

# YOGA

Year 14 Issue 8  
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## Hari Om

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### Useful Resources

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#### Apps:

(for Android and iOS devices)

Bihar Yoga  
APMB  
YOGA (English magazine)  
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FFH (For Frontline Heroes)

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## GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

### Self-enquiry

The student of yoga should develop correct habits. He should check all sorts of ambitions and the counter currents of the worldly desires by enquiry, thinking and discrimination. He should say unto the deceiving mind, “O Mind, I know your tricks. I have got dispassion and discrimination now. Do not wag your tail now. I will clip it off mercilessly. I have learnt many lessons. It is only ignorance that makes a man prefer a transient gain to permanent benefits. I do not want again these sensual enjoyments. I have resolved to attain the free, everlasting fruits of yoga, which are eternal peace, infinite bliss and supreme joy.”

—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 ॥

# Always Positive

*Swami Sivananda Saraswati*



As you think, so you become. As are your thoughts, so must be your life. The world around you is only what you believe it to be. Your circumstances and environment, your states of happiness and misery, are effects of your own thoughts. The limit of your thought is the limit of your possibilities.

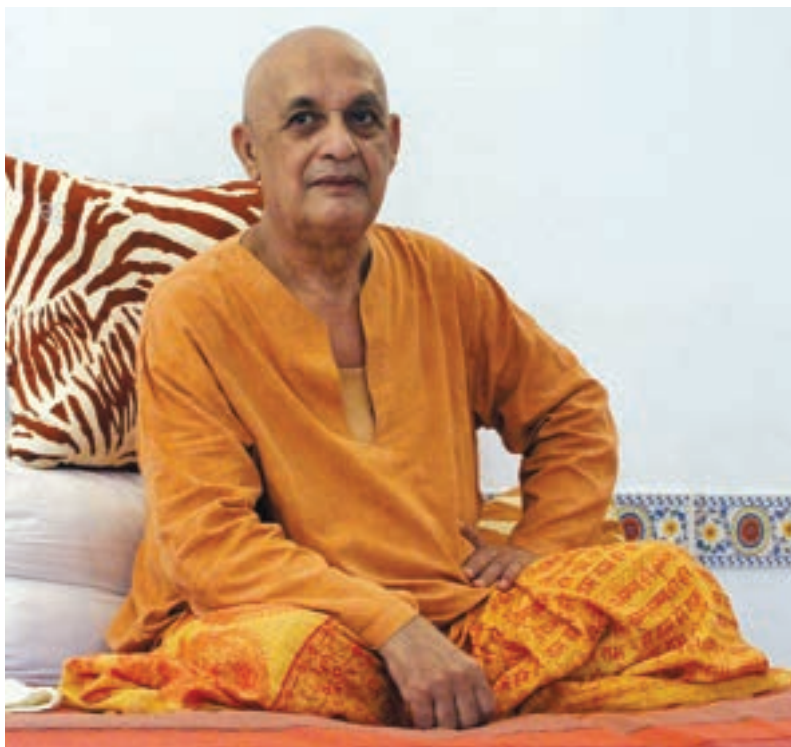
You can change your present state by your own thoughts. Improve your thinking. Better thoughts bring better actions. Entertain only thoughts that are helpful and useful. Useful thoughts are stepping-stones to spiritual growth and progress. People with negative moods of depression, anger and hatred

do positive injury to others. People with hope, confidence and cheerful spirits attract thoughts of a similar nature from others. They are a blessing to society.

The thoughts you create in your mind and the images you form in your daily life help you in making what you are or what you would become. Positive overcomes and overpowers negative. A positive thought drives off a negative one. Courage drives off fear. Love destroys hatred. Generosity drives away miserliness and greed. Magnanimity destroys petty-mindedness and jealousy. Unity annihilates separateness. Keep yourself always positive.

# The Haunting Question

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



A person on the path of jnana yoga must start to enquire. One of the most well-known enquiries is, 'Who am I?' This is the method that Ramana Maharshi suggested. If one answers the question with 'I am John Smith,' then one has not even started on the path of jnana yoga. One still has not emptied the mind of trivial, insignificant, superficial and logical answers. One's name is only a label to differentiate one socially from the neighbour who is perhaps called Fred Smith. The name is merely a means to an end which allows one's mail to reach. It is a marker, a label – it is not one's identity. One's name is not who one is.

To make progress in jnana yoga you have to throw out all definitions about your existence. You must be overwhelmed by the feeling that you do not know who you are. If you merely ask the question 'Who am I?', if you do not ask the question with intensity and the overwhelming need to know, then nothing will happen. If you ask the question like a parrot, then the implications of the enquiry will not penetrate the deeper layers of your being. This is why jnana yoga is difficult for most people; few people can become completely obsessed and filled with enquiry into their own nature.

Ramana Maharshi was a jnana yogi. He asked himself the question, 'Who am I?' He did not merely ask the question for five minutes every morning before breakfast. His whole being vibrated with the enquiry twenty-four hours a day, whether awake or asleep. The enquiry invaded and permeated his deeper being. The enquiry continued constantly, whether consciously or unconsciously. The question continued whether he was walking, sitting or talking. His whole being tackled the enquiry. His whole being was poised on the edge of a precipice. And the result? He realized his real nature. He became self-realized. This is the path of jnana yoga. It requires that a person has such a personality that he tenaciously clings to the enquiry and desperately needs to know the answer . . . as though everything depends on the answer.

It is not necessary to pose the question 'Who am I?' Any question can be asked, but it must be a question for which you desperately seek an answer. If you are really ready for the path of jnana yoga, then you probably don't need to pose the question. The question will already be there. It will be nagging at you from under the surface of your mind. If you have to sit down and ask yourself: 'What will be the question that I will ask myself?' then jnana yoga is not your path. There is no question that sufficiently obsesses you, and you do not deeply and seriously question the nature of your being and existence. If you have a question that haunts you day and night, then that question will be your vehicle in jnana yoga.

# Converting Knowledge

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



Vedanta is a system of thought, a philosophy in its own right. The followers of Vedanta can reach great heights by following its principles; however, it is simultaneously an open school of thought which says that the whole of creation can be seen as God: *Sarvam khalvidam Brahman* – “The whole of the visible and invisible creation is God.” Vedanta speaks of experiencing the existence of God in each and every thing.

It can begin with your mundane personal problems also. You do not need to have high-flying thoughts to practise jnana yoga. The thoughts can also be material, physical and sensual. Personal difficulties and handicaps can act as a catalyst for discovering your limitations, creativity, force of will and clarity of mind. If you are aware that all these little changes are happening, it is part of the process of jnana yoga. Whether it is jnana yoga, complete yoga or a different system of thought like Vedanta, Samkhya or Nyaya, the underlying factor in all these is the application of wisdom. Knowledge gets converted into wisdom when applied practically in life.

# Automatically Peace

*Swami Sivananda Saraswati*



Perfect security and full peace cannot be had in this world, because this is a relative plane. All objects are conditioned in time, space and causation. They are perishable. So where can you look for full security and perfect peace? You can find this in the immortal self. It is an embodiment of peace. It is beyond time, space and causation.

Real, deep peace is independent of external conditions. Real, abiding peace is stupendous stillness of the Immortal Soul within. If you can rest in this ocean of peace, all the usual noises of the world can hardly affect you. If you enter the silence or the wonderful calm of divine peace by stilling the bubbling mind and restraining the thoughts and withdrawing the outgoing senses, all disturbing noises will die away. Motor-cars may roll on the streets; boys may shout at the pitch of their voices; railway trains may run in front of your house; several mills may be working in your neighbourhood – and yet, all these noises will not disturb you even a bit.

Peace is the most covetable possession on earth. It is the greatest treasure in all the universe. Peace is the most important and indispensable factor for all the growth and development. It is in the tranquillity and quiet of the night that the seed slowly sprouts from under the soil. The bud opens in the depth of the most silent hours. So also, in a state of peace and love, people evolve, grow in their distinctive culture and develop a perfect civilization. In peace and calmness, spiritual evolution is facilitated.

### **Reform yourself first**

The 'peace' that prevails today is the peace of fear and the peace of preparation. Ignoring the sincere advice of wisdom, the great nations of the world are intent upon demonstrating their destructive strength. That way lies war, not peace.

No political 'ism' can ever solve the problem and bring about peace. All 'isms' are only the different hoods of the hydra-headed monster of selfishness-cum-egoism. When autocratic monarchs ruled over the nations, people thought that democracy would shower peace, plenty and prosperity upon earth. They dethroned the kings. Democracy also failed to yield the fruit of peace. Some people tried totalitarianism, socialism, communism – so many 'isms'. Each man thought that his solution alone was the best for the world. Each new 'ism' created only more problems and more quarrels.

Many are working today for the promotion of world peace, without having peace in themselves. Their loud propaganda, big talk and lectures cause more confusion, conflict and discord. All over the world, great conferences are held for bringing about universal brotherhood and a universal religion. It is the vanity of man that goads him to reform society without first reforming himself. Vanity rules the world. When two vain people meet, there is friction and quarrel.

This is also the case of social reform. Self-styled enlightened men started interfering with the customs and manners of people, in an effort to civilize them. The people lost their old moorings, and the reforms could not offer new, sound ones. Masses of people drifted away into chaos. How can blind men lead other blind men? You must acquire the Supreme Knowledge of the Reality. Then, and then alone, can you lead another on the right path.

You can elevate others only if you have elevated yourself. This world can be saved only by those who have already saved themselves. A prisoner cannot liberate other prisoners. One realized sage can do more for the promotion of peace than a thousand missionaries preaching and disputing, day in and day out.

Politics has its basis in sociology; sociology has its basis in individual personal development; individual personal development is governed by the philosophy and the religion that each man follows. The philosophy of the East considers man as the unit, and man is asked to perfect himself.

Reform yourself. Society will reform itself. Get worldliness out of your heart. The world will take care of itself. Remove the world out of your mind. The world will be peaceful. That is the only solution. This is not pessimism. This is glorious optimism. This is not escapism. It is the only way to face the situation. If each man tries to work out his own salvation, there will be nobody to create problems. If each man strives heart and soul to practise religion, to do sadhana, and to attain God-realization, he will have very little inclination and very little time to create quarrels. Automatically there will be peace on earth.

# Think About It

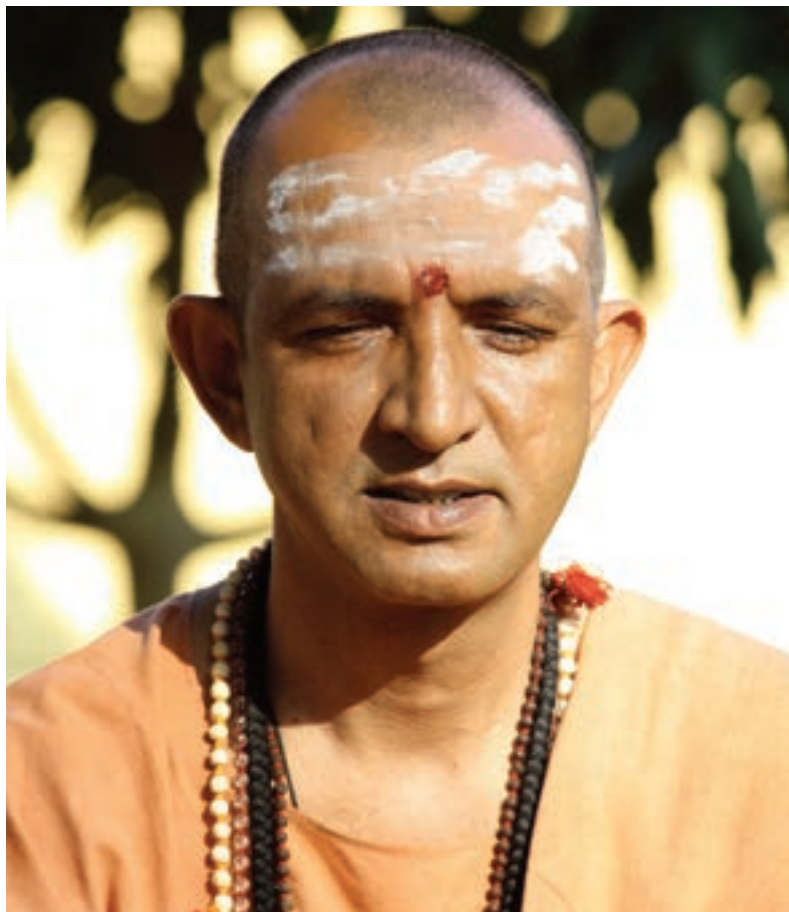
*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



Have you ever tried to listen to the obscure cry arising from the depths of darkness along the even more shrouded path of dense and impenetrable ignorance? Have you made an effort to bring a smile to the faces of those in despair, to uplift the downtrodden, to awaken enlightened culture, to end the rule of the unjust, to burn away blind faith and materialistic life and break the vicious cycle of sorrow and tears? Have you understood the meaning of seva? Have you been able to overcome violence? Have you been able to recognize humanity? Have you been able to always see only the good in everyone? Have you been able to accept the bright and pure nature of truth? Think about it!

# Desire and Reaction

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



*Sakshi bhava* or *drashta bhava* is the ability to observe oneself and maintain that state of awareness continuously for a long time. It is the state where one is able to say, 'I am observing myself, I am observing my behaviour, I am the witness of my karmas, I am the witness of my thoughts, I am the witness of my ambitions, I am the witness of every experience of mine.'

Again, the mind has to be trained to observe itself. There is a trick here. When you think, 'I want to become quiet', who is the one doing the thinking? It is the mind that is thinking. It is the same mind which is agitated and which desires peace and quietness. It seems to be a paradox that the nature of the mind is to be active and move all the time, but the desire of the mind is to be still.

You have to pick up on the desire of the mind, not the nature of the mind. That is the secret. If you identify with the mental movement, you will follow the trains of thought, wherever they take you. If you identify with the idea of peace, you hold yourself back and remain connected to that idea. You can observe the movement of the mind by being at one place. That is the drashta bhava or sakshi bhava.

One can never watch one's mind or oneself. One can only watch one's reactions: reactions which are physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual in nature. We live according to our nature. Action only happens when one creates a change for the betterment of oneself, and this idea of betterment is based on a broader vision of life. Actions related to motivated thoughts and desires are only reactions of the mind on the external plane.

Therefore, it is incorrect to say that one should observe the mind, and it is also incorrect to say that one should observe oneself. It is more appropriate to say, 'Observe your reactions, how you live, how you react to life, how you react to being what you are, without desiring to become something else.' That is the right terminology – one should observe one's reactions. The moment one is able to observe one's reactions, an understanding gradually dawns that one can make them better, more beneficial, more positive, more for universal rather than personal gain. In fact, the practices of yoga are devised in such a way that one is made to observe one's reactions.

Every action is followed by a reaction. You have to learn to accept both the action and the reaction by learning how to develop the drashta within, by becoming aware of the observer, the seer inside. Then experiences will cease to have any effect



on the mind. Just as you can see the effects of something happening outside, in the same way you can also experience the internal, unseen effects of the same events taking place, without becoming a victim to them. A gross example will convey the meaning. Eating is an external action: hand to mouth, the mouth chewing, and the food being swallowed. Here the external action stops. Then the internal action begins, the process of digestion. How it happens, you do not know. You might be doing anything, sleeping, jumping up and down or travelling, but the digestive process is going on. No matter what you do, digestion goes on and there is no way you can stop it.

When you become the *sakshi*, the observer of yourself, and that faculty of observation is continuous, constant and does not dissipate or fluctuate, then you become centred. Everything should be taken as an opportunity to observe and reprogram the mind. Your mind becomes centred and there is an experience of peace and harmony.

# Features for Self-Culture

*Swami Sivananda Saraswati*

1. Culture is the blossoming of the spiritual Consciousness.
2. Culture is that which is related to the Good, which springs from the good and also promotes the good.
3. Goodness of being and doing constitutes the rock bottom of one's life.
4. The gospel of life is a gospel of non-attachment, of the immortality of the soul, of the ultimate liberation of the soul.
5. Truth is the basic law of life. Truth is a means and the goal ultimate.
6. Truth is justice, fair play and adherence to the fundamental laws of ethics of right conduct.
7. Truth is the law of life; falsehood is the law of death.
8. Practice of truth is the greatest penance.
9. Truth is the law of unselfish love for the individual and the world alike.
10. Truth and love do not clash with each other.
11. Love is the greatest healing power in the world.
12. Love is the law of life.
13. Love can hope where reason would despair.
14. Love thinks of no evil, asks nothing for itself in return, imputes no motive and sees only the bright side.
15. Love is selfless service, mercy, compassion, fellowship, helpfulness, understanding, tolerance and goodwill.
16. Self-sacrifice, charity and asceticism are the very bases of wellbeing.
17. The foundation of yoga is self-control.
18. Aspire. Sit alone. Meditate. Be vigilant.
19. Inertia is your worst enemy.
20. Intolerance is the bane of religion.
21. Unselfishness and inward peace are the distinct features of self-culture.

# Life Has to be Lived

*From Karma Sannyasa, Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati*



From the moment you are born into this world, you are compelled to act. If you had no desire to act, you would not take birth, but as the architect of your own life, you have to make a firm decision regarding the kind of life you are going to create for yourself. Remember that you are the sole creator of the heaven or hell in which you live.

The life you have been born into is the medium for you to express your higher faculties and dormant potential. Life is a treasure trove full of opportunities, but by the time you realize its importance, most of your life has been spent. The secrets, the mysteries, the bliss, the heaven, are all within your grasp in this very life, but you miss out on them due to your lack of discrimination.

I will tell you a story which illustrates this. One morning before sunrise a fisherman went to the river. Near the bank he felt something hard under his feet. He picked it up and, fumbling in the darkness, concluded that it must be a bag of stones. He was waiting for daylight to break in order to start the day's work. Immersed in thoughts and anxieties, he absentmindedly picked up a stone from the bag and threw it into the water. Plop! came the sound. He mused over it and threw in another stone. In this way, to amuse himself he started to toss away all the stones, one by one.

Slowly the sun rose and by the time it was light, the fisherman had flung away all of the stones. Only one was remaining in his hand. His heart almost failed him when he looked down and saw there, shining in all its lustre, was a beautiful diamond. He cursed himself many times over when he realized that in the darkness, lost in his sorrows, he had thrown away many rare gems. Full of remorse, he sobbed, cried and went almost out of his mind with grief. Accidentally he had encountered a mass of wealth which could have enriched his life many times over, but in the darkness, unknowingly, he had flung it all away.

For most of us, too, there is darkness all around. Time ebbs away, and the sun never rises. So we throw away the gems of life without ever realizing their value. Life is a bag of precious gems, but in ignorance and darkness we take it for granted that life is nothing but a collection of worthless stones. If you have a mind to see, you will find there is a lot of good in life. In every situation, there is a mine of riches and wealth, but you regard it as worthless stones simply to be thrown away.

Throughout life you are moulded by the way you think. Ultimately it is your attitude towards each event and situation in life which makes or mars you. It changes and shapes your life and helps you to awaken your soul. Your attitude towards life influences the path of your further evolution. When you realize that your attitude towards life will mould you for the future, you may immediately try to change your way of thinking. You may begin to view life from a completely different standpoint.

The problem does not lie in your husband or wife, your child, your parents, your home, your wealth, your happy or unhappy circumstances; it lies within yourself. Change yourself and automatically your whole life changes. Just as the whole world is bathed in light when the sun rises, in the same way, you can brighten your life with the intense flames of discrimination and proper understanding. To adore life is the greatest sadhana.

# The Teaching of Yoga

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



A gardener has a small piece of barren land. He wants to convert it into a beautiful garden. So he has to prepare the land, remove the weeds and rocks, mix the earth, break the dry earth and prepare the ground. When the soil is ready, he brings the seeds, plants them and looks after them until they are able to flower and give fruit. If a gardener goes through such a process to create a garden of his liking, then why don't you bring this concept of gardening into your life?

Therefore, become a gardener of your life. The moment you can become a gardener of your life, your life potentials will develop spontaneously, automatically, naturally, for they are contained, inherent inside, waiting for the right opportunity to manifest. You have to give this right opportunity to yourself. When you are running around in your life, what is the aim behind it? Is it success, economic security, becoming famous in society, playing a positive role in the evolution and creation of

society? Whatever effort a person makes, the aim behind it is that there be name, fame, happiness, contentment, prosperity, peace. This is what you wish for in your race in life, from birth to death.

The mental conditioning created as a result of this wish proves to be a hindrance in the development of your mind. The central point of yoga is development of the human mind. This aim should be considered the foundation of yoga, and the method of mind development in yoga is related to your behavioural, social, and material life. If you can understand this relationship, then, according to yoga, life becomes meaningful and you can identify your intentions and goals. The basic character of a human being is to seek material, financial, emotional, intellectual and social fulfilment. The drive and effort of everyone is to attain prosperity. Prosperity is a goal of life, fulfilment and satisfaction are goals of life, and your effort is to experience the goal. When the search for prosperity, peace and contentment falter, the results are undesirable.

You have to come back to the basic idea – your life. You have to see your mind as a field on which you can work. If you simply ignore the field and do not cultivate the good, the appropriate, eventually what will happen is there will be an overgrowth of weeds and the land will become unusable for some time until you are able to remove the weeds.

### **Focus on the mind**

In your life, in the drive for prosperity, fulfilment, contentment and satisfaction in the material world, you ignore a basic rule governing human life. You have never considered the development of mind to be important, rather you have considered the development of intellect to be important for your progress, success and security in life. However, the intellect is only one part, one small component of the mind. The focus and foundation of yoga is to develop the entire mind. Unless and until you begin to work with your mind, the mind is not utilized, for what you think does not reflect the functions

and the activities of the mind. What you desire does not reflect the nature of the mind. What you think are thoughts that come to the surface of your mind, what you desire are aspirations and ambitions, and you seek their immediate fulfilment – or in the near future.

According to yogic traditions, the mind is composed of ego or *ahamkara*, intellect or *buddhi*, analysis and the power of reflection or *manas*, and *chitta*, the memories and impressions in our psyche throughout the course of our life. Intellect, memories, ego and the ability to reflect are the four aspects of the human mind, out of which you have emphasized the development and activation of intellect. You have not been able to regulate or manage the activities of ego. You have not been able to manage or utilize the wisdom contained in your memories. You have not been able to use properly the power of analysis and reflection. Today, despite having so much knowledge, understanding and wisdom around, you are still ignorant of the basic facts and conditions of life. According to yoga, to improve the quality of life, you have to focus on the mind, which is the engine. Just as the car cannot run without its engine, in the same way, your life becomes redundant if it is not guided by the powers of the mind. It is the management and development of the mind potential which is the aim of yoga, according to classical scriptures.

Maharishi Patanjali, who codified raja yoga, represents a tradition of the Indian civilization in which yoga had already come to its apex. Yoga was well known to everybody, and therefore the teachings of Maharishi Patanjali are in the form of *sutras*, small sentences, not in the form of books, scriptures or essays. These sutras or statements indicate that the knowledge of people of that time was such that just by being given a hint they would understand.

What is yoga? *Atha yoga anushasanam* – instruction and guidelines on yoga, disciplines that can be followed, implemented and incorporated. What is the outcome of these disciplines? *Yogaschitta vritti nirodhah* – attainment of mental balance. What happens after you attain inner, mental

balance? *Tadaa drashtuh svaroope'vasthaanam* – then you realize your true nature. These three statements of yoga are the most important and crucial statements which define the entire philosophy, theory and practice of raja yoga. If the mind is not stimulated, focused, concentrated and made positive, it will fall into negative traps which come through association with the outside world.

### **Negative traps**

What are the negative traps? There is a beautiful statement in the *Bhagavad Gita* which explains (2:62–63):

*Dhyaayato vishayaanpumsah sangasteshoopajaayate;  
Sangaat sanjaayate kaamah kaamaatkrodho'bhijaayate.*

When a man thinks of the objects, attachment to them arises; from attachment desire is born; from desire anger arises. (62)

*Krodhaadbhavati sammohah sammohaatsmritivibhramah;  
Smritibhramshaad buddhinaasho buddhinaashaatpranashyati.*

From anger comes delusion; from delusion the loss of memory; from loss of memory the destruction of discrimination; from the destruction of discrimination he perishes. (63)

The *Bhagavad Gita* explains the relationship of the individual with the world of objects, and what the association with the object creates within you. It creates a craving, desire, it creates a like. That desire becomes your goal which you try to attain. You struggle and make an effort to attain that desire to fulfil your ambitions and aspirations. When there is difficulty in achieving what you have aspired for, frustration sets in. When frustration sets in, the aggressive nature manifests and then you lose your clarity of mind. This description of the mental state of the individual in relation to the outer world is the most clear description.



When you live in the world, you cannot live without establishing a relationship with the objects of the world; even if you are a renunciate, you also have to live in the world and establish a relationship. When that relationship is established, emotions, hopes, expectations get fused and thoughts are fused with it. With these thoughts comes the colour of expectations, a disease of humanity that no one has ever been able to end. You have expectations from your elders, those younger to you, from your husband, wife, children, friends, acquaintances; you live with expectations from everyone.

When these expectations are not met, you are sad, distressed, disturbed, excited, angry. The mind is confused and this is called stress. When mental states, frustration, restlessness or excitement influence your thoughts and behaviour, the mind is filled with negativity, envy, dislike, disgust, greed. These are considered negative traits. If they enter your life, what will happen to your character, personality and mentality? When the mind is caught up in external objects, you have to endure the influence of those objects. This becomes the reason for the negative state of mind, and the negative state of life, the

distress in your life. According to yoga, if you can recognize the restrictions and limitations of your life and want to make an attempt to find satisfaction, contentment, happiness and peace, you will have to fine-tune your own mental states, behaviours and thoughts, the weeds of your mind. Removing the weeds from the garden of life is the process of yoga. Here yoga begins.

### **Fine-tuning the mind**

If you look at the classical scriptures of yoga, the practice of yoga does not begin with asana or dhyana. In his ashtanga system of yoga, Patanjali defined it clearly: start with yama and niyama. In the *Yoga Sutras* Patanjali defined eight stages of yoga: yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi. In this sequence, it is clear that the mental modification, the fine-tuning of your personality begins when you start to practise the yamas and niyamas. Health is attained when you practise asanas. Vitality is generated when you practise pranayama. The mind is brought under control when you practise pratyahara. You train your mind to become focused and one-pointed when you practise dharana.

To change the basic quality and nature of the mind, to remove the weeds from the mind, you have to start with the practice of yamas and niyamas which rectify the negative traits of human personality. This is the system of yoga that the seers of the past have seen as a means to learn how to deal with the mind which is interacting with the outer world.

The first method in mind control is to regulate the material, external relationships and behaviours, for which yoga teaches the yamas. Until these external relationships are regulated, envy, disgust, dislike, desire, anger, crookedness, fraudulence and greed will certainly be expressed in life. Therefore, the concept of fine-tuning is that you are aware of the behaviour of the mind, and slowly try to develop its positive traits.

You are searching for whatever is good in life – and you can bring about the expression of that goodness in life. There is

nothing in that search that you can get only externally. When the search is complete, there is satiation – the mind, the heart, the spirit is satiated. Until the search is complete, there is no satiation. Somewhere there is a thought ‘I want to continue this search.’ The qualities that you search for and desire in life lie within you, only under the influence of tamas you are not able to express them.

### **Review of the Day**

Where there is talk of love, selfishness enters; where there is talk of learning, selfishness is there; where there is talk of treatment, there too is selfishness. In other words, everyone is inundated with selfishness, and it is this selfishness that troubles everyone. You need to modify this selfishness a little and how do you do that? There is an easy way that you can practise in your daily lives.

Every night, when you go to bed, do something before falling off to sleep and that will be your yoga. Visualize everything that happened to you during the day. What did you do when you woke up in the morning, whose face did you see first, what did you do first, what did you eat for breakfast, what did you drink, who did you talk to and about what, what did you read in the newspaper, what impressed you, what did you ignore? Revisit your day on your mental screen, and contemplate: if the same situation, person, opportunity or event were to occur again, how would you deal with them in a better way. You have an argument with someone, and you come back home in anger, and that same anger goes to bed with you. You cannot sleep, and your subconscious mind has to deal with the same anger when you are asleep. You get up the next morning with an angry state of the mind, with the same emotion, for you cannot accept and release it. For good physical or mental health, it is essential that you release it.

You eat food and take the necessary energy from it, and the waste matter is expelled, it doesn't stay inside. If the waste matter stays in the body, then the toxins increase, you will have

constipation, indigestion, gas. Therefore, just as it is necessary to expel poisonous matter from the body, in the same way it is necessary to expel the negative elements from the mind. The emotion with which you go to sleep, the thought and situation that you carry with you, is breeding a special tension in your subconscious mind: it is breeding stress.

It is also related to your work-efficiency, as it beats your mental and intellectual talent. When you revisit the events of the day at night, you can learn from them, namely that there could have been another way of dealing with the same situation. If you can do this every day, for one month, two months, three months, you will see that there is change in your thinking, behaviour and responses. This is called yoga.

### **Science of life**

In India too people have begun to consider yoga a physical science only. This is wrong. Yoga is not a physical science, it is a life science, it is a way to excel in life. Therefore, do not think that meditation, doing asanas and thinking good thought is yoga. No. These can be different parts of yoga, the same way that your body is made up of different nerves and cells. Which one of them is important, which is secondary? None. Whatever part causes sickness becomes important. If you have an upset stomach, then you treat that, and that is what is important to you. If your mind is upset, you treat your mind, and that becomes important to you. Whichever part of the body is diseased becomes important for you. There is nothing like primary, secondary; everything has its own function.

If you see yoga as a life science, then asanas play a small part in it. One-tenth of yoga is asana, not more, and five percent is pranayama. Yoga is an immensely vast science, which can influence every dimension of the personality. Therefore, if at night before going to sleep, you try to remove stress and anger from your mind, then that too is an exercise of yoga. You have to believe in it. If we are able to remove despondency and tension, we are yogis. Until we are able to do

so, we are bhogis with our happiness, sadness, likes, dislikes, disgust, greed – everything is there. Therefore, at night, all of you do an analysis of your day; analyze every interaction that you had, your every behaviour. Watch as you watch a movie on a screen, the same way, objectively. Observe the events that happened to you during the day and try to find a better way to deal with that situation or event the next time it happens in your life. The next time it happens to you, if you remember, your responses will be different and you will be less affected by the stresses, pains, sufferings, dissatisfactions and frustrations.

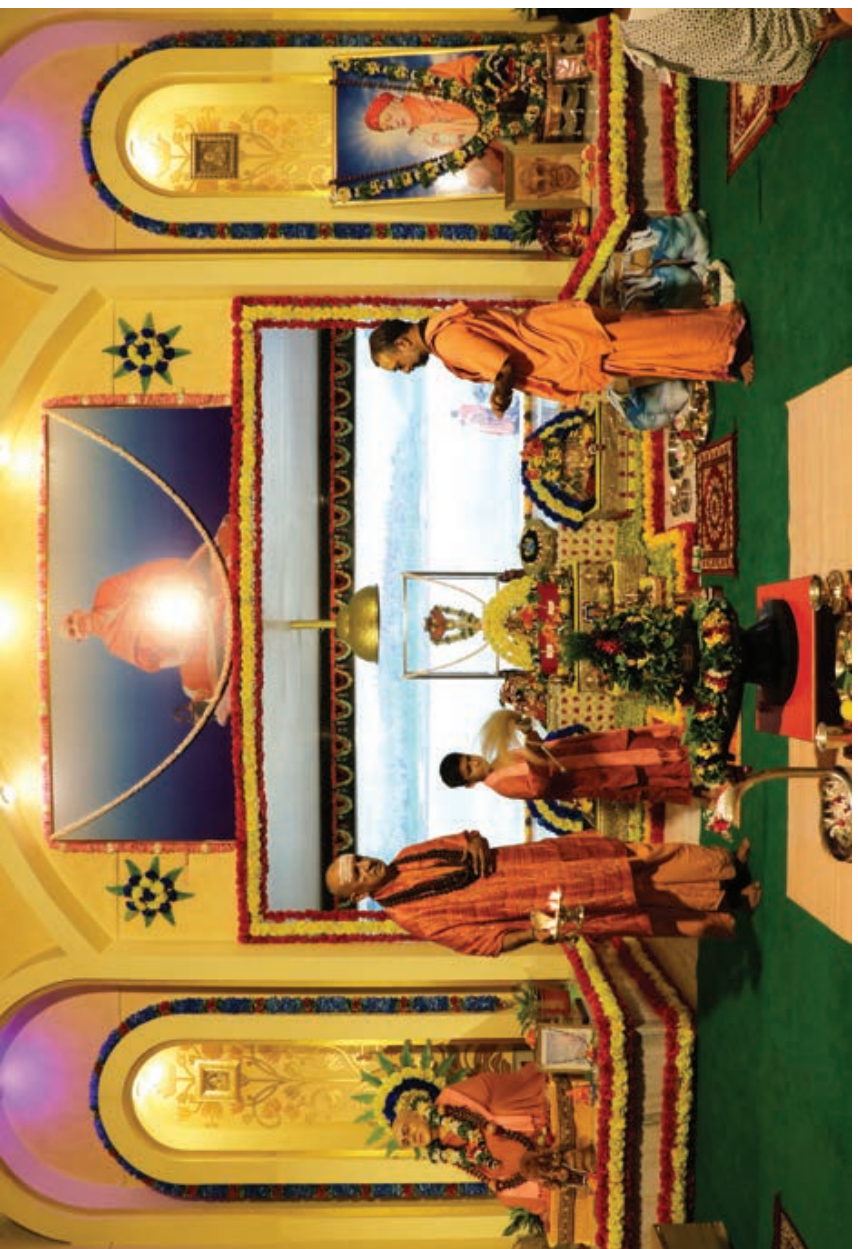
Our guru, Swami Satyananda has always said, especially to his sannyasins, that there are no simple solutions in life, only intelligent choices. There are never any easy solutions, yet for anything in the world there are various possibilities from which you have to choose one. That possibility should be proper and befitting for you, and to search for it you have to remain aware. You can bring this awareness into your life through meditation.

The process which takes you towards salvation is not meditation, yet the process that can make you aware of yourself is. Meditation begins from awareness of yourself. How do you become aware of yourself? You should know what you did, you should know whatever you are doing, you should have control over what you want to do. You can achieve this condition through the practice of the review of the day, your self-analysis. From there you achieve fine-tuning of yourself. When you begin to analyze and see your reactions, you also spot your weaknesses.

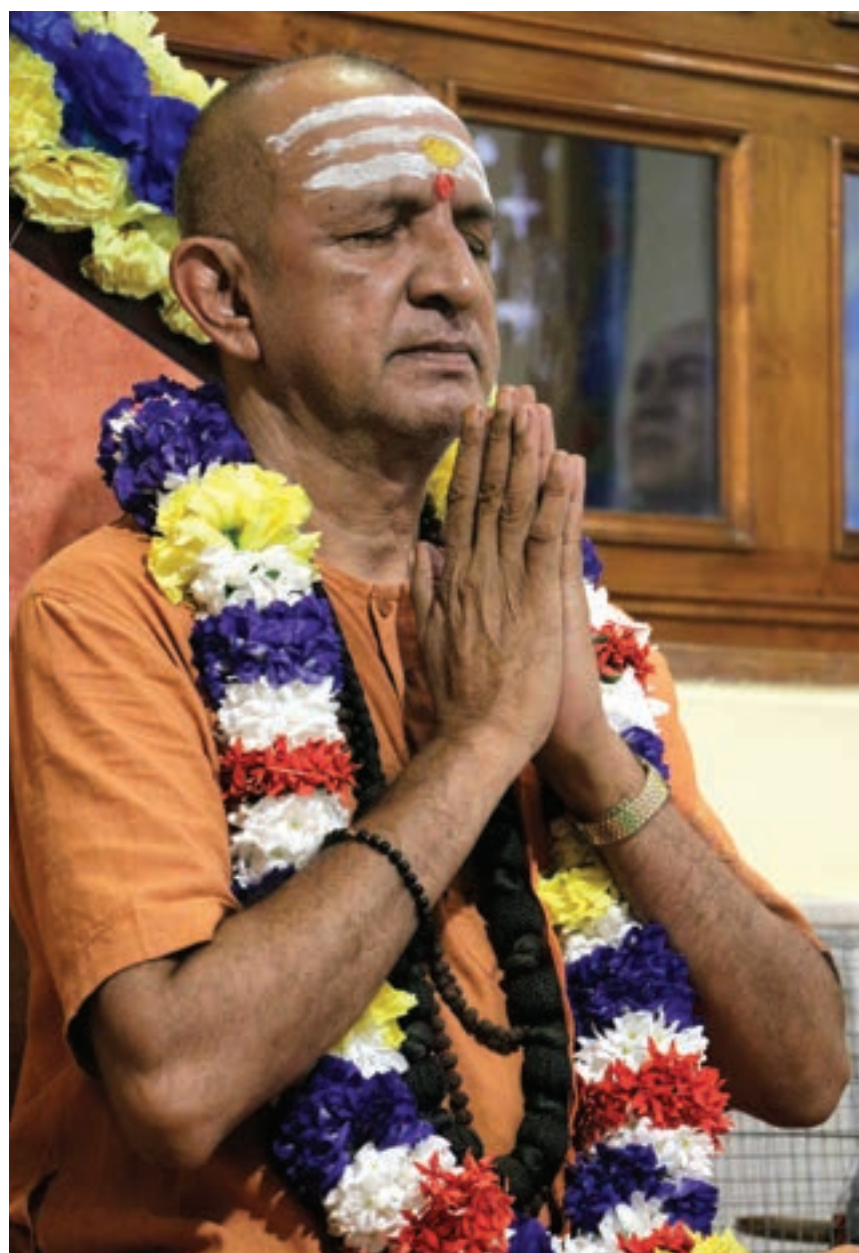
### **SWAN analysis**

You have to realize that you, in one way or the other, express your strengths and weaknesses in life. You follow principles and these principles govern your life, moment to moment. What are these principles? Strength governs and controls your life, weaknesses, ambitions and needs control your life.











Strength and weakness are together, for one weakness can be overcome by cultivating an appropriate strength and quality. Often you ignore the strength and identify with the weakness, and when you identify with the weakness you do not know how to respond or act since you have identified with the weaker component of your nature, not the stronger component of your personality.

Similarly, needs and ambitions go hand in hand for many a time, you confuse your ambition to be your need, and your need to be your ambition. When there is no discrimination

between the two, you do not know how to prioritize your life. Sometimes, you are chasing your ambition, thinking it to be your need, and sometimes, ignoring your ambition, thinking it is not a need. There has to be proper cultivation of wisdom which will happen in this meditative process analyzing your strengths, weaknesses, ambitions and needs and observing yourself interacting and responding in normal situations. You are the person who has to face the environment of society and deal with every situation. Therefore, it is important that you devote ten minutes to this practice of self-observation and modification of your mental behaviour. This is the beginning of your yogic journey, which leads you to cultivating the positive qualities of life.

### **Plant the right seeds**

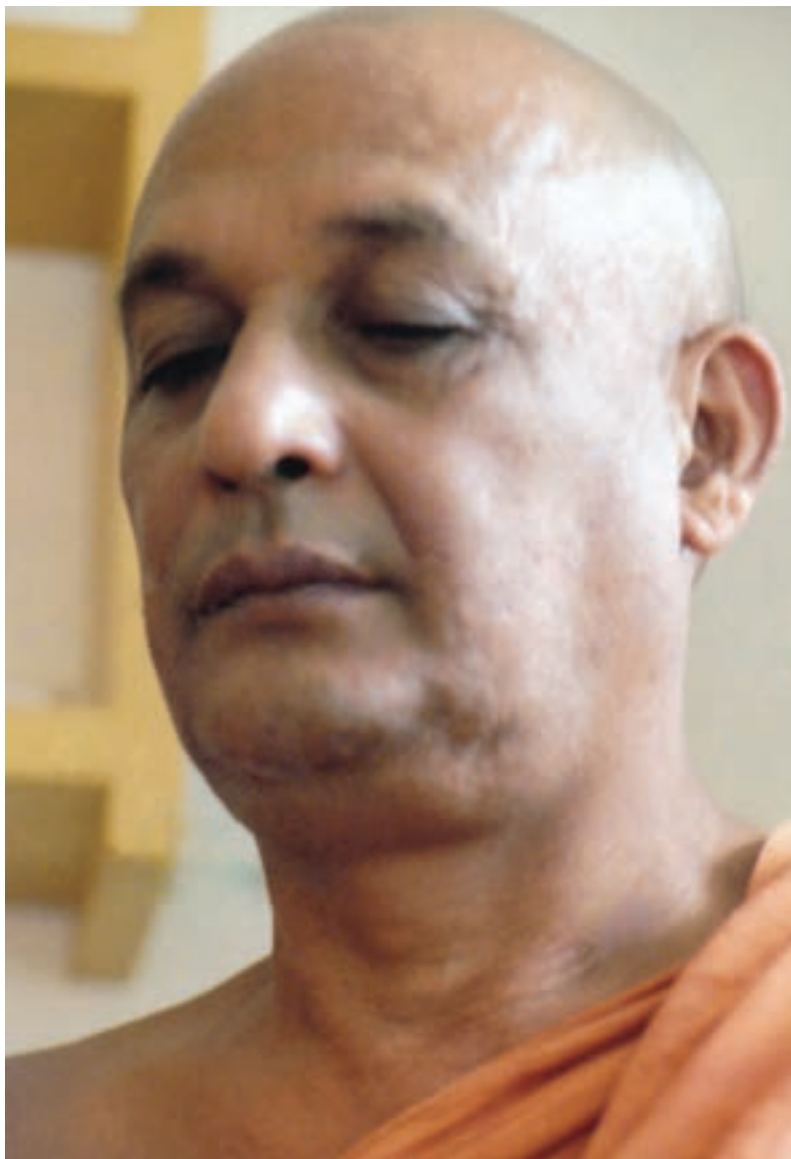
For this reason, be a farmer, plant and protect the right seeds. You have to develop the courage to live your life the way you want to, with conviction, faith and strength. The system of yoga provides you with these opportunities. If you are able to understand and adopt yoga in your life routine, definitely the human personality will be transformed. There is no doubt about it, yet you have to have that attitude and bent of mind in which you are able to realize and balance the material and internal dimension at the same time. You need to have that particular aspiration.

Begin your yoga at night by observing the events of the day, try to be aware of the decisions and thoughts that come to you at night when you are thinking about the situations. In this way, the quality of your mind will change. It will become more creative, positive, optimistic. It is the optimistic positive mind which progresses, not the pessimistic restrictive mind. If you can control your desires, the superior qualities of life manifest in your behaviour and thoughts, and society will be inspired by those. This is the teaching of yoga.

*– 5 August 2005, Ramjas College, Delhi*

# Vrittis

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



There are two types of introversion, *vishayakara vritti* and *brahmakara vritti*. *Vishayakara vritti* means the tendencies of the mind in the frame of sensuality. During introversion the mind and its patterns assume the shape of the *vishayas*, the sensual objects. In *brahmakara vritti*, the mind and its patterns assume the shape of Brahman, that is the cosmic awareness, the divine awareness, God awareness or spiritual awareness. In yoga, introversion is known as *antar mukha*.

When the person whose mind is in the frame of *vishaya* becomes introverted, he is the loser and society is the loser. He achieves nothing. He comes out only to balance his psychological state. However, when one who has developed the *brahmakara vritti*, the spiritual awareness, becomes introverted, he comes out with jewels, valuable ideas, philosophies, accurate decisions, and so on. Introversion has to be defined.

The mental tendencies must remain in the frame of spiritual consciousness and then this *antar mukha vritti*, introverted tendency, becomes the most precious *vritti*. If a spiritual-minded person becomes *antar mukha*, his senses are withdrawn, he is not the loser and society is not the loser. However, if an unevolved person, who has not worked through his emotions and passions – hatred and jealousy, *raga* and *dvesha* – somehow, due to some shock, neurosis, deep-rooted attachment, or sensual passions, becomes introverted, he reverts to darkness. He is the first loser, his family is the second loser and society is the third loser.

A clear distinction has to be made between the introverted personality and introversion in the spiritual personality. There are people who live in fantasies. They may have fantasies for money, enjoyment, name and fame, or anything. They live in a world of their own. That is not *brahmakara vritti*, that is *vishayakara vritti*, as their mind is assuming the shape of enjoyment or ordinary sensual enjoyments. In yoga it is *antar mukha vritti* in relation to *brahmakara vritti* that is being emphasized.

# Confidence

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*

You go through many layers of mental experiences, trying to overcome the negative expressions of the personality, the conflicting thoughts, the feelings of insecurity, loss, connecting with the source of inner strength, developing a relaxed state, developing a focused state of mind.

Just as you identify with the world and attach yourself, there is also an internal identification with the inner self. Just as you feel threatened and insecure when something external is shaking your connection, there is also insecurity when something happens internally and it changes your life, your mind and your attitude.

When you become natural, when there is no imposed projection of an image, when you are able to guide and control the energies in motion within you, you are able to cultivate the positive, optimistic and qualitative form of life. Confidence is knowledge, understanding and awareness of your strengths and ability to deal with a situation. When you know you are the master of the circumstance or event and can control it, and you have the wisdom to know what is right and wrong and act according to dharma, that is confidence.



# Questions and Answers

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



## **Why is it necessary to have no desires?**

The world says, 'Follow your desires.' Spiritual life says, 'Step away from your desire.' We all have desires, and all these desires are tamasic desires. Each desire is for self-gratification; it is not a selfless desire. The desires which seek personal, sensorial, sensual gratification have to be balanced. The negative desires have to be channelled, and the sattwic, positive desires have to come to the forefront. This is the journey.

To be desireless is not possible, but to control desires is very possible. Somebody had asked Sage Buddha, 'How do you know that one is progressing in meditation and spiritual life?' He said, 'If the cravings of the mind become less, if the desires of the mind become less, you are progressing on the path.' If the desires do not become less, remain in their intensity, and still seek self-gratification, then there is no progress. Sage Buddha gave that as an indication of your development in spiritual life.

This is definitely true. Who is saying, 'I want to be desireless.' Who is saying, 'I have desires.' They are two sides of your own mind. One side which is looking to the world, and the other side of the coin is looking to the back. We are looking to the world, from the head side, outside. Our engagement is in the world.

For those who want to do that, it is perfectly fine. People have been doing that for thousands of years, living and enjoying the world, with all the wealth and prosperity, frustration, pain and suffering – everything is there. You can give vent to your desires as much as you want. You can choose never to be satisfied. If you have ninety-nine, you will want one hundred. If you have one hundred, you will want hundred and one. You can choose never to be satisfied on the outside. That defines our normal character.

Then there are certain people, who are spiritually inclined or spiritually aware. Instead of looking out for their own engagement, involvement and gratification, they begin to look at something different which is not common. When they look inside, the desires which are linking them with the external sense objects are cut. Your engagement with the world reduces while you are looking inside. So, there is already reduction of your expectations. In that reduction of your expectations, you will discover peace.

When people meditate and there is disconnection, they feel very peaceful and comfortable, and say, 'I have never felt like this before.' Otherwise, from the time you wake up until the time you go to sleep, and while you are sleeping, you are constantly engaging yourself with the senses and the sensorial world. In the waking state there is no disconnection, and in sleep also there is no disconnection. The subconscious and unconscious conditions prevail.

When we look inwards, the other side of the coin, then the whole mind-set is different. There is no sense object with which you have to connect. You are not visualizing pizza or any kind of good food. You are observing your breath or you

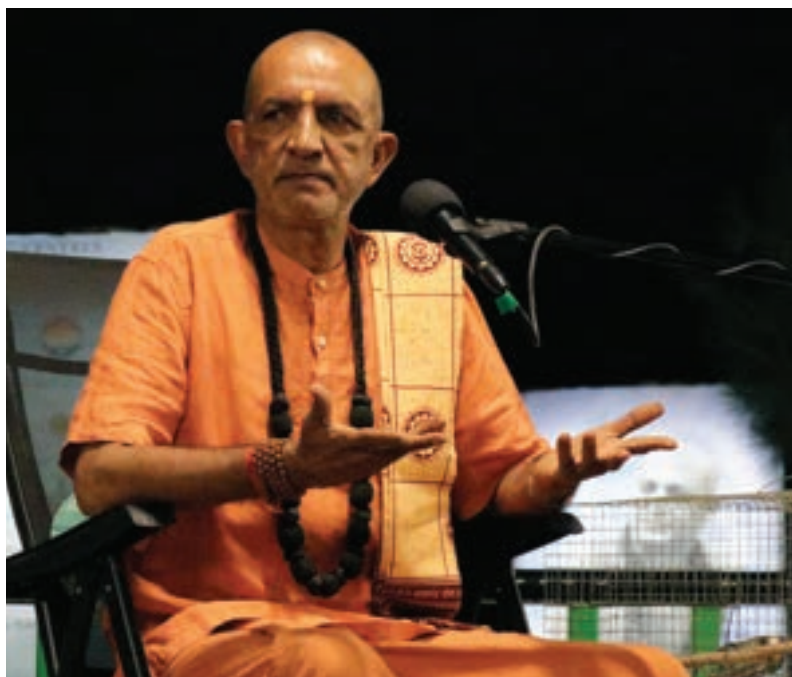
are saying your mantra. It is a totally different activity, where there is no experience of craving. With eyes open, I can crave all the time: 'I like your clothes, I like her watch, I like his mala, I like his glasses, I like his tattoos . . .' I can look at everything and continue thinking, 'This could happen, this could happen, or I can also do this, you can also do that . . .' and you go on a head-trip. With eyes closed, you can only go on an internal trip.

In a natural process, the desires become less. If you do not want to leave the desires, do not leave them. If you want to experience spiritual awareness, the spiritual condition, you have to experience that aspect of yourself, which can disconnect itself from its associations with the external sense objects. That is the meaning of the words, 'reduction of desires'.

**I cannot be a one hundred percent happy, because there is so much suffering in the world. How can I work with this feeling through yoga?**

You are saying that you cannot be one hundred percent happy because there is so much suffering in the world. How can you ever be happy by looking at the world? If you see the world, you will see the condition of the world. If there is suffering, you will see suffering. If there is war, that is what you will see; if there is pain, that is what you will see. Anything that you see outside is not going to give you satisfaction or happiness, as there is total disharmony. Happiness and peace are experienced when there is harmony; not in a disharmonious condition of either civilization, society, nation, or the individual.

When do you feel peace? When you feel that your mind and emotions are at rest. If the mind and emotions of people are at rest, there will be global peace. If you say, 'I cannot be happy because the world is suffering,' then you have missed the point. You are not working on yourself. You are simply crying, as you feel you are unable to deal or cope with what you are observing. That represents your weakness. Either be weak or be strong; the choice is yours. Our environment, our society, our family, our profession are creating stressors in our



life. Sometimes they are strong enough to shake our internal balance. You can be happy, but to be one hundred percent happy, do not look at the world. Look at the universe and expand your vision.

Look at the universe and realize the presence of divinity, God in the universe, and then you will be happy. If everything is contained in God, and God is contained in everything, then why are you sad? Either you believe in God, or you do not believe in God. Therefore, all the spiritual traditions speak of God; not because God is a good selling point. Anyway, there is no need to sell God, if the realization is that there is a benevolent power that created the worlds and nourishes all life, though in its invisible form through the Big Bang. There is so much richness and harmony in creation. Everything follows the cosmic law, known as *ritam*; no planet drops out of its orbit. That is the shift that has to happen in mind and in consciousness.

This is the teaching of the masters too. Swami Sivananda said, 'Live the Divine Life.' What is living the divine life? A positive, optimistic, qualitative life. If each one can try and live that kind of life, definitely peace and happiness will increase in society and in the world. Try to find a balance between the external that you see, and the internal that you experience. That will be your achievement.

**Should everyone walk the spiritual path one day or the other, in this life? Is it not okay if we stay in worldly life and yet do good deeds?**

Even those who live the normal worldly life and do good deeds are spiritual people. The hallmark of spirituality is doing good deeds. Those who are not aware of spiritual life, do good deeds and are spiritual, but they do not know that they are spiritual. Those who know that they are spiritual still continue to do good deeds, like Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda. Their every thought, their every action was for the welfare of others. What does the statement 'Kindness is yoga' mean? The statement does not say that asana practice or meditation is yoga. The statement is that kindness is yoga. If you can understand this sentence, you have achieved it.

Everyone has to go through this process of evolution, and ultimately come to the point of spiritual awareness and spiritual realization. Everyone, whether they do it in this life, or whether it takes many lives in the course of evolution. Leave that up to destiny, as everything is decided. Ultimately, you get what you need, not what you want. What destiny holds for us, we do not know. We can focus on what is within our control to make this journey. We can focus on making our journey a comfortable and a joyous one. Spiritual awareness is the destiny of every living creature, even though they may not be humans; even dogs and animals have spiritual destinies.

*– 7 November 2024, Ganga Darshan*

# A Platform to Grow

*Jignasu Omnidhi, Lebanon*



Staying at the Bihar School of Yoga for eight months has shaped me in ways I did not realize until I came back to Lebanon. My stay in the ashram was an experience, where a lot of things got broken but a lot got built.

When I came back to Lebanon, I saw how my ego had become a bit more flexible, and how much the ashram had taught me the act of being the *drashta*, the observer, especially in family situations, where before I would be aggressive and selfish.

I understood how putting boundaries is very important, even if it is with the parents. I am not here to please the surroundings but to create a coherent and understanding environment. Voicing myself is part of the boundary. taying quiet but with inner intentions which are not pure does not make me a 'better person'.

I observed that I am in a more positive energy with myself and with my surroundings. I am shocked to know that I have more strength and the ability to see beyond events which before used to make me collapse. I can sense a less tamasic energy within me.

I could go on about so many things. I had to reflect on the importance of karma yoga where we are sometimes put in situations to confront and do seva with people who trigger us so much. Karma yoga polishes the ego, so that we can really see our true potential. So many expectations were broken. The ashram taught me to believe in myself and not to rely on another person's shoulder, yet to accept and see the divine in all as we are all walking towards the same light.

All of this happened with the grace of Swamiji. He was always the anchor, the Guru who embodies all the teachings given by him and by Swami Satyananda. In his satsangs, he would remind me that humility, compassion and understanding is the key to self-evolution. He would remind me that nothing is against me, that all of his blessings through karma yoga are meant for me to overcome my limitations, my stubbornness and see my potential. Everything offered by him is a platform for me to grow.



# Dealing with Negativity

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



When your stomach is bad what happens? Bad wind, stomach ache, loss of hunger, giddiness or uneasiness. What do you do? You take a tablet and go to the toilet a number of times. Or you take an enema, clean yourself, so you can go to the toilet five, six, seven times and all the bad things come out.

In the same way, when you practise mantra or meditation first the negative thoughts must and will come. It is necessary to understand this process. This has been the complaint and the experience of most people and that is why we always suggest you practise the mantra with a mala.

When you go on practising your mantra and your mind is brooding on all kinds of things, the mala brings you back again and again. The mala is the resort for the wandering mind. You will have to face again the negativity of the mind.

At every level of transition in spiritual evolution, you will have to face negativity of different dimensions. When the awakening of kundalini takes place, the negativity is much

more powerful than you are talking about. What is the Satan of Christ and what is Mara of Buddha? The same negativity of mind at the time of awakening.

You should read the life history of people who have awakened their kundalini, they go through a terrifying experience! At the moment you are only facing the negativity of the consciousness, when you awaken your kundalini you have to face the negativity of the subconscious mind, and the terrific negativity of the unconscious mind, when all the repressions come out in the form of nightmares.

According to the depth of your mind, you will face the negativity of the mind at three levels. This negativity is what I referred to earlier – Brahma granthi, Vishnu granthi, Shiva or Rudra granthi, on the mental plane.

When you are practising your sadhana, when your mind is vomiting negativity, you must feel better. You must feel good. You should not be frustrated; you should not feel sorry. On the contrary, you should feel happy because you are purging. You know purgatory. Purgatory means toilet.

The negative thoughts which come to you during sadhana, come from a very deep source and it is not at all possible to suppress them. If negative thoughts come in your mind and you say no, it goes away but it comes back. Again you say no, it will go away, it will come in a different form which can even be a physical disease. In yoga there are two ways suggested for controlling the mind, abhyasa and vairagya. *Abhyasa* means constant practice, and *vairagya* means detached view of all you have seen and heard.

The thoughts of the past come – let them. Worry comes, anxiety comes, let them come. Remain detached. Don't identify yourself. Don't feel panicky about it, 'Oh God, what am I thinking!' Practise your mantra, abhyasa. Vairagya means dis-identification with the cravings of the past, which you have heard and seen. So abhyasa and vairagya must be combined.

– 16 June 1984, Sivanandashram Paris

# The Process

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



Jnana yoga is cultivation of self-awareness. A properly guided awareness develops into knowledge, understanding, knowing. Without awareness, the process of knowing is not complete and therefore the basic foundation of jnana yoga is awareness. You can translate jnana yoga as the yoga of knowledge, or the yoga of self-enquiry, yet they are just labels to understand jnana yoga. The process of jnana yoga begins with the first rung which is awareness, knowing, the beginning of knowing, observation, self-awareness.

Try to have the component of awareness in as many moments of the day as humanly possible. Begin with that

understanding. It can be a few minutes as our span of awareness is limited. You will notice that if you think you are being aware, you will also realize that you are being distracted. There is a fine line between awareness and distraction. Distraction and awareness go hand-in-hand and you have to think of awareness. There is a fine line, a fine understanding and you should be able to differentiate between developing focused awareness and awareness converting into distraction. That is where the understanding of each individual comes into play, it is the cultivation of awareness but staying away from distraction.

Then through self-observation and self-perception, identify the SWAN principles of your life. What are your strengths, what are your weaknesses and do you need to convert any weakness into strength or you can just ignore those things? Many times when we make a list of our strengths and weaknesses, we think, 'This weakness, I will try to overcome.' Is that really necessary for you? Rethink about it for there are many areas where we can divert our attention that may not be necessary for our growth and development.

Just because we seem to be attracted to something does not mean that it is important in the long run. In the short term, infatuation can make you take any decision and generally in life that is where problems begin. When our vision is only short term, we can't see beyond certain moments of our life. Similarly, when we look at our own nature, if you want to search for gold you have to remove tons and tons of dirt in order to discover one tiny nugget. It is one thing to make a list of strengths and weaknesses, but it is another thing to identify, 'This is what I am going to be.' You cannot be all-encompassing. That is impossible. Throughout human history nobody in this life has had everything, no. Out of one thousand, maybe we can acquire ten, fifteen, twenty qualities. Maybe we can acquire twenty-five, thirty, forty, fifty, even one hundred but never one thousand. Life is not long enough to acquire all the thousand qualities.

Whatever we can acquire, even if it is five items, that is our gain, our achievement and fulfilment in life. We come to the limit of evolution in this life. There is a limit to evolution in this life. After all, when you die, evolution stops. Maybe something else happens, but the perceivable, physical, material evolution stops after you die; you don't exist. If you don't exist, then what is perceivable, material evolution? It doesn't exist. So you have to have an awareness of how you wish to see yourself five years down the line, ten years, fifteen years down the line. What you wish to become in fifteen, twenty years is the practical aim of your life.

After all, a student decides to become a doctor or engineer only after passing certain grades. Then the training and preparation to become excellent in the chosen profession begins, and that takes time. You don't become a doctor in one day. You have to first go through the general training, then the common medical training, then specialized medical training and education and then into other specializations. You only become a general practitioner, after you complete a certain number of years of basic medical education. If it takes you ten years to become a specialist, even after receiving your degree you do not immediately become a qualified, experienced practitioner. The experience which you gain through your involvement in your profession ultimately makes you known and recognized. It is not just the degree, but the experience. You can have a degree in surgery and never operate on anyone. Even though the degree is from Oxford, Cambridge or Harvard, will you be successful? However, if you work on a thousand patients and cultivate that skill, you will be recognized as an authority. It is not the degree which is final. It is the experience, your participation and involvement which makes you become what you want to become.

You have to apply the same principle in lifestyle too. Begin by discovering how your nature, how your personality functions and what the shortcomings and the strengths are. What qualities do you need to cultivate? What skills do

you need to cultivate? What understanding do you need to cultivate to become what you want to become in ten, fifteen, in twenty years' time? The SWAN principle should help you to analyze and understand this directional focus of life. After cultivating awareness, this is the beginning of self-observation and self-regulation.

You will not reach anywhere by thinking, 'I am one with the transcendental.' To cultivate that mentality, you have to start with personal discovery. If you have a car and you don't know how a car functions, when there is a breakdown you have had it. If you have a car and you have a basic understanding of the radiator, brake, clutch, brake fluid, spark plugs and all that, when anything happens you can take care of it. In the same manner, you have to know the nuts and bolts of your personality before you try to discover how petrol is converted into power and propulsion. That is a highly technical subject. You don't have to worry about how petrol is converted into propulsion by burning it, yet anyone can know about the mechanics. You have to know how to look after your brake and clutch, spark plugs and steering wheel, hand brake and gears, that is more important. In jnana yoga, this component of self-observation and self-tuning comes with the application of the SWAN principle.

So first is awareness, then self-observation and self-regulation, then is attitudinal change. Is the glass half empty or half full? You decide. In my opinion, if I say half empty then I am aware of the absence of water, whereas if I say it is half full then I am aware of the presence of water. Even though it may be half or a quarter, I am aware of the presence of water and not the absence of water. If there is awareness of absence that will lead to personal suffering and if there is awareness of presence it will lead to contentment and acceptance. So attitudinal change has to come in our regular interactions of day-to-day life.

*– 16 January 2009, Ganga Darshan, Munger*

# Just Close Your Eyes

*Swami Sivananda Saraswati*



Some people imagine that they have reached very near perfection. They feel that there is only a hair's breadth to the attainment of God-realization. They only close their eyes and dream, for in their everyday life you will find them full of selfishness, full of egoism and all the negative qualities.

Just close your eyes and think of how many times a day you have allowed the fullest play for your selfishness. Make a note of this in your diary. You will be astounded at your own spiritual state. Searching analysis will reveal to you the subtle forms that selfishness assumes. Gradually endeavour to eradicate all these.

# The Rotten Rubbish Must Go

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

What is mantra? The etymology of mantra is simple: *mananat trayate iti mantraha*. *Man* means repetition, *manan*, again and again, again and again. *Tra* means freedom, liberation, *mukti*, release. You become free. From what? What are you freeing with the mantra? You are making your karmas free. You are providing an outlet to your passion, your bad mind, your tamoguna, to all kinds of samskaras. After all, there is no harm in this. I am not asking you to kill somebody, but if you are angry with someone, at the time of doing japa and if you mentally take a revolver and shoot him, you are letting your karma out, you are making it free. One point of shankaprakshalana is finished.

The same is the case with kama and krodha. *Kama* means passions, *krodha* means frustrations, anger. *Lobha* is greed and covetousness. The various samskaras are mostly negative. I mean, when you do shankaprakshalana you never get the French fragrance of Eau de Cologne. Have you ever smelt Eau de Cologne while doing shankaprakshalana? Never! In the same way, when you are doing japa, you will never come across the fragrant samskaras. You will always come across the rotten karmas because they have to come out.

Life after life, year after year, you have accumulated so much pain and frustration. There are so many difficult karmas stored in the computer memory of your mind, in that little silicon chip in the brain. You have to take it out. If you do this expulsion of karma by any other method, you won't be able to handle it. There are very strong methods in yoga, too. Mantra is a very mild homeopathic dose. It expels your karma in such a way that it does not disturb your mental balance.

Mantra is a commitment, a relationship between guru and disciple. That is why at the time of mantra initiation, the



guru will only ask you to practise five malas, seven malas, ten malas. If you cannot do these five malas, how are you going to fulfil your commitments to your guru? What do you expect from him and what does he expect from you? If you have not fulfilled the basic commitments and obligations, how can you go further? Therefore, the first condition is to practise mantra.

Second, the mind is not a static substance. It is an ever-progressing, ever-moving substance which is always growing. You are not the same as you were yesterday or a moment

before. The mind is like a burning candle. There is consistency in the flame, but the atoms of the flame are moving out at a certain rate, every second. The flame which existed a few moments ago is not the same now. The composition of this flame is a different atomic structure. Similarly, the physical body does not remain the same and the mind also keeps changing. You can become an atheist, a sceptic, an agnostic or just a sensualist, but your mantra must continue.

This happens in every man's life. In Rishikesh, my guru gave me a mantra and told me to do five malas every day. I do them even today because his words are in my mind. I have made a resolve and given my promise to him, so I will always do it. However, in between, I have gone through a lot of turmoil, not pain, but philosophical upheavals because I have been thinking about many topics, both relevant and irrelevant.

There was a time when I was very impressed by Karl Marx. I like his ideas even today, but I am not a communist nor a politician, far from it. I do not want, need or accept it and that is the reason I never went into politics, although I had a lot of chances. I was very impressed by his philosophy. I have also read the entire literature of Dr Sigmund Freud and Sartre. I liked their books. I have read most of the books of Acharya Rajneesh and I liked his ideas, but the person who influenced me the most from the philosophical and social angle was Karl Marx. There came a moment when I said, 'Yes there can be a creation and event without God, because matter is a self-evolving process and is eternal'. This is how I came to many conclusions. I also studied Einstein's view of energy and conversion of matter. Matter is the basis for energy. Energy is not higher than matter; energy is not the basic material. Matter is the basic material and energy is the composition.

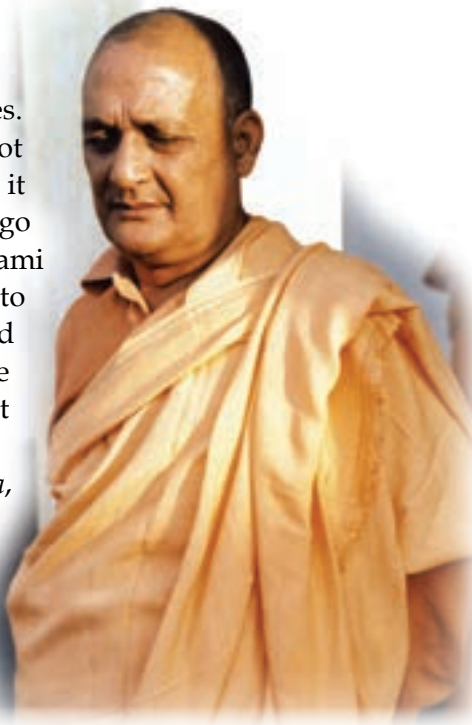
With all that, I did five malas of my mantra every day. This is what every sadhaka should do and if you are expecting undiluted, unbroken concentration and spiritual light as early, as quickly as possible, then you do not know the purpose of mantra. It has to be done with the mala; it does

not matter where your mind goes. Do not worry about it. You do not have to make the mind retreat; it will come back by itself. It will go by itself because you are not a swami of the mind. You are subservient to the mind and therefore the mind will come back on its own and the mind will go on its own; you just keep quiet for some time.

Do mantra, *Om Namah Shivaya*, *Om Namah Shivaya*, *Om Namah Shivaya*, then think, 'When I get my son married, I need one hundred and one thousand rupees, ornaments, Fiat car, oh no, Maruti is better, Maruti is not good, another expense takes place, it has that colour, I will have that Fiat also . . .' You see these ideas, and then suddenly you come back, *Om Namah Shivaya*, *Om Namah Shivaya*. Then there comes repentance, 'Oh my God, what am I doing, I do my mantra with these passions, anger, greed, ego and ambition, I don't know what is happening to me.' Surdas said the same thing, *Mo soma kutila khala kami* – Who can be a better rascal than me?

This rotten rubbish must go out of your mind, because you have been accumulating it in your mind life after life, incarnation after incarnation. These karmas are stored and you have not allowed them to express themselves. Religions suppress you. Society suppresses you. Parents suppress you. You cannot do anything you like, so naturally everything is stored. Now at least during dhyana, during sadhana, you enjoy one hour of kama, krodha, lobha and a day will certainly come, I assure you, when you will become free.

– 26 February 1986, Ganga Darshan, Munger



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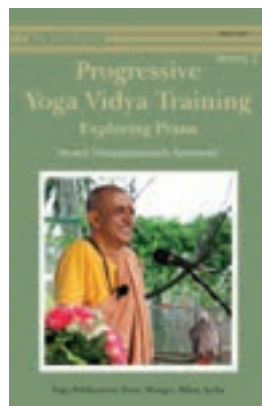
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|                           |                                                   |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
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| <i>Sep 22-30</i>          | Raja Yoga/Bhakti Yoga Training                    |
| <i>Oct 3-11</i>           | Hatha Yoga/Karma Yoga Training                    |
| <i>Nov 1-15</i>           | Progressive Yoga Vidya Training                   |
| <i>Nov 16-Jan 30 2026</i> | Sannyasa Experience (national/overseas aspirants) |

### **Bihar Yoga Bharati Yogavidya Training**

|                     |                                   |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Nov 1-Dec 31</i> | Yogic Studies, 2 months (English) |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|

### **Monthly Programs**

|                                 |                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Every Saturday</i>           | Mahamrityunjaya Havan            |
| <i>Every 4th, 5th &amp; 6th</i> | Guru Bhakti Yoga                 |
| <i>Every 12th</i>               | Akhanda Path of Ramacharitamanas |



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