

YOGA

Year 15 Issue 5
May 2026



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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Useful Resources

Websites:

www.biharyoga.net
www.sannyasapeeth.net
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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Saraswati 1st Munger Padarpan Diwas,
May 2026



GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

How to feel great joy

Make others happy as you strive to make yourself happy. Speak a helpful word. Give a cheering smile. Do a kind act. Serve a little. Wipe the tears of one who is in distress. Render smooth a rough place in another's path. You will feel great joy. Worship the poor, the downtrodden and the oppressed. These are your first gods. Regard your neighbour's happiness as your own happiness, and your neighbour's pain as your own pain.

—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

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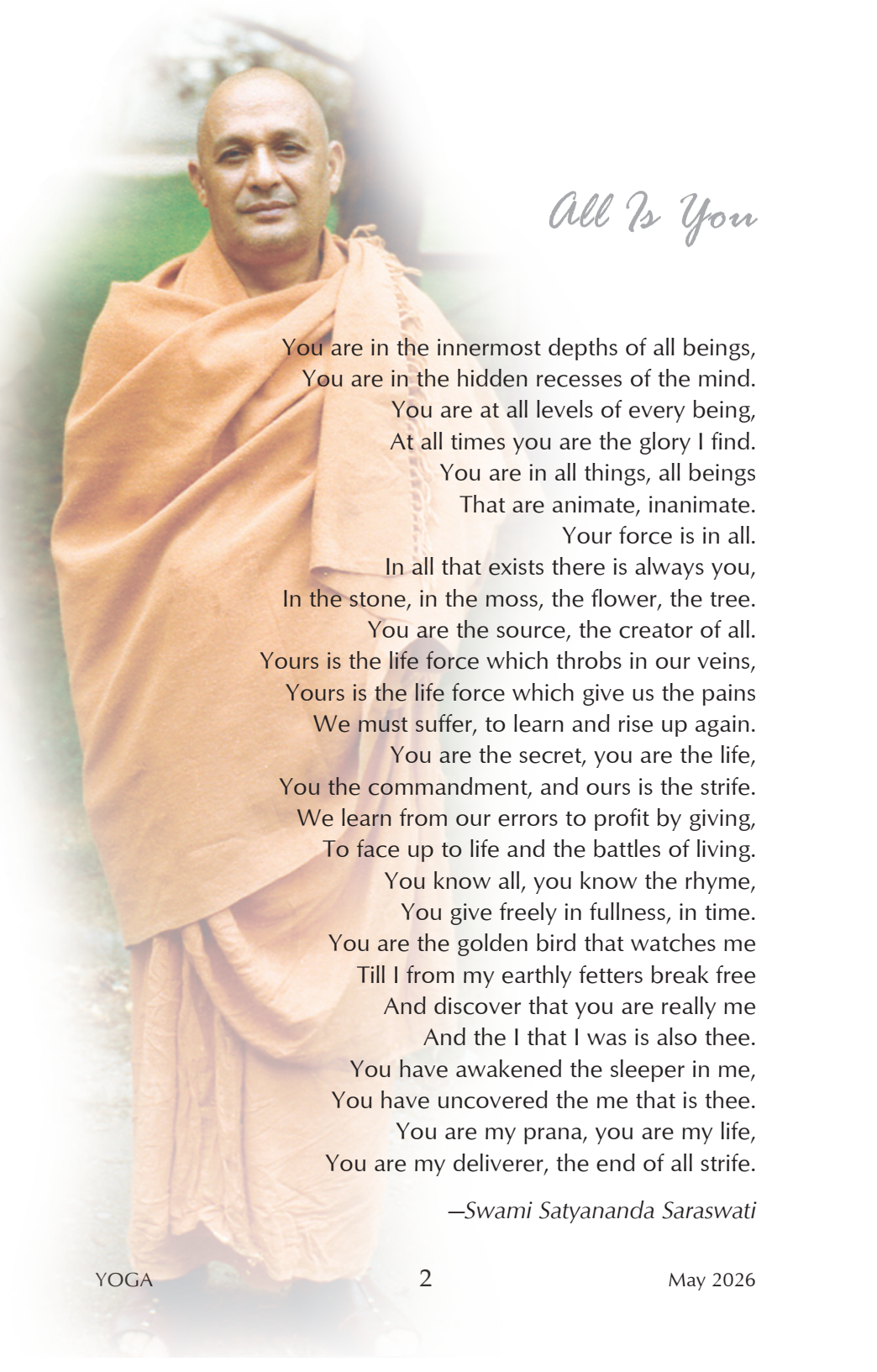
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The Yogi is superior to the ascetic. He is deemed superior even to those versed in sacred lore. The Yogi is superior even to those who perform action with some motive. Therefore, Arjuna, do you become a Yogi. (*Bhagavad Gita VI:46*)
तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥



All Is You

You are in the innermost depths of all beings,
You are in the hidden recesses of the mind.
You are at all levels of every being,
At all times you are the glory I find.
You are in all things, all beings
That are animate, inanimate.
Your force is in all.
In all that exists there is always you,
In the stone, in the moss, the flower, the tree.
You are the source, the creator of all.
Yours is the life force which throbs in our veins,
Yours is the life force which give us the pains
We must suffer, to learn and rise up again.
You are the secret, you are the life,
You the commandment, and ours is the strife.
We learn from our errors to profit by giving,
To face up to life and the battles of living.
You know all, you know the rhyme,
You give freely in fullness, in time.
You are the golden bird that watches me
Till I from my earthly fetters break free
And discover that you are really me
And the I that I was is also thee.
You have awakened the sleeper in me,
You have uncovered the me that is thee.
You are my prana, you are my life,
You are my deliverer, the end of all strife.

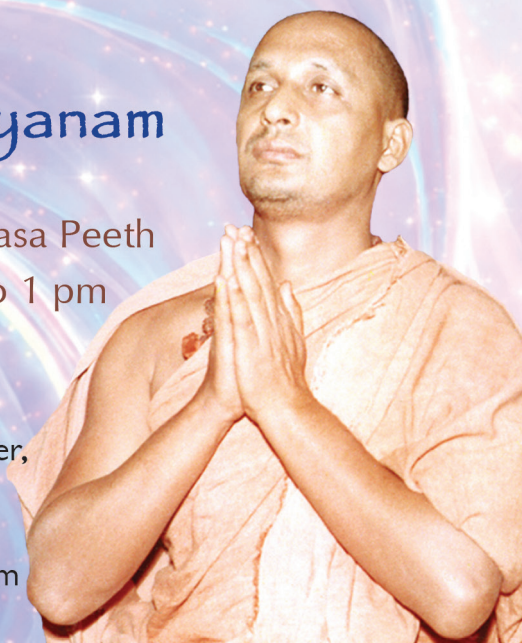
—Swami Satyananda Saraswati



1st Munger Padarpan Diwas of
Paramahansa Swami
Satyananda Saraswati
and
Srinivasa Kalyanam

Paduka Darshan, Sannyasa Peeth
6th May 2026, 11 am to 1 pm

Organized by
Citizens of Yoga Nagari Munger,
Bihar, India
Performed by
Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam

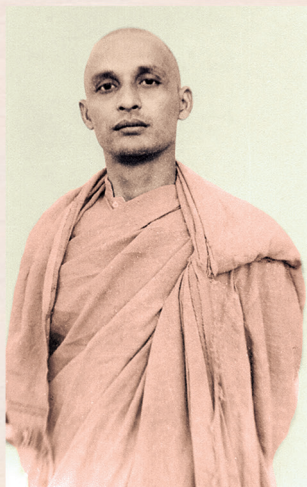


Blessed Selves
Hari Om

With reverence, joy and deep gratitude, the Citizens of Yoga Nagari Munger, along with Vishwa Yoga Peeth and Sannyasa Peeth cordially welcome you to a historic and blessed celebration of the **1st Munger Padarpan Diwas** of Paramahansa Swami Satyananda Saraswati.

On 6th May 1957, Sri Swamiji first came to Munger as a *parivrajak*, a wandering sannyasin. It was the call of the Uttar Vahini Mother Ganga that drew him here. Through profound spiritual experiences and inner visions, Sri Swamiji recognized that Munger was destined to become the epicentre of the modern global yogic renaissance. It was here in Munger that Sri Swamiji planted and nurtured the living seed of yoga. It was here that he established the Bihar School of Yoga in 1963, which fulfilled its divine destiny as:

- an ashram dedicated to the teachings of Swami Sivananda;
- a gurukul where through living, serving and learning, one could strive to become better in life, and attain health, happiness and harmony;
- Vishwa Yoga Peeth where yoga is learnt, practiced, discovered, lived, imbibed and expressed for the cultivation of the noble qualities of head, heart and hands.



Through the yoga sankalpa of Sri Swamiji, Munger was recognized in 2005 as Yoga Nagari – the City of Yoga – by the then President of India, Honourable Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

Now, in 2026, for the first time in 69 years, the like-minded people of Yoga Nagari Munger come together to commemorate this sacred milestone by celebrating the 1st Munger Arrival Day of Sri Swamiji on **6th May 2026** at the **Paduka Darshan grounds**, on the holy banks of the northward flowing river Ganga.

Srinivasa Kalyanotsavam

The Mahaprasad of this sacred day: The unique grace of this first celebration is the blessed opportunity to bask in the divine presence of **Lord Sri Tirupati Balaji**. On this auspicious occasion, devotees will receive the rare blessing to:

- have **darshan of the Utsav Murti of Sri Tirupati Balaji**,
- Witness the sacred **Srinivasa Kalyanotsavam**,
- Participate in an atmosphere charged with devotion, sanctity and divine grace.

For this unique and historic occasion, the Utsav Murti of Sri Tirupati Balaji will be present in Yoga Nagari Munger on 6th May 2026, accompanied by the learned pandits and brahmins from the Tirupati Devasthanam, Tirumala, who will perform the poojas, sacred proceeding of Srinivasa Kalyanotsavam, seva and other divine duties for the Lord.



Darshan timings: The doors of Paduka Darshan ashram will open for darshan from 11 am to 1 pm. All devotees are humbly requested to maintain the decorum of: **Sat Vichar** – noble thoughts, **Sat Vyavahar** – noble conduct, **Sat Karma** – righteous action, for you shall be in the divine presence of the Lord of the Universe, Sri Tirupati Balaji.

A historic day of Grace: It is the grace of Gurudeva, Sri Swamiji, that has made this a historic day for both Bihar and Munger. This blessed occasion shall be remembered as a sacred day in history: **the day Lord Sri Tirupati Balaji travelled to Bihar and graced Munger with His divine presence.**

Kindly note that from 4 to 6 pm Lord Sri Tirupati Balaji will give darshan in Polo Ground for the citizens of Munger.

Come, let us gather in devotion, gratitude and joy.
Let us honour the first arrival of Sri Swamiji in Munger.
Let us receive the blessings of Gurudeva, Mother Ganga and Lord Sri Tirupati Balaji.
Let us participate in a day that unites history, devotion, yoga, grace and divine destiny.
May this sacred day awaken devotion in the heart, clarity in the mind and grace in the life of all.

With prayers and welcome,
Swami Kaivalyananda Saraswati
Gaurav Sharma, Satyesh Sharma,
and the Citizens of Yoga Nagari Munger.

Note:

- The Moola Murti of Sri Tirupati Balaji is installed at Tirumala. His Utsav Murti travels to other places and bestows His grace upon His devotees.
- Only traditional Indian attire (dhoti/kurta-pyjama for men, saree/salwar-kameez for women) will be allowed in Paduka Darshan.



Organized for Loka Kalyan

Kindness

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



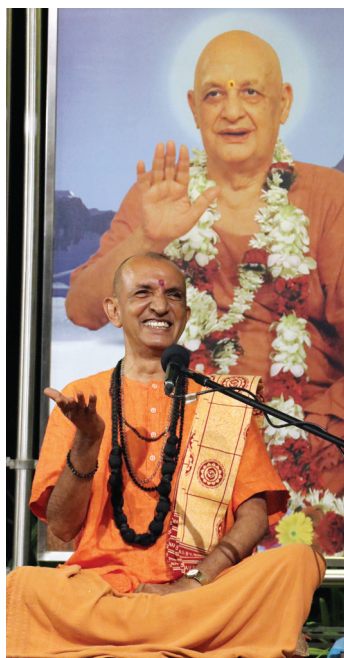
Kindness is goodwill, humaneness and tenderness. A kind person delights in contributing to the happiness and welfare of others. Kind people are good-natured, sympathetic, accommodating and amicable. They are disposed to do good to others. One who entertains kind thoughts is ever calm and cheerful. Kind thoughts increase the flow of vital energy into your body and mind.

Kindness is the cheapest of all things. Smile, serve, radiate joy. Speak kind and sweet words. Cheer up one who is in distress. Kind words soothe and comfort the hearer. A kind look, a kind word, a kind act, a friendly smile, all cost nothing but bring to others happiness which money cannot buy. They are priceless in their value.

Kindness is the language the deaf can hear and the dumb understand. Just as little drops of water make the mighty ocean, in the same way, little acts of kindness make an ocean of goodwill. Cultivate kindness. Be kind to all.

Legs of Happiness

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



One kind of happiness is sensorial – when you see something pleasing, when you hold something pleasing, when you touch something pleasing, when you hear something pleasing, you feel happy and elated. Another happiness is mental happiness, when expectations and desires are fulfilled, when you have received what you wanted.

One thing is definite, at every level, there has to be respect, simplicity, humility and love. These four become the four legs of happiness. Simplicity is not having a complicated mind. Respect is to respect everyone and to recognize them, plus humility and love. If these four legs are there, then happiness is more permanent. These four qualities make a big difference in our association, experience and expression of happiness. Happiness is not something which is a transitory situation; it does not come and go. What comes and goes is transitory, is sensorial, mental, emotional, spiritual.

Then there is something which is known as the permanent happiness, which is actually freedom of spirit. When the spirit and mind are free, and not shackled by desires, expectations and wants and all those things which make us what we are, then that total contentment of the Self, is the happy state of being.

– 21 December 2024

Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Yoga is not a path of suffering in the sense that we understand it. Yoga is a way to perfect bliss, *anandam*. What is the aim of yoga? Samadhi. What is the effect of meditation? Shanti. What is the effect of dharana? One-pointedness. What is the effect of pranayama? A good brain. What is the effect of asanas? A light and healthy body. What is the result of niyama? A system or science of life. What is the effect of yama? Breaking down the complications in life. So how can that be suffering

Progression of Yoga

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

When we look at yoga from a broader perspective, we see that the progression of yoga begins when we work with the body, the *annamaya kosha*, through the practices of shatkarmas and asanas. After having performed and perfected shatkarmas and asanas, we move into the dimension of *pranamaya kosha*, the energy system. This happens through pranayama, mudras, bandhas and other techniques such as prana vidya, pranotthan, and even *chakra shuddhi*, purification of the chakras, as chakras are centres of *prana*, energy. When we are working with chakras, it does not mean that we are awakening them. It is only clearing the pranic blocks in the different chakras to allow the free flow of this vital energy through the physical and mental systems.

After removing blocks in the flow of prana, we come to *manomaya kosha*, the mind. It is here that the actual yogic process and work in yoga begins. For most people, the mind is just a word; in yoga the mind is much more than a word. There are different experiences and states of the mind that one has to work through. Thoughts are an experience; they are a response of the mind, an activity of the mind, but they are not the mind. Feelings and emotions are activities of the mind; they are not the mind.

We begin with practices which help us to identify and distinguish between the different activities of the mind and understand their impact on our thought process, behaviour and performance. Everything that we experience in the form of thoughts, sentiments and emotions are responses to sensory triggers from outside. What you think is a response to some trigger that has been experienced. That thought is not the natural state of the mind.

The same goes for sentiments and emotions; they are responses to something that has triggered this behaviour.

After all, why do we get angry? Anger is not a natural state of mind, it is triggered by something that makes us feel angry. Depression is triggered by something and that is what you are experiencing. Everything that we experience in our mind is actually a response to a trigger, and therefore we are never aware of the total mind. We can only realize what is happening because of the response; we can only witness that much.

It is for this reason that yoga begins with the effort to realize the nature of the mind. This mind is intellectual at one level, and at another level it is emotional. The third progressive stage is of going through these different layers. After the intellectual responses and emotional responses are settled, psychic experiences and deep internal experiences begin to arise. That is the movement or progression into the *vijnanamaya kosha*, the psychic body or body of consciousness. All the impressions of consciousness are to be cleared at this point. The *pratyayas*, impressions and conditionings of consciousness, have to be cleared in *vijnanamaya kosha*. Only then, one moves into the *anandamaya kosha*, the dimension of spirit, where one is free from all sensorial, mental and emotional conditionings, free from the *samskaras* and *karmas* that bind us to certain conditions and behaviour. The experience of that freedom is the *anandamaya* or the spiritual experience. This is the progression defined in yoga: from *annamaya kosha* to *anandamaya kosha*, from the external, physical dimension to the internal, spiritual dimension.

Hatha yoga

Similarly, there is also a progression in individual branches of yoga. Hatha yoga has a definite progression where one moves through different stages. We may reject or ignore stage one or two or three or four, because our interest lies in physical performance. People can choose to ignore the first stage, second, third and fourth stages, and just focus on the physical development. Even if this is the only focus, efficiency or adaptability in the performance of a posture does not indicate



perfection in hatha yoga. You may perform an asana without much difficulty, just as people from a circus or gymnasts perform postures perfectly. Does that make them yogis? Just being able to practise asanas does not make you competent in hatha yoga, because that is not the sequence prescribed by hatha yoga.

The sequence of hatha yoga practice begins with cleansing, purification and detoxification of the physical body. Hatha yoga leads you into asana practice only after the detoxification of the body has taken place, not before that. After having perfected the asana, we move into pranayama, followed by mudra and bandha, and then we move into concentration techniques like trataka.

The purpose of hatha yoga is to balance the body and the pranic energy system. The whole sequence followed in hatha yoga is to attain that state of balance. Today people only focus on physical asana practice because that is their interest. However, if you are keen and sincere about following the yogic process, only asanas are not important. It is important to begin with purification. Asanas facilitate the natural and spontaneous flow of prana without any blocks in the physical body. The focus of hatha yoga is the activation of pranas, and not just on the the physical performance of a posture.

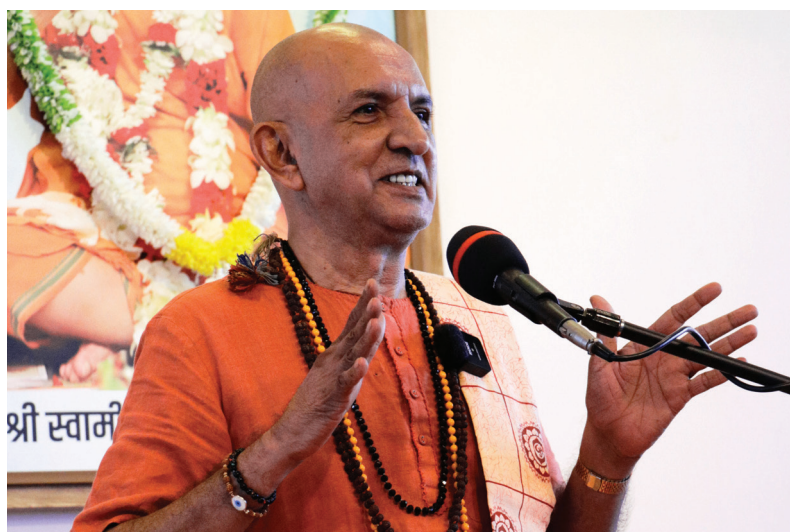
Raja yoga

It is the same with raja yoga; after all, the raja yogic system is known as the eightfold path. If you want to go into a building which has eight floors, you don't jump straight to the fifth floor, you don't jump to the sixth floor, you don't jump to the seventh floor. You have to ascend floor by floor, one after the other. In the same way, after you have achieved detoxification and purification, after you have perfected the posture, after you have activated the pranic system and worked through the annamaya and pranamaya koshas, only then you move into manomaya kosha. Manomaya kosha or the mental dimension begins with correction or rectification of the way you engage with the world, followed by the expression of positive qualities through the mind. I am not using the word 'of' the mind, rather 'through' the mind.

These are the yamas and niyamas, the first two stages of raja yoga. They help to divert the mental activity from sensorial, tamasic engagement towards an internal awareness and positive engagement. This is where the recognition of *swabhava*, one's mental nature, begins. The third and fourth stages of the eightfold path of raja yoga are asana and pranayama. Raja yoga does not define the practices of asana or pranayama; it is presumed that asana and pranayama have already been perfected in hatha yoga.

Asanas are used in raja yoga to become still and comfortable, *sthiram sukham asanam*. Is this only physical stillness? No. It is also a sensorial stillness; the stillness is comprehensive where 'sthiram sukham' implies that you are fixed or stable in a physical posture indicating that your sensory activities have also become still. Even when we sit down comfortably, we keep on shifting and changing our posture. Why is the posture shifting and changing? It is because the senses are still active and it is these senses that also have to be stilled; that is the sthiram or stillness concept of raja yoga.

The stillness of raja yoga does not indicate muscular stillness, skeletal stillness, physical stillness, but the stability



and stillness of the senses. They do not divert your awareness or attention to some other experience. If you are sitting in meditation and a mosquito bites you, your attention is gone. You are more aware of the mosquito bite and less aware of your meditation. So sthiram sukham represents stillness of the senses and prana, because you have achieved that in hatha yoga and that is what you sustain and maintain. If pranas run amok, the mind cannot be still. If the senses are running wild, the body cannot be still. Therefore, in the third and fourth stages of raja yoga, asana and pranayama have been mentioned in passing, not as a specific practice, indicating that in raja yoga the senses and pranas should become stable, and that their wild activity has been contained.

Pratyahara

Once that happens, the stage of pratyahara is next, observation of triggers, responses and actions – *trigger*: somebody says something unpleasant to me; *response*: anger; *action*: what I do to that person, or what do I do to myself. It is the observation of this activity, then silencing and stilling it which becomes the focus of pratyahara before coming to concentration.

Pratyahara is developing an awareness of the total mind, and this is the only stage where this is possible. You cannot develop the awareness of the total mind in dharana, dhyana or in samadhi. It is only in pratyahara that you are able to observe the functions, behaviour and responses of the total mind; from the intellectual perspective, from the emotional perspective, from the conscious perspective, from the subconscious perspective and also from the unconscious perspective.

Whenever I am asked, 'What is real yoga?' I always say, 'It is pratyahara.' Pratyahara is the real yoga; the rest are just supports to pratyahara. Even dharana is a support to pratyahara. Pratyahara has to be understood in the right sense, not just as practice but as a state of observation, balance and harmony that can be maintained and sustained. Therefore, after having perfected yama, niyama, asana, pranayama of the raja yoga system, and stillness of the pranas and senses has been attained, pratyahara begins with the observation of mental behaviour and then turning the mind in a positive direction. Through the practice of yama and niyama, you begin to relax and release yourself from accumulated internal conditionings and subsequent external behaviour. The more you release, the more relaxed you become, and therefore relaxation becomes like the main *adhaar*, base, of pratyahara.

In practical terms it begins with the practice of yoga nidra, where you consciously relax yourself, where you consciously guide your mind to leave behind the triggers of anxiety and stress, and connect with the experience of deep relaxation and release. After this when you have worked through the conscious responses, the subconscious responses and unconscious responses, when everything is stilled you move into dharana.

At the intellectual level, after having achieved relaxation, we begin the observation of those things that come to the surface of the mind, starting by observing thoughts through the practice of antar mouna. What type of thoughts do you observe? Do you know that you have 50,000 thoughts every day? Out of the 50,000 thoughts that pass through your

mind in the waking state, do you know that seventy percent are repetitive? Due to the repetitiveness of these thoughts, you move into worries, brooding, anxiety and depression. For example, worry, which is common, is due to a thought repeating itself again and again. Anxiety is caused by a thought repeating itself again and again; the same thought going on and on and on. An equal number of thoughts, that is seventy percent, are also tainted and coloured by the *tamasic gunas* or qualities, like desire, anger, greed, infatuation, jealousy, competitiveness.

Everything that transpires in our mind is tamasic. Can that be cleared? Yoga says yes, but you have to be persistent. You have to be firm and stable; do not look for novelty every time you meditate. Focus on that which has to be managed, cleared and balanced. This is where people fail because there is a constant search for novelty and something new. We get bored quickly and this boredom is a trigger of *tamas* because it is seeking, craving and desiring stimulation, newness, something which attracts the mind to an outer experience or object. When that does not happen, you get bored and you say, 'I need some excitement in life;' that is the tamasic trigger. It is these conditions of the mind which have to be managed. At the conscious level, we start with thoughts. At the subconscious level, we begin with emotions, sentiments and feelings. At the unconscious level, we examine *samskaras* and *karmas*, the conditioning which make us act in a particular manner.

After all, *samskaras* and *karmas* are the building blocks of life and this is where the actual work with oneself takes place. My guru always said that our home is our mind, not where we live physically, the house, street, city. That can change, yet the mind always lives with us and we live in our mind. There is so much of clutter in our mind. We tend to ignore it, look the other way and say, 'Oh, my mind is clean.' We do not want to look at the clutter of the mind. *Pratyahara* makes you look at your mind clutter, and clean the mind of this clutter, to make it free.

Dharana

Once the conscious, subconscious and unconscious controls have been observed and released, we move into the state of dharana. It is difficult to maintain the focused firmness of the mind. It has been observed that during dharana some people experience that their body trembles. This is an indication of pranic imbalance and that the pranas have not been balanced, managed or harmonized before coming to this stage. If this happens, you have to go back and make sure that your pranas are balanced. The shaking of the body is not part of the state of dharana; rather it is indicative of an imbalance of pranas. It is better to focus on pranayama and regain pranic balance before starting with dharana. There has to be resilience and flexibility in recognizing the blocks and dealing with them before progressing further.

There are many different experiences which people have that indicate an instability of awareness, focus, concentration, mind, logic, sentiments and emotions. This has to be worked through properly before coming to dharana. After that, dharana becomes a simple practice, but the search for excitement has always been there since the beginning of human history. Therefore, even Shiva said, 'I will give you 100,000 techniques of dharana. Let your mind play with them. Out of these 100,000 techniques, maybe one will grab you, one will hold you, one will elevate you.'

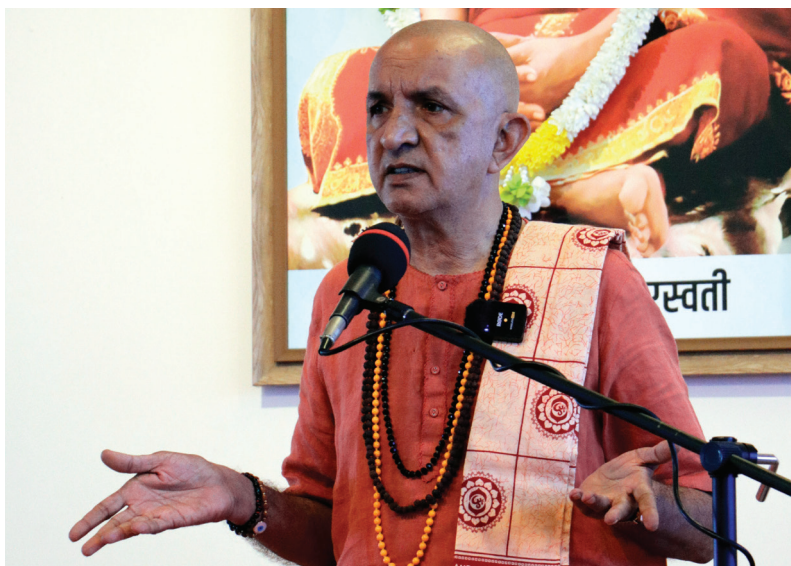
While practising dharana, due to this fluctuation of the mind and the tendency towards boredom which is human nature and the mental nature, different goals are given. There is *bahir lakshya*, the external goal, and *antar lakshya*, the internal goal, and there is *uchchya lakshya*, the higher goal. We have to achieve the outer goal first and master it. This outer goal is achieved through the practice of mudras and bandhas, and the preparation for this has already started in hatha yoga. In dharana, they become deeper practices which influence the functioning of the mind with practices like *shambhavi mudra*, gazing at the eyebrow centre. Once the mudra is perfected,

it results in the activation of a psychic centre in the body, specifically of the prana of ajna chakra.

In the practices like *nasikagra mudra*, looking at the nose tip or *agochari mudra*, looking at space, it is difficult to hold the attention and fix the awareness and mind because the senses tend to connect with a physical object. The senses cannot survive without the support of a physical object. You have had that experience too. While you are looking at space, suddenly you notice that your eyes are focusing somewhere else. When you notice that, it is a shortcoming for which you have to again train yourself. This is the effect of the senses and the nature of the senses and here you are trying to outsmart your own sense perception, your own sense experience.

Dharana also has to move ahead; it is not just concentration and thinking, 'I can sit and focus on whatever happens.' Only when the fluctuations of the mind stop, can one move into *dhyana*, the meditative state. In the context of raja yoga and in the context of mind, the progression has been clearly defined. After this, when meditation begins we move away from the mind to the dimension of consciousness. In dharana, we experience consciousness through the process of moving away from the mind, whereas in dhyana, we *live* in consciousness, and in samadhi we *become* consciousness. This is the whole sequence of raja yoga.

When you have moved from manomaya kosha to vijñanamaya kosha in dhyana and samadhi, you come to anandamaya kosha which is divided into two parts: the psychic experience and the spiritual experience. As the fetters of the mind disappear, consciousness becomes free; as consciousness becomes free, different potentials of consciousness are awakened and realized. These potentials of consciousness are known as *siddhis*, extraordinary abilities. Many people get caught at this stage because they think, 'I have achieved this siddhi, this ability; now I am complete.' From the yogic perspective, siddhis are actually the last attractions or temptations given by nature to drag you down from the path



of enlightenment and realization. Siddhis re-open the doors of ego, and ego drags you down. If you are able to influence somebody, ego will be affected.

Let us say you develop the ability of clairvoyance; your ego will drag you back down. You will start to think, 'Oh, I have this ability; I can do this. I can see the future, I can . . .' These are the last bindings which people mistakenly think of as qualification, ability or empowerment. They are not that at all; they are not qualifications, they are not abilities, they are not empowerment. It is a trap of nature to keep you within its grip, and not allow you to transcend the body-mind experience. Psychic awareness is the last pit which people can fall into but if you pass through that without succumbing to the temptation, you move into the spiritual dimension and you are enlightened, you move towards enlightenment and realization. So this is the progression.

Only then you come to kriya yoga, for here it becomes possible for kundalini to ascend. Until now, it is only enlightenment of the mind and prana. After raja yoga, when kundalini ascends through the chakras with the practice of

kriya yoga, the circle is complete; from the non-transcendental experience to the transcendental experience, from experiences of bondage to experiences of liberation and freedom. This becomes the sadhana component or the component of yoga practice. Before the stage of pratyahara, everything is just preparation. Pratyahara is the actual yoga to be perfected and mastered. Dharana, dhyana and samadhi are stages of maintaining the state of awareness and steadiness, keeping the connection of our goal alive, which is the experience of freedom and liberation.

This is the progression of yoga as a whole system, of hatha yoga, raja yoga and kriya yoga. What is the purpose of this particular sequence of progression? People do not realize its value and importance; they are over-ambitious and want to meditate without any foundation, without any preparation for meditation. Therefore, ninety-nine percent of the people who have no idea of what meditation is teach abstract meditations under different names and guises, 'This is vedantic meditation, this is tantric meditation, this is this meditation, this is that meditation.' Show me the scriptural reference for those meditations: there is no reference; it is merely conceived in ambitious minds. The references of meditation are found in pratyahara and dharana.

Vijnana Bhairava Tantra has hundreds of dharanas which are documented. When there is no documented evidence, it means that it is just a creation of people's minds. They may give it different terms, but there is no reference. Even if they give a reference, it will be some abstract statement like '*Aham Bramhasmi*'. If you search through the Vedas, there is no meditation or dharana prescribed or described on *Aham Bramhasmi*. It is a misuse by an individual who has no understanding of meditation. I am placing the facts as they are. Try to develop this understanding and then you will realize the reason, value and worth of this progression of yoga.

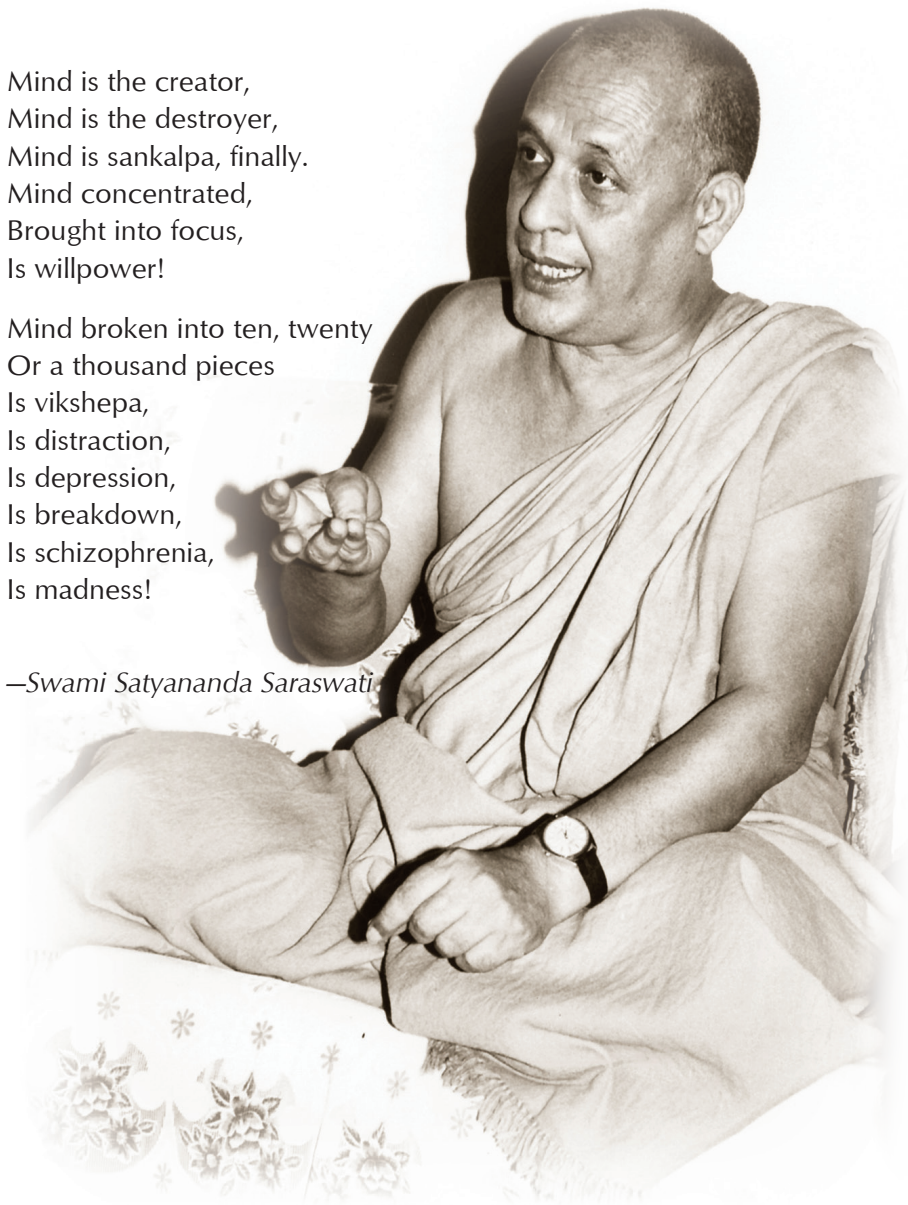
– 8 April 2026, Dharana Training, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Power of Mind

Mind is the creator,
Mind is the destroyer,
Mind is sankalpa, finally.
Mind concentrated,
Brought into focus,
Is willpower!

Mind broken into ten, twenty
Or a thousand pieces
Is vikshepa,
Is distraction,
Is depression,
Is breakdown,
Is schizophrenia,
Is madness!

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Meeting with Children

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Guruji, which *Bhagavad Gita* sloka is closest to your heart. Could you share the reason behind it?

The chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*, which I like very much, is the twelfth chapter. The twelfth chapter is on bhakti yoga. Sri Krishna tells Arjuna, who he likes most. Just as your parents love you and like you, in the same way God also loves and likes the people who follow his instructions, who are obedient to him, and who also love him. God says, 'I only love those people who have some special quality, special nature. At the end of describing those qualities, He says, '*Yo madbhakta sa me priya*, such a person I like most, such a person I love most.' If you want to know whom God loves most, you will have to read the twelfth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*.



That is my favourite chapter because I want to be loved by God also. Don't you? Just as you want to be loved by your parents, you also want to be loved by God. I also want to be loved by God, so I have to do things according to what He says. God loves those people who listen to Him and who are obedient. Just as your parents will also love you if you are obedient, and listen to their guidance. So, that is my favourite chapter.

For attaining good education and balance in life, which form of yoga should I practise, and which japa and paath should I follow?

The best form of yoga is surya namaskara, which is good for the brain, memory, and for developing the physical stamina. It is very good for growing up. This is the best yoga practice to help us in the life of a student, when we are going to school and college. I would say this is the best practice which can help us throughout our education. If we are regular with it, we will be getting good marks and pass without failing.



The mantra is the Gayatri mantra. The Gayatri mantra will allow us to learn the knowledge, the *vidya*, with greater ease, in a playful manner. Our scriptures and ancestors discovered that when we chant the Gayatri mantra, our brain and mind open up. We can receive every kind of knowledge, every kind of art, because this is the invocation of Mother Saraswati. She is the goddess of learning, knowledge, wisdom, arts, music; everything that we like and everything that helps us grow in life. She is the goddess of that. The skill, the knowledge, the wisdom, the jnana that we use in life, is given by Mother Saraswati. Her mantra, the Gayatri mantra, is the most beneficial and useful one. So If you do these two things every day, you will become a superstar in life.

How can I overcome the stress that arises from studies?

Two things will help. Have a break of five minutes every half an hour, from your studies, to change your mind, your brain, your perception. Another thing is to practise pranayama, and more specifically the bhramari pranayama. Bhramari pranayama is humming of the bumble bee. Bhramari pranayama balances the brain waves and reduces the effect of stress and anxiety on body and mind. It develops concentration and focus in the mind. Bhramari pranayama will definitely help, and also having a break every half an hour for five minutes from your studies, will help manage the stress, anxiety and tension.

Could you tell us about what mantra means?

Mantra is a powerful tool, which is like our friend all the time. I do not consider mantra to be initiation; I consider mantra to be my friend. Whenever I am in distress, it is this friend that comes to help me out. For you also, mantra should be your friend, and whenever you feel disturbed, agitated and in need of support, it is this mantra which will always help you. When the mind is disturbed and agitated, when things are going wrong, when there is insecurity and fear – in all these difficult situations, with eyes open, mentally keep on



ri Devi, Bhu-Devi

akateswara Sw

Kalyano Swam

hi Satyananda Sara

ger Padarpan Mah

Vish Peeth

Sa Peeth







repeating the mantra. Even when you are walking on the street, playing games, are jogging and running, watching television or going through your social media account, mentally you can keep on repeating the mantra. You find that it will help you become more peaceful and relaxed. It will develop a better nature, a better aspect of your personality, which will give you the strength to deal with any and every type of situation. So, consider mantra to be your friend and not a discipline of life, and that will help you.



How can one cultivate the discipline to practise yoga and meditation consistently throughout life?

Difficult, but this should become a habit. Once you develop a habit, nobody can change it. If you see adults, many of them smoke. If you ask them to leave smoking, it is difficult because smoking becomes a habit. There are many people who drink; if you ask them to stop drinking, it becomes difficult because it is a habit. So, if sadhana, if the practice of asana and pranayama, meditation and mantra, relaxation and concentration, becomes a habit, then it will remain with you for all times to come. So, instead of developing bad habits, develop a good habit. Instead of developing bad habits, if you develop good habits, it will help you throughout your life. Therefore, try to make yoga a habit of your life and not a practice. You come, you do your practice, and then you go away and you forget it. No, no, no. Make yoga a habit, and that is the best thing you can do for yourself in this lifetime.

– 23 March 2025, Atmadarshan Yogashram (ADY),
Bengaluru, India

Chair Yoga in Aged Care

Swami Prembhava Saraswati

Practice is not about perfection of the body; it is about continuity of awareness.

– *Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



I have been teaching weekly Chair Yoga classes in an aged care home. Teaching yoga in this environment is unlike any other yoga setting I have known. Some students live with advanced illness, others with reduced mobility, cognitive decline, or dementia. I teach students lying in hospital beds, barely able to move, many in wheelchairs, and most supported by walkers, able to stand only briefly without assistance. A few can still walk and balance independently but choose to practise from the chair, as sitting on the floor and standing again is no longer possible.

Within the aged care home, the background noise of staff, visitors, medical equipment, and daily routines creates a busy and often noisy atmosphere. Yet, regardless of the external distractions, or the varying states of body and mind, everyone

receives benefit from coming together for the yoga class – myself included.

I teach people in their late eighties and nineties, and my oldest student is 103 years old, one of the last surviving ANZAC veterans of World War II. These are remarkable individuals who have lived full lives, rich with experience, loss, humour, and resilience. They are brought together in the final years, months, and sometimes weeks of their lives. To be with them each week is both a privilege and an honour.

For many residents, daily life revolves around managing physical health, medical appointments, meals, organized activities, and waiting for visits from family. Beneath this routine there is often a quiet uncertainty about what lies ahead. This stage of life is not easy, and yoga offers moments of respite, smiles, and relaxation.

The structured system of Satyananda Yoga is both adaptable and powerful. It brings health and positivity regardless of age or physical capacity. Chair yoga in aged care is not a reduced or diluted form of yoga; it is yoga adapted for the ageing body. Ageing brings limitations, but it also brings experience, resilience, and depth. When these qualities meet the practices of Satyananda Yoga, they support strength, balance and acceptance in life.

In chair yoga for the elderly, Pawanmuktasana Series 1 is the most important practice. It can be adapted to suit each student's individual capacity. PM1 is simple, light, and repetitive. It increases joint mobility, reduces stiffness, and gently strengthens the muscles and joints of the body. Even the smallest movement has great value, especially when performed with awareness.

PM1 can also be practised through imagination and visualization when movement is limited or no longer possible. I once taught a student who had lost his toes from diabetes. He practised the toe movements by visualizing them. He told me it was easy and that it felt good. This confirmed for me that yoga works not only through the body, but through awareness itself.

After some time, PM1 can be practised with breath awareness. When movement and breath are combined, the effects are magnified. The breath naturally deepens, the body relaxes, and the mind remains present and alert.

One eighty-year-old woman lost her ability to walk after a fall in the shower. After several weeks of practising chair yoga, she was able to walk to class using her walker. She became known as 'the miracle'. She can now stand and practise simple balancing movements. She loves the classes and always leaves smiling, grateful to be moving again.

Even the smallest practice, done with awareness, brings transformation.

— Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Alongside this work, I live with my ninety-three-year-old father, who has also learned these simple chair yoga practices. Observing his daily life has deepened my understanding of ageing just as much as teaching in aged care. He has always been physically and mentally active and continues to be so. Each day he moves his body, practises yoga, lifts light weights, rides his exercise bike, meditates, and keeps his mind engaged. He works with languages, uses computers,



watches educational programs, and follows the news with discernment. His routine is steady – meals and activities at the same time each day. Through diet, movement, routine, awareness, and mental engagement, he remains present to himself and the world around him. Yoga and regular movement give rhythm, strength, and something dependable to return to each day. This is a life lived with awareness, even at ninety-three years old.

Teaching chair yoga in aged care and living alongside my father have shown me that asana and pranayama sustain the strength of the body and clarity of the mind, while routine and lifestyle support us throughout life. Yoga does not prevent ageing, but it helps us live it with awareness, dignity, strength, and even a sense of humour.

Our bodies evolved to move, not to remain seated for long hours. As we age, this becomes increasingly important. The saying *“if you don’t use it, you lose it”* becomes very real. I have observed that those who were active earlier in life – dancers, golfers, athletes, and yogis – are the ones still walking unassisted and practising yoga well into their nineties and beyond. When yoga is part of life from a young age, it creates a foundation that supports us through all stages of life.

Inevitably, some of the elderly students pass away. Sometimes this happens suddenly – one week they are present in class, and the next week they are gone. I remember them, and I miss them. This is the quiet sorrow of teaching yoga to the elderly. I hope they were touched by the light of yoga in their final months and weeks, and that they remembered to breathe, to observe, and to meet the closing stages of life from a calm inner place, without fear.

Benefits of Chair Yoga for older adults

Physical: Chair yoga helps maintain mobility, strength, and circulation. The gentle joint movements of Pawanmuktasana Series 1 reduce stiffness, improve coordination, and support balance and confidence.

Mental wellbeing: Simple, structured practices stabilize attention and reduce restlessness, boredom, anxiety and depression. Pranayama strengthens the nervous system and calms the mind. Many students continue breath awareness in their rooms, helping them sleep and reconnect with inner peace. The increased mobility of the body gives confidence and a sense of achievement.

Emotional wellbeing: Group practice creates connection and routine. The class becomes a shared experience rather than an isolated activity. Breath and movement calm emotions, and the class provides laughter, conversation, and mutual support.

Inner awareness: During yoga nidra, the elderly turn inward very quickly. A deep stillness settles across the room, as if inner awareness is familiar and close. Even those with limited mobility benefit by directing awareness through the body, encouraging healing and wholeness. Yoga gives a direct experience of breath and inner stillness. This helps to accept the changes happening to body and mind and prepare for the final chapter of life with a sense of connection to something beyond the body rather than experiencing depression and fear.

A SIMPLE CLASS STRUCTURE FOR CHAIR YOGA IN AGED CARE

A chair yoga session must remain adaptable as participation varies from day to day, and not everyone can practise everything in the class. The main focus is on movement with comfort, safety and awareness, the breath as a vital tool and ally in life and the ability to be aware of oneself and thoughts in the mind.

1. Joint movements – Pawanmuktasana Series 1

Practised seated in the armchair:

- Toes and ankles
- Knees and hips
- Fingers and thumbs

- Wrists and elbows
- Shoulders
- Neck movements (within a comfortable range)

Movements are slow, coordinated with the breath, and repeated up to ten times as appropriate.

- Tadasana
- Tiryak tadasana
- Kati chakrasana

The TTK series can be practised from the chair by simply stretching the arms above the head and moving the torso only. Maximum 5 to 7 rounds only.

2. Standing practices (optional)

For those able to stand safely:

- Standing while holding the back of the chair
- Squatting with chair support – 10 times
- Leg lifts to the side and back for hips and leg strength, 5 times each side
- Gentle balancing – one foot placed on top of other foot, trying to hold balance for 3 seconds

Those who remain seated continue with simple leg movements or rest, staying included in the group.

3. Pranayama and breath awareness

- Awareness of the natural breath at the nostrils
- Counting inhalation and exhalation
- Gentle abdominal breathing
- After sometime nadi shodhana can be practised or psychic nadi shodhana for those with weak arms.

No breath retention or force is used. The aim is relaxation and awareness, not control.

4. Yoga nidra in the chair

Practised seated:

- Rotation of awareness through the body
- Breath awareness



- Brief observation of thoughts
- Sankalpa can be added after a few weeks of practise.

The practice is short and simple, encouraging relaxation without inducing sleep.

5. Closing practice

- Palming
- A moment of stillness.

This allows the practice to settle before returning to daily activities.

Ageing is inevitable, but suffering is not. Awareness determines the quality of life at every stage.

— Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Living with my father and teaching yoga to the elderly has shown me that growing old is not for the faint-hearted. The body and mind change, sickness comes, there are pains and stiffness in the body that move and change, relationships alter, children move on with their lives, loved ones pass away, life becomes quieter and people often feel alone. These changes cannot be avoided, but they can be met with awareness and the knowledge of how to make the best choices for one's health and happiness.

Yoga offers tools of movement, breath awareness, relaxation, and self-observation to help live happily within the ageing process. My time with the elderly confirms that it is never too late to begin practising yoga. Even the simplest practices can bring strength to the body, calm to the mind, and a sense of peace, dignity and contentment. Yoga is a faithful companion through every phase of life. It adapts, supports, and remains available to all.

Yoga is for everybody – and it is never too late to learn.

Willpower

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

I tend to be a compulsive, emotional eater. How can I use willpower to overcome this habit?

Willpower has a lot to do with it. At the same time, you have to understand that there are some basic instincts. Management of those instincts is always a challenging process for every individual. *Ahar*, craving, is one instinct. At the physical level, the craving is for nourishment, food.

At the mental level, the craving is for satisfying mental needs. The four basic instincts are: craving, fear, sleep and passion.

Can they be controlled through willpower? Yogis say yes. However, you have to understand that yogis have stronger willpower than normal people. For normal people to control it through willpower is hard, challenging, difficult. If you recognize the situation that you are in, and you try to improve that situation through awareness, and recognition of your weaknesses, compulsions and habits, then one by one, you can gradually try to overcome that weakness.

Willpower represents a condition of mind, in which you are able to observe and alter the behaviour of the mind. If you cannot observe and alter the behaviour of the mind, then that is an indication of your shortcoming; it does not reflect willpower. Willpower is also not rigidity of thought or of desire. Willpower is more an awareness, an observation. Meditation and cultivation of the *drashta bhava*, the witness attitude, and awareness, will of course help.

– 23 February 2025, Ganga Darshan, Munger



Meditation

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



All forms of yoga are preparations for meditation. The practice of hatha yoga purifies the body, the practice of bhakti yoga purifies the emotional personality, the practice of jnana yoga purifies the intellect. After these practices you take to the practice of meditation. When you close your eyes, what do you see inside? You see consciousness inside. Beyond the body is mind and beyond the mind is spirit.

The purpose of meditation is to discover this unseen spirit. Through meditation you are able to transcend the world of name and form, and then you come to a world which has no boundaries and no limitations. Therefore, remember that meditation is like a bridge which takes you from this shore to the other shore.

Bihar School of Yoga Training – 2026



Total Health Capsule

During my stay in the ashram, I experienced peace in mouna and digital fasting. The silence felt golden as I found space to listen to my inner voice. The stillness allowed my thoughts to settle. Seva gave me joy and I was able to introspect and think clearly.

Waking up before sunrise, doing asanas, chanting mantras, participating in kirtan – all these activities gave me energy with each passing day. I felt more positive and my body felt stronger each day. It was a week of inner pilgrimage, physically exhausting and mentally cleansing. I return home lighter and more aware.

– Vidya Purohit

Breathe for Healthy Lungs

Every session is well designed to experience every single breath that we take. Here I was living yoga, not just doing it.

– Sannyasi Atmamani



I have learnt and experienced the power of the asanas preparing for pranayama. My whole respiratory system feels rejuvenated.

— Aseem Bansal

I really appreciate the course as it gave me insight of how important it is to learn and practise the basics of pranayama instead of going into direct practice. All the sessions were helpful for me. I feel very light and my body is showing flexibility. Ashram life has helped me understand to be grateful for this life and how important discipline is for my own good.

— Beena Ahuja

Dharana Training

I started this training with the will to do my best, knowing how difficult it is to experience dharana. The training quickly reminded me that will is useless. I have fully understood that relaxation is the key and how it works through the few moments I was able to experience it.

— Sannyasi Suryaprem



This training has given me a ray of hope how to improve upon my memory, focus and concentration. My ability to listen and be aware has improved after the practices of dharana. I became aware that my mind, if trained, can handle any situation in life.

— *Sannyasi Sivchaitanya*

This was a transformational time, not only the sessions but the whole stay at the ashram. I have experienced so much peace and silence within that I did not know was possible. Digital fasting has been an incredible experience.

— *Anand Prabha*

Previously I was unable to maintain focus. Through this training, I was able to go so much deeper into the practice and experience in a very profound way. My heartfelt thanks for creating such a meaningful learning environment.

— *Sannyasi Karma Dhyam*

Freedom of Will

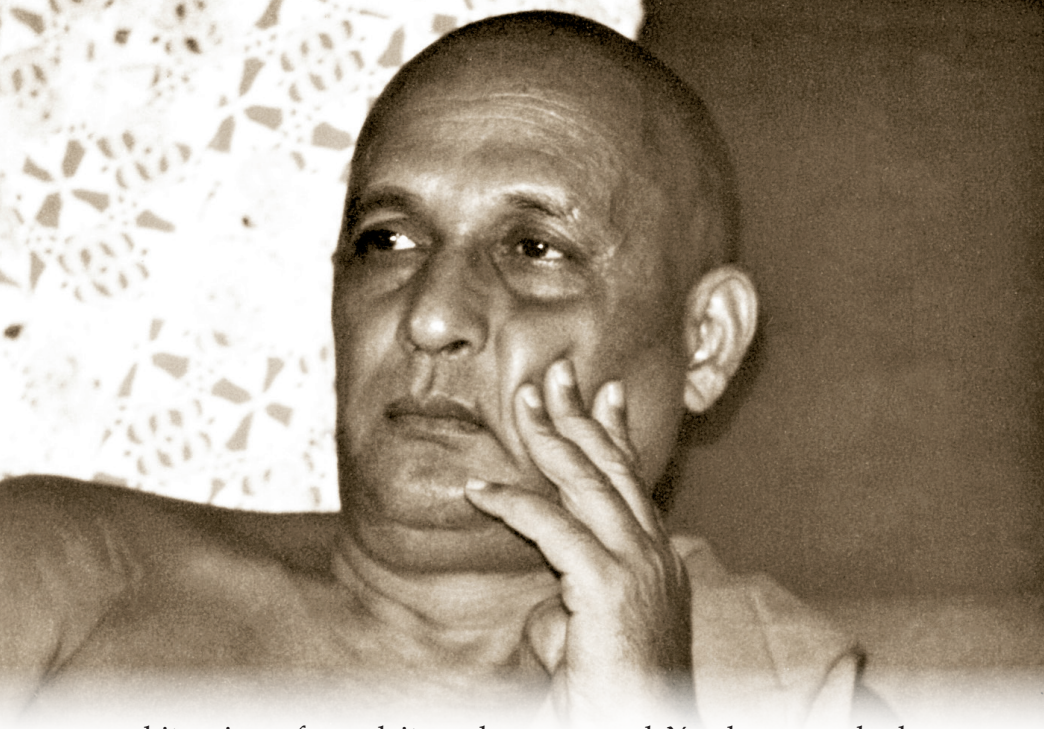
Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Just as every tree produces seeds, every action you do produces an effect and that is retained or stored in your mind in seed form. These seeds are known by various names. Some call them *karma* or *samskara*, some call them archetypes or latent impressions, but it is all the same. Happiness and unhappiness, good life and bad life, prosperity and poverty, disease or health, every experience creates an effect. This effect is converted into a seed and these seeds are in the form of vibration.

When my voice is recorded in the tape recorder it has an electronic shape. In the same way, every experience which you go through in life is also recorded, because there is a recording system in life. This recording system is known as the witnessing self. It records each and every experience, both objective and subjective. These effects, *samskaras* or seeds, germinate in you for some period, according to their own rules and at the proper time a particular seed will fructify, thus creating your destiny, affecting your life, body and mind. Therefore, this life is an effect of your past karma.

It is not so only with you, but with everything. A flower tree grows, flowers bloom, seeds are created, then they are scattered everywhere. They remain inside the earth for some time and in the proper season, when there is heat, air, water and nitrogen, they grow. Some seeds are destroyed; some seeds are impotent but most seeds have potential; they will grow. They will remain in hibernation in the earth for one, two or even three years, and then they will germinate. These seeds are indestructible. Not only with the flowers, trees and plants, but with everything in this universe, there is a law called the law of cause and effect.

The law of cause and effect can also be called the law of action and reaction. You hit a tin plate, it produces a sound. You



hit a piece of wood, it produces a sound. You love somebody, he will react. You hate somebody, she will react. You help somebody, he will react. The relationship between action and reaction is equal and opposite. You create action, there will be a reaction; only the action of an enlightened person, one who has gone beyond matter, has no reaction. A jnani who has gone beyond matter, his actions do not breed reaction, but the action of everybody in this creation creates a reaction.

This is the eternal law. This is not my law. You may not like it, but it is the truth. This is the law of karma. We do not see it because we have no time to see it, but if you analyze yourself you must accept that you are a product of something. You are not just born. Your body is the result of union between two forces. You are not immaculate. Nobody is immaculate. You are a product. Even as your body is a product, your mind should also be a product. How can you say that your body is the particular seed and will fructify, thus creating your destiny, affecting your life, body and mind? How can you say that your body is the product of two forces and your mind is independent?

The way you think, feel and imagine, the way you act in your family, the way you move, is the product of some cause. Man's life on this planet is a link in a great chain. This is the truth, but at the same time nature has given man one small spark. This little spark is called independent will. In yoga this is called *purushartha*, the power of the spirit. Everyone has it in seed form. It was born with us, but we are not able to utilize it.

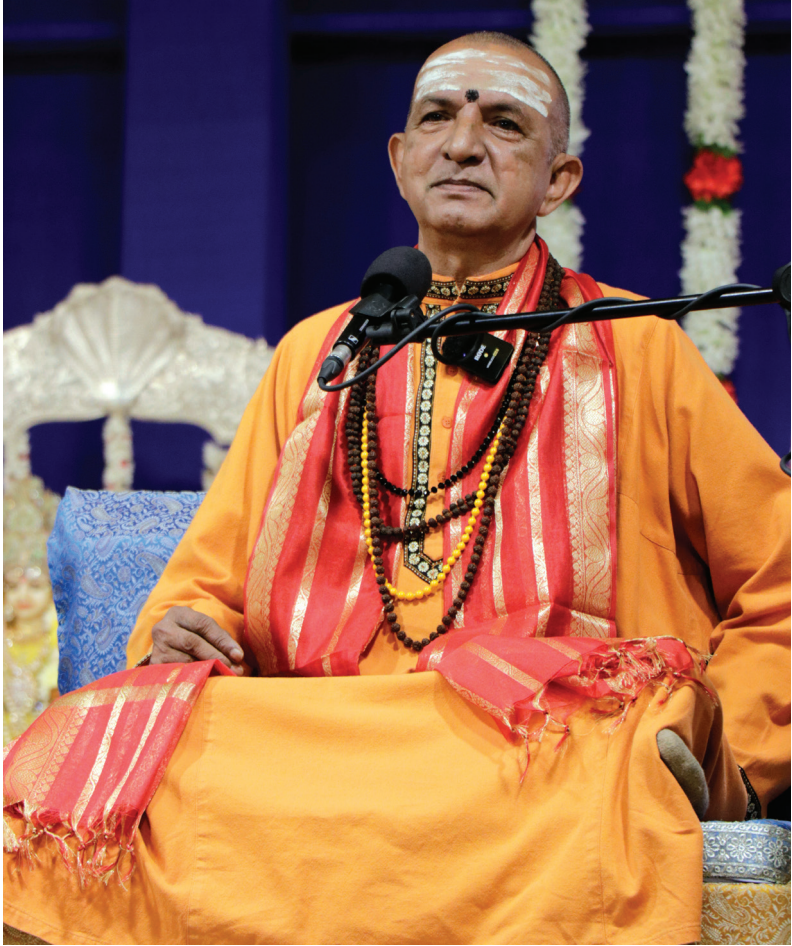
In order to utilize this power of the will, you must have a strong mind. The power of the will does not operate in most people. We live the lives of circumstance. Nature kicks us like a football and we keep on being tossed from this end of the field to that end of the field. In order to develop the power of will, there are many things that you will have to accomplish. First of all, you will have to learn how to control the impulses of your mind, you will have to learn how to discipline the body-mind relationship, and you will have to learn how to focus the energies of the mind. You will have to learn how to stop the dissipations of the mind.

Can you stop your mind for a second? Can you focus your mind for a minute? Can you stop your mind for some time? If you can, then your willpower will come into operation. I can tell you one thing: man can develop his willpower, he can make some amendments in the destiny of his life, but as long as you are in the human body, you cannot completely escape destiny. You may be a great yogi, you may be a perfected siddha, you may even be an incarnation of divinity. You may be an avatar, a messiah or a prophet, but you still cannot totally override destiny.

We have seen the history of the past. Even prophets and saints, when they were born, were under the control of destiny to some extent. Therefore, let us develop our willpower as much as possible and help matters to become a little better, but do not think of completely escaping destiny. In order to escape destiny, you will have to become the master of nature. If you manage to escape destiny, it will create a crisis in the realm of nature.

Unhooking from the Vrittis

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Human society is a fragmented society and an illogical society. There is no logic in what humans do. They create distinctions and differences – rich and poor, big and small. Did God send you with that intention? Did God create rich and poor? Did God create big and small? Did God create master and slave?

No. You have created all that. What does that indicate? Your own distorted mind, guided by your own selfish and negative personality. Our mind is all distorted; it is not balanced. There is no *sanyam*, there is no regulation and no discipline. We are all subject to our desires and expectations. If our expectations and our desires are not fulfilled, then we react to it. 'I want it. This is my right. This is my need. I am not getting it!' Who is not getting it? You are not satisfied because you are unable to fulfil your desire and expectation. Desire and expectation are the biggest enemies of humanity and of humanness. They remove us from the expression of the human nature.

A desire can manifest in different ways. It can be frustration, anger, greed, jealousy, envy. It can create distinction between me and you, big and small, rich and poor, master and slave. It is that mind which seeks enlightenment; and this is never going to happen, unless you change the quality of your own mind. If you are able to change the quality of your mind, enlightenment is possible. If you are unable to change the quality of your mind, then no matter what you do, what you try, which path you follow, nothing is going to happen, nothing is going to change.

It was for this reason that our Paramguru, Swami Sivananda, said that understand yoga as the right expression of head, heart and hands. People define yoga as union with the higher self. What union with higher self, when you can't even recognize, guide and control your own nature and mind? How will you recognize your higher self? The higher self can only be recognized when all the limitations of the mind are transformed and transcended. That is the main purpose and focus of yogic practices and spiritual life. Spiritual life is not a religious life. Religion is limited in the expression of the openness of heart and mind. Religions do not allow your heart to open, or your mind to open. Has any religion done that until now? Which religion has allowed you to open your mind, expand your consciousness, open your heart and accept everybody into that fold? I have not come across any

understanding from any religion that has allowed this to happen.

Spirituality is totally different. Spirituality is discovering the beauty within yourself. Spirituality is discovering the truth and creativity within yourself. Once you discover that within yourself, then it expresses in the outer dimension. Yoga becomes a tool to step into spirituality, as that is the intention of yoga. People like Swami Sivananda have made it amply clear that it is the integration of the faculties of head, heart and hands, which has the power and the capacity to illuminate life. As long as head, heart and hands are separate and fragmented, there will be strife, confusion, distortions, distractions and disturbances. Once they come together, there will be peace, harmony, creativity, expansion of consciousness and liberation of energy, which are confined in this system of our body created by God. People want to awaken their kundalini and chakras by holding the breath or a posture. They never succeed because chakras and kundalini are not physical. They are positive qualities of consciousness; they are expressions of a positive quality of consciousness. If we have not worked with our mind, if we have not cleaned our mind of the dross of negativity, the collected rubbish, then how can a different state of experience evolve within us? It is all blocked.

There is a story. Three friends wanted to go on a boat journey on the Ganga. They decided, 'If we announce to our families that we want to take a journey on the Ganga by boat, they are not going to allow us. So, let us escape from our homes at night, row the boat, and go for a trip.' At the appointed time in the pitch dark night, these three friends came together. They went into a boat, took up the oars and started to row and rowed the whole night. In the morning, as the sun was coming up on the horizon, one of the three said, 'You know, the world looks the same everywhere.' The second said, 'Yes, surprisingly we have rowed the whole night, we have come so far, but the buildings look like those in our own town.' The third friend said, 'You know, the people who are coming to bathe in the

river, some of them look like our own family members. One lady even looks like my wife!’

What had happened? They were rowing the whole night, but they had not untied the boat. They were stuck in the same place. That is happening to all of us today. We do not free the boat of its mooring and we row. The mooring is the desire and attachment to family, society, friends, money, to everything. You do not want to leave anything behind, but you want to reach new destinations. That is not possible. To reach new destinations, you have to unhook yourself from the hooks you are connected with and which hold you back. Therefore, *vruttis* are the hooks that are holding you. You have to unhook yourself from those *vruttis*.

Vruttis are not only those things which have been defined by Sage Patanjali. *Vritti* is everything; it is the expression, behaviour, thought, desire, expectation of your life. Everything is a *vrutti*; the only thing stable is the mind. *Vruttis* keep on changing, they are not permanent. If you get ninety-nine rupees, you will say, ‘I wish I had one hundred; one more.’ That is another *vrutti*; you are not satisfied with ninety-nine. You want one more, and if you receive one more to make it one hundred, you will say, ‘Oh, I wish it could be hundred and one.’ If you are unable to unhook yourself from the *vrutti* or desire, how can your mind be free? Not possible. Therefore, apart from asana and pranayama, the majority of work has to happen with our mind, to unhook the mind from the *vruttis*. That is the process of yoga. Whether it be hatred, greed, jealousy, aggression, frustration, depression, anxiety – they are all *vruttis*. One has to realize the cause and manage it. Otherwise, you will be the traveller in the boat which does not go anywhere. You will have the satisfaction, ‘I have done enough exercise of rowing the boat,’ but beyond that nothing more, nothing new, nothing different. You are the same and you will remain the same. At the fag end of your life, when life flashes before your eyes, you will realize, ‘I am stuck in the same place.’ If you are able to unhook yourself, progress becomes possible.

Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda gave many tools for that. They were not mechanical people who told you to practise an asana in a perfect manner. They told you how to become aware of the qualities that govern your mind and life and how you can change them, transform and transcend them. That is the real yoga. You can practise surya namaskar or pranayama for forty years continuously; nothing is going to happen except a good physical body. Mind is not changing because of your surya namaskar. You can practise pranayamas, you can hold your breath in the hope, 'Maybe by holding the breath my granthis, chakras and my kundalini will awaken.' If you are not working with your mind, nothing is going to happen.

It is the openness of the mind and opening of the heart and creative expressions of the hands, which is real yoga. When that happens, you see everyone as equal and everything as a gift of God. Every experience is a step forward into realization of life, and every good quality takes you closer to your inner nature. It will bring you peace. If you connect with goodness, it will bring you happiness, peace, joy, harmony and balance. If you continue to express the blocks, limitations and negativities of your mind, you will be encountering crises at every step of your life. There will be dissatisfaction, disharmony and misunderstandings.

Therefore, you have to make the decision. It is not the practice which makes the decision for you. You have to make the choice: either to continue with the mind which you already have at present and suffer, or transform your mind into something unique which gives you the understanding of what is harmony, peace, contentment, happiness, joy and bliss. The people who can transform their mind, become enlightened. They are the people who become an inspiration for the world.

– Basant Panchami, 22 January 2026, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Pratipaksha Bhavana

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



According to yoga, cultivation of an opposite thought, *pratipaksha bhavana*, is important to restrain the senses. If the eyes are attracted to something, create a thought and say to yourself, “This is nice, but the opposite is also nice.” If the eyes are craving beauty, the mind should also accept the ugly. In this way, the sensory attractions have to be balanced by cultivating the awareness of the opposite and not just identifying with that which is pleasurable and offers fleeting joy.

The ability to realize both the good and the bad must be developed because they are two sides of the same coin. You don’t have to interact with the person you consider your enemy, but in your mind, in your sentiments and understanding, that person can cease to be an enemy and just be an ordinary person.

Energy is One

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Energy is one. It is the application of energy which makes the difference. Electricity is one. With electricity, you can turn on a light, a fan, a freezer, an air-conditioner. You can use the electrical power to run any machine, which runs on that electrical power.

In the same manner, in our body energy is only one. That is known as the prana shakti. The energy which controls the universe is known as mahaprana. Mahaprana is the universal energy and prana shakti is the energy contained in this body. When this prana shakti is managing the *indriyas*, the senses, and the functions of the body organs and systems, muscles and bones, it is known as the vital force. People call that vital force *jeevani shakti* or also prana shakti, which is physical. As the gross aspect it manages the physical body.

The subtle aspect of this prana shakti manages the mental and emotional behaviour, the thinking, the expression of thoughts and ideas, the clarity or the cluttering of mind. Everything is decided by *chitta shakti*, which is the subtle form of prana. These two control our life in this world. Prana shakti controls the physical, and the subtle prana shakti, known as chitta shakti, controls the internal, the mental.

Atmashakti simply means concentrated energy, like, when you are able to focus the light of a torchlight into one single point. The spreading of light becomes focused, concentrated, like a laser. That is known as *atmashakti*, where there are no distractions of the energy, and the whole energy is focused at one point for your own emancipation. So, energy is one, but named differently according to its nature, behaviour and condition.

– 9 March 2025, Ganga Darshan, Munger

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING DONATIONS

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

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Yoga Publications Trust

Yoga Taravali

Commentary based on the teachings
of Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

271 pp, soft cover, ISBN 978-93-48677-20-4

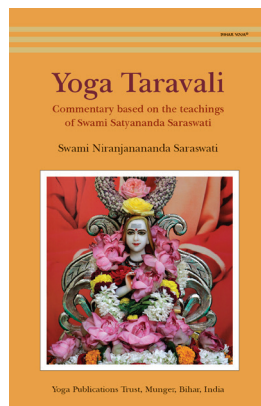
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For more information, please contact:

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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

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Other Apps (for Android and iOS devices)

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Yoga Peeth Events & Yoga Vidya Training 2026

Yoga Peeth Events

May 6	Munger Padarpan Diwas
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

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 & Yoga Lifestyle Experience (for overseas aspirants)

Bihar Yoga Bharati Yogavidya Training

Nov 1-Dec 31	Yogic Studies (English)
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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.