

# SIVANANDA YOGALife

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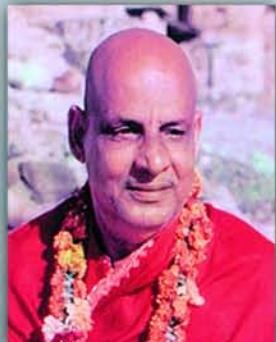
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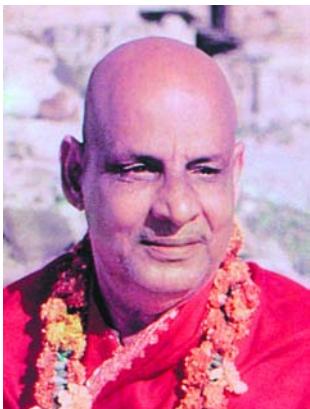
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# INTERNATIONAL SIVANANDA YOGA VEDANTA CENTRES

## SWAMI SIVANANDA (1887-1963)



The spiritual strength behind the Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centres, Swami Sivananda's teachings are a synthesis of all the formal doctrines of yoga. Author of more than 300 books on yoga, Swami Sivananda was a medical doctor before renouncing worldly life for the spiritual path. He founded the Divine Life Society and the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, Rishikesh, Himalayas. His main message was: Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realise. In 1957 he sent one of his foremost disciples, Swami Vishnu-devananda to the West to spread the ideals of yoga. Swami Sivananda entered Mahasamadhi on July 14th 1963.

## SWAMI VISHNUDEVANANDA (1927-1993)



Born in South India in 1927, Swami Vishnu-devananda entered the ashram of Swami Sivananda at the age of 18. A world famous authority on Hatha and Raja Yoga, Swami Vishnudevananda founded the International Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centres in 1957 and was author of *The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga, Meditation and Mantras, Karma and Disease* and a commentary on the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*. Swami Vishnu-devananda entered Mahasamadhi on November 9th, 1993.

## The Executive Board

The Executive Board of the Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centres is comprised of senior disciples of Swami Vishnudevananda, personally chosen and trained by him to direct the organisation after his departure. Each of them has had many years' experience in teaching all aspects of yoga. They are renowned for their devotion to Swami Vishnu-devananda and Swami Sivananda and for their profound knowledge and inspirational teaching and guidance, wisdom imparted to many thousands of students throughout the world.

**Swami Mahadevananda**

**Swami Swaroopananda**

**Srinivasan**

**Swami Durgananda**

**Swami Sivadasananda**

**Swami Kailasananda**

## HEADQUARTERS

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With ashrams and centres located around the world  
see page 52 for addresses

The International Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centres, founded by Swami Vishnudevananda is a non-profit organisation whose purpose is to propagate the teachings of yoga and vedanta as a means of achieving physical, mental and spiritual well-being and Self-realisation.



TRUE WORLD ORDER

## WELCOME

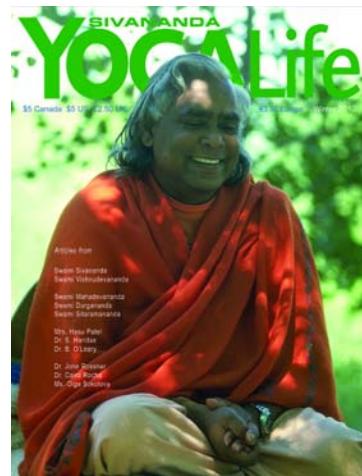
Welcome to the latest edition of *YogaLife*. The issue offers a rich pot-pourri of articles on ancient vedic knowledge. Music, mathematics, architecture and politics are some of the subjects touched upon in the magazine as well as profound insights into the workings of the mind from Swami Sivananda and Swami Vishnudevananda.

An invitation to all students who have taken the Sivananda Yoga Teachers' Training Course to join us at Headquarters in Val Morin for three days of celebration, to reconnect to our Masters and their teachings can be found on the centre pages. Already preparations are under way for this momentous gathering.

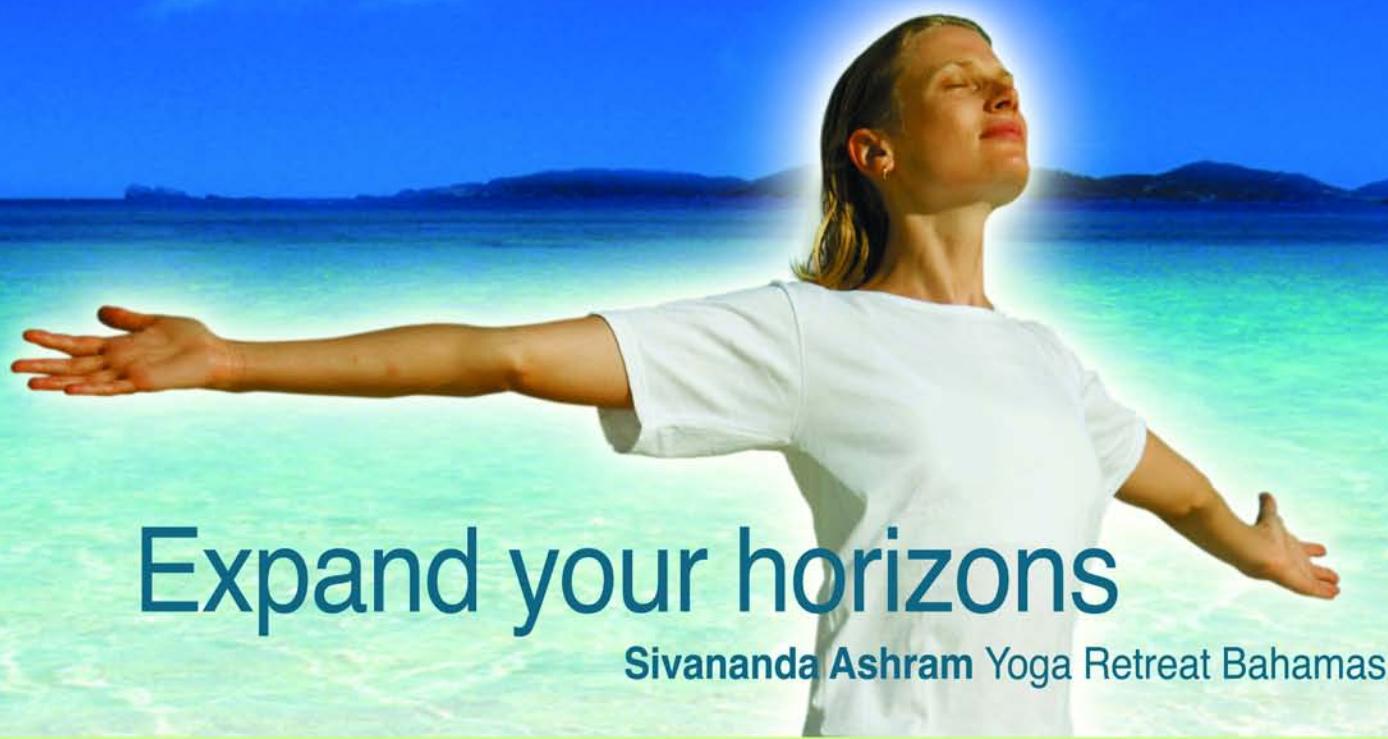
We are also delighted to announce the opening of two new Sivananda centres--in Lithuania and Italy. See page 45 for details. Swami Vishnudevananda's mission to bring peace to the world by creating inner peace remains stronger than ever and it is through the contribution of everyone that this peace can become a reality.

May the blessings of Swami Vishnudevananda and Swami Sivananda be on us always.

HQ, January 2010



Cover Photo Swami Vishnudevananda



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**February 19 - 28, 2010**

## **Yoga for Children Training Course** with Mira Binzen

**February 28 - March 6, 2010**

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with Dr. Marc Halpern  
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**April 5 - 15, 2010**

## **Stress Management Teacher Training** with Swami Vidyananda and Jo Jaya Applebaum

**April 16 - 23, 2010**

## **Advanced Raja Yoga Course** with Swami Swaroopananda

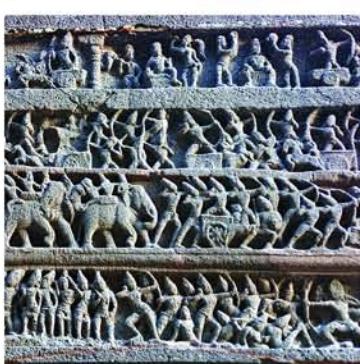
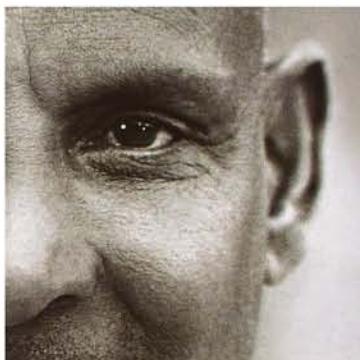
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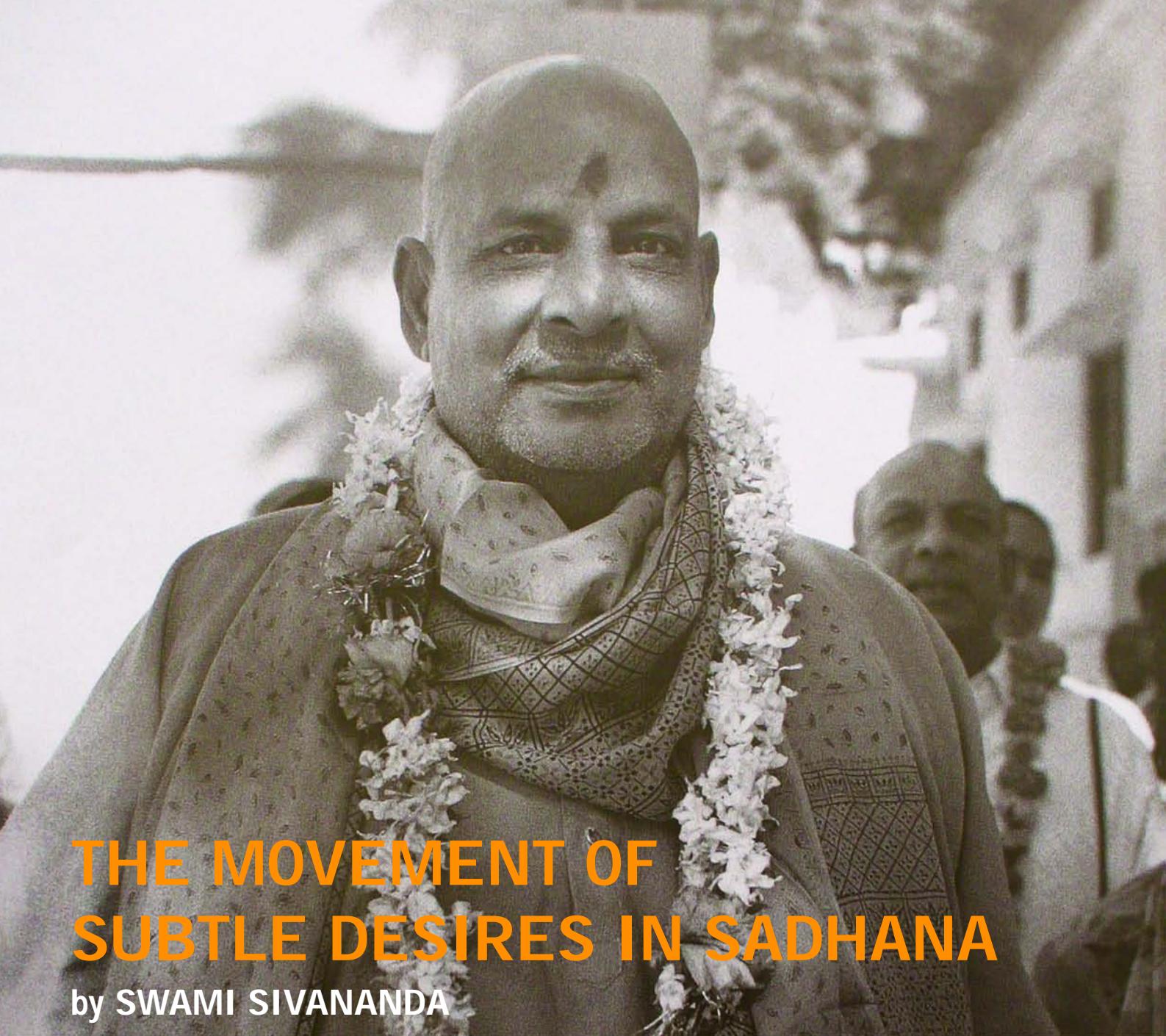
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# THE MOVEMENT OF SUBTLE DESIRES IN SADHANA

by SWAMI SIVANANDA

The sincere aspirant struggles on amidst the rough and tumble of the relative (or vyavaharic) world. Troubles and difficulties crop up at every step. Temptations, trials and tests assail him ever and anon. He strives and fights manfully against the heavy odds, and at last thinks it is high time that he segregated and tried to pursue his sadhana (spiritual practice) away from these upsetting factors. He retires from the bustle of worldly activity and goes into comparative seclusion in some spiritual institution where he spends some time in selfless service and does sadhana systematically. But he is horrified to find that, after a time, instead of feeling a gradual and progressive purification, morally, mentally and spiritually, he experiences more impurity, evil and undesirable emotions and thoughts. What is this strange phenomenon? Is he slipping backwards? What is this queer stage he is passing through? Is he indeed moving towards Light or getting more and more into darkness? These considerations begin to trouble his mind seriously. His natural anxiety and grave concern over his inexplicable state is quite understandable. If he reflects a little and patiently tries to introspect and analyse his condition and the change that is going on within him, he will soon know the actual truth and will at once be reassured. His mind will be at rest.

This is not a degenerating process but is actually a purifying one.

The course of spiritual development at times appears as the contrary of what it really is. Extreme things that are diametrically opposite and contradictory tend to seem identical at times. Very low rates of vibration the ears cannot catch and similarly extreme high rates the ears cannot hear. A static object appears motionless, and the same object set rotating at a tremendous velocity appears to the eye to be perfectly still. Thus, when, during a stage in sadhana, the extreme reverse process of purification and the getting rid of impurities (mala) takes place, it appears alarmingly similar to that of the obverse positive process of acquiring asubha-vasanas (evil tendencies). It is here that an important note of caution has to be vividly borne in mind. When these inner vasanas (tendencies) begin to cast out themselves, then the aspirant should, with great alertness and vigilance, see that they are not afforded any scope to have any active physical manifestation. Like the excess water in a dam that is released out of the barrage by the periodical opening of a few sluice gates, these vasanas must harmlessly flow out. Then the sadhaka (aspirant) is all right, and he will soon proceed with his sadhana as before. Else these outflowing vasanas will get translated into actions and forge further bonds in the karmic cording that holds the individual in thrall here. Instead of becoming a release process it will be a reverse of it.

There are two processes in this connection which will be of great help and reassurance to the sadhaka if he remembers and makes proper and timely use of them with a little discrimination. That is, it is not always necessary or even desirable that all such 'spending-out' forces should indeed be allowed to flow out abortively or that they should issue forth at all. Where they are imbedded in the chitta or the subconscious mind, these can be directly sublimated and nullified. Just as the heat of the sun shining upon a pool of water reduces its contents by evaporation, so also regular meditation of the aspirant sublimates a portion of the store of vasanas, day by day, as he proceeds. Then with those forces that actually sally out there is a very profitable alternative, viz., sublimating them upon the external physical plane and transforming them into some profitable spiritual activity. This latter can be employed either subjectively with beneficial repercussions upon himself or objectively to the advantage of others. Subjectively, for instance, should the subtle tendency of lust endeavour to manifest itself, then the aspirant should transform it at once into a dozen surya-namaskaras or a vigorous round of the favourite pranayama, a course of asanas, or a full-throated chant of mantra japa, etc. Thus the process of sublimation also is turned into sadhana.

Should the vasana or tendency of anger commence this 'spending-out' process, then repair to a quiet room and have a good loud hearty laugh and make it effervesce into a pure upsurge of good cheer. Or sit still and send out wave after wave of love, blessing and goodwill to the entire world from the bottom of your heart. Repeat again and again the sublime verses of the scriptures, and you will be simply filled with overflowing cosmic love.

## Repeat again and again the sublime verses of the scriptures, and you will be simply filled with overflowing cosmic love.

All tendencies to anger will vanish, leaving in their stead a continuous thrill of motiveless love. This feeling is indeed indescribable. This sadhana will give you a positive asset of sattva (purity) and prema (love). You will find yourself a tangibly different being after even a single genuine attempt at this process of deliberate sublimation.

This subjective method is preferable and is to be adopted particularly with such rajoguna and tamoguna vasanas (tendencies for instance, anger, lust, greed, etc.) that become activated through external contact and by association. Then there are such tendencies as one's suppressed social nature, rajasic urge to aimless activity, the erotic sentiments to manifest affection, which will be overcome if they are sublimated through the objective way. When a fit of social nature assails you, do not allow yourself to be driven out into the bazaar for gossiping or into the nearest reading-room, tea-shop or to dissipate your diligently conserved energy in sundry politics, topical news or table-chat. But go among the poor and the afflicted and see if you can serve them in any way. Go to the road or the highway among the pilgrims and wayfarers and seek to relieve them of their loads and lessen their burdens with pleasant and elevating conversation. Thus in the very process of giving, enrich yourself, too. When sentimentality assails you from inside, be still. Do not foolishly rush amidst your friend; and colleagues. Rather go and commune with Nature. Address endearingly the squirrel and the little lamb. Talk and laugh lovingly with the little birds among the bushes and the bright butterfly flitting from flower to flower. Thus safely spend out the unwinding threads of vasanas from the reel of chitta, and you will be quite safe.

So, when the inner vasanas break through and strike the surface, do not be dismayed. Understand what is happening and deal with them calmly. Adopt the methods outlined above to suit the case and with variations to fit into particular situations and temperaments. Overcome them wisely and be a gainer. This

experience will enrich you and you will be more firmly established in sadhana. Now there is a point to be noted in this connection. There is a similar process that appears like this spontaneous uprising of inner vasanas, but which it isn't. It is something different, and has to be dealt with differently. This is the out-rush of vasanas stimulated by external agency or impulse. This situation is what is called temptation or test, and this is dangerous, for here you are faced with two forces, both of which you have to combat—the innate potency of the vasanas and the active mechanism of the external stimulating agency. Adopt a combination of several methods for this. Follow the already outlined sublimation method and augment it with prayer, fasts, a little bit of aggressive self-restraint, changing of the place where temptation is, taking of a resolute vow, etc. You will succeed in overcoming the test. The individual consciousness is made to pass through varying states of mental and emotional stress; pure, neutral as also impure, just as the muddy water is made to pass through a tray of sand, charcoal and some germicidal medium for the task of filtration and purification. For the purpose of filtering away of gross impurity the rough grains of the sands of vyavaharic experiences suit and suffice admirably. But for the subtler impurities (like the gaseous ones in water) a medium like black charcoal is required. This is the recrudescence of disturbingly unspiritual thoughts and tendencies that dismay and upset the sadhakas in the onward course of their spiritual development. This process takes place almost entirely upon the mental and emotional planes. Their inner working is very curious and interesting. They take place in both the waking as well as the dream state and in the latter in two slightly differing shades of dream consciousness, rather difficult to distinguish.

The various positive and negative and subjective and objective sublimating methods detailed already are for use when the 'spending-out' process is in the waking state. In dream state the sadhaka has only to depend upon the subconscious mind to guard him and to effect a proper self-adjustment inside. More often than not, the thought influence of his Guru (preceptor), as also the Grace of the Ishta-Devata bring the sadhaka safe out of the dream state processes. It leaves only a slight vague impression on the mind that retains it the next morning in the form of some mood, either depressing or exhilarating, as the case may be. And at times this process in the dream state takes place in a curious way.

## Victory is to the vigilant and success surely attends upon the sincere sadhaka, firm in faith in his Guru or Teacher.

The person dreams and the vasanas spend themselves out but the consciousness of the sadhaka is not aware of the fact that he has dreamed. Thus he wakes up in the morning with a curious feeling, a different man from the time he retired to bed the previous night, yet unable to explain it or attribute it to anything that he can recollect. This is somewhat like the process you adopt when you have unknowingly drunk impure water and later on, to disinfect it, you take charcoal tablet orally. The medicated tablet enters the stomach and carries out its purifying work invisibly and unknowingly. You are unconscious of what is going on inside, as in the case of those vasanas that expended themselves in your unconscious dreams. Thus proceeds the process of purification and the wise and vigilant sadhaka raises himself upwards and progresses onwards on this ocean of adhyatmic (spiritual) life, even as the clever boatman skilfully takes immediate advantage of each uprising wave and sails ahead, making his little boat leap, as it were, from crest to crest in the ocean. Victory is to the vigilant and success surely attends upon the sincere sadhaka, firm in faith in his Guru or Teacher.



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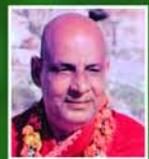
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Swami Sivananda  
(1887-1963)



Swami Vishnudevananda  
(1927-1993)

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- **Yoga of Recovery Retreat** with Durga (Cathy O'Neill) March 26–29, 2010
- **Easter Yoga Retreat:** April 2–5, 2010 with Swami Padmapadananda

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- Permaculture, Green Yoga & Earth Day Celebration with Vidya Chaitanya • April 18–23, 2010
- Memorial Day Retreat–Energy Medicine with Dr. Cairo Rocha • May 18–31, 2010
- Children's Yoga Camp July 1–12, 2010

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# THREE LIVES

by SWAMI VISHNUDEVANANDA

One day we will all have to write a test. What type of test? And are we going to pass the test? The test is whether to live an animal life, a human life, or a divine life. Before we can live a divine life, we must live like a human being, not like an animal. Animal life is instinctual. Animals do not have a reasoning mechanism; they live on the instinctive plane or subconscious plane. All their actions are automatic, instinctive. They learn their natural state automatically. They have to worry only about two things, fight or flight. They either have to fight to survive or they have to flee to escape death or suffering. We also have the fight or flight mechanism but we have something else more. We have reasoning.

Animals do not have reasoning power and because they do not possess reasoning, they do not have karma. You are here because of karma. You are sitting on this floor because of karma. We are born with our karma. An animal's birth is not due to karma, it is due to natural evolution. Eventually, it starts to discriminate. The moment discrimination comes, the reasoning mechanism comes with it and then every action can be questioned.

Suppose I throw some water on one of my students. Even though he is my student, you will question immediately what I am doing. I can use reason to convince myself that as he is my student I can do such things to him. But you have the capacity to ask questions. Why did you do that action? Even though I am a swami, I am a holy man, still you can ask. You have the right to. But if a bull charges at someone, you would not ask the bull why he charged. You do not blame the bull because you know it is his natural instinct to charge. You do not take the bull to court and bring him before judge and jury because you know he is doing his duty as prompted by his instincts. As long as there is no reasoning mechanism for an action, then there will be no karma.

What does karma mean? Karma has different meanings depending upon how you use the term. The literal meaning of karma is action. But it also means destiny in the form of a reaction to an action performed. When you perform an action, you will have a reaction. If I throw water on a student deliberately, knowingly, willfully, maliciously he has a resource at his disposal. He can go to court and put in a complaint, Swami did not obey the rules and regulations of a normal being; he insulted me. The court will look into the case, and if I have done that action with reason I will be sent to jail. But if the judge decides I am insane then I will not be jailed; I will be sent to a mental asylum or a psychiatrist. We can see then that it is not the action itself that is the cause of the karma.

It is the motive that determines the karma. An insane man can kill someone, and he will not be called a murderer. A reaction will follow only when an action is done through reason. An action has no reaction if the person is insane or has no motive. For example, unknown to me a loaded gun is lying on a table behind me. I reach for a glass of water without looking and instead of taking the glass, I pick up the loaded gun and accidentally pull the trigger and someone is shot. Because there is no motive behind the action, I will not be considered as a murderer even though my hand pulled the trigger.

Now consider this. Suppose I don't like somebody in America or

Canada. I tell one of my students, that I will give him ten thousand dollars if he takes a ticket to New York and shoots Mr. So and So, and then takes the first flight out and meets me back here. I promise to cover for him and everyone will think he is conducting the Yoga Teachers' Training Course. Well, suppose he does what I ask? Now who is the murderer? Here I am, five thousand miles away, and instead of my own finger, I send another finger to do the job. Who is the murderer then? I am the murderer. Though I am nowhere near the crime, still, I am bound by my action. I will get a reaction sometime, somewhere. How many innocent people go to jail? Someone else has committed the crime but they are blamed for it. These people may not be guilty of the crime of which they are accused, but they are suffering for crimes committed in past lives.

Animals do not have motive, so they do not have the reaction, the karma. They evolve naturally, step by step. But the moment you are human and develop thinking and reason, then from that moment on, you are responsible for every action.



Swami Vishnudevananda

You question your actions through your conscience. Maybe one time when you were a child you willfully killed an insect. What was the reaction, the first time you killed that insect? Of course you did not go to jail. Normally, they would not take you to court and punish you. But, what was the question that came to your mind? Were you happy about it?

No one saw you; no one is going to blame you, you are alone; but, there is one person who is going to ask you---your conscience. He will stand behind and ask, why did you do that? He will disapprove of your action. You will feel guilty. If you are an evolved being, you will apologise and to a certain extent punish yourself. If you are a truly spiritual person, you will pray to the Lord to be forgiven so as to remove the negative reaction to that particular action. But the second time you kill an insect your conscience does not prick as hard. By the third, fourth and fifth time the conscience is completely buried. It is like a distant echo. Your conscience will question you the first time you do something wrong. But if there is no-one around to question your actions, be careful what you do because you will find that it becomes easier and easier to repeat an action that initially made you feel very guilty.

It is important to have evolved people around so your actions can be questioned. I'll give you an example. Once when we were with Master in his garden on a hot summer's day a scorpion came out of its small hole to walk around in the fresh air. We

were with a new visitor and he saw the scorpion. The guest was carrying a torch and he took the torch and finished off the scorpion. Gurudev asked him why he had killed it. The visitor replied that it was poisonous and had a nasty sting. Gurudev replied, "by killing one scorpion, do you think you will be able to get rid of all scorpions? Do you have the power to give life back to it? If you do not have the power to give life, you cannot take life." There is a place in God's creation even for a scorpion. We do not have the right to take away its place. Our responsibility is to allow freedom for everyone.

There are three types of action: animal, human, and divine. A cat is seated here; and a mouse there. The cat will at once jump over and catch it with no questions asked! This is animal instinct. When a human being acts he may start to question his animal nature. He starts to question his actions. When he starts to follow the divine life, then he knows that he does not have power to give life, so he cannot take life. He prefers to die himself in order to save another. Jesus had the power to destroy the people who came to crucify Him had He wanted. He could have burnt the Cross; He could have burnt all the people there. But if He had, then He would not have acted as a divine being; He would have acted as a human being.

**That's why at that time of suffering on the Cross, He said "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."**

That's why at that time of suffering on the Cross, He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Acting as a human, He had the right to defend Himself. But He was divine, so He died to save others. Our own Gurudev was once attacked by a crazed man with an axe. The police came and arrested the attacker. The next morning Gurudev went to the jail and garlanded his would-be assassin, put flowers at his feet and prostrated before him. He saw God in the form of an assassin. Then with two of his disciples, Gurudev escorted him back home. This is divine action. Later on Gurudev wrote to him as a disciple and soon after, the assailant repented and wrote a letter asking for forgiveness. Through love this man's life changed totally. This is divine action. If I had acted as a human, I would have taken revenge and sent him to jail. But divine beings like Jesus and great teachers like Sivananda Gurudev did not even entertain the idea of taking revenge.

So there are three types of action: animal, when you perform action through instinct without any question; human, when you perform an action with motive, with the conscience present even if you do not heed it, and with the principle of karma operating; and divine, when you are not bound by any action because there is no selfish motive.

For every action, there must be a thought behind it. When you see a mango tree, there's a cause behind it. What's the cause? The seed. And if there's a seed, there's a cause for that. The cause is the tree. Which came first, the seed or the tree? Nothing came first. Or second. Cause and effect are one and the same, depending on how you look at it. If, for example, you take a full circle, where is the beginning of the circle? Going clockwise I can say this is the beginning and this is the end. But now if I go counter-clockwise the end becomes the beginning and the beginning becomes the end. Similarly there is no cause and effect, they are one and the same. But everything depends upon some cause. Ultimately we cannot know the cause of a particular action. But good or bad, nothing happens without a cause. And we are born because of our karma. Our task is to work out our karma. We come to evolve, to work out our karma. So work at that and attain eternal freedom.



# KEEP THE CONNECTION

by SWAMI MAHADEVANANDA

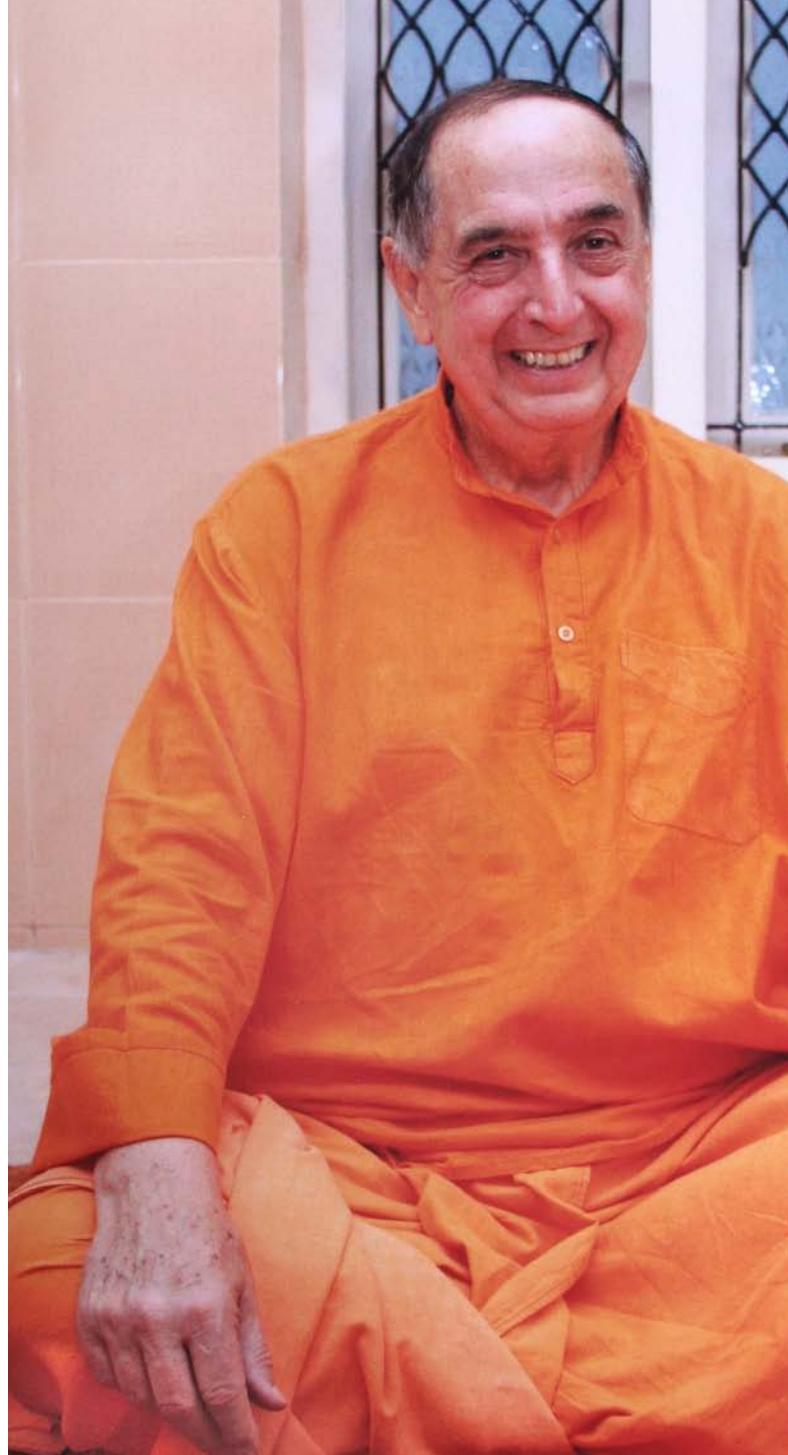
*Taken from an address given by Swami Mahadevananda at the Staff Reunion held at the Yoga Camp in August 2009.*

I would like to ask this question, it is a question for all of us here. Why sometimes does life become so difficult? What is the real difficulty? I will tell you. The difficulty is only in our mind. There are no difficulties. Many of us fight against the natural flow of life either consciously, or even subconsciously, without knowing that we are struggling. But if we do this, our energy, our prana, is eaten away by the fight. Others amongst us manage challenges easily because we may have already experienced enough difficulties in our lives to have come to an understanding that resistance brings suffering. Each one of us, teacher and student alike, has to eliminate the negativity in the mind, because otherwise it stays with us throughout our lifetime, and we lead an unfulfilled life. When the opportunity arises to rid ourselves of negativity, we have the choice to surrender or to resist. To change by surrendering is not easy; it is like being burnt. Remember though, that once that moment of pain has gone, it has gone forever and we emerge stronger. For some of us, it may take a lifetime to get through just one painful moment.

We realise that when we return home after spending time at the Ashram, we see the contrast between looking at life from a spiritual point of view and the way we previously looked at life. Spiritual training can be very intense and very concentrated. Once you are home, you will find you will have a tremendous amount of energy for a week or so. However, you may easily slip back to your old ways unless you retain the practice. The old ways of the mind will be dormant, but still active. The mind reasserts itself easily despite the training. Without support, the ego rises up and finds excuses not to continue the new practices. The mind becomes scattered. Initially this makes you feel good because, during your stay in the Ashram, the mind has been squeezed--it has been made to focus, focus, focus. At home you suddenly let go. Ahhh, it feels so good to relax. Why should I get up at 4:30? Maybe I'll start at 5:30, then at 6, then at 7, then 8. Self justification creeps in. The mind will tell you more and more "Why should I do that?" But if you let the mind go too much you will have to restart the whole process of training again.

In spiritual life we become aware, gradually, of the process we have to go through to grow, to expand our consciousness. What spiritual training does is bring us closer and closer to the true reality of life. Each of us has his or her own karma. Each has to follow his or her duty in life but at least if we follow the teachings of Swami Sivananda and Swami Vishnudevananda, we develop a different outlook with different values, we have a broader understanding of the process of life than we did previously.

Remember , what we call love -- infinity, eternity, immortality -- is in front of us all the time, even at this very moment. We cannot see what we call God because we are not focussed. We are scattered. God does not hide Himself under the carpet or behind the furniture. He is infinite and He is everywhere. But the fact that we cannot see God, whether we call Him or not, whether we acknowledge Him or not, is because our minds are not focussed. In our training courses, we may not feel the presence of God, we may not experience Him, but we begin to understand the process of doing so. We begin to see how much we can do, but also how much has to be done. We recognise that we are on the right path, that we have a better knowledge about ourselves, that



we can manage better our own physical, mental, and spiritual energy. We are better equipped for life. Eventually, if we continue for long enough and with enough determination and faith, we become saintly.

In the end it makes no difference whether spiritual life is inside an ashram or outside. This morning, as a Swami in an ashram, I am striving to create the best possible conditions to practice yoga, but there is no guarantee that preference is given by God to a sannyasin, to a yogi, to a person living in an ashram, or to people outside. All is the same before God. We all have the same soul. The best sinner or the best saint is the same before God. Everybody has the same eternal, divine soul.

And yet we live with veils that prevent us from seeing the true reality and we require a great deal of strength and courage to remove these veils....one step more, one step more, one step more. We remove these veils one by one. The truth makes us aware that the mind is an object, it is not a being. The mind is a machine, a sophisticated machine, but still a machine. When we fight with this machine, we lose track of what reality is all about. The power of God is there, but we have to become aware of it.



Swami Mahadevananda addressing the Staff Reunion at HQ, August 2009

Sometimes students ask me, "Swamiji what about the real world outside?" I tell them it is an illusion existing only in our own mind. Slowly we begin to understand that the real world is inside ourselves, not outside. It is not in an ashram, it is not anywhere in the world, it is inside. At this point we begin to question whether we will do something about our inner lives or not.

We then take on the responsibility to continue on this path of self-discovery. We can practise yoga, be a good example to ourselves, our family, our neighbours, our country, and wherever we go, spread the teachings of Swami Sivananda and Swami Vishnudevananda. We go to Swami Sivananda and Swami Vishnudevananda for identification, but remember---Guru is God. There is no difference. We can see Swami Sivananda and Swami Vishnudevananda as a frequency to which we tune. It is God we are tuning to, through them, and it is God, through them, that brings a ray of hope, a ray of understanding, a ray of compassion, tolerance and patience to mankind.

Let us continue in the same way. The best possible wish we can make is a wish for our own Self because, in the end, what we give out is what we get back. If we put something good out, good comes back. We need to have this awareness and with that

comes responsibility as well as peace of mind, knowing that we are trying to do the right thing, at the right place, at the right time. But of course the ego is there. Swami Vishnudevananda once asked me: "Why Mahadeva do you give me such a hard time?" I said: "Swamiji you know why. Because of ego. I do not do it to harm or hurt you. I do not know what I am doing. If I was a saint Swamiji, I wouldn't be with you." And then he started to laugh. I continued : "I am with you and I stay with you throughout my life because you are my teacher, because you are my Guru, because I learn from you. I do it because I am not liberated. But I never do it with the intention to hurt you, to take revenge, to make an argument or to show superiority."

The one thing Swami Vishnudevananda had was compassion, such love for all of us. In the early days in India it was tough; it was the toughest period in my life. I had a hard time with the food. We used to have rice and tapioca and the next day tapioca and rice and then rice and tapioca. And then Mataji (Swami Vishnudevananda's mother) used to add very hot spices to the food. It was hard, plus I had to wear a dhoti which would unravel. People would laugh. And the climate was very hot and so many other difficulties. Swamiji would come, and he would blast my head off. It would be like facing a tsunami. One day I felt I had been working enough, and he called me to his kutir down by the lakeside where he used to live. "Come in" he said. He gave me a big hug. He said "Do you know why I give you such a hard time? It is because I love you very much." This is why the Guru gives us a hard time; because Guru loves us. Otherwise he would say: "if you want to be stupid, okay, be stupid and be happy" and we would be left alone. But to us the Guru says "You are stupid, but I want to make you stronger, so don't do this or don't do that. If you do that, I will break your ego."

We have to ask ourselves what kind of lifestyle each of us wants? If we have a simple lifestyle, the teachings will support us. But what happens, most of the time, without knowing it, we disconnect ourselves from Swami Vishnudevananda, and we disconnect ourselves from spirituality. Remember that our own energy is very limited. When we stay close to the Guru, it matters not who we are or where we are in the world, we will have full energy. And this energy is a creative energy. The moment we think we want to make money because of money alone, Swami Vishnudevananda severs contact. We find ourselves on our own, where we have only a limited amount of energy with which to operate. So this is the secret --and this is how Swami Vishnudevananda was an example to all of us. Whatever he did, he did for Swami Sivananda. He did everything for Swami Sivananda. He connected to Swami Sivananda's energy and by doing so he changed the world. If we cut ourselves off from this energy, we are diminished. But if we stay connected to the Guru, then the energy we receive can change the world.

We can call this energy whatever we want. The important thing is to reconnect; to be here and to have a connection with the powerful, infinite energy. Call it Swami Vishnudevananda or Swami Sivananda. I do not perceive the Gurus as I used to. I connect with their energy and the more I do so the more I am able to create, the more inspired I become, the more things move. The moment we disconnect ourselves, we can no longer operate at a higher level. Swami Sivananda and Swami Vishnudevananda tell us to remain connected. So those who have come for the Reunion--- keep it up, stay in touch, keep practising, and keep connected. That's the best thing. That's all.

*Swami Mahadevananda is the Yoga Acharya (spiritual director) for the Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centre ashrams and centres in India, Canada, Italy and Japan.*

# FROM EMOTION TO DEVOTION

by SWAMI DURGANANDA

Bhakti Yoga is the yogic path of surrender to the Divine. By merging with the Divine, Self-realisation is achieved. Bhakti is often considered the easiest path of yoga. However surrender requires the practice of true humility-in itself a real challenge. It is a mistake to think that if one prostrates often enough and offers prayers regularly then one has achieved devotion. These external forms of worship need to be internalised in order to reach the next step on the spiritual path. Real change takes place internally and for this to happen perseverance is required.



## Emotions Create Limitations

There is no room for emotions in the other paths of yoga: the practice of asanas, pranayama and meditation in Hatha or Raja yoga depend on self-discipline, not emotion. The central question of Jnana yoga, Who am I?, depends on an intellectual understanding and an intuitive experience of the Self - there is no room for feelings of like and dislike. In Karma yoga we train ourselves to do not only the things which we can do well, but we also set ourselves tasks which do not appeal to us, over-ruling our emotions. Only in Bhakti yoga are emotions accepted, because without emotions love is not possible. Bhakti, however, also shows us the limitations of emotions and how they are related to the impulsiveness of likes and dislikes, and stem from a deep-rooted selfishness and a thoughtless sensuousness.

## Love for Love's Sake

The aim of the practice of Bhakti yoga is to change emotion into unconditional love and devotion. By that we mean a love which is neither selfish nor binding, a love which is pure and godly, as in the love of a mother to a child--a love which remains true, whatever the child does. In order to feel this love, character must be developed just as in other paths of yoga. The yamas and niyamas, the first two steps of Raja yoga, are aids to building character. They are comparable to the Ten Commandments of Christianity or the ethical teachings of Buddha. Karma yoga (selfless service) is the best practical method of character-training to purify the heart. With the purification of character, emotions are uplifted and the experience of the true unconditional loving Self becomes possible. Listening to Divine stories of universal wisdom (shravanam) is a method in Bhakti yoga to change emotion to devotion. Shravanam is never boring because of its direct link to the experience of changing emotion to devotion. A further practice in Bhakti is the repetition of mantras (japa) or mantra chanting (kirtan) in a group. When emotions have been sublimated, one experiences the essence of the Self as an uninterrupted stream of heartfelt love. This absolute, never-ending love is comparable to the uninterrupted flow of ghee (clarified butter) from one vessel to another. When this state has been reached, the pure Self shines in its divine brilliance. Bhakti leads us to pure cosmic love, our birthright. Great saints such as Mother Teresa, Sri Anandamayi Ma and Swami Sivananda felt this cosmic love. That is why we feel attracted to

these people and why we love them, although we may have never personally known them.

## The Barrier between Man and the Universe

The barrier between man and the universe is not a wall erected by someone, but the barrier of the ego in our own mind. Although ego is necessary in order to live responsibly in this world, it must not be allowed to develop into senselessness and greed and should always be in harmony with nature and the laws of nature. While the ego has allowed us to make exceptional progress in medicine, technology, space

travel and architecture, it has also caused air pollution, poisoned water, soil erosion and bad nutrition. Today we live further apart from one another than ever before. Slowly people are becoming aware of the problems connected with this separation. Even the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, recently mentioned in a speech to German students that we must no longer separate ourselves from each other. Is it not grotesque that we, as citizens of the world, are spatially more closely connected than ever before - every day 5 million people move around the globe in aeroplanes - but spiritually we are in ever-increasing separation? This separation is strengthened by the media, which drowns us in news of war and crime. We see a potential criminal in every person we meet. Gradually and imperceptibly we lose trust in mankind. If a stranger smiles at us in the street, we spontaneously think, "he must be mad", or "he wants something from me". Yoga helps to melt away this ever-increasing negativity and mistrust through the practice of positive thinking and feeling. We learn to speak more with one another and be there for one another, independent of looks, language or nationality.

## Bhakti in Everyday Life

Swami Sivananda stresses that Bhakti can be practised by anyone in any situation. Each one of us has numerous opportunities for interaction with people during the day. The devotion in Bhakti can also be experienced in a good yoga class: surrender to concentration in the asanas, experiencing the breath and letting go in the final relaxation, surrendering to the present moment. Devotion leads to peace and happiness and reconnects us with our true Self. The aim of yoga is to give us the strength and courage to face life in all its intensity, through the practice of asanas, pranayama, meditation and positive thinking. Anyone who says they have no time for yoga has not understood the message; yoga is everywhere and happens each and every second. We practice yoga to make our lives more than an aimless flow in an ocean of sensuous pleasures, led only by instinct and emotions.

# PRAYER

by SWAMI SIVANANDA

## Bhakti is not tied to any Religion

Bhakti is the highest love for the Divine. The Divine can be a personified God (Ishta devata), or the Self, the Soul, the Universe or absolute Goodness. Bhakti is not tied to any religion. The frequently-asked question of whether yoga is a religion is not easily answered. All religions, as well as yoga, have rules as a foundation for self discipline and therefore yoga can be combined with any religion.

However, it can also be practised without religion. The practice of yoga expands the aspect of spirituality which is present in every human being. The practice of Bhakti yoga makes it possible for every individual to experience fully his or her own higher values. If these values are restricted by the emotions, they will be watered down. In this case the practitioner speaks in terms of "my God", "my way", "my religion", or even "my dogma". This leads to separateness which causes sorrow and war. The classical yoga scriptures, such as the Bhagavad Gita or the Narada Bhakti Sutras, do not mention any specific name or form of the Divine. In Bhakti yoga the chosen form is quite clearly a personal matter, of great importance to the practitioner but not to the teachings of Bhakti yoga itself. The sublimation of emotion to devotion is the actual meaning of all religions. According to the teachings of Bhakti yoga all religions can exist side by side. Religion comes from the Latin *religio* which means "binding to the Self, the Source, the Divine in Man". Learned representatives of the religions of the world know this--a reason why they get on well with one another. They remain each on their own path, but meet together with tolerance and love. This knowledge corresponds to the internal condition of Bhakti. But Bhaktas, as well as devotees of all religions, do not reach their goal if the internal condition is not realised. Jesus expressed it explicitly with the words "Love your neighbour as thyself". If this phrase becomes a reality, the aim of yoga is achieved. Then the unification of the jiva (the individual soul) with the atman (the cosmic Self within) is achieved. Then Man has arrived at his destination.

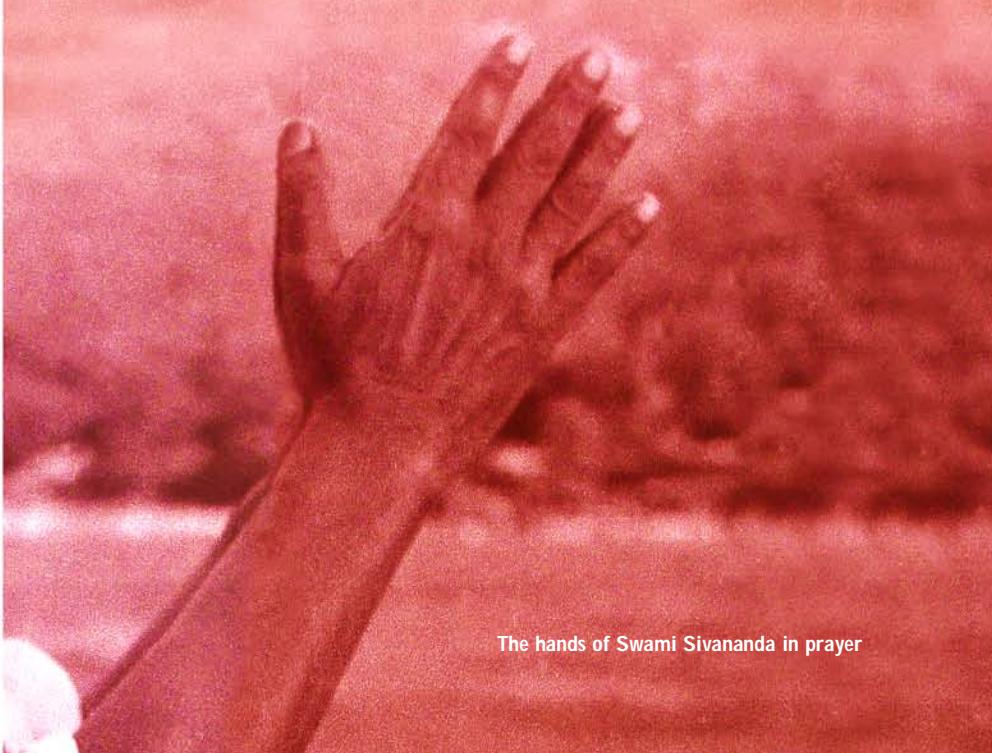
Swami Durgananda is the Yoga Acharya (spiritual director) of the Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centres in Europe  
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Prayer is a mighty spiritual force. Prayer is spiritual food for the soul. Prayer is a spiritual tonic.

Prayers are powerful spiritual currents. There is nothing so purifying as prayer. If you pray regularly, your life will be gradually changed and moulded. Prayer must become habitual. You will feel as if you cannot live without prayer, if prayer becomes a habit in you. Prayer lightens the heart and fills the mind with peace, strength and purity. When the mind becomes pure and sattvic through the power of prayer, the intellect becomes sharp and keen. Prayer elevates the mind. When you pray, you link yourself with the inexhaustible cosmic powerhouse of energy--Hiranyagarbha-- and thus draw power, energy, light and strength from Him.

Prayer is the trusty companion along the weary path of moksha. Prayer is the rock to which man can cling when he is drowning in the ocean of samsara. Prayer frees the devotee from the fear of death. It brings him nearer to God and makes him feel the divine consciousness and his essential immortal, blissful nature. Prayer works wonders. Prayer moves mountains. Even when the medical board has pronounced a case to be hopeless, prayer comes to the rescue and the patient is miraculously cured. There have been many instances of this description.

You may be aware of this. Healing by prayer is really miraculous and mysterious. Prayer is an unfailing remedy for all situations. Many a time have I experienced its marvellous potency. You too can experience it... Pray fervently right now from this very second. You will attain eternal bliss.



The hands of Swami Sivananda in prayer

# THE DIVINE ENERGY

by OLGA SOKOLOVA

The colossal granite stone statue of Ayyan Thiruvalluvar situated on a huge single rock-island in the middle of the sea near the Vivekananda Memorial at Kanyakumari, at the southernmost tip of India, was built in memory of and homage to the ancient philosopher and author of the timeless epic Thirukkural. The structure, 7000 tonnes and 133 feet tall, withstood the onslaught of the horrific tsunami in 2004 while other buildings on the mainland were severely damaged or destroyed. What saved the statue from the destruction of the tsunami against all odds?

The answer is simple. Divine Energy. This is not a metaphor, but the implementation of the ancient rules of vaastu shastra, (the science of architecture), teachings originating in southern India and considered to be over fifteen thousand years old.

The true secret lies in the design of the monument. Ayadi calculations, vaastu rules and an ancient interlocking system were used in the implementation of this project by architect Dr. V. Ganapati Sthapati, world-renowned in the field of the science of traditional architecture. This colossal monument was built out of

and only from granite boulders with no metal reinforcement whatsoever. Dr. Sthapati calls it the "rock to rock and rock on rock" statue. The main characteristic of this unique vaastu structure is the open inner space of the monument starting at the bottom of the statue and rising, with an opening to the sky, to the top of the head. This open space is identified as the Brahma sthan or a Shaft of Divine Energy. According to Brahmarishi Mayan, the progenitor of the science, empty space is not empty, but filled with units of living divine energy called paramanu, where para is super and anu is atom. These units of energy are the building blocks of the Universe or Consciousness itself. This living energy has its own dimension and vibrates with a specific absolute frequency. The entire monument is built in proportion to the divine energy unit - the paramanu. The vibrating space inside of Thiruvalluvar's body is the energetic vertebrae of the monument which preserved it from the destructive force of the tsunami. Dr. Sthapati said, "If the statue had not had the Brahma sthan, and had been solid, then it would not have survived the tsunami."

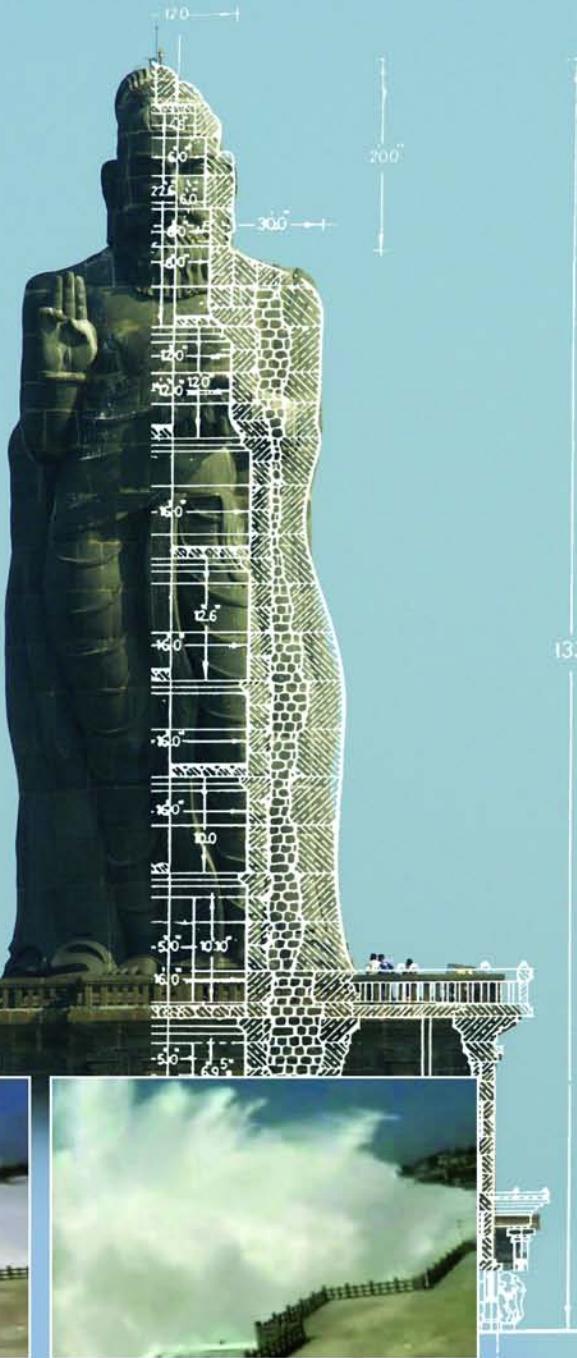


# IN VAASTU

In the traditional technology of laying and fixing individual stone pieces, there are no pins or steel pins bonding each and every pair of stones, yet each stone is firmly fixed to the next. To achieve this anchorage and solidity the traditional method of joining is used whereby every piece of stone is cut with concavity at the bottom and the top, perfect to spirit and plumb. Because of this concavity at the bottom every stone piece will sit on the stone below with a biting effect.

When the statue was inaugurated in January 2000, the governmental engineers refused to certify it, stating that they were not familiar with monuments of that size built only from boulders according to ancient rules. After the disaster, Dr. Sthapati joked that actually it was the tsunami that led to the certification of the statue. In 2005 Dr Sthapati was awarded a special prize from the Government of Tamil Nadu for his unique creation and in 2009 he was awarded, by the President of India, the highly prestigious national title, Padma Bhushan for the monument. Dr. Sthapati said, "They don't know, but the monument is alive. It breathes and vibrates with Divine Energy."

*Olga Mandodari Sokolova is a civil engineer and a skilled Vaastu Shastra consultant, graduate of the world famous International Institute of Mayonic Science and Technology, Chennai, India. Born in St Petersburg and living in Washington DC, Ms Sokolova runs a successful consultancy advising on how to design and build living spaces with healing properties. [www.mandodari.com](http://www.mandodari.com), [www.vastuvived.com](http://www.vastuvived.com)*



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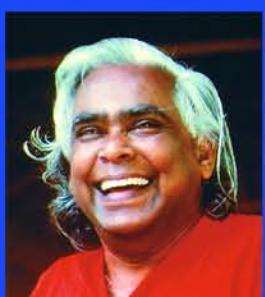
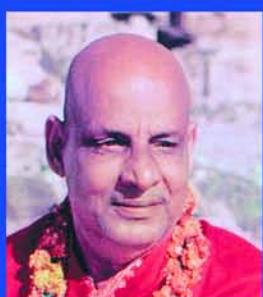
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# THE PHYSICAL PRESENCE

by SWAMI VISHNUDEVANANDA

Flexibility of the body, especially the spinal cord, and flexibility of the mind are interrelated. Flexibility of the mind means adaptability. Its opposite, rigidity of mind, is called ego. As ego puts stress upon the nervous system, it creates a rigid body. Yoga says that flexibility of the spine and flexibility of the mind are interrelated. If you keep the spinal column flexible, you will have a flexible mind, and you will find that the flexible mind can do more work than the inflexible mind.

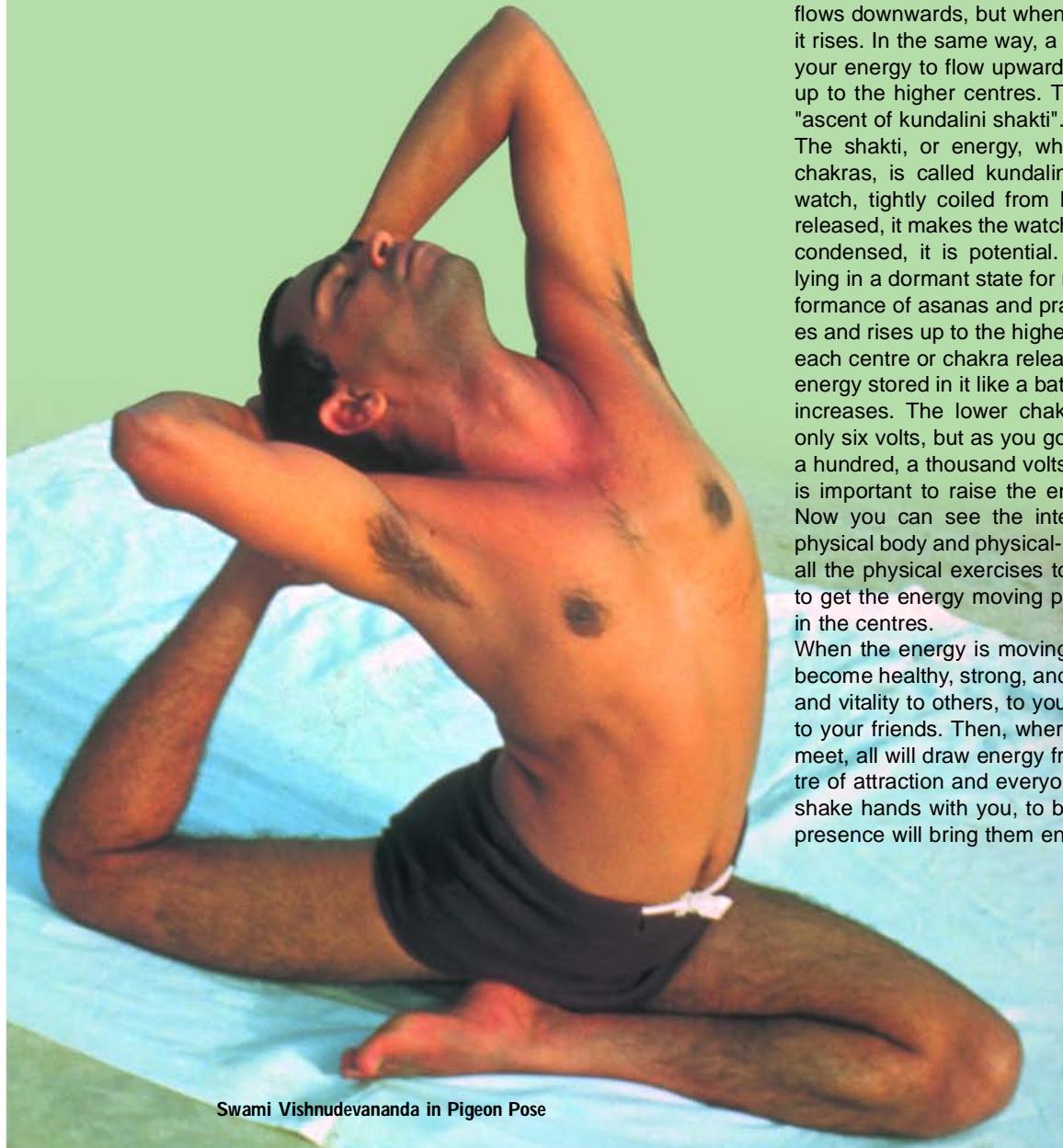
Have you ever seen a tree standing on the shore? Such trees are very strong, still standing after seventy, eighty or ninety years. When a sudden flood comes, they are completely uprooted and washed away because they are very rigid. When the flood waters subside, the tall grasses are still there. The powerful flood waters could not wash them away. Why? Because they just bent with the flow of the waters instead of resisting.

The water could not do anything. However, the more powerful but rigid tree was uprooted. Grasses blow before the gale and again raise their heads to the mid-day sun. The proud giants of the forest remain stiff, not moving an inch, only to be rudely uprooted. The humble servant prostrates to all and goes on serving until retired by old age, while his unbending master is envied, only to be thrown out as Prime Minister or Senator or even disgraced and thrown in prison. But the ordinary servant goes on. For a spiritual aspirant especially, flexibility is necessary. Once the prana starts to increase, any resistance will prevent its free movement. So every morning you should practise your asanas, pranayama and mantra japa (repetition of God's name).

Flexibility of the spinal column will allow the energy to flow properly, so that instead of going downward, it will go upward. It is just like water, which, in a gross state, flows downwards, but when in subtle form (as in steam) it rises. In the same way, a flexible spinal cord will allow your energy to flow upward, past the lower centres and up to the higher centres. That is what is meant by the "ascent of kundalini shakti".

The shakti, or energy, which is stored in your lower chakras, is called kundalini. It is like the spring in a watch, tightly coiled from being wound, so that when released, it makes the watch hands move. The energy is condensed, it is potential. Kundalini is coiled up and lying in a dormant state for most of us. Through the performance of asanas and pranayama, it unwinds, releases and rises up to the higher centres. As it is stimulated, each centre or chakra releases a specific wavelength of energy stored in it like a battery. As you rise, the voltage increases. The lower chakras may have for example only six volts, but as you go up, you encounter ten, fifty, a hundred, a thousand volts. So, for spiritual evolution it is important to raise the energy to the higher centres. Now you can see the interrelationship between your physical body and physical-mental flexibility. We perform all the physical exercises to attain mental flexibility and to get the energy moving properly, removing blockages in the centres.

When the energy is moving properly, you are bound to become healthy, strong, and peaceful, radiating strength and vitality to others, to your family, to your loved ones, to your friends. Then, wherever you go, whomever you meet, all will draw energy from you; you will be the centre of attraction and everyone will want to touch you, to shake hands with you, to be with you. Even your mere presence will bring them energy and strength.



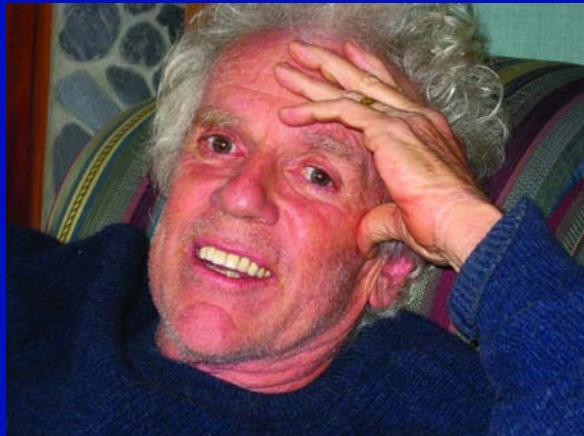
Swami Vishnudevananda in Pigeon Pose

# THE NEW ENERGY REVOLUTION

by BRIAN O'LEARY, PH.D

The world is at an energy crossroads. The alarming new information coming out of the climate science community confirms the unprecedented danger faced by all of humanity and nature by mankind's routine burning of hydrocarbons-oil, coal and natural gas. The resulting emissions of carbon dioxide and carcinogens into the Earth's atmosphere spell almost certain doom not only for the environment, but for human systems of government and commerce as we know them. Human survivability itself is in question, especially against the backdrop of vast deforestation, marine habitat destruction, accelerating species extinctions, and the threat from weapons of mass destruction on Earth, and, perhaps soon, in space.

Nature is fighting back with heat waves, super storms, rising oceans, desertification, species and disease vector migrations, and weakening of the Gulf Stream, in response to warming caused by injection of record amounts of carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Despite this, and in the face of dwindling supplies of hydrocarbons, humans still consume as if there were no tomorrow. Even modest international agreements such as the Kyoto Protocols are ignored by the most polluting nations, especially the United States government, which seems to be more interested in going to war for oil than transforming its energy infrastructure to cleaner sources.



This multi-trillion dollar fossil fuel juggernaut is the largest economic engine ever made in human history. We see record profits for the petroleum industry while innovation is stifled and largely ignored by established scientists, leadership and media. Yet innovation in our energy systems may be the single most important factor for our survival.

Significant solutions using conventional technology have proven to be elusive, prompting some scientists and environmentalists such as James Lovelock, Stewart Brand, John Holdren, Nathan Lewis, Richard Heinberg and myself to conclude that even the traditional renewables such as solar, wind, biofuels and hydrogen are not adequate to replace hydrocarbon combustion. Solar, wind, waves, tides, ocean-thermal, geothermal, hydropower and satellite solar power can suffer from intermittency, site unsuitability, diffuseness, limited availability and materials- and land-intensity. Biofuels such as ethanol and biodiesel compete with agriculture for land and still inject carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, albeit not as much as hydrocarbon combustion. Hydrogen is expensive to produce.

It most often requires more energy to extract hydrogen than you get out of it, making this fuel an energy carrier but not an energy source. Typical methods of production (reformation of methane and electrolysis of water) still consume fossil fuels, emit carbon dioxide and can deplete atmospheric oxygen.

These fundamental physical limitations have led James Lovelock, Stewart Brand and others to reluctantly conclude that we should construct centralized nuclear power stations throughout the globe to produce electricity

through grids in an electric economy. But because of limited supplies of uranium, high costs, hazardous fuel cycles and nuclear proliferation concerns, many of us in the scientific community believe this is a very poor choice for our future. First, the questionable safety of nuclear power plants, especially in the age of terrorism, presents grave dangers to us all. Moreover, no safe long-term method has yet been found for disposing of high-level, long-lived radioactive waste-an inevitable byproduct of the nuclear fuel cycle. Finally, the proliferation of the technology throughout the world, would inevitably lead to acquisition of doomsday nuclear weapons by numerous irresponsible parties. The prospects for "hot" nuclear fusion are equally dim. In spite of tens of billions of dollars over decades being spent on trying to achieve energy "breakeven" using gigantic Tokomak reactors,

the results have thus far been negative. Moreover, nuclear fusion plants would constitute oversized, vulnerable facilities necessitating the continued use of ugly, antiquated centralized grid systems.

When full life-cycle environmental costs are considered, none of the above technologies appear to meet the criteria of sustainability. By choosing any or some of them, we could only hope for incremental changes in our energy supply in the face of accelerating global demand. More importantly, these alternatives do not address the urgent time factor requirements for clean energy needed to mitigate global warming.

On the other hand, many new energy technologies have already been proven in hundreds of demonstrations in laboratories scattered throughout the world. Any one or some of these approaches, if properly developed, could end our dangerous dependence on hydrocarbons and uranium. Clearly the traditional technologies keep us mired in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries rather than launching us forward into the twenty-first century. Nevertheless, this conventional thinking continues to dominate



the news these days. Despite the great need, suppression of new energy has been historically documented in great detail by those who have taken the time to investigate. Inventors have suffered funding cuts, threats, sabotage and even assassination ever since the time of Nicola Tesla more than one century ago.

We define "new energy" to generally mean innovative technologies with the potential of providing a quantum leap in our ability to tap cheap, clean, safe and decentralized energy for producing fuels and electricity. These may or may not be recognized by mainstream science. The technologies include:

**ADVANCED HYDROGEN TECHNOLOGIES** (1) catalytic water molecule manipulation and dissociation through cheap electrolysis, and (2) manipulation of hydrogen plasmas with catalysts to induce fractional quantum electronic states that yield large energy outputs;

**COLD FUSION** or non-radioactive low-temperature nuclear reactions by electrochemical means, induced in water and heavy water solutions catalyzed by (1) palladium cathodes, (2) sonocavitation and (3) other processes that can produce large amounts of thermal, radiation-free nuclear energy;

**VACUUM ENERGY** or zero-point energy, tapping the enormous quantum potential of every point in space-time, through the use of (1) super-motors with super-magnets (cf., the experiments of Michael Faraday in the 1830s), (2) solid state devices, (3) Tesla coils, and (4) charge clusters; and

**THERMAL ENERGY** from the environment.

Any one of the above approaches to new energy promises a quantum leap, i.e., orders of magnitude increase, in our ability to tap and have abundant clean, cheap, decentralized energy for all of humanity. In addition, there are many important transitional technologies which can mitigate emissions in the very near future, as follows:

**RECYLING AND SEQUESTRATION OF CO<sub>2</sub> AND OTHER POLLUTANTS AT THE SOURCE** through innovative chemistry; and **REMEDIATION OF RADIOACTIVE NUCLEAR WASTE** with innovative technologies, based on the principles of low temperature non-radioactive nuclear transmutations.

All of the above concepts have already been demonstrated in laboratories throughout the world (I have seen many such demonstrations) and have been published in the peer-reviewed literature. But implementing them has proven difficult because there is no significant support. This lack of support for outside-the-box thinking is familiar to those who know the history of innovation. That is to say, there is generally a bias against the credibility of a new technology until it is accepted by the mainstream culture. The most strident objectors are often scientists themselves because some of their treasured "laws" appear to be broken by breakthrough experiments that often lead to profound technological change. In spite of these severe limitations, I propose here that the transformation of our energy culture to one based on new energy is necessary for our survival, and that we should embark on a research and development program as soon as possible.

History is replete with examples of disbelief of new technologies when they first emerge. One example is aviation during its early days. The reporter who covered the Wright brothers' maiden flight in 1903 was fired from his position because his editor denied that heavier-than-air flight was possible. In 1905, Scientific American wrote an

editorial saying that aviation was a "fraud" because it wasn't reported, even though, by that time, thousands of eyewitnesses had seen the Wrights fly. It took a few years longer to establish the credibility of aviation, thanks to a public demonstration for U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt. Before then, we had been embroiled in a vicious cycle of media and scientific blackouts of reality. A few months ago, I received a call from the producer of a BBC television special on energy solutions to environmental problems. He wanted to interview me on new energy. Days later the interview was mysteriously cancelled when he admitted that their "new energy" segment would be confined to Tokomak nuclear "hot" fusion technologies rather than any of the concepts I had explored. To this day, the mainstream Western media has blacked out mention of true new energy.

There is much discussion now about how the warnings we hear from leading atmospheric scientists continue to be ignored and scoffed at by those in power. In a refreshing counterpoint to politics-as-usual, former U.S. vice president Al Gore recently said that our children "deserve better than the spectacle of censorship of the best scientific evidence about the truth of our situation and harassment of honest scientists who are trying to warn us about the looming catastrophe."

New energy would shift the paradigm overnight. We will need public policies in place to:

1. Do the necessary R&D Apollo-style in secured laboratories, gathering teams of the best and brightest scientists and engineers in the field. But first we should support a wide variety of inventors and technologies throughout the world. Surprisingly, this seed effort would only be on the order of \$1 billion per year for the first few years, equivalent to a few days to weeks of fighting in Iraq or profits for ExxonMobil. Funds could come from public and/or private sources (at the moment, the new energy researchers receive no public support and only scattered private support). The seed money can come in the form of small business grants and loans to the 100-200 most promising researchers until they can attract capital or open source their technologies. As the technologies mature, we can expect the actual amount of investment and return to end up being significantly greater, depending on a number of factors other than the true R&D costs.

The goal is to produce prototypes for the marketplace as soon as possible. Whatever management model emerges, we must leave no stone unturned in this quest because of the urgency of the global crisis. Fortunately, the range of technologies is already broad and far-reaching. The research effort should be international in scope and be immune to the political vicissitudes and corruptions of leadership and corporate dominance in the United States and elsewhere. Therefore, the research may need to be done discretely at first under responsible and publicly accountable auspices.

2. Provide public forums to debate and discuss how to implement the most viable new energy options to reverse climate change and pollution; and provide education and demonstrations for the world community. We need to plan conversion scenarios that can help industries and governments make the necessary transition to a new energy economy, free of corruption and monopoly. We need to assess the full life-cycle environmental impact of each alternative and its safety. We don't want to repeat the mistakes of touting the benefits of nuclear energy without

*Continued on next page*

## Zero-point, Consciousness and the Ether

The zero-point energy is defined as the enormous potential energy field everywhere in time and space, yet still exists at a temperature of absolute zero. Students of yoga know this reality as the ether, which could be described as the ineffable field of consciousness that links all of creation, independent of time and space, and accessible through the practices of meditation, pranayama, asanas, purification and ahimsa. Ether is the fifth element of nature that was later dropped by the ancient Greeks, who only considered the material elements air, earth, fire and water—thus founding the (incomplete) Western materialistic world-view.

Yet modern experiments are now confirming the existence and usefulness of the ether to our everyday life—including the likelihood we can tap it for clean, compact and decentralized energy. But this potential must be wisely implemented: on the one hand, it could solve the energy crisis; on the other hand, it could be overused or abused as a weapon. Some experimental devices I've seen seem to be triggered by positive conscious human intention through the medium of water or electromagnetics. These interactions appear to cooperate with nature, rather than act against nature, as is the case of using our current energy systems. But can we transform that intention into a socially responsible energy culture for the benefit of humanity? We may have no other choice but to shift our paradigm to one in which consciousness, positive intention and the ubiquitous zero-point field become the higher ground of our awareness and action.

properly assessing its dangers and hidden costs. While being politically incorrect at the moment, the consideration of new energy needs to be at the forefront of future energy policy discussions. It is too late to deny this, and we certainly don't want the control of these technologies to fall into the wrong hands by default. New energy needs to be controlled by the citizens of the world and so, in my opinion, a strong grassroots movement will become vitally important.

I cannot stress too strongly that an aggressive program to develop new energy is what humanity requires to survive this perilous situation. It may be painful for us to address these issues and may seem a bit far-fetched at first, but I can assure the interested reader that these technologies are very real and can be developed as public policy. To that end, some of us are working now with the progressive elements of the U.S. Congress to draft legislation for providing public support for new energy R&D. Sceptics do not seem to understand that we are in the research phase of an R&D cycle, and we cannot expect yet to have the kind of commercial prototype demonstration they desire in order to be convinced.

we hear little coming from any of these spokespeople about which energy technologies could replace what we now use for a lasting sustainable environment. Taking this added but necessary step appears to be politically incorrect because of the societal grip of powerful vested interests and the regressive thinking even among those of us who are motivated to do something about the crisis.

Beyond envisioning a capital-materials-and-land-intensive solar, wind and biofuels economy, we see a dearth of recognition that, some day, our energy might come with clean and inexpensive elegance from the ethers of space (or from specially catalyzed treatments of water and hydrogen), if only we could allow these approaches to: (1) develop freely from the shadows of suppression, and (2) become responsibly and benevolently managed for the benefit of humankind and nature. This transcendent phenomenon of nature, previously unrecognised by Western scientists, seems to hold the key to our collective future, whether it be clean energy and a clean environment, fresh water, wholesome food, or the recognition that we are all linked as integral parts of a greater creation.

They are just as ignorant as those scientists who denied the practicality of aviation even after the Wright brothers were flying. But to expect the Wrights to immediately deliver a 737 would have been unrealistic—or insane.

But, for the sake of argument, let us grant for a moment the remote possibility that the sceptics are right and that no new energy source were to prove to be practical for one reason or another. Would doing the research have proven to be a waste of time and money? Of course not. The path of discovery always comes up with unexpected surprises, and I would opt for such a modest effort, compared to the costs of war and polluting energy, when our survival is at stake. It is time to put altruism and creativity ahead of near-term profit.

All of us should become educated about the possibilities and collectively support these pioneers of innovation, because we need all the help we can get to convert civilization from a catastrophic energy age to a new energy age.

Each day when I read the news, I see another urgent appeal by a world leader, eminent scientist, media personality or environmental organization to do something about our dirty energy practices and the resulting pollution and climate destabilisation. But

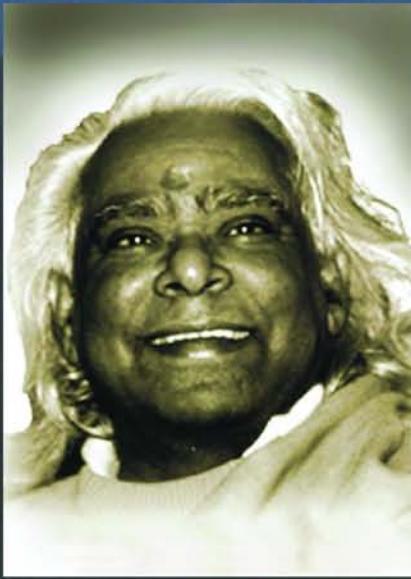
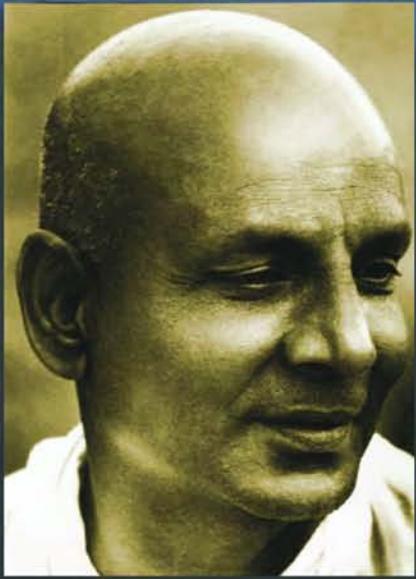
The "miracles" familiar to yogis throughout history could become the commonplace science of tomorrow (see section above). Maybe we can all become empowered to extract energy from the void in harmony with the Earth. These activities could bring us into a higher dimension, which only awaits our acknowledgement and exploration. Then we will become more fully conscious of our place in a universe felt newly alive and connected with who we are, and in the process, learn how special all life on Earth is. This is largely what the new scientific paradigm is about transcending our self-imposed imprisonment of materialism and the quest for monetary gain. We need to look at all this in light of the challenges of the twenty-first century. Perhaps we can now envision a sustainable future in which a blend of consciousness and common sense is creating powerful and benign new technologies whose time may be coming at last.

*Brian O'Leary, Ph.D., is a scientist-philosopher with fifty years of experience in academic research, teaching and government service in frontier science and energy policy. He was a NASA scientist-astronaut during the Apollo program, and selected for a planned Mars mission. His books include *The Energy Solution Revolution*, *Re-Inheriting the Earth*, and *Miracle in the Void*, [www.brianoleary.com](http://www.brianoleary.com)*



# SIVANANDA ASHRAM Yoga RANCH

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[yogaranch@sivananda.org](mailto:yogaranch@sivananda.org)



## PROGRAMS 2010

### Teachers' Training Courses

June 2nd - 30th  
September 10th - October 8th

### Advanced Teachers' Training

July 6th - August 3rd

### Yoga & Permaculture

Design Certification Course  
August 3rd - 22nd  
Year-round Earthcare workshops  
(see [www.sivananda.org/yogaranch/permaculture](http://www.sivananda.org/yogaranch/permaculture))

### Dr. Kamlesh with Ayurvedic Cooking

April 23rd - 30th  
Ayurvedic Cooking Certification Course

### Yoga of the Heart with Nischala Devi Joy

(yoga for cancer and cardiac patients)  
May 13th - 30th

### Yoga of Recovery Course

with Durga & Swami Narayananda  
June 26th - July 1st, July 8th - 18th

### Ayurveda Body Treatments & Consultations

May 28th - October 8th

### Yoga for Young People

How to Teach Young People  
Date Here

### Yoga for Young People

Date Here  
Family Yoga (for parents/kids)  
Date Here

### Memorial Day May 28th - 31st

### Independance Day July 2nd - 5th

### Labor Day September 3rd - 6th

### Ashram Highlights and Activities

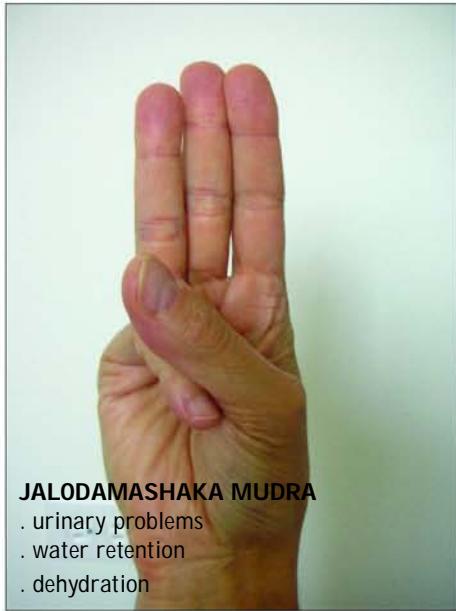
Guests are welcomed year-round,  
for nightly stays, half day visits,  
yoga classes or meals. Stay includes:

- Hatha Yoga Postures
  - Meditation, Chanting
  - Vedanta Philosophy: Workshops on  
yoga, philosophy & psychology
  - Relax / Rejuvinate in our Russian Sauna
  - Year-round Hiking in all four magnificent  
Catskill seasons
  - Gardening, Edible Landscape Design
  - Temple Worship, Interfaith Dialogue
- Work-study programs are available:  
live, serve, & practice as a member of  
the ashram community

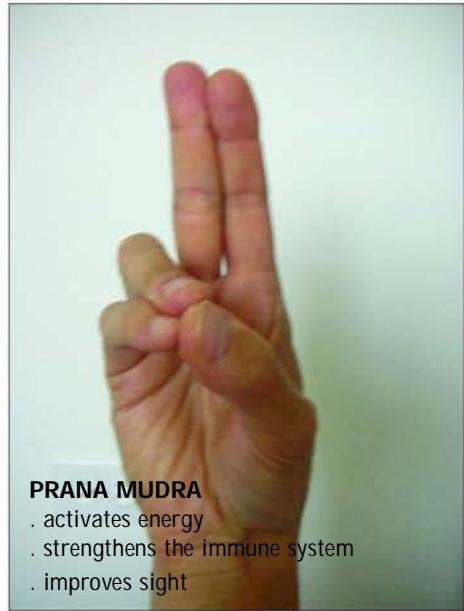


**SURYA MUDRA**

- . eases tension
- . activates the thyroid
- . weight loss

**JALODAMASHAKA MUDRA**

- . urinary problems
- . water retention
- . dehydration

**PRANA MUDRA**

- . activates energy
- . strengthens the immune system
- . improves sight

# MUDRAS

 by CAIRO ROCHA

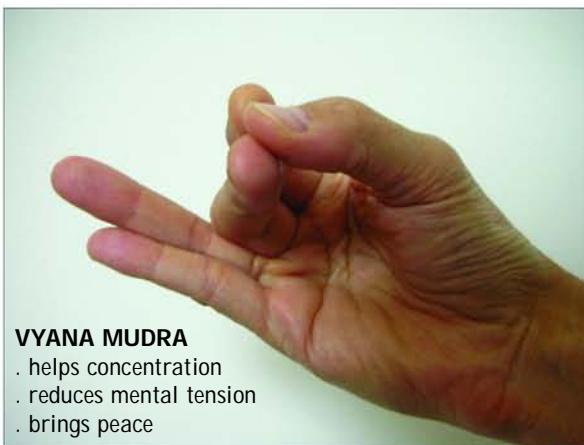
Besides our facial muscles, no other part of the human anatomy expresses emotions as perfectly as the hands. Our hands, with a wide range of gestures and movements, are capable of conveying our thoughts and our feelings in a precise and detailed way.

The Chinese believe that the hands are an extension of the Heart, and since the Heart is considered to be the seat of the Mind, it is understandable that gentle and harmonious gestures reflect a peaceful heart. A disturbed Heart (Mind) is the underlying cause behind aggressive, agitated and uncontrolled hand movements.

The highly sensitive nerve endings that irrigate the whole surface of the hands are responsible for one of the human being's most basic and refined senses - the tactile sense. Through the force of evolution, the human brain has developed a profusion of neurological connections that control the hands and finger movement.

One of the most fascinating traditions of using the hands for therapeutic purposes comes from India - the mudras. For thousands of years, the yogis have used specific hand and finger positions as part of their yoga postures with the purpose of stimulating the brain, body-mind healing and expansion of consciousness.

Interestingly, modern science researches have recently proven that, by constantly moving and exercising the fingers in the mudra fashion, a large portion of the brain is activated.

**VYANA MUDRA**

- . helps concentration
- . reduces mental tension
- . brings peace

**SHANKHA MUDRA**

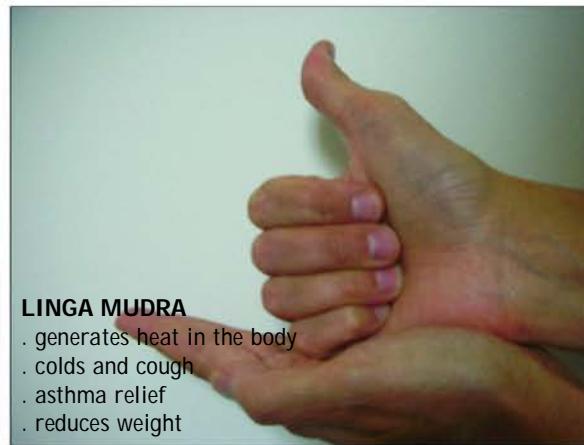
- . treats gall bladder and intestinal disorders
- . thyroid
- . improves voice
- . helps digestion

**SAHAJA****SHANKHA MUDRA**

- . cures stammering
- . improves
- . singer's voice
- . helps digestion, gas

**MERUDANDA MUDRA**

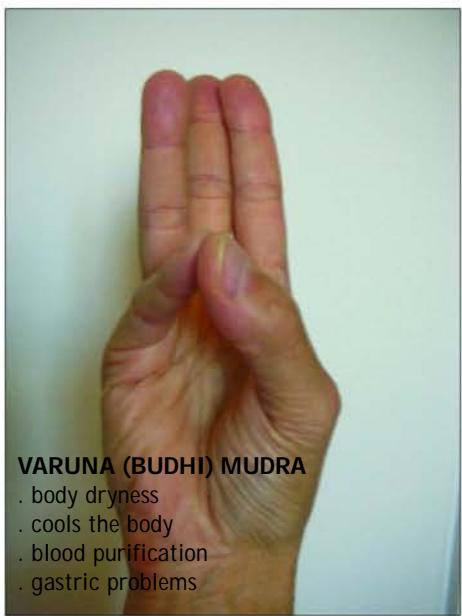
- . treats all kinds of back pain

**LINGA MUDRA**

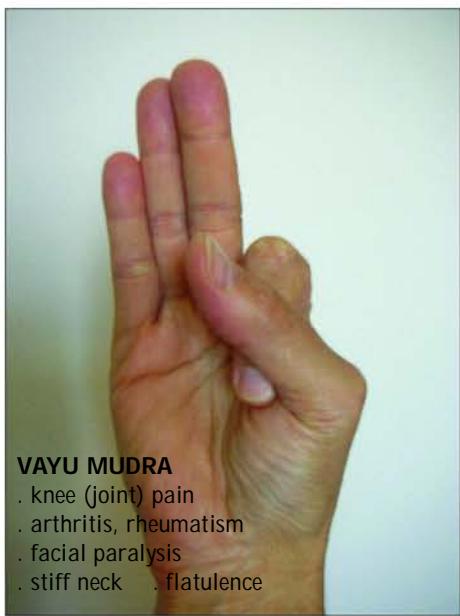
- . generates heat in the body
- . colds and cough
- . asthma relief
- . reduces weight

**KSHEPANA MUDRA**

- . strengthens lungs and large intestine
- . cleanses the body
- . improves the skin

**VARUNA (BUDHI) MUDRA**

- . body dryness
- . cools the body
- . blood purification
- . gastric problems

**VAYU MUDRA**

- . knee (joint) pain
- . arthritis, rheumatism
- . facial paralysis
- . stiff neck
- . flatulence

**SHUNYA MUDRA**

- . ears, hearing problems
- . deafness

There is a significant increase of neuron renewal and expansion of the neuronal network, especially in the motor cortex of the brain, which controls movement and general physical coordination. The mudras stimulate the energy flow in the body through the nadis (energy channels), as their terminal points are located in the fingers and feet. They help to create inner peace and strength, eliminate tiredness and anxiety, as well as improving physical and emotional health.

Ideally, the mudras should be practiced with the legs crossed in a traditional meditation posture. However, they do not lose their efficacy if the person is walking with hands in pocket or lying down. Some sources suggest that they should be practiced for thirty minutes daily, while others recommend fifteen minutes, three times a day or until the health issue subsides.

*Cairo Rocha is an internationally-acknowledged expert in the fields of acupuncture, natural therapies and oriental medicine. He has recently published Anger goes Up, Fears Go Down - Emotions and the Hidden Link, an excellent exposition on the foundations of Chinese medicine.*

[www.cairorocha.com](http://www.cairorocha.com)

**SHWASA (ASTHMA) MUDRA**

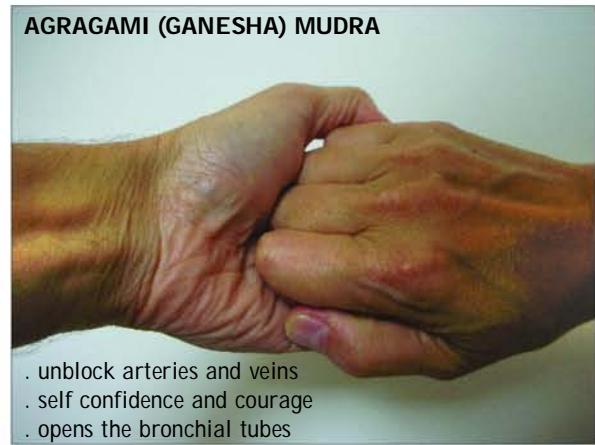
- . treats lung problems
- . asthma
- . controls emotions: sadness

**BHRAMARA MUDRA**

- . cures allergy
- . increases body resistance

**VAJRA MUDRA**

- . stimulates vitality
- . controls blood pressure
- . strengthens stomach, spleen and pancreas
- . heart

**AGRAGAMI (GANESHA) MUDRA**

- . unblock arteries and veins
- . self confidence and courage
- . opens the bronchial tubes

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3 – 31 October 2010

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16 May – 13 June 2010

### SADHANA INTENSIVE

12 - 27 September 2010

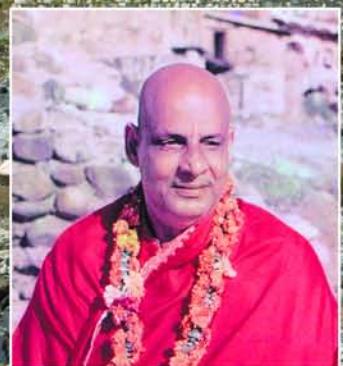
### YOGA VACATION

1 August – 7 September 2010

### HIMALAYAN TREKKING

Valley of Flowers - 5 – 11 August 2010

Gomukh - 10 – 13 May 2010



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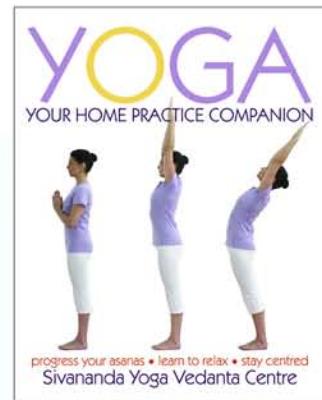
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*Taken from the book **Yoga - Your Home Practice Companion** published by DK  
[www.dk.com](http://www.dk.com)*



# The breath of life

Breathing is like no other body function because it connects us with our environment. Plants take in carbon dioxide and give off oxygen, while human beings and animals inhale oxygen-rich air and exhale air high in carbon dioxide. Yoga breathing exercises help to increase the gas exchange in the lungs and in all the cells of the body.

## Involuntary breathing

Most of the time we breathe involuntarily, thanks to respiratory-control centres located in the brain. An average adult respiratory rate varies between 12 and 20 breaths per minute at rest, moving about half a litre (1 pint) of air in and out of the lungs – this is the vital capacity. When an adult exercises, the respiratory rate can go up to 35–45 breaths per minute, increasing vital capacity to over 4 litres (8½ pints) of inhaled and exhaled air. Such fast, deep breathing is prompted by a sudden increase in carbon-dioxide waste in the muscles caused by exercising.

### DURING INHALATION

During a full yogic breath the diaphragm contracts and descends. This draws air into the lungs and pushes the abdomen forwards.



## Voluntary breath control

Yoga emphasizes voluntary breath control. During asana practice, breathing slows to 10–12 breaths per minute. In relaxation and meditation, you breathe only 6–8 times per minute, and you take just 3–6 breaths per minute during Alternate Nostril Breathing (see pp182–3). All respiratory training in yoga emphasizes complete exhalation in order to eliminate maximum amounts of stale air and allow a deeper inhalation.

In this way, freshly inhaled oxygen-rich air mixes with lesser amounts of stale air than in involuntary breathing, making more oxygen available to nourish every cell. During pranayama, oxygen levels in the blood are higher when you inhale and much lower when you retain your breath. Studies by the Russian medical researcher Dr Arkadi F. Prokop suggest that exposure to

alternating high and low levels of oxygen promotes cell rejuvenation, speeding up the renewal of mitochondria – the microscopic power plants in every cell. Many asanas create pressure on the chest and abdomen. Performing a complete yogic breath (see p181) against such resistance strengthens the respiratory muscles and helps you to breathe with greater awareness in daily life.

**DURING EXHALATION**  
The diaphragm relaxes and moves up, pushing air out of the lungs and allowing the abdomen to move back in.



# One pose, many benefits

Asanas work on many body systems simultaneously. Gaining a better understanding of how some of these benefits complement each other can bring you one step closer to understanding the Sanskrit word *yoga*, which translates as “union”. Here, we look at the benefits a single asana can bring to many parts of the body and the mind.

## Effects on the body

Practising this variation of Triangle pose (see p167) benefits all ten body systems, from the skeletal to the reproductive, but these in particular:

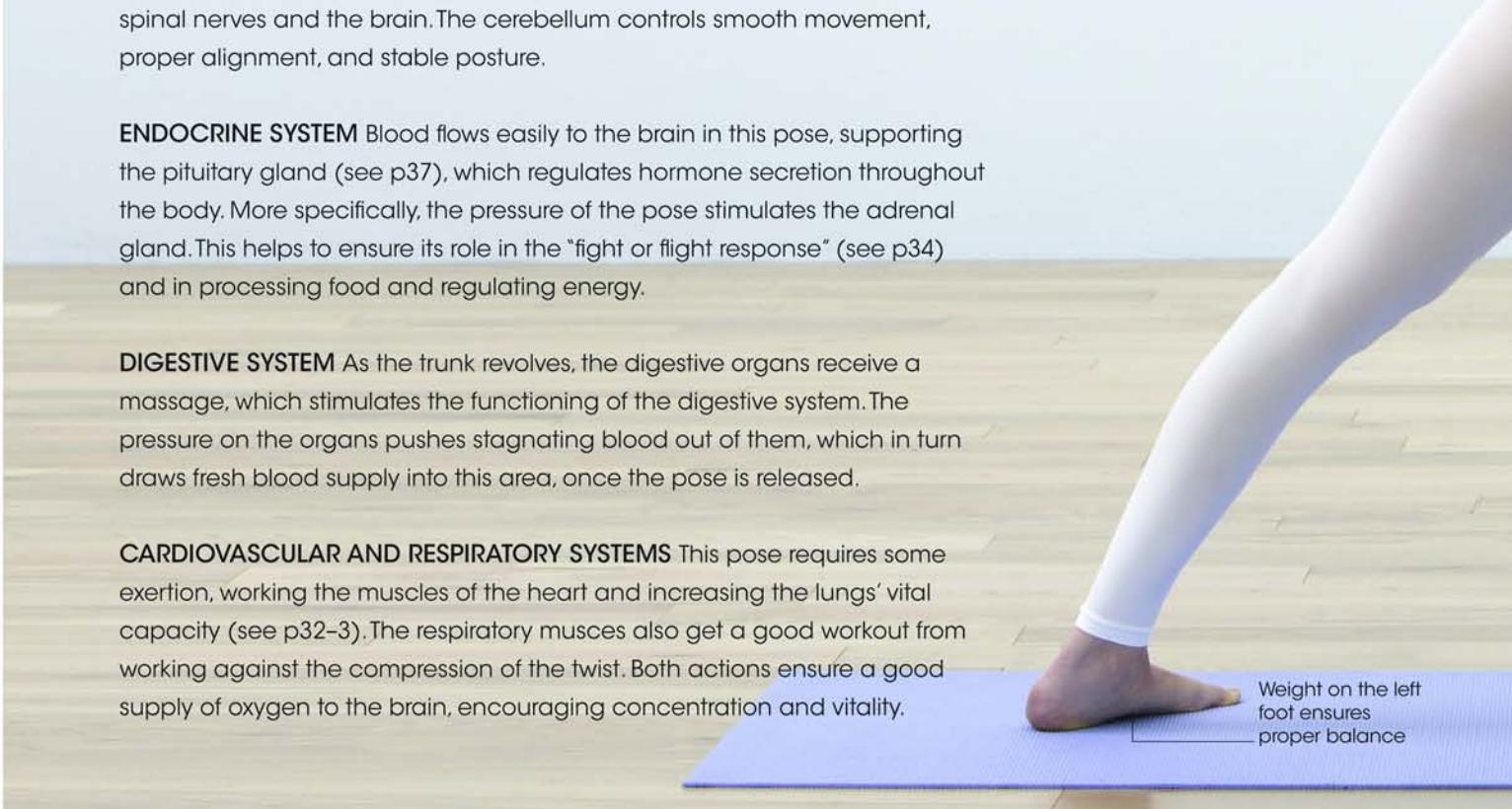
**MUSCULAR SYSTEM** The muscles at the front of the thighs contract to keep the leg stable, while those at the back of the thighs extend. Balancing muscle strength with length maintains mobility in the joints. Repeating the pose to both sides promotes good posture by working the spine evenly.

**NERVOUS SYSTEM** The spine, containing the central nervous system, receives a good stretch along its length, which benefits communication between the spinal nerves and the brain. The cerebellum controls smooth movement, proper alignment, and stable posture.

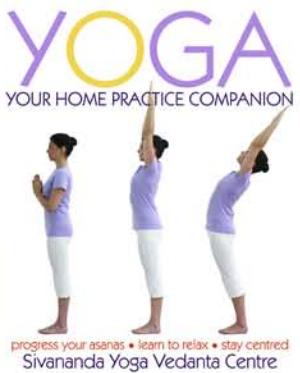
**ENDOCRINE SYSTEM** Blood flows easily to the brain in this pose, supporting the pituitary gland (see p37), which regulates hormone secretion throughout the body. More specifically, the pressure of the pose stimulates the adrenal gland. This helps to ensure its role in the “fight or flight response” (see p34) and in processing food and regulating energy.

**DIGESTIVE SYSTEM** As the trunk revolves, the digestive organs receive a massage, which stimulates the functioning of the digestive system. The pressure on the organs pushes stagnating blood out of them, which in turn draws fresh blood supply into this area, once the pose is released.

**CARDIOVASCULAR AND RESPIRATORY SYSTEMS** This pose requires some exertion, working the muscles of the heart and increasing the lungs’ vital capacity (see p32–3). The respiratory muscles also get a good workout from working against the compression of the twist. Both actions ensure a good supply of oxygen to the brain, encouraging concentration and vitality.



Weight on the left foot ensures proper balance



One Pose, Many Benefits

41

Massage of the adrenal glands helps deal with stress

Massage of the digestive system makes it work more efficiently

Eccentric muscle contraction on the left side of the back keeps the torso aligned horizontally

The left hip rotates inwards

The hamstring muscles of the right leg stretch deeply

The right hip rotates outwards

Rotation of the spine tones the spinal nerves and improves their communication with the brain

The cerebellum is stimulated into controlling balance

The pituitary gland controls the secretions of the adrenal gland

### What happens in the brain

The pose activates the cerebellum to maintain balance. It also massages the adrenal glands on top of the kidneys, whose function is controlled by the pituitary gland in the brain.

Pituitary gland controls several hormone glands in the body

Cerebellum controls movement and balance

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As well as the benefits on the various body systems, this asana enhances balance and spatial awareness.



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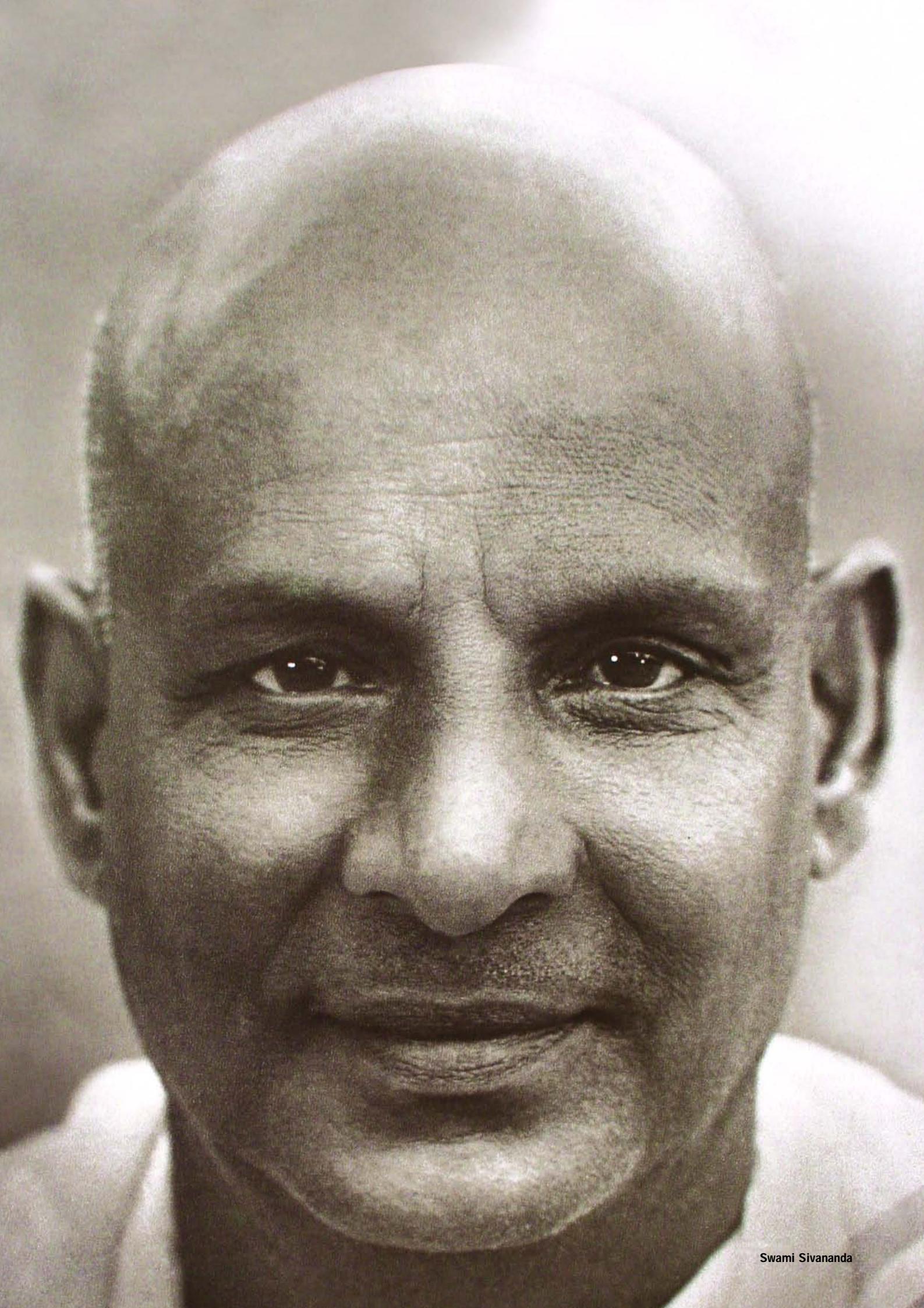
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Swami Sivananda

**T**ratak is steady gazing at a particular point or object without blinking. Tratak is the alpha beta of concentration. It is mainly intended for developing concentration and mental focussing. It removes vikshepa or mental vacillations. There is no other effective method for control of the mind. Sri Ramana Maharshi, the famous jnani of Tiruvannamalai, is doing this exercise even today. When you visit his Ashram, you can see this clearly. When he is seated on his sofa in his room, he is gazing at the walls. When he sits in the verandah on an easy chair he steadily looks at the distant hills or at the sky. This enables him to keep up a balanced state of mind. Nothing can distract his mind. He is very calm and cool always. He is not at all distracted by anyone even though his bhaktas might be talking and singing by his side.

You can do tratak on any picture of the Lord, of Krishna or Siva or on the saligram. Sit in padmasana. You can sit on a chair also. Fix the picture on the wall in front of your eyes. Look at it steadily without winking. Gaze at the head; then at the body; then at the legs. Repeat the same process again and again. When your mind calms down, look at a particular place only. Be steady till tears begin to flow. Repeat your ishta mantra, or Hari Om, or Sri Ram, or Gayatri during tratak.

Tratak with open eyes is followed by visualisation. Visualisation is the calling up of a clear mental image of anything. Gaze at the picture of the Lord, your ishta devata, for a few minutes and then close your eyes and try to visualise the picture mentally. Look through the mind at the mental picture of your ishta devata. You will have a well-defined or clear-cut picture of the Lord. When it

or on the full moon. After sometime, you will see lights of different colours. Again sometime later, you will see only a particular colour throughout and all other surrounding stars will disappear. When you gaze at the moon, you will see only a bright moon on a black background. At times you will see a huge mass of light around you. When gazing becomes more intense, you can also see two or three moons of the same size and at times you cannot see any moon at all even though your eyes may be wide open.

Select at random any place in the open sky in the morning or evening hours and gaze at it steadily. You will get new inspiration. Look at a mirror and gaze at the pupil of your eye. Some persons do tratak on the space between the two eyebrows or on the tip of the nose. Tratak can be profitably done even when you walk. As you walk along the streets, do not look hither and thither. Gaze at the tip of the nose or at the toes.

Advanced students can do tratak on the inner chakras or padmas. Muladhara, anahata, ajna and sahasrara are the important centres for tratak. Keep a ghee light before you and gaze at the flames. Some astral entities give darshan through the flames. Practise tratak for one minute on the first day. Then cautiously increase the period every week. Do not strain the eyes. Do it gently with ease and comfort as long as you can conveniently do it. Do not be impatient. Gradual, steady practice is required. Gazing at a spot even for a full three hours continuously counts for nothing if the mind is wandering. The mind also must be on the spot. Then only you will advance in this practice. Those who cannot gaze steadily even for a second, in spite of several

# •TRATAK•

by SWAMI SIVANANDA

fades, open your eyes and gaze. Repeat the process five or six times. You will be able to visualise clearly your ishta devata after some months' practice. It is difficult to fix your mind in the beginning on the whole picture of the Lord, because all the rays of the mind are not collected. Sometimes you can visualise the face, sometimes the feet, sometimes the eyes. Fix the mind on that part of the picture which the mind likes best. Do not bother yourself if you are not able to have perfect visualisation of the picture of the Lord with closed eyes. Try to produce even a hazy picture. By repeated practice, the hazy picture will assume a well-defined clear-cut form. If you find it difficult to visualise even a hazy picture of the ishta devata, fix the mind on the effulgent light in the heart and take this as a form of the Lord; or you may try to hear the sound of the mantra repeated by you or of the letters of the mantra in order. This will stop mind-wandering.

Continue your practice vigorously and regularly. You will succeed. What is wanted is prema for the Lord. Cultivate this more and more. Let it flow unceasingly and spontaneously. This is more important than visualisation.

Write the word OM in black ink on the wall. Sit in front of the drawing. Concentrate on it with open eyes till tears come in the eyes. Then close the eyes. Visualise the picture of OM. Then open the eyes and again gaze till lachrymation manifests. Gradually increase the period. There are students who can gaze for one hour...

Lie down on an open terrace and gaze at a particular bright star

attempts, need not worry much. They can close their eyes and gaze at an imaginary spot at the space between the two eyebrows. In some people who have weak eye-capillaries their eyes may become red. They need not be alarmed unnecessarily—the redness of the eyes will pass off quickly. Do not tax your eyes by overpractice. When you feel tired, close your eyes and keep your mind on the object of tratak.

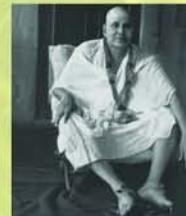
While doing tratak on any object, the same object of gazing will appear as something else during the practice. You may have many other visions. Different people have different experiences...

By the practice of tratak, disease of the eyes is removed. Eyesight improves. Many have thrown away their spectacles after taking to this practice. Will-power is developed. Vikshepa is destroyed. Tratak steadies the mind. Tratak is a very effective, powerful remedy for a wandering mind. It prepares the mind undoubtedly for perfect dhyana and samadhi. This is assuredly a means to the end. You must ascend the yogic ladder step by step. Several persons have been benefited by this useful exercise. Why do you not also, dear friend, sincerely attempt to practise this from this moment? Practise tratak for six months. Then you can take up advanced lessons in concentration and meditation. Be regular and systematic in your sadhana. If there is a break, make up the deficiency or loss the next day. I have given you different exercises for tratak. Select anyone of the methods that suits you best and realise the spiritual benefits.

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# SAMANU

by SWAMI VISHNUDEVANANDA

We use samanu pranayama with the repetition of various bija (seed) mantras to remove resistance and impurities from the psychic system and the nadis. We use the seed syllables of air, fire, moon and earth--YAM, RAM, TAM and LAM respectively at the same time as controlling the breath. These four basic syllables used in samanu will remove the impurities from your psychic system. This cleansing is only for advanced students who have been initiated by their teacher. Beginners should not practise this mental cleansing until they have mastered anuloma viloma and kapalabhati.

Before the chakras open, resistance from the nervous system and all impurities from the sushumna nadi must be removed. Once the sushumna is purified, energy can be sent through it to all the chakras which then act like condensers or capacitors storing and releasing energy.

YAM is the bija mantra of vayu. Vayu means air or gas. It does not mean gas from the physical point of view. When prana is in its gross state, it is called vayu. One manifestation of prana in the physical world is oxygen. Of course it also comes in the form of carbon dioxide, for the plant kingdom to survive. A combination of different types of atoms creates the vayu. The particular vayu which we are focussing on at this point is called prana vayu, that which moves without restriction. There are two types of vayu; physical vayu or physical air, and prana vayu or the subtle vayu. It is the latter that we use to remove the impurities.

When we practise kapalabhati we use the physical air or vayu to remove impurities. Kapalabhati is the physical way of using air or vayu to clean up the system. The cleansing of the nasal passages, throat, stomach, etc. is also part of the physical purifying techniques we use in yoga.

YAM is the bija mantra of the prana vayu or air. YAM is the original name of prana vayu. Name is nothing but a vibration. When I say water, you understand what I am saying, because although it is just a sound, it denotes a particular meaning. If it does not create any meaning, it does not create any wave at all in your mind, and you will not recognise it. When you recognise a name you convert that particular sound into a thought wave which your mind can grasp. If I just said *vellum*, it will not create any reaction in you because you do not know what it means. In Malayalam it means water. Similarly, in the original language, YAM is the sound for the prana vayu. By repeating YAM, the vibration cleans the inner impurities, the psychic impurities, the subtle impurities, which are very difficult to remove by physical methods alone.

Next comes RAM, the bija mantra for fire. RAM purifies and burns all impurities. Fire is the ultimate purification, the ultimate purifying agent. You can throw cow dung into fire, and it will turn into pure ash; you can throw filth and it will burn and turn into pure ash, and so too sandalwood. It does not matter what you throw into fire--good or bad--everything dissolves into pure ash. Everything will look the same--white and pure. No germs, no worms--nothing can thrive in that ash. Fire removes all impurities, all odours, all qualities, and makes it pure, colourless, odourless ash. This is the purpose of repeating the bija mantra

RAM, to remove all the impurities of your nervous system, psychic system and inner body.

And then comes TAM. This is the bija mantra for the Moon. For the nectar. Moon represents the cooling agent, sun is hot, moon is cool. TAM is used to remove the impurities from the nadis. TAM cleans the nadis with the flowing nectar. So first the air dries, then fire burns, then TAM releases the cooling nectar and washes the impurities out of the system.

And now LAM. LAM is the bija mantra for the earth. The earth is solid and strong like a rock, and can take a high voltage. By using the LAM mantra we make our physical and nervous system very strong.

So in samanu pranayama we start by repeating the mantra YAM eight times while we inhale through left nostril, then we hold the breath repeating YAM thirty two times and then exhale through



Swami Vishnu Devananda

the right nostril repeating YAM sixteen times (all through this repetition of YAM your focus should remain on the anahata chakra - the heart centre). Then inhale through the right nostril while repeating RAM for eight times. Then hold the breath while you repeat RAM for thirty two times, and exhale through the left repeating RAM for sixteen times (all through this repetition of RAM your focus should remain on the manipura chakra - the navel centre). Then inhale through the left nostril repeating TAM for eight times. Hold the breath, repeating TAM for thirty two times (all through this repetition of TAM your focus should remain on the chandra chakra - the tip of the nose). Then exhale through the right nostril by repeating LAM for sixteen times (while you repeat LAM your focus should remain on the mooladhara chakra - the base of the spine).

When you practise, first do kapalabhati and then this practice. Kapalabhati is a cleansing with the physical air. Samanu is a cleansing with the subtle air--the prana vayu.

## by S. HARIDAS

Mathematics is said to be the Queen of Sciences. No wonder, as there is hardly any branch of knowledge devoid of mathematics. From a cattle census to satellite-imaging technology, everything flourishes in the courtyard of mathematics. This omnipresence of mathematics was not alien to the ancient people who lived on the river banks of the Saraswati and the Sindhu. They expressed it in beautiful language. The *Vedangajyotisam* states:

*Yatha sikha mayuranam  
Naganam manayo yatha  
Tadvadvedangasastranam  
Ganitam murdhani sthitam*

"Like the crowning crest of a peacock and the shining gem in the cobra's hood, mathematics is the supreme *Vedanga Sastra*". There are six *Vedanga Sastras* viz. *Siksa* (phonetics), *Niruktam* (etymology), *Vyakaranam* (grammar), *Chandas* (prosody), *Kalpam* (ritualistics) and *Ganitam* (mathematics).

How could such a magnificent position be attributed to this subject at a time when all the other five branches were in their pristine glory, in full bloom, vast and deep as an ocean? The only logical conclusion to be drawn is that ganitam (mathematics) had also attained such perfection. And what was the need for such intellectual luxuries as science and mathematics for those nomads sitting around the fire, praying to the lord of natural forces, the forces of fire, air, water, thunder and lightning, out of sheer fear!? Though they were mostly forest-dwellers, living on mere roots and fruits, their enlightened souls kept the fire of knowledge burning, a knowledge which knew no barriers. They could penetrate deep into the subtler regions and into hidden truths, formulate principles, and illustrate mechanisms in beautiful language. These people who realised the ultimate forms of knowledge are known as rsis and the Sanskrit verses that they wrote took the form of the Vedas. There, hidden behind the metrical syllables, sprung the basic tenets of the life sciences both physical and spiritual.

Who was the first to count, give shape and symbols for continuous counting from one to infinity? An inquiry will invariably reach the Vedas and frame charges against the Vedic rsis. In the Yajurveda the rsi after preparing bricks (*istaka*) for a sacrifice, prays thus:

*Ima me Agna istaka dhenava santveka ca  
Desa ca satam ca sahasram cayutam ca  
Niyutam ca prayutam ca arbudam ca nyarbudam  
Cantyam madhyam parardhascaita me agna  
Istaka dhenavasantvamutramusmimloke*

"Oh! Agni (fire) let these bricks be milk-giving cows to me. There are (eka) 1, (desa) 10, (satam)  $10^2$ , (sahasram)  $10^3$ , (ayutma)  $10^4$ , (niyutam)  $10^5$ , (prayutam)  $10^6$ , (arbudam)  $10^7$ , (nyarbudam)  $10^8$ , (antyam)  $10^9$ , (madhyam)  $10^{10}$ , (paradham)  $10^{11}$ , bricks. Let these be milch kines in this world and the other world too."

This is no poetic imagination, but a cryptic description of the decimal number system up to twelve places, which is still in use today. They had odd numbers (camakamantram), even num-



bers, fractions, sequences and more. Their efficacy in fundamental operations, especially in handling bigger numbers is still unmatched. The value of pi correct to five decimal places was known, as well as second degree equations all used for the construction of sacrificial altars and sites.

Their knowledge was not limited to computations. Simple point and line up to complicated figures like the sri cakram were at their finger tips. The knowledge of geometry (rekhagantam) that developed in those days was simply fantastic. The Pythagoras Theorem (540 BC)

existed thousands of years before Pythagoras. The Sulba Sutra of Baudhayana, an ancient treatise on the construction of altars, says: In a rectangle (dirghacaturam), the square of a diagonal (aksnaya rajjuh) is equal to the sum of squares of its length and breadth. B.S.S. I (37). Geometrical figures like the triangle (tryasram), rectangle (caturasram), circle (mandalam), isosceles triangle (praugam), as well as area, volume and many other principles were used profusely in Vedic sacrifices.

### Other Sciences

To have a bird's eye view of the use of mathematics during Vedic times, we need to refer to some other branches of knowledge.

Astronomy (jyotissastra) was in its glory. The 12 moon signs each of  $30^\circ$  (amsa), are the Vedic descriptions of the solar system. The names of stars and planets, the time of eclipses, the revolution of earth, the calendar from ksanam (a moment) to kalpam (an aeon) are used even today. It is difficult to believe that the velocity of light given in Vedic literature is a true match to that of present-day science. Sayanacarya in his commentary of the Rgveda says: Salutations unto thee, Oh Lord! Who travells two thousand two hundred and two yojanas in half a nimisha. [R.V. (S.B.) 1-50-54].

Nimisha is a unit of time and yojana, a unit of distance. This is equivalent to  $2.9 \times 10^8$  m/s; the modern measurement is  $3 \times 10^8$  m/s.

What was the status of the physical sciences at that time? Of course, Ayurveda, the complete system of medicine was a widely accepted branch of science from Brahma Himself! And the brilliance of Patanjali, the author of the Yoga Sutras, the science of the mind; the Caraka Samhita the science of life; and the Mahabhasyam the science of words, are without parallel. Each had their own standard units of measurement.

All inhabitants of this world are classified as born from egg (andajam), born from sweat (svedajam), born from seedlings (ulbhijjam) and born from placenta (jarayujam). Is there a better start for a student of botany and zoology? The knowledge about the atom (anu), the molecule (dyanukam) and more, of the Samkhya philosophy and the science of substances (padarthavijnaniyam) of the Nyayasutra stand intact even after the present-day scientific explosion.

The science of mercury (rasavidya) of the alchemists was highly evolved. They could even melt iron into gold! Usmapa, the science of the metallurgy was highly developed. The Damascus Sword was of legendary sharpness and strength, and claimed to be able to cut through even rock. The steel originated in India.

# MATHEMATICS

The science behind this and the finest alloys used for aeroplanes and rocket engines, in the right proportions and the application of the exact degree of heat is hard to grasp. The Vaimanika Prakaranam of Bharadwaja, a treatise dealing with flying machines written in the 4th century BCE, says: (2150-51): Fill in the mould (nalikamusamukham), place it in the furnace (cakramukhakundam) and heat by a blower (ajamukhabhastram) up to 712° (dvadasottarasaptasatakaksyosnapramanatah). This is to manufacture the metal for a rocket engine. The temperature is measured in standarised units.

## Discoveries

What about discoveries? Who had the fortune to make the flat earth into a round one! Of course Copernicus and Magellan did it beautifully, but only after our Puranic poets perceived it. The Bhagavatham has a chapter by the name of Bhugolavarnana, a treatise on geography. Aryabhatta (499 AD), a master of astronomy and mathematics, computed the circumference and diameter of earth, the distance to other planets and so on from this treatise. Newton (1671 AD) discovered the principle behind the falling apple. But Aryabhatta, after establishing earth's gravity (gurutva), wondered how we could say that it comes down or goes up when space is so bountiful. In his Golapadam (6) it says: "This earth has the power of attraction too, and by this it attracts things towards it. Though this looks like downward falling, how can we say that when space is so vast?" The concept of 'space' in modern science is only of recent origin.

The whole of the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution gained momentum from automation. Who was instrumental in the invention of the automobile engine, the internal combustion engine or the gasoline engine?

Bharadwaja, engineer par excellence writes in the 4th century BCE: [2099-2100] In front (top) of the gas combustion engine (Vatapacakayantrum), to burn the oil (tailam), a spark plug (dipaculli) is fitted. To spark the plug and to produce fire (agni) an electric device (vidyut yantram) is fixed with a switch. Do we need a better illustration for the internal combustion principle?

Now, if we are presented with the puzzle--Electricity? In those days?, there is the whole of electrodynamics (saktitantram), coming from none other than the ancient rsi Agastya who even dried up the oceans. [2212-13] The dynamo (sangharsanam), hydroelectric power (jalapadam), battery (samyojakam), solar cells (kiranajanyam), etc. are the thirty

two sources of electricity described in the Sastras. Of this, the battery (samyojakam) is suitable for aeroplanes. Materials like copper wire (tamratantri), iron magnet (ayaskantam) and coil (avrttanalam) were in use.

Nowadays digital audio, video recording and transmission are mega-business. What does Bharadwaja have to say about this? [V.P. 1690-91] From the sounds of a heart beat (pranana) to a bang (sphotana), corresponding to their intensity and in their order by digital code (samkhyanasarena) through the wire (nala) connected to the sound recorder (sabdaphenam) in that order. This means sound waves are converted to digital codes and sent by wire to a machine fitted with a recorder. Is there any difference from our present day analog-to-digital converter technology? What is the speed of a supersonic jet? Bharadwaja's rocket propelled jets attained 400 yojanas per hour.

(1 yojana = 9.09 miles approx.) [V.P. 2462]

## Future Technology

We are in search of fuel which is easily available and non-exhaustive. Although the source of energy is the sun (aditya), we have started from Fire,--wood and coal for the steam engine, oil for the internal combustion engine, liquid gases for air and space engines. All these are from Earth (prthvi). The next natural choice is Water (ap). It is yet to be tapped. Our ancient scientists could visualise it clearly: [2165-67] The current (vidyuchakti) is supplied through the wire (nala) in its order using a switch (kilaka), which (samcodayet) activates between two molecules of water (varikosadvaya madhye) to the prescribed measure. The water then decomposes into hot gas (ousmyadhumakaram) and collects in two jars. This, exactly, is the hydrolysis of water.



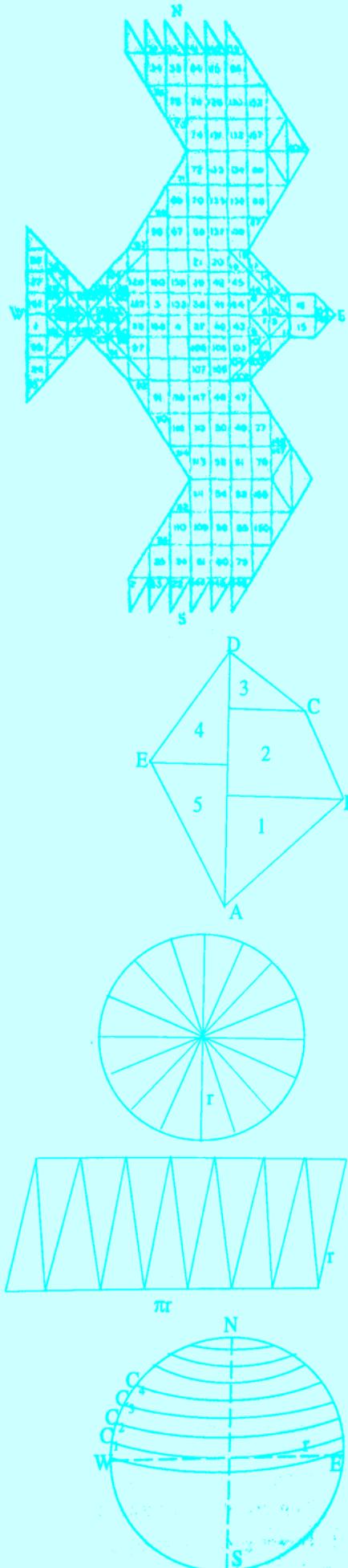
This nascent hydrogen is ignited in high pressure and escapes through nozzles to propel the aeroplane. It is astonishing to read the term which shows that they had full knowledge of the composition of water and that water molecules exist as  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ .

## Monuments

Why did all this wisdom, both pure and practical, not pass to modern times?

Science studies the property of matter and taps it to the furthest extent possible. This is true for all ages. Even the terminology at the functional level seems similar.

*Continued on next page*



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## Vedic Mathematics *continued from previous page*

To achieve a particular objective the material selected may be slightly different as well as the process. Moreover, according to the Vedic calendar, in the Krita Yuga, there is no need of anyone's help. Everyone can make the effort and attain any desired goal. The other two yugas the Treta and the Dwapara are governed by mantra and tantra respectively. Only in the Kali Yuga man depends on instruments or machines (yantram). The most proficient mathematician of India, Aryabhatta, as early as 499 A.D., has unequivocally stated that the Kali Yuga started after the Mahabharatha war, fifty two centuries ago. Though the knowledge was there, it could be used only in the Kali Yuga. Still, there are standing monuments, some of which are puzzling even to modern scientists. The iron pillar of Delhi, the sites of Mohan-jo-Daro and Harappa, the poetry in stone of Ajanta and Ellora, the observatories of Jaipur, the colossal temple structures throughout India can speak volumes about the knowledge that was available. From these we can easily infer that there was science as well technology with standardised units and measures, necessitating a high knowledge of mathematics.

### Vedic Mathematics

We have already seen that the origin of mathematics is from the Vedas. But the Vedic tradition faded away in the ravages of time. Fortunately we were blessed with the birth of another seer, Jagadguru Swami Bharati Krisna Theerthaji (1884-1960), late Sankaracarya of Puri Govardhan Peetham. His Holiness had a brilliant academic career and he took eight M.A. degrees at the age of 20. Sanskrit and mathematics were among them. He served as principal of a college for a short stint. But his inner urge for higher truths took him to the Sringeri Mathom, where he continued learning the Vedas and Sastras. His sharp intellect pierced into the hidden meaning of certain sutras.

After eighty years of tapas, he recovered sixteen mathematical sutras, supported by thirteen odd subsutras. He wrote sixteen volumes establishing the veracity of these sutras in the solution of problems in modern mathematics. He used to give demonstrations in colleges and universities at home and abroad. The manuscript, kept in a disciple's house for printing, went missing. At the repeated request of his followers, Theerthaji started writing again, but could finish only one volume viz. Ancient Vedic Mathematics, which is the original text on this subject.

The Sankaracarya with unmatched calibre and erudition, though a contemporary of mathematical genius S. Ramanujan, gained little recognition. Swamiji lived fifteen years in independent India, but his book was published five years after his mahasamadhi. Indian Universities and academics were reluctant in taking up serious studies in this subject, whereas Western mathematicians have made great strides.

Three professors from England, A.P. Nicholas, J.R. Pickles and K. Williams have contributed on the use of Vedic mathematics in higher applications. Professor Williams published a book Triples as a fitting tribute at the eve of Theerthaji's birth centenary. In England Vedic mathematics is accepted as part of the syllabus and the authorities have started preparing text books. Dr. Narendra Puri of Roorkhee University (U.P.) has also tried his best in the propagation of this subject.

The purity of Vedic sciences is really holistic as life itself. We may have tasty food cooked in sophisticated micro-ovens. But we cannot ensure a sound body better than that of the ancient earth-ware users. We are assisted with highly efficient I.T. servers and all knowledge at our finger tips. Yet we are no more wise in our performance than those half naked saints. In the midst of all amenities and luxuries created by modern science and technology, sleep is but a half-note away.

*S. Haridas is a world authority in Vedic mathematics. He has published many books on the subject and is currently teaching in India. He set the record for the fastest mental calculation by finding the 251st root of a 794 digit number in 1 minute 40 seconds at Cochin University.*



## YOGHURT RICE (THAIR SADAM)

**Preparation Time: 30 minutes. Cooking Time 20 minutes.**

**Serves 4-6**

**Can be served hot or cold**

- 1 cup long-grained rice
- 1 small raw mango, skinned and chopped finely (optional)
- 1 cucumber, skinned and chopped finely
- 2 green chillies, chopped finely
- 1 inch piece ginger, chopped finely
- 1 cup fresh yoghurt
- 1/2 cup fresh milk
- 1 bunch coriander leaves, chopped finely
- salt to taste
- A few chopped coriander leaves for garnishing

### Tempering

- 2 teaspoons oil
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon urad dal
- 1 teaspoon channa dal
- 1 dry red chilli, halved
- A few fresh curry leaves

### Method

1. Cook the rice and set aside, or, use left-over rice
2. Add the chopped mango, cucumber and salt.
3. Heat 2 teaspoons oil and add all the ingredients for tempering to the oil.
4. When the mustard seeds splutter, add to the rice and mix thoroughly.
5. Add the chopped green chillies, ginger, and part of the chopped coriander leaves to the rice. Mix well.
6. Add the yoghurt and the milk to the rice. Mix thoroughly.
7. Serve immediately.

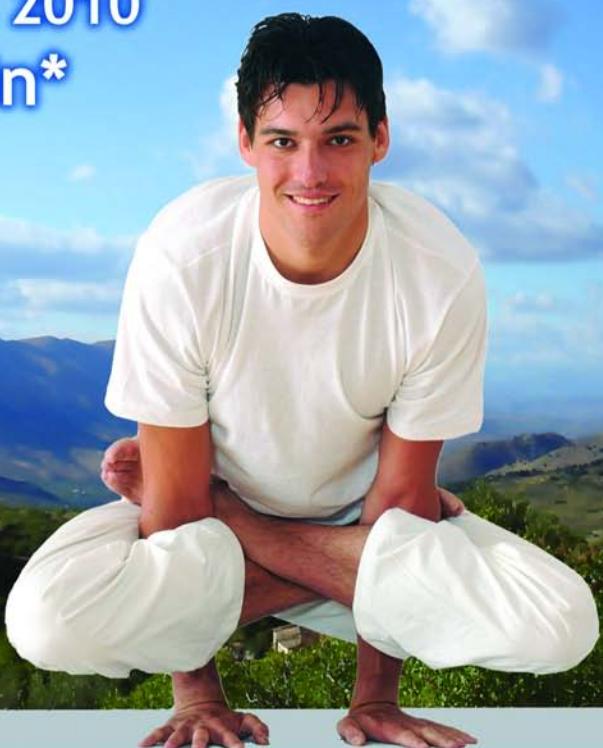
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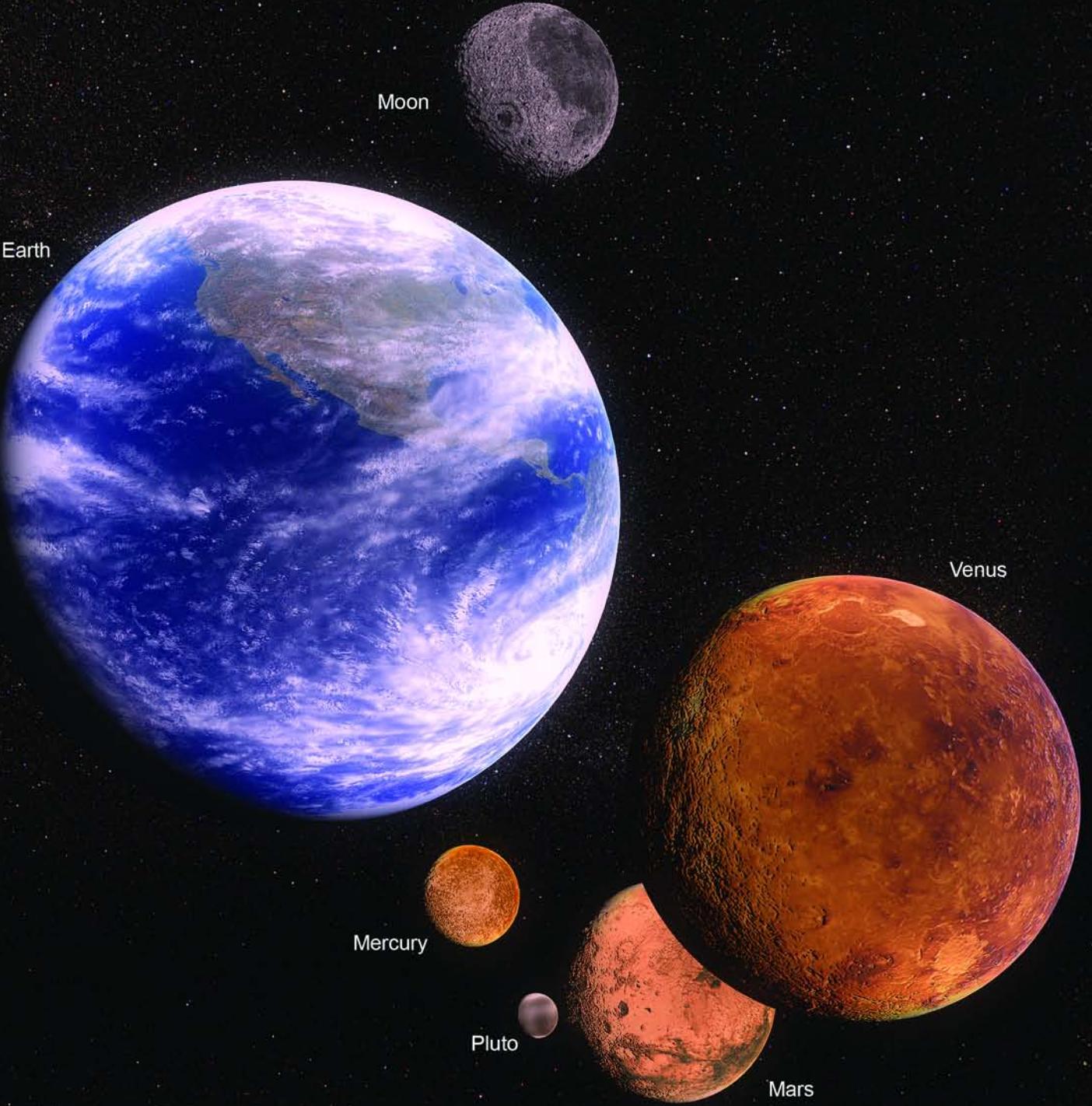
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(free choice of dates)

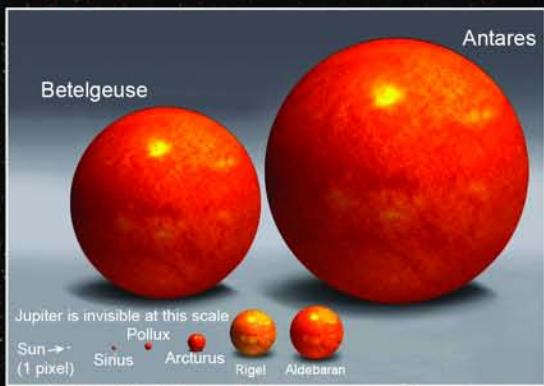
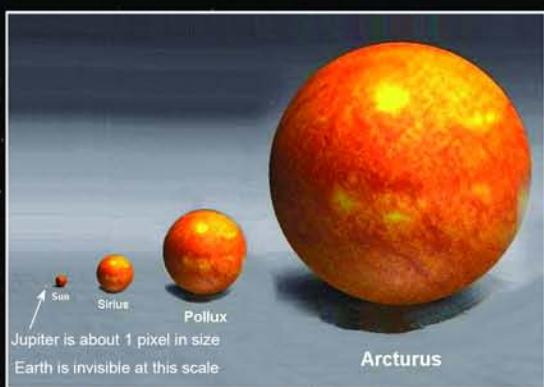
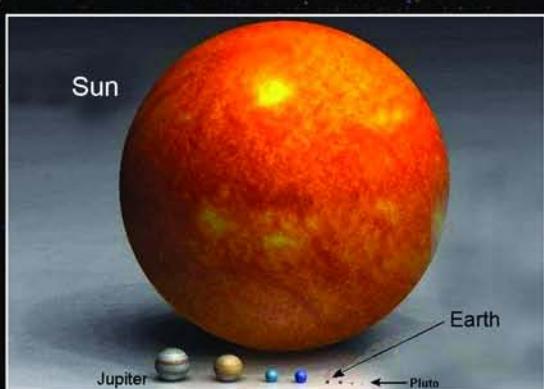
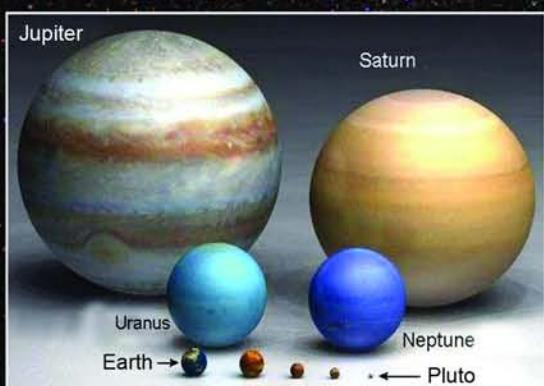
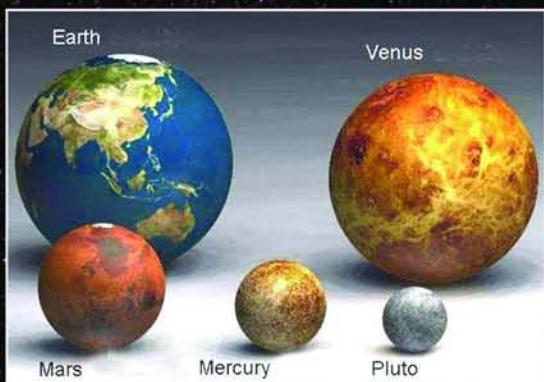


\* All activities are given in Spanish



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# THE RELATIVE WORLD

# JAPAN



7Swami Mahadevananda and Mani Chaitanya arrived in Tokyo Japan at the end of October 2009 to visit the affiliated Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centre in Tokyo and to promote Swami Vishnudevananda's mission in Japan on a week-long programme.

During the week Swami Mahadevananda gave inspiring workshops and satsangs to large gatherings of students, both in Tokyo and in the city of Yaizu, a two hour bullet-train ride away.

Among the highlights of the visit was a formal Tea Ceremony conducted by Sivakami, the director of the Tokyo centre and accompanied by other TTC students. Sivakami and her assistants were bedecked in the stunning traditional kimono dress and the ceremony, at which Swami Mahadevananda was Master Guest, was conducted with great dignity and beauty. Members of the press including those from the national yoga magazine Yogini were also present. Swami Mahadevananda pointed out that the aim of the ceremony was to invoke spirituality in our everyday life and he drew parallels with the concentration and devotional practices of Raja and Bhakti Yoga. He explained how the postures, gestures, breathing and mind practices in yoga can deepen any religious and cultural practice.

Throughout the trip Mani Chaitanya gave inspired asana classes including a Gentle Yoga class in a day care centre for seniors at Mitaka City, Tokyo.

Future plans and ongoing activities to expand Swami Vishnudevananda's mission in Japan were discussed. Swami Mahadevananda explained the work of ISYVC worldwide and how the Masters work through different channels. Sita, Lalitambika as well as other TTC graduates have agreed to commit to open a centre in Tokyo with karma yoga involvement along with Shivakami and Shivakami Mako during the coming months.

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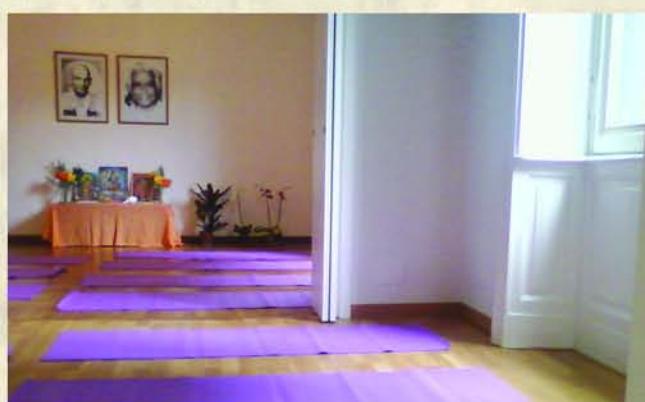
## NEW SIVANANDA CENTRES



### VILNIUS, LITHUANIA

October 4 2009 saw the opening of the first Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centre in Eastern Europe. Yoga Acharyas Swami Durgananda and Swami Atmaramananda blessed the Centre, sharing their love and enthusiasm with all. The Centre was beautifully prepared with the support of many close teachers and students. The inauguration began with a puja to the Masters attended by 170 people. Asana classes were divided into beginners and intermediate. Swami Durgananda delivered a very inspiring lecture on Swami Vishnudevananda's life and mission accompanied by a slideshow. Bhima, who came from London to direct the new Centre, taught his first asana class and was introduced to the Lithuanian teachers. We are all feeling very blessed to be instruments of the Masters for bringing their teachings to this new part of the world.

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Vivulskio 41, LT-03114, Vilnius LITHUANIA  
Tel: + 370 (5) 21 041 93, e-mail: vilnius@sivananda.net



### MILAN, ITALY

Italy saw the opening of its second Centre in November, this time in the city of Milan. Swami Jnaneswarananda is director of the Centre and is actively recruiting students and teachers. The Centre is located very near the centre of the city and the famous cathedral and is ideally situated on the corner of a busy street. Open classes are offered daily and there are plenty of new teachers from the Teacher's Training Course held in Italy for the first time this year. The formal opening of the Centre will take place in April 2010.

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mobile: +39 334 760 5276  
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## ASHRAM AND CENTRE NEWS

### GRASS VALLEY

New luxurious cabins at the Yoga Farm, Grass Valley, CA.

Nestled on the little hill above the Yoga Platform, two new bamboo flooring full service cabins with private bathrooms are available for guests. They are the first accommodation with attached bathrooms available at the Ashram. We are planning to build three more.



### PARIS

Since the move to the new ground floor premises near the Gare de l'Est last year, the Paris Centre has seen a steady increase in students. Now an extra space has been rented on the first floor, which will serve as residential quarters and additional teaching space.



### MADURAI

For the first time since its inception (5 years ago), the ashram was open for the entire year. The new temporary dormitory has a coconut leaf roof; with accommodation for an additional 40 guests. A veranda was also constructed, overlooking the mountains in the distance; providing a place for personal reflection and study. Additional improvements include readying the ground for constructing a wall around the Kali temple and planting over 200 different varieties of trees, bushes and plants.



### VAL MORIN, CANADA

Ten new huts are being built on the hillside in Ashram grounds to house staff during the summer. This will release space for guest accommodation during our busiest months. A bathhouse will be built to complete the project.



### NEYYAR DAM

Paintings of the Ten Avatars of Lord Vishnu were recently restored in the Narayana Hall, in the oldest part of the ashram. We use this hall for the daily chanting of the peace mantra, Om Namo Narayanaya. These new paintings add a special energy to this vibrant hall.



### NEYYAR DAM

The terraced pathway leading to the Rama Hall and Raja Rajeshwari Temple, has been tiled. This will minimize the slippery conditions during the monsoon season, as well as give a new look to the pathway. Red tiles with an intricate design were used, nicely distinguishing the stone wall and surrounding greenery.



## LONDON

With the completion of the renovations of rooms and the planned opening of a teaching space in the loft during the coming months, the Centre is ready for its first Teachers' Training Course to be held in April 2010. Up to 25 students will be able to participate in the residential course, with the presence of various Swamis, the peaceful atmosphere of the Centre's Peace Garden and the parks and River Thames nearby. The reception and boutique have been moved to the recently renovated new building.



## BAHAMAS

Last summer renovations of existing accommodations began, adding ensuite bathrooms and air conditioning for those who would like to find a little more "creature comfort" within ashram life. This summer, we began construction of four beachfront villas that will offer guests not only private bathroom with tub and shower, but also kitchenette, air conditioning, double beds and sliding glass doors to a balcony. The large balconies with their wonderful views over the ocean allow privacy and solitude. The villas are built with the characteristic charm of typical Bahamian homes, made of wood and painted pastel green with white trim. They are now nearing completion and we are already taking bookings for the forthcoming winter-spring 2010 season.



## DELHI NATARAJ

On the holy occasion of Master Swami Sivananda's 122nd birthday, we opened the newly-renovated Sri Vishnu Hall in the Delhi Nataraj Centre. Amidst garlands and decorations, we celebrated with a Ganapathy Homa and a Navagraha Homa. Amongst over 150 celebrants were Swami Gurupriyananda from Chinmaya Mission and Swami Prabuddhananda from Arsha Vidya Mandir, who both explained Swami Sivananda's teachings. A lamp was symbolically lit by the Swamijis and senior teachers completing the inauguration.



## ORLEANS

It was a truly expansive moment when the teacher trainees of the July course at the Orleans Ashram found the space of the Yoga Hall extended to double size for the final week of the course, holding up to 85 for asanas and 200 for satsangs. The extension of the former Horse Stables of the historical Castle includes four new guest rooms with attached bathroom, as well as indoor dining area.



## NETALA

Work has started to build a protective wall for our new Ashram opposite Swami Vishnudevananda's Samadhi rock and facing the Ganga River. Once this is completed we will start construction of accommodation rooms for visiting staff and guests.





## VIDURA-NEETI

**The Vidura Neeti from the Mahabharata is considered one of the classic discourses relating to the science of kingship and politics. However, it has relevance to everyday life and to our relationships in work, the family and the community. Vidura, known for this truthfulness and intelligence, is counseling his half-brother Dhritarashtra on how he should behave toward the Pandava brothers and toward the conflict between the two family factions which eventually leads to war.**

The mind of Dhritarashtra was terribly upset...His frame burned as if with fever. He tried to sleep. He could not. In despair he sent for Vidura. Vidura came to him quickly and asked him why he had been sent for. He said: "Vidura, Sanjaya has returned from Upaplavya. He spoke harsh words to me and went away. I have tried to sleep. I cannot sleep. You are my only friend. You have loved me with all my faults. You must console me and make me sleep. I cannot sleep".

Vidura said: "My lord, five kinds of people are unable to sleep. A man who lusts after the wife of another cannot sleep. A thief cannot sleep. A man who has lost all his wealth cannot sleep, or one who thinks all his wealth will be lost. An unsuccessful man cannot sleep. A weak man oppressed by a strong man cannot sleep. I hope none of these descriptions fits you. Surely, avarice and greed are not qualities to be found in you!"

Dhritarashtra was not unused to sarcasm in the words of Vidura. He smarted under the insight of his brother. He said: "Please tell me how I can sleep".

Vidura smiled at him with pity blended with scorn. He said: "You have not been able to sleep for the last so many years, my lord! From the moment the Pandavas came to Hastinapura, you have not been able to sleep. Why, your sleeplessness goes further back. I remember the day when your son Duryodhana was born. You called me to your presence and asked me: "I hear that a son has already been born to my brother Pandu. He is older than my son. Do you think there will be trouble about the heir to the throne because of this? Since that day, jealousy has lodged in your heart and has driven out sleep.

"For the last so many years, I have been trying in vain to install in you some righteousness. You are a very sinful person. You have been responsible for the sufferings of the Pandavas and the imminent destruction of the Kauravas. How can a sinful person like you get sleep? Yudhishtira has always paid you the respect due to a father. He considers you as his father. But you have always been behaving like a thief towards him. I am not surprised at this suffering of yours.

You ask me to tell you how you can sleep. At this very moment, if you decide to return Yudhishtira's kingdom to him, you can sleep like an innocent child. Please listen to me. You are not wise. You are foolish".

Dhritarashtra said: "Tell me, my dear brother, what are the qualities one finds in a wise man and in a foolish man".

Vidura said: "I will tell you what a wise man should be like. A man should aspire for the higher things, ideals, in life. The assets of such a man are self-knowledge, exertion, forbearance and steadiness in virtue. Such a man is wise. Neither anger, nor joy, nor pride, nor false modesty, nor vanity, can distract him from his purpose. His actions are always done with the thought that they should serve both the worlds. He does not tinge his actions. Honest deeds delight him and he loves what is good. He is unaffected either by honours or by slights. Like a lake in the course of the River Ganga, he is calm, cool and unagitated.

"On the other hand, the qualities of a fool are also easy to enumerate. Scripture is a closed book as far as he is concerned. He is vain: when he wants to have something, he will never hesitate to employ unfair means, he has a knack of desiring what he has



no right to desire. Those who are powerful make him envious. Let me tell you about a peculiar attribute of sin. One man commits a sin and several reap the fruits resulting from his sin. But in the end, the sin attaches itself ONLY to the one man, while those many who enjoyed the fruits of his sin escape unscathed!

"A wise king should discriminate the TWO with the help of the ONE. He must control the THREE by means of the FOUR. He has to conquer the FIVE, know the SIX, abstain from the SEVEN and be happy. By ONE is meant the intellect: by TWO, right and wrong: by THREE friend, stranger and enemy: by FOUR is meant gift, conciliation, disunion and severity: by FIVE the senses: by SIX, treaty, war, etc.: by SEVEN women, dice, hunting, harshness of speech, drinking, severity of punishment and waste of wealth. This means that one should know how to discriminate between right and wrong by the use of the intellect. Friend, foe or stranger can be won over by one of the four: gift, etc. The senses must be under control and a king should be familiar with treaty, etc. which are essential. The seven have naturally to be avoided if a king aspires to be wise.

"Poison kills but one man: so does a weapon. But wicked counsels destroy an entire kingdom with kings and subjects. The highest good is righteousness. The one supreme peace is forgiveness. Supreme contentment is knowledge. Supreme happiness is benevolence. A king can easily become great by doing just two things: refraining from harsh speech and disregarding those that are wicked. Three crimes are considered to be terrible: that of another's property, outrage of another man's wives and breach with friends. Three things destroy the soul: lust, anger and covetousness. Three are essential: a follower, one who seeks protection and one who has come to your abode. These should be protected. A king, although powerful, should never confer with these four: men of small sense, men that procrastinate, men who are indolent and men who flatter. Five things are to be worshipped: father, mother, fire, the preceptor and the soul. Six faults should be avoided by a king who wishes to be great: sleep, drowsiness, fear, anger, indolence and procrastination. These six should not be forsaken: truth, charity, diligence, benevolence, forgiveness and patience. A king should renounce the seven faults. Eight things glorify a king: wisdom, high birth, self-restraint, learning, prowess, moderation in

speech, gifts given with discrimination, and gratitude. This human body is a house with nine doors, three pillars and five witnesses. It is presided over by the soul. The king who knows that is wise. These ten do not know what virtue is: the intoxicated, the inattentive, the raving, the fatigued, the angry, the starving, the dejected, the covetous, the frightened and the lustful.

"A man who does not grieve when a calamity overtakes him, who does his best all the while with his senses under perfect control, who bears misery with patience, is the foremost of men. One who bears no malice towards others but is kind to all, who does not talk arrogantly, who forgives a quarrel, is praised everywhere. A king who seeks prosperity should take only that which can be taken and that which will be beneficial. As the bee collects the honey without destroying the flower, so should a king take taxes from the people without injuring them.

One should pluck flowers but one should not uproot the plants. A wise man should learn good behaviour, good words, good acts from every side, as a gleaner collects grains of corn from the field abandoned by the reapers. Virtue is preserved by truthfulness; learning by application; beauty by cleansing the body; high lineage by good character. Mere lineage, in the case of one whose behaviour is not good, cannot command respect. A king or a man who envies another's wealth, beauty, might, high lineage, happiness, good fortune and honours, suffers from an incurable disease. Good behaviour is essential for man. Intoxication of wealth is much more to be censured than wine; for a man intoxicated with prosperity can never be brought to his senses unless and until he meets with a fall.

"Like the moon during the lighted fortnight, calamities increase for him who is a slave to his senses. That king who wishes to control his counsellors before controlling his own self, or who wishes to subdue his adversaries before controlling his counsellors, fights a losing battle, losing his strength. A king should first subdue his own self, regarding it as his foe. He will then never fail to subdue his own counsellors and later his enemies. Great prosperity waits upon him who has subjugated his senses, or controlled his soul, or who is capable of punishing all offenders, or who acts with discernment, or who is blessed with patience.

*Continued on next page*

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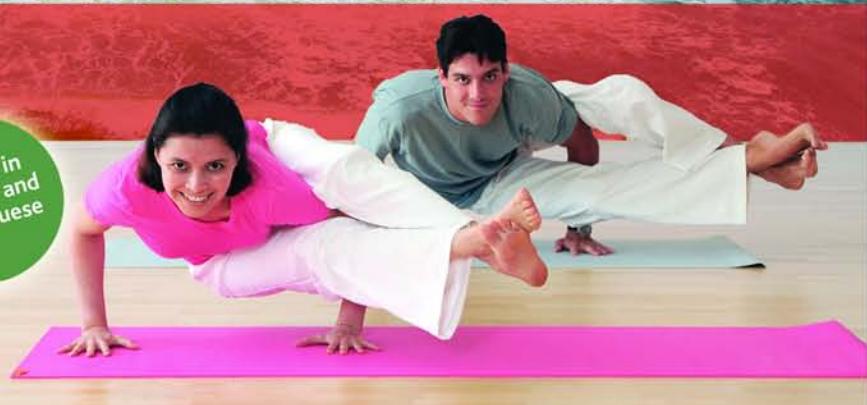
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## VIDURA-NEETI *Continued from previous page*

One's body is the chariot: the soul within is the driver: and the senses are its steeds. Drawn by those excellent steeds when they are trained, the wise man pleasantly goes through the journey of life in peace. The horses, however, if unbroken and incapable of being controlled, lead the unskilled driver to destruction in the course of the journey. Many evil-minded kings, because of their want of mastery over the senses are ruined by acts of their own, lust for kingdom being the cause of their sin.

"To control speech is said to be the most difficult. It is not easy to hold a long conversation, utter words filled with meaning and delightful to the hearers. Well-spoken speech is capable of doing so much good. Similarly, ill-spoken words cause evil. A forest pierced by arrows or cut down by hatchets may grow again, but the heart wounded by ill-spoken words can never recover. Weapons such as arrows or darts can easily be extracted from the body but a word-dagger plunged deep into the heart is incapable of being taken out. Word-arrows shot from the mouth are terrible. Smitten by them, man grieves day and night. A learned man should not shoot such arrows, for do they not touch the very vitals of the others?

"The person, to whom the gods ordain defeat, has his senses taken away from him and it is because of this that he stoops to ignoble deeds. When the intellect becomes dim and destruction is near, wrong, looking like right, strikes the heart firmly. The clouded intellect causes defeat.

"Ablution in all the holy spots and kindness to all creatures: these two are equal. Perhaps kindness to creatures surpasses the former. As long as man's good deeds are spoken of in this world, so long is he glorified in heaven.

"The gods do not protect men taking up clubs in their hands after the fashion of herdsmen. Unto them they wish to protect, they grant intelligence. There is no doubt that one's desires meet with success in proportion to the attention he pays to righteousness and morality. The Vedas never rescue a deceitful man from sin. Gold is tested by fire; a well-born person by his deportment; an honest man by his conduct; and a brave man is tested during a season of panic; he who is self-controlled, in times of poverty; and friends and foes are tested in times of calamity and danger. Sacrifice, study, asceticism, gift, truth, forgiveness, mercy and contentment constitute the eight different paths of righteousness. The first four of these may be practised from motives of pride but the latter four can exist only in them that are truly great.

"Do that during the day which may enable you to pass the night in happiness; do that during the eight months of the year which may help you to pass the rainy season happily. Do that during youth which may ensure you a happy old age; and do that during your whole life which may help you to live happily hereafter.

"Untying all the knots of the heart by the aid of tranquillity, mastering all the passions, observing true religion, one should learn to regard both the agreeable and the disagreeable like his own self. One should not return slanders or reproaches. Strange to say, when a silent man suffers these reproaches, it is the slanderer that is consumed and the virtues, if any, of the slanderer find a home in the other man.

"Never quarrel with friends. Avoid the company of those that are vile and low. Never be arrogant and have ignoble conduct. Avoid speaking words that are fraught with anger. Harsh words burn and scorch the very vitals, bones and heart of men. And so, he that is virtuous should avoid harsh and angry words. Silence, it is said, is better than speech. If speak you must, it is better to speak the truth. If truth is to be spoken, it is better to say what is agreeable. If what is agreeable is to be spoken, it is better to say

what is consistent with morality.

"Asceticism, self-restraint, knowledge, sacrifices, pure marriages and gifts of food - these are the hallmarks of a high family.

"Men die and are reborn again and again. Repeatedly they wither and grow. Often times they ask and are being asked. Again and again, they lament and are being lamented. Happiness and misery, plenty and dearth, gain and loss, life and death, are all shared by all in due order. A self-controlled man should neither be elated nor should he grieve.

"Anger is a kind of bitter, acrid and hot drink; and it is painful in its consequences. It is a kind of headache born not of any physical illness. The wise can swallow it and never those who are wanting in wisdom. Excess of pride, excess in speech, excess in eating, anger, the desire for enjoyments and intestinal disorders - these are six sharp swords which cut off the period of life allotted to creatures. It is these which kill and not death.

"Kings are said to have five different kinds of strength. Of these the strength of arms is considered to be the most inferior kind. The acquisition of good counsellors is regarded as the second kind of strength. The acquisition of wealth is the third kind of strength. The strength of birth which one naturally acquires from one's sires and grandsires is the fourth kind of strength. That, however, by which all these are won, and which is the foremost of all kinds of strength, is called the strength of the intellect.

"One who never gives way to anger, one who regards pieces of mud, stone and gold as all of the same value and he that stands aloof from what is agreeable and disagreeable, like one perfectly withdrawn from the world, is a real yogi. Intelligence, tranquillity of mind, self-control, purity, absence of harsh speech, and an unwillingness to do anything displeasing to friends--these seven are regarded as the fuel to the flame of prosperity. Virtue is everlasting: pleasure and pain are transitory. Life is, indeed, everlasting, but its particular phases are transitory. Forsaking those which are passing, betake thyself to that which is everlasting and let contentment be thine; since contentment is the greatest of all acquisitions.

"Illustrious and mighty kings have ruled this mighty earth so full of wealth and glory and joy. All of them have become victims of the Universal Destroyer. They went away leaving behind them their kingdoms and their immense pleasures. The son, brought up with anxious care, when dead, is taken up and carried away by men to the burning grounds. With dishevelled hair and with piteous cries they cast the body into the funeral pyre as though it were a piece of wood. Others enjoy the wealth of a dead man while birds and fire feast on the elements of his body. Only two things go with him to the other world: his merits and his sins. Throwing away the body, relatives, friends, and sons retrace their steps like birds abandoning the tree without flowers or fruits. The man cast into the funeral pyre is followed only by his own actions. Therefore should men, carefully and gradually, earn the merit of righteousness.

"The soul is spoken of as a river and life is also spoken of as a river. In the river of life the waters are the five senses. Its crocodiles and sharks are desire and anger. Making self-control the boat, one should cross the eddies which are represented by repeated births. In the river which is the soul, religious merit makes up its sacred baths: truth, its waters: self-control, its banks: kindness its waves. He that is righteous purifies himself by a bath in this river, for the soul is sacred and the absence of desire, the supreme merit."

*Our thanks go to the author Smt. Kamala Subramaniam and to the publisher and copyright holder, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mumbai, India for permission to reprint this extract from their 2001 edition of Mahabharata.*

# THE MYSTICAL POWER OF VEDIC MUSIC

by Mrs. HASU PATEL



According to Vedic philosophy, at the beginning of the universe there was the cosmic sound naadbrahma. During the Cosmic Dance, Lord Siva created the primordial sound setting Creation in motion. Na means life breath or prana and D means fire or agni. The literal meaning of naad is flow or resonant sound; the implied meaning is stream of consciousness.

The Yoga Shikhopanishad describes naad as:

*Nasti nadatparo mantra na devah: swatmanah parah /  
Nanoo sandehe para pooja nahi truptehe param sukham //*

*There is no mantra greater than naad, there is no deva greater than your own soul, there is no greater puja than union with naad, and there is no greater happiness than contentment.*

Yogis and maharshis have defined naad as the saguna form of nirguna Brahman--the sound manifestation of the supreme Brahman, eternally resonating in the cave of the heart. In the Bhagavad Gita Lord Krishna says:

*Omityekaksharam brahmavyaharanmama nu smaran /  
Yah:prayati tajandeham sayati paramam gatim //*

*Uttering the one-syllabled OM-Brahman-and remembering Me, he who departs, leaving the body, attains to the Supreme Goal.  
Bhagavad Gita 8 -13*

It is this Divine origin that has made Indian music subjective, spiritual and individualistic. This yogic art is not aimed at creating symphonic brilliance but perfecting a harmony between man and the Divine. When a musician tunes his tanpura (drone) to give one chord, he tunes his own soul with the sound. He becomes an instrument of the whole cosmic system. The beauty of the tanpura is in the creation of a hypnotic subdued sound for accompaniment through sustained resonance and harmonic overtones of the instruments.

Lord Krishna's flute, Ma Saraswati's veena and, during the cosmic destruction, the Dance of Lord Siva with his damaru (drum), symbolise the divinity of music. In the Vedic period, music was played in the temples as divine prayers to connect with

Supreme. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna says: *Vedanam saamvedosmi / among the Vedas, I am the Saam Veda.* The Sama Veda is full of musical hymns and it tells us that a homa, (divine worship through fire), cannot be fruitful unless accompanied by the chanting of the Saamganas.

Music is the highest art of the Divine because sound is free from all forms and thoughts. A true musician believes that music is naad-sadhana (spiritual practice through sound) and therefore a path to achieve moksha (liberation). One who has understood naad as the foundation of music, realises it as the subtlest of vibrations, the life-current in each and every cell in his body. It is this omnipresent naad, which, following particular rhythms, curves and waves, flows through our life. The musician becomes a musical instrument in the hands of the Supreme and the musician's life itself turns into music.

## MANTRA

Sanskrit is the language of yoga, in which the spiritually empowered sound known as mantra is made manifest. Mantra is a sound of crystalline purity, a dance of energy in the eternal now, a sound syllable which when repeated correctly, allows one to transcend the mind. *Manant trayate iti mantrah*--that which saves a person through reflection is called mantra. According to Vedic philosophy, the vibrations of mantras collect in the pranic field of the body, creating a healing force. The Vedas stress the power of the word in the form of mantra. By chanting Sanskrit letters the body turns into a cosmic resonator. When we resonate to the universe, let us remain still and listen--the universe resonates back. Mantra has the capacity to convert the body and mind into pure energy. The sound vibrations of the mightiest mantra OM, as well as the Gayatri Mantra, the Mahamrityunjaya Mantra etc. have the power to invoke the cosmic energy within, energising the mind and immunising the body against negative forces.

## SWARA, SHRUTI and TALA

Despite its evolution through thousands of years, Indian classical music has retained its purity. The swaras (the seven quintessential notes) are established on the natural progression of



sound based on intonation or pure tuning which becomes universal harmony. This is in contrast to the tempered scale of Western music which is used to compromise the modulations to many different notes. Indian music is entirely melodic, firmly rooted in its tonic Shadja - Sa. The primordial, everlasting, never-ceasing swara - Shadja or Sa, is a Sanskrit word meaning birth-giver of six swaras. To sing Sa, six body parts - the nose, throat, stomach, palate, tongue and teeth - are engaged collectively.

The chanting sound of AUM, corresponds to the swaras Shadja (Sa) Gandhar (Ga) Pancham (Pa). The sound causes vibration in the stomach, heart and head which stimulates blood circulation, heart movement and the brain.

The use of the 22 shrutis, which are subtle and specific microtonal intervals between the swaras, create intonation and embellishment to the swaras. These are the subtle sounds which evoke the nine human rasas (moods): shringara (erotic), hasya (comic), karuna (pathetic), raudra (furious), veera (heroic), bhayanaka (frightful), vibhatsa (disgusting), adbhuta (wonderment), shanta (tranquil) and they give prana into the raga (musical composition). This unique music system is based on inherent harmony in its simplest form. *Yagnavalvkya-Smruti* describes the shrutis as:

Veenavadtantvagnah shrutijativisaradah /  
Talagnascaprayasen mokshamarga nigacchati ||

*One who does sadhana of the veena playing with the full knowledge of the correct shrutis and talas, will attain moksha effortlessly.*

Swaras and *talas* (rhythm) are the basic component of music. Swaras are born from the naad, and the laya (tempo) gives movement and becomes tala, a specific rhythmic cycle. The number of matras (beats) in a tala can be correlated with the number of petals (nadis) of the chakras. All chakras are energised by the talas.

#### RAGA

The classical music of North India is based on ragas which use five, six or seven swaras in ascending and descending order. There is an awareness of harmony between man and nature, each acting and reacting on the other. Just as the swaras are correlated to agni, the ragas are associated with a particular time of day or night as well as a season because agni in the body differs during a twenty-four hour-cycle as well as at each season. The artist begins with alap, an improvisational piece of music invoking the raga which creates a tranquil state of mind, a meditative mood leading the musician into a state of meditation. At

the same time there is tala. Imagine tala as the appearance of Shakti ready to unite with the meditative alap - Siva. According to the Yoga Sutra, naad is the source of music inseparably connected with kundalini. With the creative and contemplative aspects uniting, the musician is led into the blissful state of musical samadhi, ultimately leading to Brahman.

The 72,000 nadis or channels in the body are sensitive to sound and vibrations. There are 22 fixed nadis producing 22 musical sounds. The word nadi is derived from the word naad indicating the vibrational nature of the subtle energy channels of the body. Musical swaras increase the vitality of the nadis and stimulate the tissues and organs promoting good health. Vital prana and musical sound travel through the mind like a wave, revitalising the brain cells, and creating harmonious thoughts. The seven swaras of the musical scale correspond to the vibration of the seven chakras from the muladhara chakra at the base of the spine to the sahasrara chakra at the crown of the head.

#### ANAHATA NAAD

In the beginning there was the swayambhu (self-produced) sound known as anahata naad--AUM (OM). Anahata naad means the sound which continues; the soundless sound with no beginning and no end. At the highest point of a yogi's practice, the yogi feels that the whole body and mind is nothing but a series of rapid vibrations, a continual movement of sound -- he experiences himself as sound only. If the yogi turns inward he will begin to enjoy the subtlest of music - the anahata naad,- in the innermost chamber of his heart. The anahata naad forms the vehicle to take him from the gross to the subtle, from the finite to the infinite. As his vibrations become attuned to the Divine, the music of his soul reveals to him the music in creation and of creation. He finds the entire universe resounding with the eternal notes - Soham Soham, I am that I am. This pure consciousness is the Supreme Self unconditioned and free, immaculate and perfect, the reality behind the universe. This 'objectless awareness' is unconditioned and unlimited. All the cause for disturbance and distraction has ended in it. And it is Sadasiva - ever auspicious. When the mind has calmed and the last of its ripples dissipated, the pure water of truth reflects the brilliant glories of the chidakasa. Chinmatroaham Sadasivah---I am that pure consciousness alone, ever auspicious. Eventually the yogi experiences oneness with the Divine. This experience is the kaivalya state - absolute independence, the total awakening from delusion and the delusory sense of limitation.

We listen with our ears but also with the rest of the body. Music is the language of the heart. Physical substance is energy and energy can be affected by vibrations, sound, tones and frequencies of any kind. Sound and vibrations stimulate simultaneously the body's electrical and nervous systems. The drone aspect of music creates sympathetic overtones that hypnotize the nervous system. Different cells, bodily systems and organs have their own resonant frequencies at which they vibrate. Tala engages the hind-brain and laya (tempo) alters the sense of time. The more we listen to and experience natural sounds or music, the more connected we will become to the Self, the cosmos and Nature. We are the vibrations and the energy. We have a physical body consisting of emotions, mind, spirit and soul - all are vibratory fields. Some music stimulates our emotions; some heals our body; some breaks down our electromagnetic field leading to disease. Listening to the right type of music can change the world. Music is not a passive or active experience; it is a way of being. It is the supreme language of the universe.

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# YOGA FOR ADDICTION HEALING

by SWAMI SITARAMANANDA

Yoga teaches us that all addictions are rooted in the mind. We know that the mind is full of waves - thought waves - and when a thought wave manifests, it projects into the mind something that is external. We pursue this externality because we believe - wrongly - that our thoughts are ourselves. When we make this mistake, we are in fact identifying with the thoughts and we become attached to them. Once this attachment is established the thoughts begin to repeat themselves in our minds.

We need to detach ourselves from our thoughts. As long as we are attached, we believe that we are at the mercy of our thought patterns and that they are "us". But when we detach ourselves from the mind, and our thoughts, then we are able to dwell on our true Self - on that existence or that consciousness that is real. When thoughts arise, if we do not identify with them, we remain content within ourselves. The thoughts have no energy and they subside. Therefore the first tool in healing an addictive pattern of behaviour is detachment. Through detachment we can free ourselves from repeating patterns of thought that cause suffering; we understand that it is our thoughts that cause our suffering. Generally, we think our suffering is caused by someone or something external to ourselves, but the truth is that we create our own suffering by entertaining certain thoughts in our mind. I am making it sound very easy. However the problem arises when we become trapped in our negative thought patterns. It is these negative thought patterns that create addictions.

Many people suffer from addictions because the mind is, by nature, addictive. What does this mean? It means that if we think about something one time, then we will very likely think about it a second time, and if we think about it a second time, we will probably think about it a third time and then a fourth or fifth, and soon we are caught in a groove of repetitive thinking. This is exactly how the mind works - it develops a habit and then holds on to it. The mind is only a bundle of habits. The way to remove these habits is to replace them. We replace the negative thought habits with positive thought habits. Think of a smoker who has difficulty losing his smoking habit. He manages to overcome it because he replaces the cigarettes with chewing gum. Every time he thinks of smoking, he takes a piece of chewing gum. This method works for many people. Similarly, when a negative thought arises, stop a moment and replace it with a positive thought.

Addictions are negative habits and negative mind patterns. They arise because many people feel they have to do something every time they feel empty or stressed about a situation. They might reach for a drink, a cigarette or chocolate bar. It is a nervous response. The response becomes habitual and once this happens, reaching for the drink or cigarette or chocolate bar turns into an addiction.

The mind loves to repeat itself, and we must endeavour to stay detached from repetitive thoughts so that the grooves they cre-



ate do not become deep. We must not allow agitations, which are at first negligible, grow in the mind, because if we do, they will increase in intensity and frequency. For example, someone may say something to us that is unkind. We must not dwell on the comment. If we do so, the intensity and frequency of the thought will increase and we begin to think of the person as our enemy. We become angry and

resentful, not because of the comment itself, but because we thought about it too much and allowed it to build out of proportion. We repeat the same pattern over and over again even though it may not be beneficial. We need to observe the mind constantly to ensure a difficult experience such as an insult does not leave too deep an impression in the mind. Allow only good thoughts and impressions to stay in the mind. The mind is extremely powerful but it can only focus on one thing at a time, one thought at a time. It is very important to understand this. To keep our minds from falling into repetitive negative patterns, we make our minds so focussed on positive thoughts that there is no space for a negative thought or habit to enter.

Yoga teaches us that we are students and we are being moulded by the Divine. Events happen so that we can be moulded into a better person. When we are faced with a difficult situation, we are being given an opportunity to learn. However sometimes we do not learn. Instead, we develop a negative emotional reaction that becomes habitual. Then we look for ways to relieve ourselves from the emotional negative memory and this can lead to addiction. For example we may have an emotional problem, the mind resists and does not move; we feel we have no connection with our inner being and have no strength or will. We take a drink. The negative feeling begins to consume us so that we have even less will, less strength, less discrimination. We just drop our hands down in despair and say "What's the point of struggling? What's the point of trying to be a good person? What's the point of disciplining and controlling anything? I'm going to drink myself to oblivion." Once there is a tendency towards self-destruction, it is easily repeated and it becomes a habit. And even if we reach a point where the negative memory has faded and we are drinking less, guess what? There will be another difficult situation that confronts us. That is how life is. And because we emotionally crashed the first time and reached for something external to support us - our addiction - we are likely, in the face of this new crisis, to follow the same path of addiction.

In yoga we do not let ourselves collapse. We train ourselves not to collapse. In yoga, when we hold a posture, we hold it and continue to hold it. And though we may resent our teacher, we hold the posture, breathing and relaxing into it even though we may want to do the exact opposite. Holding our body in a yoga posture helps us to learn to hold our emotions and our mind. If we practise self discipline and do not indulge in every sensual pleasure that tempts us, we become stronger. Yoga trains the mind to become stronger, more balanced and better able to adapt - flexible, in other words. *Continued on the following page*

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## **YOGA FOR ADDICTION HEALING**

*Continued from the previous page*

We train the body to be flexible because when it is flexible it is able to adapt and hold and balance and this helps the mind also to be strong. The physical asanas are an important aid in building a strong flexible mind.

In yoga, we use the word *samskara*. *Samskara* means impression. It can be described as a mental scar that leaves an impression in the mind creating a deep groove.

Another technique is to keep ourselves busy, which will take the mind away from the addiction. To keep busy, to keep concentrated is a very good way to stay out of trouble. When the mind wanders, it receives all kinds of influences from the surrounding environment. The imagination starts to play. We develop all kinds of anxieties and fears. Keep busy. Busy means concentrated, not stressed. In other words, we use the method of conscious concentration of the mind. A good way to concentrate consciously is to use mantras. Mantras are the pure vibrational sounds that invoke the Divine.

Mantras are wonderful tools to replace negative thought patterns. Repeating a mantra when a negative thought arises, allows positive samskaras to develop. The mind runs smoothly on the beautiful mantra groove, with no opportunity to slip back into the previous addictive pattern.

In addition, we need to work to purify all the old negative samskaras that are lodged more deeply in the subconscious. These will surface into the conscious mind eventually and we need to look at them, detach and let them go. We can say: "this is not serving me, it is of no use to me anymore." It is important to stay vigilant. The moment we are unable to release a negative thought, the mind reabsorbs it and it takes only one thought to re-ignite a negative thought pattern. Then all we have built up begins to crumble. The lesson here is that we need to keep working on the mind and empty it of everything except positive thoughts.

We need to carefully limit the influences to which we expose ourselves. Influences can come from anywhere - from friends and

family, for example. They may unconsciously encourage us in our addictive habits. We need to be aware of the influence of films, television shows and literature, advertisements and song lyrics. We must be wise with whom we mix and how we spend our time. We need to mix with people who think positively and radiate positivity.

Another tool in the yoga of healing addictions is the method of self-surrender. Many of those who have strong addictions know that they cannot rely on themselves to heal and become whole again. Here the method of self-surrender is a powerful instrument to overcome addiction. The addict says "I know I cannot deal with my mind and I need support. I am going to call on a higher power to help me." We surrender our own will and instead ask God's will for help. In doing so, we link, through devotional practice, to a source of power that is stronger than our mind. We surrender to God and the addiction knows that it cannot compete with God and leaves us in peace. All we need do is surrender and we can relax. We become as a kitten in the mouth of a mother cat. When we surrender to God, or to the Divine we know that the work will be done.

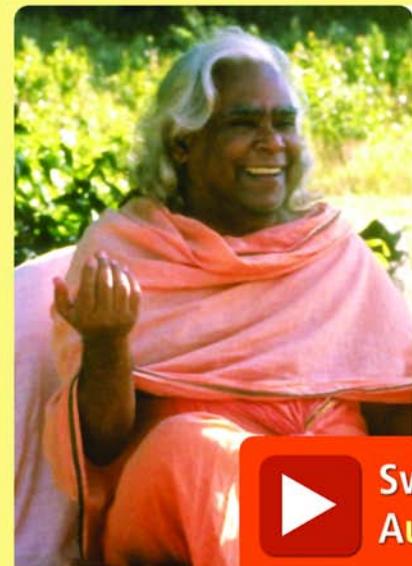
We have to only relax, surrender, pray and connect ourselves to God. We bring the presence of God into our life and that is all. We just have to remember God. This is the method of self-surrender and it is very powerful. Bhakti yoga is the science of devotion which teaches us about God. It teaches the ways and means to dwell on the Divine presence, via name and form. Self-surrender can be difficult in the beginning but it becomes easier and easier. We ask forgiveness for our past mistakes and make amends if possible. We ask forgiveness from God. By doing this, we take responsibility for our lives and clear the path towards behaving differently in the future.

We use yoga and meditation to slow ourselves down and to watch our thoughts and our mind, and to break the old negative addictive patterns as we create new positive ones. And through the Grace of God we reach freedom from our addictive behaviour.

*Swami Sitaramananda is director of the Sivananda Ashram Yoga Farm and oversees the Centres in Los Angeles and San Francisco in California.*

Thanks to the volunteer work done at Sivananda Ashram Yoga Camp Headquarters in Val Morin, Canada, over 3000 recordings of lectures by Swami Vishnudevananda have now been transferred from tapes to mp3-format. This impressive archive constitutes a precious legacy of this great pioneer of Yoga of the 20th century. It is the wish of the International Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centres to make this treasure of knowledge and inspiration available to students all over the world. In order to assemble a suitable presentation of this vast material, the content of the lectures needs first to be catalogued.

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# MEMORIES

by Dr. JOHN ROSSNER Ph.D

I first met Swami Vishnudevananda when he looked just as he did in *The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga*. He had recently arrived in Montreal and he had been teaching at the Jesuit Centre in Montreal. In those days, he was very young, very slim, and talked very fast. He was sitting on the desk as I arrived, and as I went into the room he was standing on his head! From upside down he was explaining the posture and its benefits, and then he flipped right side up, sat in the lotus position and started to laugh.

I was introduced to him personally: and then had to leave to go and teach my own class in ancient history. That was 1963: and that was the last time I was to see him until 1974.

In that year I arrived at the Yoga Retreat for an international conference as the only Christian priest on the programme. Every guru in North America was there - Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Sikhs, and the Reverend Ralph Abernathy who had taken Martin Luther King's place as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Council. Also present was Senator Eugene McCarthy who had recently run for the position of President of the United States of America.

Scientific research on yoga and its observance of universal principles of positive human spirituality had begun in North America. Its role as an adjunctive therapy for healing in mind, body and spirit began to be a very popular topic. Since 1975, there has been an ever-increasing awareness in popular culture of the health benefits and universally applicable spiritual benefits of yoga and other systems of meditation and practice originating in Hindu, Buddhist and other eastern religious traditions. New psychologies and new physiologies and other younger scientific traditions have become very popular. While there is still a resistance to them on the part of more rigid and conservative scientists, there is no doubt that new sciences of consciousness and healing and in general a new physics have won the approval of many of the leading minds of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. New models in science now make sense of the methods and claims of classical yoga/Vedanta and the Buddhist traditions of meditation, which have been permeating the West from Eastern religions in general.

In the 1970s Swami Vishnudevananda and I began to design together conferences and symposia involving such subjects as the new physics, heightened spiritual perceptions and psychic awareness which were the byproducts of yoga practice. Swami Vishnudevananda had begun to put on programmes in Nassau, Val Morin and other Sivananda Centres, including California and New York, dealing with subjects such as Yoga and Physics in Los Angeles, in 1977 with Dr. Fritzho Capra, and the Secret Life of Plants with Clive Baxter in Nassau.

We were interested in those scientific discoveries which shed light on the ancient belief system of yoga. Leading thinkers of the day were interested in models of the universe which reflected the yogic belief--based on observations in ancient times--that there was an Intelligence that was innate to all living things and was operating within all of nature. Western science since the Age of Reason has generally assumed that there is no creative Mind or



Divinity intrinsic to nature and operating from within it. The yogic model, on the other hand, sees the whole physical world as a living expression of Divine Intelligence within all things. In the West, God operates upon nature from outside of it. One major exception to this rule is that in mystical Judaism - Kabbalistic philosophy - there is the affirmation that God created and creates the world and nature out of Himself. The world, and especially the human person, is God's self-expression, His breath [Hebrew: *Ruach*]. The flaws in the Creation are not conceived of as the work of God. "Evil" enters into Creation due to the free will of rebellious angels and men.

Eastern gurus were coming to the West to teach therapeutic spiritual methods. They were aware that Western religionists and theologians mistakenly thought that Indian yoga and Buddhist meditations were based upon pantheistic assumptions. Nevertheless, the Eastern religious belief that Divinity is found within all things, meant that science could legitimately expect to find a ghost in the machine.

The ancient doctrine found in India, Greece, and other ancient civilizations, states that there is a subtle counterpart to every por-



Swami Vishnudevananda with scientists in the 1960s

tion of the body and its functions. This is called the astral body or manamayakosha [Sanskrit]. The primary residuum of intelligent functions of the body is not believed to be in the physical flesh but in this subtle body. This doctrine was taught and continues to be taught in the psychology and physiology of ancient classical yoga systems such as Sivananda Yoga.

Marshall McLuhan, famed author of *The Medium is the Message*, came to one of our early international conferences in 1977. He began his lecture by saying "In this electronic age of television, we are now all spirits on the airwaves without our physical bodies yet present to each other throughout the world over thousands of miles." Hans Selyé, a great twentieth century pioneer in medical research, proved with animal tests that stress could break down the natural immune system, could cause illness, dysfunctions and ultimately death in both animals and human beings. Dr. Selyé explained in 1977 how difficult it was to get this fact accepted by the medical profession of the day. This, of course, was of great interest to Swami Vishnudevananda because it was well known to him that yoga practice could relieve stress in the mind and body very effectively. This research did much to awaken the healing professions in the West to take seriously the potentially harmful factor of stress, and to recognise eventually that yoga was an effective remedy to this problem. Swami Vishnudevananda had been lecturing before this time in medical circles on the health benefits of yoga practice and had been met by a wall of general scepticism from the medical profession. Swamiji was visiting hospitals and medical centres in Montreal, lecturing to doctors and scientists. He was showing them photographs of autopsied lungs which had turned black because of smoking. He warned them that they should advise their patients about this, and to prohibit smoking in hospitals and doctors' offices. Most of them laughed at him.

Yoga was beginning to enter the mainstream of awareness in North America and somewhat later in Europe. Here was a system of ancient thought practised in a devotional mode which was a mental and physical exercise based on the assumption that one could activate a divine and natural intelligence and presence within all things. Yoga began by proving that it could mitigate or eliminate stress which was caused by the nonobservance of the certain innate values exhibited in various states of consciousness.

In the Eastern hemisphere, Indian gurus, yogis, Buddhist masters, and other oriental religionists, held a conviction based upon their personal experience. Gurus were telling their disciples to go West where "the people will be ready for you." We know that Sri Yukteswar told the young Paramahansa Yogananda to go to America. Even before that, at the end of the nineteenth century, Vivekananda addressed the first World Parliament of

Religions in Chicago in 1893.

In the late seventies large conferences on the same subjects followed. Among just a few of the featured speakers were Marshall McLuhan, Wilder Penfield, JB Rhine (founder of the first parapsychology department at Duke University), and a retired Roman Catholic bishop, Msgr. Eduard Jette, (who had been a Vatican official at Vatican II on spiritual healing). Swami Vishnudevananda attended and participated with great interest in all of these conferences.

The relationship of mystical and psychical experience to the formation of great religious traditions had already been present in the interests of Ghandi, Swami Sivananda and many other Eastern gurus as early as Vivekananda at the end of the nineteenth century. This was one of the great insights of Swami Sivananda and his rationale for wanting eventually to create a Sivananda International University. Swami Vishnudevananda shared in this vision of creating such a university. Indian gurus who came West, whether Hindu or Buddhist, Sikh or Jain, were aware of the fact that the West needed new sciences of consciousness and healing in order to understand the ancient yogic and Vedantic models, as well as those of other Eastern philosophies and religious traditions.

We should note that the study of new sciences of consciousness and healing is not only scientific in mode but also religious in content. For, the word religion in Latin is *religio, religare* which means to bind together body, mind, and spirit with the ground of being. Interestingly enough, the word in Sanskrit for *religo, reli-gare* is *yug*, to bind together body, mind, and spirit with the ground of being. This means that yoga is religion and vice versa. However, it is a science and technology as well. Both words for religion in Latin and Sanskrit refer to methods for binding together or uniting and coordinating the body with the mind, and the individual spirit with the Divine ground of being.

It has been said by many Western theologians that in the Eastern religions, there is an integral identity between the Divinity and the creation. On the other hand, the same Western scholars have tended to say that in the Western religions, Christianity, Judaism and Islam, there is a radical separation between Divinity and the creation. However, in the yoga-vedanta conception, the aim of yoga is self-realisation. This means that the highest and most real element in the human soul is a spark of the Divine. When this self-realization is achieved, the yogi is able to say Atman and Brahman are One. In Hindu theology, Brahman is the One Supreme, Divine Being. Brahman may then be referred to as Father and/or Mother of all living things.

In the New Testament, Jesus teaches his disciples that He as their exemplar and teacher is One with the Father, the Source. The He who is speaking is the atmanic consciousness. In that Supreme Consciousness moment, He is able to say: "The Father and the Son are One". This means that at the root level, Christianity is not radically separated from the affirmation of Eastern religions, as expressed in the yogic statement: Atman and Brahman are One.

In ancient times, Egypt had been the source of wisdom for Greece and the rest of Western civilisation. India had been the source of inspiration for all of Asia. Ancient Egypt no longer exists as the enlightening source of the wisdom of Hermes Thrice Blessed. But modern India in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries still has holy men and women who practise the ancient sources of the primordial wisdom. Swami Vishnudevananda came to the West with the ageless wisdom of India sent by his master Sivananda. We have all been benefited by his living presence in the Spirit, which remains with us to this day.

*Dr. John Rossner is an Anglican priest & Professor Emeritus of Religion, Concordia University, Montreal Founder-President, IIHHS, United Nations NGO-DPI [www.iihs.org](http://www.iihs.org)*



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Dwarka Centre

PSP Pocket,  
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Sector - 6 (Behind DAV school)  
Dwarka, New Delhi, 110075 INDIA  
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Or +91.1145566016  
e-mail: Dwarka@sivananda.org

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maduraicentre@sivananda.org

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### Yoga Warehouse

Shyam and Mohini  
508 SW Flagler Ave.  
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Florida 33301, USA  
Tel: +1 954 525-7726  
e-mail yogis@yogawarehouse.org

# Sivananda Yoga Prison Project

## STATISTICS FOR 2009

(TILL END OCTOBER)  
Income \$2677 Expenditure \$3802

### Books Sent to Prisoners

Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga 100  
Meditation and Mantras 30  
Books of Swami Sivananda 33

Donations should be sent to  
**Sivananda Prison Project**

1200 Arguello Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94122 USA

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[swamipadma@sivananda.org](mailto:swamipadma@sivananda.org)

Having become so familiar corresponding with people around the world using the simplicity and speed of email, it is quite cumbersome writing to prisoners through snail mail. Snail mail is slow, time-consuming, and inefficient at 21st century pace. To my delight and relief an amazing new company called CorrLinks

has appeared. CorrLinks is a way for family and friends to communicate with their loved ones incarcerated in prison through email. Established through a relationship with a corrections agency, this system allows people to communicate with inmates by subscribing to CorrLinks services. This is how easy it is: A prisoner emails me and he/she gets a reply in a day or two. Pure magic. The very first letter below was just "cut and paste!" However, CorrLinks has only recently begun and it will probably take several years for it to truly get going. Perhaps...in the near future we might even be able to Skype prisoners too.

Blessings to all. Om and Pranams.

Thy Own Self,  
Swami Padmapadananda from San Francisco

### Letters received online

I wanted to take this opportunity to relay my sincerest 'Thank You' for sending me 'The Complete Illustrated Book Of Yoga', as it is greatly appreciated.



Previously I had never practiced any yoga and I also had an injured back that had given me large amounts of pain. I tried just a few of the easier exercises shown in the book that you had sent me and the pain in my back and upper torso that I had been dealing with for years basically disappeared. I still had a little stiffness at first but the pain and pressure that I had was gone. I know that I sound like an infomercial or something, but I never thought that I would be able to go without almost constant pain in my back again without having some kind of intrusive surgery. Thank you again for everything.

Very Sincerely, JWR

Greetings.

I'm incarcerated in a state facility in Pennsylvania. I'm extremely thankful and grateful for your gift I received, "The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga," by Swami Vishnudevananda. My first feeling was excitement and tears of joy and relief. I have at last in my possession a treasure of information. I'm very passionate in my devotion to mind, body, and spiritual development. I hope that you will continue to provide me more books on mind, body, and spiritual development. I pray for you and your ministry outreach. Thank you and may you prosper in health, and long life.  
Sincerely yours, CC

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2010



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May 8 – June 6, 2010 (German)

July 31 – August 28, 2010

August 29 – September 26, 2010

December 18, 2010 – January 16, 2011

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Stephen Quong, California, USA
- YOGA AND HEALING HERBS  
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With Dr Annika Waldmann
- MANTRAS AND MYSTICISM OF YOGA  
Sri Potty Swami, Kerala, South India
- YOGA AND PSYCHOLOGY  
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With a large pink lotus flower graphic on the right side.

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## Advanced Teachers' Training Course

Quebec, Canada  
Aug 1 – 28 2010

Nassau, Bahamas  
Jan 6 - Feb 2 2010

Tyrol, Austria  
May 8 – Jun 6 2010

Neyyar Dam, South India  
Feb 14 – Mar 14 2010

Uttar Kashi, North India  
May 16 – Jun 13 2010

Orleans, France  
Jul 2 – 30 2010

Woodbourne, NY, USA  
July 5 – Aug 2 2010

Grass Valley, California  
Jun 3 – Jul 1 2010

Garopaba, Brazil  
January 3 – 31 2010

Vrindavan, North India  
Oct 9 – Nov 7 2010

## Teachers' Training Course

Quebec, Canada  
Feb 14 – Mar 14 2010  
Jul 4 – 31 2010  
Sep 4 – Oct 2 2010  
Nov 14 – Dec 12 2010

Nassau, Bahamas  
Jan 31 – Feb 27 2010  
Mar 4 – 31 2010  
Apr 4 – May 1 2010  
May 5 – Jun 1 2010  
Nov 21 – Dec 18 2010

Tyrol, Austria  
May 8 – Jun 6 2010  
Jul 31 – Aug 28 2010  
Aug 29 – Sep 26 2010  
Dec 18 – Jan 16 2011

Neyyar Dam, South India  
Jan 10 – Feb 7 2010  
Mar 21 – Apr 18 2010  
Nov 14 – Dec 12 2010

Madurai, South India  
Jan 24 – Feb 21 2010  
Feb 28 – Mar 28 2010  
Oct 24 – Nov 21 2010  
Nov 28 – Dec 26 2010

Uttar Kashi, North India  
Apr 11 – May 9 2010  
Jun 20 – Jul 18 2010  
Oct 3 – 31 2010

Orleans, France  
Jul 7 – 30 2010  
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Woodbourne, NY, USA  
Jun 7 – 30 2010  
Sep 10 – Oct 8 2010

Grass Valley, California  
May 1 – 30 2010  
Oct 3 – 31 2010

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January 3 – 31 2010

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Feb 28 – Mar 28 2010

Vrindavan, North India  
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Oct 9 – Nov 7 2010

London, England  
Apr 24 – May 23 2010

Alcudia, Spain  
Aug 14 – Sep 13 2010

Poland  
Aug 28 – Sep 26 2010

Umbria, Italy  
Sep 4 – Oct 2 2010

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