
Daily Sadhana

*Awareness starts with the time we allot to our practice
With the mindfulness that we watch ourselves
With the balance we find
With the focus we obtain
With the wholeness we discover
With the changes we make*

Rachel Miller



**Satyananda Yoga Centre
70 Thurleigh Road
London SW12 8UD**

Tel: 020 8673 4869 * Fax: 020 8675 4080

Monday-Friday, 9am-7pm

www.syclondon.com

Front Cover

The front cover, a yantra for ajna chakra, was drawn especially by Ganga. For more information on her work, visit her website at www.lucylindner.com

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“This [ajna chakra] is the centre of extrasensory perception where various siddhis manifest according to one’s samskaras or mental tendencies. For this reason, ajna chakra is said to resemble a knot directly on top of the spinal cord. According to tantra this knot is called *Rudra Granthi*, the knot of Shiva. This knot is symbolic of the aspirant’s attachment to the newly developed siddhis which accompany the awakening of ajna. The knot effectively blocks the spiritual evolution until attachment to psychic phenomena is overcome and the knot in consciousness is freed”.

KUNDALINI TANTRA
SWAMI SATYANANDA SARASWATI

SATYANANDA YOGA CENTRE

LONDON NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2004



Swami Atmananda – An Appreciation

Since the last newsletter I have had to come to terms with the death of one of my first and most influential yoga teachers, Swami Atmananda, who came into my life in the late 1960s. Her memory lingers on at the London Centre, where she often came and conducted programmes in the early years. Her voice and phrases pop up in nearly every Yoga Nidra I teach, and I have vivid memories of the *huge* bowls of kicheri she doled round the kitchen table at shankhprakashalana time.

Swami Atmananda guided me towards my first meeting with Swamiji, and ten years later, when the time came for me to be initiated into Sannyasa she was again there to help. Hers were the first feet Swamiji told me to bend and touch after that momentous event.

In more recent years I have seen her at Rikhia, still serving her Guru with love and enthusiasm, still teaching and inspiring those less experienced than herself. She was also a true inspiration to many of Swamiji's female disciples who saw in her great courage and commitment at a time when there were few female sanyasins.

I shall always be grateful for her presence in my life.

Swami Pragyamurti

Swami Niranjan Mallorca Programme, 20-23 May 2004

Swami Niranjan is coming to Mallorca, 20-23 May 2004, for a programme with the theme of *Spontaneous Yogic Living*.

These few days will provide a rare experience by combining the sweet taste of yogic living in a natural ashram style environment during the day with a relaxing holiday feel in an attractive hotel near a beautiful beach at night.

Leave your expectations and presumptions at home and come to live in the present, with an open mind and heart. Your willingness to practice karma yoga and participate fully in sharing this special opportunity with Swamiji, Acharyas, friends, colleagues and aspiring yogis from around the world is an essential part of ensuring its success.


Booking forms are available from the London Centre, or can be downloaded from www.yogadiary.co.uk

Register of Satyananda Yoga Teachers


A list of Satyananda Yoga Teachers is being compiled and will be kept at the London Centre. If you are a qualified BSY teacher, please complete and return the form enclosed with this newsletter.

Yoga Mart

Blessed Self

A collection of chants, mantras and bhajans from Krishnadhyanam's Nada Yoga classes and workshops. Music to listen to and bliss out with. The tape comes with a booklet of words so you can join in!  60 minutes

Nada Yoga Music Practice Tape & Booklet

Develop your singing voice by learning and practising the Indian swaras (notes) Sa-Re-Ga-Ma-Pa-Dha-Ni-Sa, whilst also improving your sense of pitch and rhythm.  90 minutes

These tapes are £6 each (+£1 p&p), available from the London Centre.

Telescopic Tratak Stands

Adjustable up to a height of 100cm and easily dismantled for travel. High quality and excellent value at £22 from the London Centre.

Other Items

We also stock a selection of books, neti pots, malas, yantras and chakra charts.

Publications

The twice-yearly News Sheet for the International Yoga Fellowship Movement UK & Eire has an excellent selection of articles and a national diary of Satyananda events. Please contact Lalitambika for subscription details at 41 Charlton, Singleton, West Sussex PO18 0HU.

Yoga Magazine, published by the Bihar School of Yoga, is available from the London Centre. To subscribe please send an SAE to the London Centre asking for further details, or download an application form from the Yoga Mag website at www.yogamag.net

Satyananda Websites

If you are a web-enabled yogi/ni, there are several useful Satyananda sites to keep you up to date with the latest news and events:

www.syclondon.com is the new web address of the London Centre

www.sycbirmingham.com is the brand new site for the Birmingham Centre

www.padma.org.uk will take you to Padmasambhava's relocated website

www.yogadiary.co.uk is a new site for Satyananda events in the UK & abroad

www.yogamag.net is Yoga Magazine's website with news, articles and links.

Nadarupa

Yantra



The word *yantra* comes from two Sanskrit root words, *yam* meaning an instrument, implement, machine or apparatus, and *tra* from the word *trana* meaning to liberate from bondage. So a yantra is an instrument that liberates.

Symbolically *yam* refers to *Yama*, the lord of death, and then *yantra* becomes the tool by which one may attain liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth.

Yantras are ancient symbols and there is evidence of their use in many cultures.

The Christian cross is in effect a yantra, said to have derived from the swastika. The eight-spoked wheel is of importance to the Buddhist as representing the setting in motion of the dharma as taught by the Buddha. The Star of David is a common feature of yantras, in the form of two interlocking triangles, one pointing up (Siva), the other pointing down (Shakti).

There are many different types of yantra; those that we use in our yoga practices are mainly based on geometric figures. These are constructed with concentric arrangements of circles, triangles, lotus petals and squares. In the centre of the yantra is the *bindu* (dot or point) from which the yantra emerges and to which it will return. The yantra is enclosed in a *bhupura* (square) that contains, protects and earths the energy. The aspirant then uses the yantra as a tool to reconnect with the *bindu*, the point, the one.

On a conscious level this represents the initial separation from and the eventual return to the point of cosmic unity, where the individual consciousness reunites with the universal consciousness, the point from which it came, the goal of Yoga.

Brahmananda

Yantra Retail Therapy

A selection of beautiful Yantras, including Sri Yantra, are available from the London Centre, cost from £5 upwards depending on size.

All yantras are mounted on thick board and suitable to use for *tratak*, or simply to enhance your home or yoga practice space.

Tantra

Tantra is a very significant tradition of Indian spirituality. It stands for a system of knowledge and practice that encompasses every faculty of human consciousness, life and action. Its practices are open to all, irrespective of caste, colour, gender, nationality or religion. The approach of Tantra is to expand human consciousness and liberate creative energies. It has developed the most elaborate system of practical tools for the evolution of human consciousness using Mantra (sound), Yantra and Mandala (geometric figures) which act as the visible forms of divine vibrations. The techniques of yoga also have their source in Tantra.

Tantra is the way to attain freedom from the bondage of the world while still living in it. With the help of yogic practices derived from the science of Tantra we can manipulate the functioning of the subtle dimensions of personality and evolve in the higher dimensions of consciousness. With the concepts and practices related to chakras, the transformers of energy, and kundalini, the sleeping dormant potential force of cosmic nature in human beings, Tantra gives us a very powerful and practical way to transform our ordinary consciousness into higher divine consciousness. At a more practical level Tantra gives us the control of the creative force which is already in us but is latent due to our lack of awareness. Tantra is a way of life that brings knowledge, power, bliss, peace, light and spiritual evolution.

Through hatha yoga Tantra has given us the science of balancing the interacting activities of the physical body, mind and energy. Through *tattwa shuddhi*, the purification of the fundamental elements, Tantra gives us the way to prepare ourselves for higher experiences. Through *kriya yoga*, *chakra sadhana* and *kundalini yoga*, Tantra has given us direct methods to awaken our higher faculties of knowledge and creativity. With the help of the science of *prana*, Tantra gives us the techniques to tune ourselves with nature and higher levels of existence.

Swami Maheshananda

Swami Maheshananda at the London Centre, 13 June 2004 (6-8.30pm)

Swami Maheshananda's programme at the London Centre on 13 June 2004 at 6pm will be a combination of theory and practices derived from Tantra, which will help you to live in a more balanced and harmonious way and give you a glimpse of some of the powerful techniques of advanced Tantra to awaken your creative potentials and expand the horizons of your individual consciousness. A little knowledge of yoga at a practical level will help understand the advanced practices better, although all levels are welcome.

The Varanasi Experience

Our very own Nada Yoga teacher, Krishnadhyanam, has been spending time studying and living in the ancient, holy and not entirely clean city of Varanasi. Here are some highlights of his time there, taken from recent emails...

5 January :: Omniscience, Omnipotence and Omnishakti are being showered upon you at this very moment. Yesterday I travelled on the train from Deoghar to Varanasi. Yes there *is* a train station at Deoghar; disguised as a cowshed, it boasts at least one train a day. Despite this low turnover, punctuality is not exactly its forte, as the *Muv Khei* Express (express in name only) couldn't even get itself to the station it starts from on time. I really must have a word with them about the underfloor heating sometime. Third class travel in winter is a treat to be looked forward to if you haven't experienced it. Just before I left, Swami Satsangi gave me a rose; its aroma helped to stave off the familiar smell of cowshit as the train approached Varanasi. I sense a little cynicism in this email which I feel is unbecoming for a karma sanyas lifestyle. I must amend my ways immediately.

Had a nice lie-in this morning, prompted as much by the chilly fog seeping in through the windows and futile attempts to get my feet warm as by the fact that there was no karma yoga to get up for. Arrived in my new hotel which is the pits. I am going to change back to the one I was in before. A nice bowl of porridge has helped to warm my soul. *Nia sal mubarraka* (Happy New Year) to you all!

7 January :: Blessed Self, you are the lucky recipient of yet another email from the sacred city of cowshit and Shiva - like Shiva and Shakti the two seem to go hand in hand (if you forgive the expression). I have decided to stay in Varanasi and brave out the cold weather. Had a few days of being down and depressed after getting back here in the cold to a chilly room and wondering what on earth I was doing in this place but then I discovered that my cheap room includes use of a hot shower - which actually works. Bliss! Oh heaven!! My first hot shower in India - and after Rikhia in the cold it couldn't have come at a better time.

So now I am feeling warmer (having just bought a woolly jumper) and more optimistic, and have just discovered an internet place that has broadband. What more could a yogi want? Had a wonderful darshan with Satyanandaji on New Years Day. His new year resolution is to start educating some of the young boys in the area, so the kanyas will now be joined by the brahmacharyas. One thousand and eight Oms to you all.

30 January :: Hari Hari Om. Finally the sun is beginning to make itself seen and felt during the day. I have been ill for two weeks now. Still having daily tabla lessons and twice weekly singing lessons but the latter is a bit of a joke considering the croak which has replaced my voice. Am getting very frustrated

Skived off gardening to do washing :: The witnessing quality we talk about in meditation is now becoming real. For the first time in my life I really am getting into meditation, understanding how it can be used as a tool. This is probably because we have one or two daily meditation classes, giving us the opportunity to deepen our practice.

The Old Ashram :: Today we visit the small underground room where Swami Satyananda spent six months practising yoga. Later we swim in the Ganges and listen to a flute player, then mouna in preparation for tomorrow's *Japa Anusthan*.

Japa Anusthan :: Practise constant mantra repetition all morning, a fascinating experience. Although I expect something awful to come up, instead I drift through the morning, valuing the space within and without, and feeling the relief from the endless clutter of thoughts. By constantly repeating a mantra we are protected from any barbs lurking in our subconscious. This is my first experience of utter peace, so much so that I don't want to stop. I am, however, surprised to be so tired at the end of the day.

In Rikhia :: Bus trip was wild. Rikhia is very different from Munger. Lots of children around bring a different energy; they are leading the Kirtans. Meals are served on banana leaf plates. My karma yoga is to clean the toilets. A colleague is driving me crazy with incessant chatter and rushing around, I want to slow down and stop the noise. Highlight was bumping into Swami Niranjanananda and having a photo taken with him. Went to Deoghar, phoned home and saw the gory remains of a goat sacrifice at the Bada Baidyanath temple.

Coming home via Agra and Delhi :: Spend time at the Taj Mahal in the gardens, processing the last month and enjoying the peace and space, and looking forward to showing my family the photos. In Delhi we shop until we drop, a very grounding and externalising experience!

Final reflection :: In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Arjuna is told that we can change all the *karma* we have through our attitude and it is this practical experience that I would like to further explore, using karma yoga as the tool.

Kriya

You have the right to work, but never to the fruits of work. You should never engage in action for the sake of reward, nor should you long for inaction.

Perform work in this world, Arjuna, as a man established within himself, without selfish attachments, and alike in success and defeat.

For yoga is perfect evenness of mind.

Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2 verses 47-48

Shankhprakashalana (Salt Water Cleansing)

Spring Clean dates are 1 & 15 May 2004 *in Dulwich*, starting at 9am prompt. If you haven't done the practice before, you will be taught the short version only. Cost is £25 payable in full before the day at the London Centre.

BWY Yoga for Children Module

This BWY module runs over five days and is being held at Yoga Junction, Finsbury Park. Dates are 20 March, 17 April, 15 May, 19 June & 17 July 2004.

For more details please contact Lynn Parrott (Lilamurti)
Phone: 020 8693 4603, email: lynnparrott@yahoo.co.uk

Teacher Training Course starting in 2005

A teacher training course (TTC) is planned to start in 2005, culminating in a final month in India in November 2006.

Please contact Swami Vedantananda if you wish to register an interest.
Phone: 01293 784 192, email: vedanta.saraswati@virgin.net

Yoga Events with Swami Vedantananda

Saturday 20 March	Introduction to Yoga (Cambridge) Contact: Chrissie Clarke 01223 214 796
Saturday 22 May	In-service training day (Leicester)
Weekend 12-13 June	Scottish Yoga Teachers' Association (St Andrews)
21 June-4 July	In-service training (Greek Ashram)
Mid-October to December	India

Kirtan & Nada Yoga

Kirtan and chanting of Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra takes place on the last Friday of the month, 7.30-9.00pm. Free of charge – everyone welcome.

Nada Yoga is expected to resume on Friday evenings at 7.30pm, sometime in April or May when Krishnadhyanam returns from India.

Sita Kalyanam 2004

Sita Kalyanam and Sat Chandi Maha Yajna will take place at Rikhia, India from 12th to 16th December 2004.

London Centre Diary

Saturday 17 April **Yoga Nidra (ISTD)**
9am-5pm *Swami Pragyamurti*

For Yoga Teachers :: Going deeper into Yoga Nidra and how we teach this core Satyananda practice

Sunday 13 June **Tantra**
6-8.30pm *Swami Maheshananda*

An evening programme with Swami Maheshananda from Bihar Yoga Bharati University, India. See the article on Tantra for more information.

Saturday 19 June **Japa Anusthan**
9am-5pm *Swami Pragyamurti & Nadarupa*

A day of constant japa (repetition of mantra), silence and fasting. Please bring a mala

Saturday 26 June **In-Service Training Day (ISTD)**
9am-5pm *teacher to be confirmed*

Details to be confirmed – keep an eye on the London noticeboard or our website

Sunday 27 June **A Day of Yoga**
9am-5pm *teacher to be confirmed*

Details to be confirmed – keep an eye on the London noticeboard or our website

Friday 2 July **Guru Purnima**
Early till late *Everyone welcome!*

A joyful day including early morning meditation, yoga class, mala making, kirtan and evening feast

Saturday 17 July **Nada Yoga**
9am-5pm *Krishnadhyanam*

A day of Nada Yoga, chanting and enchantment :: Krishnadhyanam returns after 6 months in India!

Residential w/e 24-25 July **Meditations on the Heartspace and Other Joys**
Saturday 9am to Sunday 5pm *Swami Pragyamurti*

Hridayakasha Dharana and other practices focusing on the Heartspace

Please send full payment with your application and bring vegetarian lunch to share for the one day programmes (except Japa Anusthan which is a fasting day).

Cost is £27 for day programmes, £70 for residential weekends. If you have difficulty paying for a weekend event, please contact us as we do not wish to exclude students from Yoga programmes because of the cost.

ISTD events are for qualified yoga teachers only. Yoga Teachers must complete at least one In-Service Training Day each year to maintain insurance cover.

A Month in India

Countdown to India :: An intense time, with three children, a full-time job and yoga students to sort out. Once on the plane there is an enormous feeling of relief, that I have actually made it! However I am not really prepared for what will come towards me as the preparations have only scratched the surface...

On the plane :: Irritating man behind me keeps using my backrest as a lever to manoeuvre his bulk out of his seat. Looking back I guess I was coming from a very safe Western standpoint where the world is a comfortable place and we are within our rights to ensure our 'physical' comfort.

A long train journey :: I become fearful in the night as the train to Jasidih sways to and fro. I ask myself whether we would hear about Indian train crashes back home? I guess it probably would hit the news if twenty UK nationals were travelling together. I resign myself to the fact that there is nothing I can do; my life is in the driver's hands. On a more positive note, Indian toilets are no longer a hurdle, nor is eating without cutlery.

Discovering Karma Yoga :: During our stay in Munger we are very fortunate to enjoy lectures on the *Bhagavad Gita* from Swami Yogakanti. We look at the different types of Karma Yoga and how the 'selfless service' of cleaning the ashram and working for its wellbeing develops our knowledge of ourselves.

Karma Yoga helps us to:

- Co-operate, work with and care for others as it is an extroverting gesture
- Observe and practise our relations with other people and those we would not normally associate with
- Develop meditative awareness in action and break down attachments and expectations by cultivating 'non-attachment to the fruits of our actions'
- Increase control over our senses and desires through a positive attitude.

Swami Dharmadev, who initiated us into life in Munger Ashram, said that each difficulty we faced in the ashram was a challenge, and whatever experience we drew from our time there would be the experience we were in need of. This is the scientific law of action and reaction - or *Karma!*

Exhaustion :: The concept of 'selfless service' is starting to take its toll, it is more difficult that I imagined and I find myself looking to the outside world. Irritated with idiosyncrasies of my colleagues. My knees are giving trouble, is this a question of flexibility? I feel unable to let go in case something comes up that I can't deal with.

Enjoyed polishing plates today :: I am starting to lighten up as I surrender to the duty of action, playing with how I witness these techniques of distraction to keep me occupied and unfocused, shying away from dealing with the issues at stake.

with my tabla teacher who is so typically Indian and rigid in his approach: "It's been like this for two thousand years and we're not going to change now". In short, the glamour and glitz has worn off completely. Am hoping that a new month will bring a sense of purpose and warmth. Much love and many Oms, KD.

1 February :: Hari Om. This is a group email, which does not of course reduce its beauty and meaning in your life - we are all one, after all. Last Tuesday was Saraswati Day. All the temple virgins of Varanasi were out in force for days before, decorating the alleyways and installing statues of said Goddess - they were all beautiful and some were stunning. Guru Purnima decorations will never be the same again! The next day the statues were taken in procession down to the Ganga and with great clamour and shouting and calls of *Jai Ram Sri Ram* the statues were taken out into the middle of the river and thrown in. Women weren't involved in any of this of course - they stayed in and carried on with whatever it is that women do here - cooking and bringing up the children and keeping the house clean. A pity that the men can't follow their example and keep the streets clean - even that is a woman's job.

It rained again yesterday. For those of you who have not heard my description of the effects of rain in Varanasi, imagine a huge water buffalo in the sky (a mere cow does not suffice) that dumps this absolutely gi-normous cowpat over the whole city, which everyone then proceeds to sludge through until the rain stops. No matter how carefully I walk, it splashes all up my trouser leg. After a couple of days of sunshine there is no trace of the great-buffalo-in-the-sky and I think it was all a figment of my imagination. Except that it has happened twice already. Somewhere in an ancient Kashi manuscript, there is a detailed description of this buffalo-god but for some reason he has been whitewashed out of the Hindu pantheon of Gods. Maybe I should dedicate my life to learning Sanskrit so I can peruse the holy scriptures in search of said God. Much love & innumerable Oms.

20 February :: Varanasi is known as the 'City of Shiva' and there could surely be no more appropriate place to spend Shivaratri. This sacred place, colourful, loud and vibrant as it is, explodes at this festival into a raucous celebration of Shiva's marriage to Parvati. A triumphant procession carries the two of them atop an elephant to their marriage, accompanied by innumerable splendidly raucous brass bands, and they don't come more brassy than India! Off to Mumbai on Sunday to spend four days at a yoga programme with Swami Niranjana - a treat I wasn't expecting and am looking forward to. Feeling much better now, my bronchitis has gone, as has winter, and I don't even notice the cowshit any more - I must be becoming enlightened.

If there is no time, no problem. If there is no space, no problem. Hari Om!

Krishnadhyanam