

YOGA

Year 12 Issue 9
September 2023



Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar, India



Hari Om

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FFH (For Frontline Heroes)

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You are taking sannyasa. That is your destiny. If you insist on going, you can go, but the train will not move. If you go by bus, the bus will not move and if you go by horse cart, the horse will not move. Because you are meant to be a sannyasin; that is your destiny.

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

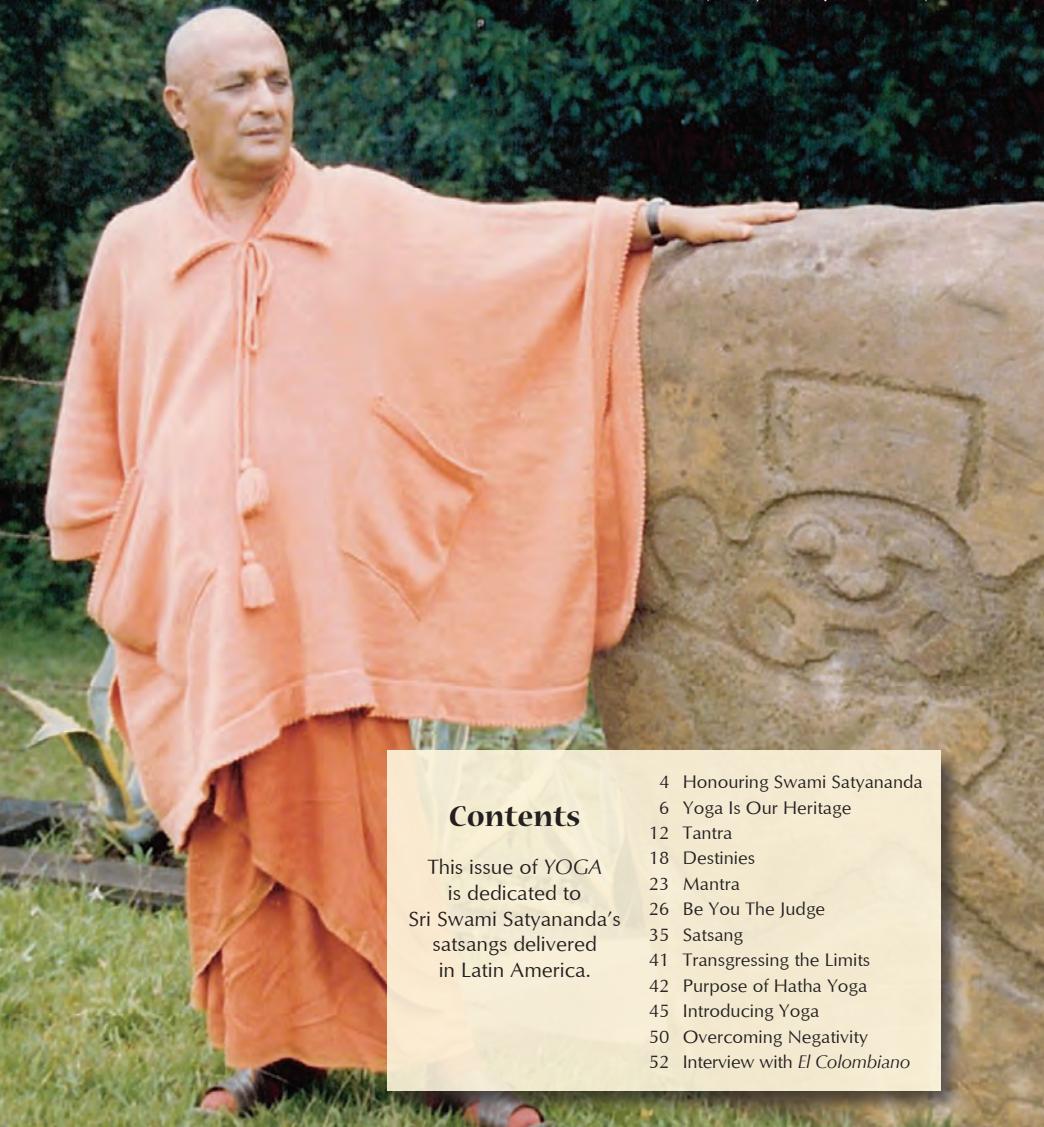
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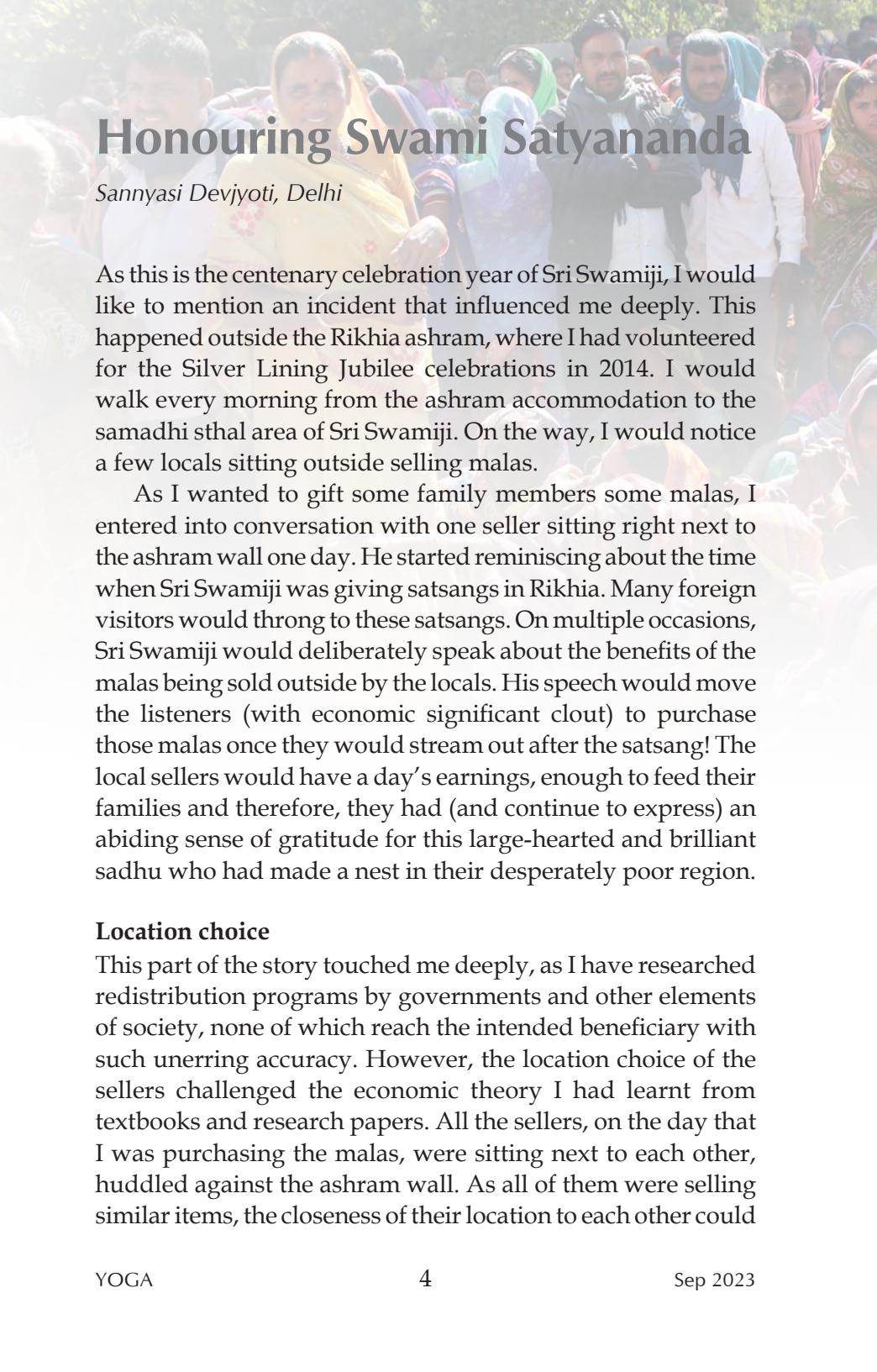


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is dedicated to
Sri Swami Satyananda's
satsangs delivered
in Latin America.

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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 मर्तोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥



Honouring Swami Satyananda

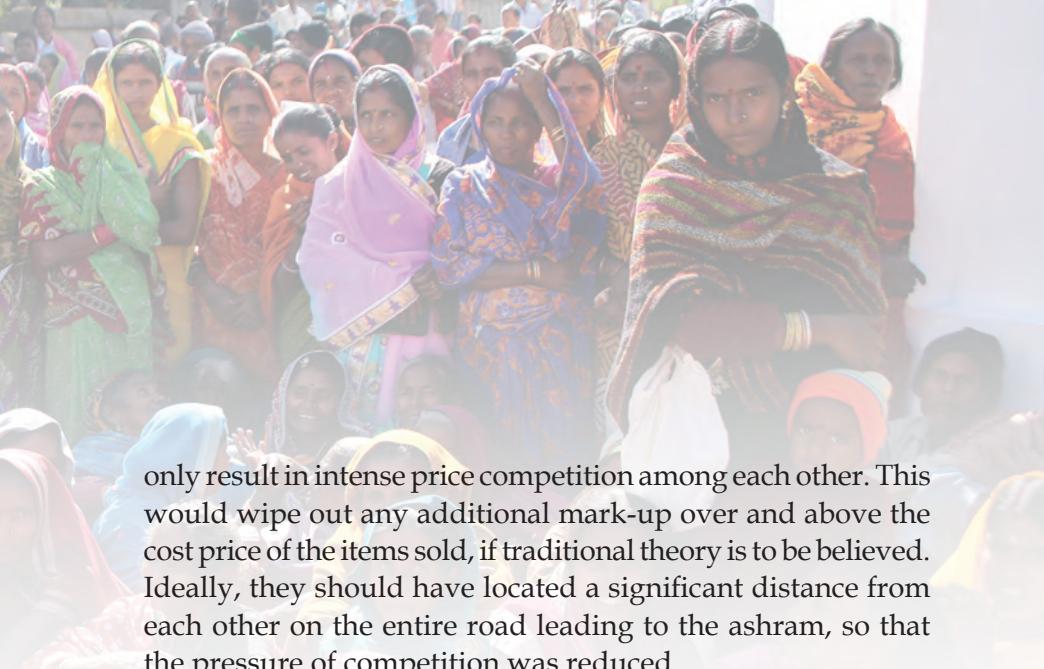
Sannyasi Devjyoti, Delhi

As this is the centenary celebration year of Sri Swamiji, I would like to mention an incident that influenced me deeply. This happened outside the Rikhia ashram, where I had volunteered for the Silver Lining Jubilee celebrations in 2014. I would walk every morning from the ashram accommodation to the samadhi sthal area of Sri Swamiji. On the way, I would notice a few locals sitting outside selling malas.

As I wanted to gift some family members some malas, I entered into conversation with one seller sitting right next to the ashram wall one day. He started reminiscing about the time when Sri Swamiji was giving satsangs in Rikhia. Many foreign visitors would throng to these satsangs. On multiple occasions, Sri Swamiji would deliberately speak about the benefits of the malas being sold outside by the locals. His speech would move the listeners (with economic significant clout) to purchase those malas once they would stream out after the satsang! The local sellers would have a day's earnings, enough to feed their families and therefore, they had (and continue to express) an abiding sense of gratitude for this large-hearted and brilliant sadhu who had made a nest in their desperately poor region.

Location choice

This part of the story touched me deeply, as I have researched redistribution programs by governments and other elements of society, none of which reach the intended beneficiary with such unerring accuracy. However, the location choice of the sellers challenged the economic theory I had learnt from textbooks and research papers. All the sellers, on the day that I was purchasing the malas, were sitting next to each other, huddled against the ashram wall. As all of them were selling similar items, the closeness of their location to each other could



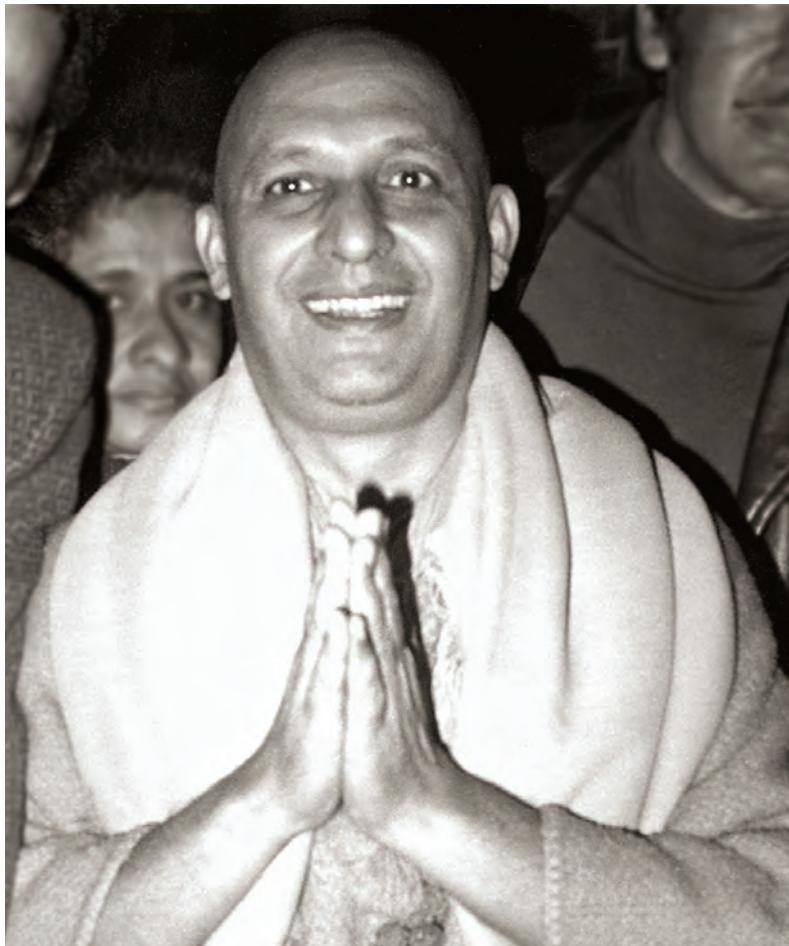
only result in intense price competition among each other. This would wipe out any additional mark-up over and above the cost price of the items sold, if traditional theory is to be believed. Ideally, they should have located a significant distance from each other on the entire road leading to the ashram, so that the pressure of competition was reduced.

I opined this to the sellers sitting there, using the weight of my professional degrees and experience as an economist. A set of sellers became interested in my curiosity about their location choice and they told me the reason for this location choice. What they told me was a lesson I shall never forget. Without any bookish erudition but with absolute confidence, I was informed that closeness to the gates of the ashram 'certified' them as authentic sellers and any location choice further away from the ashram gates would outweigh any potential benefits of reduced competition (as the buyers would not believe them to be selling 'genuine' items)!

Upon my return home from the ashram, I researched this kind of location choice and found mention of this kind of 'certification'-based location only in some obscure journal articles on industrial organization. I took away a deeper lesson from this experience: that closeness, nearness and adherence to the teachings and guidance of the Guru can alone identify me as someone who is 'genuine' and not a 'fake'! I salute the life and deeds of Sri Swami Satyananda, with a sincere promise to make a 'genuine' effort to walk on the guidance that comes to me through my Guru, Swami Niranjanananda.

Yoga Is Our Heritage

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Hari Om Tat Sat is the way to greet you and express happiness at being here with you all. This is a beautiful country with wonderful landscapes, greenery, sea and, most of all, people full of spirit of yoga. Time is limited for me but I will try to talk to you about all aspects of yoga.

We have come here having attended the International Yoga Convention, which was of tremendous importance since it heralds in a new era for humanity. After the convention we travelled to various countries in South America and we are now here in El Salvador. Tomorrow we have to leave for Guatemala, and after that we proceed to Spain and then back to India. I have visited nearly all the countries in the world, in the Middle East, Europe, Africa, South-East Asia, Australia, Latin America and North America. In the minds of many people there arise the following questions: What is the motive for all this travel? What do we teach? Who are the people involved? Why should swamis go from one place to another without any attachment to religions, cultures and political systems? What are these swamis talking about? This is what I am now going to tell you.

Throughout the whole world, in every small town, in every city, there are people talking about yoga. Regardless of beliefs, political affiliations, status etc. vast numbers of people in one way or another, are practising yoga. Man today has started to think deeply about himself.

Questions like: "What is the reality in me?" arise in his mind. He does not know his reality but he has started to think whether or not he has any deeper being. This is why you people here who are representatives of your whole country, have come to this meeting; the same question is in your minds. You have come to look for that. From the depths of your being you are all searching to find your true nature and potential.

The question arises: "Are we being indoctrinated into yoga? Is yoga a new system, a new religion or a new philosophy?" The answer to this enquiry is a big no, for yoga is the universal inheritance of mankind. It is a culture which was known and practised by man in ancient times, perhaps more than forty centuries ago. During those times it existed throughout the whole world, but it was lost in the course of time, it died out.

Recently, however, in Latin America and all other parts of the world it is coming back to life. It is being revived. Lack of insight in man was the cause of the loss, or rather,

the disappearance of this ancient yogic culture. It was put aside, hidden ad forgotten. It was replaced by materialism, together with pleasure seeking; man wanted more and more possessions, wealth and status. This materialism has driven man and society to the edge of total collapse.

At this present time, when man is poised on the edge of this precipice, he is starting to think: "What have I done?" And it is at this moment that he begins to search within himself and finds that his ancestors - yours and mine - had a way of life, a culture called yoga. We are starting to relive it again. It is nothing new. Neither brought nor planted form outside, but something which is already in the collective consciousness of all humanity.

When I was a child, people thought that yoga enabled a person called a yogi to sleep on a bed of nails, to drink nitric acid and to remain immobile in temperatures below zero without harm. They thought that a yogi was a puritan, a renunciate, an escapist and so many other things. This was what yoga meant to most people and superhuman feats were thought to be the aim and ideal of yoga. People used to say, "If these feats are the aim of yoga, then I don't want to know about yoga. What do I gain by sleeping on a bed of nails? What do I gain by drinking a litre of nitric acid? What do I gain by renouncing everything? What is the sense in renouncing all the things of life?" These were the misconceptions that kept the science of yoga hidden away from the majority of mankind.

However, things are changing. Recent years, in the last few decades, free thinkers started to investigate and understand the real purpose of yoga. They started to realize that their preconceived ideas about yoga were totally wrong. People who were previously pessimistic and critical started to propagate the real meaning and practices of yoga.

Let us briefly discuss the mind. Perception can be directed downwards, towards the outside mind, towards the senses, to sensory perception, or on the other hand, it can be directed upwards, towards the inner being and away from the senses.

When you practise this process of introspection then you are actually doing yoga. When your perception becomes extroverted through the senses then you are not practising yoga; you are doing bhoga (total concern with worldly experiences). Yoga can be defined as the union of the finite, individual mind with the infinite, cosmic mind. It can also be defined as harmonization of the inner world with the outer world.

The mind, like everything else that exists in the material world, is subject to the process of evolution. In its most primitive state, it is very gross and responds to stimuli in a vegetable-like manner. In this state, there is no thought such as we know it. With evolution, the mind develops to a state which can be described as instinctive. This is the mind level of animals. The third state of mind is reached through the evolutionary process, which can be described as the oscillating mind. In this state, there are thoughts and perceptions of objects but the mind continually oscillates, going here and there. The mind is not able to fix itself on one point. These three states of mind are natural and are obtained automatically in the course of evolution. They require no practice; they require no self-effort. Nature gives and produces them in the course of evolution. Most of us function at stage three, the fluctuating mind. We are not capable of centring the mind.

There is a fourth stage in which your thinking process is kept fixed on one idea without interruption or interference from other thoughts, without any oscillation whatsoever. Different practices of yoga bring about this state of mental one-pointedness. I will not describe these practices here. There are thousands of different techniques, all of which will take an individual to state where the mind is kept constant, where it can maintain smooth concentration for a long time.

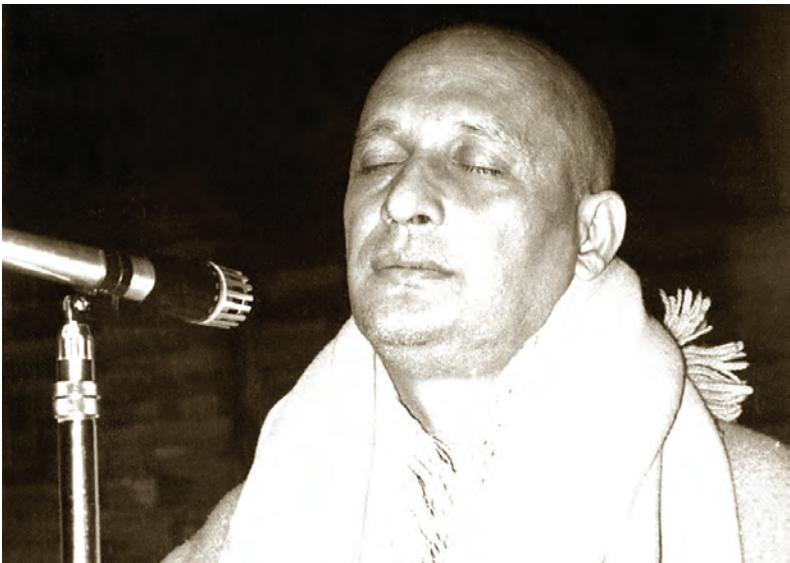
When we speak of the evolution of the mind, we are not talking about the evolution of one aspect of the mind, but of all components which constitute our whole personality. There must be an integrated development of all aspects of the human personality whether physical, emotional, psychic

or mental. It is no use developing the psyche if emotions are not simultaneously harmonized. It is no good becoming highly developed intellectually but remaining emotionally empty. There must be overall balance and development of the whole human being. This is why there are different types or rather branches of yoga. Bhakti yoga deals with sublimation of emotions; karma yoga deals with making one's actions powerful and one-pointed; raja yoga is for control of the psyche; jnana yoga develops superior wisdom; hatha yoga deals with the control of physical and *pranic* or vital energy; and mantra yoga with sound; and there are so many other types. Yoga covers all fields of life in order to bring about the integral development of the personality.

Yoga aims at harmony and equilibrium of the potentialities and aspects of the human being, whether emotions, intellect, intuition etc. so that the individual can obtain the fullest, possible expression of himself. Once this is obtained, then true contentment arises. Until this total expression and development of personality is achieved, man will remain unhappy. All the ingredients of the mind must be balanced in the same way that the physical body needs to be balanced by the correct intake of proteins, vitamins and other nutrients. All these aspects of the mind must be harmonized in order to achieve true inner peace.

One of the most important methods of bringing balance to the mind is meditation. It is being practised by people everywhere in the world. Meditation means a state of total perception, of total consciousness. It implies the merging of the mind with the object of perception. It influences both the physical and mental bodies. It has been proved scientifically that in advanced states of meditation, when the mind is about to merge with the object of concentration, when it is about to enter a state of total one-pointedness, that the alpha-brain waves increase, more than in everyday life, thus removing all anxieties, anguishes, tensions and inducing a deep state of relaxation.

I will give you an idea, a concept, which you should be able to fully appreciate: society is nothing but the product of



man's mind. This means that according to the mental states of individuals, so too is the state of society. We always complain about social structures and social patterns that we don't like and with which we disagree.

But the way to obtain complete transformation of society is first to bring about the transformation of the individual, and this is achieved by meditation. Systematic practice of meditation brings about a transformation of the whole consciousness of the individual, his mentality and attitudes. And if there exists a group of these individuals, then without a doubt society will change.

Yoga gives one mental peace and balance, but what does yoga give to society and to mankind? The answer is simple. By changing the consciousness, the mental structure of individuals, yoga will bring about real and positive change in the social structure and the collective consciousness of man.

*— This speech was given in El Salvador, Central America,
after attending the International Yoga Convention in Bogotá,
Columbia, October 1975*

Tantra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Tantra understands that man is weak, and therefore the tantric practices are taught according to the capacity of the aspirant. If you eat meat, tantra will never say that you should not eat it. If you drink, tantra will never say that you should not drink.

If you are married and have your own conjugal life, tantra will never say that you should not have that. Everybody has a right to evolve, and for that, you have to start from the point where you currently stand.

In order to evolve in spiritual life, you don't have to become something or somebody. If you are a householder, you don't have to be somebody else. If you are a weak man, you have to start at that point. We can teach you the practices which are suitable. In tantra, there are practices for weak persons and for strong persons. You must understand that everybody does not belong to the same category. Some people are passionate by nature. Some are lethargic. Some are mean-minded. Some people like to eat too much. Some people like to sleep too much and some people like to remain alone, away from others. People have different characters. One and the same way cannot fit everybody.

Your children go to school, but you cannot put them all in the same class. If you put them all in one class, many will fail. It is the same in our life. We do not all belong to one category. Broadly speaking, we belong to three categories. They are called the three qualities of man. Some people are harmonious and balanced. They have a good nature, very good habits, their family situations are ideal, they do not have evil habits, they do not have much passion, ambition or desire. This is one quality, or one group of people. Such people are very few in this world.

Then there are people who are very aggressive and dynamic. They have a lot of desires and passions, they work hard at things and they worry too much. They will do anything to fulfil those passions and ambitions. This is another category of people. Therefore, the spiritual practices should be taught according to their aptitude. This is the speciality of tantric philosophy and this is precisely the reason why tantra has a worldwide following.

Many psychologists have been thinking about it. The great Dr Sigmund Freud got so much inspiration from tantra. Even later, Dr Carl Jung and others derived so much inspiration

from tantra. As a result of that inspiration, the occidental society has completely changed in the last one hundred years. The occidental society which you see today was not the same one hundred years ago. When Dr Sigmund Freud came onto the scene, he made emphatic declarations. He said, 'You are suppressing your passions, and therefore you have guilt. You are suppressing your emotions, and therefore you are ill.' That is how modern psychology came about as an occidental version of tantra.

It is important to know that beyond the physical body, there is another man. The physical body is not the ultimate definition of a human being you have to talk about the mind also. Without mind we are nothing and this mind is an important aspect in our life. This mind can be improved and through this mind we can experience great things.

I am going to talk to you about the expansion of mind. This is the most important topic in tantra: how to expand the mind and what is expansion? Normally the mind operates through the medium of the senses. The senses supply the necessary information to the mind, and perception and cognition take place in coordination with the senses. If the senses are withdrawn, the mind cannot have perception and cognition. The mind has become so dependent on the behaviour of the senses, but if you analyze deeply who actually has the experience? The senses are only the carriers of the experiences. The real experiencer is the mind, but this mind which is the experiencer of all experiences, depends on the senses.

When you delve into the mind through the senses, the mind is isolated. When the mind is isolated, it begins to experience something else. It can see without eyes, it can hear without ears, it can smell without the nose and it can taste without the tongue. Sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch are inherent in the mind, not in the senses. Eyes do not see, it is the mind which can see. In the same way, the senses do not experience, the mind experiences. So it is possible that the mind can experience without the senses.

When your mind can experience without the medium of the senses, that is called expansion of mind. If you can see an object without the eyes open, you have an expanded mind. In the process of evolution of the mind, it should become independent of the senses and that is called the supermind. This in short is the philosophy of tantra, which is important for the man of this century. The yoga which you hear about is an offshoot of tantra. Yoga and tantra are not different. Tantra is the mother and yoga is the child. Hatha yoga, mantra yoga and similar yogas are a part of tantra. In fact, all the yoga teachers and practitioners throughout the world are practising tantra.

What is the difference between higher experience and lower experience?

I will give you a very gross example of that. You take a pin or a needle and prick yourself somewhere on the wrist. You feel a sharp pain from the pinprick. Where are you feeling it? You feel the pain; you experience the pain at the point where the needle pricked you. Does the pain take place here? No.

The experience of pain is in the head. Can you experience the pain here at the eyebrow centre instead of there at the wrist? If so, it is a higher experience. If you experience the pain at the point of the pinprick, it is the lower experience. The experience of all experiences is in the eyebrow centre. The eyebrow centre is in the middle of the two eyebrows. It is directly connected with ajna chakra at the top of the spine. It is there that higher experience takes place.

It is the same with every experience: the experience of taste, the experience of sex, the experience of happiness, the experience of an object. Every experience takes place at ajna, but man experiences it at a lower level. Everybody has the sense of taste, smell, touch, hearing and sight, as well as sexual and mental experiences. Where do you have these experiences? If the same experience takes place within the mind, that is higher experience.

I feel that everybody is a tantric. You are already practising tantra. What does this mean? A man living the life of the senses is a tantric; tantra is not against sensual life. Religions are against the sensual life, monastic traditions are against the sensual life. They always say, 'Abandon this, abandon that. Control the taste. Control the eyes. Control the mind.' Tantra says, 'No, don't do this. If you want to have an experience, do so, but experience it on a higher plane.'

When you have an experience on a lower plane, there is dissatisfaction. There is frustration, there is nervous breakdown and you get completely exhausted about life, because every time you experience it, you remain unfulfilled.

How to sublimate sensual life? Many people live sensual lives and say, 'Well, we are practising tantra.' They just do whatever they like and they say, 'Oh, I am practising tantra.' It is not the meat, wine or women that is important in tantra. The important thing is the experience that they generate. If that experience is experienced at a higher level, you are practising tantra, and if that experience is experienced at a lower sensual level, you are not practising tantra.

When you are practising tantra with a higher experience, everything that you do in your daily life becomes a spiritual practice. Then this body becomes the 'sanctum sanctorum', the temple. The sensual objects become the instruments of worship. Sleep becomes samadhi, and whenever you walk, it becomes the perambulation of a holy place. Whatever you speak becomes a prayer. Whatever you do, whatever way you live and whatever you experience, all that becomes a form of worship of the divine.

It is not just one hour in the morning, or one hour on Sunday. Each and every act, each and every experience must become a part of that universal experience. Just as every drop of ocean water is saline, every aspect of man's life must be divine. You cannot say that going to the temple is good, and going to a bar is bad. Why do you compartmentalize life? Why don't you consider the whole of life itself as a progress on to perfection?

When you incarnated as a human being, everything was given to you for spiritual progress only. You were not told to create two compartments, 'Here I am spiritual, and there I am worldly'.

Are there two paths? Well, if there are two paths, I have nothing to teach you! I don't think that there are two paths. There is only one path and that path has many milestones. Every milestone is linked to the next milestone. There is a continuity of the process in life. The bad man is a good man in the making. A saint is the manifestation of a rogue. Poison contains nectar in it, and nectar becomes poison in the making.

Therefore, in tantra we do not focus on the diversity, duality or paradoxes in life. I may be a sensual man and you may be a saint, but you were also sensual once upon a time, is it not so? I will also become a saint later. There are no two paths where, the path of a scoundrel goes this way and the path of the saint goes that way. There is nothing good and nothing bad. Everything is part of the totality, and everything was created for the purpose of man's evolution. God is not against the bad. In tantra, the definition is very simple. Go ahead and you will eventually reach your goal.

– 9 April 1982, Martinique

Destinies

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Does yoga run the risk of degenerating, like other great schools of thought and traditions, or lineages?

When you lose sight of the main purpose, then yoga will become a sect. Today yoga is a practice, not an organization. It has no popes and cardinals. It has no canons and laws. It has just practices and techniques. It has no ceremonies and rituals and that is why everybody likes it. If yoga is turned into an organization, politicians are bound to cash in on it, because they are always after a popular movement. Then they will make it into a very big organization, install a chief at the top and call him His Holiness or His Highness. They will have so many unnecessary ceremonies, and yoga will degenerate if such is the case.

It did degenerate in the past. For example, in Tibet they used to practise yoga but they ordained very big lamas, like the popes or cardinals. Each of these lamas used to wear coats with large vests and hats, in order to show to the common people that they did not work. When you have big vests and other fancy attire, you cannot work. So, this is how they deviated from the practice of yoga, to conducting elaborate ceremonies and the establishment of Lamaism. Every religion was practical in the beginning. Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism were all practical in their approach. However, today there is no recognition of the importance of integral practice, there is only focus on the outer show of rituals and ceremonies, so there is degeneration. If you do the same thing with yoga, it is also going to degenerate.

I have studied that there was a belt, called the yoga belt. Territories in Latin America, Central America, France, Africa, the Middle East, Afghanistan, India, other South East Asian countries, China, Japan, Tahiti were regions which formed the



yoga belt. The southern part of modern day France was a very important region in that yoga belt. The neighbouring countries were also under the influence of this belt. You know what is a yoga belt? Let me explain. For example, what is the Communist belt? Czechoslovakia, Poland, Ukraine, Romania, Russia, China, Vietnam form the Communist belt and it influences

the bordering countries. It has influenced France, Italy, Iran, India and many other countries. Similarly, once upon a time there was a yoga belt having its own areas of influence.

However, some mistake happened, something unexpected. We do not exactly know what the problem was. Perhaps it was due to the great geographical rearrangement known as the continental drift that was responsible for this. Atlantis sank into the ocean, the central part of India came up, the Indus valley civilization, and for a long time there were big monsoons, typhoons, hurricanes and all kinds of difficult natural disasters.

You have references in the Bible. We have references in our Hindu scriptures. There are also references in the Zend Avesta of Zoroaster. Scientists are also saying the same thing. That continental shift did disturb the entire structure of the yoga belt and its civilizations. And later on, I think it could not be put together, because the whole world had to be reorganized.

Only the catchment areas of Ganga were free from this disaster. The Himalayas were not affected by this disaster. The southern parts of India and the present Africa were separated by the Arabian Sea. Otherwise, before this, the present South India and Africa were linked through the Arabian Sea, and still you can find the similarity between the African tribes and the south Indians. But of course this happened thousands of years ago.

Now since the Himalayas were not affected by this geographical disaster, yoga remained there in its original form. The Hindus preserved the knowledge of yoga even after the total geographic restructuring of the continents. Therefore, all the acharyas and teachers of yoga are said to have descended from the Himalayas.

I think it is important for us not to worry about what is going to happen. We should look after our immediate problems. We have very little time to think about whether we should choose yoga or not. I think, and you will also agree with me, that the world today is in a state of emergency and we have no time to lose. Yoga or no yoga, the choice is yours.

How can yoga modify or alter your destiny, if it depends on the position of the planets in your astrological chart?

Well, the question does not directly relate to yoga but I will deal with it briefly. When you were a child, you were so incapable, that your parents had to help you with everything. You had to be carried and you had to be fed. And whatever your parents did, you had to accept, because you were a child and under their care. But gradually you gained strength, you could walk on your own two feet, and your parents did not have to carry you. Later, with age, you learned to look after yourself. You earned your own money, and they did not have to feed you. You became independent.

It is the same thing with the individual. When you are weak in mind, the planets influence you. They control your destiny. If it is the time to suffer, you have to undergo it, because you are an undeveloped individual and are unable to exercise your willpower. You do not have willpower at all and are tossed by your destiny hither and thither. If any star or planet is to influence you, you have no choice. However, gradually, as you develop your inner being, and when you learn to control your thoughts, develop your mind, sublimate your emotions, and channel the energies of life properly, then planets do not have complete control of your life. Things begin to change, not completely, but significantly. If you go on developing your inner being more and more, and you expand your mind and make it a supermind, and you completely transmute your emotions into absolute devotion; then passions do not control you, but you play with them.

Similarly, when the mind does not command you, and you control it; when you can handle your emotions; when you can change the nature of your mind, the planets will be unable to disturb you. It is not possible for everybody to understand what I am saying. It is like telling a two-year old, 'Hey, you can drive a car!' He will not even understand what I am telling him. He will only understand after twenty years, when he is driving a car. I will tell you a little about myself. My family priest cast

my horoscope at birth. He predicted that I would be destitute, sick all the time, and would be a loafer or a vagabond. He said that I would destroy my whole family. He was not wrong. His predictions were based on the planetary positions, because there were many bad aspects, indicating sickness, poverty and about everything else that is bad in life. He even said that I would not have friends. Somehow I came to spiritual life, and in my childhood one great Indian lady saint told my father that I was not meant to be a householder. So, it was decided that I would go to a guru and live with him.

I lived with my guru for twelve years. I had nothing of my own, not even a piece of cloth but that changed my whole destiny. I became very strong in mind and such things had no meaning for me. Success had no meaning; failure had no meaning for me; love had no meaning; and hunger also had no meaning for me. That is how the mind develops very strongly, in the course of twelve years in a guru's ashram.

The predictions still remain true. I am still a pauper. I have no bank balance anywhere, no bank account. I have no property in my name. I have no relatives. I have no religion. However, I meet with sick people every day, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, maybe more. All the time sickness and diseases are in my mind, such as cancer, tumours, rheumatism, arthritis. The predictions came true, but because of the quality of my mind which my guru was responsible for developing in me, the outcome of the predictions changed.

The same thing can happen to anybody. What is destiny after all? It is a great law of nature. You cannot violate the law, but you can definitely change the structure and outcome. You cannot only change the structure, you can even understand its place in your life. It is very necessary for everybody to accept their destiny, but it is more important for you to know how to restructure it and reshape your own life for the best outcome.

– 11 April 1982, Martinique

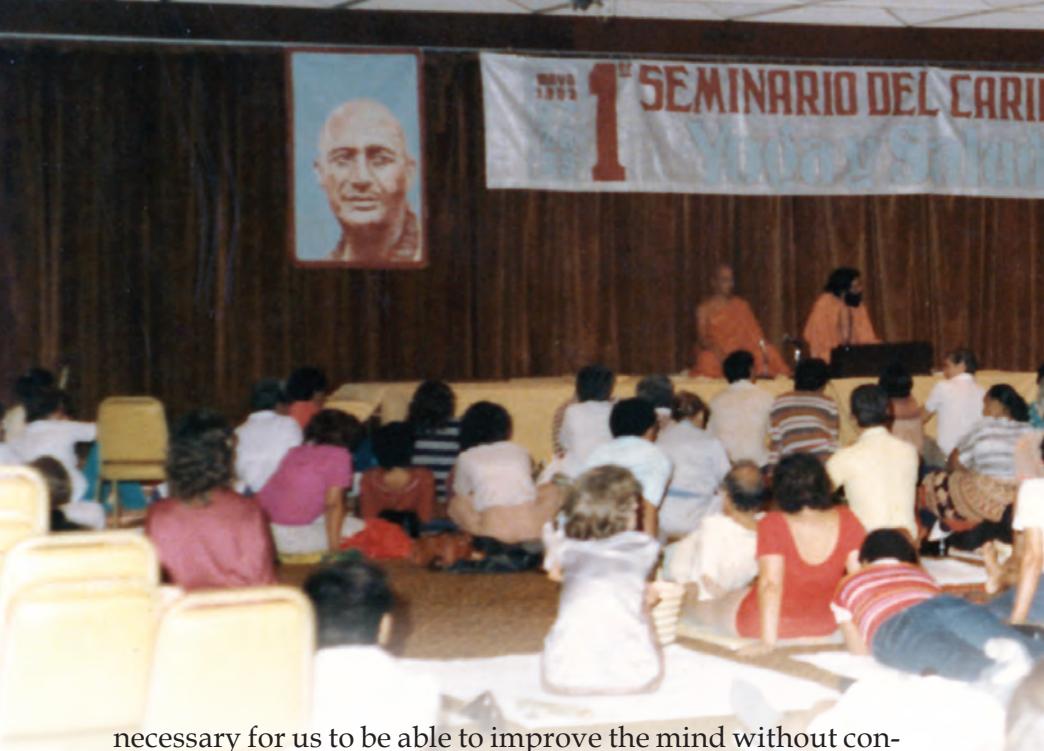
Mantra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

For many thousands of years, yoga was practised by the people of this continent but later, for some time, they forgot all about it. We are now reviving that science. I am coming from India, which is not very different to your country, and the people of India are also not very different from you. The whole world is now immersed in materialism and it has forgotten its spiritual inheritance. It is only India, which even today preserves the great spiritual science, maintains the gurus and the teachers, and it is from that country I come with the message of yoga for all of you.

The subject which I have in mind is the yoga of mantra. It is known by various names like mantra yoga, japa yoga. It is very significant that I am talking about mantra yoga today. It is because this is the easiest of the practices of yoga which every person can practise without facing any difficulty and without facing any risk. Whether you practise the mantra with faith or you practise it without faith makes no difference. Just as you sow seeds in the earth and it doesn't matter which way the seeds fall, they will germinate. In the same way, if you practise the mantra with concentration or without concentration, with faith or without faith, with sincerity or without sincerity it is going to produce its result.

All of you know by your own experience how difficult it is to control the mind. It is true sometimes you are able to concentrate, you have strong willpower, you are able to control the mind at one point but to be able to control the mind for years and years together is not possible for everybody. Why? Because our mind is restless. It is running after the objects of the world. It has to worry about things, it is filled with anxiety, it has a lot of passions, and so it is impossible for an average person to control the mind. But then it is also



necessary for us to be able to improve the mind without controlling it.

When you try to control the mind either you get a headache, or you get funny feelings, or you have frightening experiences which you are not always able to handle. Therefore, we have to find an easier way through which we can improve not only the mind but also manifest the inner spiritual being. There are two bases upon which we can improve the mind and manifest our spiritual being. One is the form or symbol; another one is sound or mantra. I will tell you later about the symbol, maybe tomorrow.

Become the listener

Everybody has his own mantra; everybody has his own sound. If you can discover that sound, that mantra, and you go on chanting it then the sound that it produces is registered by your mind and by your self. For example, this sound can be experienced in four different stages. The first is the gross stage of the sound. You chant, *Om Om Om*. This is the produced sound and is the first category of sound. The subtler category



of sound is merely whispered and the third category is mental. You don't even move your tongue – nothing is to be done, you are just thinking, *Om Om Om*, that is called mental sound. Beyond these three sounds, there is the fourth sound which you can hear without producing *Om*. You can hear it without it being produced when your mouth, lips and eyes are closed. In the mind you hear it as if somebody is producing the mantra from inside. That is the fourth category of the sound which is known as the transcendental sound.

Suppose you have received a mantra from your guru. That works like a seed sown in the earth. The guru tells you repeat the mantra. Your soul, your *atman*, your mind, your consciousness registers that mantra. For some time that mantra becomes dormant, yet through incessant practice of japa yoga that mantra later germinates. It grows. When it grows you do not have to practise it; you have to listen to it because your self, your *atman*, your consciousness is repeating the mantra and you are the listener of the mantra, not the practitioner of the mantra.

– 23 May 1982, Santo Domingo

Be You The Judge

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

**Why is yoga related so much to health in your teachings?
Here in the West yoga is associated with religion.**

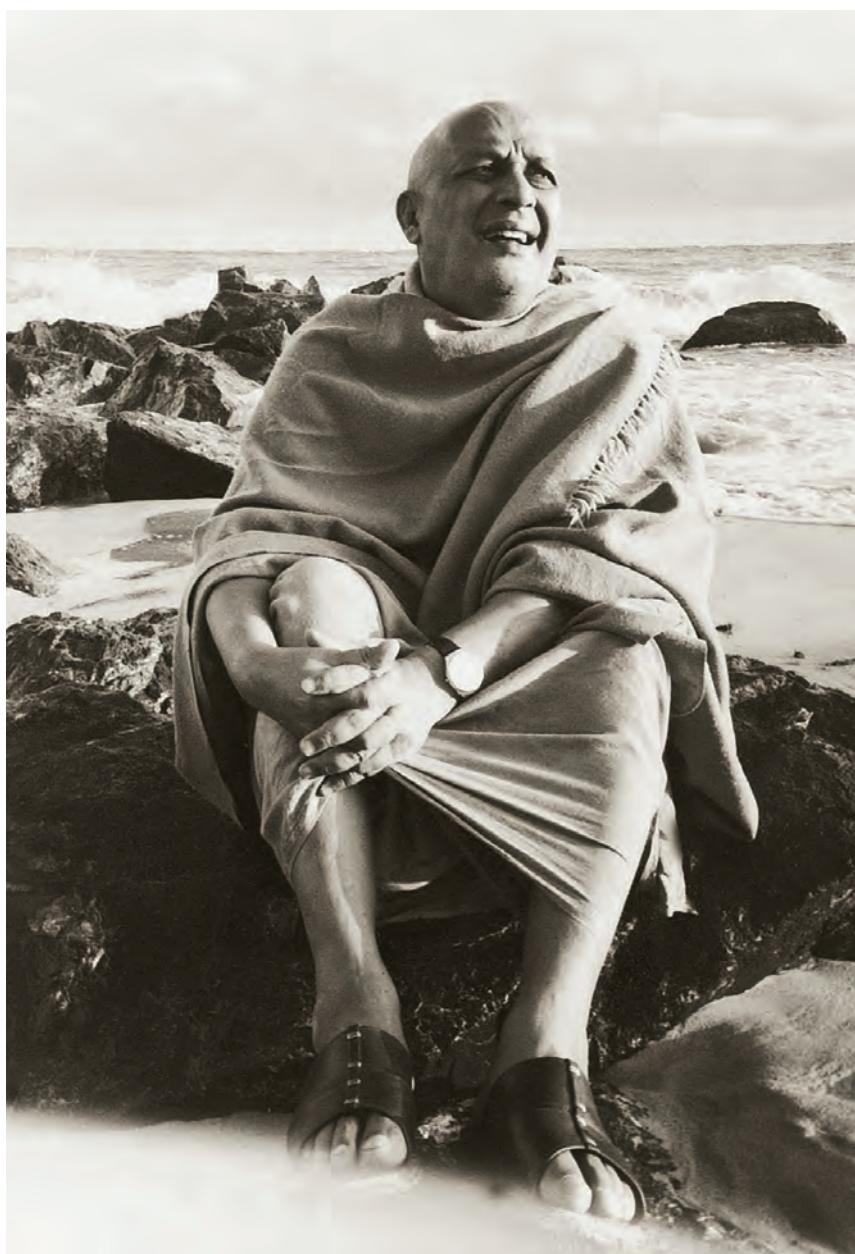
Yoga has never been a religion. Right from the beginning, it has been considered a science. In the last few years, the scientists have conducted some research which have positively proved that yoga is not a religion but an intrinsic part of health.

Religion is based on faith. Science is not based on faith; science is based on objective experimentation. The authentic texts on yoga written many thousands of years ago are in a style which is not religious. But, of course, from time to time, people who have practised yoga have tried to synthesize it with their own religious faith.

Yoga is a science which talks about the union and harmony between the two forces in the human body. There are two visible and objective forces in the human body called the vital or life force and the mental force. The vital force, called *prana*, is responsible for life and motion, and the mental force, *chitta*, is responsible for keen knowledge and awareness.

Usually it is seen that there is an imbalance between these two forces in the body. As a result of this imbalance, psychic and somatic diseases are born. If there is an excess of the pranic force, there are physical diseases and vice versa. Therefore, in the practice of yoga, the concept of union relates to the harmony between these two forces. In modern scientific terms, it is the balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. If the sympathetic nervous system is predominant and the parasympathetic nervous system is subservient, or vice versa, then psychic or somatic diseases are created in the body.

This is the first definition of union given in yoga. There are other definitions of union as well. They say the union

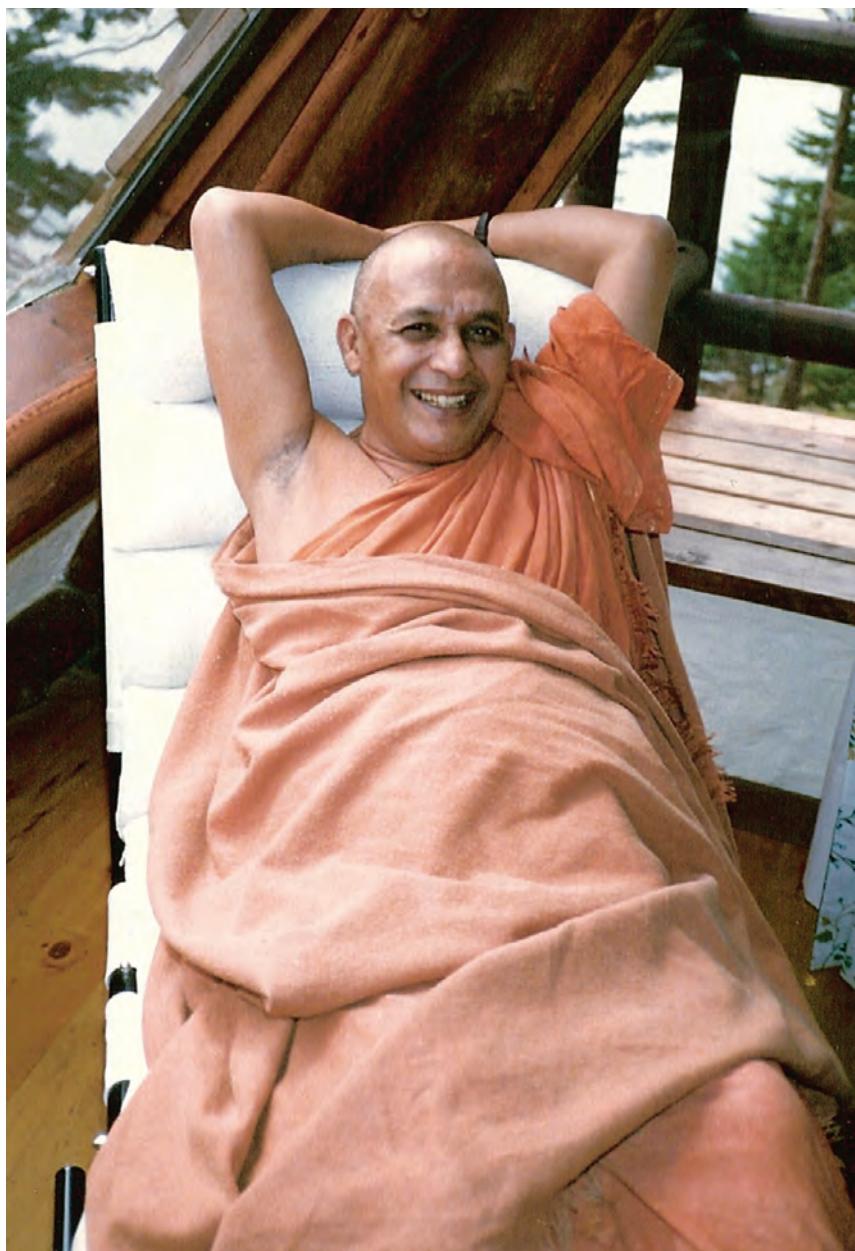


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between the individual soul and the cosmic soul is also union. It is always better to hold the first definition for yoga which is more scientific and more objective and tangible.

The practice of yoga changes the very structure of man's interior personality which cannot be done by other activities. Moreover, through the practices of yoga you can increase the inner vitality, the pranic force, which can maintain the quality of your life for years together.

What is pranic energy?

Pranic energy is the life force. It nourishes the whole body. It has more than 100,000 pathways through which the body maintains life for more than 80 years. This pranic force is also a magnetic force which protects the body from negative magnetic forces of the outside atmosphere, because there are many magnetic influences which come to the human being from the external spheres on this earth. As a result of that, many times the inner health and the inner processes are affected, including the brain. Therefore, we should have some form of resistance within us. This pranic force provides you with the required amount of resistance. It is a protective mechanism all around you.



Many people say that to practise yoga you have to make many sacrifices, change your life and abstain from many things.

I don't think so. This particular opinion which is voiced by people with regards to yoga has a religious basis. Yoga is primarily a practice and not a religion. In fact, the exercises that people are talking about should also be defined. To renounce your beloved is not a part of yoga. To become a vegetarian is not compulsory in yoga. To abstain from women has nothing to do with yoga. Then what are the 'sacrifices' we are supposed to do?

These sacrifices are a part of puritanism, not a part of yoga. Puritanism is a relative concept; it is not an absolute concept. Who is going to prove what is pure and what is impure? Therefore, in my opinion, the only sacrifice which yoga demands of anybody is a little time in the morning and if possible in the night.

Of course, there are some regulations. They are not universal, rather the regulations are according to the sickness which a person is suffering from, and those regulations are not peculiar to yoga. Even in medical science you have those regulations. If you have diabetes, you should not eat potatoes,

sugar and rice. If you have high blood pressure, you should not take fat or salt. If you call that sacrifice, then do you reject medical science? In my opinion, these regulations are peculiar to man's sickness and that much sacrifice everyone should be prepared to make.

If one is suffering from cardiovascular problems, he should definitely not go to women. It is not a sacrifice, it is a regulation. If he is suffering from haemorrhage, paralysis or rheumatism you will tell him not to take meat, but to have a vegetarian diet. If a person is suffering from cirrhosis of the liver, he will definitely be told not to take alcohol. If a sick man is not prepared to make this sacrifice, then it is better he does not talk about yoga at all.

A doctor from the United States, who is a disciple of a great yogi, has said that there is no need of mantra. What is your opinion on that?

I think his statement should have been vetted by a scientific investigation. In this scientific age I cannot abruptly state that this is necessary and this is not necessary, but it should be scientifically examined.

Scientists have worked on mantra. Transcendental Meditation groups have done so, and besides that, there have been many other experiments. The potential of sound has also been investigated. It is very unscientific to say that a sound is only sound and not energy. Mantra is sound. Sound is an energy. You can even break a rock with sound if you want.

Sound has frequency and velocity. Some sounds you can hear, some you cannot. You can hear the sound of my voice because your ears can register this, but there are many other sounds which you cannot hear. Now this sound is called mantra. If that gentleman you are talking about thinks that mantra is God's name or a divine name, well, he can say whatever he likes. But if he rejects or is unable to accept and appreciate the energy, the power and the effects of the sound, I think it is very unscientific. Those who are evolved do not

need mantra, but there are millions of people in the world who are suffering from infirmity of willpower. They do not know how to handle the mind. They do not know how to control the mind and they do not know how to concentrate the mind. By rejecting the importance of mantra, it is leaving these millions of people in the wild sea without support. With due apology to that gentleman, I do not agree with what he has said.

What is the purpose of this seminar that is being held at Santo Domingo for which you have come from India?

I have come from India happily to be present at this seminar because I want the people of your country to practise yoga. When I came here six months ago, I could sense and I could understand the nature of the people of your country. Therefore, I have come to conduct this seminar with the idea of teaching the integral system of yoga.

I do not want to overemphasize one system of yoga, because man is a complex personality. He is head, he is heart and he is hands; and a combination of these three is man. So we will have to teach him yoga postures and breathing exercises. We will have to teach him mantra and meditation. We will have to teach him kirtan and bhakti yoga and we will have to teach him raja yoga and karma yoga. The system of integral yoga emphasizes simultaneous development of the dynamic, psychic, emotional and rational being in man. This will be the theme of the seminar.

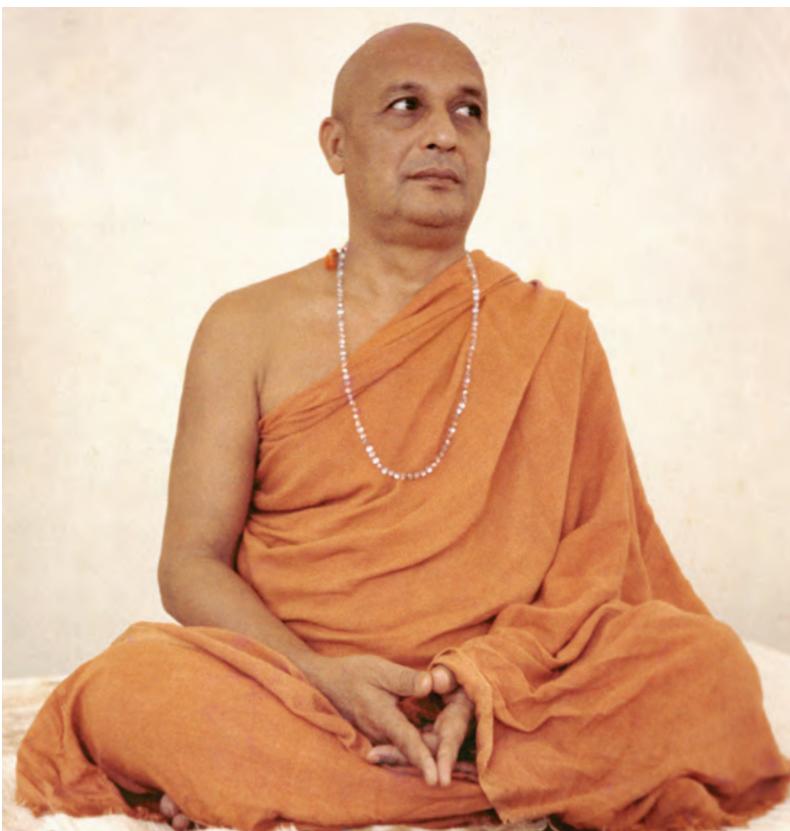
Whenever you want to prepare something, you have to mix many ingredients together. In the same way for a human being, it is necessary for a parallel development to take place in all the areas of personality.

The seminar which is being held in Santo Domingo is open to everybody who wants to derive maximum benefits from yoga in relation to his family and life. The object of this seminar is to provide an independent means of health, happiness and inner wisdom.

– 21 November 1982, Santo Domingo

Satsang

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Can a person whose body is full of toxins meditate well or do you think that the cleaning practices should be taught first?

There are many sources of toxins. By impure food and over-medication you develop toxins in your body. You also develop them through lack of exercise, wrong thinking and sometimes due to the natural hormonal order in the body. Therefore, before meditation you must practise hatha yoga *shatkarmas*, the sixfold purification of the body. You must clean the nose,

the alimentary canal, the large intestines and the lungs. Like this, you must purify the whole body. Then you must correct your diet and practise asana and pranayama. You must also rectify your way of thinking.

Some people emphasize diet. It is okay but not final. In my opinion it is thought that should be rectified. By a wrong thought a heart attack can take place. You know it very well. By a wrong thought a nervous breakdown or cancer can also take place. You should not underestimate the quality of your thinking. Thinking, feeling and emotion should never be underestimated. More than half of your family problems are due to your mind. Ninety percent of all the diseases in the world are born of your mind. Therefore, toxins can also be produced by the process of thinking.

Anxiety is no good; hatred is no good; anger is no good; jealousy is no good; passion is no good. They should be there in you but not very much. Your experiences in meditation are influenced by the quality of your thought. If you do not want your thoughts or mind to influence your meditation, then you must first control your mind and then meditate.

In the Koran, the Bible, the Vedas and many other books it is said that saints went into the mountains and fasted for forty days. These saints used to go into seclusion where there was nobody. Why? Because there are so many sources of toxins that can develop in the body. What do you think about gasoline? Does it not produce toxins? What do you think about noise? Does it not produce toxins? Therefore, we should try to balance the production of toxins in the body from time to time through the practice of periodical hatha yoga practices. When you try to meditate, you are also removing toxins from the body.

What is the origin of madness according to yoga and what practices should a mad person do?

When your mind is restless, it splits into many parts. It is scattered and dissipated. That is one cause of madness according to yoga. A man who does not practise meditation,

yoga or concentration has a mind which is not stable and constant. It is restless due to sense impressions. His mind is tossed hither and thither through the storms of passions, ambitions and desires.

Normal desires one can have; normal passions, frustrations and disappointments are natural to man. Sometimes he has strong desires and passions, and due to these his mind is not able to cope with reality. His mind creates many patterns at different times. These patterns of mind are so restless and so explosive that they sap his entire energy. The nervous system is not able to meet with his demands and there is mental breakdown. This is one important cause of madness according to yoga.

Secondly, when your belief and your life are opposing each other, then you become mad. For example, everybody in Europe is Christian. They believe in the Bible and the sayings of the saints who preach that certain things are sin. For more than nineteen hundred years they have been taught, 'This is sin, this is sin, this is sin!' Now what are you taught in the schools and colleges? Freudian psychology tells you exactly the opposite of what you have been taught for nineteen hundred years.

So now there is an absolute antagonism between belief and external knowledge. What religion calls 'sin', science calls 'healthy'. Science will say, 'No, it is good for your health, don't suppress it.' Your religion says, 'No, it is bad, suppress it.' Therefore, an average European is split into two. That is called schizophrenia. This is what is happening to the whole modern culture everywhere.

When the two parts of the mind are talking opposite languages and opposite philosophies, then there is madness. When you meditate by force, then you become abnormal. Your mind is running after the sensual pleasures and your mind is also trying to meditate. So you split your mind into two. One part of the mind is fantasizing and fantasizing while the other part of the mind is trying to meditate. You know what will

happen. If a strong man pulls my right hand and another strong man pulls my left hand, I will be split into two! Therefore, this is the second cause of madness.

Thirdly, the hormones from the pituitary gland must be properly balanced. There has to be a check. There is a time, according to the maturity of the body, for the hormonal secretions. If your son or daughter does not develop sex hormones up to the age of twenty-three, they are going to go mad, definitely, and if your child at the age of ten develops sex hormones, he is also going to go mad because sex hormones are the wild hormones. They are like wild tigers, wild boars, wild buffaloes. They change everything in your body. Therefore, they should be allowed to trickle into the body according to the capacity of the body. So, in yoga it is said that if you don't have a healthy pineal gland you will be abnormal.

Another cause of madness is imbalance between the pranic force and the mental force. In the physical body there are two energies, the life force and the mental force, and both have to be balanced properly. If the life force is predominant and the mental force is subservient, there will be madness and this madness will be a wild madness. For example, you will be a criminal, you will murder someone or you will be a terrorist. If the mental power is predominant and the pranic power is subservient, then psychic madness will occur. Therefore, there has to be a balance between the mental and pranic forces through meditation, pranayama, asana etc.

What are the benefits and uses of pranayama and how do we maintain prana?

According to the hatha yoga books, there are various areas of energy in the body. These energies are known as five types of *prana* or life energy. They help you to digest food, maintain circulation and body weight, nourish the foetus and maintain the constant life process in the body, but due to overuse and misuse the life force is sometimes wasted. Through the practice of pranayama you charge these pranic areas.



Take the example of the battery in your automobile. When it gets discharged you get it charged again, but if the dynamo is working properly, why should it get discharged? Pranic spots in different parts of the body sometimes become exhausted and discharged. As a result of that, there is exhaustion, depression, bad digestion and bad circulation. You have no strength to walk or to work; you cannot even think properly. If you begin to think a little more, your heart begins to palpitate. You cannot even handle bad news. If anybody insults you, you get nervous; if your child becomes sick, you get anxious. So it is necessary to maintain a balance and constantly charge these pranic areas.

The five types of prana are known as prana, apana, udana, samana and vyana, and these five must be charged from time to time. This is significant. When that has been done pranayama will charge your brain with extra energy and help you to meditate. You know, when you worry and become anxious you

use maximum prana. When you run your household, you do not need that much prana and when you meditate, you need minimum prana.

For example, you have a plug point through which a microphone is connected. If you get a bigger installation, say 5 horsepower of energy and plug it there, in half an hour the wire will become hot and all the fuses will blow. This is what is happening to most of us. We are using maximum pranic energy when we are dealing with fears, anxieties and passions.

You do not know what the thinking process is. The thinking process is not only a psychological process. It is a product of the pranic force. If there is no life, there cannot be a psychological process. Have you ever heard of a dead man thinking? No, you can only think if you have prana. So there is no exclusively psychological process. It is a pranic process. For each and every thought you think, you are utilizing the battery.

When you use a tape recorder, every second the battery is going down. You will have to change or recharge it later. The same thing is happening to all of us. Your battery gets discharged all the time. You are using prana while you are thinking, worrying, becoming disappointed, frustrated, happy or angry. You are using prana all the time. When do you not use prana? When you are in samadhi, then you do not use prana. When you have attained nirvana, the state of void, then you do not use prana. You can exist without prana for hundreds of years. When you are meditating you use little prana. When you are in your Self and you don't think about time and space, you don't think about your name and body, just your self, you only use a little bit of prana and this will last for many hundreds of years. But this is not realistic. We are living in the world and we therefore have to use prana. We are not saints; we are amidst so many difficulties, so we have to use prana. Now, how to replenish the lost stock of prana? That is done through pranayama.

– 23 November 1982, Santo Domingo

Transgressing the Limits

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Hari Om

I don't see yoga as anything else except as a process of improving the quality of the body, mind and emotion. The moment yoga transgresses this limit of its responsibility and obligation, it will become religion, and we have dozens of them, we don't want one more. Teachers of yoga will have to be very careful about this. We are not to prepare and manufacture prophets.

We should concentrate on producing that scientific quality of teachers which will be able to give us that aspect of yoga which will go a long way in transforming the quality of the body, mind and emotions.

If you add religions after religions, there won't be any peace on this earth. In fact, they have failed in the past and they have betrayed history. If peace has to come on this earth and on this planet it is not going to come through a philosophy, it is going to come through man and man.

Three billion restless souls cannot bring peace to mankind, definitely not. At least one billion people must understand how to bring peace into the framework of their personality. Yoga has to accomplish that, and if it cannot, reject it and find out another method. Yoga is not an end, it is a means. When yoga becomes the end, it is going to become a religion and I am going to be the prophet. With this note of warning I wish good luck to the convention.

– 15 November 1982, Puerto Rico,
Opening Speech of Convention



Purpose of Hatha Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

For most of you, hatha yoga and asanas are synonymous, but not for me. Hatha yoga is shatkarmas, then asanas and pranayamas are practised after that. After asanas, you have mudras and bandhas, in order to awaken the psychic forces, I mean the deeper mental forces. Then only you come to practise kriya yoga.

The purpose of hatha yoga is to prepare yourself for kriya yoga. If you don't believe me, please read the books on tantra. There are sixty-four texts on tantra, and out of these, quite a few have been translated into English, French, German, and maybe Spanish as well. *Mahanirvana Tantra*, *Vijnana Bhairava Tantra*, *Hai Vajra Tantra*, *Hema Vati Tantra*, *Ananda Lahari* and *Saundarya Lahari* have been translated and a few more.

I am going to talk about kriya yoga but I won't be able to finish it this morning. This is the tradition of all the hatha yoga practices. Mind is not something which you can control. You are trying to control the mind, but you are controlling the thoughts and not the mind.

When a bad thought comes into your mind, what do you do? You stop it. Are you controlling the mind? I am switching off this mike, am I controlling electricity? So do not talk about controlling the patterns of the mind; let us not talk about controlling the mind. Therefore, even after twenty years of meditation, you are only having psychic experiences; you do not have the power.

In meditation, are you escaping from the realities or are you awakening some sort of energy, which will feed your mind with extra power? The philosophy and the practices of kriya yoga are very clear on this point. They say, 'Look here, there is no point in trying to control the mind, because mind is a consequence, it is not an original object.'

According to Samkhya and other philosophies, mind is a composition of various elements and various items. How can you think of controlling the mind without controlling the physical energies and the physical elements? You try to control your mind, okay, and I will give you an injection of cocaine – see what happens. No, you will not be able to control it because mind is not thought; mind is not emotion; mind is not passion; mind is not exactly what we know.

Mind and body are interconnected. What happens to your sympathetic, parasympathetic system, cardiovascular system, to your kidneys, to your gall bladder or to your stomach? Everything goes to the mind and affects the mind.



Vipareeta karani mudra

I will close my speech here with a description of the first kriya of kriya yoga. I have one more chance and then I will tell you the next. The first kriya in kriya yoga is known as vipareeta karani mudra. *Vipareeta karani* means reverse, just as you reverse a car by putting the reverse gear and the car goes backward. In the same way, vipareeta karani mudra is putting you or something in your body in reverse gear.

Vipareeta karani mudra resembles sarvangasana but it is not exactly sarvangasana. The basis of this vipareeta karani mudra is cited in *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*. The text reads, 'From the moon, the nectar flows and the sun consumes it, and the yogi or practitioner dies a premature death, disease and decay. But the wise one reverses this order. He sends back the nectar without being consumed by the sun in the navel and sends it back to the higher centres.' That is vipareeta karani mudra.

In yoga they call it amrit. In tantra they call it bindu and elsewhere they call it ambrosia. This is a fine substance which is generated in the cranial passage, just below the centre where the Aryans or old type Hindus kept a bunch of hair.

In all the tantric texts, including *Ananda Lahiri* by Shankaracharya, there is a clear reference to this substance. Once I was involved in a research on glaucoma of the eyes through a certain poisonous principle. It was at that time, during the dissection, I personally saw that little place in the cranial passage exactly as described by Shankaracharya in his *Ananda Lahari*.

In hatha yogic practices, there is a mudra called khechari mudra. This mudra is practised in two different ways. One is for the young people of twelve or fourteen years of age, and the other is for anybody, all of you. The root of the tongue is snapped slowly and the tongue is elongated. After it is elongated, it is stuffed inside into the upper part of the epiglottis. The tongue actually excites a particular nerve which is situated in the upper nasal orifice and thereby sensations are sent or communicated to the higher centre in the bindu. Then this substance begins to flow.

It flows down and is controlled in vishuddhi chakra. Vishuddhi chakra is situated in the junction at the cervical plexus. The name is vishuddhi, which means refinery, and therefore; the colour of vishuddhi is purple. In Hindu mythology Lord Shiva is supposed to contain the poison in his throat. That is the point where the poisons are supposed to be refined into a pure substance.

When this fluid or substance enters into the body, it revitalizes every cell and each and every tissue. It's a sort of resurrection. In the Bible it is said that there is a ladder ascending from earth to heaven, it has seven rungs? Half the way you climb with open eyes and half the way you close your eyes. That is kriya yoga.

– 17 November 1982, San Juan, Puerto Rico

Introducing Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Yoga is primarily intended for those who are suffering physically, mentally or emotionally. It is not for the recluse or for those who have a healthy body, balanced emotions and tranquillity of mind. It is for those millions of people all

over the world who are suffering today. When we talk about yoga, we are not talking about a religion, mystical philosophy or about metaphysics. We are talking about a practical way of maintaining harmony between the three poles of human existence: the body, mind and spirit.

The concept of yoga is very simple; it is based on scientific principles and by its practice, a great change is created in the physical and mental structure of every person. Yoga was designed by our ancestors in a way that even modern man can find at least fifteen minutes from his busy life to devote to yoga. We have to move very fast in our modern society and our body has to cope with all the hectic activities of life. The demands are great with tensions mounting day by day; tensions in the family, tensions at the political level or on the national level and we are not able to maintain proper equilibrium. Due to this, various diseases have come up like hypertension, diabetes, migraine, coronary diseases, gastric problems and others. These diseases have come up on account of our failure to face the situations of life, and the practices of yoga give us the opportunity to create a balance in our system. The mind wanders and wavers; it does not know when to rest; during the daytime it is busy and at night, unconsciously, it is active.

The mind becomes sick on account of disturbances; it interacts with the physical body and influences the hormones, the digestive system and so on. If a man is sick, he goes to a doctor who tries to help him to the best of his capacity. He goes to a doctor of the mind who is also trying his level best to help him get out of that situation, but unless we have been able to train the very process of thinking and feeling, how can we stop the whole vicious circle? Therefore, in yoga, the first and foremost thing is the mind and to control the mind, to have mastery over the functions of the mind is the basic definition of yoga. We know one level of the operation of the mind, but the mind functions at various levels of our existence; there are other dimensions we don't know about and we don't know what to do with that. When your mind is functioning at

a particular level of existence, but you do not know that it is functioning like this, what can you do with it? Nothing. There is a dimension of mind where we know it is functioning, but still we are unable to control the flow.

When the mind creates tension within you, when you are worried about your business or about your family, is it possible for you to stop the mind from thinking about it? No. Even if you know that what you are thinking is wrong, still you cannot control the mind. You know very well that you are thinking unnecessarily; you know very well that this kind of brooding is not going to help you. You want the mind to stop, but it does not. What does this mean? It means that the mind is out of your control; it means that the reins of your mind are out of your hands. If this is the situation in life, that your own mind is not under your control, you can imagine what is going to happen.

Imagine you are driving a car, fast; there is a big truck coming and you want to reduce the speed. You move your foot to the brake, it does not work; you change gear, it does not work; nothing is working and the car is moving at a speed of 100 kilometres an hour. You do not want it to, but still it is moving. Do you know what is going to happen? An accident. And that is what is happening to every one of us. A disease in your body is an accident; cancer is an accident; ulcer is an accident; heart attack is an accident, all caused by the speed of the mind which you are not able to control.

It is not only control over the conscious mind, but you must also have control over the other phases of the mind. If you can control your thoughts by willpower, that is good. But can you control a dream? Can you control visions? No. It means that you have no control over that area of the mind, which is beyond your consciousness. You should be able to control the dreams, the hallucinations, the feelings and it is for this purpose that the whole of yoga has been systematically organized. Yoga, therefore, for all of us is a science of the whole mind. It teaches us what we have to practise, what we have

to do in order to obtain total command over the mind and its mysterious functions. Therefore, for the modern man we have organized the whole foundation of yoga into four parts: hatha yoga, the practice of asanas and pranayama; concentration, trying to focus the mind on one point; meditation in which we try to fuse our consciousness with the greater one; and lastly, the relaxation of the whole body, mind, nervous system and emotions which is done with yoga nidra.

We should try to set apart 15 to 20 minutes every day in the morning and at least ten minutes at night. During this period, we must do a few asanas and pranayama, a little bit of concentration and the practice of the mantra. This fifteen minutes of practice in the morning will keep you sufficiently fresh and energetic to cope with the tensions of your everyday life which you are going to face during the day. At night when you retire, devote at least ten minutes to the practice of your mantra, that is japa. This practice will balance the whole personality and you will have a sound sleep because you are sleeping after resolving the tensions of your body and mind with the help of mantra. In this modern life, when we are short of time and have a lot of duties to fulfil, it is definitely possible for all of us to devote half an hour from our life to the practice of yoga. This is one aspect.

Many scientists in the USA, Europe, India, Australia and Japan are working on the effects of yoga on coronary diseases, insomnia and hypertension. In the United States they are working on the effects of yoga in controlling the different brain waves. The conclusions have almost been drawn that yoga can be very helpful in many diseases, for instance asthma, rheumatism, migraine, diabetes and lung problems; the list is too long for me to state here. But let me say that the time has come, which the scientists have been telling us about, that yoga can help humanity as a science of therapy. This is really wonderful because all along people have been thinking that yoga is a science of mystics and once you practise yoga you are going to get out of family life and out of this world. That

is how yoga has been misinterpreted and defined, but today scientists are defining yoga in a different way.

They conducted a six-month experiment and studied the wave patterns of the brain during the chanting of *Aum*. When ‘Au’ was chanted, they detected alpha waves. When ‘mmm’ was chanted, they detected theta waves. This is the effect mantras or sounds can have, and every sound has an effect on the nerves and brain waves, both negative and positive. A mantra or sound can bring about physiological changes in the structure of the brain. Not only this, but a mantra can also affect the process of hormones in the body; it has been seen by scientists. Yoga must be understood in our modern age in relation to science and not in relation to religion.

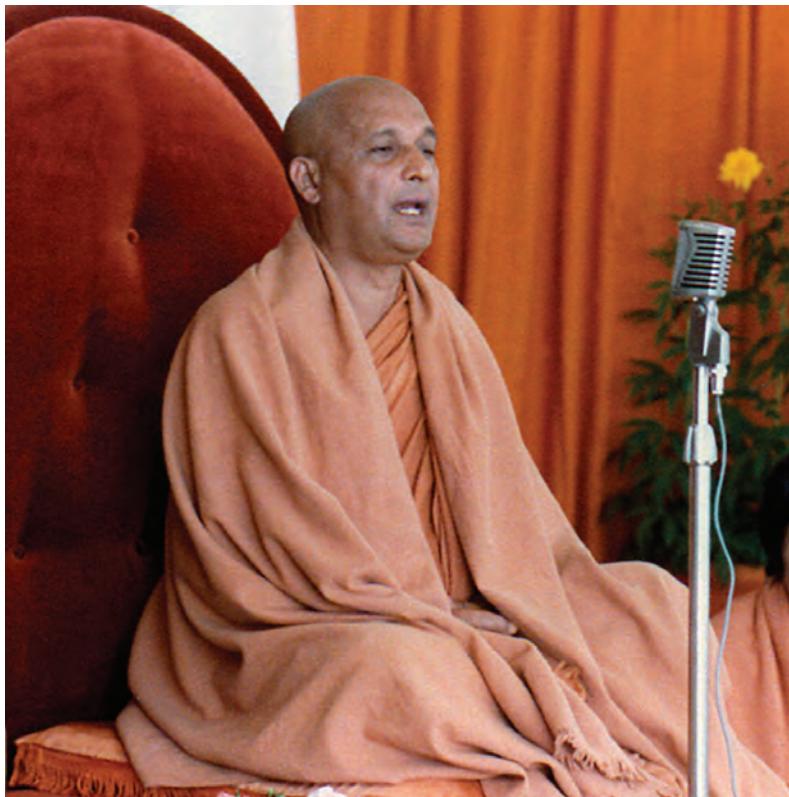
Yoga in this country has now taken strong roots, but please remember that we are not an institution of crazy brains. We believe in science and we believe in discipline. We believe in a process of education of mind and body. We also believe in the training of emotions. That is our system of education. It will be better if the system of yoga finds recognition not only from the people, but also from the government. If yoga can help boys get out of their crisis, if yoga can help anti-social elements to attain mental equilibrium, if yoga can help householders maintain a dignified approach to life, then I think yoga is doing a social service for your country. And if that be so, then not only the people, but also the government should recognize it.

We are not a movement of dissipated souls. We are very clear in our approach. Man is unhappy and he has to find his happiness himself; man is sick and he has to cure himself; man is groping in ignorance and he has to get out of it. This is a glimpse of the vision of yoga. Yoga was the culture of your continent, but you have forgotten it. I have come here to remind you of your culture, I have not come to preach yoga.

— 22 November 1978, Bogotá, Colombia

Overcoming Negativity

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Sri Krishna says, 'Oh, Arjuna, wake up from the state of mind, influenced by desire and jealousy.' Wake up from that state of mind which is deluded by conflicts. The conflicts are delusions, not reality. At another place, Sri Krishna says that desires and frustrations follow man all the time because not every desire is fulfilled. When the desires are fulfilled, it does not matter much to him. However, when the desires are not fulfilled, it matters. If you have twenty desires and eighteen are fulfilled and two are not, they will matter to

you. If you have eighteen desires and you get sixteen but you don't get two, it will bother your mind.

So, there are two forces. One is desire and another is frustration. Where there are desires, there ought to be frustration. Now, you ask a question, 'Well, my desires are fulfilled'. Are you sure? All of them? Yes, many desires are not fulfilled. What happens to you? You say, 'When my desires are not fulfilled, I am frustrated.' So, the first stage should have had a deeper influence or impact on the mind than fulfilment; and every action that you do in life has desired fulfilment, undesired fulfilment or mixed.

If a baby is born into the family and if the mother is dead, what are you going to do? Which will have impact, the birth of a baby or the death of the mother? Just imagine; you will not say you should laugh and weep at the same time. The mind will be influenced by the negative, not by the positive. This means that the mind has to be trained from negative situations and at the same time, when we are living in positive situations, we have to balance the mind.

What happens is you try to balance the mind in negative circumstances. When everything is unlucky, bad or frustrating, you are trying to balance your mind. This imbalance, this disharmony caused during positive moments of life will become your disqualification when you face the negative side of life.

When you have a lot of money, fame, friends and a good body, you do not try to train the mind. That is the disqualification within. The training comes when negative situations arise. You have to try to train the mind while you are in positive situations as well, only then you can face negative situations. Otherwise, if you try to face negative situations, there is tension. Desires and the resultant frustrations are known as gluttons, who eat too much. They consume every bit of peace of mind; they consume everything.

– 19 October 1980, Bogotá, Colombia

Interview with *El Colombiano*

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

What does life mean to you?

Life is the manifestation of nature towards the higher spirit.

What is the significance of nature and all its elements to a yogi?

A yogi appreciates nature because everything that is natural is in tune with the inner spirit. Everything created by man has been done so out of passions and desires and to conquer other nations and races. He has created them and is now suffering because of them. After creating big cities, people like to go away and come to a place like this. It is not only in Colombia, but everywhere in the world, they just get out of those things which they have created. Where do people go? They go to those places created by nature, because in those natural surroundings they are able to commune with their spirit.

What has been your greatest satisfaction in your life as a yogi?

I don't know, because I have always had a very balanced way of thinking, a very balanced way of life. From time to time there may have been ripples in my mind, never waves, never ups and downs. I had one facility, which was my ability to foresee the events of my life. If one is sure about life and the future events to come, why should one be worried and anxious. Still I participate in life. If I do not work, if I do not participate in life, then my followers will become lazy. It is not at all necessary for me to work because I do not want to achieve anything. I know that if I don't, all the followers behind me will become lazy as whatever elders do, the juniors follow them. The greatest satisfaction in my life is that everyone has given me maximum help. Whichever country I go to, everybody helps me. Even

the religious heads have faith and trust in me. Muslims, Christians everybody has faith in me.

Do yogis have taboos?

No, they discover and then they believe.

What is your opinion about people going to the moon and the attempts to go to outer space?

It is good, they will have more knowledge about outer space. They will know more about the atmosphere, stratosphere and other higher spheres and it will improve the philosophy of materialism. Scientists will be amazed to see how fine and subtle nature is. However, it would have been better if these programs had been delayed for a few more years. The sum of money which is being spent could have been used to scrap misery and poverty from poor nations. There is a lot of work which remains to be done; Europe, America, Australia are developed but Latin America, Africa, India, Southeast Asia and the Middle East are still under poverty. A concentrated effort could have been made to scrap diseases, illiteracy and poverty in this major part of the world, instead of flying into space.



Do you like Colombians very much?

I think Colombians like me.

Who brought you to Colombia for the first time?

I came in 1971. Before that, I met Dr Fernando Sanz in Paris, when he was serving in the diplomatic corps of Colombia. He invited me to Colombia. In 1971 I came here and met all my friends and all of you here.

– 4 December 1982, Medellín, Colombia

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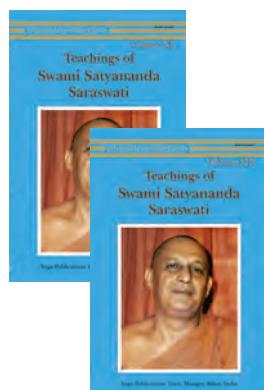
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Bihar School of Yoga Yogavidya Training

<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