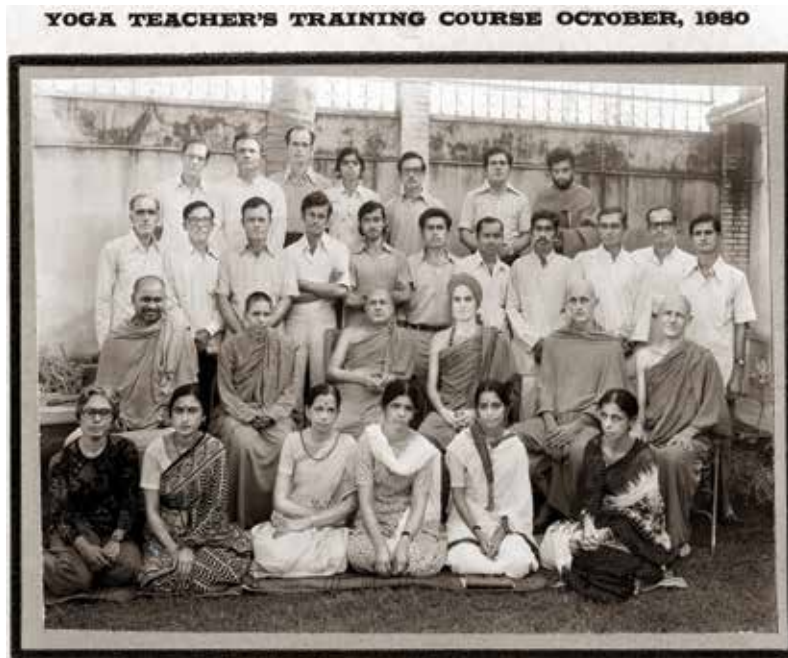
Towards permanent change

Yogic goals are different in different branches of yoga. A sequence of yogic practice is required to uplift and improve the quality of the body, the mind, emotions, behaviour, consciousness and energy level. Then our lifestyle changes will be a permanent change. It is important to do yoga as a regular sadhana and not only as a practice in a yoga class once a week. Our yogic objectives are small, short-sighted and related to the cure of ailments, the yogic practices are irregular and inconsistent, and their benefits small and temporary.

The danger with such limited knowledge is that this great knowledge developed by our munis and rishis over thousands of years will become distorted and may die in due course of time. Therefore, let us resolve to change ourselves and society by applying this great yogic science first in our life and then for others in society.

Satsang

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



What will the role of yoga teachers be?

Yoga is the nucleus of a coming civilization. Yoga teachers will have to play a very prominent part in that coming event. Yoga teachers are in no sense ordinary teachers like music teachers and dance teachers.

In the past yoga has been a philosophy which has created geniuses, ideas, forms and expressions. In order to restructure the individual human mind, scientists have tried different methods right from the beginning of civilization, but they have found that the science of tantra of which yoga is a branch, is the most powerful and most successful.

Unless you are able to liberate energy from matter, how can the shakti be handled? In the same way, the *sukshma* or the

subtle force in the human being is arrested by the gross body, mind and senses. This transcendental force known as *atma*, as *chaitanya shakti*, is in eternal captivity. We can see and experience the body and the mind, senses, thoughts and emotions in many ways – pains, pleasure, jealousies, dreams, hallucinations – but you have something other than this which most people have not been able to experience. Most people have not been able to experience the dimension of shakti. Yoga teachers, not only in India but everywhere, must understand that they will have to manifest this shakti in their life through constant sadhana and thus become the nucleus of a common culture.

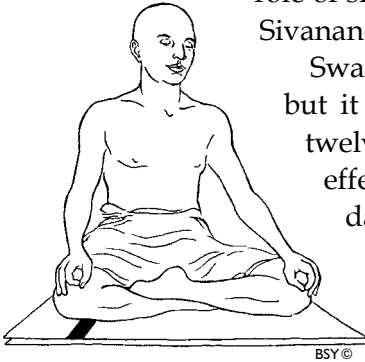
What will be the role of your swamis in the future? Will they be teaching and who will handle the knowledge?

I am a person who has a very clear-cut plan. I am not going to have many swamis to survive me. My swamis will have a very limited role to play, they will initiate the whole movement and then the householders, the total number in the human civilization of the world will take up the work, because this is meant for them.

Sannyasins and swamis are renunciates, and the most difficult commodities to find. Renunciation is the most difficult test. As such, I do not expect that many sannyasins will take over my work or that they will continue to be the leaders or masters of the culture. Sannyasins will not survive me but it will be the householders in India and abroad who will continue this work. They will have to champion the movement.

Can householders practise siddhasana? It is said in the *Gheranda Samhita* that parents who practise siddhasana have defective children.

Siddhasana is one of those asanas which can, in the course of time, bring about a state where the masculine system becomes incapable of producing a child. This is why it is said that siddhasana is good for brahmacharya. However, I have made some studies on siddhasana and had many talks on the



role of siddhasana with my guru, Swami Sivananda, who was a medical man.

Swami Sivananda told me this is right but it is a minimal effect. It is about twelve years before siddhasana has an effect on the human body. So, these days, if you want less children, if you start practising siddhasana at the age of eighteen, then maybe by the age of forty you will be able to plan the whole thing.

When you need more children, then siddhasana need not be practised; when you need to produce more Christians or Muslims, or when you need more people to go into the army. We are not a race who believes that children are born in order to give expression to the most beautiful things in life though one might become a Shakespeare, another a Ravindranath Tagore. In order to give the best product to humanity, to guide humanity from darkness to light, children have to be produced not merely to increase the number of religious fanatics or to produce more children to go to the battle field.

Siddhasana has an overall effect only if you practise one and a half to two hours every day. If you practise siddhasana for half an hour or ten minutes every day, you can practise it throughout your life, it will not interfere with the scheme of procreation. In siddhasana you press two important areas of the body – the perineum and the abdominal viscera. These are the two important places or centres. They are responsible for sending stimuli to the heart.

When you practise siddhasana, the blood pressure remains steady. It will neither rise nor fall. When you practise meditation or *dhyana*, japa or pranayama, the blood pressure fluctuates. Everyone's blood pressure fluctuates during these practices, sometimes more and sometimes less. These fluctuations should be controlled and in order to control them, siddhasana should be practised. When you do pranayama and pooja, meditation

and japa or any other psychic or tantric practice in siddhasana, it has been noted that the blood pressure never fluctuates. It remains steady because the two important centres in the body are pressed during siddhasana. So this helps us understand the positive side of siddhasana.

If we care for the defective children being born through the practice of siddhasana, we have to make a systematic, thorough study about it and we know that defective children are born due to faulty medication also. Once when I was in England, one scientist had made a study that many outstanding musicians have defective children. He came to think that because they do a long range of Aaaaa . . . or *rechaka*, exhalation, they have defective children. That was the theory he was preaching and he was able to provide the name of a few outstanding musicians and their children.

Somehow he stumbled upon me and was talking to me about this. I became very alert because it was not only an attack on music but on *rechaka*, exhalation. He was saying *rechaka* can cause defective children. I said, science is something which can be shot at anyone. Science is a very vague system. It is not a clear system. I have studied it, at least from a yogic point of view for the last forty years. Today I can stand and criticize every asana from a scientific point of view and I have been supporting hatha yoga from a scientific point of view. Science is not a very clear subject. You can say anything about it and you can say anything on the basis of it. You can even say that the food you are eating is creating an imbalance in your hormonal system, so stop eating carrots from today.

In addition to what we study in science, there has to be a quantity of common sense in man. Science is definitely a very orthodox system. As such, if someone has made a statement that by practising siddhasana, the quality of the progeny becomes defective, you may accept it, this is perfectly all right but surely in India in the last few thousand years, there have been only a few defective great men. One of them was Ganesha, another defective personality was Brahma. The history of the

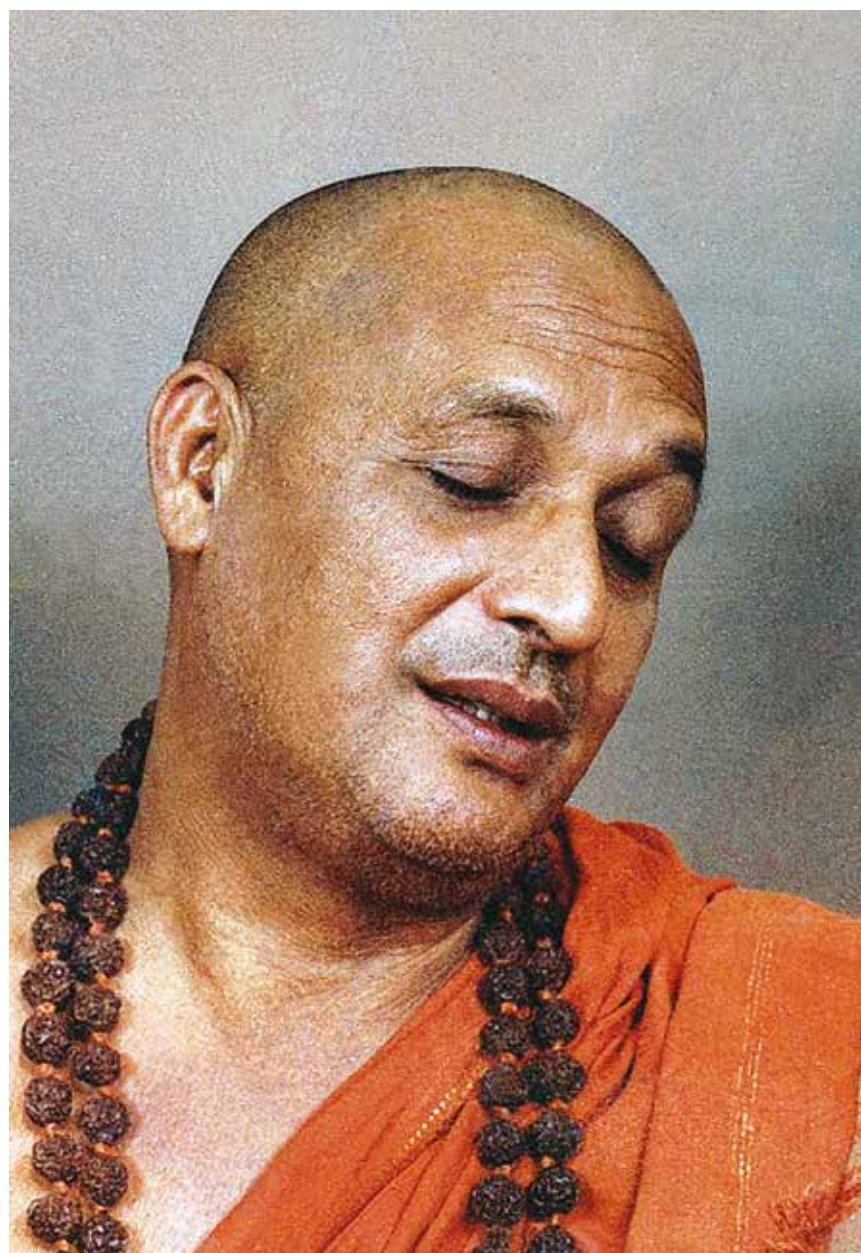
people who have been practising yoga in this country for centuries and centuries have proved that, not only siddhasana, but the whole of yoga can definitely bring about a greater race and not a defective race.

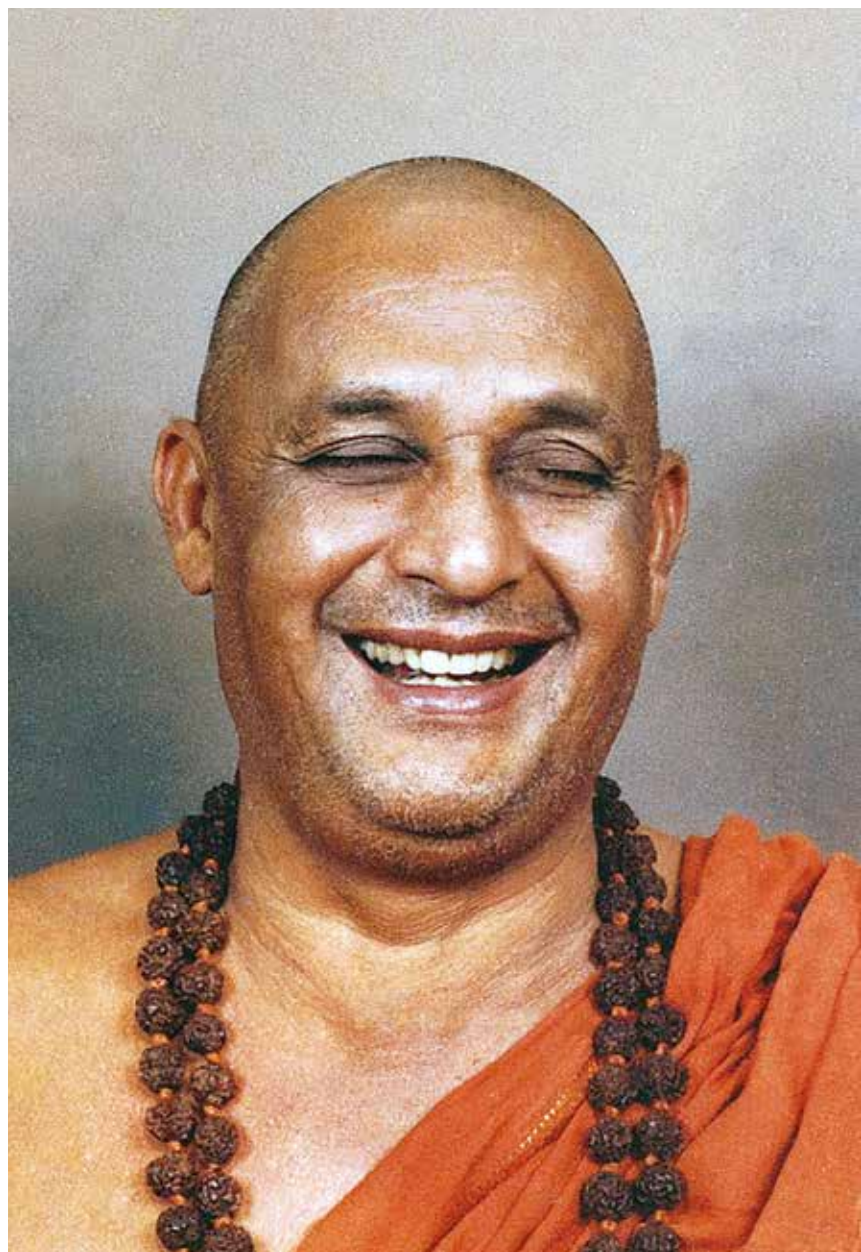
My parents are worried that I may become a sadhu. How can I handle them?

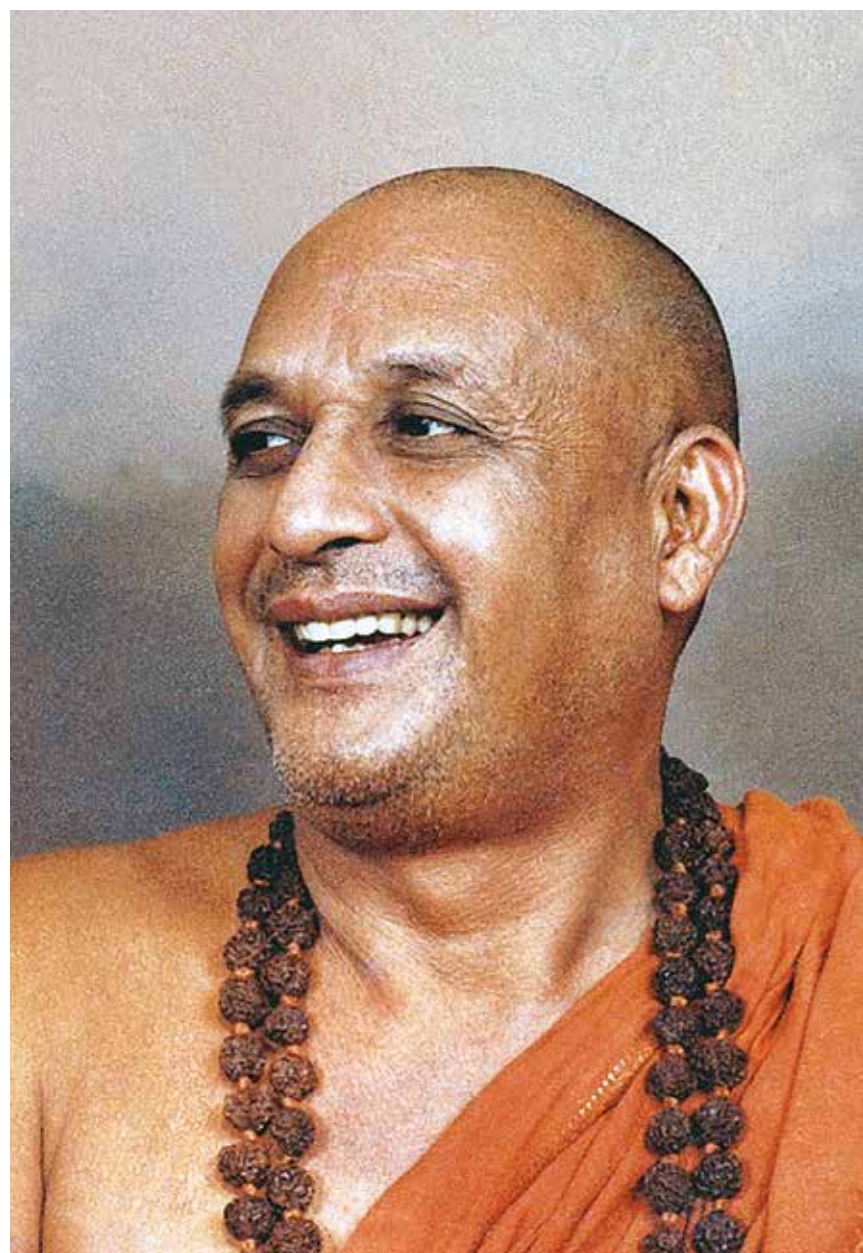
This is always a problem. Many times the families think that I am going to become a scoundrel and they are worried about it and then they are also afraid that I am going to become a vagabond. That is also a problem. You can never help the family because the structure of families is based upon interdependence, not upon independence. A family is a place where people should sit together with total independence. In a family there is the dominance of a few people. When you will say that you are going to become a sadhu they should take it to be happy news. At least you are not going to become a gambler.

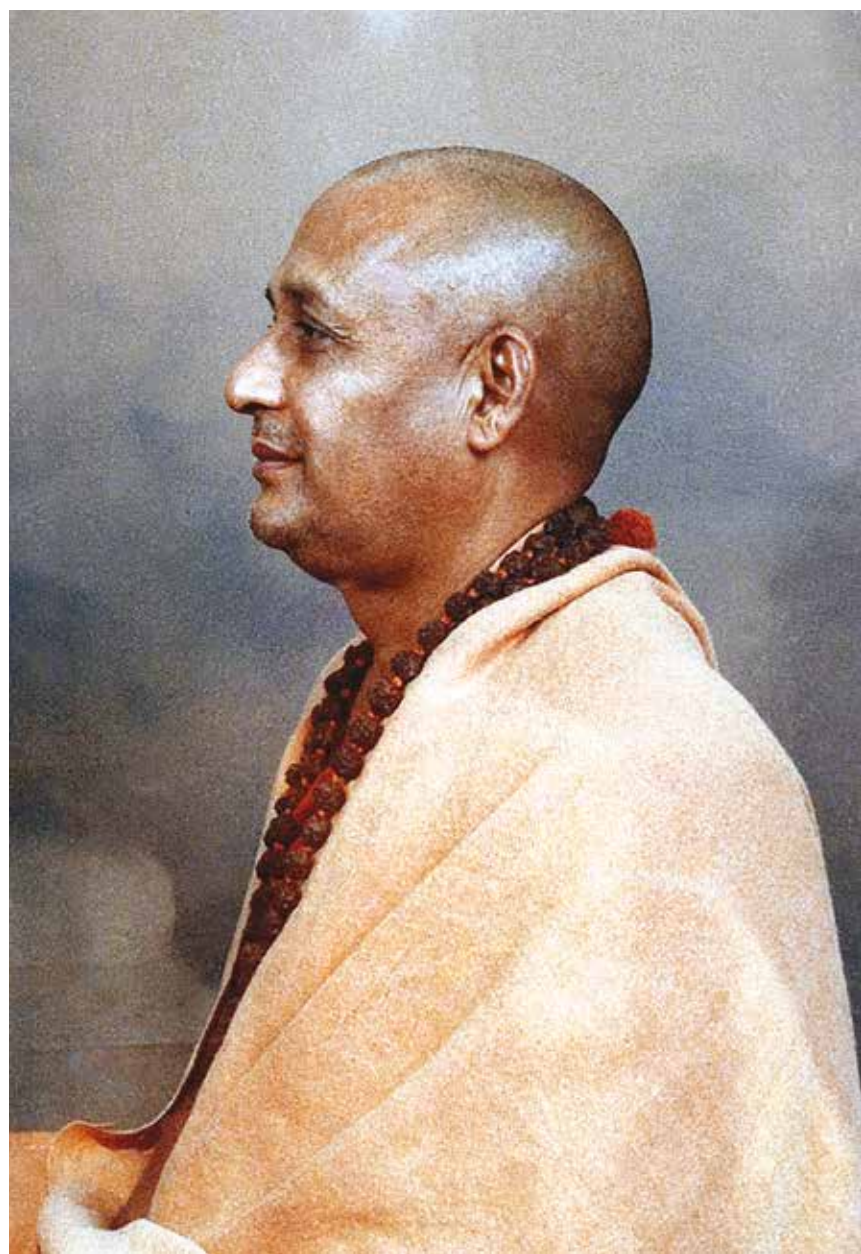
Of course, I have been thinking, and I have certain complaints about family life in many countries and many cultures. We follow a system that is a worn-out system. It is not beneficial for our present-day requirements, and that is why there is so much crime and tragedy. There is so much dissatisfaction and suppression in the family. Everybody is unhappy. The husband, the dominant figure is unhappy; the wife, the dominated figure, is unhappy. The children in a suppressed state are unhappy. The wife is crying, the husband is wailing and crying and ultimately some tragedy happens.

You must remember that young people are more capable than people who are grown up. They can do better things. The second point is that when any member of your family wants to become a sannyasin, a sadhu, a politician, a mountaineer or a sportsman – let him go! Let him be the best wherever he lives. Everybody cannot become a captain, somebody has to be the crew. Therefore, one should be the best whatever and wherever it is.









If he becomes a sannyasin and becomes like Swami Vivekananda – well and good, or if he becomes a mountain climber well and good. If he become a statesman or a mahatma like Mahatma Gandhi – well that is all right. Give him the best encouragement, the best help, so that he turns out to be the best in that particular vocation.

I practise asana and pranayama, but what is the best way to attain salvation?

Asana and pranayama have nothing to do with salvation. Asana and pranayama are the basic lessons in the science of yoga for the maintenance of the body, for increasing the sensitivity of the nervous system and also for the purification of the body and to make it fit for yoga and meditation. Salvation is an experience. Salvation is the discovery of an idea. Asana or pranayama, pooja, a temple, a church, the Bible, the *Bhagavad Gita* or *Ramayana* they are for a different purpose.

Salvation means, *moksha*, emancipation. You should think about what it really means. Mukti, moksha, nirvana, samadhi are synonymous terms. They say jivatma is arrested by devatma, by maya. The jivatma is under the captivity of maya, and when he becomes free from the clutches of maya then he becomes known as *mukta* – free.

In Samkhya philosophy, in yoga philosophy and in tantra, the concept is very clear. Just as energy is arrested in matter, even as the oil is in the sesame seed, the fire in wood and butter in milk, in the same way, behind this matter which is your body and mind, there is a great force which is dormant and that force has to be liberated. That force has to be released, just as a scientist breaks matter and by the process of fission and fusion releases the energy from the matter, known as nuclear energy. In the same way, in meditation, *dhyana*, this great energy becomes free from the hold of matter, this is the meaning of *mukti*.

– 20 April 1980

What is Intuition?

Swami Satyananda Sarawati



I think there come certain moments in the life of a businessman, when an idea or a sequence of thoughts will flash through his mind. It is often that idea which becomes the basis for his later success and leadership within society as well as in his business. The idea which flashes across the mind could be termed intuition. If you are a businessman and I am a sannyasin, it

is not just the hard work within our respective fields that we put in which ultimately gives a bumper success, but it would be an intuitive idea that flashed across our mind before the success. Based upon the idea you started your business and I started my mission.

I knew Vedanta very well. I have a thorough knowledge of the systems of monism, which go back to the intuitive areas of mind. I understand Sanskrit today much better than English. I have studied the vedantic texts of Shankaracharya, Ramanuja by Madwacharya. Volumes and volumes I have swallowed. Yoga had not captured my attention. Yoga texts I did not even read except for a few. Suddenly an idea flashed across my mind, a very spontaneous, yet emphatic and sure idea, like an inspiration. That flash was yoga and I based all my activities on that.

In the process of self-introspection, things become very clear and definite within the mind, and there is no conflict at all. This is the same for a businessman or a swami. When those moments occur with self-introspection, he makes his decision one way. In another case, he decides under different circumstances, 'Oh, I'll go to the club. I'll drink and go with the girls.' Then he might think, 'Oh, that's all wrong, but it doesn't matter.' The force majeure becomes greater than he, and he becomes heavily laden by those burdens of temptation.

In other moments of self-introspection, light flashes through the mind – the light of idea and revelation. Man makes decisions and knows how he will work, and he acts rationally on the basis of intuition. The life in an ashram helps a man so far as his ambitions in life are concerned.

However, it is only an achievement. I can say what I wanted to do was worthwhile doing even though it has taken me almost all my life to achieve. I have not yet achieved it, but achieving it will prove the worthiness of my ambitions. If I do not achieve it, people will consider that it was just an empty dream; they will say we knew from the beginning it was not possible.

You might say that failure makes even your most worthwhile dream seem empty. No, no. If this thought and dream has been an intuition, if it came to you during certain moments of your life like a lighting idea, then it is bound to come to fruition, no power can stop it, because this flash of light comes when destiny has made all the arrangements. I changed my whole profession, you have no idea. Do you see the point? I changed the whole area of my business. I am using the word business. I am not at all a yoga teacher. I did not know anything about yoga. I practised hatha yoga in 1956 and 1957, but I became a swami in 1943. Twelve years later I knew about yoga in 1956 and 1957 when I was living in Munger.

I had to completely change the area of my studies. I had to change the language. I even had to change the spiritual goal to be able to propagate it to people. Instead of talking about what I talked on, I had to start talking something else. It was so difficult for me because the idea came with such a gusto, with such a flash of light. It became almost a mania. For a few months the people who knew me said, 'What has happened? What are you talking about? You are speaking of yoga. Are you talking about men or about witchcraft?' At that time people had peculiar ideas about yoga.

Destiny had made all arrangements. I am using the word 'destiny' – you may see it as the cosmic law which has been formed and the minds of the people which changed as they are changing. Nowadays one can say people will be interested in yoga – that arrangement was made by a cosmic law. In the same manner an idea will flash through your mind when destiny has made all kinds of arrangements. It can happen to anyone – to a businessman, professor, research scholar. Swami Kuvalyananda was a lawyer and he had to change his profession completely. Then he studied M.D., started yoga and then research on yoga in Lonavala. He had to change his profession like many people. This gentleman Albert Schweitzer had to change his profession. He was a musician in an orchestra

and he went to the medical science and started working. The whole lifestyle had to change.

Likewise, you have to change in the world when an idea comes and the death of the mind occurs. It is so overwhelming, impressive, enlightening. That is the way of the mind. Other than that you have to use rational systems of thought. Intuition and rational matters are not contradictory to each other. Intuition is the basis. A rational mind is the work that is done on the basis.

Intuition is a lightening flash and creates instantaneously a potential. You see in your mind's eye that this is what can happen and this is what you should do. Then comes the second part – building a solid foundation in a rationalization of your ideal. That is what happens, the achievement of your ideal. In the process, you find that you do not have the skills. All right – you have the intuition, you have your ideals, you think how it can be done, but then comes the problem of finding a way towards it. This is where your successes delay because you do not possess the right skills; you have not tackled the problem properly. This is where one has to find a source which can help you to overcome your own deficiencies and create conditions which give the skills necessary for success. This is where you come up against a stone wall. In situations like this what is the remedy? What is the way out? How can yoga, in this particular instance, help?

You have already come to yoga. You are practising it and you will see how it is able to create a potential, a procedure, a means. They are all correlated factors. It is like something is standing just on the ground and there is a horizon maybe one hundred feet away. You must find people who have the same inclination, intention and aptitude. That is important, not just to be a dry businessman. A businessman has to practise yoga or something very definite. He has to be able to study the minds of his opponents. He must understand how they work, which naturally happens.

– *October 1980*

Religion, Yoga and Love

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



In the Catholic religion, it is said that the enemies of man are the world, the demon and the flesh. What do you think of these beliefs?

It is not only said in the Catholic religion, but also in yoga. In yoga we do not use the word enemy. We say that there are three obstacles on the path of the divine. Maya is one obstacle, mind is another obstacle and the physical, material need is the third obstacle. When you sit for meditation, the mind creates all kinds of games. You have to fight with it all the time. For

years and years, you keep wrestling with the mind in all sorts of ways.

Then again you are in the body. The problem of sleep, hunger and exhaustion or fatigue is there. Then there are physical urges. Food is one urge, sleep another, fear is the third and the sexual urge is the fourth. So whatever is said in Catholicism is true and is also said in yoga. It is a matter of common sense. Those, who have been practising bhakti and trying to come closer to their own selves or to God, have to face these three forms of sickness, in spite of all sincerity, honesty and truthfulness. The world, the devil and the flesh are in my words – maya, the mind and physical awareness.

What is divine love?

Love is twofold. One is to love the mundane, and the other is to love the transcendental. Transcendental love is known as divine love and bhakti. *Bhakti* is translated as devotion, but it is love. When you love the higher being, and your mind is completely saturated in him, it is known as divine love.

When the mind and emotions are directed towards the mundane objects of the world, when the emotions run after transient things and the mind after the trifling matters of life, then that is known as mundane love. It is worldly attachment. Worldly love pacifies the body and disturbs the mind. Worldly love breaks the heart.

On the other hand, divine love fulfils inner happiness. It gives peace to the heart, brings concentration to the mind and ultimately purifies the whole body. When your mind is directed to God, guru, the creation of God, the disciples of your guru and the suffering people, then it is the enactment of divine love. When you love and enjoy yourself, your wife, children and your own things, when the purpose of love is self-enjoyment, that is called worldly love. In yoga bhakti is the higher love.

– 9 January 1981, satsang with a group from Colombia

Approach to Yoga Practice for Happy Hormone

Sanjiv Chaturvedi, Bangkok

The right approach to yoga begins by understanding who we are. We are complex beings comprised of physical, mental, emotional and energy bodies. Just taking care of one aspect of us, our physical or mental bodies, may cause an imbalance and goes against the wholistic approach of yogic science. Therefore, to practise yoga means to take care of the body, mind and emotions as an integral whole. If your practice is only asana, then it is not complete. Some people may obtain a social-media-worthy physical appearance through asana practices but could still suffer from anxiety, stress and other mental and emotional issues. Neither is only meditating or mantra chanting enough. The body's health must be maintained. A good state of health is a balance of the body, mind and emotions and only then can a person function optimally and excel in daily life. Physical practices must be followed by breathing, relaxation and meditation practices. Doing challenging postures beyond one's physical capability does more harm than good. Basic, simple and effective asana practice in conjunction with other aspects of yoga practices is what makes it sustainable and beneficial.

The correct approach to yoga practices will promote conserving energy, not depleting energy. This is completely different to exercise where energy is exerted, leaving you feeling tired and needing replenishment. On the other hand, yoga practices done correctly make you feel physically, mentally and emotionally recharged and energetic. This is because practices promote the secretion of our four natural feel-good hormones, boosting our moods and our immune system.



Approach of karma yoga

Adding karma yoga principles of full attention and awareness to yoga practices while having no expectation of the outcome steers the practitioner to stay focused in the present moment. Karma yoga is one of the four classical schools of yoga focusing on the path of action. It gives students of all levels the right attitude towards practices and brings their focus on experiencing the practice rather than on the results thus fostering alertness and the ability to observe. The benefits of being in the present moment are multiple. It relaxes the body, quiets the mind from self-destructive judgement and conserves energy. Only with a relaxed state of body and mind can we heal and rejuvenate. With the focus on the practice itself, students can connect with the teacher's instruction and build patience to commit to their daily practice and let go of unrealistic expectations. Focus must be on the present moment because the benefits of yoga will not come over night. Results can only be experienced through regularity and discipline.

The *Bhagavad Gita* says (2:47):

*Karmanyevaadhikaraste maa phaleshu kadaachana;
Maa karmaphalahetur bhoor maa te sango'stwakarmani.*

Thy right is to work only, but never with its fruits;
let not the fruits of actions be thy motive, nor let thy
attachment be to inaction.

Our focus should be on action, not the result. If we focus on the result then we cannot be in the present moment and it is difficult to give our 100 percent effort in the action. We can miss the experiential knowledge and understanding. Fruits will come, but our motive should be action not the fruits and attachment should not be to inaction.

Approach of bhakti yoga

The principles of bhakti yoga of devotion must also be incorporated in our approach to yoga practices. Along with karma yoga, bhakti yoga is another one of the four classical schools of yoga focusing on the devotion to the yogic path. The importance of finding a Guru or a yoga tradition which is right for you is very important. Making hasty decisions based on superficial observations may cause more harm than good. However, once you are convinced of your Guru after having made your resolve to commit in a calm state of mind, follow the practices wholeheartedly with discipline. Have faith in the tradition of your choice because going to one Guru after another will only slow you down from experiencing the benefits of yoga and leave you feeling frustrated.

Happy hormones:

Feeling good depends on our mental and emotional states. Over-challenging and fighting with our bodies will definitely not make us feel good. Because our bodies and minds are not separate entities, whatever we do to our bodies directly affects and sends messages to our brains and thus affects how

we feel. Our approach, attitude and awareness are important and influence the secretion of happy and healing hormones.

Dopamine

Dopamine is a hormone and a type of neurotransmitter that the body produces to use in the nervous system. Levels of dopamine increase when we complete any self-care activity or experience small wins and successes in our daily lives. That is why it is commonly known as a 'reward chemical'. The positivity and motivation we feel after practising yoga correctly is partly thanks to the increased dopamine level in our system. Over-challenging ourselves with difficult postures and exerting ourselves unnecessarily will not increase dopamine levels but leave us frustrated and fatigued. This highlights again the effectiveness of basic integrative yoga to keep practitioners of all levels happy every day.

Oxytocin

Oxytocin is a hormone produced in the hypothalamus and released by the pituitary gland. Also known as the love hormone. Yoga practices enhance oxytocin levels in the bloodstream, helping us to be more loving towards others and ourselves. In our age of social media, judgement on physical appearance is a source of toxic self-dissatisfaction. Increased oxytocin levels enhance our ability to accept and love ourselves just as we are, in all shapes, sizes, abilities and conditions, giving us more self-confidence, as well as compassion for others. Once we learn to love our bodies, we will not do anything that is not good for us. It will become second nature for us to make healthy choices in our diet, lifestyle habits and to continue with yoga practices.

Endorphins

Endorphins are hormones commonly known as the body's natural painkiller which are released by the hypothalamus and the pituitary gland in response to pain or stress. Secretion of

endorphins are enhanced in a relaxed state of body and mind; that is why we feel less pain when engaging in activities we enjoy. Those who like cycling or hiking would not mind the extra distance and can tolerate some physical exertion much better than those who hate doing it. It is the same with yoga practice. When basic yoga is practised with a relaxed attitude and a joyful heart, endorphins are secreted and the practice becomes more pleasurable. However, if the practices are too difficult and not balanced, you end up with physical pain, exhaustion and lethargy.

Tunnel-vision effort to achieve challenging postures is counter-productive. It is much more effective to regularly practice accessible and simple asana to gain the benefits of yoga. Many students, as well as teachers, misunderstand rigid and serious-minded effort as virtuous. In reality, it tenses the body, makes it prone to injuries and causes mental frustration and anger. Yoga should be practised with a relaxed attitude with a smile. The practitioner should enjoy the process as if going on a happy stroll with a light heart. It is not meant to be a fight with the body to achieve a posture or a mental struggle to sit still during meditation. Of course, practices should not be done in a casual manner, but they definitely should not be forced or cause unnecessary pain. The saying, 'No pain, no gain' does not apply to yoga. It was not meant for physical pain. It is rather the contrary, "No pain, more gain'. In this context, pain refers to gradual, consistent and regular *sadhana*, dedicated practice, with patience.

Serotonin

Serotonin is a hormone known as the natural mood booster produced in the centre of the brainstem. It is released when we engage in pleasurable activities such as swimming, walking in nature, cycling and other physical activities done in a relaxed state of mind. Basic integrative yoga practised regularly enhances the secretion of serotonin and promotes a balanced and positive outlook on life. Pushing yourself to do extreme

yoga will not increase the mood-booster effect. In fact, over-challenging yourself makes you feel restless, competitive and could trigger the ego to be arrogant. Addiction to achievement can develop and thus you are caught in the vicious rat race of chasing for more. In yoga, less is more. Correct and moderate daily practices are more effective in giving you a positive outlook on life.

The peace within

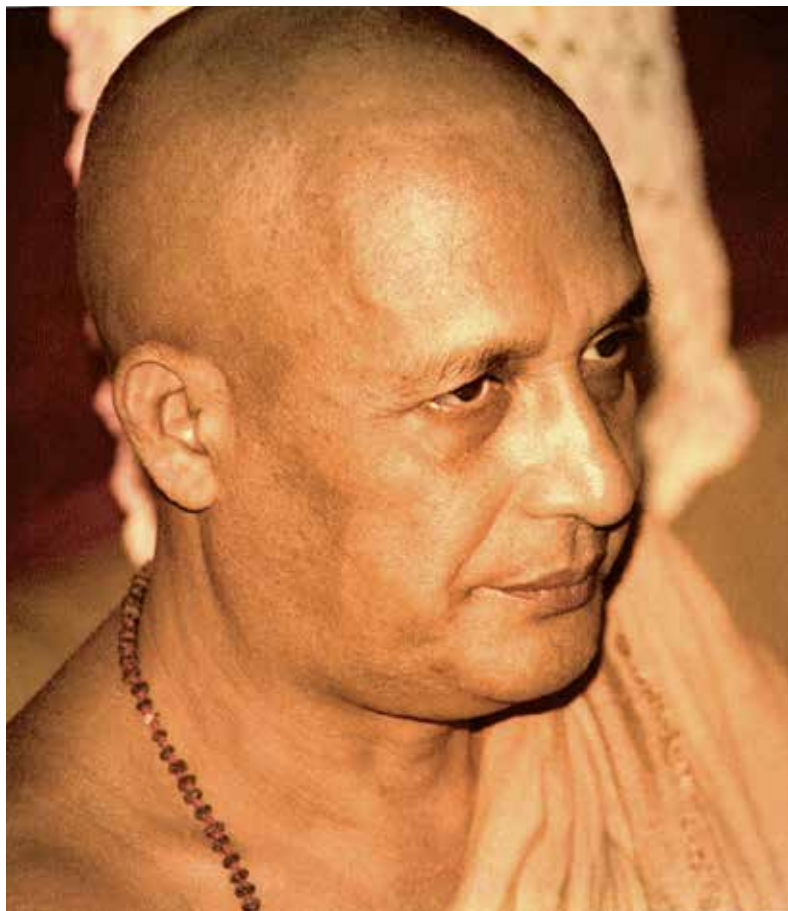
Having the right approach in practising yoga will ultimately make you experience the benefits of yoga which is overall wellbeing. You will feel good and that would be the motivation to continue the practices. It is as simple as that. Take the time to check your approach and attitude to your practices. Is it incorporating all aspects of yoga? Are the practices giving you energy or depleting your energy? Do the practices leave you feeling frustrated or content? If you are treating yoga as an exercise routine, then some physical fitness will be the only thing you gain from it.

Some teachers may tell students that they should be feeling inner peace and calm at the end of a tough asana session. Covering only one aspect of yoga will not yield the peace. You cannot expect to grow apples if you plant mango seeds. Over-exertion in asana will leave most people feeling tired, frustrated or wondering why they did not feel the peace the teacher was talking about. Inner peace and happiness cannot be found outside. Trending yoga fads, yoga props, cool yoga wears and yoga pose selfies can only give you a temporary thrill that quickly fades.

Happiness and feeling well must be found within ourselves and the correct approach to yoga will lead you on that path. With a positive attitude and awareness, yoga will lead you to experience the present moment. No guru or teacher can give you the happiness and health that you are seeking. Benefits of yoga can only be gained as an individual effort to empower yourself.

Everybody Has Access

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Will you allow me to disagree with the point of view that the practical and illiterate person is more advanced and even preferable from the educated and trained person?

It is not necessary for a sannyasin to be a scholar or an educated person because spiritual experience can come to anyone. This does not mean that educated persons cannot

have spiritual experiences. Educated people can also have spiritual experiences, but the educated people will have to work a little more.

I will give you a very simple example. When I initiate uneducated people into mantra, I give them a sound and tell them to concentrate on the sound. When I initiate an educated person into mantra, I give him a sound and tell him to concentrate on the sound, but this educated man has difficulties because he has no concept of sound. If I tell him to concentrate on the sound of *Om*, he knows O and M, if he knows English. He has to transcend that step first. The uneducated person can directly go to the sound waves because his mind is not conditioned like ours. A particular sound has been taught to us in symbols. The sound 'ah' has a symbol.

The concentration on sound has to be symbol-less. When you are concentrating on a mantra through a symbol, you are not concentrating directly. Therefore, a person whose mind has not been structured by certain symbols finds it easier to conceive the subtle waves, but it should not mean that only illiterate people can have experience. Anybody who practises sincerely has access to spiritual experience.

Can you tell us how an industrial, capitalist and materialistic country like America has developed so much in yoga?

Wherever there is wealth there is tension; wherever people are living the fast life, there are more tensions. The same is true with America. It is an affluent nation and therefore they have more mental problems. They have tried many methods to get rid of these problems and finally they have come to yoga and are finding fantastic results with yoga.

In India, life is different. When you live in the villages, life is calm and quiet. There may be dust, but there is no pollution. There is a lot of fresh air and fresh water. They get up at four o'clock in the morning and they go to bed at eight o'clock in the evening, and are outside throughout the day from morning to evening. Only at night they stay in their houses and most

parts of the year they do not even sleep in their houses at night. For nine months from February to October, they sleep outside. So naturally, they have no such problems as Americans have. Americans have a lot of problems like pollution and emotional problems and tensions. Whether they are in houses, offices, cars or trains, they have to be in completely soundproof compartments. They do not have a community. They do not have a family. The man in this flat does not know who is staying in the next flat.

Two Indians from Jamalpur living on the same floor of a building for seven years never knew each other. One day, when I went to Jamalpur to inaugurate a function, I met both of them. I asked them, 'Where do you stay in America?' One named a particular city and the other said, 'I stay in the same city.' I knew the city a little so I asked, 'On which side do you stay?' They named the street and the building and finally they realized they were staying with only a wall in between them. In America there is neither emotional integration nor informal friendliness.

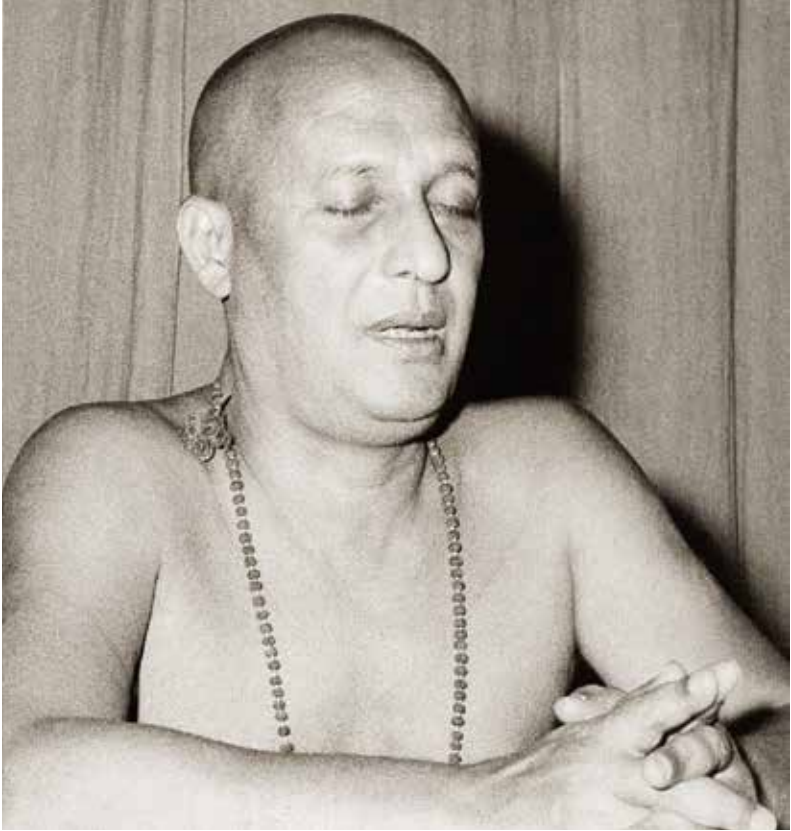
Once in Barcelona, we were having kirtan in the flat of my host. All the next door neighbours said, 'What are you doing?' It cannot happen here. If you are singing in India and I object, I will be considered a crazy man. People will say, 'He is singing, why are you worried?'

In the absence of emotional integration and because of other factors as well, the young people chose a different life altogether. In the beginning they were following the path of the hippie cult, but they did not find peace. Then some of them followed the Hare Krishna cult where they found a very well-integrated community. Now they are finding that yoga is the best way.

– 17 January 1981

Satsang

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Is satsang a simple question and answer session or is it a form of deeper communion, and can it be conducted by any sannyasi or only one who is perfected in sannyasa?

Satsang is a combination of two ideas. *Sang* means association and *sat* means reality or the truth. Whenever you are attuned to the reality or the truth within yourself or outside, that is known as *satsang*. Satsang is not necessarily a session of questions and answers. Within you there are the lower self and higher

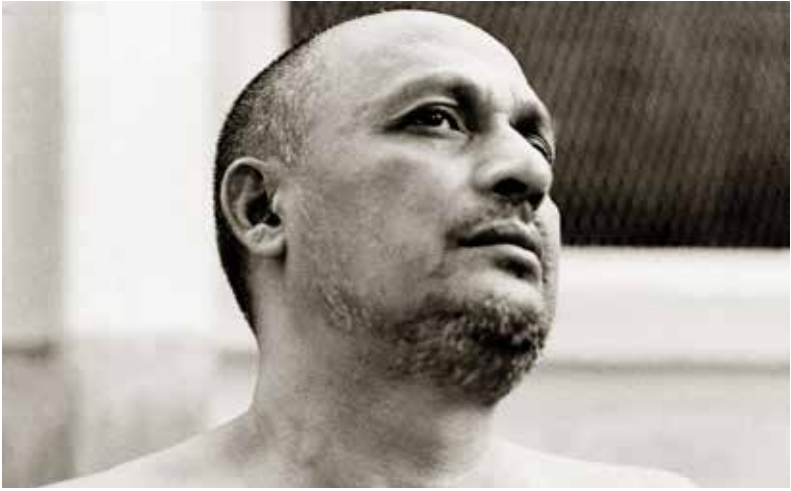
self, the two personalities. The lower self is ignorant, and the higher self is full of knowledge. When the conversation takes place within your self between the lower self and the higher self, that is satsang.

It is not possible for everybody to invoke the higher self. Most of the people are on that level where they have a self filled with conflicts, confusions and ignorance. Therefore, at that time, they need an external personality to represent their higher self. As I am here to answer you questions I represent your higher self. This is the spirit of satsang. The knowledge can be acquired by two known ways. One of the ways is known as tuition, the other as intuition. In the tuition, an external personality represents your higher self, and in intuition your higher self is awakened and you get an answer through it.

Anybody who can answer your questions is not considered qualified for satsang. Whether it is your higher self which you have evolved and raised or whether it is a person outside of you, he should represent the higher consciousness. Merely attending to satsang through intellect is not enough. One has to have some sort of communion with one's higher self. The higher self is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. That alone can give you a proper answer. Therefore, every sannyasin cannot conduct satsang, but if he has evoked and raised his higher self, surely he can.

Do particular faculties of a chakra manifest while awakening that specific centre or only once the chakra is fully awakened?

It is a very important question. There is a confusion which is attached to the awakening. Awakening is a very general terminology. Awakening of chakras is completely different from awakening of kundalini. Awakening of sushumna is also quite a different event. Even awakening of mooladhara chakra is not awakening of kundalini. In the systematic practices, first of all the awakening of the chakras takes place. If awakening can take place, it should take place in each and every chakra



from mooladhara up to ajna. Even when the awakening takes place in these chakras, either in one or all of them, it still does not mean that kundalini is awakened.

By concentration on bhrumadhya you can awaken one chakra, the practice of uddiyana bandha can awaken another chakra, by practising your mantra or any bija mantra you can awaken almost all the chakras one by one. As a result of this awakening you can have very good psychic experiences also. That does not in any way mean that you have awakened your kundalini.

From incarnation to incarnation, with the yoga that we have been practising some of us may have already awakened the lower chakras in our previous incarnation. Although we have been trying to awaken mooladhara, swadhisthana or any other chakra, it is not necessary that these chakras may be awakened. We may have evolved even beyond manipura on account of our efforts in a previous life. In any case, it is essential that all our chakras are awakened before we make an attempt to awaken sushumna.

These chakras are like junctions. From here the energy is distributed to different parts of the body. From here the lowest and highest energies are distributed. After the awakening of the

chakras you have to awaken sushumna. Sushumna is a direct link between the lower self of consciousness to the highest consciousness. It is in a dormant state, and when sushumna wakes up then only the attempts should be made to awaken kundalini.

When awakening of kundalini takes place, it passes through sushumna. When it passes through different chakras and does not find any obstruction, it goes further. When it finds an obstacle in a chakra which is not awakened, it either stays there or returns. When awakening of kundalini takes place, and ascendance also takes place, then the different chakras begin distributing the higher energy to different parts of the body. Therefore, we should try to awaken all the chakras.

Through the practical experience of yoga, we are convinced of its benefits; so then how can we introduce it to the people without presenting it as propaganda, and still respect their ideas?

Yoga is a life-saving science. It is not a religion, and it need not be propagated. It does not need an organization; it only needs teachers. It needs totally dedicated teachers because the science of yoga is a very vast science. The teacher must have an all-comprehensive knowledge of the external and internal sciences. This question came to me about ten years ago and I fixed it properly. I do not have to propagate yoga. People will need it and I teach them. If humanity needs yoga we shall teach. If humanity does not need yoga we will not teach. We are not going to convert you. Yoga does not convert or compel. It is not passing you from one tradition into another tradition. It is a system of transformation of the totality of consciousness of the human being.

If humanity wants this transformation, we shall transmit it. If this transformation is not necessary, we can close the ashrams. We do not worry about propagation.

– 26 December 1981

The Luckiest Day of My Life

Sannyasi Mantrashakti, Mumbai



In August 2004, my daughter and I went to Rikhia to attend the Jhoolan program. We were very excited as it was our first visit to Rikhia and we hoped and prayed for a darshan of Sri Swamiji.

When we arrived, there was a buzz of excitement and flurry of activity as everyone was preparing for one of the most joyous occasions for the whole of humanity. Jhoolan is a festival which celebrates the games played by Lord Krishna in Vrindavan during this youth where it was believed that he used to play on the swings with this consort Radha and the gopis.

After settling in our room, we went to the office and gave a written request for darshan of Sri Swamiji. We were slightly disheartened to hear that he was in seclusion and not meeting anybody. Nevertheless, we kept our hopes up high and joined in the ashram routine wholeheartedly. One morning,

after breakfast, a sannyasi came running to me. He asked me, "Where is your daughter? Bring her quickly and stand in this line." Before I could ask him the reason why, he had disappeared. I ran to our room, pulled my daughter out and stood quietly in the line, my heart bursting with excitement! Could it possibly be that our prayers were being answered?

Soon enough, we were led into a beautiful room where a small group of people were receiving Sri Swamiji's darshan. My daughter and I sat down gratefully in the last row, soaking in the energy and the grace which was flowing in every direction. It was as if the Heavens Above had opened up and abundance was flowing towards all who were open to receive it!

When I managed to bring my attention back into the room, I observed Sri Swamiji giving a satsang in the centre of the room with Swami Nirananandaji on one side and Swami Satsangiji on the other. In my mind I thought, 'I wish Swami Niranananji guides me for the rest of my life.' No sooner had I finished thinking the thought in my mind, than Sri Swamiji turned his head towards me and replied, "In this ashram we do not depend on others to guide us. *Atmadeepo bhava* - Awaken the light within." I was stunned beyond words. Did he just read my mind?

Before I could absorb the depth of the tremendous blessing I had just received, Sri Swamiji turned his attention towards my daughter. He enquired about her school in Mumbai and revived his own memories of his visits to Mumbai. He blessed her nature saying that she is peaceful, cool-headed and of good character. Forseeing abundance in her future, he blessed her to share it with others. As for me - time had stood still. I had received more than what I had asked for and my gratitude knew no bounds.

All too soon the satsang was over and we all filed out in a straight line. I managed to gather back my senses and saw Swami Niranananji walking past. Feeling my heart overflowing with gratitude, I said, "Thank you." He replied, "For what? You were just plain lucky." And I thanked the Lord for the luckiest day of my life.

To Live a Full Life

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

In order to live a fuller life, you will have to break the barriers of your mind and emotions. Man is a captive of his own faith. He is captive of social circumstances. How can he live a fuller life? You do not have an independent mind; you do not have an original mind. You have an indoctrinated mind. You have been brainwashed by the circumstances in which you have been living. Wherever you live, in India or South America, you cannot say you have an original mind.

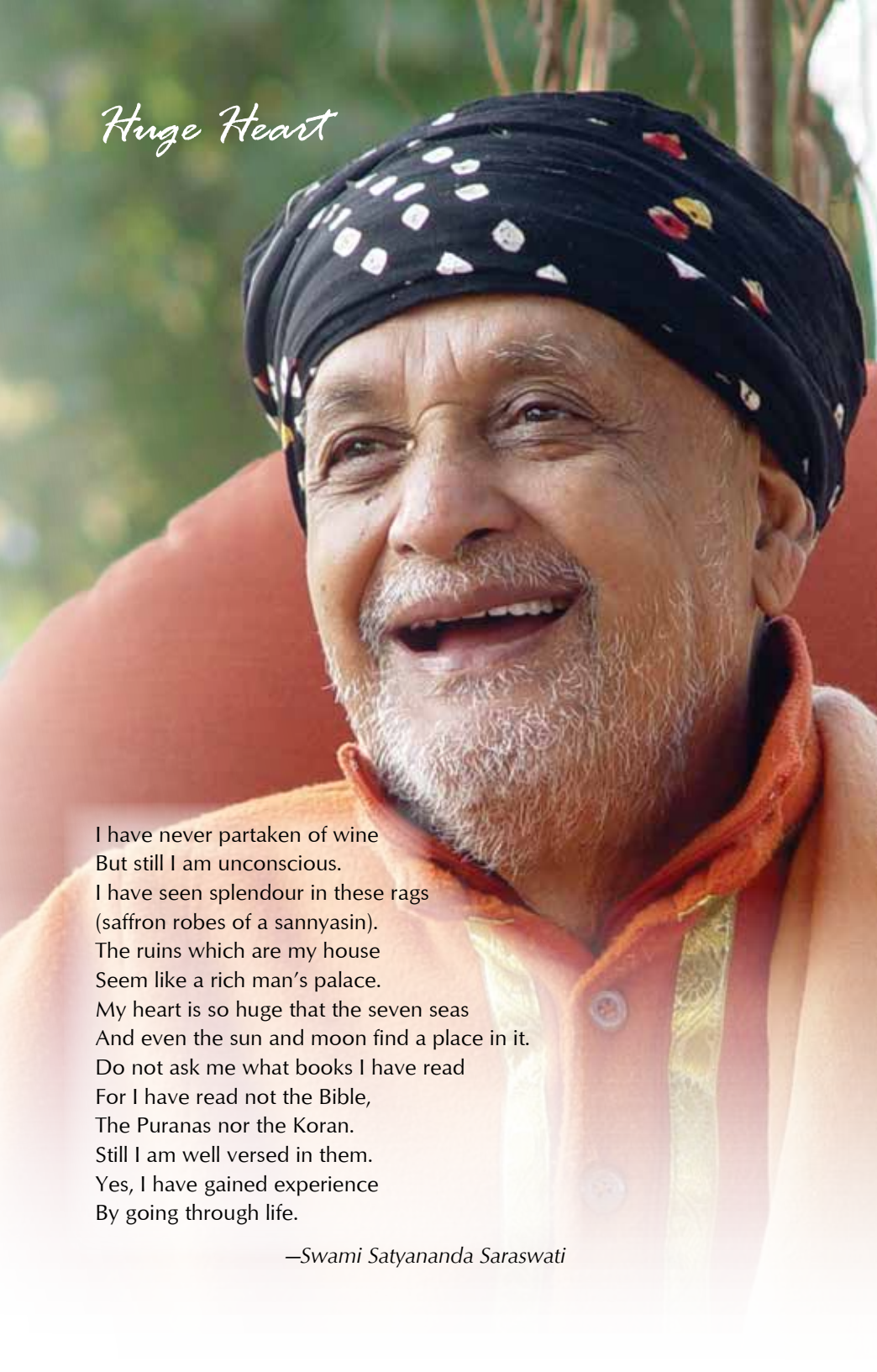
Many times our mind is thinking automatically. There are many concepts which are so automatic to us. The language we know is so automatic to us, we do not have to learn it. From this you understand how much we are brainwashed and automatic, and how much our brain or personality is conditioned. As long as we are conditioned we cannot live a fuller life. We have our concept of freedom, knowledge, health, prosperity and happiness, but that is what we have been taught.

First of all, to lead a fuller life, you will have to break the mind. You will have to completely clean it up. You will have to channel your own faith. It is such a difficult thing, but once you channel your own faith, you do not know what you are going to live up to. Most people are very weak. They cannot live without a faith, without concepts and boundaries. They must have boundaries.

In order to live a fuller life, the boundaries will have to be shattered. How to break the boundaries? You have to practise yoga first and gradually come to the deeper realms of the mind. When you go into the deeper realms of the mind, you understand the reality of the universe and you know what is truth and what is not. Then you lead a fuller life.

– 4 January 1981, Munger, India

Huge Heart



I have never partaken of wine
But still I am unconscious.
I have seen splendour in these rags
(saffron robes of a sannyasin).
The ruins which are my house
Seem like a rich man's palace.
My heart is so huge that the seven seas
And even the sun and moon find a place in it.
Do not ask me what books I have read
For I have read not the Bible,
The Puranas nor the Koran.
Still I am well versed in them.
Yes, I have gained experience
By going through life.

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati



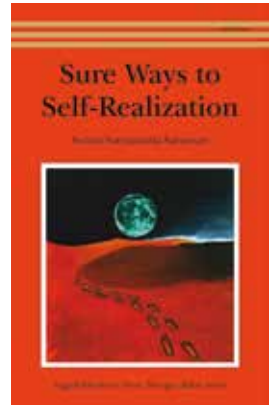
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Swami Satyananda Saraswati

466 pp, Soft cover, ISBN 81-85787-41-7

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Hari Om

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

Om Tat Sat
The Editor