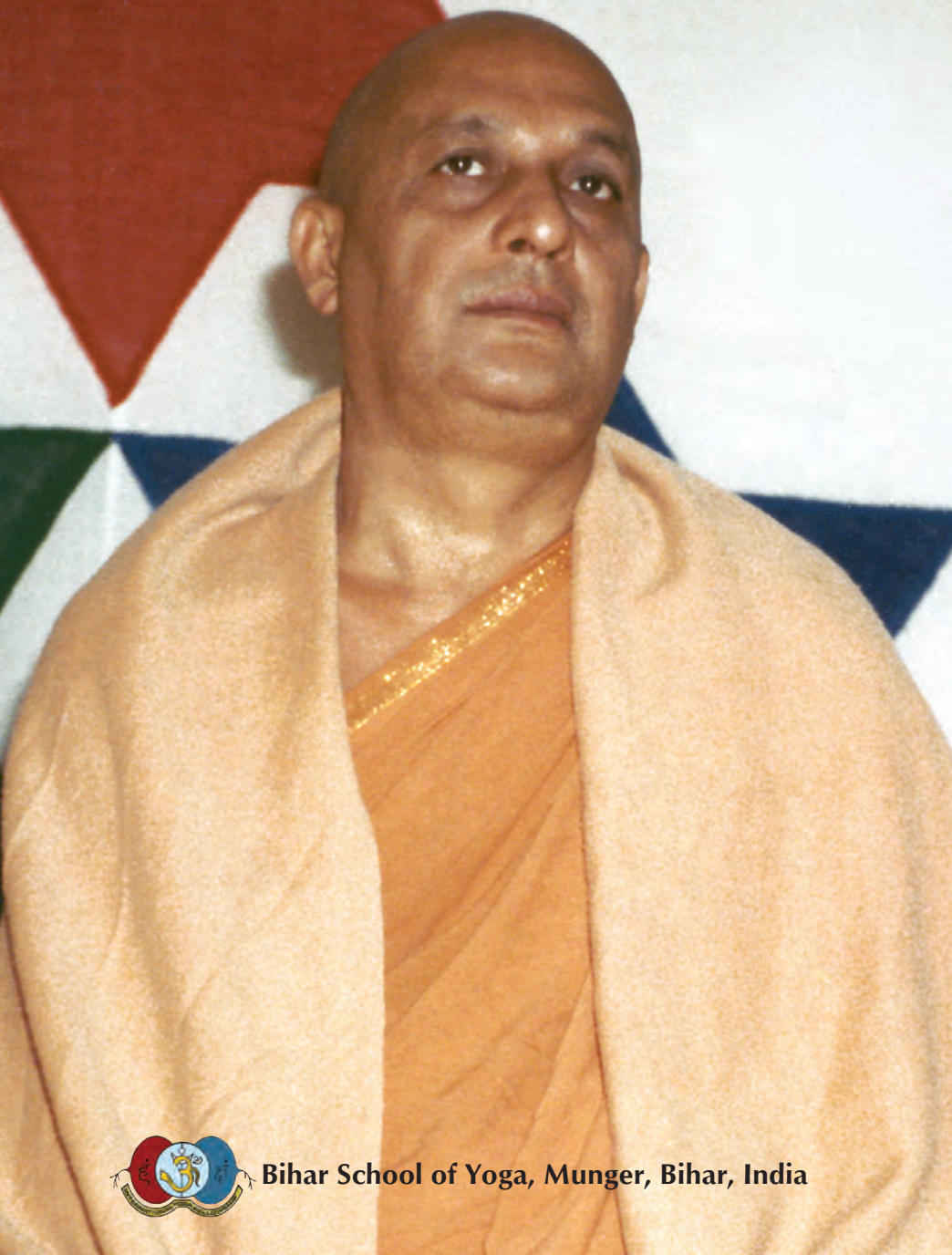


YOGA

Year 12 Issue 8
August 2023



Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar, India



Hari Om

YOGA is compiled, composed and published by the sannyasin 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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FFH (For Frontline Heroes)

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TRIBUTES BY SWAMI SIVANANDA TO SATYAM

Has anyone managed to stop a river from flowing or the sun and the moon from rising, that I could have stopped Satyam? He has a lot to accomplish. He is my real successor.

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

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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 ॥

Philosophy of Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

When you practise yoga, you improve the quality of your mind and emotions. With the improved quality of your mind and emotions, you begin to accept many inevitable events. Many people in this world are worried about everything because man is a perfectionist. He wants everything to be perfect. If he sees something absurd, he does not accept it, he does not understand it.

The philosophy of yoga is related to the process of evolution. We believe there will always be idiots in this world, existing side by side with wise people. Positive and negative forces will prevail, will exist side by side. When this is realized by you, nothing bad can disturb you. Existence is the mixture of the three gunas, and they will be there all the time. If you pass a law that all criminals must be killed now, within five years there will be another tribe of criminals.

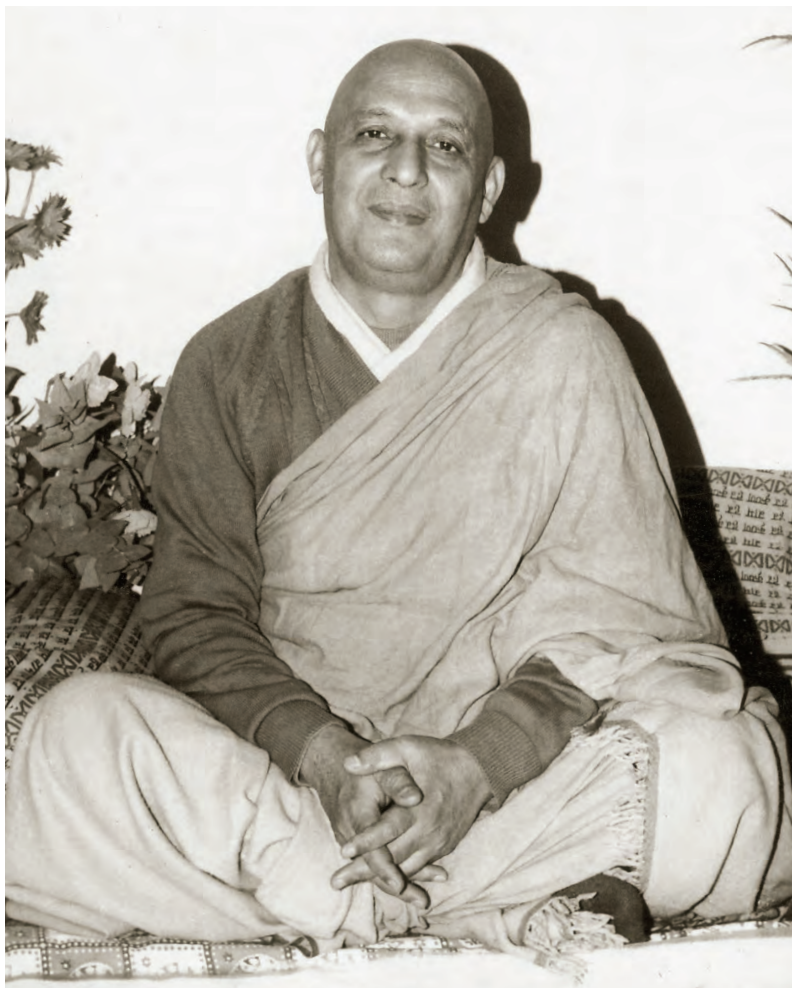
You cannot eliminate the ever-surging process of Nature. You cannot eliminate death, and if half the people of the world became immortal, there will be great problems. Once upon a time there was a problem of mortality. Now there is the problem of overpopulation. Therefore, death and other adverse circumstances should not cause imbalance in the mind.

The most important philosophy of yoga is: you perceive the world according to the quality of your vision. As you grow beyond the boundaries of the lower self, the actions and reactions taking place in the mind have different interpretations for you. We know about hatha yoga and raja yoga, but yoga is mainly concerned with the depth of consciousness of man. It helps one evolve and have a better realization of the world.

— September 1982, San Sicario

Practice, Not Belief

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



The path of yoga is subject to experimentation. You don't have to accept it. You should use your reason. A lot of work has been done in yoga by scientists. The effects of yogasanas and pranayama have been exposed to scientific scrutiny and

they have realized positive results. Experiments have been conducted on the effects of mantra. Experiments have been conducted on the result of yantra and they have discovered positive results.

Now they are working on the effects of meditation. How does it affect the brain? How does it influence all other systems of the body? All this is going on and the scientists have come to the conclusion that yoga is a beneficial and reliable science. In many countries they are working on scientific experiments. So, as far as scientific proof is concerned, you have to accept yoga.

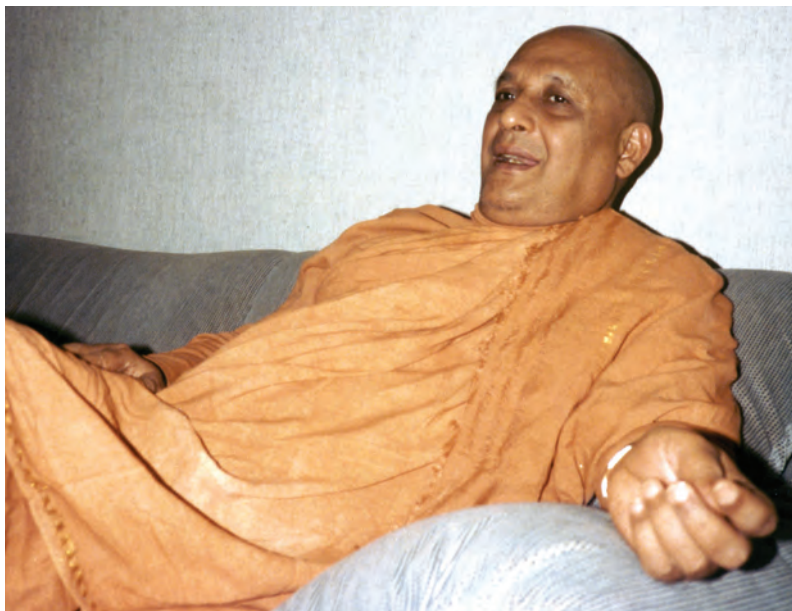
So far as spiritual life is concerned, there is enough proof about yoga. Throughout history, yoga has produced people of enlightenment. From this you can understand that the path of yoga is the right path. There is no dogma in it, no sectarianism, no compulsion. If you want to practise raja yoga, do it. If you believe in God, practise bhakti yoga. If you believe in reason, practise jnana yoga. If you believe in mysticism, practise kundalini yoga. If you believe in humanitarianism, practise karma yoga. You have to choose the right path for yourself. The signboards are already there.

There are many people who do not want to practise bhakti yoga because they don't believe in God. Many don't want to practise raja yoga because they are not mystics. They don't want to learn self-control, they want to contemplate. Let them practise jnana yoga. By a process of thinking also, you can come to realize the truth, but not everybody can do it. There are people who only like to do karma yoga. Therefore, the path of yoga is the right path because it keeps many doors open for everybody. If you do not believe in anything, then practise hatha yoga. At least it will give you good health. Practise pranayama, it will give you better oxygenation and remove carbon dioxide. So, you have to practise yoga after proper reasoning. You do not have to do it because I say it.

– February 1983, Florence

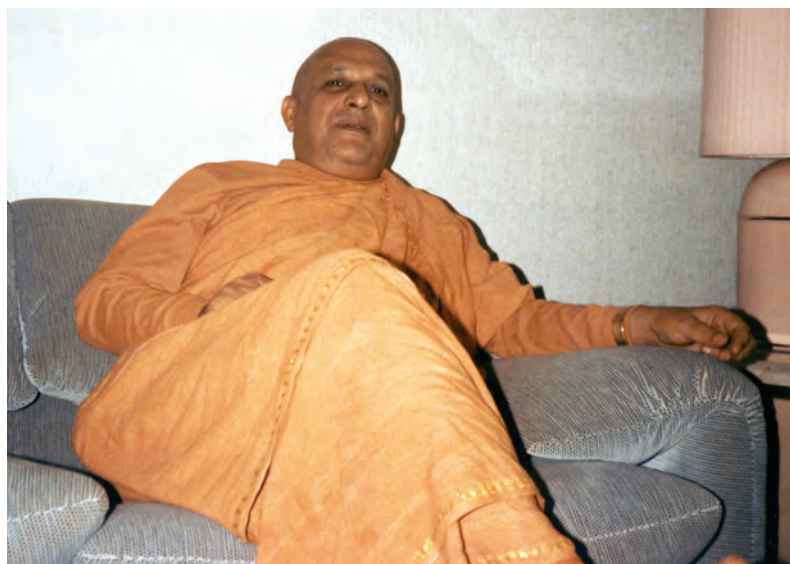
The yogi who went to space

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



He is a yoga teacher. He was sent into space for research on yoga and space sickness. The cosmonauts who go into space develop many problems there, which are partially due to weightlessness. They have problems like nausea, digestive disturbance, nervous disturbance. Yoga is considered very important in this situation because in the practices of yoga, we try to control the negative aspects of weightlessness.

Therefore, this man was sent into orbit to work with other cosmonauts. They have been working on this project for a very long time and I am confident that the research results will be produced soon, and they will bring out a set of practices for cosmonauts. The main thing is, when the body becomes weightless, as it does during meditation as well, how do you manage? In yoga, this is one of the most important practices.



Many people who practise meditation don't like it. There are many cases where people just jump up.

So, in meditation, we gradually train the mind to face that experience. Therefore, if a person who has already practised meditation and experienced lightness goes into space and experiences the same thing there, he won't have any problem. There is another problem in space. When the body becomes weightless, you have many kinds of psychic experiences and you can't face them. You may have nightmarish dreams. You may see shadows and lights, have hallucinations.

You see, this physical body has different reactions in different places. As you go high up in the mountains, you have different reactions. People who go on an expedition to Mount Everest experience different reactions. Gravity controls your experience; it controls the behaviour of your nervous system and brain. When you are out of the influence of gravity, you cannot handle it if you have not practised anything. So, the future cosmonauts will practise yoga and then go into space.

– May 1984, *Il Ciocco*

Thank You

Swami Anandananda Saraswati



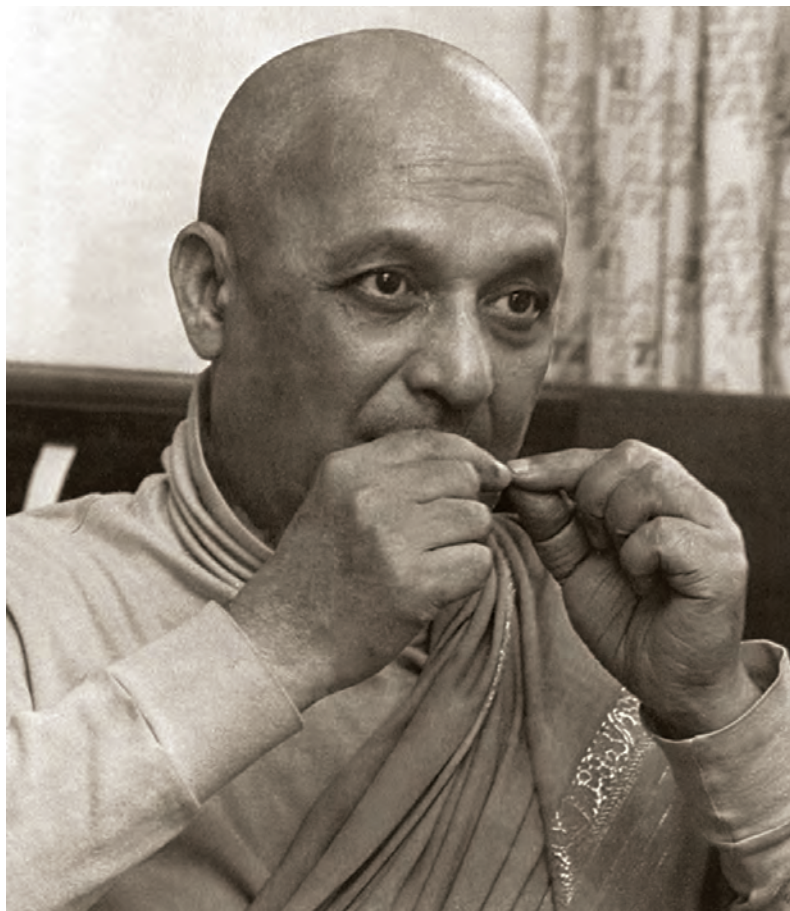
I met Swami Satyananda on 14th May 1979 in Australia where I received mantra diksha and spiritual name from him. That visit is still a vivid memory. I entered the room where Paramahamsaji was seated, to the right a fireplace was blazing. I sat in front of him and my mind went blank; all the questions I had, all the rational thinking, the sense of time, was gone. There was just him. Paramahamsaji patiently waited till I found my mala and remembered what I had to ask him. I left with the knowledge in my heart that I had found all I was looking for: a guru and a purpose in life.

When leaving Munger in 1980, Paramahamsaji told me, "I'm coming to Italy this year. I will see you there." When Paramahamsaji did arrive in Italy, I found the courage to ask him for a sadhana. He looked at me with a smile and said, "First you work very hard then think about a sadhana."

There are no appropriate words to describe my feelings for Paramahamsaji. All I can say is that the feeling is unique as he was a unique being, a unique man, sannyasin, teacher, explorer of life and spirit, a unique guru. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you Paramahamsaji.

Prana Vidya

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Throughout the universe there is a great force which is known as life force. In yoga we call this force *prana*. If we analyze this great force, prana, then we come to a point of particles of energy. Even as you have particles of light and particles of atom, in the same way you have particles of prana. Prana, therefore, is manifest as well as unmanifest.

When there is no creation, then the pranas are in an unmanifest state, or when the whole creation is dissolved, the pranas go back to their own source. At that time, the pranas remain in the form of particles. Somehow, when these pranas in the universe begin to explode and manifest, they change into the form of waves. This happens with all forms of energy, including pranic energy. This prana which I'm talking about is the universal prana or the universal life force. But there are many objects, many living beings, many other things in the universe which comprise of the same life force. Therefore, prana has two dimensions: microcosmic prana and macrocosmic prana.

In the macrocosmos, prana is permeated throughout what we call a field, a unified field. This energy field can be called a universal life field or pranic field. 'Field' in modern science refers to a section or a dimension through which the energy flows. You have radioactive fields, electromagnetic fields and in the same way, there is a pranic field. Thus, prana is not just the air you breathe in; what you breathe in every day is oxygen. This oxygen has positive and negative ions, and it can stimulate your pranic system.

In microcosmic bodies, that is, us, prana is present throughout the body. It is present in this physical body in the form of waves, and it is created, comes into being or is in you from the time the mother conceives you in her womb. Thus, everybody is born with prana. It also means that we are born with a definite quality of prana, according to the quality of the nature of father and mother. It is the inherent quality of every matter in this universe, including the semen and ova, to be pregnant with that life force. So, what is the structure of prana and what are its laws? They have not been properly defined by us, the yoga teachers, because most of us talk about prana in relation with the oxygen we breathe in, in the form of inhalation and exhalation.

If you study the ancient yogic and the tantric literature, you come across two terminologies, prana and mahaprana,

that is, life force and the great life force. In this physical body there are two centres for these two types of forces. The seed of prana is in manipura chakra and the seed of mahaprana is in mooladhara chakra. Some people are born with excess of pranic energy. Due to this they manifest some healing power, or healing capacity. They always radiate a quantity of magnetism and transmission from a particular part of their body. This fact has been endorsed and verified by many scientific observations made by Kirlian photography. Some people have a shrunken pranic field and some people have a very wide, very large pranic field. Therefore, you must also understand that prana is not only a life force, but it is a force whose quality is radiance.

Many years ago, a man called Mesmer used to attract people through his look; therefore, his practice came to be known as mesmerism. This gentleman must have been born with an excess of pranic energy, or he must have practised some yoga techniques, or he must have been touched by some of the pre-Christian tantric rituals through which he must have improved his pranic energy. Throughout the world we find thousands of people who have the capacity of healing others. In India, we have such helpers practically in every community. They can transfer their pranic energy through any part of the body. For thousands of years, such pranic healing has been continuing in every part of the world. However, there was a time when people of the western countries misunderstood it. They thought it was a kind of black magic and these healers were penalized, persecuted and sometimes even executed. In fact, many times the pranic healers themselves could not explain what was happening. They themselves believed that it was a magical power.

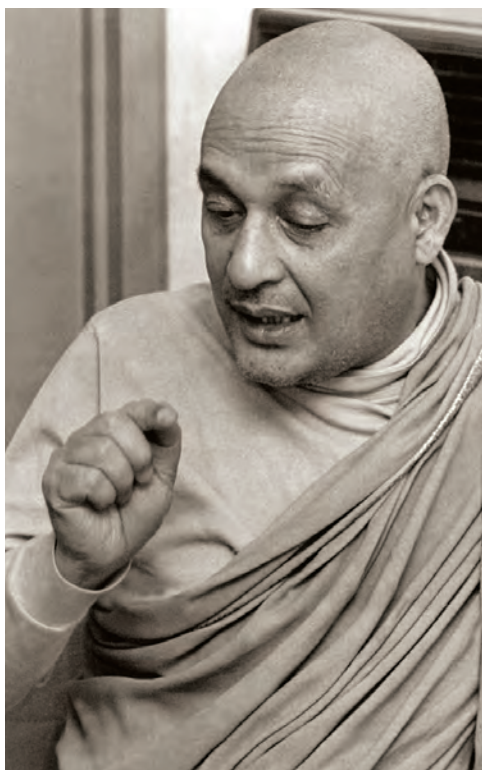
They could not explain that prana is a force which can remove the disease elements in the physical body. Just as when the body is freezing, you bring it in contact with fire and you get comfort, in the same way when the body is sick and you bring it in contact with the pranic force, it is healed. However, I'm not going to talk about how to heal others in this lecture.

This was just an introduction about the importance of the pranic force. At the same time, it is very important for us to know that we are not individual or separate entities, but we are a part of the universal life force.

Now, let us analyze what yoga tells about prana. In order to understand this, let us revert to kundalini yoga. Kundalini yoga is a faculty or part of tantric technology. It tells that there are three nadis in the spine, which emanate from mooladhara chakra and terminate in ajna chakra. The word nadi needs a little explanation. *Nadi* means channel, but more correctly it means flow. Therefore, the meaning of the word *nadi* is flow

of energy. These three nadis are responsible for conducting three types of energy or forces in the physical body. Kapalbhathi is forced expiration and it is also considered one of the six kriyas or shatkarmas of hatha yoga. When Ramananda practised kapalbhathi and he was exposed to modern scientific instruments, it was found that the reactions or processes within the physical body were taking place in exactly the same way as they do in a natural acupuncture operation.

I will tell you another very short incident from Dr Motoyama's experiments. A girl was put into a soundproof and magnet-proof chamber and she meditated. She meditated on mooladhara chakra and the pathway of pingala nadi. The room was totally dark. A video camera was focused on her abdomen and pelvis. In the next room, a modern computer was registering the condition of her body and bodily processes.



She meditated for half an hour, after which she was brought out and the video film was played. Please remember that the room was totally dark. Even the girl could not see her own hand. After fifteen minutes of that film, suddenly a small light flashes. I'm trying to explain what pranic explosion is. There was a small light, it was not round shaped. It was the colour of a fluorescent lamp and as small as the light of a glow-worm.

The rest of the film is completely dark, but at one particular point that light is seen to come up and come down, vanishing, again reappearing, going to the right, then going to the left, going to the centre, coming down, disappearing, like some kind of a dance. For about twelve to fifteen minutes this little fluorescent spark of light kept trying to rise in some direction but it could not, it would go into another direction, then disappear, again reappear and try to go up, sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left, and finally it disappeared. This video film was there in Dr Motoyama's institute and I have seen it. The little spark of light was the concentrated pranic force.

This is the force which you have to create in prana vidya. But how to do it? There is a practice, I don't know if I'll be able to tell you about that, I've wasted so much time talking about science. Anyway, I will tell you something about it. When you rotate prana a number of times, it gains momentum. You rub your palm fifty times, heat will be produced. In the same way, you raise the prana consciously up and down, up and down, up and down, forty times, and this light will be generated.

That girl made a mistake; or rather, she did not really do the proper practice. She concentrated on mooladhara chakra. Mooladhara chakra does not have enough prana; it is the seat of kundalini. Manipura chakra is the seat of prana. If she had concentrated on manipura chakra, there would have been a wave of light, not a particle of light. From manipura chakra, you trace the path of the pingala nadi to ajna chakra. You practise psychic breathing in the form of ujjayi, and from manipura chakra onward up and down, up and down. Do it forty times

and every time you do it, you will get a better experience. You will have a better conscious control over the pranic force. After doing it forty times, stop the breath by concentrating on ajna chakra. From ajna chakra now distribute the prana to the particular part of the body which is suffering. The distribution can be done once or twice in one retention because you can't retain the breath for a long time. For as long as you can retain, maybe half a minute or one minute, take the prana from ajna chakra to the part of the body which is sick. Do it in the posture of shavasana. You can even do it in padmasana or siddhasana, but not on any easy chair.

Finally, before I close my incomplete speech on prana vidya, I must say a few more things. I'm not an orthodox man; I don't hold any views on vegetarian or non-vegetarian diets. I teach according to the necessity of the person. Therefore, I must tell you that those people who want to practise prana vidya for healing their own sickness should be totally vegetarian, because food is a very important factor in connection with prana. Of course, you will not misunderstand me or think that I'm telling you something religious. When I'm talking about a vegetarian diet, I'm also excluding milk and dairy products because that is animal protein. I know that it is necessary for the body, but here I'm talking about a sick person who is trying to heal himself. I have several documents from Tasmania; one of my disciples teaches prana vidya in Tasmania in her Yoga Healing Clinic. She has made tumours disappear. She has treated cancer.

Thus, you should raise the quality, you should raise the standard of your prana. It's easy to understand. If you run your tape recorder on an old battery, what does it sound like? So, what do you do? You either recharge the battery or fix a new battery. You don't want to fix a new battery for your body as yet! So, you need to recharge it. Prana vidya is a system of recharging your flat battery.

– May 1984, *Il Ciocco*

The *Bhagavad Gita* and the yoga of today

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

More than five thousand years ago, there was a great civil war between two dynasties in India. This battle was fought in a place which lies to the northwest of Delhi. Countries outside India also participated. That time India included modern Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tibet, Burma, Malaysia, Iran and Turkey. That was known as greater India.

When the two armies were about to battle with each other, something happened there. The chief of one of the armies was Arjuna and his chariot was driven by an outstanding personality of that age, Krishna. Krishna is held in the same esteem by Hindus as Christ by Christians. The only difference is that Christians consider Christ to be the son of God and Hindus consider Krishna to be an incarnation. Another difference is that Christ lived the life of a sadhu and Krishna lived the life of an emperor. However, from his very childhood, he was the master of miracles like Christ.

During the famous battle, Krishna was placed in a very difficult situation. The chief commanders of both sides came to seek his patronage. It was not possible for him to patronize both, so he said, "Here is my army and here I am. You choose one of the two." One party chose his army and Arjuna chose Lord Krishna himself. Krishna told Arjuna that although he would join him, he would not handle any weapon. So he became Arjuna's charioteer.

When the battle was about to begin, Arjuna became nervous. He saw his own uncles, brothers, teachers, relatives and friends before him among those he would have to kill. He decided to withdraw from the war. Then Krishna came and instructed Arjuna, and these instructions are known as



the *Bhagavad Gita*. The instructions are divided into eighteen chapters and the title of each chapter refers to one kind of yoga.

The title of the first chapter is 'The Yoga of Mental Depression'. The title of the second chapter is 'Samkhya Yoga'. The twelfth chapter is 'Bhakti Yoga'. The sixth chapter is 'Raja Yoga'. The eighteenth chapter is 'Sannyasa Yoga'. In this way, each chapter has the title of a different yoga. One theme is running through the eighteen chapters, which is "renounce the ego and live in the world". If you can renounce your ego, you can live in the world like the lotus in water. In fact, the instructions in the *Bhagavad Gita* are considered to be the basis of karma yoga.

Karma yoga means that you can give a great meaning and purpose to any action you perform. Why do you marry? Because you want to have children. Why do you have a business? You want to earn money. These are the aims everybody has regarding his life and profession. This is called karma, but karma yoga is different. When you realize or decide a sublime aim for your life, it is karma yoga. You must realize the purpose of your existence, and then whatever you do becomes karma yoga. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, life as a whole is accepted within the plan of spiritual progress. This means that whatever you do is part of your spiritual progress and nothing in your life is extra-spiritual. This you have to realize.

— September 1982, Rimini

Beyond Time and Space

Swami Shaktidhara Saraswati



Retracing the past time, it clearly appears how, for many of us, having met you has happened, in fact, before meeting you in person. Your being had already reached us through the wisdom of the words in your books, through the people who had already met you and before them through the desire and the need of the presence of a guru in life, which by a favourable concurrence of events was realized through you.

You were here before we encountered you and you still are; your presence is certainly not limited by the existence of a physical body. In the same way, you already existed in my heart before I met you, and you still continue to exist within me. This is your greatness. Your existence is not conditioned or limited by time, space and object.

Your existence vibrates, pulsates, imperishably and uninterruptedly. Past, present and future have transformed and woven into each other until the moment of the encounter with you.

Fibromyalgia (Extracts)

Sannyasi Bhaktimala, Italy

Fibromyalgia is a syndrome characterized by widespread chronic musculoskeletal pain and a set of symptoms such as sleep disturbances, nervous system dysfunctions, fatigue, headache, irritable bowel. A decrease in the pain perception threshold is associated with neuroendocrine and/or psycho-affective and mood alterations. Women are affected three times as much as men.

In 2020, I started teaching yoga to patients with fibromyalgia. I conducted a three-month cycle of twelve classes. Slowly I was able to continue one cycle after the other.

Approach

In most cases, patients (I prefer to call them people) with fibromyalgia are particularly prone to self-doubt, mental rigidity, feelings of inadequacy, and overextending themselves. Given a kind of obsession with duty, they tend to 'execute a task' rather than enjoy a yoga practice in a relaxed way, thus running into more pain, frustration, feeling inadequate, and discouragement. Also the fear of pain generates even more tension and pain, even persistent, triggering a vicious circle.

In each class I undertake to welcome, empathize, listen, observe, appreciate their every success and progress, reassure, follow their rhythms and not those of a typical yoga lesson, guide, provide alternatives, whenever needed, even to simple practices, to explain their meaning, motivate to develop a positive awareness of the body, sensations, breath.

And so, little by little, people have come to experience their body, hitherto perceived as a perennial source of malaise, in a completely new and different way. Compared to 'normal' lessons, it was necessary to reiterate several concepts over and over again:

- Focus on slowness, gentleness, fluidity and pleasantness of the movements.
- Be loving towards themselves and their bodies, instead of demanding performance.
- Listen to the body's needs and feel free to rest for a few breaths even if it is not indicated.
- Accept one's own current limits, without ever getting to perceive pain or even discomfort in the movements.

Overcoming can only come from acceptance. Thus one does not need to do the perfect position, like lifting the arms all the way up, but the position that feels good, even just creating a space between the arms and the body.

Of course, as the lessons progress, it is also necessary to encourage to gently extend the limit, especially in cases of associated rheumatoid pathologies: in fact, if moving hurts, not moving destroys the joints. Using the exhalation and a subtle sustained sigh is a great help, imagining to inhale a beneficial light and to remove the pain with the sigh.

- Learn to discover and appreciate pleasant inputs, i.e. increase awareness of the sensations of wellbeing that come from the body thanks to consciously performing yoga practices.
- Be thankful for what we took for granted, such as life, breath, one's hands, walking.
- Become aware of the tensions generating moment by moment and let them go immediately: for example, I often remind them to leave a small space between the dental arches, which otherwise they tighten at the slightest difficulty or novelty.
- Discover, observe, recognize and reinforce, thanks to repetition, positive sensations such as vitality, wellbeing, lightness, fluency, freedom to breathe. This interrupts the conditioning to remember only the negative experiences and stimuli, while the positive ones go unnoticed.
- Notice the relaxed condition that is created and appreciate it, even if it is not perfect.

- Live in the present, accept the experience of the moment, without expectations.

It is normal that in every lesson there may be a movement or a position that just isn't right for someone: instead of trying it anyway, causing discomfort, let it go and relax with a few quiet breaths. Or, perform it mentally, with a positive visualization of oneself. All this with as few words as possible, at the right moment, also using non-verbal and para-verbal language.

Special precautions

In most cases it is not possible to immediately assume the sitting position. Therefore, in the first lessons I demonstrated how to take correct positions on the chair, using or not the backrest. Then I invited them to sit on the mat and experiment with how they felt, sitting cross-legged with and without a brick, pillows under their knees, back against the wall, legs stretched out, etc. After a few lessons, everyone left the chair (which I recommend to keep close anyway).

It is very important to *accompany people*, not taking anything for granted, even if it has already been said several times. For example, in the transition from supine to sitting, I indicate to bend the legs, keep feet on the ground, move to one side and push with the free hand on the ground to come back sitting...

Generally, the students need to move, to *change position often*, especially those who work while sitting for a long time. Even maintaining the pose of shavasana presents difficulties for many: therefore, especially for yoga nidra, which in any case must be particularly short, I have given various options, such as using pillows, practising it in bed, in an armchair or in matsya kridasana, doing half rotation of awareness on each side, which has proved to be particularly effective.

I wait several times before coordinating the movements with breathing: first I lead people to discover how nice it is to move slowly, to become aware of all the positive sensations associated with movement, to move without causing the slightest pain, continuing to breathe normally without blocking

their breath. Then I explain something more about breathing, the importance of inhaling and exhaling through the nostrils and not through the mouth (which everyone does instead) and finally I introduce the idea of coordinating breath and movement. I invite them to associate with inhalation a sense of lightness and expansion of the body which, like a kite, is moved by the breath and, with the exhalation, relaxes, or descends gently like a falling leaf.

Micro-movements especially of the neck, back and shoulders are very useful. One of them is the '*wave movement*', which gives relief to the back: supine, bend the legs with the feet on the ground and perceive the support of the whole back on the floor. Inhaling, lift just a portion of the lumbar spine, as if to let a line of ants pass from one side to the other; leave shoulders and pelvis on the ground. Breathing out, place the lumbar spine back, as if to leave its print in the sand or to crush a soft little ball. The pelvis always stays down. The movement can be refined by reducing its range to a few millimetres and increasing awareness and perception at the same rate, until it is directed only to a couple of vertebrae, where it needs to relax more.

Occasionally inserting *slow motion movements* gives surprising relaxing and regenerating effects.

Some *adaptations* are also useful. For example, the Pawanmuktasana Series 1 or arm extensions like in hasta bandha utthanansana can also be done lying down. Particular caution should be used during neck movements: if people remain within their limits, they will be able to improve later; while, if they try to overcome their limits immediately, they will have pain the following days. To facilitate full rolls (jhulana lurhakanansana) they can separate the knees well. But every yoga teacher can understand what to adapt and how, by observing people, and developing a connection with them.

Many times, it may be necessary to *divide asanas*, like tadasana, into various simpler phases, without wanting to get to the final pose in one go. As we continue with lessons, it is also necessary to consider other additional pathologies, like knees or back.

Excellent results are obtained by sometimes inserting quick '*perceptual images*', such as in a relaxing position imagining, one's face like that of a sleeping infant; or to sit like a king on a stable cross-legged base. The image of the inner smile is very useful, which illuminates and relaxes all the features of the face, then bringing serenity and relaxation also to the head, mind and whole body.

Learning to relax your face, as well as making it more beautiful, leads to relaxation in life: this is an excellent motivation!

Suggesting the concept of '*playing*', '*enjoying*' or '*dancing with Life*', instead of '*doing an exercise*' largely eliminates stiffness and promotes physical and mental flexibility.

Associating words such as expansion, freedom, immensity, lightness, fluency, relaxation, peace, with breathing phases and poses concretely helps people to replace negative images and ideas they have of themselves.

Less is more: It is better to do less yoga practices, accompanying people with calmness, care and attention, helping them to value every single positive effect they experience. Then they understand that they can keep fit, not with effort, but by relaxing and remaining calm, even finding a smile again.

Finally, the idea associated with the movement or any other practice is more important than the practice itself. If people are encouraged to put ideas and feelings into their minds such as '*the pleasure of awakening life*', '*the breath that feeds me*', '*the good feeling that I discover with this movement*', their bodies will shape accordingly. It is obvious that if they think: '*I have to do it*', '*I don't like it*', '*It is difficult*', tension and pain will be the masters.

The following impressions express the many physical, mental and emotional benefits and the greater ability to adapt to the challenges of daily life.

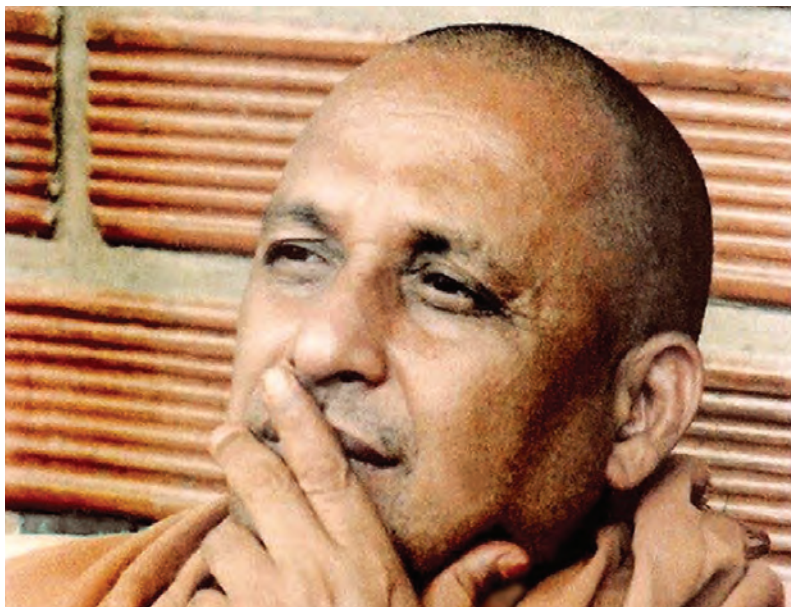
- A divine experience.
- My lifeline.



- A fantastic gift.
- It was very nice to discover that even with slowness, gentleness and relaxing my body, I can do a lot and have so many benefits. Knowing that pain will accompany me for life is not so easy to accept. My cage made of pain, tiredness and mental confusion gave me no respite and discouraged me a lot. Now I am relieved to have discovered that instead there is something that I can do, that I can learn and what's more, I like it, it interests me and it makes me smile again.
- Even if the pain comes back, it seems lighter to me, more manageable, because it no longer blocks me as before, and now I have tools at my disposal.
- I can turn my neck to reverse the car at last!
- This morning in the car I found myself smiling alone.
- I can change, instead of trying to change what's wrong around me, I learn to let go.
- The way I perceive things has definitely changed and, in moments of tension, I focus on my breathing.
- The visualizations are beautiful. I am a school teacher and I do some practices in class. Some children would like to do yoga every day.

No False Talk

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Once you let your mind free, the expressions are unlimited, and then the mind becomes effulgent. The mind becomes awareness, and then the mantra becomes dynamic, the yantra becomes powerful and the mandala becomes real. You can project your thought force; you can transmit your thought waves. The mind can produce waves which can travel thousands of miles instantaneously.

With this mind, we can also enter into samadhi or the spiritual state. With this mind, we can love our children, husband, wife and neighbours. With an untrained mind, you cannot love your neighbours. This undisciplined mind cannot have compassion for other human beings. We talk about love and compassion; it is all intellectual, not real. It is all false talk. It is only a disciplined mind that has compassion and love.

Meditation

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



In the western countries when you practise asana and pranayama, you call it hatha yoga, but hatha yoga is more than this. *Ha* means life; *tha* means mind. You see, in this cable there are two wires. They are known as positive and negative. When these two cables join together, there is electrical manifestation. The same principle applies in your body. Within your spine,









there are two nerve channels or nadis. One which flows on the left side carries the flow of consciousness and the other which flows on the right carries the flow of life. These forces are distributed throughout the body from four distributing centres. When there is any block in the distribution of energy, then you become sick either physically or mentally. The yoga postures, pranayama and other exercises in hatha yoga remove these energy blocks.

However, there is another fact which is linked with hatha yoga. The purpose of hatha yoga is not to treat your disease. In the days when hatha yoga was discovered, people were not as sick as they are today. The intention of hatha yoga was to prepare the body and mind for deep meditation and higher awareness. It is very important for everybody to know that just by closing the eyes you do not enter into the higher realm. When you want to meditate, when you want to practise dhyana, and when you want to make your mind quiet, when you want to look within yourself, just closing the eyes is not enough. Every morning, or in the night, thousands of people around the world close their eyes and they try to concentrate their mind. They try to pray in peace, they want to think with total one-pointedness of mind, but they are not able to do that.

There is no doubt that meditation is the highest achievement of man. Sleep is not the highest achievement of man. Work is not the highest achievement of man. When you are able to get out of this objective experience and are able to experience the inner light, inner mind or inner feeling, that is man's accomplishment. This external mind through which you are operating in your life has its limitations. Those who know how to get rid of this mind and at the same time develop that inner mind, are the people who have created history.

As you travel within yourself, you find that a great flood of energy is within yourself and that you are not the limited man or the sick man. But the point is, how to meditate? When you close the eyes, the mind runs. You can close your eyes, you can plug your ears, you can tighten the body, but you

can do nothing with the mind. Even if you try to concentrate very hard, the mind just enters into the subconscious plane and wanders.

For thousands of years, people have been discovering methods, ways and means to meditate. People have discovered wonderful methods, absurd methods, obscene methods, dangerous methods. People have tried to chemically influence the mind. However, except yoga, everything has failed. To hypnotize the mind is easy, to influence the chemistry of the brain is also easy. Take any drug, it happens. But meditation is not shutting the mind. Meditation is not influencing the chemistry of the brain. Meditation is a practice in which you create an evolutionary process in the mind, the brain and consciousness.

Remember, meditation is not shutting the mind. I am repeating again, meditation is not shutting the mind. Meditation is a process through which you evolve the mind. The mind becomes a better mind. The better mind becomes a higher mind. The higher mind becomes a supermind, and the supermind becomes the Self. This is called evolution. And what is shutting the mind? You close the mind, everything is finished. I am finished, you are finished, everything is finished. There is no light, there is no knowledge.

In order to practise meditation, there has to be a systematic practice of all the forms of yoga. Karma yoga is necessary, otherwise you cannot balance the archetypes of your brain. Without karma yoga, you cannot treat the schizophrenic mind. This schizophrenic mind manifests in meditation, in dreams. There is only one way in which you can treat this schizophrenic mind. That is karma yoga, selfless work. Then come other practices. So, when you want to practise yoga, please remember that you are practising yoga to change the quality of your mind, the quality of your body and the quality of your manifestation.

– September 1982, Trieste

Yes is the Answer



Why do you practise yoga? To have control over the mind.
Why do you want to have control over the mind?
If you don't have control over the mind, you will have accidents.
What is an accident?
Unhappiness is an accident. A painful life is an accident.
If you have control over the mind, can you change the tragedies of life?
If you have control over the mind, can you change your habits?
If you have control over the mind, can you change the body also?
The answer of yoga is yes.

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Transcending Suffering

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



The Christian religion says that human unhappiness is not only impossible to eliminate, but also necessary. This unhappiness is considered an important instrument of knowledge. What is the value of this position in relation to expansion and liberation?

No matter what the great enlightened people said, ultimately they knew the same thing. It is only the language and symbols that are different. In tantra we call it liberation, in Buddhism you call it nirvana, in Christianity you call it salvation. Similarly, in Christianity you call it suffer-

ing, in yoga you call it austerity and in Buddhism you call it spiritual effort. The terminologies are different, no doubt. The method of explanation and expression is also different, but ultimately what they speak about is the same.

There is an eternal existence. This eternal existence is beyond pain, beyond suffering. In order to experience this eternal union, one has to pass through various phases of mind, of *dukha* or suffering. Even as in Christianity it is said that suffering can be overcome, in Buddhism they speak of four eternal truths. There is pain; there is a cause for the pain; the pain can be removed; and there is a way. In the same way, in

yoga and tantra they say that if you are far from the Self, you suffer. If you are close to the Spirit, you are not unhappy. What is the purpose of yoga? To eliminate the root of all suffering. Where is the root of suffering? The mind is the root of suffering. How to eliminate the root? By transforming it.

Thus, ultimately, these great men, these great scriptures are talking of one and the same thing. Still we have to discuss things a little more. Suffering is known as *dukha*. Enjoyment is known as *sukha*. Pleasure and pain are qualities of the mind. When the mind is withdrawn in deep sleep, you have no pain and you are not aware of pleasure.

Pleasure and pain do not belong to the object. They belong to the quality of the mind. What is pleasant today can be painful tomorrow and what is painful today can be pleasant the next day. No object is absolutely pleasant or painful. An individual whom you love today is pleasant. An object you love today is pleasant. However, the same person and the same object can give you pain in course of time. This is completely dependent on the mind. Therefore, if you have to overcome suffering, you have to totally transform the mind. Up to a particular point the mind experiences pain and pleasure, but after some time it does not. This is the philosophy of suffering. People suffer on account of the incompleteness of their experience. If you are able to see more than you can, there will be no suffering.

Desire causes suffering. Attachment causes suffering. Jealousy causes suffering. Frustration causes suffering. These are the things that should be overcome. How to overcome desire? How to overcome fear? How to overcome jealousy? This is the thing we have to understand. Just because we know fear or desires, we cannot transcend them. The mind should be transformed. The transformation of mind is very important if you want to transcend pain and suffering. When the mind expands, you transcend suffering.

– April 1981, Milano

To Learn and Live a Message

Sannyasi Sadhanashakti and team



Health is physical, harmony is mental, peace is spiritual,
and a healthy body, harmonious mind and peaceful spirit
is the definition of the perfect human being.

– Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

In the last few years, Swamiji has underlined the importance of promoting health. During the COVID pandemic, he has exhorted us to take care of ourselves, bringing physical and mental wellbeing into our daily lives. From the yogic point of view, health is the management of different physiological conditions and the modifications that take place due to the changing conditions of the body and the environment. The purpose of yoga is to generate positive responses to these modifications, not to treat a disease or cure an ailment. The indicators of wellbeing are health, happiness and harmony, and yoga helps us to achieve these goals in our lives and in our interactions with others. Swamiji has encouraged us to integrate yoga practices into our daily life in the form of capsules, which do not take too much time and generate positive habits.

When we watched Swamiji's satsang of 1st January 2022 from the livestreaming of *Hanuman Chalisa*, we were amazed by his words and his seven-point message:

The first part of the message is that we should look after our own health. Health is not only physical, but also mental, emotional and spiritual. When we are able to regain total health of the body, mind, emotions and spirit, then we can call ourselves healthy. Until then we have to struggle to find our health, either at the physical or psychological level. No one is ever healthy. So, let's make an effort to focus on the cultivation of health this year.

– Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

With this goal mind, a small group of Satyananda Yoga teachers from different regions of Italy decided to share our ideas about taking care of our health. We organized workshops, both in-person and online, for ourselves and our students. Once a month, we organized the following workshops:

Dinacharya: Sannyasi Shantanu (Torino) presented a simple sequence of purification practices of yoga and ayurveda to be done in the morning to purify and awaken the senses.

Breathe for Healthy Lungs: Sannyasi Sadhanashakti (Udine) talked about the video released by the Bihar School of Yoga during the pandemic to promote correct breathing habits by developing awareness and vitality.

Remove Energy Blocks: Sannyasi Mantramitra (Fregona) taught the Pawanmuktasana Part 1 series for eliminating energy blockages in the joints of the physical body, stimulating natural healing processes.

Relaxation for Psychophysical Health: Sannyasi Nitya-murti (Torino) discussed the techniques of bhramari, kapalbhati, pranayama, yoga nidra and samiksha to manage stress and release the physical, mental, and emotional tensions that accumulate daily.

Discovering Balance Through Opposites: Jignasu Brahman-mitra (Torino) offered a lesson of asana, pranayama and yoga nidra to discover psychophysical balance as the foundation of health and personal wellbeing.

Purification Techniques for Self-Care: Sannyasi Samadhan (Pinerolo) presented the cleansing techniques, such as jala neti kriya, kapalbhati and trataka, that can be easily introduced into the daily routine to maintain a state of purity and balance.

Each teacher held the in-person workshop at their respective centre while students of the other teachers participated online.

The whole endeavour created precious moments, not only for trying to incorporate Swamiji's instructions into practices, but also for sharing knowledge and experiences among teachers. We felt enriched, learning and supporting each other during the difficult COVID pandemic. The students received the message of health, happiness and harmony of our Satyananda Yoga tradition. The project flowed smoothly as if we were guided by the invisible hand of Swamiji, Guru's grace.

Human Incarnation

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Many people think that meditation has something to do with the mind and not with the stomach. They do not understand that we are homogeneous. The stomach and the mind are the same thing. Mind is all-pervading. The two forces, prana and mind, are permeating through and through the body. There is not a point in the body where there is no mind and there is no point where there is no prana.

A sincere meditation practitioner should leave at least three hours between a meal and meditation. The best time for meditation, in fact, is the same which is best for sleep. How nicely you sleep in the morning from four to five o'clock. That is the time when you have a high quality of sleep and that is time when you have the highest quality of meditation. The

requirements of first class sleep and first class meditation are the same.

Another important factor has been noticed. As you go on meditating, the wave patterns in the brain undergo a change. As the brain waves change, the stress is reduced from different parts of the body and the blood pressure falls. When the blood pressure falls, there is a feeling of total relaxation. Therefore, meditation in the higher stages must be done in padmasana, siddhasana or siddha yoni asana. At the same time, foods that bring down the blood pressure should be avoided. This little piece of revelation should be enough for all of you.

The final point: As a race, we are advancing in our external realization. We have gone far in our scientific advancements and have developed technology and the external material aspect of society. However, it seems that in the last few thousand years we have not stirred a bit on the spiritual plane. It seems that in the last few thousand years, our consciousness has been very static. It has remained at the same point, it has not moved.

We have changed the manner of our body, we have changed the ways of dressing and living, we have changed the system of housing and civic styles, but the awareness has not changed. The little that it has changed is because of the natural law. Why has it been like this? Why have only a few people received enlightenment? Are only a few people destined for illumination? Is truth the destiny of only a few selected people? Is truth only a destiny for those who are pure and divine? Or is enlightenment the birth right of everybody?

In my short span of life, I have come to this point of realization: man is born for enlightenment. Enlightenment is the purpose of human incarnation. If only he is exposed to a spiritual life, humankind can move from its present state of stagnation. Thus we visualize meditation as an important ingredient of social revolution.

– April 1981, Torino

Love at First Sight

Swamis Uttarkashi and Anusandhana

The arrival of a guru in one's life can be like a whirlwind, a tornado or an earthquake and so it was with our meeting with Paramahamsaji way back in 1981. We had been feeling the need for a guru and had been anxiously waiting to meet one for quite a few years. Then suddenly, almost out of nowhere, Swami Anandananda phoned from Turin and said that Swami Satyananda would soon be in Rome for a few days. This was the first indication of what was to be such a sudden, thunderbolt change in our lives, because neither of us had the



means to get to Rome at that moment. But "So what!" we said and off we went, though it did not seem at all the sensible thing to do. However, the wisdom of it had its roots in something inner and more intuitive and the pull to go and meet a swami, a true guru, a paramahamsa of such spiritual heights was like an irresistible magnet for us. From then on, many things which seemed impossible became possible.

The meeting with Swami Satyananda turned our lives inside out, the initiations he gave, the precise instructions he imparted and just meeting him and looking into his bright, lively eyes, gave a new spark of energy, a new meaning to every action, a new approach on how to relate to the journey of life, to its evolution and purpose. And it was love at first sight!

Expansion and Liberation

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



The latent energy in mooladhara chakra is known as kundalini. You will have to remember this word very well because kundalini is the energy of the future humanity. Awakening of kundalini develops what we call the supermind. The mind we have now is a lower mind. This mind is dependent on the

senses and on so many factors. Our little mind is restricted by so many conditions. This mind is not a complete mind. It is nothing but an understanding of the objects that are outside. The mind is limited and incapable. It is not competent because it does not know itself; it does not know the inner being. However, there is a more competent mind, a more capable mental condition. That is going to be the basis for the future culture of humanity. Therefore, man will have to explode his kundalini. You cannot understand the truth by this mind. With this mind you can only think. With this speech you can only talk, but you can never experience atma, the soul or divinity. This mind can never reach that substance.

In order to understand that experience you will have to transform the quality of the mind. You cannot see radioactive waves with the naked eyes; a more sensitive instrument is required. In the same way, the truth has to be experienced by a transcendental instrument. Whether it is for the awakening of the higher mind or for realization of the higher truth, the quality of consciousness has to be transformed. A blind person can talk about the sun, or beautiful flowers, but he can never see them. We may talk and read a lot about higher things. You may even fight about it, as people have been doing for centuries, but the experience is not possible unless the supermind or higher mind intervenes.

Therefore, this problem has to be tackled. What is the problem? How to transform the quality of consciousness? How to develop the quality of mind? How to explode the intelligence? This brings us to the awakening of kundalini. Kundalini represents the latent universal consciousness in man. With the awakening of kundalini, expansion of consciousness takes place.

If you want to transform the quality of mind, you will have to expand the consciousness. Ordinarily the mind functions within certain limited areas. If there is a flower in the garden, you can see it and if there is no flower you can't see it. If there is the moon, you can see it and if there is no moon, you can't.

If there is a sweet dish, you experience it as sweet and if it is sour you experience it as sour. This means that your ordinary perception is dependent on the sensory capacities. But there is a question. Is experience a completely sensory outcome? Another way of putting the question is: can we experience only through the medium of the senses? Can we see without the eyes, hear without the ears, taste without the tongue? We can, provided we are able to expand the mind.

What is expansion? There is a flower in the garden and you can see it. However, even when you close your eyes you continue to see the flower, just the same. That is expansion. There is no sound in this room; nobody is playing music or singing kirtan, but still you can hear music. That is called expansion of experience. When you sit down quietly in your room and are able to visualize your guru or master, face to face, not merely feeling his presence, but seeing him in the total dimension, that is called expansion of consciousness.

The entire system of tantra is intended to expand the mind and liberate the energy. There are different practices to help you expand the mind and liberate the Shakti. Yoga helps to expand the mind and tantra helps to explode the Shakti. Yoga and tantra should not be understood as separate sciences. You should never say, "I practise yoga, not tantra." In fact, all the practices of yoga are a part of tantra. However, people are frightened and feel ashamed to say that they practise tantra because they want to pose as puritans and cannot face their own guilt.

Not only in the West, but all over the world people are still afraid to say that they practise tantra, so instead they say, "I practise yoga." All the practices of hatha yoga and raja yoga are a part of tantra. Therefore, everyone who teaches yoga in the world actually teaches tantra. However, there are certain practices which are exclusively tantric. They are known as yantra, mantra and mandala.

– April 1981, Milano

Vriksh Sankalpa – Nature Our Teacher

Prasiddhi Singh

Vriksh Sankalpa – Nature Our Teacher is an eco-yogic series talking of nature, culture and learning to inspire everyone not just to think but also to act.

A lesson from the Neem Tree

Hari Om. I am Neem, also known as margosa, Indian lilac or nimtree. In Sanskrit I am known as Aristha and Neemba in Ayurveda. My botanical name is *Azadirachta indica*, or *A. indica* for short. I am known for my air purification qualities. I have a huge family called Meliaceae with 53 genera and about 600 species.

We are native in India, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. We have been widely introduced elsewhere in tropical and subtropical regions, from South America to Indonesia. We occur in dry forests. We grow well at elevations from sea level to 1,000 m near the equator. We are evergreen trees but we shed many of our leaves in the dry winter months. We are fast-growing trees, our height ranges between 49 to 66 ft. My family and I have a lifespan of about 180 to 200 years.

My medicinal values are in treating conditions such as malaria, typhoid, digestive disorders, liver disorders, intestinal worms, respiratory disorders, urinary disorders, diabetes, hypertension, cancer, smallpox, chicken pox and measles.

In cosmetics, I am the very neem oil you use to relax your body, my paste is very useful to treat multiple health issues and to also feel internally calm. My neem powder purifies the blood, flushes out toxins, treats insect bites, battles free radical damage, and is an amazing skincare product. I have

been purifying society for quite a long time, in fact I am the fifth sacred plant, written about in the Vedas.

Now let me share my Top 5 benefits:

1. *Health benefits from root to fruit:* My seeds cleanse and eliminate intestinal worms and parasites when consumed as juice. My leaves are used to protect the skin. They have multiple traditional uses, such as treating head lice, skin conditions, wounds, and repelling mosquitoes. They are also a time-honoured skin softener when boiled in water for use as an ointment. My bark fights dental plaque, reduces oral bacteria, and aids in healing wounds. My twigs are traditionally used as toothbrushes for this reason. My roots, like other parts of me, contain antioxidants. My fruit oil is extracted and applied to the scalp to eliminate and prevent dandruff. It is also used as a mosquito repellent and is commonly included in commercial room fresheners. Lastly, my flowers are antiseptic and consumed for cleansing. They are used in Southern Indian cuisine, such as the dish Ugadi Pachadi, and are recommended in Ayurveda for cooling and beating the summer heat.
2. *Economic potential:* Each part of my tree holds commercial value in various industries, including agriculture, cosmetics, and medicine. My products, such as neem oil and leaves, find wide usage in cosmetics and beauty formulations.



The demand for these products is increasing, particularly in agriculture where neem oil, cake and pesticides derived from me are utilized. The Indian government promotes the use of neem-coated urea, a product derived from me, to minimize nitrogen loss in farming. India and some

African countries are major sources of neem products, which have the potential to benefit small farmers and rural economies. To maximize the benefits, it is important to strengthen incentives for seed collection, improve marketing strategies, and maintain high standards for extracting quality neem active extracts.

3. *Environmental support:* I am a versatile tree that is emerging as an eco-friendly alternative to synthetic products. I have the ability to purify the air, control floods, reduce soil erosion, and naturally fight pests. My medicinal properties offer safer alternatives to chemical pesticides. I also serve as a windbreaker, supporting biodiversity. My potential in reforestation and agro-forestry makes me an invaluable resource for a sustainable future. My biomass production provides durable wood and fuel. Embracing Neem contributes to a healthier environment and promotes sustainable practices.
4. *My connection with God:* In Hindu culture, I receive great reverence as the Neem Tree. From a divine perspective, I am considered a manifestation of goddesses such as Durga and Sitala, and I am regarded as sacred. According to mythology, heavenly nectar bestowed divine properties upon me, connecting me to the divine realm. As a result, I have become a symbol of spiritual significance and a powerful protector against evil forces. It is believed that I am the abode of Sitala, the goddess of smallpox, and a sanctuary for gods like Surya, the Sun God. Neem flowers and burning Neem leaves are used in Hindu rituals to repel evil spirits. My deep-rooted association with gods and goddesses makes me an integral part of Hindu culture and spirituality.



5. *My cultural essence*: I hold a prominent place in various cultures across India, deeply ingrained in our food, traditions and customs. In Indian cuisine, my leaves are used to add a distinctive flavour to dishes like chutneys, curries, and rice preparations. I am an integral part of religious ceremonies and festivals, where my branches are used to create garlands, decorations and prayer offerings. In Ayurveda, India's traditional system of medicine, I am highly valued for my therapeutic properties and utilized in remedies for various ailments. Moreover, I play a role in daily life, from the use of my twigs as natural toothbrushes to incorporating my oil for skincare and haircare. I truly embody the cultural richness and wholistic traditions of India.

In India today the traditional method of cleaning the teeth is by means of a twig from a neem tree. The twig is usually about fifteen centimetres long and half a centimetre thick. It has good alkaline and astringent properties. The end of the stick is chewed until it forms bristles. These are then used to brush the teeth and gums. Both chewing the end of the stick and using it as a brush makes the teeth and gums strong and clean. After use, the stick is thrown away.

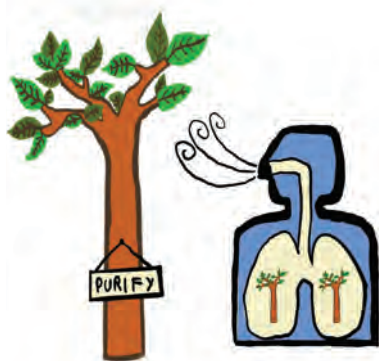
—Swami Satyananda Saraswati

I am sad to see that my tree friends Bael, Palm and Sandalwood are slowly becoming vulnerable which is a big concern for me. Right now I might not be a concern in the table of extinction, but if you don't protect me and my family, I might not exist. So please think of me and my family.

Sankalpa - PURIFY

So that was the Neem Tree sharing its economic, environmental, sacred, cultural essence and of course its health benefits. I hope you had a mind-boggling time while reading about the Neem Tree. While understanding about how useful and beneficial Neem is, I also realized that Neem, being a

remarkable tree, holds a deep association with purification. Just as Neem purifies the air and environment around it, it reminds us of the importance of purifying ourselves and the world we live in. In a fast-paced and often polluted world, embracing the concept of purification becomes essential for our physical, mental



and spiritual wellbeing. Just as Neem fights pests and cleanses the soil, we too must cleanse our minds of negativity and harmful thoughts. By purifying our actions and intentions, we can contribute to a harmonious and sustainable world. Let Neem's essence inspire us to purify our lives, promote kindness, and work towards creating a cleaner and more compassionate world for ourselves and future generations. Just as the Neem Tree purifies the air, soil and surrounding, yoga purifies our mind, body and soul. So we should also do our best to purify ourselves for a happy lifestyle.

Now I will request you to please recite the pledge as you read; don't forget to fill in the blank.

I _____ promise to PURIFY the planet and help in protecting the Neem Tree. I will hereby take good care of the environment and protect planet Earth by planting more trees, spreading environmental awareness and living a yogic-sustainable lifestyle.

I hope you are following your Eco-Resolution Diary for the Palm, Sandalwood and Bael. Here are some questions for you to check how well you understand the importance of the Neem Tree and its sankalpa PURIFY in your life and how well you



fulfil your pledge. Remember, you should not only think but also act. This is a weekly tick box for your Eco-Resolution Diary:

- Did I plant, water or take care of a tree?
- Did I talk about the environment to friends and neighbours?
- Have I been practising PURIFY to live a yogic-sustainable lifestyle?
- Have I told 3 people about the importance of Neem or purification?
- Have I been mindful of Neem for enriching my life with its health products?
- Have I started to include the Neem Tree in my cultural tradition or worship?

Creative Vriksh – Neem as Nature's Purifier

The neem tree, with healing might,
Its medicinal values shine bright.
From leaves to bark, its potent grace,
Fights ailments, nature's embrace.

In Hindu culture, the neem tree holds great sway,
Associated with gods in a sacred way.
Lord Vishnu, as Vamana, found solace and rest,
Beneath Neem's branches, in his divine quest.
Goddess Durga's emblem, symbolizing her might,
And Sitala Devi, her abode, shining bright.

The neem tree, though cherished for its worth,
Faces threats, diminishing its birth.
Conservation is the key to securing its reign,
Preserve its essence for generations to gain.

Neem's versatile prowess, nature's bliss,
Sticks for teeth, powder, paste we can't miss.
From leaves, refreshing oil and repellent we make,
Wellness connected, a holistic path to take.

Neem's versatile prowess, nature's bliss,
Connecting wellness, a holistic twist.

Just like neem purifies the air with might,
Let's cleanse our beings, radiate pure light.
As neem leaves filter, removing impurity,
Let's purify ourselves, breathing serenity.

Neem, a tree of remarkable worth,
Medicinal benefits, a treasure trove unearthed.
From leaves to bark, its healing power soars,
Nature's gift, a remedy that endures.

Tribute



Swami Pragyamurti Saraswati, a senior disciple of Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati, passed away on 11 August 2023.

Born in England, Swami Pragyamurti, started her journey into yoga and spiritual life in the mid-1960s when she joined yoga classes of Lily Kowalsky, who had returned from the first Teacher Training course conducted by Sri Swami Satyananda in Munger. At that time, she was managing a fashion model agency and lived a life of glamour, or in her own words, 'I was a very stylish woman in those days'.

In 1969 at a yoga seminar in France, the first meeting with Sri Swami Satyananda took place; there he told her that he had seen her in a dream and she was to be one of his disciples and help with his yoga mission. Swami Pragyamurti had found her guru and her purpose in life. On her return to London, people came knocking on her door asking for yoga lessons. Life was never to be the same and she began her journey of 50 years teaching, inspiring and loving those in need of

comfort and guidance. In 1976, she was initiated into poorna sannyasa by Sri Swami Satyananda.

Founder and Acharya of Satyananda Yoga Centre, London, she brought the teachings of her Guru to prisoners and patients living with HIV/AIDS in the UK and South Africa. Her compassion for those who suffered, were neglected and ignored knew no bounds. Her courage, commitment and dedication to her Guru, Sri Swami Satyananda, opened all doors and hearts. With a group of students, she was a frequent visitor to Ganga Darshan, Munger, and to Rikhiapeth, introducing her students to her Guru, the source of her own inspiration and the teaching she transmitted.

At the World Yoga Convention and Golden Jubilee of Bihar School of Yoga conducted in Munger in 2013, she received a standing ovation for the account of her work in the UK and South Africa and her heartfelt plea to all delegates:

Extend your heart to touch my students, all of our students, all of our fellow human beings in the most desperate conditions, striving, trying, and hoping where there is so little hope. Please, please be generous with your love.

With her deep knowledge of the teaching, her understanding of students' needs and her all-embracing sense of humour, she enriched the lives of countless seekers and those who did not know they were searching. To all she gave the light of yoga; and in sincere humility she always gave credit to her Guru:

I am so grateful for this lifetime and to have been so inspired by Sri Swamiji, for being allowed to teach his glorious teachings. I will move on to the next life with a vision and a sense of his presence during my life.

Swami Pragyamurti will be missed by all. The blessings of Sri Swamiji as well as the sincere prayers of the yoga family the world over will always be with her for her onward journey.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING DONATIONS

Donations to the ashram will be received only under the following 'Heads of Accounts':

1. **General Donation**

To Bihar School of Yoga, Bihar Yoga Bharati, Yoga Publications Trust or Yoga Research Foundation

Funds will be utilized towards developing and furthering the Yoga activities.

2. **Corpus Donation**

To Bihar School of Yoga Corpus (Mooldhan) Fund, Bihar Yoga Bharati Corpus (Mooldhan) Fund, Yoga Publications Trust Corpus (Mooldhan) Fund, Yoga Research Foundation Corpus (Mooldhan) Fund

Interest income generated from **CORPUS (MOOLDHAN) FUND** shall be utilized towards all the activities of the Society/Trust.

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Therefore, devotees are requested to send donations to the above-mentioned account heads only.

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A covering letter mentioning the purpose of donation, mailing address, phone number, email ID and PAN should accompany the same.

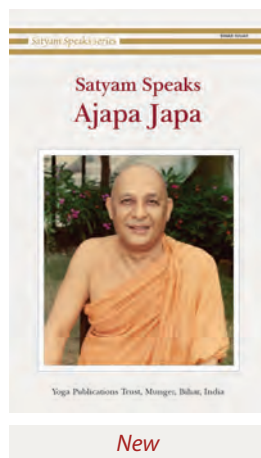


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Websites and Apps

www.biharyoga.net

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

Satyam Yoga Prasad

The digital library of the Bihar Yoga Tradition presenting audio, video and publications online. Available at satyamyogaprasad.net and as apps for Android and iOS devices as prasad.

Living Yoga Lifestyle Sadhana

This program is released aiming to improve and enhance health and total wellbeing. Available from biharyoga.net and satyamyogaprasad.net.

YOGA & YOGAVIDYA Online

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- *APMB*, the bestselling yoga book from YPT available as an easily browsable mobile app.
- The *Bihar Yoga* app brings to the user ancient and revived yogic knowledge in a modern medium.
- *For Frontline Heroes*, designed for people who are active in the fight against Coronavirus, presenting simple yoga practices to help alleviate tension and stress caused by the pandemic.

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Yoga Peeth Events & Yoga Vidya Training 2023

Bihar School of Yoga Yogavidya Training

<i>Jul 2022-Jul 2024</i>	Ashram Life Training
<i>Jul 1-Dec 31</i>	Yoga Chakra Experience
<i>Sep 20-28</i>	Hatha Yoga/Karma Yoga Training
<i>Oct 4-12</i>	Raja Yoga/Bhakti Yoga Training
<i>Oct 15-29</i>	Progressive Yoga Vidya Training
<i>Nov 20-29</i>	Kriya Yoga/Jnana Yoga Training

Bihar Yoga Bharati Yogavidya Training

<i>Aug 7-Oct 7</i>	Yogic Studies, 2 months (Hindi)
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Events

<i>Nov 4-15</i>	Munger Yoga Symposium II
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Monthly Programs

<i>Every Saturday</i>	Mahamrityunjaya Havan
<i>Every Ekadashi</i>	Bhagavad Gita Path
<i>Every Poornima</i>	Sundarkand Path
<i>Every 4th, 5th & 6th</i>	Guru Bhakti Yoga
<i>Every 12th</i>	Akhanda Path of Ramacharitamanas