

YOGA

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Hari Om

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Useful Resources

Websites:

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www.satyamyogaprasad.net

Apps:

(for Android and iOS devices)

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

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GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Tapasya

Thorough rigorous discipline and self-imposed restrictions will eventually eradicate all desires, thoughts, impulses cravings and passions. You should not give any leniency to the mind. The mind is a mischievous imp. Curb it by drastic measures. Become a perfect yogi. Let the struggle be keen. Let your endeavour be sincere. Let your motive be pure. There must be iron discipline, iron determination, iron will and iron sadhana. Then there will be no difficulty in the attainment of a life sublime in its nature, resplendent with spiritual light, radiant with splendour, vibrant with ecstasy and replete with peace.

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

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"Believe in yourself. Know that you have the strength, the ability, the courage and the will to transform yourself. The best way to reach God is through silence, not through intellect."

Learn in silence about the mysteries of life by understanding and believing that you have the strength, the courage and the ability!"

Swami Niranjanananda 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 ॥

Consuming the Dross of Life

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



That flame which is kindled to consume the impurities of the body and the organs of actions, is called physical penance. To kindle this flame, one has to worship God, learned men, one's own teachers and one must continue to practise purity, straightforwardness, continence and non-violence.

Once the flame is kindled, the impurities of this life vanish. The flame that is kindled for purifying speech is called the penance of speech. The first condition of kindling this flame is that we should not be restless. We should speak true and agreeable things and study scriptures.

When this flame is kindled, all the impurities are consumed. Cheerfulness of the mind, goodness, silence, self-control and pure ideals are the attributes of mental penance. The performance of all these acts is the wider meaning of penance. This penance consumes the dross of life.

Self-Discipline

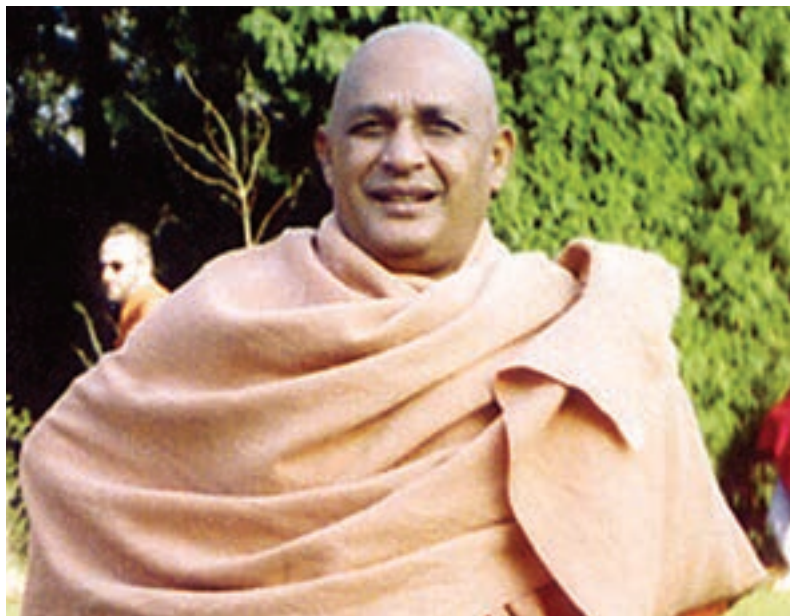
Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



What is austerity? It is self-discipline. If one cannot sit for five minutes, how can you say, 'I am disciplined'? There are people who cannot even sit still for five minutes, they are continuously moving. Their senses are active, their bodies are active, their pranas are active, their mind is active. There is no discipline. If there is discipline, if there is *sanyam*, consciously and wilfully, we can stop everything, including the chatter of the mind and the expression of negatives in life, and we can connect with the positive. *Tapas* means self-discipline – total and complete, in every respect.

Internal and External

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Self-control and discipline are good things, but they are cruel acts on one's own personality and sometimes they can even obstruct the progress of one's consciousness. Take for example the yamas – satya, ahimsa, brahmacharya, asteya, aparigraha. If you tell me to practise this as much as I can, I can agree, but people will say, 'No, you have to practise these things absolutely.' If you have to be a celibate, you have to be an absolute celibate, and if you do not practise that, you develop a guilt complex. That again has a repercussion on your personality.

Our consciousness and our state of mind is not ready to practise yama and niyama directly. Therefore, practise shatkarma first, asana and pranayama next. Then find out if you are ready to practise yama and niyama. I still feel that

talking too much about yama and niyama makes people more sick. It is better if you do not talk to people about yama and niyama. There are thousands of mental cases in the mental hospitals and these mental cases are mainly due to the puritanism that we have pressed on man.

Man is a product of natural evolution, both of body and mind. Social laws and religious principles cannot create that state of evolution. You cannot change me. You can make me act better, but that will be my social personality. I am what I am. If progress is to take place, it has to take place in the inner recesses of my mind. Many times you feel that you are getting better; you are improving, but it is your intellect which is improving. It is your conscious mind which is improving. In the depth of your personality, there is another man and that is what you are. You cannot change him. No social law, no religious principles, no government laws can change that man. You cannot even touch him.

Right from the beginning, you are told, 'Don't tell lies, don't tell lies, don't tell lies.' I call it indoctrination, brainwashing. What does it do? You only produce a culture. You produce an intellectual behaviour. As a result, you have a good society, no doubt, but it is a hypocritical society, comprised of people whose inner mind is completely different to their outer expressions.

I know people do not like to hear these things and therefore I do not talk too much about it, but I still feel it is much better not to speak about self-control and self-discipline. Instead, you can try to improve the level of your awareness so that your external life will become an expression of what you are. In the case of most people, their external life is not an expression of their internal consciousness. You, I and all of us are expressions of all that has been taught to us. We are expressions of our parents, our society, our government, our religion and the environment around us.

– 17 April, 1982, Otterburn Hall, Manchester, UK

Inner Discipline

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

About two and a half thousand years ago, Patanjali wrote the classic text on yoga known as the *Yoga Sutras*. Yoga sutras are yoga aphorisms. The opening statement is, 'Yoga is a form of inner discipline.' This is a very important point. We think of discipline as something that is imposed, but in yoga, discipline begins with knowledge and self-awareness. If we want to drive a car, we have to go through the process of getting in, starting the engine, engaging the gears, releasing the hand brake, depressing the accelerator and then gradually driving off. Without awareness of this sequence, accidents will happen. Similarly, internal discipline involves an understanding of how the human nature, body and emotions interact with each other. Once we know how they work, we are able to direct them constructively and creatively. That is known as inner discipline.

With inner discipline a square peg will fit in a square hole and a round peg in a round hole. However, because of our ambitions we try to fit a square peg in a round hole or a round peg in a square hole, and there is a mismatch. This mismatch is the cause of the dramas that arise in the form of depression, frustration or tension, physical illness and psychological problems, and it does not allow the potential of the mind to be developed. If you do not know how to sleep peacefully and resort to sleeping tablets, it means you have lost the ability to direct your energies. Being able to sleep without worry is one of life's greatest gifts, but many people are unable to do so because they cannot remove the confusions and conflicts that affect their relationships and social lives. Therefore, the opening statement of the *Yoga Sutras* on internal discipline has to be understood from the very beginning.

The second aphorism of the *Yoga Sutras* states that internal discipline leads to management of the mental states. When you

are able to manage the internal psychological conditions in a better way, then you become established in your real nature, which is the third statement. This is the process of yoga as defined in the classical texts.

In order to fulfil these three aims: inner discipline, management of the mental states and being established in our own nature, many yogic practices have evolved. The physical postures are the physical component. Scientific investigations into the effects of yogic postures on the body have shown that these practices can help to manage many physical



diseases and imbalances. In some countries, physical yoga has been recognized as an alternative therapy, especially in the management of so-called psychosomatic illnesses, which begin in the mind and affect the physical body.

Tension, for example, is the cause of hypertension, sleeplessness and many other physiological disorders such as digestive problems. Usually we treat the problem that has manifested, not the cause. If a person with hypertension takes a tablet, it will reduce their level of tension but not get rid of their stress. Investigations have proved that as the causes of mental conflicts, confusion, stress and tension are reduced with yoga practices, many physiological disorders disappear by themselves and there is greater control over one's inner behaviour, which leads to inner discipline.

– 19 May 2004, University of Balearic Isles, Palma

Sattwic Austerity

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



In Chapter 17 of the *Bhagavad Gita*, Sri Krishna describes the tamasic, rajasic and sattwic types of *tapas*, austerity. Sattwic austerity or self-discipline is expressed through the body, speech and mind.

*Devadwijagurupraajna poojanam shauchamaarjavam;
Brahmacharyamahimsaa cha
shaareeram tapa uchyate.*

Worship of the gods, the twice-born, the teachers and the wise, purity, straightforwardness, celibacy and non-injury – these are called the austerities of the body. (14)

Using the feet in pilgrimage to sacred temples, using the hands in cleaning the temples, in collecting materials for worship of God, service to parents, preceptors, the poor and sick is called physical austerity. Non-stealing and not coveting are also included. Immense musing on the objects of the senses does more harm to the inner spiritual life than actual sense gratification. If the mind is not rendered pure by sadhana, mere mortification of the external senses will not produce the desired effect.

The senses always have an outgoing tendency. The mind operates through the senses. Control of the one goes hand in hand with the other. Control of the senses is also control of the mind, because the mind is a bundle of senses only. There is no mind without senses.

Just as an enemy can be easily conquered if you have a two-pronged attack, so also the mind can be controlled easily if you attack it in two fronts simultaneously – an external attack on the senses and an internal attack on the mind itself by the eradication of the desires.

*Anudwegakaram vaakyam satyam priyahitam cha yat;
Swaadhyaayaabhyasanam chaiva vaangmayam tapa uchyate.*

Speech which causes no excitement is truthful, pleasant and beneficial, and the practice of the study of the *Vedas*, are called austerity of speech. (15)

The words of the man who practises the austerity of speech cannot cause pain to others. His words will bring cheer and solace to others. His words prove beneficial to all. The organ of speech causes great distraction of mind. Control of speech is a difficult discipline but you will have to practise it if you want to attain supreme peace. Nothing is impossible for a man who has a firm determination, sincerity of purpose, iron will patience and perseverance. It is said in the *Manu Smriti*:

*Satyam bruyaat priyam bruyaat na bruyaat satyampriyam
Priyam cha naanritam bruyaat esha dharma sanaatanah.*

One should speak what is true; one should speak what is pleasant. One should not speak what is true if it is not pleasant nor what is pleasant if it is false. This is Sanatana Dharma.

To be an austerity, speech must form an invariable combination of all four attributes mentioned in this verse, such as non-excitement or non-painful, truthful, pleasant and beneficial. If it is wanting in one or the other of these attributes, it cannot form the austerity of speech. Speech may be pleasant, but if it is lacking in the other three attributes, it will no longer be an austerity of speech.

*Manahprasaadah saumyatvam maunamaatmavinigraha;
Bhaavasamshuddhirityetat tapo maanasamuchyate.*

Serenity of mind, good-heartedness, purity of nature, self-control – this is called mental austerity. (16)

Just as a lake which is without a ripple on its surface is very tranquil, so also the mind which is free from modifications, from wandering thoughts of sensual objects, is quite serene and calm. Mouna is the result of the control of thought as far as it concerns speech, silence of the mind, the ability to remain calm even amidst disturbing factors from without. Purity of nature means honesty of purpose, freedom from cunningness when dealing with other people. It is the pure state of the mind wherein there is absence of lust, anger, greed, and so on.

*Shraddhayaa parayaa taptam tapastattrividham narai;
Aphalaakaangkshibhiryuktaih saattwikam parichakshate.*

This threefold austerity practised by steadfast men with the utmost faith, desiring no reward, they call sattwic. (17)

Two Paths

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Spiritual traditions have maintained that to develop sattwa, we need to practise and live spiritual disciplines. In order to deal with the intensity of the gunas there are different techniques. If tamoguna is predominant, and we need to practise some methods to transform that tamoguna into sattwa, then austerity has to be practised, tapasya. If rajoguna is predominant, and we want to convert that into sattwa, then we need to practise yamas and niyamas such as ahimsa or aparigraha just to change the quality of rajoguna into sattwa.

All the various traditions that exist in the world have followed these two paths. One, an extreme path of austerity and hardship, in which we may have to fast, we may have to be harsh with our body, we may have to expose our body to the elements – just to control the mind and overcome the natural inclinations of tamas and pleasure in life. The other path is much simpler than that: by becoming aware, we change the various components of our personality, one by one.

– 28 May to 2 June 1998, Mumbai

For an Infinitely Greater Achievement

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

The senses have *not* been given only to be starved or killed. Neither are they given for being indulged in and fattened. In truth, the senses are not given for any earthly purpose whatsoever. That is the highest view that the sages uphold for spiritual aspirants. The senses are given for being utilized consciously and deliberately for the attainment of something altogether above and beyond the farthest reach of the senses.

To understand the right import and significance of self-restraint, one must take a more comprehensive view of the question. In the human being, these senses are given together with the superior, directive faculty of intelligence with its aspects such as discrimination and selection. The senses are to operate under its wise supervision. The aim is not the ultimate denial of the senses, but the achievement through restraint, of a pleasure a million fold greater than that achieved through gratification. When one realizes this fact, one will understand, how, with the yogic aspirant, this self-restraint is not a matter of bitterness or reluctant, unwilling repression at all. Understood in its correct light, it is a joyous, voluntary discipline undertaken for the acquisition of an infinitely greater and more blissful experience. Does the angler ever grudge the loss of the worm cast for catching a big fish?

Moreover, the rationale of asceticism is not rightly understood by most people. The ideal of asceticism and penance is not based upon repression. Conservation and sublimation are the principles underlying asceticism rightly practised. The true ascetic withholds, diverts, channels and finally transmutes his natural propensities. The untoward repercussions of forced repression such as complex and neurosis have no place here.



No doubt, modern psychologists are correct in their view about repression, but one must know that it does not apply to religious asceticism, wherein the process is sublimation and not just repression. It must always be remembered that asceticism is a part of yoga which provides such a marvellous system of mental training and culture that most effectively counteracts and wards off any possibility of neurotic complexes or obsessions.

It is, however, true that asceticism is very much misunderstood by the majority of persons, and unfortunately by the ascetics themselves, as a result of which we hardly come across a real ascetic in the aspirant world. Yoga recommends a proper utilization of the tremendous faculties of undissipated senses

for higher purposes of inner culture, social welfare, inventions, scientific progress, and finally, intuition. The senses are to be sublimated through restraint applied through reason and intelligent judgement. Their unlimited potentialities are to be harnessed for the greater good and not allowed to be most shamelessly dissipated for a momentary pleasure, unintelligent and animalistic. Viewed from this angle, the aspirant is asked not to starve and destroy the senses, but really to strengthen them and utilize them for his good.

Dissipation, on the contrary, actually causes destruction of the senses. The Greek ideal was enunciated as a general philosophy of life for the average humanity. Asceticism, as understood by the sages, is a distinctive discipline especially incumbent upon that class which would walk the spiritual way, the aspirant class, dedicated to the goal of Self-realization. This class is vividly aware that the conception of 'moderate enjoyment of life' is a conception alone and is well-nigh impossible to put into actual practice. For, the very nature of enjoyment is such that it tends to progressively increase in force each time the senses are indulged in. The habit gets man in its grip and draws him down. This has been the uniform experience of the sages.

Therefore, at one stage or the other, a rigid religious self-control and denial becomes imperative in the march to spiritual progress. The rank materialist may not care for it, but the seeker does. The seeker is marked out for a special achievement. You know how an ultra-modern acrobat, a ballet dancer or an expert boxer willingly imposes a rigid regimen upon himself to keep perfectly trim and healthy for his professional success. Mark the denials and restrictions during the training period of any serious candidate trying for a championship in athletics! His keen zest and enthusiasm serve to keep his mind in a high mood of inspiration and anticipation. What, then, should be the interest and aspiration in true asceticism undertaken as a part of the training for an infinitely greater achievement in the spiritual path?

Vasanas

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The way to overcome vasanas without suppression is meditation, reflection, restraint and discipline. That is the only way. Recognize what your desire is: see the negative fallout and the positive fallout. Deal with the negative fallout, harness the positive fallout, ignore what is not needed, grab on to what you feel will help you objectively, and in this way select the vasanas you want to fulfil.

It is no use saying there are plenty of vasanas. Of course there are plenty of vasanas, yet you have the ability to be selective. Be selective. When you go to a restaurant you get a menu. A thousand and one items are written there: they are all your vasanas, each one is available for a price. Out of the thousand items on the menu you select four, five, six and you live those vasanas and forget about the other ones that you have not selected. They are on the menu and you can select them at any time. So enjoy your present meal.

– 11 August 2010, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Tapas – To Synchronize

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

For many people tapas is austerity. They are right, for it is an austere life that you live in tapas. However, you are able to live that life as you have created a condition in which there is no indulgence; you are the master of your senses and mind. Sri Swamiji did the panchagni. I did the panchagni. People used to say it is tapasya, hard austerity. It could have been: surviving eighty degrees of temperature. If I look at the hardship of the practice and keep thinking, 'This is difficult, this is difficult, I have to face it, I have to do it,' and half-heartedly I make the effort to do my sadhana, I would be creating a negative condition in my mind. I would not be in sync with what I am doing. If the mind thinks that the austerity is a problem, then how can it perform the austerity? Therefore, the real meaning of tapas is living a life without indulgence, whether material, mental, psychological, psychic or spiritual.

When there is no indulgence, there is no wastage of prana shakti. The blocks of prana are removed and the pranas can be elevated. The whole idea of tapas is to be able to lift the pranas and to master the pranas. It is a constant, ongoing process of channelling and directing prana. When you are practising asana, if you are able to direct your pranas, your body will support you. That is tapas. If you are not able to direct your pranas, you will feel discomfort during asana. For how long can one sit in front of fires at eighty degrees, thinking it is too hot? Not more than a few minutes. However, if one is enjoying it and the pranas are in sync with the agni pranas, the question or thought of 'It is hot, it is intolerable', does not arise. Rather, there is synchronicity between my prana and the agni prana, the agni tattwa.

Tapas does not always mean hardship. Tapas also means to synchronize oneself with the environment and the cosmic



will. This is another definition of tapas. Yet another meaning is to live in sanyam and not overindulge. Yet another meaning of tapas is to live a basic, spartan lifestyle. You do your own thing and don't depend on luxuries, comforts, equipment and instruments. Anything that pushes you to live in a disciplined manner, with restraint, in harmony and sync with nature and the cosmic will, is tapas. It is a niyama, for if you are able to regulate your life then the changes will be felt in the activities of the mind and senses. This is the result of tapas: it changes the performance, the understanding, the perception of the senses and mind.

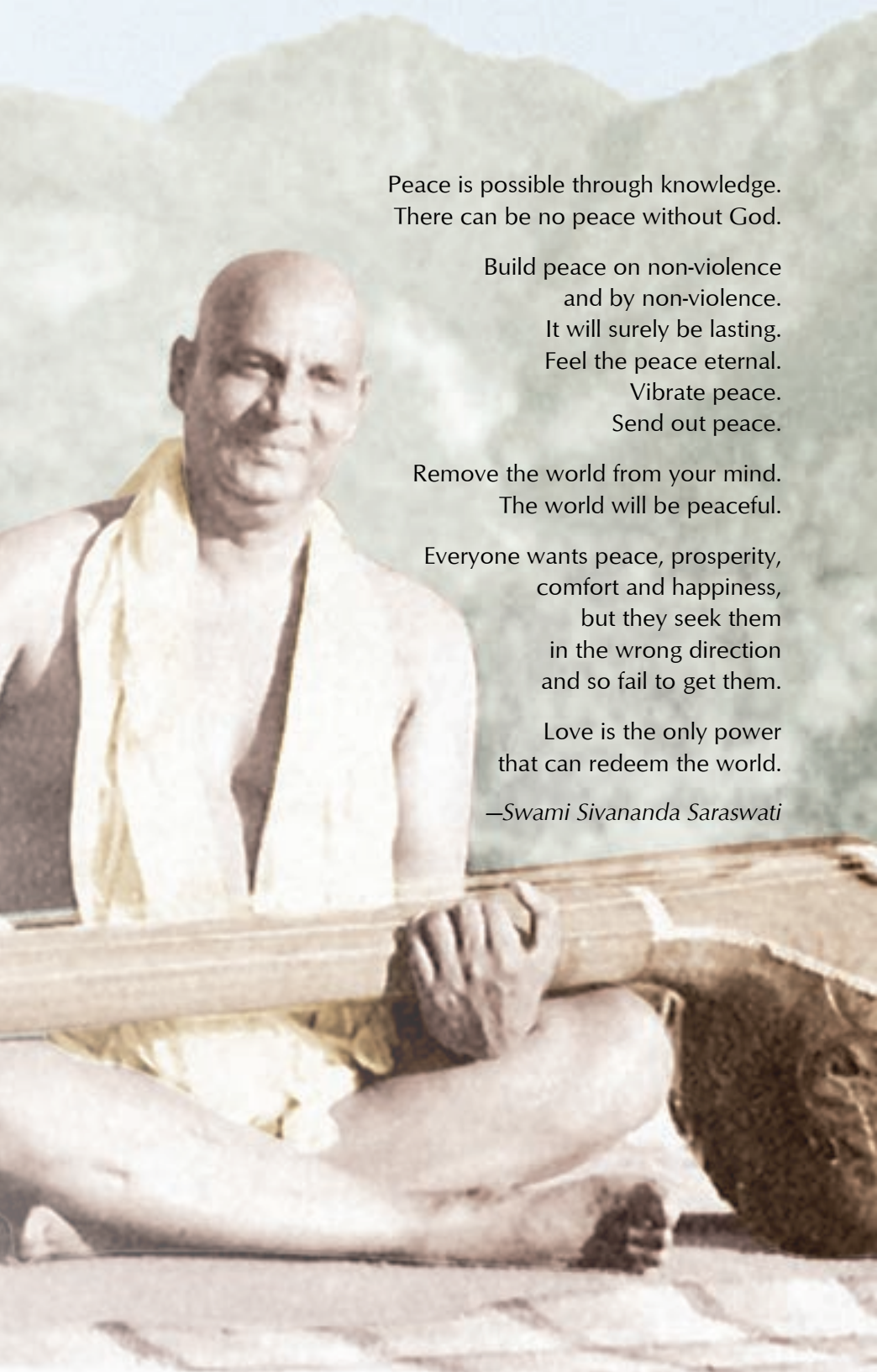
*– 8 October 2019, Progressive Yoga Vidya Training,
Ganga Darshan, Munger*

World Peace

Work for the peace and harmony of the world.
The way of peace is very simple and straight:
it is the way of love and truth.
No piece of paper can establish peace in this world.
Pacts and treaties will not stop war;
they are paper only.
Ethics should be put into practice by all.
This alone will contribute to peace, universal love,
unity, proper understanding, world harmony
and brotherhood of mankind.
Wherever there is love, there is peace
and wherever there is peace, there is love.
A proper understanding of the essential unity of religions
is the most effective and powerful factor
in bringing about peace in the world.
It will remove all superficial differences and conflicts
which create restlessness, discord and quarrels.
Peace through God, through love, through unity,
through desirelessness is possible.

Many are working today for the promotion of world peace
without having peace in themselves.
To be lasting and constructive,
peace must be achieved through God.
Every leader thinks he has world peace in his pocket.
Everybody wants peace and is clamouring for peace,
but peace does not come easily.
Even if it comes, it does not last for a long time.
Perfect peace cannot be promoted by anybody who does not
have perfect peace in themselves.

Love can only bring peace to the world. Therefore, love all.
Love and peace, peace and unity must move hand in hand.



Peace is possible through knowledge.
There can be no peace without God.

Build peace on non-violence
and by non-violence.
It will surely be lasting.
Feel the peace eternal.
Vibrate peace.
Send out peace.

Remove the world from your mind.
The world will be peaceful.

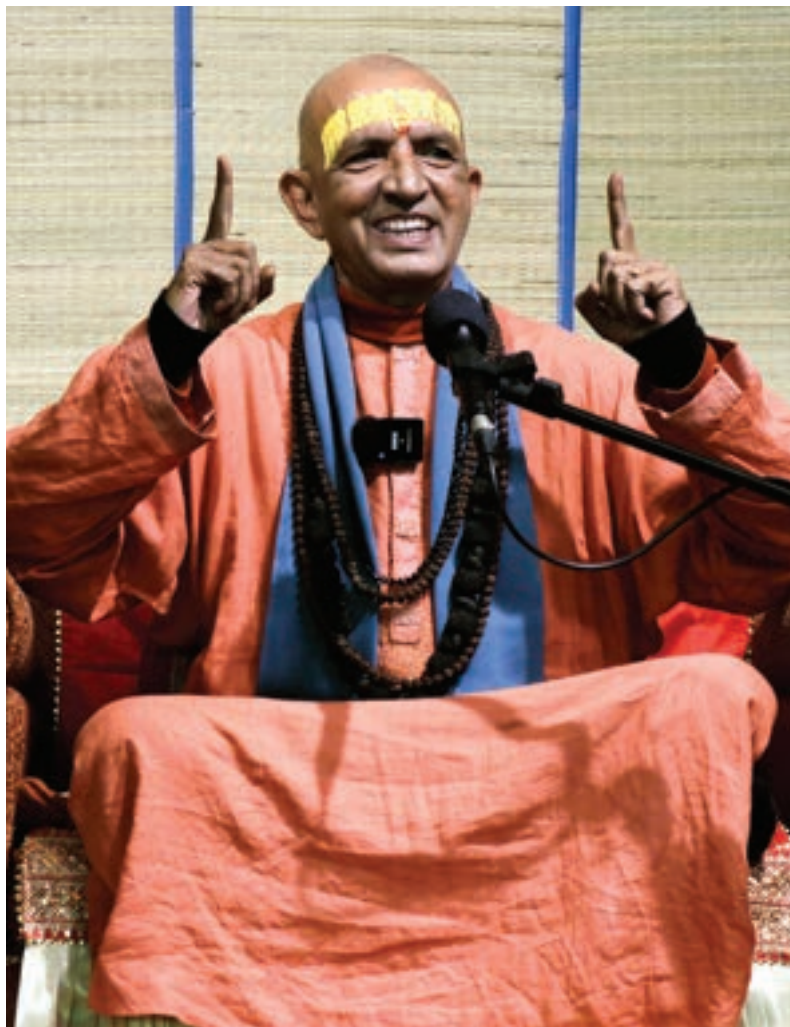
Everyone wants peace, prosperity,
comfort and happiness,
but they seek them
in the wrong direction
and so fail to get them.

Love is the only power
that can redeem the world.

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Transcending the Mind

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Higher qualities always transcend the physical, and this we see in the life of bhaktas. After all, who is a bhakta? Generally, people translate bhakta as a devotee, yet it is a gross translation.

In reality, a bhakta is that person who has purified their heart, who has cleaned their mind, and their focus is now not on the senses or sense objects, but on the higher experience.

In the 1940s and 50s, there was a saint in India, Meher Baba, and he was a 'mast.' *Mast* means intoxicated, God-intoxicated. He established an organization, called the Mast organization. People who used to go to him, used to be completely intoxicated by his divine aura. Not around him, but inside them. They used to get connected to that. Similarly, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, another great bhakta, used to inspire thousands and thousands of people who used to be totally intoxicated by his presence and the mantras. He would only sing the Mahamantra. Due to the influence and intoxication that would be created in people, many of the cut-throats of the time, completely changed their way of life. There is a saying that by singing the name of Hari, even the worst of people like Jagai and Madhai, were liberated. So, that is a different state of mind.

The entire experience of life is based on mind. We have a gross mind, a tamasic mind, yet the expressions of tamas have to change into expressions of sattwa. How will the sattwa expressions be experienced? The intellect is gross; it is material, it is worldly. When this gross, material, worldly mind is applied to the spiritual dimension, the realization is identified as a philosophy. The mind cannot grasp the experience which is beyond the tamasic mind.

Even in life it is difficult and challenging to adopt a good nature, as it contradicts your nature. Are the people who claim to be spiritual able to experience that purity? Are they able to experience that harmony? Are they able to experience peace? It is difficult and challenging, so spirituality only remains an idea, 'I want to be That, but I cannot become That.' If we want to transform the mind, the intellect from being tamasic to sattwic, then how much time do we give it and how much time do we give to our worldly environment? People give more time to family, profession, household, friends and

society. The majority of time is spent in that. For half an hour you close your eyes and expect transcendental experiences through meditation; that is not going to work. That will never happen.

The weight of the negative scale is much more than the weight of the positive scale. It is completely lopsided. The negative scale is more heavy; the positive is lighter. So make this positive scale heavier, so that the negative side goes up. Do you spend any time in making sure that it happens? Do you think that fifteen minutes to half an hour of meditation is enough to remove the dross of the mind?

Nobody has been able to experience purity of mind. That is the reality. It is the ego which defines who I am. There are thousands of people who wear orange, there are thousands of people who claim to be gurus, there are thousands of people who can speak good sentences and words. Do they live them? Do they apply what they say to others to themselves? In six decades of my life, I have not found a single sannyasin who has actually applied what they have said, on themselves. They are good orators, no doubt. People can say there are good people who can explain and talk about things, yet oration or explaining something is totally different to what you experience within.

So, nobody has been able to transcend even the basic quality of their mind. Those who have, have had to cut off all connections with the external world. Swami Sivananda had to cut all his connections and ties to everything that was his in material life, including family, friends, associations and contacts. He had to die, to live again. Swami Satyananda did the same; he had to die and disconnect from everything that he was in the past, to become Swami Satyananda. Is anybody willing to die? If nobody is willing to die and cut, then why expect anything? You should not expect anything, because you are not leaving your grip on the material world and still you want to be fully enlightened and spiritual.

– 25 January 2025, Ganga Darshan, Munger

A New Life

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Those who have enough of everything should develop the philosophy of atmaabhava in their lives. That is the philosophy of Vedanta: we are all the same. All of us, living or dead, are part of the universal soul which resides within everyone. It is easy to say that, but in actual practice the tenet is not followed.

In practice 'I' is separate from 'you'. The feeling of oneness comes when we can feel that all those who live around us have the same soul or are part of the same soul that is within and that their sorrow and pleasure are our own sorrow and pleasure.

It may not be possible for one human being to share all the difficulties of their neighbours, but certainly one should have the quality to feel that. One person cannot wipe out the pain of everyone in the world, but there should be the feeling that if someone's child is sick, one should feel the pain that the mother feels for the child, or for that matter the pain of friends, wife, daughters and neighbours, in the same way as one would for one's own kith and kin. This is very important. The sayings of the Upanishads will not be true until that is practised.

This does not mean one has to pay for their education, although it would be good to do so, but at least they should have two square meals a day for their children. There are millions of families in this world whose children do not have two square meals a day.

I often pray to God for another birth and an early departure, because at this advanced age I am not as effective in serving people as I would be if I had a new life. When I see young people fully absorbed in their own selfish ends, I crave even more for a new life because I do not aspire for pleasure and riches, nor do I crave for a kingdom. My only craving is to serve those who are deprived and living in need. So I pray to God to bless me with a new birth, in a poor family where one feels the pangs of hunger, where one undergoes the torture of cold without adequate clothing, and where one lives and dies in sickness without proper treatment. The pangs of the illiterate mother whose son takes birth and lives in poverty is difficult to fathom. So I intend to have a life of hardship and rise from there.

Therefore, I pray only for the health and prosperity of everyone. Let everyone be kind and caring to one another and may no one ever experience any distress in their life



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జ్ఞానాభివృద్ధి యోగ - 2025

జ్ఞానయవోద, అమరావతి

Under the Guidance of
Sri. Swami Niranjananda Sa
Ramaracharya, Bihar School of Yo
Viveka Yoga Path, Ganga dharan, Mun







The Koshas

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



From the yogic perspective, mind and consciousness are experiences. These experiences are defined in the koshas. A Russian wooden doll can be opened and inside there is another doll. You open that and inside is the third one. You open that and inside is the fourth one. Then you open that and inside is the tiny fifth one. Surprisingly, the Russian dolls only have five dolls, and surprisingly our body has five bodies, which we experience in this lifetime.

The first experience is the physical body, the senses and the interaction or the attraction of the senses to different sense objects. You hear something; you can either like it or dislike it. You see something; you can either like it or dislike it. You taste something; you can like it or dislike it. You can touch something; you can like it or dislike it. In this manner, in the physical dimension, our whole awareness and attention revolves around the sensorial perceptions, known as the *jnanendriyas*, the cognition of the senses.

Along with the cognition of the senses which give us the experience of life through this body, the body is also supported by intricate organs whose sole function is to keep the body alive – lungs, heart, kidneys, liver, stomach, everything in this body. The sole purpose is to keep this mechanical component functioning. The cognition of this mechanical robot happens through the senses, which are always seeking for something which is pleasant and gratifies. It makes the physical dimension fulfilled, and that you experience in your mind as happiness. This is *annamaya kosha*.

For any equipment to work, whether it is a fan, air-conditioning, heater or a car, energy is needed. For the organs of the body to function optimally, energy is needed. That energy is pranic energy or the second body, the pranic dimension, the *pranamaya kosha*. Pranamaya kosha is the battery which feeds the senses at the physical dimension. It keeps all the systems ticking inside to ensure that physically we are able to interact with our environment, our world, the sense objects and senses. Internally, at another dimension, it is feeding the subtle mental, emotional and spiritual behaviour. Pranamaya kosha is more the battery, through which we are able to experience the totality of life.

From the yogic perspective, at the time of death, the pranas along with the spirit leave the body. It is not only the spirit, but also the pranas. Yogis have shown that when they achieve samadhi, they are able to raise their pranas and put them out through the crown of the head, the sahasrara chakra. This

indicates a level of competence, perfection and understanding of the intricate pranic process. Yogis are able to achieve that, yet for us normal people, prana is a feeder to the physical, mental and spiritual bodies.

This prana has to always maintain its balance. If there is more prana, there is hyperactivity in all the koshas. If there is less prana, there is lethargy and hypo-activity in all the koshas. Either vitality increases or dullness sets in. The only way to charge these pranas when they are depleted is through rest, sleep and pranayama practices. When you are tired, you feel sleepy. It is an indication that your body needs recharging, and so you lie down. Then, as the energy recharges the body, you feel better, and you get up. When the batteries are not fully recharged, you drag yourself up to do something that you need to do. Or, if the batteries are fully charged, you jump up and are ready to do anything that requires doing. That is the pranic dimension.

The globe of the mind

The third body is manomaya kosha, which is a very interesting subject. Let us think of manomaya kosha like a round ball. I am holding a ball in my hand and that is the mind. The sun is up and is lighting the ball. Where has the light come first to this ball, and where has the light come last to this ball? The ball is curved, so in the centre part which is closest to the sunlight, the light will come first. If this is Earth, the equator will have the first strike of light. Places like Greenland, which are in the Arctic circle, or the Antarctic circle, are further away, so light will go there last. It is not a vertical object where light is hitting all the sides at the same time.

The part where the light hits first is the conscious mind. In between the middle and top is the subconscious mind, where the light will hit after it has gone through the conscious. At the North Pole and South Pole, the light will reach last, and that is the unconscious mind. The globe is the mind. Consciousness is the space where this globe is hanging. Manomaya kosha,

where the light is hitting first, is the *chetan man*, conscious mind. The whole concept of mind represents that aspect of our nature, ourselves, or consciousness, which is interacting with life, not only the body, the senses, me or my family, but the entire experience and expression of life. That is the conscious which is visible, external, and in the form of *kriya*, action. The senses cannot be without *kriya*, without action. When the mind is awake, it cannot be idle; you have to force it to be idle during meditation. Otherwise, it is just continuously running helter-skelter. That is the conscious mind.

Then, after some time, the light hits the subconscious dimension. It is the conscious perceptions which reach into the subconscious dimension, in the form of conditionings, *samskaras* and *pratyayas*. The subconscious is the building block of your nature and personality. Whatever is in the subconscious will affect the conscious dimension. Then, the little bit of light that comes through very late to the top, is the unconscious. The light is there, yet it is not making you aware of that region because your centre is focused on the conscious dimension, in the middle. Sometimes, you access your subconscious dimension when you sleep, in the form of dreams and visions. The mental activity that you perceive at night during sleep is coming from the subconscious dimension. When these experiences stop completely and you see nothing, and there is no awareness of time, space and object, then in that limbo state, you are in the unconscious mind.

Intellect and intelligence

This whole mind is nothing but an expression of intelligence. Intelligence is of two types. One type of intelligence is known as intellect, and the other type is known as intelligence. Intellect is something that we realize when we are in this body, but intelligence is something that is there permanently, even if we do not experience it, or when we are able to experience it. Intellect or logic is an activity of the conscious mind. Intellect does not function in the subconscious, it is more

active in the conscious. Everyone in this world tries to develop their intellect. Education is a form of developing intellect. Knowing $2 + 2 = 4$ is not intelligence; it is intellect. Knowing the combination of hydrogen and oxygen is not intelligence; it is intellect. In this sensorial world, our interaction is through intellect, not intelligence. Intellect is what everybody wants to sharpen.

Intellect is like a knife. Intellect can slice through ideas, just as a knife can slice through an apple or orange. Intellect will question 'Why?' and dissect different layers of the onion – take out each layer of the onion. That is intellect – what lies after this; what lies after this. Intellect is like a knife which dissects everything. The more you dissect things, the less of the bigger picture you see. You only have that tool of intellect, which is to cut and dissect; you do not have a needle to sew. You are able to cut the cloth with your knife, slash it and make a thousand pieces of the cloth with your knife, to discover what lies beyond. However, you do not have the tool to sew the cloth. The tool to sew the cloth is not intellect.

This intellect is very much for material understanding, beyond that intellect has proved futile. Intellect has never allowed us to understand, grasp and recognize the reality which exists behind the appearance. We are always going for the appearance, and we are not connected to the reality behind the appearance. Intellect itself is not enough to have spiritual or even philosophical understanding and realization. If I speak on philosophy, through your intellect you will be debating with me forever – why like this; why not like this; why should it be that; why should I do that; why can't it be done like that? Intellect is not a constructive thing. Sri Aurobindo said clearly, 'In the beginning intellect was my friend, but at the end it was the biggest barrier that I had to face in my life, the biggest obstacle that I had to face in my life, because it would not allow me to construct anything; it would make me destroy things. Even things that I believed in were destroyed by the intellect, without creating anything new.'

This is the mind; the whole mind can be said to be the intellect. We do not understand philosophies; we do not understand good ideas; we do not understand religion; we do not understand what is virtue; we do not understand what is dharma. If somebody says anything about these things, immediately your intellect comes to cut it into shreds, from your perspective and understanding, without developing the picture for which it is intended.

Vijnanamaya kosha

After this comes vijnanamaya kosha. Vijnanamaya kosha is the space where Earth and other planets are just sustaining themselves; they exist without any support. They are all in the lap of space, and that space is vijnanamaya kosha or consciousness. One interesting idea has been given in the yogas – you can speak of the conscious mind, the subconscious mind, the unconscious mind, yet beyond that you say superconsciousness. You do not say superconscious mind, as there is no such thing as superconscious mind. There cannot be a superconscious banana; there cannot be a superconscious animal, bird or a superconscious person.

To become that, you have to go beyond the mind into nothingness, and where the mental experiences will have no sway over you, your actions, your thoughts, your emotions, your aspirations. This superconscious mind which you achieve is vijnanamaya kosha. Now, you are able to see yourself, and you are able to see others as balls hanging in space. Sages have the superconsciousness, for they are able to see the bigger picture of everyone, including the universe. They become the witness of that consciousness, and discovery continues in that dimension as well. Just as science is continuing to tell us that space is not what it looks like; there is also dark matter. Space is contained in that dark matter, so something much greater and much vaster than space is out there, known as the dark matter. In that dark matter is our bubble of universe. When you are able to witness this bubble of universe that is the vijnanamaya kosha.

Then discovery continues from space to dark matter. You know what is dark matter? It is known as Kali, the power of time. In this transcendental consciousness, time is just one experience, not the past, the present or the future. At that level of superconsciousness in vijñanamaya kosha, time is just one continuum. There is no past, there is no future, there is no present. If anything, it is a continuous present. That continuous present is what makes you a *drashta*, the seer, the rishi.

Then beyond that is the anandamaya kosha, where you see the distant sun, the source of everything. You go towards that and you merge in it. You become a part of the sun, a ray of the sun, a part of the hydrogen that burns in the sun. You become the sun. That is the merger of the individual consciousness with the higher consciousness. When a raindrop falls into the ocean, it becomes one with the ocean and you cannot separate it again.

– 18 January 2025, Ganga Darshan, Munger



Cancer

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



In 1976, the Australian Cancer Research Foundation, gave us six cancer patients who were at their third stage. They wanted to know if yoga could somehow help alleviate a little bit of the pain, a little bit of suffering. We said, 'Let us try something.' To these patients who were given like six months to one year of life, we started the practice off with yoga nidra. I have always believed that more than the physical component, it is the mental fear which is more dangerous than the disease. There is one illness, which I call DIFS, disease induced fear syndrome, which can be lethal and harmful for the individual. That fear 'I am going to die,' or 'I am suffering from cancer' had to go. Yoga nidra helped in achieving that. It built up their confidence, optimism. It gave them a tool to relax and not be under the constant influence of fear and anxiety.

After that we taught them Pawanmuktasana Part 1, to promote circulation through the whole body. Then we taught them pranayama, to activate the vital energies and to develop their immunity, and, ajapa japa, *So Ham* with breath awareness. For six to eight months, these six patients practised yoga every day, and surprisingly they survived for decades beyond the time prescribed by the doctors. They became well. They were clinically cured with these four things.

Much later many other people tried, but they got stumped because cancer happens in every part of the body, from brain, to liver, kidneys, skin, to blood. So, it is not one practice which can be applied to all the cases. If it is blood cancer, the practices have to be different. If it is brain cancer, then just hope for a quick departure. It depends on where the cancer has affected your body and your senses. In many cases, if we can strengthen our mind with positivity, with prana, then that can help us overcome the physical debilitating condition.

Cancer is what? Deformation of cells. Even when you have a normal boil, the cells are deformed. The difference is that when there is a boil, the cells deform and they can be brought back into the condition in which they were. You can see the healing. Then, at certain times you cannot bring them back to normal. Definitely, the immunity of the human body has taken a big beating, with all the tasty food that we enjoy, all the chemicals that we ingest, the pollution of food, air and water. All that has affected the health of the human body.

The latest scientific studies show that from the year 2000, in every generation we are losing 10% of our immunity. That is a serious challenge in front of people, yet nobody is thinking about it. Nobody is willing to change their eating and drinking habits. If we are not going to change, then how can we expect wellness and therapy? The more we ingest these pollutants into our body, the more we will be susceptible to many more illnesses and diseases than cancer. There can be many other types of illnesses which we cannot deal with.



It is always better for human life and human health to go back to basics, to go back to a natural life, where you can be out in the sun, where you can play in the mud, where you can bathe in a spray of water outside, and live a life connected to nature. Eat nourishing food, drink not the bottled water, but a water that can help the body with the right alkaline content. For total health we need to bring a lot of changes into our lifestyle and routine, without which it will just remain a distant dream. We shall be firefighting with this problem now, and that problem in the next generation, and the third problem in the coming generation.

I feel that healthwise we have come to the point where we can simply fall over the cliff any time. There are some people who are aware of the risks and who are making the attempt to live a better life, yet that percentage is minimal, and the majority like to indulge and splurge in life. At least conscious people should make the effort to change their life, to inspire and encourage others to change their habits, with a better understanding of what is happening to the human body. The focus should be on lifestyle, rather than on therapy.

– 10 January 2025, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Higher Awareness

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati

At some time in our lives, it is necessary to rise above the mundane experience that we have from birth until death. The culture in which we live, the times in which we live, the technological culture in which we live that has completely paralyzed us, it holds a big power over our minds. In India, with the technological advancement and development that is taking place, people are swayed by it. In the West people are steeped in it, but in India, even though they are overtaken by the technological culture, they know and really do believe in their hearts, that along with this technological culture, man has to face a new set of problems. Even experts, psychologists and thinkers have accepted that with this technological culture, modern man will have to face new problems.

Lazy mind

With the technology that we have at our finger tips, life has become very easy. We have a lot of time. How do we spend it? We spend it with different types of amusements which titillate us, which make us very excited and agitated. That is how we spend our time, all our time. The free time that we have, because of technology, we spend in amusing ourselves, entertaining ourselves, finding new ways to excite ourselves.

That is how we spend our time, and problems keep piling up one by one: economic problems, family problems, social problems, emotional problems. So much so, that modern man is very restless, agitated and excited. He has so many different gadgets at his disposal for his amusement and comfort. He lives in luxury and comfort.

He may have all the luxuries and comforts, but does he have the appetite for them? Can he really enjoy them? You have the best house, the best bed, but you don't get sleep at



night. You have the best food, the best cuisine, but you can't digest it. You have everything at your disposal, but do you really enjoy everything that you have? There was a time when the civilization in India was at its peak and people had all the luxuries and comforts, and they came to this one conclusion: that luxury and comfort make man lazy.

Luxury and comfort stagnate the mind. The mind becomes lazy, it loses the power of awareness. Struggle and difficulties awaken the mind, they awaken the power within you; they make you alert and aware. This is very simple logic. It is nothing great which I am telling you. If you have everything, naturally you are not going to be very alert and aware about things, but if you don't have anything, every moment will be spent being alert for survival. But is survival the only thing in life? There is something more than that, which is awareness.

– 17 June 2011, Bulgaria

The Joy of Yoga

Annie Asseraf, France

I have been working with disabled children for about five years. Most of the children cannot walk, some walk with a walking frame, wear a splint or live in a wheelchair, some children cannot talk at all or have great difficulty in doing so. They can perform asana very well, even such asanas as bhujangasana, makarasana, kurmasana, sarvangasana and halasana. They are at ease with the asanas and feel comfortable in the postures. A few years ago, a young boy who had autism was able to stay completely still in shavasana. His teachers could not believe it as he was never still, always restless and moving.

Some children speak well, some not at all, and some are learning with great difficulty. Audrey, at six years of age, could only say 'yes' and 'no'. Now she slowly makes sentences and sings mantras with all her heart. The children enjoy mantra chanting very much. They are able to memorize many mantras such as *Om*, *So Ham*, the Gayatri mantra, the Shanti Mantra as well as the words of various kirtans. Most of the children cannot read so they have learned only by listening and memorizing. One girl, Sublime, now chants *Om* spontaneously when she feels the need to do so. Anastasia, who is seven, loves music and does not talk . . . yet. As soon as I play the Gayatri mantra, she brightens up and starts dancing on her knees. When her caretaker tells her that she is going to yoga class, she smiles and is happy.

I also taught them concentration and correct breathing and told them they could use these techniques whenever they needed. I have witnessed many changes over the past five years and so have the other professionals who work with the children. Their ability to concentrate has developed enormously along with their awareness of their breathing and their ability to change the breathing patterns.

One boy, Romeo, who is in a wheelchair and cannot talk, told his mother, with the help of a communication notebook, that when he comes home after yoga, he wants to have silence and not play any video games.

I hope that these children, when they leave the school at the age of sixteen, will remember some of the yoga practices they have learned and keep using them in their daily lives.



Many cases of psychologically or emotionally retarded children or physically incapacitated children can be taught yoga which will improve their minds, their attitudes and their personal conditions. In my opinion, handicapped children should be exposed to the benedictions and influence of yoga. Bring out the poet, the musician, scientist or swami in them.

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Ashram

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Many times people say ashram is like a community; yet we differ from that concept, for us it is a family. You should be able to feel for the ashram just as you would feel for your home. If something is wrong in your home, you take the necessary steps to correct that wrong, for you belong to that place, your home. In the same manner, if all of you want to understand ashram life, the ashram systems, structure and discipline, you have to belong; you are not a participant or a student, you belong to this place and are equally responsible for the ashram as we are. Together we can make an environment which is conducive to our spiritual development, mental peace and personal harmony.

The ashram structures and disciplines can be challenging at times for those who are not used to it. We are stiff due to our mind. If the mind can be made a bit pliable and flexible, then adjustment and accommodation becomes much easier. To derive the full benefits of the ashram, be flexible in the mind, learn to adjust, accommodate and accept the different situations and disciplines.

The disciplines and situations are geared to make us aware of ourselves. For example: we practise silence at mealtimes and from six in the evening to six in the morning. People wonder how they can remain without speaking. Try it and I am sure you will enjoy it. People who are not habituated to remain quiet and silent find those periods difficult as they are used to having verbal diarrhoeas; if you want to control the verbal diarrhoea practise mouna. That is an example of the ashram discipline. There are many other little things that are incorporated in ashram life and its structure.

– 25 September 2011, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Questions on Education

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



In which way can yoga help to bring peace and harmony into the educational system?

Nowadays people think of education as a matter of intellectual development only. They do not consider that discipline is also part of education. Therefore, in most educational institutions, you will find there is practically no discipline. The relationship between the teacher and those taught is absent. Whether the teacher is great or not, the first discipline that the student must have is respect for the teacher. Otherwise, whatever he learns from the teacher will not become fruitful in his life.

According to Indian tradition, in the gurukul system, it was always the disciple's duty to get up before the guru and shampoo his feet, then the guru would get up. Now, these customs are completely forgotten because that closeness between guru and disciple no longer exists. The students do not live with the teachers and they do not even know how the teachers live.

The relationship between teacher and student is not based on discipline, respect or learning. I learn geography from you because the government has appointed you as my teacher; it is not I who choose you as my teacher. In the olden days, students used to develop so much respect for the teacher from whom they learned. Nowadays, however, we never even say from whom we have learned. We will only say we are from Delhi University or Oxford or Stanford; nothing to do with the professor or teacher.

Another important factor in education is personal discipline insofar as the student is concerned. Nowadays students get up after their parents. There are some students who never see the rising sun. There are five important characteristics of students which were enumerated to us when we were children. These are: *kaga chesta* – the student must be as alert as a crow; *bakodhyanam* – he must have concentration like a crane who stands still for hours watching for fish; *swananidra* – he must be able to sleep like a dog; *alpahari* – he must eat very little; *grihatyagi* – he must have nothing to do with his family affairs. These are the five characteristics of a great student.

The student's life has got to be disciplined throughout, but unfortunately this type of discipline and order has been completely ignored in the present educational curriculum. Now it appears that a student can lead any type of life. He can do anything except austerity. He can drink, he can read rubbish books, he can wear any kind of dress, but he has nothing to do with austerity, with discipline, with respect or obedience.

In order to bring yoga into the educational curriculum, first you must bring discipline, austerity and absolute respect, irrespective of what you feel. The moment this concept is brought in, then order is established and everything runs smoothly. The fundamentals of yoga are self-control and discipline – yama and niyama. Yama means ‘self-control’ and niyama means ‘a particular way of living with law and order’. This is the foundation of yoga. It is on this principle that asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana and dhyana are all built. If the foundation is weak, the edifice will also be weak.

If we force this type of ethics, or ‘do’s and don’ts’, upon the student, isn’t there a possibility of suppressing his personality?

No. There will be correct expression. Suppression is only possible when the teacher tries to discipline the student in the most irrational way, otherwise not. Discipline should come from within; it should not be forced. Self-discipline is the result of a disciplined mind and yoga makes its own contribution towards this.

What is your point of view about social discipline and freedom?

In free enterprise everybody is asked to do his own thing, because almost the whole world today stands undisciplined except for a few nations where there may be social discipline, but even in those countries there is no individual discipline. Individual discipline is a subject of yoga and social discipline is a subject of political administration. This social discipline has got to be maintained by force in the beginning because there are a few elements who will oppose it, who will try to create undisciplined behaviour. They will have to be corrected, but this is only necessary in the beginning. Once social discipline has been established, there is no need for suppression or compulsion. When there is absolute lawlessness in human society, in order to uproot that lawlessness, a certain amount



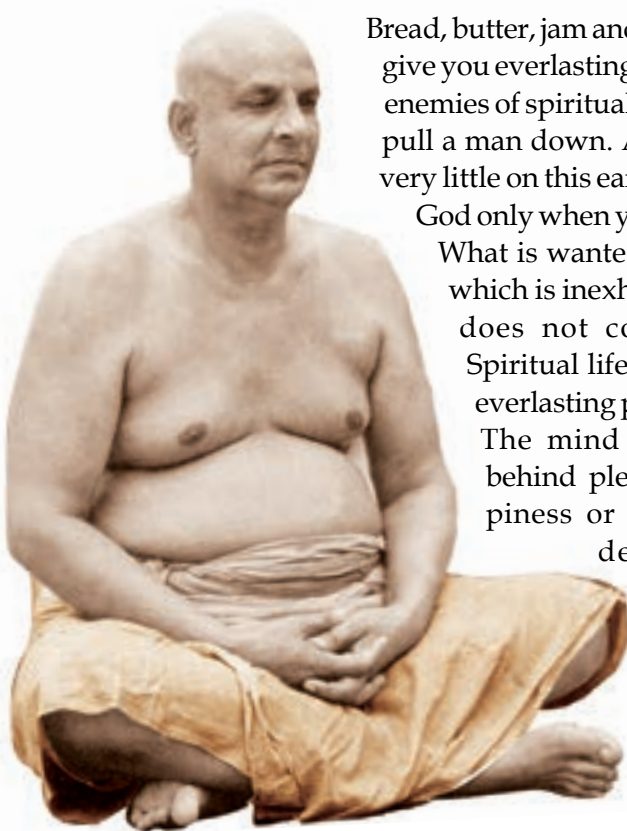
of freedom has got to be controlled, but when order has been established and that continues for a few years, then gradually you remove the controlling strings and allow more social and individual freedom. That is essential.

I agree that freedom is the greatest heritage of man. However, freedom should only be given after checking the qualifications of each and every individual. Many people do not know why they want freedom. They want freedom to do whatever they like; nobody should stand in their way. If they do something bad, who are you to say? This is the usual conception. People are not aware of the higher aspects of freedom, which is freedom of the self, expression of the soul, which enables one to do a great work. Freedom for the sake of doing whatever one likes is a very narrow, very low, selfish and negative concept of freedom that people have in their minds. There may be a few thousand people in the world who are intellectually conscious of the higher level of freedom, but we don't mean these people at all when we say that freedom has to be controlled for some time.

– 18 September 1967, India

Experience Heaven on Earth

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Bread, butter, jam and nice biscuits cannot give you everlasting peace. Comforts are enemies of spiritual life and peace. They pull a man down. After all, man wants very little on this earth. You will think of God only when you are in adversities.

What is wanted is spiritual wealth which is inexhaustible. Happiness does not come from wealth. Spiritual life alone can give real, everlasting peace and happiness. The mind is the substratum behind pleasure or pain, happiness or misery, success or

defeat. Rise above the pairs of opposites by resorting to a guru and his instructions. Study the lives of saints who underwent various trials and the books by realized

souls. Develop the spirit of true surrender wherein you have no thought of body or bodily needs or self-protection even in the slightest degree and wherein you forget the idea of life and death altogether. Serenity is merely mental. Therefore, cultivate mental equipoise by gaining spiritual knowledge.

If you want to enjoy heaven on earth, go on purifying yourself by controlling the lower mind, the desires and cravings. All is bliss, all is joy, all is happiness then.

Daya, Daan and Daman

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Every civilization has a story of creation. We know about the story of Adam and Eve, we know the story of other civilizations who have mentioned how creation took place, and how humans appeared on this planet. In India also we have our own story of creation. In this story of creation, the Creator made two genders, male and female, and he gave them the instruction to multiply. Along with the instruction to multiply, he also gave them three aspirations for life to experience humanness in this created world.

Humanness is the biggest ideal and religion of the world, which people have forgotten. It was God who wanted us to live like human beings and to experience what humanity and humanism is like. He gave clear indications on how people have to live on this planet. God said to the people He had created, 'Number one, always be compassionate, *daya*; number two, learn to give always, *daan*; number three, always have control over the senses, passions, desires, and live a balanced life, *daman*.'

So, *daya*, *daan* and *daman*, learning how to be compassionate, learning how to give and share, and learning how to be in control of yourself are the three instructions given by God to humankind, at the time of creation. Millennia have passed and in this passage of time we have forgotten these three basic instructions of the Divine. We believe that we are the only people who know the Divine, and our path, our system, our belief is the only way to experience the Divine. The Indian tradition never said that it is the only path, but that there are many paths. We respect and honour them all.

We should not forget the three mandates of God to experience fulfilment, peace, joy and union with that Higher Self. It is something that one needs to understand properly. Compassion is a pure state of self; it is a state of mind, it is a state of perception, it is a state of knowledge, 'I know the sufferings of other people and I am capable of helping them out.' This compassion can take any form: somebody is sick, provide them with medical help; somebody is hungry, provide them with food; if they are suffering, understand the suffering and help them overcome the suffering. It is a pure state of connection with another individual person. There is nothing selfish about it, there is no arrogance in it. It is just a positive connection that you can develop, by cultivating your own understanding about the life of another person. That is compassion.

Once you realize what is the need, then the aspect of giving comes into play. Medicine for the sick, food for the hungry, shelter for the shelterless, that is *daan*, giving; that is *seva*, service.



Only when you have compassion in your heart and mind, giving happens as an expression of your senses and body and life. At an individual level, realize what you desire. Does what you desire add any value to your life or not? If your desires do not add value to your life, they are not worth fulfilling. If your desire is of infatuation, it does not add any value. If your desire is for self-gratification, it does not add any value. There has to be purity of thought, purity of intention, purity of mind, purity of heart, purity of expression. Expressing this purity is known as *daman*, restraint, control. Control is not holding back, control is transforming the binding, the negative, the confining, into an expression of purity which you feel within you.

If these three mandates can be lived in life, then you live with God. The world is divided into believers and non-believers, yet that is a mundane, materialistic concept. It is not a question of believing or not believing in the higher reality, but how we can live our life at its best. When you live your life at its best, then life is luminous, the journey in life is luminous, and there are no pitfalls, there is no darkness where you can falter. This is the message of the yogis and rishis since time immemorial. This is the message and the three points which we need to keep close to our heart – compassion, giving and restraint.

– 30 January 2025, Basant Panchami,
Ganga Darshan, Munger

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

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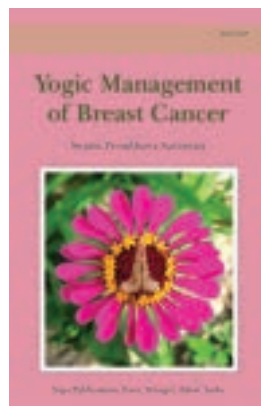
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<i>Oct 3-11</i>	Hatha Yoga/Karma Yoga Training
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