

YOGA

Year 14 Issue 11
November 2025



Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar, India



Hari Om

YOGA is compiled, composed and published by the sannyasin disciples of Swami Satyananda Saraswati for the benefit of all people who seek health, happiness and enlightenment. It contains information about the activities of Bihar School of Yoga, Bihar Yoga Bharati, Yoga Publications Trust and Yoga Research Fellowship.

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YOGA is a monthly magazine.

Published by Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger, Bihar – 811201.

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YOGA (English magazine)
YOGAVIDYA (Hindi magazine)
FFH (For Frontline Heroes)

Total no. of pages: 56 (including cover pages)

Front cover: Bharat Yoga Yatra 2025

Plates: Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati
with Children



GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Faith

Faith is an important qualification for an aspirant in the path of spirituality. Students of all yogas, whether of karma, bhakti, raja or jnana, should possess this fundamental virtue. No faith, no devotion. No faith, no jnana. The whole world runs on faith only – the rajah has faith in his dewan, the husband has faith in his wife, the shop-keeper has faith in his customers, the patient has faith in his doctor, the client has faith in his lawyer and the engineer has faith in his head-clerk. You cannot achieve anything grand, sublime and meritorious with a weak and wavering faith.

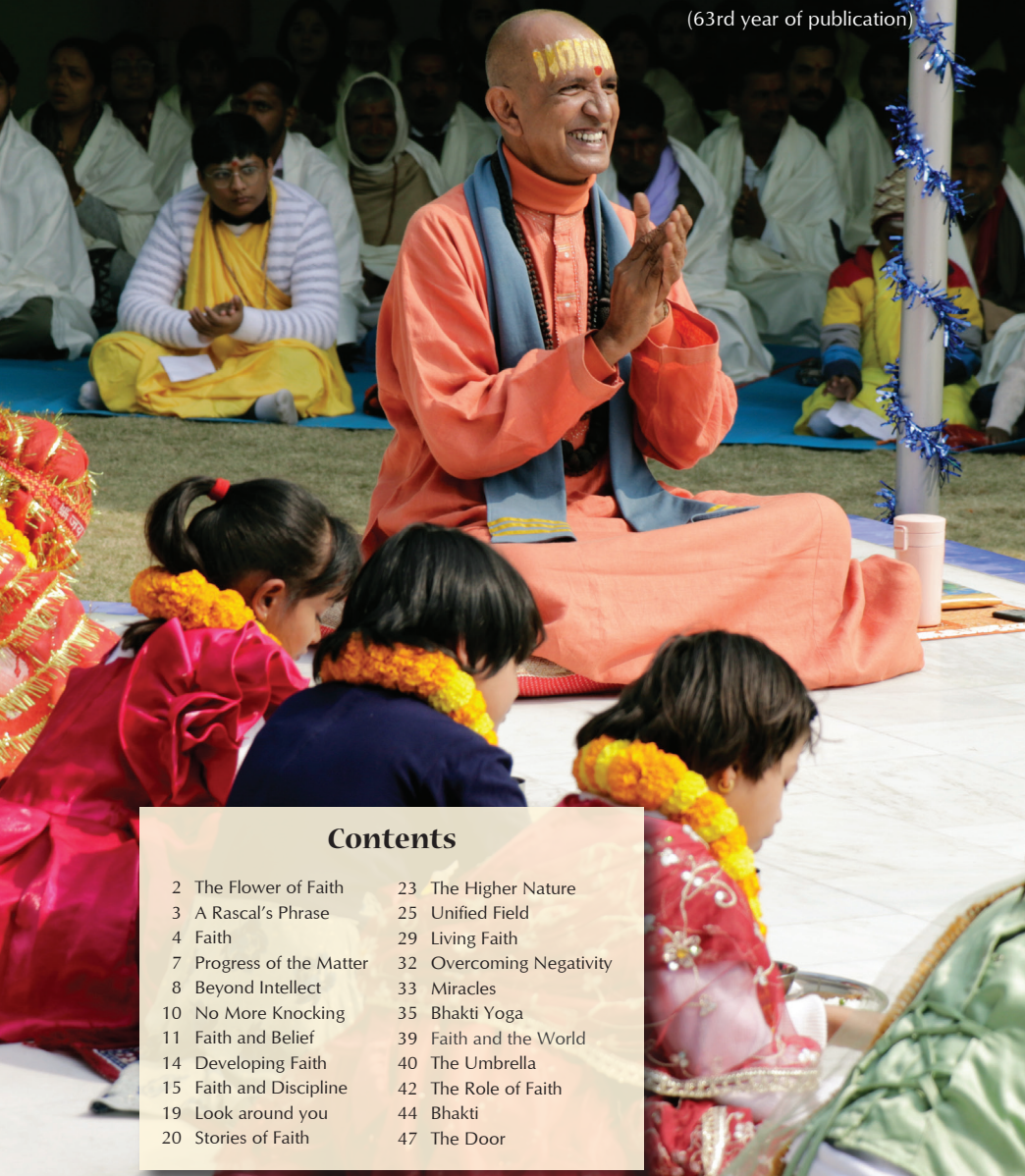
—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Published by Swami Shivadhyanam Saraswati on behalf of Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger – 811201, Bihar

Owned by Bihar School of Yoga **Editor:** Swami Gyansiddhi Saraswati

YOGA

Year 14 Issue 11 • November 2025
(63rd year of publication)



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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 ॥

The Flower of Faith

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Faith is a rare flower of inestimable value. It must be cultivated in the garden of your heart. It must be nourished daily with the water of sincerity. The weeds of doubt and fears should be totally eradicated. Then it will strike deep root, blossom and bear the fruit of devotion quickly.

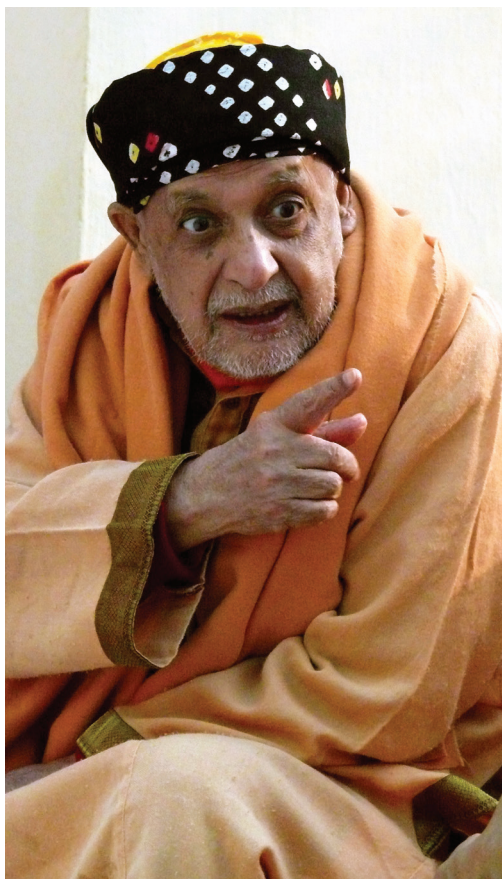
One cannot reach the goal of life with a faith that flickers at every step. One's faith must be as firm as the Himalayas. It must be as steady as a lamp that burns in a windless place. When one's faith is a living faith, it will develop into devotion to God.

A Rascal's Phrase

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Faith is the greatest property and special wealth. Faith is a spiritual substance and the main factor behind existence. If I have faith, I can move a mountain. I can part the ocean or make the sea dry. This faith is a spark of divinity which can be found in everybody. God and faith are two sides of the same coin. The moment one has realization of faith, one has realization of God; the moment one has realization of God, one has realization of faith. Faith is not merely a belief in something. Faith is confidence. Faith is a strong, unshakeable conviction in the existence of God, in the authority of the revealed scriptures and in the truth of what the guru says.

Intellect does not make a person unique. One is great due to faith and belief, not because of intellect. One has faith and belief, therefore, one is a superior human being. If one is without faith and belief and possesses only reasoning and calculation, then one is merely a sound box, fit for nothing. Faith is power and it can work miracles. There is no such thing as blind faith. Blind faith is a phrase coined by rascals.



Faith

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Some scriptures say it is the attainment of a body; others, that intelligence makes us unique from other life forms.

There are diverse opinions as to what the greatest attainment of human life is, and maybe from their particular perspective all are correct. However, from another perspective the greatest attainment one can have in life is faith, because faith keeps the mind and emotions balanced. Faith does not allow one to undergo either emotional or intellectual infidelity. This is one of the most important points about faith.

Faith is the original expression of the human heart. When a person is born, he functions through the heart, not the mind. When he starts formal education, the mind takes over and the heart component is relegated to the background, so that in the course of his life he functions through the intellect, through logic. The questions, "Why?", "How?" relate to intellectual expressions and understanding. Certain things, however, cannot be understood or even analyzed by the faculty of intelligence, and that is the strength of the heart. The mind can think about and aspire for good things, yet it is always diverted from them. The desire remains a desire, the thought remains a thought and the aspirations can never be implemented. The heart is always looking for support, security, compassion, love and affection – all the goodness and beauty in life.

There are different mentalities, different *samskaras*, impressions, belonging to each civilization, each group in society. The mentality of each society depends on the social environment. If the social environment has no balance between the material drive and the spiritual aspirations, then one disconnects from the heart forces and energies. When there is disconnection from the heart forces, the mind transforms itself, becoming more gross, materialistic and sensual, more full of cravings and desires. These cravings, desires and ambitions lead one to seek fulfilment outside. When one is unable to find pleasure, happiness and fulfilment in the world, one goes into a depressive cycle or an insecure cycle, an aggressive cycle or a fearful cycle, which then controls one's behaviour. Psychological and emotional imbalances disturb the family and then society becomes disturbed. To avoid that frustration, one

becomes addicted to something, which takes the mind away from that depression.

This is where faith comes in. Faith is the quality that balances the psychological and emotional disturbances. For example, there is a big psychological difference between a beggar and a thief who has a knife or a gun to rob people of their valuables, and, if they resist, will possibly harm them. If a beggar in India does not receive five rupees and goes hungry, at night before going to sleep he will say, "God didn't want me to eat today. I accept God's will. Maybe tomorrow will be a better day." He will remain content with that feeling. Faith will give some peace, solace, comfort and security, an awareness that he is being guided by his creator. For a thief, however, personal fulfilment is more important than another's life.

Shraddha, faith, does not need much elaboration. Belief is a quality of the mind and faith is a quality of the spirit. One can believe through the mind, one can disbelieve due to the mind, yet once faith arises, that fire, that force cannot be extinguished by the mind. Faith becomes the strength of human character. *Shraddha* is associated with a positive feeling or emotion. When a feeling is established in positivity, jealousy, repulsion and revulsion are reduced and love and compassion are increased. This leads to the spontaneous expression of *shraddha* flourishing within.

Faith is not associated with God or guru; they become the points of focus upon which *shraddha* rests. Faith is the connection between the individual and the transcendental Self. Without this feeling being established within, one cannot experience the divinity that resides in the heart. Tulsidas says that without faith even a *siddha*, an enlightened one, cannot see the divinity residing within his own heart. In this way, faith is the fruit or attainment of positive feelings and emotions, which not only join one with the divinity of the inner self, but also ensure that one is never separated from this divinity residing within. Faith is a mobile phone. It always keeps one in touch with the person one loves.

Progress of the Matter

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

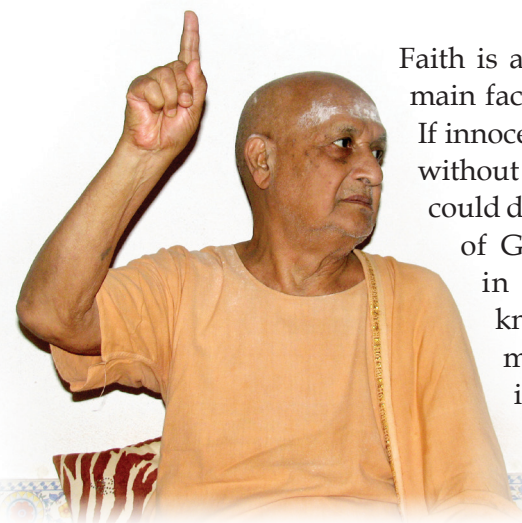


There is no meaning in having faith in the master only after he has performed certain miracles. Real faith and love are independent experiences which one develops even before knowing a person.

Faith is the first and foremost condition. God-realization is an outcome of intense and unflinching and non-dual faith. Faith does not demand any proof or epistemological conclusions. Faith is that intuitive attitude which one cultivates inwardly even before one comes across an object or a person.

Beyond Intellect

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Faith is a spiritual substance and the main factor behind human existence. If innocent faith could be maintained without any intellectual pollution, one could do anything in life. Knowledge of God is one aspect and faith in God is another. Through knowledge alone one may or may not develop communion; it is never a certainty. Knowledge of God does not necessarily bring one closer or guarantee communion with Him, but

faith does. Faith has to be experienced. A child has faith, a disciple has faith, and that faith is realization.

Faith does not demand any proof or epistemological conclusions. One cannot say that one will have faith in God only when one has seen Him. He cannot be seen until one's faith is complete. Faith is an intuitive attitude which one cultivates inwardly even before coming across an object or a person. It is the first and foremost condition. Of course, faith presupposes love. Thus one loves the object of one's faith. Awareness follows, then surrender, then merging and finally realization. This is how the aspirant progresses.

There are many stories about saints, miracle workers and great devotees. Things have happened to them and around them which cannot be explained in terms of human knowledge. This is due to faith. One has to guard and protect one's faith because intellect and logic kill faith. However, if the difference between faith and intellect is understood properly, both can develop simultaneously in their respective directions.

Usually one's faith in God is intellectual. It is therefore not faith at all, but an idea. Most people believe in God; they love, respect and worship Him. That is belief. Generally, when people refer to faith in guru or God, they mean that they are intellectually convinced of the guru's or God's superiority, a notion acquired from their parents or society. What most people have is belief, and it is mistaken for faith. Many also kill the little belief with which they could have survived on the psycho-emotional level. They say there is no God and conduct arguments on the subject, damaging their only link with the divine forces. Therefore, it is necessary to protect one's faith as well as one's belief.

Faith, however, is more than belief. It is a higher energy in a concentrated form. Belief can fail, and sometimes does. Intellect fails, but faith is infallible. It will never fail because faith is not an expression of the mind. It is understood through the mind, but not expressed through the mind. It has a different source and a different channel.

A human being has intelligence and faith. It is through intelligence that he learns about God, but it is through faith that he experiences God. Not knowledge but experience comes about through faith. Just as love, enmity, jealousy, joy and sorrow are not the stuff of the intellect but of experience, faith is also a matter of experience. The basis of the intellect is analysis. The Upanishads may have been written with the help of intelligence, but faith is such a substance that it accepts even the invisible. After all, no one has seen anger, but anger exists. This is a matter of faith. Faith needs to be experienced, not seen.

Faith and belief are essential, though intellect has its own place. Intellectuals ask why idols of gods and goddesses are worshipped. At the level of intellect, this may seem strange. After all, how can a piece of stone be God? How can a piece of paper be God? How can a person who eats and sleeps be guru and God? The intellect may question this, but when it comes to faith, then a stone is indeed God, a leaf is God and a tree is God.

No More Knocking

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati



Transformation and elevations of internal awareness and perception is the only way to bring about permanent and continued improvement in the quality of your life. So where are you going to begin? You have searched and knocked on many doors, but you have returned defeated and disillusioned. Even your religion has not been able to transform the quality of your experience. Moreover, the faith that most people have in their religion is not born out of a trust and confidence that arises from personal experience. Rather, it is a blind faith which has been handed down by the society, culture and family environment into which one is born. Therefore, it can never work.

Real faith has the power to transform an individual, but that faith has to be alive, not dead and burned out. Living faith, which can transform your whole personality and enrich the quality of your life, requires personal experience, which gives birth to trust, dedication and sincerity.

Faith and Belief

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Belief is mind speech. Faith is heart speech. If one can lose faith easily due to disillusionment, it means that one never had it. Belief can often be construed as faith due to the understanding that belief means acceptance with adherence, placing one's trust in what one has accepted. However, in faith there is trust, surrender and acceptance, not adherence. In belief it is not necessary to have the feeling of surrender. Adherence can often become a way of surrender, when one feels, 'I have been following this for so many years in my own life that I feel I have surrendered myself.'

Belief can be broken; faith cannot be broken. If faith is broken, it means it was only a head-trip without any real inner surrender. One has to surrender to oneself to one's feelings and convictions. One never surrenders to another person. One might say that one has surrendered to the guru and accepted him as one's guru. Surrender happens when there is trust and belief in oneself. Even if the guru is miles away, yet one identifies with him in spirit, mind, behaviour, action and wisdom, then one can say, "Yes, I have been able to surrender."

Belief and surrender are interesting concepts. I can believe that Swami 'X' is a nice person, containing the wisdom of the ages. I may feel that this person can guide me, be my refuge. I feel a great energy field around that person in the form of love, compassion and knowledge. That is my link with this swami whom I have accepted as my guru; however, it is only a belief, it is not faith. It is a belief that I have created in order to give myself a direction in which to move.

It may happen that somebody comes and says, "Swami 'X' is a bad person, look what has happened because of him" and suddenly one thinks, "Right, that Swami 'X' must be a bad person" and one's belief is gone! Faith cannot be shattered; it

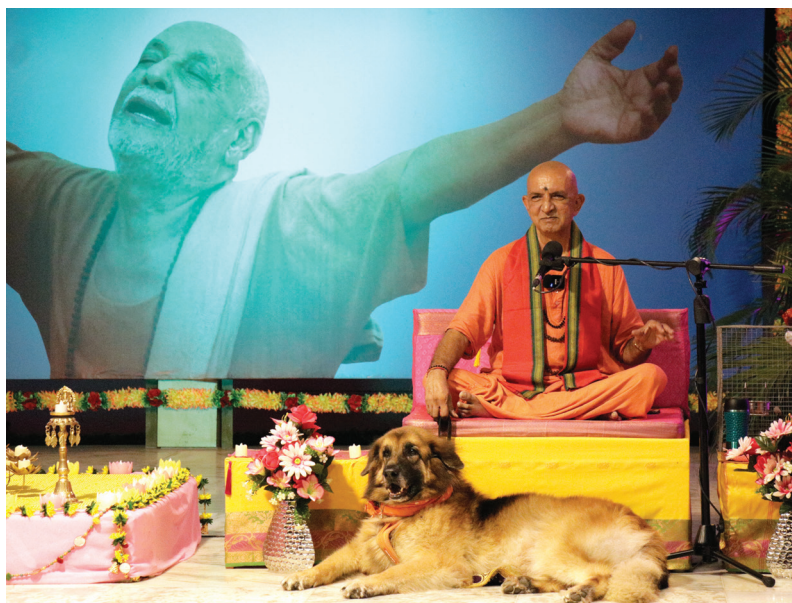
was only a belief which shattered, and it did not shatter due to a personal experience, but because one is susceptible to the influence of other people. If one has accepted somebody, something or some idea as the focal point, there has to be a feeling of unity with which a third person cannot interfere. If unity exists, faith manifests. If unity does not exist, it is only a heady concept, a belief, a thought, that can be shattered at any time.

Belief can change; faith can never change. Faith is awareness of the quality which is good within oneself, the other person and everyone. It is communicating at that level where one is able to experience equality. Belief and faith are matters of individual discovery. This discovery can only happen if one is sincere with oneself.

Faith and belief represent some basic realizations that one may have had about oneself and God. One can say belief is personal reflection and faith is universal reflection. One has faith in God, something and somebody whom one has never seen and may not see in this lifetime, yet faith continues. There is faith in some transcendental form of existence, and there is belief in oneself.

Every aspect of creation is guided by its inherent nature. The nature of a fruit tree is to eventually bear fruit. The nature of a human being is to experience peace, truth and bliss. If the seed of a fruit tree is left above ground in the middle of a desert, it will not germinate, much less become a tree and fulfil its nature by bringing forth fruit. One has to plant the seed, care for it and create the right environment for it to fulfil its destiny. It is the same with human beings. The nature of a human being is to experience *satyam*, truth; *shivam*, positivity, auspiciousness; and *sundaram*, beauty. However, to have this experience one has to create the right environment. One cannot just say, "I am going to fulfil my destiny."

The right environment begins with belief in one's own potential and ability and faith in God, *Ishwara pranidhana*, knowing one is being guided and directed, and that the



essence in oneself is the same as the essence of God. This is the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta. Whether water is contained in an ocean, a river, a lake or a cloud, the essence is the same: H_2O . Similarly, the essence of God and the reflection of that essence in everyone is the same. The essence of water is called H_2O and the essence of divinity, God. Recognizing and realizing that essence is the development of faith and belief. Therefore, one component of bhakti is dropping the masks and experiencing the reality at a personal level, a social level and a global level. If the aim of bhakti is to experience truth, the first sadhana of bhakti is to realize the truth of who and what one really is.

Once faith and belief are alive and active, the emotions are channelled and this is bhakti. Emotion is e-motion: energy in motion. When it is directed outwards into the world, one experiences pleasure, pain, change, likes, dislikes, fulfilment, satisfaction, as well as a vacuum and emptiness. However, when the same energies are directed inwards with the help of faith and belief, it becomes bhakti. Bhakti is channelling the emotions towards transcendental realization.

Developing Faith

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Faith can be strengthened through satsang, prayer, self-purification, meditation and study of scriptures. You can ascend the rungs of the spiritual ladder with the help of intense, unflinching faith alone. When a doubt arises, dispel it by means of well-directed, strong suggestions and affirmations such as: "I will succeed. There is no doubt of this. In my dictionary there are no such words as can't, impossible and difficult."

Whenever doubts assail you, reject them ruthlessly. Open your heart to the divine light, the source of all knowledge, all light. Become as simple as a child. Pray from the bottom of your heart. The flame will again become brighter and brighter.

Do not argue. You will not gain anything. Sit before your spiritual preceptor or a saint quietly and meditate for an hour. Let the soul speak to the Soul. All your doubts will be cleared by themselves. You will have good experiences. You will enjoy a peculiar peace. There will be a holy thrill of joy in your heart. This is the way for your spiritual growth. Abandon all sorts of unproductive beliefs, superstitions, weaknesses, wrong notions and ideas of impossibilities. Cling fast to faith in divine possibilities. Have faith in divine life. Aspire fervently and constantly to live in the divine. When you hear discourses that disturb your faith, leave the place at once. Do not keep company with such people until you have grown, until you are established on the rock of divine love. Never budge an inch from your present position. Stand adamant on the bedrock of faith.

Faith and Discipline

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The statements of realized beings are the guidelines which can lead one from ignorance to wisdom, from a restrictive nature to liberation, yet one needs to follow these guidelines and disciplines faithfully as they are set forth. In Chapter 17 of the *Bhagavad Gita*, Arjuna delves into the question of faith and discipline. Arjuna asks, “Can one walk the path just by faith, without following any discipline or guidelines?” (17:1):

*Ye shaastravidhimutsrijya yajante shraddhayaanvitaah;
Teeshaam nishthaa tu kaa krishna sattvamaaho rajastamah.*

Those who set aside scriptural injunctions and sacrifice with faith, where do they stand, Krishna, in sattwa, rajas or tamas?

The question is: Are those people who attempt to walk the spiritual path by faith alone, without adhering to any form of discipline, doing the right thing? Is that kind of nature, in which faith is predominant and effort non-existent, sattwic, rajasic or tamasic?

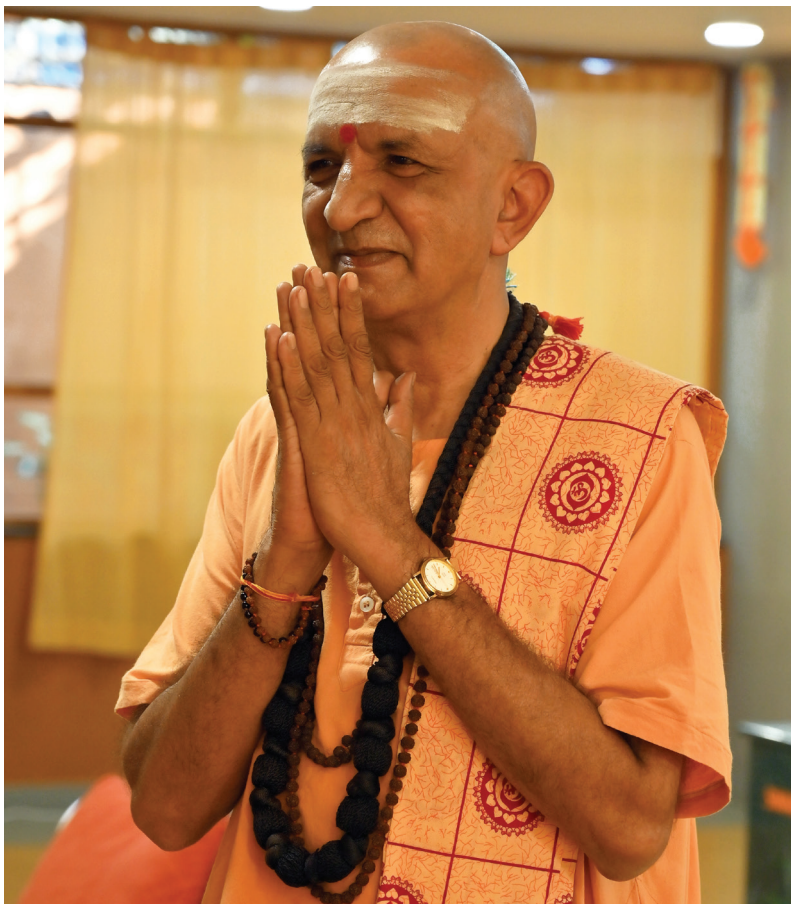
Not surprisingly, Sri Krishna anticipated other questions and so he said, “Look, you are asking me about faith only, nevertheless, I will tell you everything in relation to the individual. There is no doubt that everything falls into the category of sattwa, rajas and tamas, so faith is also sattwic, rajasic and tamasic. Even effort, *purushartha*, is of these three kinds. Not only that, even the means and lifestyle which you adopt as a sadhaka falls into the three categories.” The faith that exists in embodied beings is born of their nature, *swabhava*. Faith is not something which one receives from outside or which one can cultivate; it is inherent in everyone. Sri Krishna says (17:2):

*Trividhaa bhavati shraddhaa dehinaam saa svabhaavajaa;
Saattvikee raajasee chaiva taamasee cheti taam shrinu.*

The inherent faith of embodied beings is threefold: sattwic, rajasic and tamasic. Hear about it from Me.

Love is also inherent in everyone. Only due to one’s association with the senses and the objects of pleasure which colour one’s mentality, one is not able to discover one’s faith and bhakti.

When people ask how they can learn bhakti, Sri Swami Satyananda said clearly that bhakti is not like hatha yoga or raja yoga, something that one can learn in an ashram. Bhakti is a natural, spontaneous expression of one’s life and it already exists within everyone; one does not have to develop it. Sri Krishna is telling Arjuna the same. Faith is born out of one’s nature as the result of accumulated experiences, samskaras and karmas. In each lifetime one has another nature, *swabhava*. In each lifetime, as one gathers more impressions and experiences, the new collection is creating a different nature for the next life.



Faith is the result of one's accumulated personality blooming in this life.

If one is sattwic, one's faith will be sattwic. If one is tamasic, one's faith will be tamasic. If one's nature, personality, attitudes, thoughts and behaviour are rajasic, one's faith will be rajasic. This sloka explains everything (17:3):

*Sattvaanuroopaa sarvasya shraddhaa bhavati bhaarata;
Shraddhaamayam purusho yo yachchhraddhah sa eva sah.*

The faith of each accords with his nature. Faith constitutes the very being of man. As a man's faith is, so is he.

Faith is what one feels inside, and the entire being survives on faith. Faith is not linked to a religious concept, belief or dogma. Faith is what nurtures the personality. Faith is what connects the individual being with the higher being. It is the link, the connection, and each person expresses that faith and is that faith in their life. Sri Krishna continues to explain the three kinds of faith (17:4):

*Yajante saattvikaa devaanyaksharakshaamsi raajasaah;
Pretaanbhootaganaamshchaanye yajante taamasaa janaah.*

Sattwic people worship the gods, the rajasic worship the spirits guarding wealth and power, and the tamasic worship ghosts.

People who are endowed with sattwic faith don't identify with the lower levels of existence or life, or with nature spirits. In their mind they only have one idea, "How can I attain the highest?" Therefore, Sri Krishna says that worship of the gods is performed by the sattwic person. Their inherent faith, due to the accumulation of positive karmas and samskaras, makes them seek union with the highest nature. People who are rajasic seek dominance, power, position and control. They are manipulative. Such people are endowed with faith, which is rajasic in nature and therefore they take refuge in rajasic spirits to assist them in attaining their desires. Similarly, people endowed with tamasic faith are going to take recourse to the lower forms of nature spirits to help them attain their goal.

In people's lives, when one guna is predominant, thoughts often come such as, "Oh, I wish I had that power." To attain that siddhi, people perform sadhanas that invoke the lower category of forces or link them with the intermediate category of forces. Some people also perform sadhana for siddhis that involve connecting with the higher forces; however, those who connect with the higher forces eventually lose the desire to attain siddhis and become self-disciplined.

Look around you

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Look around you. You will find that everyone is wrapped up in their own self. Nobody goes out of this self to help others who are plunged in misery and suffering. To forget this narrow-minded outlook is a part of our mission. I am very sure about our mission's great services to humanity. Those who sincerely intend to plunge into this sort of work will never bother how. I have faith in those revelations, which inspired me to establish this mission. I have faith in my inner voice.



Stories of Faith

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

This word 'impossible' is not the word of an arrogant person. With faith one can eliminate disease, no matter what it is; one can change one's nature overnight, no matter how bad it is; and what's more, one can be anything in life regardless of what one is today. A humble person with limited resources in life, once he realizes faith, realizes God. So tell me, what is impossible?

God is formless; God is an experience. God is transcendental existence. One cannot see him with the naked eye or by means of this mind. One cannot realize him by any mundane sensual tools but when faith becomes effulgent, God is there.

The main support of human life is faith, not the intellect. One never thinks about that which is clear. This is faith. Faith and trust are deep and mysterious. A child believes in God naturally, as Mirabai did. Some saint gave her a wooden statue of Krishna and Mirabai fell in love with it. She must have been a small girl at the time. To the little girl, that small statue of Gopal became her husband. When she grew up she saw Gopal as an adult, like herself.

Mirabai was either insane or she was completely natural. The thought just did not occur to her as to how a wooden statue could be a man or her husband. This thought just never entered her mind. So many people tried to reason with her, but she had just the one thing on her mind:

*Mere to Giradhara Gopaala doosaro na koyee
Jaake sira mora mukuta mero pati soyee.*

Only Krishna is mine, nobody else; the one who wears a peacock feather on his head is my husband.

Faith needs no explanation. One may feel devotion or respect towards someone after seeing them; one might feel that they



are wise or beautiful. However, faith is experienced without ever seeing the object of the faith. There is not a thought about it; it is spontaneous and simple. One believed that one's father was one's father. This is trust. It is the same with God. Those who have this kind of faith, they attain. Such trusting people are straight forward and simple.

When I reached Munger, Nandkishore Goenka was twelve or thirteen years of age. He had the white patches of leucoderma on his lips. One day he asked me for a cure and I said to him, "Practise Chhat pooja." He performed Chhat pooja during the festival that celebrates and worships the sun, and the patches disappeared. Why did they go? They disappeared because of trust.

Children are spontaneously and naturally trusting. They believe whatever people tell them. Whenever one accepts something without contesting it, that is *vishwasa*, trust. *Vishwasah siddhidayakah vishvassah phaldayakah* - "The fruit is attained only by trust." In this world, at least ninety percent of the population lives on trust. Such people can be found everywhere, not only at the Kumbha Mela. At the Kumbha Mela, when the Naga sadhus urinate here and there, everyone runs to pick up some of that sand and rub it all over the body like bhasma. Who will stop this? Is this written in some Veda or shastra? Has some guru preached this? No, this is one's own faith. That which is inborn is called faith and that which is given by another is called knowledge. This faith has been born within oneself. People go and smear themselves with urine-soaked sand. Why they do it is something only they know. Such things do not happen only in India, it happens in all religions.

A friend of Raidas was going to Varanasi, so he asked Raidas if he would accompany him. Raidas answered, "No, I cannot come. I am a cobbler and I am very poor." Instead he gave his friend some pieces of *haldi*, turmeric, to offer to Ganga. His friend went to Varanasi and he had his bath in the Ganga. Forgetting to offer the turmeric which Raidas had given to him, he started off on his return journey. All of a sudden he heard a voice behind him, saying, "Haldi, haldi." When he turned around, he saw two hands rising from the Ganga. It was a miracle - Gangaji was asking for the turmeric from Raidas. Such faith and belief are the greatest human qualities.

The Higher Nature

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The higher nature is the nature beyond bindu, nada and kala. What you paint, draw and create with your hands is a *kala*, expression and creation. What is created and what we see is also a *kala*, a manifestation. The higher nature is beyond the manifest creation, it is eternal and not subject to change and decay. *Bindu* is the source. The first Big Bang in the universe was the bindu, from which everything expanded, the cosmic inhalation and exhalation. With inhalation, everything is absorbed into one point; with exhalation everything is expelled from that one point. That cosmic phenomenon is known as bindu. Birth and death of the universe; birth and death of creation. Not of a planet, not of a civilization, but of the entire creation.

We are only aware of five percent of our universe. Imagine, that one day we are able to have the concept of one hundred percent of the universe, what a staggering experience that would be. Everything of this five percent plus the remaining

ninety-five percent is in dark matter. Lights are only suns in the dark space. Otherwise, space is absolutely dark, with suns shining, illuminating some galaxies here, some galaxies there. Imagine the enormity of the universe. If you are only seeing five percent, what if the remaining ninety-five percent becomes visible? That is only one universe. There are multiverses, and not only one galaxy, but hundreds and billions of galaxies. In the same manner, there are hundreds and billions of multiverses.

Our brain is like an ant's brain trying to understand the complexity of the universe. The entire cosmic creation and dissolution is the bindu component. Can you can imagine how vast that is? Can you imagine how vast the kala component is? Not just one universe, but multiverses. You do not know how many.

Nada, sound, becomes the basis. It is said that sound needs air to travel, yet the quality or *tattwa* of space is sound. There is no air, so how does the sound travel? We identify sound when it hits our ears. Sound is there all the time. Even in space different sounds have been recorded – sounds of the sun and planets, which pulsate in the magnetic fields. That is *nada*. *Nada* or sound is the substratum of creation.

Bindu, *nada* and *kala* represent not just one idea, but the entire cosmology. Something that our mind cannot comprehend is cosmology. We are just at the starting point of understanding our own solar system; forget about our own universe. When you see stars, that is another matter. That is not knowing the universe. Imagine how long it will take starting to understand our own solar system? To understand our milky way, and then, Andromeda, our neighbour, then, the third, the fourth, the fifth one; and each one is further and further away. This can go on for eternity. To that which is the controller of this cosmological development and is beyond all that, to that element, I offer my respect.

– 20 January 2024, Ganga Darshan, Munger









Unified Field

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati



Since a very long time ago, our ancestors have had a very clear idea that if man is to improve, he has to enlighten his consciousness. Transformation of the base survival instincts inherited from animal incarnations, such as *ahara*, hunger, *nidra*, sleep, *bhaya*, fear, and *maithuna*, procreation intended for self-preservation alone, cannot take place unless the gross consciousness becomes sublime. Of course, in today's modern world we don't think about enlightening our consciousness. We think about enlightening only up to the point of intellect, because in the present scenario, along with instincts, we also need the intellect to survive. To pass exams, to get a degree or to succeed at work, the intellect is of prime importance.

So we pay attention only to that because we have to survive. But is survival the only purpose of our existence? This is how limited we are today.

We ought to know that all our problems cannot be addressed by enlightenment of the intellect alone. After all, are you only the body, mind, emotions and intellect, or are you something more than that? On account of our obsessive involvement with the body and a little bit with what we know of the mind, the yoga we practise is confined to that. However, yoga goes far beyond that, and there are a large number of people who are spiritually minded by nature and want to know what is beyond the body and mind. They enquire into these things. Is this the ultimate or is there something more?

Know thyself

Apart from the possibility of our being something more than just the body and mind, there is another question. It is the doubt that anything exists outside us that is divine in nature. In other words, are there any divinities in existence anywhere in this world? These questions have been raised time and again, and have been argued and debated openly in India by those who lived for the evolution of the human race, the rishis and munis. In the end they came to only one conclusion; they said: "Know thyself."

Their assertion is based on the premise that if you know yourself, then you can know everything else in the universe. Today scientists are making the very same claim. They say that man is a microcosmic replica of the macrocosms. In other words, they mean that within each person there exists a miniature universe. Everything that is outside – the sun, the moon, the stars, the rivers, the planets – exists within you in miniature form. Scientists speak of the unified field theory.

The unified field theory says that each and every thing which exists in the universe is linked or connected through unseen channels. Einstein said, "The idea that there is separateness is but an illusion. We are all one thing in this universe.

Our job is to widen our circle of compassion until it surrounds everything in the universe.” Everything in this universe, galaxies, life, you and me, is connected by some unseen force which exists in the universe. That unseen force is none other than the supreme atman.

You can say that a most sophisticated network exists in creation. A giant network of microbes, amoebas, plants, animals, humans, rivers, mountains, trees, stars, moons, suns, galaxies – the list is endless because it includes the entire creation. That is precisely what scientists are saying today. The funny part is that because scientists say it, we believe it. We dare not question what they say because we do not have the wit and intelligence to do so.

What we may or may not realize is that the rishis and munis of the vedic era said the same thing a long, long time ago and it is recorded in the Vedas and Upanishads. They said: '*Anoraneeyan mahato maheeyan*'. From the tiniest atom to the greatest galaxy, everything is pervaded by atman. But the irony lies in the fact that if a Vyasadev or Valmiki says that in reality each and every being is connected to the other through the atman or undying spirit, we have the audacity to disbelieve, doubt and question them. Each and every person becomes a great think-tank and a million questions are raised which have no basis at all.

But if an Einstein says ' E is equal to mc^2 ', we immediately accept it and admire him for his intelligence and intellect. We proclaim whatever the scientists have said to be correct, although we have not seen any of the processes which they define in their equations. For example, the equation ' $E = mc^2$ ' says that energy and matter are interconvertible. Einstein said this very recently in the twentieth century, but rishis and munis have been saying it for millions of years. They said that by knowing yourself you can know everything, because at one stage you are matter, at another stage you are energy and at still another stage you are consciousness. And that consciousness is universal.

No Greater Power than Faith



In the dictionary of faith
There is no such word as impossible.
With full faith and conviction, I say,
“Nothing is impossible.”
With full faith and conviction you can be anything in life,
Regardless of what you are today.
Faith will never fail,
As it is deeper than thought, belief and intellect.
Faith will never fail,
As it is an expression of the inner spirit.
Once you realize faith, you realize God.
So tell me, what is impossible?

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Living Faith

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Kannappa

Your faith will be tested in various ways. However, even under extreme trials and difficulties you should not lose your faith, your sole anchor. Kannappa, the hunter of Kalahasti, had true, living faith in Shiva. His daily offering to God was the flesh of wild beasts. One day Shiva tested the sincerity of Kannappa. Tears fell from the right eye of the Shivalingam.

Kannappa was sorely moved. He plucked out his right eye and fixed it in the right eye of the lingam. The next day there were tears in the lingam's left eye. Kannappa plucked out his left eye and fixed it in the lingam. At once Shiva appeared before him and blessed him. Kannappa immediately had new eyes and attained the kingdom of Kailash, Shiva's abode of immortality and eternal bliss. You should possess the same unshakeable living faith which Kannappa had. Then only can you enjoy the everlasting peace of the Eternal.

Markandeya

The story of Markandeya illustrates the power of faith. Markandeya was a great devotee of Shiva. His father Mrikandu performed rigorous austerities to get a son. Shiva appeared before him and said, "O Rishi, do you want a good son who will die in his sixteenth year or a bad and foolish son who will live for a long time?" Mrikandu replied, "O my venerable Lord, let me have a good son."

The boy came to know about his fate and began to worship Shiva wholeheartedly with intense faith and devotion. The boy entered into deep meditation and samadhi on the day decreed as the day of his death. The messengers of Yama were not able to approach him. Hence, Yama himself went to take away his life. The boy prayed to Shiva for protection and embraced the



Lingam. Then Yama threw his noose round the Lingam and the boy. Shiva came out of the Lingam immediately and killed Yama to protect the boy. Shiva was called Mrityunjaya and Kala-kala from that day.

Then the devas approached Shiva and said, “O adorable Lord, salutations unto Thee. Pardon Yama for his mistake. O ocean of mercy, bring him back to life.” Then Shiva brought Yama back to life at the request of the gods. He also conferred a boon to the boy Markandeya that he should live forever as a boy of sixteen years of age.

Namdev

When Namdev was a child, his father would visit the temple of Vittoba or Sri Krishna at Pandarpur and offer worship with fruits, rice and other items. One day, he had to visit a neighbouring village on some urgent business and could not attend to the worship. Namdev’s mother gave the offerings to Namdev and asked him to go and offer them to Vittoba. The boy took the articles of worship and placed them before



the image and requested Him to eat the same. When he found that the image was silent, he started weeping bitterly in acute agony. Then Vittal appeared before him in human form and actually ate the offering in order to please his child-devotee. Faith and devotion can work wonders, and God becomes a slave of the devotee.

Shabari

True devotion will bring God to you. Shabari was a woman of the forest tribe of Bhils. She presented Sri Rama with some fruits which she had bitten to know if they were sweet. Rama accepted the offering with intense delight on account of the true spirit of devotion in which it was made. What is wanted is a loving heart. God does not want precious gifts. The prayer must be from the bottom of the heart. Love without attachment is needed. The self-surrender must be sincere, perfect, ungrudging and unreserved. When this is effected, one need not do any sadhana at all. Divine power will do everything.

Overcoming Negativity

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



One method of overcoming negativity and handling the negative energies is through faith. Do not confuse faith with a mystical or religious concept. Faith is a strength in a human being. If we can recognize faith as a strength and not as something mystical and religious, we will be able to handle the negative energies. Faith will then teach us how to flow and not struggle in life.

In the language of philosophy, negation is the outcome of our reaction to something. A rotten piece of flesh is put in

front of us. We smell it and we react and that reaction creates a negation of that particular experience. That is known as *dvesha*, rejection, repulsion. We smell a nice perfume and like it. That liking is also a reaction to that smell. If it is a good thing, we accept and enjoy it. That is known as *raga*, attraction, attachment. A reaction happens in both of them. One is good, one is bad.

If we live by continuously reacting, life is definitely going to become hell. As human beings, we must have the ability to discriminate between positive and negative reactions. To cling to either one of them will limit and bind the forces of the mind by creating a sense of attachment and not allowing the mind to experience total freedom.

– 23 November 1994, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Miracles

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

There is a story of a priest who was travelling through certain remote islands on a ship. As they disembarked to explore the islands they found savages dwelling there. But surprisingly, they were saying the prayers of the Lord, "Our Father who art in heaven, Thy kingdom come . . ." However, they were saying it wrong, the sentences were all topsy-turvy.

The priest asked the savages, "Who has taught you these prayers? They are all wrong." The savages replied, "About ten years ago, another priest like you had come to our island and taught us this prayer. Then he left. Of course we are illiterate people, we may have forgotten the right words and sentences, but we pray whatever we remember." This priest told them, "Don't worry, I will teach you the correct method." Painstakingly, word by word, he taught them the prayer of the Lord. When the savages had learned it and were able to repeat the whole prayer correctly, the priest thought his work was done, so he got on his ship and left.

When the ship was out on the ocean, about four to five hours away from the island, somebody called out from the crow's-nest, "Unknown objects approaching the ship." Everybody came out to the decks to look at the objects. When they came nearer the ship, they were recognized as the savages from the island. They were running on water. Everybody was utterly surprised. How could the savages have the power which only Jesus had – to walk on water? When the savages reached the ship, they said to the priest, "Please Father, help us again. After you left, we forgot the right method of saying the prayer. So we have come to request you to teach it to us again." The father looked at them and said, "Whatever you are doing is right. The right method which I taught you did not work, but whatever you are doing is the right method because it has given



you innocence of the heart and connected you with the Lord.” That is *shraddha*, faith.

Faith is generally translated as having belief in something, having a certain conviction which may not seem logical. It is believing that things can happen, things can change and things can be attained. It is this subtle, internal, unmanifest feeling that becomes the basis for spiritual growth, because when faith becomes logical and known, then the concept of miracles is separated from it. A miracle means something that is a natural manifestation

of Prakriti and Purusha. For people who have never seen TV, it is miraculous.

Faith is a feeling of deep inner security and satisfaction which is necessary in order to boldly take another step. Faith becomes the motivating force which keeps the energy and spirits high. In times of difficulty and need, it is only faith that brings one out of that circumstantial condition; the certainty that something will happen to make things all right. When things do become all right for a person who is emotional and devotional by nature, it may appear as an act of God or one’s ishta devata. For an intellectual it may seem as if a miracle has happened. It can take on different meanings for different people.

Yoga considers faith to be the motivating force which propels one to the realization of one’s true nature. Faith in Sanskrit is *shraddha*, and one of its meanings is to be in the vicinity of truth. From this angle, faith becomes the motivating factor for and the basis of evolution and growth – mentally, externally, internally and in every sense.

Bhakti Yoga

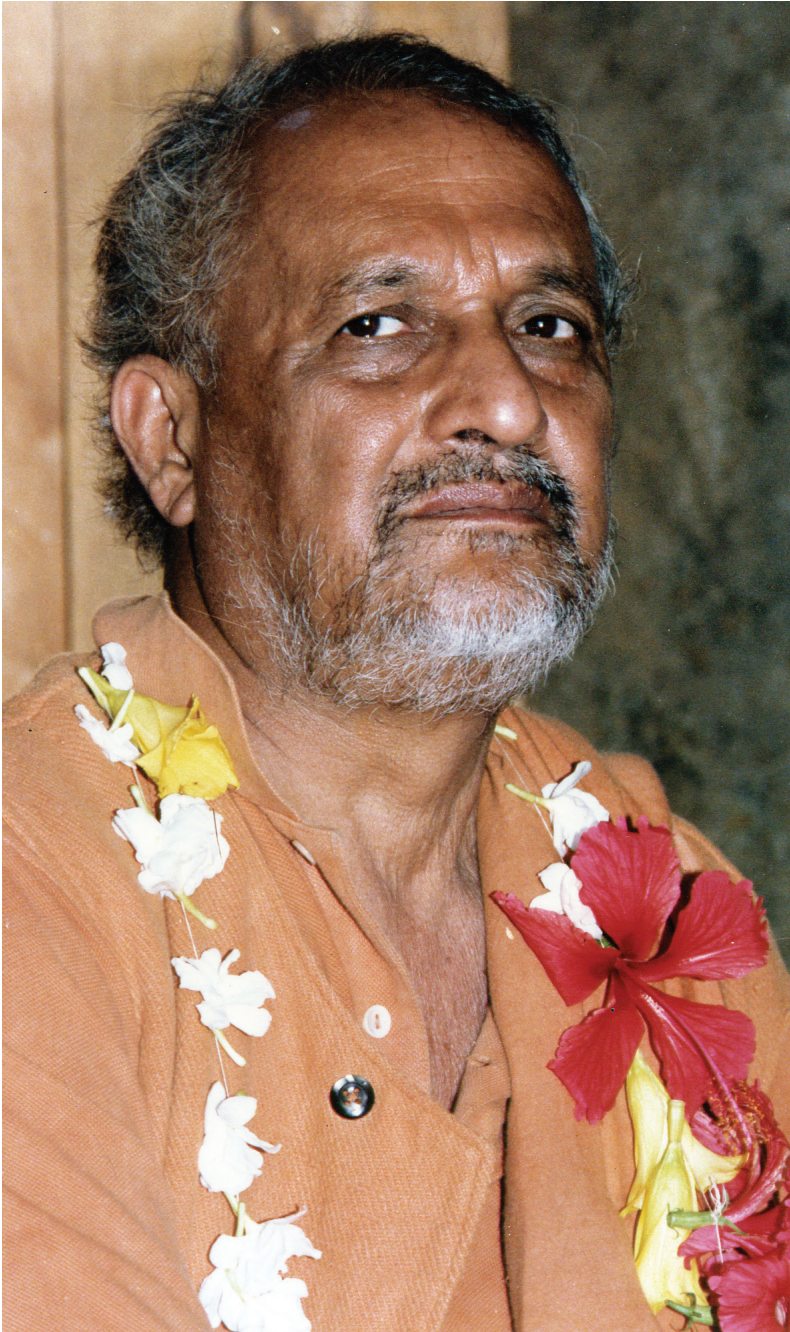
Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Faith is a quality that belongs to bhakti yoga, however in yoga and tantra, faith means awakening of kundalini. Faith belongs to man's higher evolution. It is the inherent reality of man's understanding of the deeper nature. Faith is the hidden knowledge in man. Faith is that dimension of knowledge which exists in a person, but has not actually become convincing to him.

The main purpose of faith and trust is to develop love for God, bhakti, even while living in the external, transient world. One does not develop these spiritual attributes merely to solve one's problems, but to develop an experience of God, to have darshan and merge in Him. This should be the aim: if not today, then tomorrow, if not tomorrow, then in the next life. Love with faith is bhakti.

The devotee will discover that faith brings spontaneity into his life. Even if one does not want to love God, one will love Him. Even if one does not want to surrender, one will have to. Even if one does not want anything from Him, He will give everything. Faith in God brings spontaneous blessings. God also wants spontaneity in His relationship with the devotee. When He gives pain, one must accept it, and not say it is due to a curse or bad karma. People usually think that only good things are God's blessings, but faith turns suffering into a blessing.

To practise bhakti yoga is not difficult – only faith is required. Without it there is no bhakti, no devotion, but this faith is not in the form of belief. It is a firm conviction which the intellect can never pierce. No logic, argument nor rationalizing can put down this faith which is the deepest personality of everyone. It is not intellectual in nature. It is an innocent conviction, perhaps like that of a child who naturally accepts



his mother as such without even questioning its reality even for a moment. When a person has faith it is not necessary to analyze, define or put it under the X-ray of the intellect.

At the beginning of the great Indian epic, *Ramayana*, the story of the life of Sri Rama whom Hindus respect as the incarnation of the supreme God, the author, a humble man, writes that faith is the ultimate source of power and realization. A man without faith is a man without devotion. Once one has discovered this faith within one can immediately start practising bhakti yoga. Faith cannot be imported from outside through books or holy associations. It is dormant potential lying within. Books written by saints, satsang and the practices of bhakti yoga all aim to awaken faith through which one will have a definite glimpse of God.

The most important things on the path of bhakti are faith and belief. In the *Bhagavad Gita* (12:2), Sri Krishna says, "Those who, fixing their mind on Me, worship Me, ever steadfast and endowed with supreme faith, these I consider to be perfect in yoga." Faith and belief, or faith and trust, are the basis of bhakti. They are also the basis of one's life. If somebody were to say that you have blind faith because you have accepted your father as your own father without any proof, then you would regard that person as mad. Faith and belief are the foundation of our life, family, society, and also of bhakti. Even a great saint or intellectual devoid of inner trust and belief is a faithless person.

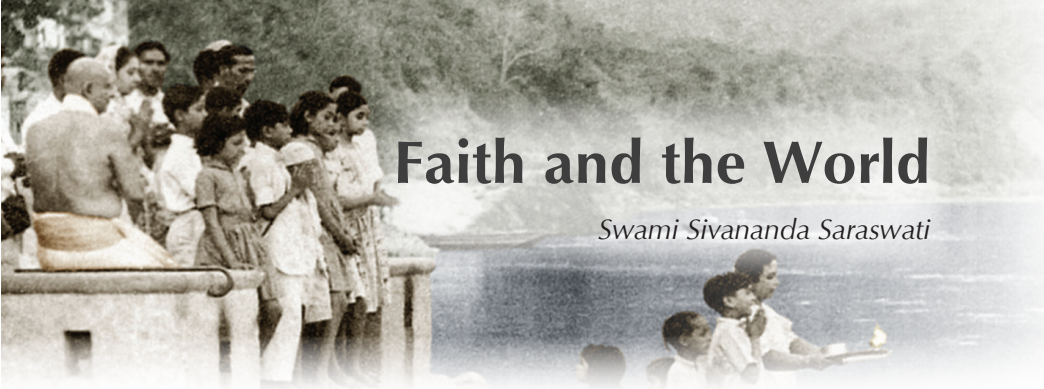
A faithless person is like a beautiful woman adorned with ornaments but completely naked. Similarly, most intellectuals are rich in ornaments but naked otherwise. Intellect is not the basis of life. Faith and belief are innate qualities in every individual. Without faith and belief one would not survive even for a single day. Faith and belief provide an individual with an identity. Faith and belief are the basis of everyone. When a girl marries she goes to a strange house. She has to adapt and make it her own home because she has to live there for the rest of her life. While she stays there as a mistress,

what is the basis of her strength and support other than faith and belief?

In fact, one cannot survive without faith and belief which are the greatest human qualities. If they are channelled properly towards God, life will be full of bliss and wonder, and the journey of life will be completed successfully. This is the best way. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Sri Krishna has declared (9:3): “Men devoid of faith in the dharma do not attain Me, O oppressor of foes, but return to the path of the mortal world.”

I have no doubt that one can be healed due to faith. Many have been healed in this way. Faith is something that everyone can develop. It is a natural quality; one just has to manifest it. One does not have to cultivate faith; it is already there. One may have to cultivate and develop intellect, but not faith. Faith is inherent. Where there is no question, there is acceptance with reason. Belief and faith are inborn virtues of human beings. Intelligence is not inborn; intelligence is developed in school, college or from text books. No one can give faith and belief.

There are many things in life which are based on faith and belief. In marriage, for example, the girl goes to an unfamiliar house where she has never been before. She accepts someone as her husband, saying that they have been together for many births, and they become united. She looks after his children, she becomes a partner in his sorrow and happiness and she loves him. Romance is also there; everything happens. The basis is respect, belief and faith. Without faith, the father is not the father and the husband is not the husband. Without faith a man is broken. He is a person without a head, full of doubts, “Will she leave me, will she betray me?” If he feels like this, he must change. The basis of bhakti yoga is belief and faith, which are both within. Everyone has the raw materials: *astha*, faith and *vishwas*, belief. Now they have to make the finished product – bhakti.



Faith and the World

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Even the greatest philosopher has faith as his stronghold. No intellectual theory can be proved if it is not supported by faith. The whole world stands on faith and is guided by faith. All religions are rooted in faith. One cannot prove the existence of God if he has no faith in God. Faith is not the voice of the mind which deludes, but the voice of the soul that uplifts and takes one to the goal. The aspirant should cling fast to faith in divine possibilities and constantly aspire to live in the Divine.

The whole world is a product of faith and imagination. Without faith in the world, the world does not exist. Without faith in sensual objects, they will not give pleasure. Without faith in God, one can never reach surrender and perfection. Faith is the fundamental necessity for all spiritual practice. Aspiration is the development of faith; it is one step ahead of faith. The flame of faith becomes the conflagration of spiritual aspiration. The devotee longs to have union with the Beloved. He has no sleep, no rest. He always contemplates how to attain the object of his love. He prays and sings to his God, and a type of divine madness overtakes him. He completely loses his personality in the aspiration for attaining God. This is the kind of faith required for samarpan.

An aspirant perceives distance, distinction and separation from God inasmuch as he depends on the external world and believes and experiences its necessity. However, with faith in God as his own inner essence, the world will eventually fall away and the devotee will experience nearness, identification and the feeling of non-separation from God. This experience is possible only through faith and the feeling that all beings are His manifestation.

The Umbrella

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



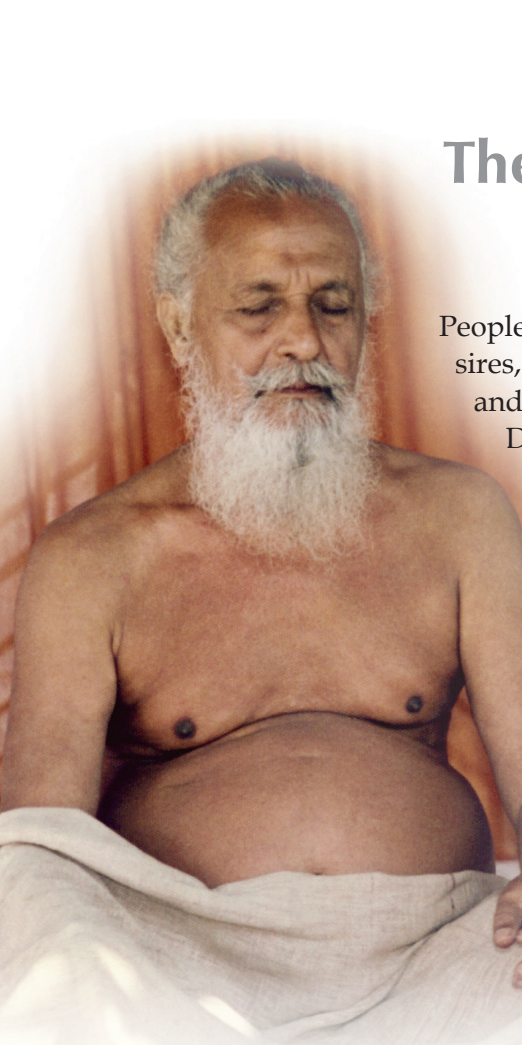
There is a story in the Upanishads. Once, there was a drought in a kingdom. There had not been any rain for years. Animals were dying, the fields were dry, the earth was cracking and people were migrating to other places. The king thought, “My kingdom will become empty if there is no rain. It will become a barren land, a barren kingdom.” He asked his wise men what could be done. They advised him to perform a yajna to please Indra, the god of rains. The yajna was begun. People from all

over the kingdom came to participate in it. The day the yajna was scheduled to culminate, a little boy reached there holding an umbrella over his head. Everyone started to laugh at the sight, "What a mad boy, he has come with an umbrella while there is a drought! There is not a single cloud anywhere in the sky, only the scorching sun, and this boy stands with an umbrella!"

The boy replied, "Who are you laughing at? There is a drought in your kingdom and you are performing a yajna to invoke rain, but you do not have any faith in it. If you had faith, then you would have received the fruits of the yajna by now. I have come with the faith that at a place where all the citizens of the kingdom have gathered to pray for rain, there will certainly be rain." The moment the boy uttered these words, the sky filled with clouds and there was such torrential rain that the entire yajna venue was washed away. Everyone ran hither and thither soaking wet. Only this boy stood dry under his umbrella.

This is known as faith. The faith of one little boy swayed the throne of the king of gods, yet the yajna performed by thousands could not achieve anything for their sentiments were not connected with it. That is the reality of people's lives also. They perform actions but their sentiments are not connected with them. They may have belief, but not faith. Their faith is not aflame. Faith has to be intensified through viveka and protected through reflection. Faith is an encounter with truth. The emotion, the sentiment, the thought whose basis is truth is called faith.

To develop faith one has to learn to let oneself go. The moment one does this one will have faith. One should have freedom of personal expression, without any inhibitions, yet within the limits of dharma, within the limits of preordained universality. This free expression of human nature within the limits of dharma is faith. Balanced expression will eventually allow one to let go of the archetypes, the impressions stored inside, and then there will be faith.



The Role of Faith

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

People suffer because of their desires, for there is no end to desires and they will never be fulfilled.

Desires are like the waves of the ocean which arise incessantly, one after another.

When suffering becomes unbearable and there is no way out, people turn to God. Intense faith develops and then the crisis slowly goes away. But it is when one is in the middle of the crisis that one should transform one's entire life totally. When a situation occurs in which God is exper-

iented as the helper, then and there the aspirant should transform his life and give it a totally new direction. He should leave everything, surrender everything to God, and tread the path to God. Many people experience their prayers being answered, but still they do not see the depth of their own faith.

To develop faith, in the beginning effort is necessary. One has to keep one's inner awareness of faith awake continuously, whether talking, meeting, arguing or explaining something to someone. If this objective is forgotten a few times in the beginning, there should be no frustration. The effort must be persistent. One must try to understand what one is doing.

In order to keep the spiritual awareness awake, one must be forever alert, optimistic and self-assured. One should have faith in the name and power of one's *ishta*, chosen deity. One must have confidence and conviction in the reality of one's inner essence; only then will this spiritual power work. However, it is quite certain that in the beginning a determined effort must be made. One must be full of determination. "It must and it shall happen!" should be the mantra.

When one takes the path of the spirit, that other element begins to rouse. One should now refer to that other element and not look upon oneself as a physical body. What is there in the world that one cannot accomplish? One should let go of doubts, let go of the intellectual question, "What if it does not happen?" Instead revel in the greatness that exists within. Each form of behaviour, each principle, each habit that undermines one's faith should be carefully extracted and removed. One should change one's manner of speaking, ambitions, language and viewpoint. One should change one's self-created convictions and thoughts. Only then will the power of faith be seen manifesting in the depths of one's life.

Any individual who searches for Him with love finds the jewel. Firm faith in God is the reward of all spiritual effort. Whether one practises asana, pranayama, kundalini yoga, raja yoga or rebirthing, the reward has to be faith. However, nobody has ever acquired the jewel of faith without the help of saints. No matter what sadhana one does, ultimately one has to come to a saint. Whosoever bears this in mind and communes with the good, finds devotion to God an easy attainment. It is the saints who bring this wisdom to the world.

In order to protect faith, to increase and experience it more fully and intimately, the relationship between God and devotee, or guru and disciple, comes first. This relationship is a matter of total faith, living faith. One has to believe in the same way one believes in one's mother. How does one know that one's mother is really one's mother? Through faith. There has to be the same faith in God and guru.

Bhakti

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



On the path of bhakti, two pillars or supports are essential for the mind: faith and trust. In the *Ramacharitamanas* faith and trust have been acknowledged as the foundation of bhakti (Balakanda, sloka 2):

*Bhavaaneeshankarau vande shraddhaavishwaasroopinau;
Yaabhyaam vinaa na pashyanti siddhaah svaantasthameeshvaram.*

I bow down to Parvati and Shiva, Who are embodiments of faith and trust. Without them, even the adept cannot perceive God, Although He dwells within all alike.

Without faith and trust, even an adept cannot see the Spirit within, cannot understand, know or recognize that. Therefore, faith and trust are considered to be the foundation of bhakti – faith in the higher power and trust in oneself. Have faith in God and trust in yourself.

Usually people do not believe in themselves, they think they are weak and powerless, and they question their ability and capacity to do something in life. Even before beginning a task

they feel defeated by it. There is a lack of *sankalpa shakti*, power of resolve; *iccha shakti*, power of will; and *kriya shakti*, power of action in life. If one is determined, one can accomplish anything in life. Resolve comes with trust – trust in one's own capacity and capability. God has not sent anyone into this world with anything less than the next person. The same power and energy in Rama or Buddha, Mahavira, Krishna, Jesus Christ or Prophet Mohammed are also within everyone. The difference is that they have realized it and people have not been able to realize it.

From a psychological point of view, God is an expression and experience of the evolution of consciousness; that is all. When a child goes to school he learns and acquires knowledge of the alphabet. In the process of intellectual development, gradually many things are learnt, the understanding grows, the consciousness grows. The child who could not even write 'ABC' can grow up to become the head of a country, a great scientist or even a great saint. For that, the consciousness needs to undergo the process of development whereby the child expands his consciousness, mind, intellect and emotions. From this viewpoint, God is an experience of the maturity of the mind. Maturity of the mind results in attraction to God, knowledge of God, belief in God and attaining a vision of God.

Trust and faith are the foundation of bhakti. Trust that one is capable of acquiring joy, comfort and competence in life. Faith that one is not alone in the world, that there is someone who is one's intimate friend, closer than the husband or wife, closer even than the children – someone who is truly inherent.

In ancient Sparta new-born babies were left outside the house all night, regardless of snow, rain or heat. The baby faced the natural conditions outside all night long. If it lived until the morning, it was brought back inside the house. There was another custom followed there. When a boy reached the age of sixteen, he was blindfolded and left in the dense forest. There would be wild, ferocious animals all around. The blindfolded boy would be petrified. In the morning he was brought home and said to have become a man.

Once, after having gone through this process, a boy asked his father, "Tell me, when a child is left in the forest to become a man, don't the parents worry that some ferocious animal will kill the child and eat him?" The father said, "Son, since you have passed the test I will tell you the secret. When you were blindfolded and left in the jungle, you were never alone. You thought that you were alone, but ten steps away from you I stood well-armed to protect you from dangerous animals."

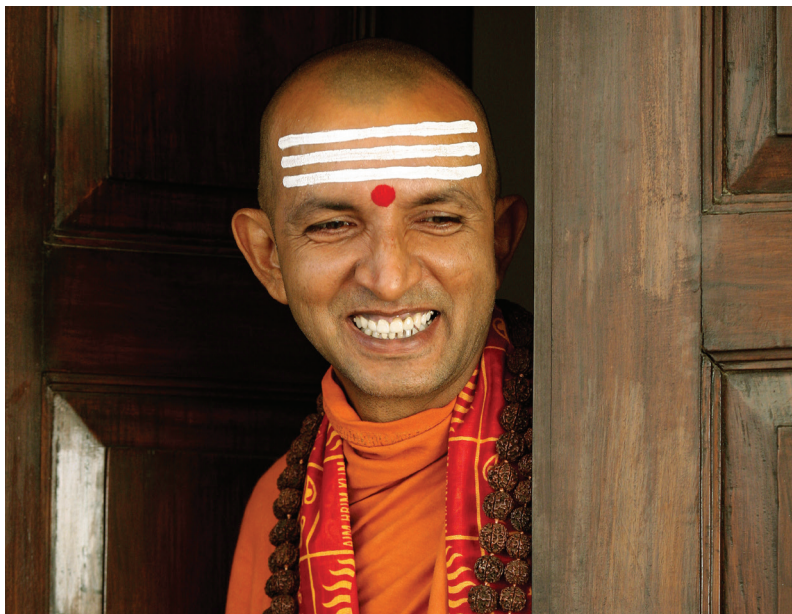
It is the same in life. People think they are alone; however, they are never alone. Once, a devotee who was a dear friend of God said to Him, "Let us go for a walk." God said, "Fine. You walk in front, I will walk behind you." The devotee asked, "How will I know that you are walking behind me?" God replied, "Whenever you turn around you will find two sets of footprints: one set will be mine, the other set yours. By that you will know that I have been walking with you." Happily, the devotee started to walk. He crossed a river, a jungle, a mountain. Many times he felt that God was walking behind him; he could hear the sound of footsteps. Many times he felt he was alone and upon turning around he would see only a single set of footprints. Finally, he felt dejected and said, "God, you are not keeping your word. You said that you would always be with me, yet many times when I turn around to look, you are not with me and I see only a single set of footprints on the ground. Why do you disappear?"

God said, "I do not disappear. When the path is difficult, I carry you in my arms. That is why you see only one set of footprints. When the path is easy, I put you down, we walk together again and you see two sets of footprints." When the path is easy God leaves one to stand on one's own feet, and says, "Child, walk. There is no problem here, keep walking." The moment the going gets tough, God picks up His devotee in His arms and carries him.

The great saints in history, no matter which culture or religion they belonged to, experienced God constantly in their lives, and the basis of that realization was faith and trust.

The Door

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Faith will only appear when 'I' does not exist. Faith will disappear when 'I' comes into existence because 'I' always represents the intellect, the logical dimension, whereas faith represents the universal dimension which connects a human being with the transcendental Self, without the imposition of any religious ideology, dogma or ritual. Faith is spontaneous connection and remembrance. A mother is always aware of her child's movements. She does not sit staring at the child all day to express her love and affection. She just has spontaneous awareness. It is that kind of remembrance which is cultivated as faith in the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta, based on the connection of the individual soul and the transcendental Self. Faith is the doorway between the room of individuality and the room of universality. That is the door which has to be opened.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING DONATIONS

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

1. **General Donation**

To Bihar School of Yoga, Bihar Yoga Bharati, Yoga Publications Trust or Yoga Research Foundation Funds will be utilized towards developing and furthering the Yoga activities.

2. **Corpus Donation**

To Bihar School of Yoga Corpus (Mooldhan) Fund, Bihar Yoga Bharati Corpus (Mooldhan) Fund, Yoga Publications Trust Corpus (Mooldhan) Fund, Yoga Research Foundation Corpus (Mooldhan) Fund Interest income generated from **CORPUS (MOOLDHAN) FUND** shall be utilized towards all the activities of the Society/ Trust.

3. **CSR Donation**

Funds will be utilized towards CSR activities.

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Donations towards Bihar School of Yoga may be made through the following links:



SB Collect Online



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Donations can also be sent through cheque/D.D./E.M.O. drawn in favour of:

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

payable at Munger.

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



Japa and Ajapa Japa for Everyone

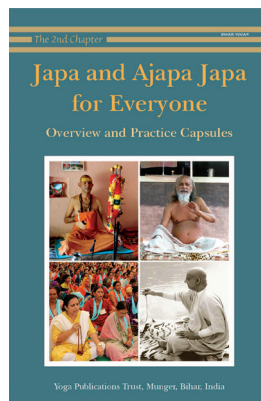
Overview and Practice Capsules

120 pp, soft cover, ISBN:978-93-94604-39-1

The series of *Yoga for Everyone* offers an overview of various branches of yoga, and includes practice capsules for different groups and conditions.

Japa and Ajapa Japa for Everyone: Overview and Sadhana Capsules describes the practice and process of *japa*, repetition of the mantra *So Ham*, which is the natural sound of the breath. Awareness of breath and sound leads to a calm relaxed state of mind. The culmination is *ajapa japa* which is not a practice, but a state when the mantra repeats itself spontaneously and without effort.

The sadhana capsules provides ways to integrate the japa practice into one's daily routine so that a wholistic yogic lifestyle can be lived and experienced.



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For more information, please contact:

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Tel: +91-09162 783904, +91-098358 92831 or visit **www.satyamyogaprasad.net**.



Websites and Apps

www.biharyoga.net

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

Satyam Yoga Prasad

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



Living Yoga Lifestyle Sadhana

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

YOGA & YOGAVIDYA Online

<http://www.biharyoga.net/bihar-school-of-yoga/yoga-magazines/>

<http://www.biharyoga.net/bihar-school-of-yoga/yogavidya/>

YOGA and YOGAVIDYA magazines are available as free apps for Android and iOS devices.

Other Apps (for Android and iOS devices)

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

Yoga Peeth Events & Yoga Vidya Training 2025-2026

Yoga Peeth Events

Jan 18-23	Basant Panchami celebrations
Jan 23	Basant Panchami/BSY Foundation Day
Feb 14	Bal Yoga Diwas
May 6	Munger Agaman
Nov 19-22	Padma Jayanti: Yoga Nidra Symposium
Dec 27-31	Padma Jayanti: Yoga Lifestyle Celebration
Every Saturday	Mahamrityunjaya Havan
Every 4th, 5th & 6th	Guru Bhakti Yoga

Bihar School of Yoga Yogavidya Training

Jan-Dec 2025	Ashram Life Experience
Nov 1-15 2025	Progressive Yoga Vidya Training
Nov 16 2025-Jan 30 2026	Sannyasa Experience
Feb 1-Apr 30	Sannyasa Lifestyle Experience (for overseas aspirants)
Feb 21-27	Total Health Yoga Capsule (Hindi)
Mar 6-12	Pranayama Breathe for Healthy Lungs (Hindi)
Apr 4-10	Dharana Training (English)
Apr 4-Apr 2027	Sannyasa Lifestyle Experience (for overseas aspirants)
Sep 28-Oct 6	Hatha Yoga-Karma Yoga
Oct 11-19	Raja Yoga-Bhakti Yoga
Oct 25-Nov 2	Kriya Yoga & Tattwa Shuddhi
Oct 2026-Oct 2027	Sannyasa Lifestyle Experience (for overseas aspirants)

Bihar Yoga Bharati Yogavidya Training

Nov 1-Dec 31 2025	Yogic Studies, 2 months (English)
Mar-Apr 2026	Yogic Studies (Hindi)
Apr 1-30	Traditional Yoga Training (English)
Nov-Dec	Yogic Studies (English)



For further information, as well as the online version of YOGA, visit the official website of Bihar Yoga at biharyoga.net or scan the QR code.