

“Spiritual life begins when one can perceive the unity between oneself and the rest of creation. If you want to experience the spiritual aspect of giving, you should try to generate the feeling that you are making an offering to the Lord’s creation, a fellow human, whose karmas at present are not as fortunate as yours.”

~ Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati



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Satyananda Yoga Centre London Newsletter

Autumn / Winter 2009



Editorial

The middle of July in England should be warm and sunny. It wasn't! But whereas the rest of the population in England may have been feeling gloomy about the lack of summer sun, those of us lucky enough to be in Harrogate between the 16th and 19th July and in London on the 24th July were, to coin a well known phrase, over the moon. And we still haven't come down to earth yet! The reason for our elation was that for the first time in over twenty years Swami Satsangi was leaving Rikhia and she was coming to see us all in England.

Many months of preparation had gone into preparing for this visit with many willing yogis helping with preparations before and during the event to ensure it all ran smoothly. Finally, when the dates arrived, so many people from all over the world flocked to see Swami Satsangi, that both venues were almost bursting at the seams and buzzing with love, joy and the sound of Om. There were babies, young children, men and women of all ages, colours and faiths gathering together for one common purpose - to meet, some for the first time, and to greet Swami Satsangi and to celebrate and give thanks for the privilege of experiencing some of the wonderful aspects of the Satyananda Tradition.

Swami Satsangi was wonderful and always came up to our high expectations. She was caring and humorous, kind and compassionate and answered our questions with candour and clarity. We all felt the warmth of her love. This we may have been expecting but there was more. She really did fulfil the mother principle and we were all allowed to feel like small children again, who were being bathed in a mother's care and affection and who would always have a safe haven to return to in times of stress and worry. But even better than this. She brought our beloved Guru with her. Many of us felt Paramahamsaji was with us. He was there for every satsang. He was there for every Kirtan. He was there in every shout of excitement and in every silent moment of contemplation. Swami Satyananda was there in Harrogate and London for every minute of every part of the programmes and his blessings were fulsome and so generously given to all of us who were there too. We were saturated with his love just as the unseasonal and almost monsoon rain, particularly in Harrogate, had saturated our bodies.

Yoga & Meditation Retreat, Rajasthan, India 6—17 December 2009

The rural location of Castle Bijaipur provides a perfect setting for a yoga retreat. You will experience the warmth and hospitality of the family who live at the Castle and run it. Their ancestors have lived here for 13 generations. The rooms have character and elegance with ensuite facilities. Food is homegrown and freshly prepared. There is a garden courtyard where you can relax and enjoy the atmosphere. The hotel has horses and bicycles that can be hired. There is also a resident massage therapist. During the yoga sessions, we will explore postures, breathing, relaxation, meditation and other aspects of yoga such as chanting and its philosophy.

Abhijeeta & Shanti will be leading this 11 night retreat in rural Rajasthan.

For more details contact:

Abhijeeta on email: abhijeeta@shivarooms.co.uk or tel: 07940 470 072

Or **Shanti** on email: somethingaboutyoga@mac.com or tel: 07710 257440

Kirtan and Healing Meditation

Kirtan (Devotional Chanting)

Kirtan and chanting of *Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra* take place on the last Friday of the month, 7.30-9.00 pm. Kirtan is free – everyone welcome.

Friday Meditation—'HEALING THE PLANET SOOTHING THE SOUL'

Rekindle your flame and share it with others—open to everyone for everyone

The intention of this meditation is to keep our own inner flame lit in order that we may light a flame in others and send this positive energy out into the community and the world at large to wherever or whoever needs it most.

It will take place on the 2nd Friday of the month, 7.30-8.30 pm with tea and biscuits afterwards for those who want to stay.

Share Your Reflections

We always welcome yogic articles to put in the SYC London Newsletter. So if you would like to write an article or feel inspired to draw a cover illustration for the next issue, please email **Shantipriya** at shantipriya@btinternet.com or tel.: **07753 882029**. Around 450 words nicely fills a page – any format is fine.

Sita Kalyanam & Sat Chandi Mahayajna and Yoga Purnima Celebrations

Dates for *Sat Chandi Mahayajna* are 17-21 November 2009 in Rikhia, India. *Yoga Purnima Celebrations* are 28 November—2 December 2009. If you are planning to attend, please inform your local Satyananada Yoga Centre for possible travel companions and to enable us to inform Rikhia of approximate numbers. You may also contact Rikhia by telephone or letter:

Bihar School of Yoga, P.O. Rikhia, Dist. Deoghar, Jharkhand 814112, India. Tel: + 93 04799449

Local Accommodation www.yogavision.net/sk/accom.htm
Travel arrangements www.yogavision.net/sk/travel.htm
India Travel www.syclondon.com/indiaplan.htm

Satyananda Yoga Teachers

What class/events are you teaching?

We are continuing to compile an up-to-date list of classes/courses that are currently being run by trained Satyananda Teachers. We anticipate an increased demand for classes after the London event and it would be extremely helpful in directing enquiries from students to appropriate classes in and around London, given by trained Satyananda Yoga teachers.

So, if you are a trained Satyananda Yoga teacher, please complete the online form from the SYC London website:
www.syclondon.co.uk The information will be kept as a hardcopy and/or electronically and will only be used for genuine enquiries for yoga classes.

So thank you so much Swami Satsangi for coming to us with your kindness and your wisdom and thank you for letting us experience the wonder and care of Paramahamsaji by bringing him with you as well. And now there is only one thing really left to say to you. When can you come again please?!

I guess now we need to continue to remember to bathe ourselves in the Satyananada Tradition whenever we can and we are all lucky enough to have the opportunity to do this. We can visit the Satyananada Yoga London Centre and mix with like minded yogis on a regular basis to give thanks to Guru and enjoy his teachings. So lets just be mindful to check the Centre's listings, be aware of what is always on offer and be proactive in turning up for classes and booking our chosen days and events in good time.

Sn. Satvikananda

Swami Pragyamurti Around & About

3/4 October Dunblane, Scotland
2009 Contact Carol Godridge, tel: 01848.200681

10 October IST: Introducing Meditation Techniques Into Yoga Classes
2009 Southampton, Hampshire
Contact Wendi Watson, tel: 023 80 453475

14 November Manchester
2009 Contact Stefanie Hundsberger, tel: 0161.224 9581

Mid Feb - South Africa, Contact Sn. Chaityananda,
Mid Mar Email: capetown@satyanandayoga.co.za
2010 www.satyanandayoga.co.za

Shankhaprakshalana—Date for Practice

The next date for this wonderful cleansing practice is Saturday 25 September 2009. The cost is **£27**. Please pay in advance, put your name on the list at the centre, leave a contact number and make sure you take an information sheet. If you have not done this practice before you must contact the supervisor prior to the day.

Satyananda Yoga 2009—A Personal Reflection



I was really lucky to have been able to participate in both the Harrogate and London programmes.

I travelled up to Harrogate with no expectation of what Swami Satsangi would be like but had made a mental decision to be open to something new. I was impressed after listening to her speak for the first time.

I fully immersed myself in the programme. Attending classes, lectures, satsangs and kirtans and did some socialising in between. I helped out on a couple of things and felt I had 'done my bit'. It was warm, inspirational and full-on for the whole three days.

Coming to the London event was completely different. I came with the intention to help out. For two days prior to the programme I, along with many, many others, cleaned, decorated and transformed the space. I came home after both days tired but buzzing.

On the day of the event I had only planned on coming up for the evening havan as I had another commitment that day. But, as things tend to do, the situation changed and I was able to make it for the whole day – to say I was delighted was an understatement.

Again, I came to work. I'd had three full days in Harrogate and didn't feel I needed any more. So off I went to help in the kitchen, serve food and make chai for the first time.

I did go to the havan and kirtan in the early evening and afterwards stayed to help pack up before heading home. How quickly the halls could be dismantled and returned to normal.

Nirvanavan Foundation (supported by SYC London)

Latest news from Rajasthan is that the rains have not appeared yet this year. Normally by now (late August) there would have been a few weeks of heavy rainfall, replenishing the fields but more importantly raising the underground water table. When I left at the end of April one of the local village wells had already run dry. I sit here in sometimes sunny but usually wet London, letting the taps run for ages for the hot (or cold) water to come through, and it's hard to believe it's the same world. As it is, on a normal day, many of the girls and women have to walk half a mile every day balancing heavy pots of water on their heads to obtain water for drinking, washing, cooking etc. (It's always the women!!) Now that walk can become twice as long – in the hot (100 degrees F.) and dusty summer weather. Please pray for rain!!

Halim Ina is a photographer from USA who visits the Foundation each year. He has established a relationship with the villagers which has resulted in some stunning portraits. He has also made a short video of the Foundation which can be seen at <www.vimeo.com/4982893> along with three other videos from his time in India last year.

We now send £1,000 a month to the Foundation. This sounds like a lot but with twelve schools to support it soon disappears. Please visit our website www.nirvanavan.org.uk for more information

Krishnadhyanam (krishnadhyanam@hotmail.com)

RYE UK (Research on Yoga Education) Training Update

RYE UK will be conducting the six month Foundation Module at Bath Spa University in Bath from January-June 2010 (one Saturday a month). Dates will be posted on the website in September so please see the website for further information www.ryeuk.org. The course is open to school teachers and anyone working with children.

Lilamurti and Katyayani

Satyananda Yoga Academy Europe (SYAE)

SYAE pilot Yogic Studies 2 Course is due for completion on 31st October 2009. A total of 38 students from 11 countries have participated in this course and have continued to find inspiration from the process of Yogic Studies. New courses are planned for next year, so please keep an eye on the website - syae.org - for further announcements and dates. For any enquiries or to request to be informed of the next courses, please contact info@syae.org

Brahmananda

All those fortunate ones have the experience of a life time when they contribute in those preparations though Karma Yoga and later get SwamiJi's Darshan.

Swami PragyamurtiJi asked me to come in her beautifully painted car that has the drawings of Gods and Goddesses to pick the bhajiyas and samosas she'd ordered in an Indian shop in Tooting. It was raining with a sun shining above as well.

As we arrived, there was a vehicle parked outside loaded with books etc. for Swami Satsangi's visit later during the month. We had the great opportunity for Karma Yoga whilst adjusting all the boxes in the corner-space by the entrance.

Many followers of the Satyananda tradition made visits over the day and the lunch time was marked with awesome food that would only taste the same on that particular occasion even though the same ingredients may be used on some other day. Guru's blessings!!!

Karma Yoga was also practiced with the cutting and folding of petals for paper-lotus flowers that needed patience, creativity and meticulous attention. Combining various colors was fun!

Kirtan in the evening was attended by as many people as could just come inside the meditation room and outside as well when the space became occupied. Decorations in the meditation room reminded me of the festival of Deepawali in India.

We all left one after another as the day went by. It was a very blissful day indeed.

To conclude, I'd share that Guru Purnima was a very important day because we remembered our Guru who is beyond birth and death. Therefore, it was not the kind of day when the sun shone and you saw day. It was the Eternal Existence, Eternal Consciousness, which was not in time and space.

As a human being, having all five tattwas, the body got caught and could not remember its Reality, because it was constituted such that it should remain a human being. The body could do good things, it could help and serve others and try to remove the *dukh* (pain) of others. But it could not succeed in removing its own pain and suffering, which is its forgetfulness, unless Guru came on earth.

Guru reminded me that I am perfect, I am *poorn*. Guru was already there. Without Guru, I could not see, without Guru, I could not hear; without Guru, I could not eat; without Guru, I could not drink, without Guru, I could not walk, without Guru, I could not be in any situation—waking, dreaming or deep sleep. That Guru, that *mahanta*, greatness, may we always remember!!!

Hari Aum Namō Narayan

Manu

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To have had the opportunity to experience the two programmes in such totally different ways was wonderful. During the Harrogate programme I was a participant. Doing karma yoga at the London programme made it a much deeper experience. I may not have thought I needed more but I certainly got more.

The old saying "the more you put in, the more you get out" springs to mind. This was certainly my experience. I had a good time, definitely not in the traditional sense and in black and white it sounds slightly mad and I do hope that the grin that feels like it is plastered across my face is only on the inside. I just wish that cleaning my own house and doing the family laundry could feel so good. Guess I'll have to keep working on that!!

A few days have passed since the London event. The 'yoga buzz' I had for a couple of days after has gone and hopefully the silly grin with it. I'm left with what I can only describe as a deep warmth and stronger connection to Swamis Satyananda, Niranjan and Satsangi and the whole Satyananda organisation. I don't know if it's from the karma yoga or Swami Satsangi or both but LONG MAY IT LAST.

Thanks to everyone who planned and organised two fabulous events. I do hope that everyone there got at least as much out of them as I did.

Jaladhara

Bring it all back Home

As a child living just four streets from Battersea Arts Centre, visits to shows and functions in that great old building, then known as Battersea Town Hall, were just awesome. Returning again to this beautiful place for yet another awesome event, after many years away, in both the Australian and Indian Ashrams, the phrase "bring it all back home" sums up best the heartfelt inspiration of having just a day in the company of Swami Satsangi at BAC and the omnipresence of Guru through the occasion. Hearty cheers to the forces that made it possible and actually happen.

Swami Sumitrananda

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Yoga for the Spirit of London 2009 —An Illuminating Experience

It was an especially illuminating and inspiring experience to be in the presence of Swami Satsangi right in the heart of London at Battersea Arts Centre on the Friday the 24th of July. It is hard to describe the atmosphere within the building but it seemed to grow exponentially throughout the day and culminate in the havan at the very end with an immense energy in the air.



The day had required months of preparation from all involved. A couple of days beforehand we began cleaning the building which was no small task. We swept, scrubbed, polished, mopped and wiped until our bodies could take no more and I am told that even the caretakers of Battersea Arts Centre were taken aback by how much the place was transformed. Then there was the day of final preparations which included the manoeuvre of a large beautiful tree for centre stage, bunting strung, furniture and carpets brought in and a shop set up.

The day began with an early morning satsang with Swami Satsangi who spoke on change and how we need to start looking within and changing ourselves in order to change anything around us. This was followed by a discussion of the material and the infinite and the importance of having a balance in being able to relate to both in this life, so as to exist harmoniously within nature, but also identify with the imperishable rather than the material which, is always finite. It was very special to hear her share some of her personal insights of the time she used to live in London many years ago, living the life that any young woman would live in this city and how in becoming a sannyasin of Swami Satyananda, her old self had been completely transformed and reborn. This was followed by a special asana class with Swami Pragyamurti who taught us some yogic tools for transformation. There was an especially delicious lunch followed by a meditation practice led by Swami Anandananda from Italy. During the afternoon satsang Swami Satsangi addressed some of our questions. To cite a little of

Guru Purnima—7 July 2009

The seventh of July 2009 happened to be Guru Purnima. My manager had already agreed that I could take time-in-lieu that day. I had been looking forward to it and a day before, on the sixth, with Swami Pragyamurti Ji's kind permission I stayed over at the Satyananda Yoga Centre. Thus, I could attend all the celebrations from morning until late evening.

This was not possible last year on the occasion of Guru Purnima as I was to appear for the first interview in this country on the same day. However, I reached Satyananda Yoga Centre immediately after my interview and kept wondering what all I had missed. Of course, I got the first job after my first interview that happened to be on Guru Purnima. Miracle indeed! Guru's blessings!

Early in the morning on Guru Purnima, it felt like waking up with a divine presence, like a new year, like a new birth, like the happiest of all celebrations gone or to come over the entire year and I was looking ahead to a blissful day with blessed people from within London and people from outside London who had come solely for the day.

Meditation with Swami Pragyamurti Ji at 6:30 am warmed up all those present and created the atmosphere of cheerfulness and hope for realization that even though geographically far, our Gurus were very much with us. That place has the presence of Swami Ji in every room!

Swami Pragyamurti Ji applied the "tilak" of Panchagni Bhasma and kumkum between the eyebrow centre of everyone's forehead after we all had chanted the Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra and the Gayatri Mantra during meditation.

Following meditation, we were welcome to make ourselves comfortable and prepare the desired hot drink and have a variety of eatables for breakfast, whilst sharing our rich experiences with the Divine Masters. It was just so amazing! The happiness that was felt needs no words. Each one of us had a special way of how they came to know about the Satyananda Guru-disciple tradition. And each one of us had one thing in common to say: "my life changed when I saw Swami Ji for the first time". Perhaps none of us though were able to exactly describe their experiences of their first meeting with Swami Ji. I guess, that is because we loose the illusion of "I" and become the "self" whenever the Guru comes before us. And "self" is beyond any descriptions.

The day followed with some videos about the Sat Chandi Maha Yajna and its preparations in Rikhia Ashram. Preparations on such a vast level and so well organised... Havan, Prasad, food, accommodations and above all Swami Ji's darshan.

Questions Answered

It's the outsider's view again!

Well, the acronym didn't quite fit by the time the event happened. So typical of the divine's mischievous sense of humour, but as I have the highest regard for Swami Satyanangananda this did not detract in the slightest from the enjoyment or the blessings of an immensely special day.

Being a non-Satyananda yogi (you can't teach an old dog new tricks - well, you can, but it hurts), I always find, when attending Satyananda functions, that the Satyananda approach to the hatha, pranayama and dhyana bits is wonderfully laid-back and accommodating. But these were the chill-outs between the discourses – and what discourses. It seems that this was a bit of a baptism by fire for Swamiji, her first 'solo' as it were, but what a debut. Complete clarity and straightforwardness in answers to all manner of questions (voiced questions in the afternoon, unvoiced in the morning). Isn't it amazing how a master seems to answer what you need to ask, but didn't know you needed to ask it – and how other people ask the questions which you might have asked but couldn't be bothered? And how the answers were expanded upon to answer several questions at once, including a potted resumé of the Gita.

We missed our train from Southampton in the morning and had all sorts of hiccups; at one stage it looked like being one of those days – but taking a deep breath and refusing to be wound up was rewarded by as unforgettable a day as I can remember. Thank you Swamiji, thank you to all those who worked so hard to make the day a success and so enjoyable - and thank you divine for the cosmic drama. It's almost real....

Graham Cailles



her words of wisdom, she spoke of how we can integrate an attitude of karma yoga into our lives here in London and of the importance not to suppress our emotions but let them out in circumstances where it will not harm other people and the difference between mourning for others and true compassion or unconditional love. Interestingly, she also discussed mental illness and how it might be perceived from a more spiritual perspective and also the philosophy of tantra and how we can bring spirit/atma/the divine or whatever you wish to call it into every aspect of our lives. And thus with tantra, it does not matter where we are at, spirit can be integrated into all that we do.

A delicious cup of chai and tiffin kept me buzzing way into the night and I have not mentioned the kirtans which seemed to charge the energy in the room even more. The havan provided a perfect end to the day.



There was also much talk of Rikhia; both the purpose of ashram life and the work carried out there towards which, all the proceeds from the event will go. We saw some beautiful footage of Swami Satyananda speaking on the needs of the people there and the importance of giving, along with an incredible dance performance by the kanyas of Rikhia.

We were really very lucky to have such an intimate event with Swami Satsangi on her 'debut' out of Rikhia. She has given us a woman's perspective on the ancient teachings of yoga and how we can integrate them into our life in the city of London. We hope that she will come back soon...

Anna Timmis



Yoga for the Spirit of London

Paths to Freedom and Fulfilment—24 July 2009

What a blessing it was to be in the presence of Swami Satsangi at the Yoga for the Spirit of London programme for her 'debut' visit to the UK in July this year. A heartfelt thank you to all who participated in the programme. The teachings will have penetrated on many levels and will certainly have some long lasting effects.

We have received some wonderful messages about the day and here are just a few:

"Everyone was eager and waiting to hear about it too and since I came I have been retelling everything! It was truly wonderful!!

We'll hope to be there again surely but prior to that hope to see you all here at Rikhia for the Yajna. This year I look forward to a big group from UK and Ireland'

~ Swami Satsangi ~



"The day was amazingly joyful and I really felt that Swami Satsangi was representing Swamiji and Paramahansaji in more than just her physical presence. Very grateful for her visit and blessings of light and love to us in the UK."

Sadhana



"Everyone really wanted to make things as nice as possible for her. This is a gift she has."

Humphrey



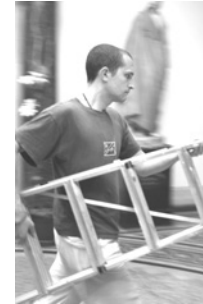
"It was the most Blessed day in so many days in the past... and we would all continue to absorb SwamiJi's Divine Blessings as we go on. So many thanks to Her for visiting us all the way from Rikhia; even if it was just for a day .

Eagerly waiting to see SwamiJi again."

Manu

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE DAY

Some Karma Yogis In Action



An Illuminating Day



Photographs, sound recordings and a DVD of this wonderful day are currently being put together.

Watch this space for more details. . . .
Details will also be posted on the website
www.swan2009.co.uk