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Hari Om

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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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Birthday Celebration

Plates: Vayu Ecology practical classes



GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Destiny

Difficulties strengthen your will, augment your power of endurance and turn your mind towards God. Face them with a smile. In your weakness lies your strength. Conquer the difficulties one by one. This is the beginning of a new spiritual life, a life of expansion, glory and divine splendour. Destiny is your own creation. You have created your destiny through thoughts and actions. You can undo the same by right thinking and right action. Wrong thinking is the root cause for human sufferings. Cultivate right thinking and right acting. Work unselfishly in terms of unity with atmabhava. That is right action.

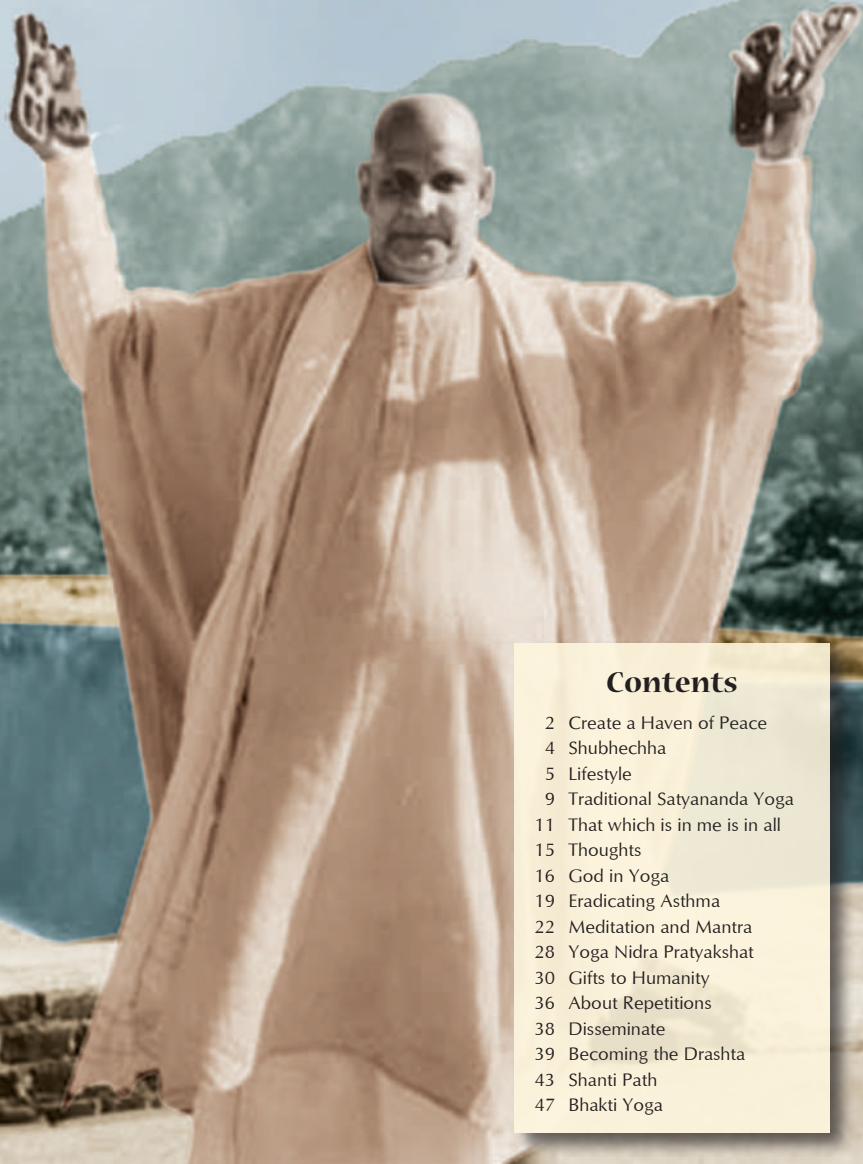
—Swami Sivananda Saraswati

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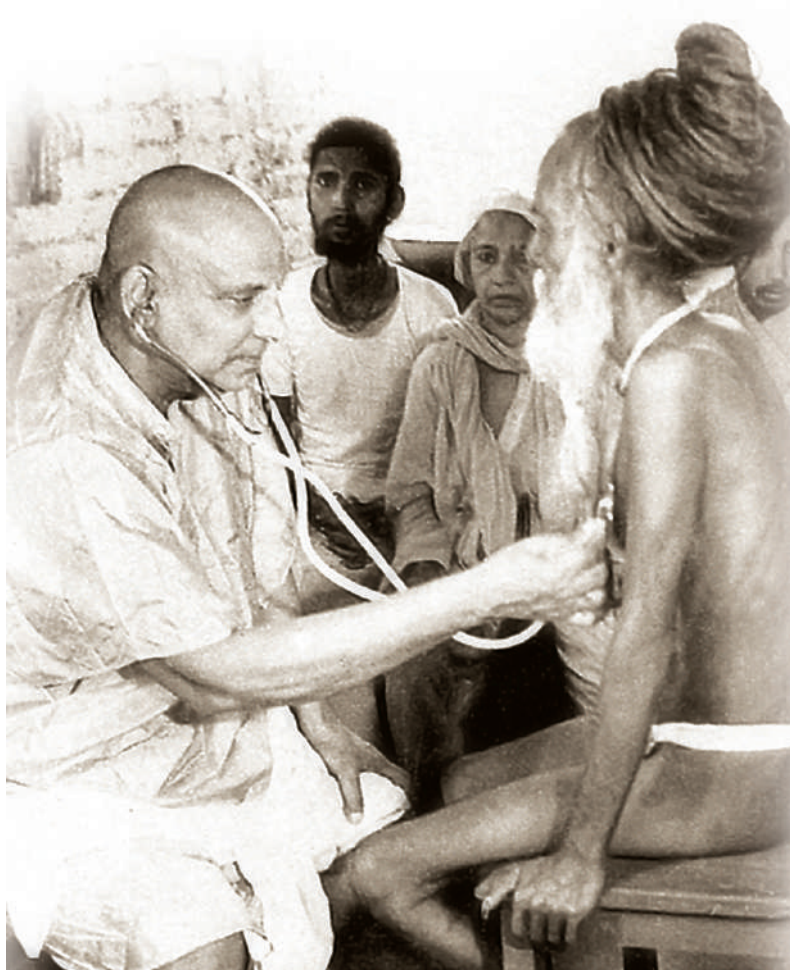
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The Yogi is superior to the ascetic. He is deemed superior even to those versed in sacred lore. The Yogi is superior even to those who perform action with some motive. Therefore, Arjuna, do you become a Yogi. (*Bhagavad Gita VI:46*)
तपस्विभ्योऽधिको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

Create a Haven of Peace

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Seva does not require wealth but a willing heart to serve humanity. Serve your parents, elders, teachers and guests. Serve the underprivileged in your neighbourhood. Feed the hungry, nurse the sick, comfort the afflicted and lighten the sorrow of the sorrowful. Clothe the naked. Educate the illiterate. Feed the poor. Raise the downtrodden.

Have a knowledge of homeopathy or Dr Schüssler's Twelve Tissue Remedies. Now serve the sick and the needy. Learn first-aid and help in all cases of emergency. Get medicine from the hospital or the dispensary for your helpless and deserving neighbours. Visit a hospital daily, if you can, or weekly, and give your best attention to the non-paying wards. Distribute oranges, if you can. Sit by the side of the patient and speak a few encouraging words. Smile awhile. Repeat, if you can, the names of the Lord or the like. Tell the person that you will visit tomorrow.

Collect some old clothes and distribute them to the needy. Distribute a few coins to the lame, the blind, and to the hungry mouths as you walk along the street. Serve any social institution for one hour daily without any remuneration. A teacher can give free tuition to poor children and supply them with free books.

Meet your friends and members of your society in a common place once a week or a fortnight for satsang and kirtan. Develop an understanding heart. Help your younger brothers and sisters on the spiritual path. Lift them up. Throw light on their path. Do not expect perfection from them. Be kind to them. They are doing their best, as you yourself are doing. You will grow by helping them. Finally, think for yourself how best you can utilize your energy, your intellect, your education, your wealth, your strength, or anything you possess, for the betterment of others who are low-placed in life, and for society in general.

One soul abides in all. There is one humanity. All are equal. There is only one caste, the caste of humanity. There is only one religion, the religion of love. There is only one language, the language of the heart. All life is one. The world is one home. All creation is an organic whole. No one is independent of that whole. You make yourself miserable by separating yourself from others. Separation is death. Unity is eternal life. Cultivate cosmic love. Embrace all. Destroy all barriers, racial, religious and natural prejudices. Recognize the immortal essence within all creatures. Let all life be sacred. Then this world will be a paradise of beauty, a haven of peace and tranquillity.



Shubhechha

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

In the transcendental nature of yourself, there is only experience of that transcendental nature, and that experience is known as shubhechha. *Shubhechha* means goodwill towards all, to wish well, and that is what a transcendental being does. He wishes everybody well and wants everybody to evolve and progress. Shubhechha is the only desire of the transcendental nature

In the beginning God was alone, and the first desire came to Him, *Ekoham, bahusyama* – I am one, let me become many. What does that mean? Does God want to become like you? No. God never wants to become like you, with all the hang-ups, difficulties, problems, frustrations, likes and dislikes and joys. So when God says, '*Ekoham, bahushyama*,' he means, 'Let me wish well to everyone. I see myself in everyone, and I wish well to everyone.' That is the transcendental nature.

If you go into the practical aspect of this theory, you will understand the teaching of Sri Swami Satyananda, *atmabhava*, being able to see yourself in other beings and care for the other person like you care for yourself. That is the transcendental *swabhava* or the transcendental nature. Recognize that you can see yourself and divinity in everyone, and then respect, honour and support that. This desire is *shubhechha*, I wish well to everyone.

Lifestyle

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



When Swami Sivananda started the practice of yoga, he lived in the times of the First World War and the Second World War. After these two devastating wars, humanity was in absolute doldrums. At that time, the focus of Swami Sivananda was not spiritual life, it was not enlightenment or samadhi. It was the upliftment of the suffering humanity. To help that, he engaged himself in *seva*, service, and incorporated yoga in his teachings of *seva*. At that time, nobody knew what yoga was.

Swami Sivananda himself used to teach his sannyasin disciples a few asanas, pranayama, then mudras and bandhas. He had to extract the yogic material from the tradition and scriptures, and teach that to his disciples. He gave a clear instruction to his disciples, 'Do not speak on religion, do not speak on philosophy, but engage in *seva* and in propagation of yoga.' All his disciples across the world, like Swami Satchidananda, Swami Satyananda or Swami Vishnudevananda, never spoke on the belief systems of sannyasa, Advaita Vedanta, which is transcending all religions, unifying everything. They focused on the propagation of yoga.



When my guru started his teaching of yoga, he did not start on the second day that Swami Sivananda told his disciples to teach. For seven long years, he travelled, lived with different communities, learnt their difficulties, problems, aspirations, and extracted out of the many yogas, six yogas that were relevant for humanity. Hatha yoga, raja yoga, kriya yoga as personal practice, for body, mind and spirit – health, peace and development of consciousness. Then came the creative expression through karma yoga, balance of emotions through bhakti yoga, and connecting with wisdom in jnana yoga. Living these principles in daily life was to improve the quality of life.

At that time in the 1960s, nobody knew what yoga was. By the 1980s yoga had become a household word. Many yoga centres, many studios were opened by thousands of teachers, who had become yoga teachers in their own right. Swami Satyananda also made the effort to make yoga into a practical and scientific understanding of life. That is the biggest contribution of any person from ancient times until today, that Sri Swamiji made.

My turn

When my turn came, times had changed. People knew yoga; some people performed better postures than all of us combined

together. The whole focus was on the physical dimension of yoga. As a carrot, many teachers across the world spoke of self-realization through yoga, which we never did. Many people spoke of kundalini awakening, shaktipath for enlightenment. The idea of spiritual awakening became the carrot to introduce yoga to people.

I focused on lifestyle, because today's need is improving our lifestyle. Lifestyle is not only routine, but an awareness of how to find balance while doing everything that we do in life. I am the first one in history to give a practical approach to the yamas and niyamas and lifestyle components, which nobody had done before.

Swami Sivananda worked for yoga for twenty years; he had a journey of twenty years. Swami Satyananda worked for yoga for twenty years; he had a journey of twenty years. I have worked for yoga for fifty years. So in the history of yoga, I would say I have the longest run in the field of yoga, from childhood till death.

The lifestyle component is definitely a much needed component in today's environment, especially when our minds are getting so distracted by external situations and attractions. There is definitely no restraint in anybody's life today. The mind is going haywire and it is being fragmented.

Parents are the most irresponsible people on this planet. They are unable to give a proper ethical and moral education to their children, and that is leading to mental and emotional disturbance. Today we see young people committing suicide. Today we see the influence of social media on people. We all suffer from doom-scrolling. Our mind is not balanced. In human beings, the attention span, the concentration span, is less than that of a goldfish which is three seconds. When I was young, the attention span used to be of seven minutes.

That shows the dissipation of mind and lack of control. Parents give mobiles to their children to play with. What will be the mind-set of these people when they grow up? In the 1980s there were computer games like Doom, in which people just had to

shoot. That was the culture in which they grew up – shooting people in computer games. The same child who played the Doom game in the 1980s, is now making wars around the world without any respect for human life. All they know is how to shoot.

This shows the state of mind of every individual on this planet. Therefore, I call parents gutless people, for they have failed in bringing up a better quality of future generations. You would not give your car keys to a boy who is ten, twelve or fourteen years old. You gladly hand over a mobile to them, without even realizing what the impact on the mind of a child is. The mind is not formed until the age of twenty. People talk of puberty, the rush of hormones and chemicals in the body, but that is only one aspect. The mind, the prefrontal cortex, is still being shaped by situations, the environment, conditions and exposures. If at this time of life, the mind and the creative powers of the mind are destroyed, what will be the life after twenty-five and thirty?

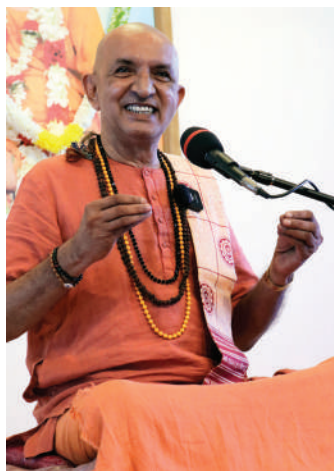
We are seeing the result of that across the world today. It is important today that we again look at our life and try to rectify the difficulties and problems that have been created by our society and our parents, and again retain some form of humanity in our hearts, in our minds, in our life, in our behaviour. It is easy to tell people, 'You are good,' or 'You are bad.' It is easy to praise people or tell them, 'I will give you two tight slaps.' Is there recognition of the condition which everyone is facing? Is there an awareness of how we can be of use to them, so they overcome their own deficiencies in life? Support, help, nurture, nourishment, kindness, sympathy, compassion are they only words or can they be translated into action?

Once upon a time they were all actions, they were not words. It was a natural expression of human nature. Today they are not part of human expression anymore. They have only become beautiful words which people say, but they cannot live, express and imbibe them. Therefore, yoga as a lifestyle is much more important and relevant today than ever before, and that is the focus of the teachings of Bihar School of Yoga.

Traditional Satyananda Yoga

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Traditionally yoga was never seen as practice, but as a natural and spontaneous expression of human behaviour, character and lifestyle. Yogis did not practise yoga for six hours, eight hours a day; they lived yoga twelve hours a day. You think that yogis practise so many hours of meditation, so many hours of asana and pranayama. Well, you are misinformed. For us yoga is not a 400- or 300-hour training; it is a lifetime training. In this lifetime



training, yoga becomes part of the natural expressions of life.

When you go the bathroom in the morning to brush your teeth, is that a practice? You should say, 'I am going to practise cleaning my teeth now.' Practising cleaning your teeth and practising yoga asanas are same. One thing becomes part of your natural expression in life like cleaning your teeth. In yoga, you call the practice a practice, and you never think beyond that. That is why nobody succeeds in yoga. Even the awareness that you cultivate in meditation, you do not carry with you during the day. The peace that you experience in meditation, you are not able to carry during the day, as it has never become part of your life's discipline and expression. This is the failure of people in relation to yoga. When yoga becomes part and parcel of your life expression, then you begin to live yoga, you begin to live the yogic awareness, you begin to live the yogic attention, and you avoid the pitfalls of stress, anxiety, frustration, depression and all the other ills that we suffer from.

It was for this reason, that Swami Sivananda in the 1940s gave a clear indication that yoga is not meant for self-realization; it is meant to enhance the creativity of life, it is meant to enhance the peace and joy of mind, and it is meant to enhance balance in life. This will not happen if you only think of yoga as a practice. It will happen when yoga becomes a natural expression of your life activities, just like getting up in the morning, going to the bathroom, brushing your teeth, taking a shower. In the same way, yoga has to be understood.

In the traditional teaching of Satyananda Yoga, this is the focus, with the combination of the six yogas, which our guru Sri Swami Satyananda put together – hatha yoga, raja yoga, kriya yoga, karma yoga, bhakti yoga and jnana yoga. Hatha yoga to balance and detoxify the body. For many people hatha yoga begins with the practice of postures; traditionally hatha yoga begins with the systems of physical purification, the shatkarmas. Until and unless the body is free from toxins, the benefits of asana and pranayama are never complete. After detoxification, movement into asana and pranayama takes place. The comfort and ease of the body has to be achieved.

Then you move into raja yoga to experience inner silence and peace, contentment and joy, and the expansion of consciousness. When this starts, you move into kriya yoga to stabilize yourself in that expanded awareness. These three branches become part of your effort and sadhana.

Then expression happens through karma yoga, engagement or active, creative participation in life. Bhakti yoga balances emotions and jnana yoga is the connection with the right understanding and wisdom, and living according to that.

This is the concept of Yoga Chakra, and the traditional teaching of yoga, as developed by Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda. This is only a glimpse of how yoga can be experienced in our life, how it can be made into a useful system, discipline, and part and parcel of human expression.

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

That which is in me is in all

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



That which is in me is in all. That which I am is everybody else. This is the knowledge to be acquired and experienced in life. The essence of all creation is the same. It should be my abiding experience that the entire creation is inseparably linked

with me. For I must know and realize that much beyond the mind, the body and the senses, there is an unseen link which holds in itself the different beads of seeable and unseeable creation. We talk of blood relations, 'community relations', 'social relations' and relations of different kinds. Let us add to all those different kinds of relations, a relation of a distinct and singular type which is abiding and universal, the relation of the Inner Self, which in other words implies that all are in essence tied by the unity of One Self.

A realization of this knowledge does sustain our thoughts and gives shape to our behaviour in our dealings with our fellow beings in all walks of life, with males or females, good or bad, even animals. Let us at least try to feel for a while when we are amidst them that THAT which is in me is in them too and that in essence we are one and the same. There is an unbroken unity in seemingly divided variety.

What is the method to realize this knowledge and to practise it in life? Let us experiment it in this way. Take the case of your father or brother, sister, husband, wife or friend who appears to you to be standing aloof and away from you in thought, principle and faith and set this knowledge which you have taken pains to acquire in rotation that, THAT which is in you is in him too – that the essence of both of you is ever and for all times the same. Let this knowledge rotate within you first until it has reached to higher frequencies or until you actually feel within you that THAT which is in you is in him too, in him who for the time being appears to be away from you in mind and spirit, though otherwise related yet manifestly unrelated to the sphere of your being.

When this knowledge gains higher frequency and intensity by practice of right meditation on the unity of essence, an unseen link is soon established; you will feel as if it were running through both of you. As a result, the opposite party somehow gets awakened to your thought, principle, faith, overcoming these separate factors. The points of difference will go, the common points will emerge and the person will

begin to commune with you in an enlightened manner. This phenomenon is known as spiritual union as opposed to physical or mental difference.

Let us take the case of any animal which appears to be standing away and aloof from the centre of your abilities, knowledge and reach because of its immature and undeveloped physico-psychic constitution. Here too set this knowledge in rotation that THAT which is in you is there too, that the inner essence of both of you is ever the same. Let this knowledge rotate within you in the form of right meditation until you actually see, feel and experience the existence of the inner link running in and through both of you. When this link would have been felt or seen by means of the right meditation on the unity of essence, an unseen communion would be effected within both the selves, as a result of which the other party will somehow get awakened to your thoughts, principles, behaviour, setting aside the opposing factors and begin to hold communion with you. That party will become your friend and admirer of your faith, principle and behaviour. This is known as 'spiritual Union'.

THAT which is in me is in all that is the real knowledge which I propose to impress upon your mind by the realization of which you would not only realize the undying link of the soul – the substratum of all – but you would also work them to move in accordance with your faith, principle and behaviour.

However, keep this resolve before you always that you are not going to practise this knowledge for selfish ends or unholy intentions in order to obsess their personalities. Forever hold this fact before your mind's eye that you are making this experiment in order to realize the essential and underlying Soul or Ishwar, who is as it were interwoven in everything in this universe. You should forever remain awake to this pure and elevating principle that you are conducting this experiment on others so that you may realize that THAT which is in you, is in all too and that beyond the body, its motions, thoughts, emotions, sensations and unconsciousness which are diverse

in each being there exists one common unseen principle, running through and permeating everything in this vast universe.

Let woman practise upon a woman and a man upon a man. Let one experiment be performed on innocent animals also. But let this be done through the medium of meditation alone without any personal contact through the body or the mind. Let not a male try this experiment on a female first to realize this knowledge and vice versa.

Pure meditation devoid of any impure motive but activated by a chaste desire will certainly lead to success. If this experiment is not conducted with a chaste and pure mind and in a spirit of ennobled ideal, there is a danger of the subject getting obsessed and reacting in a harmful fashion, quite contrary to your expectations. Therefore, try not to convert an enemy into a friend but in all experiments concentrate upon the discovery of the missing link of consciousness. One who has discovered this, is a yogi because he has joined and cemented these different factors by the realization of Oneness.

Men who harbour hatred or are actuated by malice or similar emotions should keep away from this practice. They should first eradicate their wrong emotions by love, charity, understanding, sympathy, compassion and friendliness. Men of passion must also keep away until they have overcome their passion by the practice of celibacy. Men of greed must also avoid this until they have overcome their greed by contentment, tyaga and sacrifice.

But if they continue to indulge in their desires in order to satisfy their petty selfishness, they should know that in the end they will derive more harm than good. Their obsessed personality exerts to overcome suppression by self assertion with the help of individual ego-centricity and ultimately explodes all the plans which they hatched with passion, hatred or greed.

THAT which is in me is in all, this knowledge should take us nearer to the field of unity, make us one with all, develop divine virtues within ourselves and finally help us to realize our goal of God-realization or experience of Cosmic Consciousness.

Thoughts

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Thought moves. It actually leaves the brain and hovers about. It enters the brains of others. A sympathetic thought in you raises a sympathetic thought in others with whom you come in contact. A thought of anger produces a similar vibration in those who surround an angry man. It leaves the brain of one man and enters the brains of



others who live at a long distance and excites them. A cheerful thought produces cheerful thought in others. A thought of joy creates sympathetically a thought of joy in others. You are filled with joy and intense delight when you see a batch of hilarious children playing mirthfully and dancing in joy.

In broadcasting, a singer sings beautiful songs in Calcutta. You can hear them nicely through the radio in your own house in Delhi. All messages are received through the wireless. Even so, your mind is like a wireless machine. A worldly man, whose mind is filled with jealousy, revenge and hatred, sends out discordant thoughts, which enter the minds of thousands and stir in them similar thoughts of hatred and discord. Thought is very contagious. Keep a good and honest man in the company of a thief. He will begin to steal. Keep a sober man in the company of a drunkard. He will begin to drink.

A saint with peace, poise, harmony and spiritual waves sends out into the world thoughts of harmony and peace. They travel with tremendous lightning speed in all directions and enter the minds of thousands and produce in them also similar thoughts of harmony and peace,

God in Yoga

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



In yoga there is no God. There is only the concept of a special nature which is free from the *kleshas*, afflictions, pain and suffering. This has been defined in the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali. Yoga does not speak of Shiva, Narayana, Devi. Yoga does not speak of God in the sense of religious concepts that we have developed.

Yoga started with Shiva who propagated the subject of yoga. In the scriptures of yoga, the entire concept of God is defined as Purusha. Purusha is the individual consciousness in every life-form. The consciousness in me is known as Purusha, the consciousness in you is known as Purusha, the consciousness in an elephant, dog, donkey, ant, mosquito, is also known as Purusha. There are hundreds, thousands



and billions of Purushas, each representing the presence of consciousness. This consciousness in the material dimension is subject to pain and pleasure, attraction and repulsion, *raga* and *dvesha*. It is subject to *avidya*, ignorance; *asmita*, ego responses; *abhinivesha*, insecure living. The *Yoga Sutras* say that the term *Ishwara* is the nature which is free from ignorance, ego manifestation, attraction, repulsion and insecurity. That is the concept of *Ishwara* in yoga.

Whether we like this one or that one, that is an individual choice, due to the culture, religious affiliation, understanding, background and so on. Yoga as a subject has been known to be agnostic. The commentators place yoga as an atheistic philosophy as well. They do it from the perspective of religion.

They do not do it from the perspective of spiritual realization. In spiritual realization, whether Christ or Krishna, they are one. From the religious perspective, Christ and Krishna are identified as sources of two different ideologies. From the religious perspective, distinctions will always be there, and God-awareness will always be there. From the yogic perspective, believers and non-believers both have their say. Believers follow their path and non-believers follow their path, and there is no contradiction in it. The appeal of yoga becomes universal due to this nature – no matter where I am in life, what caste or creed I belong to, I can still discover that purity and transcendence within me.

Ishwara is something which is an indication of freedom from the bondage of the senses and mind, from the afflictions of ego and our involvement in the world. The people who can rise beyond are known as *avatars*, meaning God incarnate, Ishwara incarnate – that state which has now become effulgent in this individual's life. Buddha was a normal person living in a palace, eating good food, wearing good clothes, having a nice wife, servants, chariots. He used to live a good life; he was an ordinary person. When he transcended the limited self and became enlightened, he realized the nature of Ishwara within him – 'I am that pure nature, free from influences of pain and pleasure, joy and suffering, hot and cold.' He had transcended the lower vrittis of the mind, and because of that people accept him as an incarnation, an avatar, somebody who exemplifies that pure nature.

The same with Krishna, Rama, with any other personality who is recognized as a quality of life, rather than a title of life. There are many people who like to call themselves Bhagavan; they are giving themselves the title, they do not have the quality. The people who have the quality, they do not give themselves titles; they live that life of freedom and joy, bliss and peace.

– 22 March 2026, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Eradicating Asthma

Sumathi Vasudevan

I completed 63 years of journey on this earth. During this journey, I am fortunate to be associated with yoga in many ways and on many occasions. Even when I was a child, my father used to perform sandya vandanam, closing his nose with his fingers. He used to teach some of his friends pranayama and I used to watch and wonder whether that could be effective. When I grew old I used to get cold and fever very often and a monthly visit to a family doctor became a routine. He used to give a colourful but bitter mixture which I took reluctantly.

After I got married the problem continued and I got frequent attacks of wheezing while I was pregnant. It was so severe, I could neither eat nor sleep. During such times breathing is a struggle and the problem is felt more when the stomach is full. Lying down is almost impossible. The doctors advised me to avoid medicines until the child was born and to finish dinner by 7 pm. I spent many sleepless nights. As years rolled by the problem became more and more severe with no relief in sight. I lived in a joint family and worked in a public sector bank. I had to get up early, finish my household chores and leave for my job which needed full concentration and attention.

Every year, the period from September to March was a testing time for me. I could do only the routine work and that too only with sheer willpower. I could not go for shopping or attend functions. Due to lack of good sleep and sufficient food, my energy level was extremely low. I still remember the sleepless nights I spent leaning over a pile of pillows. Lying down on my back was a luxury for which I used to wait until February or March when the weather changed and my health improved. To tell you the truth as soon as I received a New Year Calendar, I hurriedly turned the pages to check the date

of Sivaratri, as my mother said that after Sivaratri the weather turns hot.

This was my plight until 1993 when I met Swami Bhakti Chaitanya. This was a turning point in my life. I have always been longing for a systematic and natural solution for my problems. So with great hopes and faith I practised a few asanas regularly, despite my tight schedule between office and home.

During summer months I used to practise regularly and during winter months I could do very little. During the initial years the magnitude of the problem became severe, but I was able to handle it with more confidence and faith.

The asanas initially were the pawanamuktasana series, bhujangasana, tadasana, and the vajrasana series. During my practice more and more phlegm came out of my system. I vomited many times and that gave me a lot of relief.

After a few years, I was taught a few pranayamas, especially nadi shodhana and bhramari. I did the pranayamas regularly during summer and that protected me during winter. Slowly I could feel that my health was improving. Then I was taught a few cleansing techniques which really had a profound impact on my health. Jala neti was my life saver. I was advised to practise it twice daily for nearly one year.

Next, I was taught vamanasana dhauti (gajakarni) and laghu shankhaprakshalana. Gajakarni was done by me very frequently, in fact, daily during the start of the winter months. Laghu shankhaprakshalana helped me a lot to feel lighter. Surya namaskara and yoga nidra were also taught to me. I was waging a war against asthma with asanas, pranayamas and cleansing techniques. I did it all with abundant faith and unshakable confidence.

The book *Yogic Management of Asthma and Diabetes* also helped me a lot. In this book, the swami has written how he himself managed asthma in his childhood. Again and again I used to refer to it to strengthen my faith and confidence.

At last, the period of harvesting came. My problems became bearable and I reaped the fruits. I was able to manage the much

dreaded winter without medicine. I could eat some fruits which were taboo for me previously. I slowly started enjoying the winter.

Still the problem was slightly bothering me. One day when I met Swami Bhakti Chaitanya in his house he offered me something to eat. I said, 'No, I cannot take it. I am asthmatic.' He asked me, 'Are you still asthmatic?' and gazed at me. I got the clue. I started telling myself, 'I am not asthmatic.' Like a mantra, I was repeatedly assuring myself, 'I am not asthmatic.' I visualized asthma like a villain and started telling it, 'If you are not leaving me, I will leave you.'

I put the idea in my subconscious mind day and night. The seed started sprouting and I can proudly say that the problem is eradicated – rather I eradicated it from my system with blessings of God, Guru and my own sadhana.



Meditation and Mantra

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

There are times when we suffer mentally and emotionally, and we ask for a solution as to how to come out of such a situation. It is like putting your hand in the fire, burning it and then asking what to do to stop the burning. The answer is don't put your hand in the fire. This realization will only come if you are aware and if you apply your wisdom in life. You have to apply this in all situations of life – awareness and wisdom. Meditation provides you with the awareness and wisdom to face the challenges of life in a better manner.

Meditation begins with the cultivation of awareness and one of the aspects or definitions of meditation is that you bring your reactions, your responses, your thoughts in front of the mind. Mental attention towards your actions, responses, thoughts, desires and ambitions, and managing them is meditation.

Samiksha dhyanam

How do you develop this mental awareness? The first practice of meditation is to observe what your activities have been during the entire day. How do you do that? When you go to lie down on your bed at night before sleep, after the lights have been turned off, and you are comfortably settled in your bed, begin to visualize the entire activity of the day in your mind: 'What time did I wake up, after waking up what did I do, after that with whom did I interact and speak, what was my mood like, was I irritated, was I happy, was I worried, was I concerned?'

At night when you are at rest, you look at your whole daily routine from moment to moment. While you are observing this you will also notice that there were times when you were in conflict, either with yourself or with other people. Recognize if you were worried, anxious about your family, your work,



pressures and tensions. If you were irritated and had some debate or angry discussion – observe all, then reflect and think, ‘If I encounter the same situation tomorrow, how can I manage it in a better, more efficient and effective manner?’

Can I avoid getting irritated? Can I avoid fighting with somebody? Can I deal with that situation in a more diplomatic, balanced and harmonious manner?’ In this way, you go through the events of the day from morning until you have gone to bed.

If you do this regularly for one week, ten days, fifteen days, you will begin to notice a change in your awareness and responses to different situations and people. You will find that you are able to retain your own peace without expressing your frustration or anger. You will be more at peace and able to deal with situations in a much better way than you dealt when you were unaware of those responses and interactions.

This practice is known as *samiksha dhyanam*. *Samiksha* means observation of all the things that we have done, analysis of all the activities that we have performed during the day. The effort is made to improve our interactions, our activities by developing awareness in all the things that we do. This is the beginning of the *dhyana* practice in yoga, cultivation of awareness.

Japam

Along with this, we also practise another form of meditation, known as the mantra meditation, where there is no fighting or struggling with the mind. We use the mantra to bring peace and calmness into our mind. Mantra is a powerful tool, as envisioned by our forefathers, the rishis. They discovered the mantras in the deepest states of meditation. Today, due to ignorance we associate mantras with deities and religions. This happened since the time of the Puranas. Our rishis, in their meditation, realized that the whole body and mind, including the spirit, were responding to vibrations of sound, *nada*. Mantras represent the *nada* that we are able to experience in the deep states of meditation. This mantra is utilized as the first step of meditation experience.

In yoga vidya, the first *niyama* is *japam*. *Japam* is the use of the mantra in meditation, when you sit with your eyes closed,









still your body, focus your awareness on the breath. The breath becomes the ladder through which you can go into your mind and repeat each mantra with every inhalation and exhalation. The awareness of mantra with the breath helps to calm the mind, remove the tensions and pressures of the mind. It helps you internalize and disconnect from the external sense objects for the period that you are using the mantra.

Otherwise, for 24 hours, 7 days a week, for 365 days of the year, our mind and our brain are connected with the senses and sense objects. Even when we sleep the connection with the senses and sense objects exists. As long as this connection is there, we are spending a lot of energy, *prana shakti*. With the loss of prana shakti, we experience tiredness, mental fatigue, cerebral fatigue. Many times, even when we wake up in the morning, we feel that we are very tired, and we have not been able to relax. The subconscious and unconscious tensions continue, the worries continue, and in this way, with the loss of energy, there is also the loss of the vital forces of life.

Japam becomes the first practice of yoga, in which we learn how to disconnect for five or ten minutes from those causes which become the stressors, which give us the worry and anxiety. When we disconnect from these stressors or the causes of our frustration and anxiety, our body and mind again recharge with the vital energy. They experience peace, freshness, vitality and clarity. Japam, the first niyama of yoga, leads to meditation, and also to disconnection of the Self from the outer world of sense objects. Meditation begins from here onwards.

According to the yoga shastras and all spiritual traditions, mantra is the first and the foremost sadhana for all aspirants. It is something which you start from day one and continue until the moment of your death. The remembrance and connection with mantra is supposed to be the most important connection. Mantra remains with you all the time. Therefore, I call mantra 'man's best friend', because it stays with you to provide you with hope, solace, strength, inspiration, support, optimism and

with God's grace. Mantra is a person's best friend, who will always be there to help you overcome every kind of suffering, distractions, disturbances and even illnesses in life. That is the whole power and beauty of mantra shakti.

Diksha

Mantra is also given in the form of diksha. Many people say that if you take diksha from somebody, you become a disciple. Yogis have given a beautiful meaning to the word *diksha*. It means acquiring a new vision. A blind man wants to see the sun, but seeing the sun is not the priority; it is only a desire. The need is not to see the sun; the need is to acquire eyesight. If you have the eyesight, the vision, you don't only see the sun, you can see the whole world, the entire universe, the planets, stars, moon, society, family, friends, mountains and rivers. Everything becomes visible when you have eyesight. Diksha represents acquiring a new vision, a new eyesight so that we are able to see ourselves differently, not unconsciously, but consciously. The meaning of the word diksha is to develop another vision.

Mantra helps you develop the vision of awareness and wisdom. If you go deeper in the sadhana of the mantra, the anushtana of the mantra, the perfection of the mantra, then it also takes you into the deepest states of meditation, where you can discover your God within your own heart. You can realize that, and become *mukta*, free, from the bondages of karmas and desires. Mantra sadhana is supposed to be the first practice for every aspirant, and the last practice for every siddha.

Sadhana

There are two ways to connect with the mantra - the spontaneous way and the sadhana way. The spontaneous way is repeating the mantra while you are walking, shopping, working in the office, doing any other activity. You can mentally repeat the mantra continuously for one minute, two

minutes, five minutes, ten minutes, fifteen minutes, as long as you want, as a spontaneous engagement with the mantra. The only restriction is that do not concentrate or say your mantra while you are driving. Except for driving you can mentally say the mantra wherever you are. Even when you are travelling in a bus or you are in the back seat as a passenger in the car, for one minute, for ten minutes. You will experience the benefit of using this mantra in a spontaneous manner. You can be sure that you will definitely experience the power of the mantra when you do it, in your daily activities and routines. Even when you are cooking, or making coffee, just mentally repeat the mantra.

The second way is sadhana. Select a time, select a place, sit down. My suggestion is that you do this sadhana at night when you have completed everything, every duty, when you have fulfilled all your obligations for the family and profession, and are ready to retire. At that moment, sit down quietly for ten minutes, close your eyes, be in a comfortable pose, visualize the symbol of a candle flame at the eyebrow centre. That candle flame represents *atmajyoti*, the light of spirit. By focusing on this *atmajyoti*, the symbol of a candle flame at the eyebrow centre, practise two malas of the mantra with your mala. Forget everything of the world for those ten minutes. Focusing intently on the repetition of the mantra, and do not allow your mind to dissipate from the mantra awareness. For ten minutes, you should make this effort, and then you put your mala down and go to sleep.

This is also like clearing the mental house of all the rubbish that it has accumulated during the day, so that you are able to have a peaceful mind and peaceful sleep. Then the mantra will work wonders in your life. Experiment with it, and I am sure that you will derive the maximum benefit from the use of the mantra in a spontaneous manner, and also as sadhana.

– 23 April 2025, Duraiswamy Sports Academy (DUSA),
Madurai, India

Yoga Nidra Pratyakshat

Sannyasi Srimantra

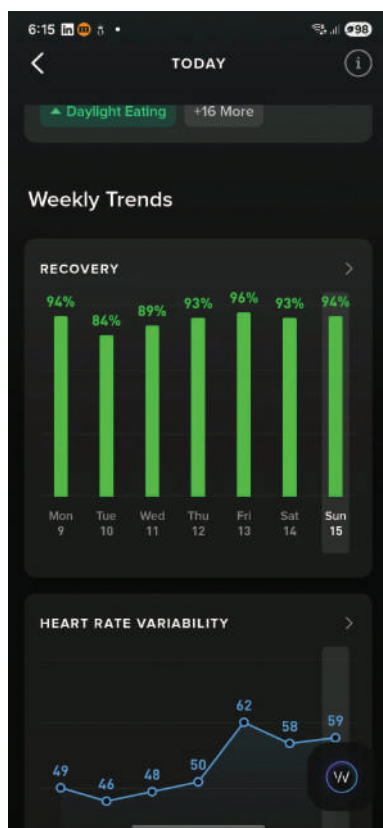
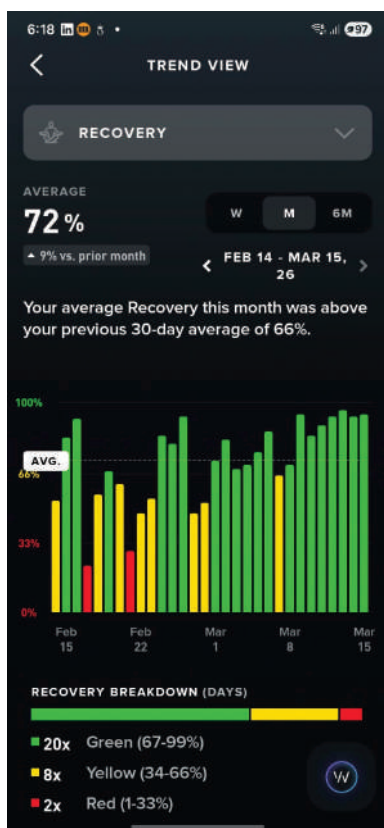
Hari Om Swamiji



I have always heard you say that in the tradition of the Bihar School of Yoga, *pratyakshat* or direct experience is highly valued. You have often mentioned that yoga is a science that should be tested in the laboratory of one's own body.

I have taken this teaching to heart. For years, I sought solutions for physiological recovery and nervous system balance through various modern health retreats and specialized protocols, yet the results were always fleeting.

Recently, I began practising the *Intermediate Yoga Nidra* via the Bihar Yoga App. Being conscious of my health, I have monitored my vitals using a wearable tracker for more than 500 days! The results have been a revelation:



- Heart Rate Variability (HRV): I have observed a consistent and significant upward trend, reflecting a level of autonomic balance I could not achieve elsewhere.
- Recovery Scores: My physiological recovery has stabilized in the 'Green' zone (90%+).

I am attaching these screenshots not as a matter of clinical data, but as a Pushpanjali of the fruit of my sadhana. It is humble proof that the ancient wisdom of the Bihar Yoga lineage is the ultimate solution for the challenges of the modern era. I always remain grateful to Sri Swamiji for providing these tools to the world. I continue my practice with renewed faith and gratitude.

Gifts to Humanity

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



My guru, Sri Swami Satyananda, has given two unique things to the world. One is yoga, and the other is yajna. These are the two gifts of my guru to humanity. Yoga has existed in the past. Yajnas have also existed in the past, but he gave them a new focus, a new vision, and through them he gave us a new inspiration. People today know the word yoga, but they do not

understand the scope of yoga. Philosophically, people say that yoga is the union of the soul with the supreme consciousness; the individual consciousness with the supreme consciousness. That is a philosophical statement. How does one realize the individual consciousness? How does one realize the supreme consciousness? How does one realize the connection between the individual and the supreme consciousness? Only through belief, only through faith? No. That philosophical statement does not mean anything to any individual, in a practical sense.

This understanding of yoga is incomplete: union of the individual self with the higher self. It is beyond my intelligence; it is beyond any logic. Even I have not been able to figure out why they say this, because I know that it is not true. I am not able to realize my individuality; I am not able to realize my transcendental nature. When I do not know my individuality or transcendence, how can I say that it is the union of both? Maybe the seers in ancient times had the vision to see that individuality and universality. Today, none of us have that ability, capacity or the vision to know the individuality or the universality.

Then, people say that yoga is good for health, and they practise the yogasanas like they would practise any type of exercise in a gym. Just by performing certain physical asanas, they say, 'I am practising yoga and I have become spiritual.' Yoga is not exercise; yoga is not asana. Asanas are the kindergarten training of yoga, not even primary school. People think that, 'By practising these physical postures, I am practising and perfecting yoga, and becoming spiritual and enlightened.' That is totally incorrect.

Yoga

So what is yoga? Yoga is a system of living life optimally and finding your happiness, your freedom, and realizing your expanded awareness and consciousness, while living a normal life. There are people who meditate, and who have meditated for many decades. What has been the result of their meditation?

Nothing but an escape into fantasy. 'I have seen the light. I have seen angels. I have seen my luminosity.' By saying that, have they changed anything, or has their mind changed into a positive mind, a better mind? Or is it still subject to likes and dislike, hatred, envy, jealousy, greed, aggression, fear and insecurity? If you have not been able to change the quality of your mind, then what is the use of meditation?

People say *yogas chitta vritti nirodhah*, to control the modifications of mind is yoga. What modification have you been able to change in your own life by practising yoga for so many decades? Not a single modification would be there. That is the fallacy, the wrong step, wrong understanding about yoga. Elimination of all the disturbing factors from the five bodies in this physical body – *annamaya kosha*, *pranamaya kosha*, *manomaya kosha*, *vijnanamaya kosha*, *anandamaya kosha*. These are the five bodies that we live, that we experience every day.

There are many destabilizing, distressing factors, which eliminate the harmony of these bodies. Maybe through asana you can find comfort in your physical body, but the disturbing agents have not been eliminated. Maybe through breathing practices, you can find comfort in your pranic body, but the factors which disturb the pranic body have not been eliminated. Maybe through meditation you can escape to a fantasy world and experience a little bit of peace, but the disturbing agents of the mind have not been removed.

Consciousness is unexplored; one can talk about it, but one does not experience it. The spirit body in our physical structure can be talked about but never experienced, due to the limitations of the other bodies. If we say that the purpose of yoga is to provide health, then health is not to be taken as elimination of disease of the physical body, but elimination of all the unbalancing factors of the human personality. All those factors which create an imbalance in our personality have to be eradicated and removed. Only then, total health can be experienced. That is yoga. This has been the approach of yoga as taught by our tradition.

The intent is that it is a lifestyle; we have to understand this as a lifestyle, not something that we do for one hour, or half an hour every day. Yoga is an expression of lifestyle at the physical, mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual levels. That is the teaching of the Bihar School of Yoga. This understanding is a gift to humanity by our guru, Swami Satyananda.

Our grandfather guru, Swami Sivananda, made many statements; I chose two statements – Become Good and Do Good. Yoga becomes the system to become good. To become good does not mean that you try to be nice and good with everyone or everything. That is something that will happen. To become good means that you take responsibility of bettering yourself and connecting yourself not with the disturbing factors, but with those uplifting factors, which will give you eternal happiness, joy, peace and wellbeing – the total health.

Yajna

The second aspect that Sri Swami Satyananda gave us was yajna. *Yajna* means a fire ceremony, according to dictionaries. What the dictionaries describe is an act which people see outside yet without understanding. The word *yajna* itself means something that is produced, something that is distributed, and something that is consumed. The farmer toils in the field and produces grains like rice or wheat. The wheat that is produced is sold in the market, for people to take home. It is production and distribution. What you take home, is what you consume. There is a whole sequence of producing, distributing and consuming.

These three ideas represent yajna. What do you produce, what do you distribute, and what do you consume? Your intention, your positivity, your creativity – the best within you is produced, the best within you is distributed, and the best within you is consumed. That is the actual meaning of the word yajna; not fire ceremony. The people who know yajna, will never subscribe to the philosophy that this is a fire ceremony. Those who believe in religions and religious systems, will say that it is a fire ceremony. I have made it clear that that external

understanding of a process does not indicate the real intention of the process. The real intention of the process is production, distribution and consumption.

You also produce in your mind many things and it is distributed and consumed by people. The gossip, the thoughts about other people that you have – either as a good or bad, or the expressions of anger, jealousy, hatred and greed that are generated within your mind, is your production. You are producing them; you are the farmer of your intentions. When you speak with somebody, it is easy to criticize and difficult to appreciate their good qualities. It is easy to criticize the bad and the negative, but difficult to accept the good and the positive. What you are thinking, is what you are distributing. What you are distributing is being consumed, and due to that consumption, there is suffering and pain. They also become catalysts in producing the negative in another person's mind.

Yajna, the three aspects of production, distribution and consumption, is always happening inside you. It is happening on a daily basis. Can you perform a proper yajna within yourself, where positivity is produced, where positivity is distributed, and where positivity is consumed? If that can happen in your life, you will be performing the real yajna. In the *Srimad Bhagavad Gita*, Sri Krishna has said the same. People read the *Bhagavad Gita*, but they do not realize what has been said. They believe the fire ceremony to be the real yajna, and everything else is philosophy. There is no such thing as philosophy, except the expression of a qualitative wisdom. If you do not understand that, it becomes a philosophy. If you understand it, it becomes a lifestyle. So, don't think ill thoughts, leave aside the anger, aggression, frustration, anxiety and depression. Just connect with that which is positive and beautiful within you, and share that with everyone.

This completes the second component of Swami Sivananda's statement – do good. First become good through yoga, and then do good through yajna. The slogan of Vishwa Yogpeeth, Bihar School of Yoga is – become good. The slogan of Sannyasa Peeth

is do good. This also creates a positive connection with yourself and with others, for what you offer is what you receive. My guru, Swami Satyananda, says that if you give hate, you will receive hate; if you give anger, you will receive back anger; if you give jealousy, you will receive back jealousy; if you give peace, you will get back peace. You get what you give. So, make sure that you give the best of you, to receive the best from the universe.

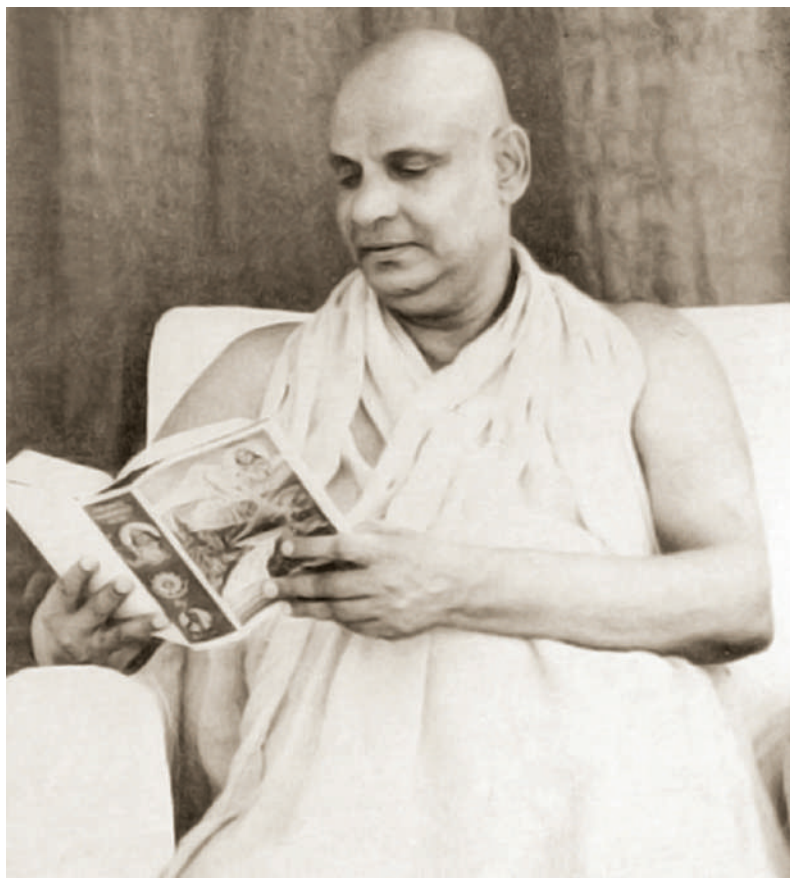
This is the yajna, and the spiritual lifestyle. People who come to the ashram engage themselves not only in yoga practices. Yoga practices become an aid only to experience the positive and qualitative life that one can live and lead. When people come to the ashram, for ashram life experience, they participate in the spirit of the ashram, and engage themselves in different activities which change according to the time. When there are no external programs, then internal programs are there – courses and classes are there, for you to delve deeper in your own nature and personality. When external programs happen, then we engage ourselves in service, *seva*. So, that the best of the intentions can be offered to people, to inspire, uplift and encourage them to connect with positivity in life.

It is challenging definitely, because everyone is not at the same level. Just as in your hand, all fingers have different sizes. In the ashram too, all people are at different levels of inspiration and evolution. Every person wearing guru robe is not enlightened. We all have our traits, our nature, our mentality, and we see the world through what we are in our own mind. What we are in our own mind, is nothing spiritual, but it is self-oriented awareness and desire.

When Lord Buddha was asked, 'How can one define growth in spiritual life?' he only gave one answer, 'When your desires subside and you are in tune with the universal desire and will, then that is an indication of your growth in spiritual life. As long as you desire to experience this and that, including samadhi, it does not indicate spiritual life.' This was the statement of Buddha.

About Repetitions

Swami Sivananda Saraswati (from Autobiography of Swami Sivananda)



I believe in the harmonious development of heart, intellect, mind and body. One-sided development is not of much benefit. I do not ignore any of the teachings of the sages and saints of various religions and cults. For a quick spiritual progress of students of different tastes and temperaments, I give the essence from all sources. I call this 'Synthesised Yoga'

or 'Integral Yoga'. The lessons that I give are the outcome of my own researches and also the experiences of thousands of devotees.

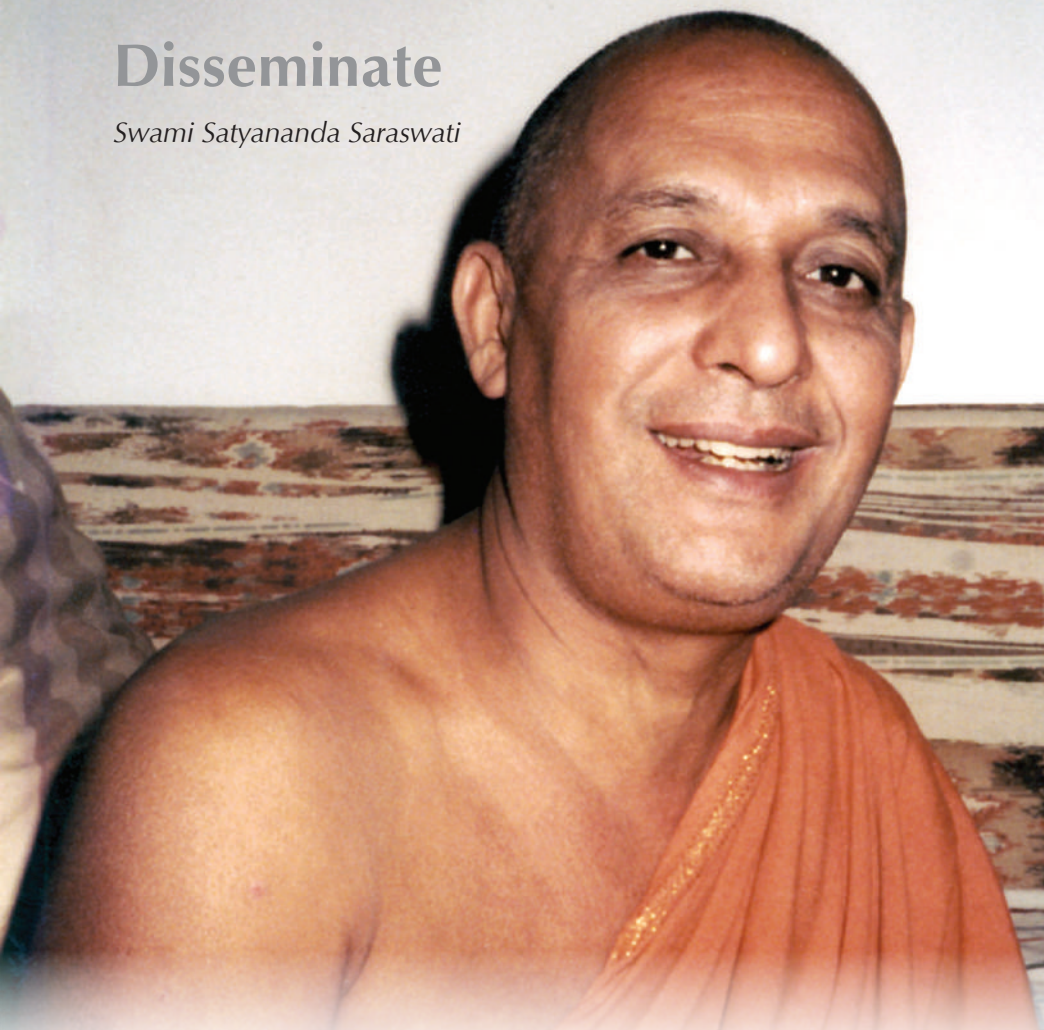
In all my books I emphasize the essential points of the practical side for an all-round development. This is regarded by some as 'repetition'. They are very helpful to sincere students. Aspirants are able to grasp the value and importance of such useful repetitions. These lessons are intended to create a deep and indelible impression on the minds of the aspirants. While describing a particular subject, with a view to making the book useful to all the readers, I repeat the vital points that are to be observed in daily life. These prove to be very helpful. They hammer the mind that is tossed by materialistic influences. That also helps to develop willpower. There is a message for the solace, peace, freedom and perfection of every individual.

Devotees have a big library with a complete set of my books and yet they frequently write to me for books that are in the press. They very often write to me, "The one beauty I find in your books is that the lessons create a taste for spiritual progress and tempt me to follow some of the lessons, though I am conscious that I do not have a natural taste or inclination for the path. The lessons are meant for me and I find them highly useful for my material progress as well. I feel a new power and hope in me after reading a few pages of your book *Mind, Its Mysteries and Control*."

In 1935, the publishers sent me a letter from a devotee who complained that my books contain a lot of repetitions. I wrote to them, "Repetition should be carefully avoided. You will have to sit 3 or 4 nights with full thermos flasks of tea and work hard for removing the repetitions. For fear of repetition, do not omit the important portions. Repetitions are necessary when the lessons aim at hammering the worldly mind. This world is a sphere of repetition. We cannot please the entire world. The *Bhagavad Gita*, the Upanishads and other scriptures are full of repetitions. This cannot be avoided. Without hammering, nature refuses to change."

Disseminate

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



It is useless to talk of the cessation of war while you are all full of petty jealousy and private hatred. Remove your discordant, inharmonious vibrations first. There will be no more war between nations. Individuals only go to constitute a nation. Lead an ideal life of peace. Ruthlessly kill suspicion, prejudice of all sorts, envy, selfishness, greed for power and possessions. Lead a simple life. Practise daily meditation and establish peace in your own heart. Then radiate it to your neighbours and all who come in contact with you. Disseminate it far and wide.

Becoming the Drashta

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

It is stated in the *Ishavasya Upanishad* (Mantra 1):

*Om ishaavaasyamidam sarvam yatkincha jagatyaam jagat;
Tena tyaktena bhunjeethaa maa gridhah kasyasvid dhanam.*

All that exists in this ever-changing universe is the abode of the Lord (in which the Lord resides). Enjoy whatever the Lord gives you. Do not covet, for whose indeed is wealth?

This whole world is the residence of God, and we are like tenants here. It is not your house; just as you rent a space in a home, you have rented your space here for seventy years, eighty years or ninety years, whatever is the duration of your life. You are a tenant here; you are not the owner of anything. After your contract is over, you have to leave. Then somebody else will come to occupy your space.

Then the mantra says, 'Enjoy everything that is given to you.' Everything has two sides – your body has a front and a back. The coin has two sides – front and back, heads and tails. Nature has two sides – sun and moon, day and night, pain and pleasure, contentment and discontentment. This polarity, this duality is the nature of the world. In this world we have a body, through which we experience duality, or in scriptural language, *dvaita*. It is duality that we all have to live with, confront, face and accept. In this duality there is another aspect, the hidden aspect, and that is unity. Spiritual life aims to give you the understanding and experience of unity.

What has been taught to the public by the sages and seers is very appropriate for the time. When Mahatma Buddha and Bhagavan Mahavira, were born they had a belief, a lifestyle, a philosophy. What did they teach to the public? Theravada

was only for the sincere aspirants. Hinayana, Vajrayana, Mahayana, the different aspects of Buddhism, were not taught publicly. The public statement of Buddha was ahimsa. He did not tell anybody to practise Theravada, Hinayana, Vajrayana, Mahayana or Vipassana. That was limited to those people who were sincere about discovering something different in their life, as an experience of their existence in this dimension. To improve the general mind-set, the teaching was different. For people to go deeper after having changed their mind-set, the sadhana was different.

The same principle applies in yoga. For general purposes, it is asana and pranayama – do as much as you want, go to the Olympics to perform your asana and win a gold medal, but that is not yoga. Yoga is for those who are sincere and you are not sincere. If you were sincere, you would develop a different understanding of yoga. How many people are drashtas of their daily routine? Maybe one or two will raise their hands, only to show that they are better than other people, but in reality they are not drashtas. It is difficult, but the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali state (1:3):

Tada drashtu svarupe avasthanam.

Then the seer is established in his own essential nature.

So, the one who is able to witness, the one who is able to observe, becomes established in their own true nature. Those who have raised their hands are not established in their own true nature. Maybe for a moment they begin to observe and realize, ‘Oh, this is happening, this is happening and this is happening,’ and they think that this is drashta.

Another example, during meditation you begin to observe, because you know, ‘Now, I have to become a drashta.’ When you are not meditating, you are not in that space anymore, and yoga has no relevance. In meditation, you become the drashta of yourself, but why are you not able to maintain that awareness in normal times? If you can maintain the awareness in normal times, you become a yogi. When you think that only



during meditation you have to become a drashta, then there is no relevance of yoga in your life.

In meditation you are already in a peaceful state; you have isolated yourself from the stresses and anxieties of the world. You have told everybody to be quiet and silent, because you are meditating. So, you create an ambience, you create an environment to meditate, or to do any other sadhana. You are not able to sustain the awareness of the sadhana in normal times. When you can sustain that, then the awareness is maintained all the way through in every moment.

When I look at the lives of our masters, Swami Sivananda, Swami Satyananda, their awareness is uncanny; they are aware all the time. We may not be aware all the time, but they are aware of the minute details as well. I will give you one example. When pots are placed, filled with sabjis, dals, rice and other edible items, people stick spoons into them for serving. When my guru used to go through that place, just by walking past, he would simply shift the position of the spoon.

Nobody used to notice it, but he always noticed. Why would he shift the position of the spoon? It was jutting out onto the path of people walking past. Nobody used to realize that simple thing. He had that keen observation and awareness. It was not just a pot and pan for him; it was something which could be organized, maintained, managed in a better manner. In a spontaneous and natural way, he would just shift the handle of the spoon which was jutting out, into a direction where it would not hamper anybody. If that had happened to you, you would not have done it, despite meditating.

In the life of the masters, I have seen that there has been a continuous expression of awareness. They have lived awareness every moment, and that awareness is what brings out the witness, the observation, and it makes you into a drashta. Awareness makes you into a drashta, and that is the beginning of yoga.

– 22 March 2025, Atma Darshan Yogashram, Bengaluru, India

Shanti Path

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Today is the 102nd birthday of Sri Swamiji, which we celebrate twice a year: once as per the lunar calendar and once as per the solar calendar. The lunar calendar time is the full moon of December, whenever it is, and the solar calendar date is 23rd of December. It was on this day that God sent a special messenger to spread the light, leading to an awareness of who we are and what our role and our goal in life is. This is encapsulated in the *Shanti Path* that we always do. This *Shanti Path*, with the sequence that it is done, is the creation of Swamiji. There are other people who do *Shanti Path*, but it is all hodgepodge. He gave a sequence to it which defines the goal of a spiritual aspirant.



The first goal is – I want to move from darkness to light. I think this is one of the most important steps that anybody can take in life. Darkness always represents the bad, the negative, restrictive and limited. How can we come out of this negative, restrictive, limited dimension of life? That becomes the first goal – I want to move away from darkness to light. I want to move from untruth, to acknowledge and live the real thing, truth. I want to move away from destroying myself continuously and constantly, and experience my internal, essential, immortal nature. This became the goal of every individual, which leads to inner transformation.

After this inner transformation is achieved, interaction, involvement, integration with the world where we live happens. All our effort, thoughts, actions should be to bring happiness, joy, fulfilment and satisfaction into the lives of everyone that we come across. *Sarvesham svastir bhavatu* – may there be goodness everywhere. It is not just a spiritual or political statement; it indicates the effort that one has to make to bring goodness, peace, auspiciousness and wholeness wherever we are.

These seven lines of the *Shanti Path* are the gift of Sri Swamiji, indicating a complete process of transformation and realization and action outside. The means for that is yoga. Not yoga as people in the world know it – the physical, to stretch, to become more curvy and more adept in practising the postures,

but yoga where there is unity and integrity in one's life – unity of the faculties of head, heart and hands, which leads to:

*Asato ma sadgamaya
Tamaso ma jyotirgamaya
Mrityor ma amritam gamaya
Sarvesham svastir bhavatu
Sarvesham shantir bhavatu
Sarvesham poornam bhavatu
Sarvesham Mangalam bhavatu.*

All the seven stages are lived, when we realize yoga. This was the unique approach of Swami Sivananda and of Swami Satyananda. It was 102 years ago that he was born, and from the day of his birth, his inspiration and his teaching has touched and transformed many lives and created new destinies for people. It has created a destiny for me, it has definitely created a destiny for the acharyas who have been through every thick and thin of life. It has touched your lives too, through yoga. If that person had not been born 102 years ago, we would not be sitting here. That inspiration came down to this earth. It was definitely a godly inspiration to bring light into the dark world. It is that which we remember today, on the occasion of his birthday.

No use saying that he was born on this date, and give the whole life story that is already known to people. If not known, it is written in the books and can be seen in the videos. One can get to know about the biodata by many means. We are not talking of biodata; we are talking of an inspiration that has moved society to discover something beautiful and nice within themselves. Therefore, the statement that he gave, that a sannyasin can be the creator of an epoch, a movement, an inspiration, holds true.

His inspiration will continue not only for a hundred years, but many more – as long as people are able to connect with it. That is the beauty of the life of saints; they always inspire us to reach for the highest. How far we are able to go, how much we are able to understand, how much we are able to live, that

is our effort and choice. They have given a clear path for the upliftment of human consciousness. It is for that purpose, that from time to time saints come into our midst. Whenever we falter in our steps, fall down and miss the point, somebody always comes to create that inspiration again, to connect us again with purity and luminosity.

The main teaching of Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda is to open your heart, clean your mind and let every action be luminous. That is the essence of yoga and spiritual life. Jesus said the same: the symbol that we appreciate is not that of him hanging on a cross, but the sacred heart that he represents. That sacredness of the heart is true spirituality, the true awakening, the true enlightenment. That has been the message of sages throughout history.

In these times, the same message is being floated by masters who have come to guide us. So let us open ourselves and let the grace flow through us. That is the inspiration, the birth of an inspiration that still continues to enlighten and guide us today.

– 23 December 2025, Ganga Darshan, Munger



Bhakti Yoga

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Bhakti yoga should be practised in two different manners – one internal and one external. The start of bhakti yoga at the internal level is the connection and identification with the mantra. At the external level, it is an act of kindness that you can do for others. Every little act of kindness builds an ocean of goodwill. It is that goodwill which will open up your heart, allowing you to explore your own bhakti.

Mantra sadhana becomes part of bhakti yoga, and an external act of kindness also becomes part of bhakti yoga. That external act of kindness will connect you in a positive manner with somebody who needs your support of kindness. It is easy to reject people and it is hard to appreciate people. It is the appreciation which people demand, not rejection. When you reject people, you create distance. When you appreciate people, you come closer to them, and they come closer to you, with a special bond of happiness and joy. There is no disenchantment and the feeling, 'I am ignored.'

You also do not like if somebody ignores you. You are happy when somebody accepts, encourages and supports you. So, what you wish for yourself, why can't you give the same to other people? Are you someone special that deserves the good, and other people do not? Gurus have always said, 'Give everybody what you desire for yourself. Give to others what you desire for yourself.' If you desire kindness, give kindness to others. If you desire compassion, give compassion to others. If you desire love, give love to others. If you desire support, give support to others. You will receive back what you give.' You will receive back what you give; and that is the reality of life.

– 13 April 2025, R.K. Convention Centre, Chennai, India

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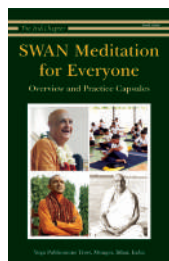
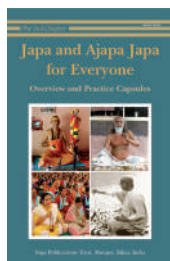
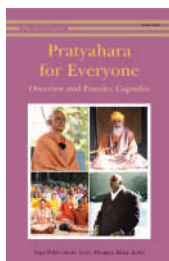
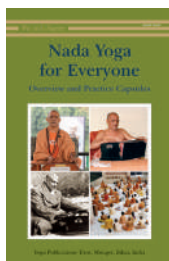
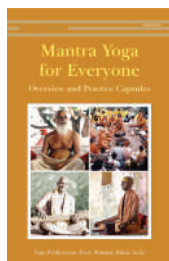
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