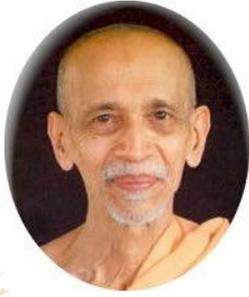


Swarupa Avastha

the natural state



*Sivananda Yoga Ashram
Australia*



Swami Chidananda



Swami Sivananda



Swami Nada Brahmananda

The Masters

Introductory Note:

*T*his small booklet has the blessings of Sri Swami Sivananda and Sri Swami Chidananda (who succeeded Sri Swami Sivananda as President of the Divine Life Society, Rishikesh, Himalayas). Sri Swami Chidananda* asked Swami Anasaktananda to write a book.

* Sri Swami Chidananda initiated Swami Anasaktananda into sannyas in 1999. Anasakta means 'detached' in the sense of 'detached from the world'

Evolution of Man

*W*e have been gifted with a human birth. How we utilise this gift is our own choice. It is up to each individual to transform their human nature into a higher state of consciousness, if they so choose. We encounter both good and bad in life. We have to get 'licks and blows'. It is all for a reason. It is all for our evolution and it has been chosen by us, either consciously, or sub-consciously.

Are our parents not our first God? They have brought us into this world. They have blessed us with a human body. They have nourished us and provided us with the necessary education to get started in life. However, just as a cow weans a calf, the time comes for the child, once grown up, to detach from the parents and live a largely independent existence. However, a child who practises *sadhana* for spiritual evolution may stay with the parents when it provides the best opportunity for spiritual growth. 

When one meets a spiritual guru who provides the necessary knowledge for understanding spiritual life, one should gladly give thanks to that teacher. Then, everything necessary is provided, both spiritually and materially.

*Mother is God,
Father is God,
Teacher is God,
Guest is God*

Selfishness has to be erased from the mind in order to get Self Realisation, or the highest state of consciousness. The Supreme Being is present in everyone. For the same reason pride must be erased also, because pride is a form of selfishness. The practice of forgiveness helps in erasing both pride and selfishness. Through forgiveness we break down the barriers that separate us from each other and from the Supreme Being.

One must be a disciple first before becoming a guru



Samadhi Hall - Sivananda Ashram Rishikesh circa 1987
Swami Nada Brahmananda, Swami Chidananda, Swami Anasaktananda

Swami Nada Brahmananda sang a devotional song '**Bol Hare**', in two versions of the same **raga**. The meaning is: Radha is the individual seeker who wishes to attain a higher state of consciousness. Krishna, the Supreme Soul, the Infinite Being, is represented by the Guru, or the Master. He is the link which binds the individual soul with the higher consciousness. Radha sees that without Krishna life is devoid of meaning. Even so, until the seeker meets the Guru, life is dreary, everything is empty. It is only when the seeker meets the Guru, life has a meaning, and an ultimate goal, which is Self Realisation. This is called Yoga.

There are different kinds of seekers, some may understand, others may not. It depends on the consciousness of the individual, or degree of clarity of mind. A '**sthita prajna**', someone who is established in intuitive wisdom, has tremendous clarity of mind. A teacher has to go through lots of pain in order to impart wisdom to the disciple. The disciple evolves through respect for the guru. No pain, no gain. One must learn from mistakes and plod on, or persevere until the goal is reached. Rome was not built in a day.

Yoga is not a business. It is a lifelong process of moulding one's self in order to become established in intuitive wisdom. A student has to experience a lot of pain in order to realise that it is not worth coming into this world for mere worldly enjoyment. Then the whole process becomes easy. Self realisation comes naturally, without any great effort, once the disciple reaches a certain stage. That fundamental stage is to become established in **vairagya**, or dispassion.

A yoga teacher who charges a fee for yoga exercise classes incurs a mixed **karma** and should give a percentage of earnings to the teacher to help maintain the ashram where he or she has learnt. This helps to erase selfishness from the mind.

Where there is discipline, money has value. However, if money is given where there is no discipline, it will have no value.

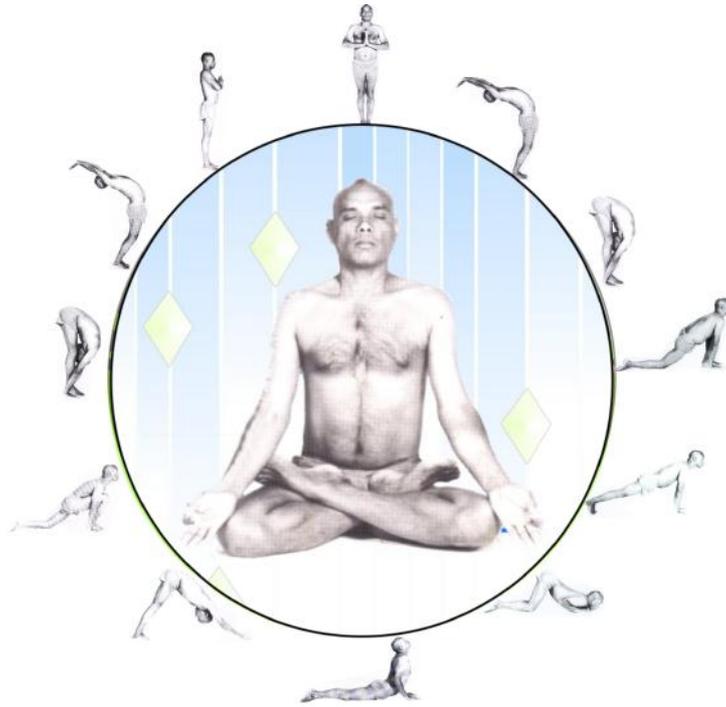
Some students are born with the quality to see and understand; to be concerned about the teacher's welfare. If the teacher has a giving nature, yet the student does not have this same nature, blessings will not come easily to the student. The teacher will automatically give grace to the student who has a giving nature. This is crucial for the quick evolution of the individual soul.

Sadhana (spiritual practise) cannot be sold. It is not a saleable commodity.



*Be Good,
Do Good,
Be Kind,
Be Compassionate*

The Nature of Man



*M*an is essentially a psychological being, endowed with a physical body, a finite intellect and a little spark of the divine. However, he has lost the awareness of his essential divine nature. He may even believe that he has come into this world for merely eating, drinking, sleeping and procreating.

Swami Sivananda stressed the importance of **brahmacharya**, or celibacy. The semen is life itself. He received letters from numerous young men who had wasted their seminal energy and were in a miserable state, some even to the point of committing suicide. Through the practice of Yoga, and restraint, the seminal energy flows upwards and enriches the mind. This leads to a sharper intellect.

Rajasic food is a hindrance to the practice of yoga. Many Swamis who come to the West are still attached to their South Indian food. If one cannot control the tongue, it is difficult to control any of the other senses. Without control of the senses, it becomes easy to fall back into the meshes of Maya, even if one has been a 'renunciate' for years.

Yoga Asana at 48

Silent Achiever 

Swamiji learnt yoga asanas at 12 years of age from Pandit Deeman Prasad's nephew, Krishna



*I*n the human state, the consciousness is mostly centred within the physical body. The body is the outward expression of mind. It is mind in physical form. Therefore, to control the mind, we must first control the physical body. This is where the practice of yoga asana comes in. The **yoga asanas** (postures) help to keep the body strong, supple and healthy. This in turn helps to keep the mind strong and calm. A strong calm mind becomes a suitable receptacle for the higher consciousness.

When Patanjali first espoused the Raja Yoga Sutras, over two thousand years ago, he prescribed a 'simple steady posture' for the practice of meditation. At the time, there was no need for the elaborate system of 'asanas' that has developed since, as people were generally stronger and healthier. Man was less deteriorated.

The connection between the body and mind is facilitated by the breath. The breath is the link between the two. Control of breath leads to control of the mind, and of course, control over the physical body also. This is why the yoga postures are practised in conjunction with control of the breath, or **pranayama**. **Hatha Yoga**, when practised regularly and in conjunction with other lifestyle changes, brings about a transformation. It helps one to realise the divine nature.

Patanjali Maharishi clearly elaborated this process in the **Raja Yoga Sutras** over two thousand years ago. The **Yama**, or restraints, clearly define the requirements for laying the moral foundation of yoga. These are:

Ahimsa - non violence

Satya - truthfulness

Brahmacharya - self restraint, celibacy

Asteya - non-stealing

Aparigraha - non-covetousness

The **yamas** need to be supplemented by the **niyamas**:

Saucha - internal and external purity

Santosha - contentment

Tapas - austerity

Swadhyaya - study of the scriptures

Ishwara Pranidhana - surrender to the Supreme Being

Added to the restraints and observances, are the practice of yoga posture, breath control, withdrawal of the senses, concentration and meditation which are the foundation for experiencing the superconscious state (**samadhi**)

Yama - restraints (five)

Niyama - observances (five)

Asana - posture

Pranayama - breath control

Pratyahara - sense withdrawal

Dharana - concentration

Dhyana - meditation

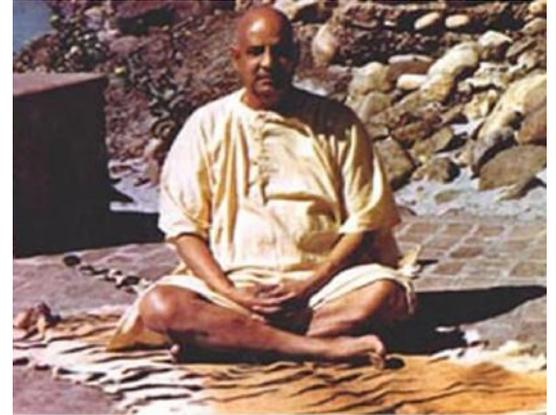
Samadhi - superconscious state

ॐ
*Yoga is the stilling
of the thought
waves of the mind*
- Patanjali

*M*an is made up of psychological attributes, including the brutal instincts, the human intellect, and divine qualities such as universal love, compassion, forbearance, tolerance, understanding and so forth. Sri Swami Sivananda summed up these attributes in the following:

Universal Prayer

O adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient
Thou art Satchidananda
Thou art Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.
Grant us an understanding heart
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and Wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptation and to control the mind
Free us from egoism, lust, anger, greed, hatred and jealousy
Fill our hearts with divine virtues,
Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms
Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms
Let us ever remember Thee.
Let us ever sing Thy Glories.
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips
Let us Abide in Thee for ever and ever



In the Bible it is said 'I and my Father are One'. The author didn't say 'Two'.

This prayer helps to change you. By regular repetition with faith and devotion it helps to transform the lower nature to the higher. Where he wrote '*Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms, Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms*' he meant in all living forms, not just human beings. He meant that by serving others, one is actually serving God, or the Supreme Being in others. We cannot serve an imaginary Superman in the sky, but we can serve our fellow beings, with divine '**bhav**' or devotion. Many saints and noble souls have transformed their human nature in this way.

Swami Sivananda's 'Universal Prayer' says 'Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient'. Knowing that the Supreme Being is in fact Ever Present, All Powerful and All Knowing, then it follows that the same Being, otherwise known as God, is in every being, is everywhere, is the source of all power and is Universal Consciousness. Therefore, when we serve another human being, or any being for that matter, we are serving God. When we bow down to another, we are bowing down to God. The Ever Present, Supreme Being is in everyone, including oneself of course. Yes, we have to understand that when we serve another, we are serving that same Being within ourselves. Living in this awareness helps to ensure that we only wish for others that which we want for ourselves. That which prevents us from seeing the same Supreme Being in others, is the impure mind. The mind is tainted by egoism, lust, anger, greed, hatred and jealousy. It is these lower qualities that separate us from others and prevent us from seeing the One Self in all.

Vedanta is the experience of man on the spiritual path. It is that which one experiences when practising the synthesis of yoga. It reveals the connection between the physical, astral and causal bodies. It is explained in great detail in the various **Upanishads**. Vedanta is philosophy in practice.

The majority of people in the western world practise yoga postures merely as physical exercises, without deriving much benefit. The yoga postures, or asanas, combined with deep slow breathing and relaxation, help to steady the mind and lay the foundation for concentration and meditation (**dharana** and **dhyana**). One needs to practise under the guidance of a teacher for many years in order to clear doubts from the mind and elevate the consciousness.

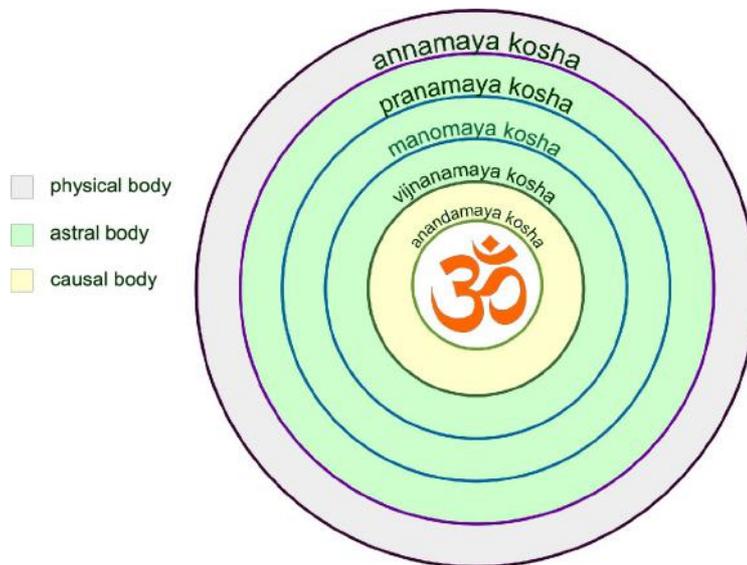


The Five Elements

The body is made of five elements; earth (**prithvi**), air (**vayu**), fire (**agni**), water (**apah**) and ether (**akash**). These are the physical attributes, from the gross to the subtle. The five elements also roughly correspond to the five sheaths (**koshas**), as they too are ordered from the gross (**annamaya kosha**) to the most subtle (**anandamaya kosha**).

The Upadhis - Limiting Adjuncts of the Atman (Soul)

- PHYSICAL BODY – **Annamaya Kosha**
- ASTRAL BODY – **Pranamaya, Manomaya & Vijnanamaya Kosha**
- CAUSAL BODY – **Anandamaya Kosha**



3 Bodies & 5 Sheaths

The five sheaths (limiting adjuncts), prevent one from getting a glimpse of the true Self. These five sheaths are namely the outer '**food sheath**' consisting of gross matter, the '**pranic sheath**' which is the seat of the vital forces and impulses, the '**mind sheath**' the seat of the lower thoughts and emotions, the '**intellect sheath**' and lastly the '**bliss sheath**'. To understand these concepts, one must contemplate under the guidance of a guru who leads the soul to the Highest Reality. **Maya**, or the illusory power of this manifest universe, prevents one from seeing the Highest Reality.

The more you give, the more you receive.

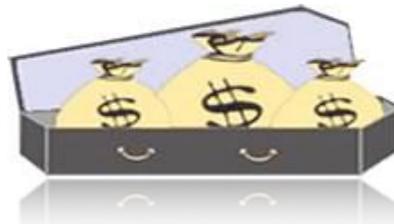


The river is not selfish. The more water you take, the more water it gives.



The mango tree is not selfish. the more fruit you pick, the more it gives.

Years ago we read in the local newspaper that there was a man in Holland who hid a very large stash of money inside a large picture frame which was hanging on the wall of his house. He apparently requested his niece to place the picture in his coffin when he died. After some time he passed away. His niece, in making preparations for the funeral, brought the framed picture to place inside the coffin as requested. Alas, the picture would not fit into the coffin. Eventually it was decided to take the picture out of the frame and place it into the coffin without the frame. Whilst dismantling the picture frame, lo and behold, the large stash of money was found neatly concealed in the back of the frame! The man apparently wanted to take his money with him to the grave.



Khali ana, khali jana, dhana yuvana ka nahi tikana - you come (into this world) empty handed, and will go empty handed; wealth and youth are not permanent.

Yoga Changes Oneself

*M*an wants happiness he shuns pain. The materialistic life of the senses and attachment to objects is the root cause of pain. We cannot escape pain in this material world. Happiness is often elusive and short lived. By lifting the consciousness above the body and senses, we are able to rise above the root cause of pain. By elevating the consciousness, through the techniques handed down to us from the ancient rishis and seers, we are able to attain true and everlasting happiness in the Eternal Universal Consciousness.

Of course, we have to struggle against the current of worldliness and the downward pull of the senses. We have to overcome the lower aspects of our human nature. With effort and discrimination, these will gradually fall off like leaves from a tree. First comes the yearning for truth, then the process of discriminating between the real and the unreal, or between that which brings us eternal peace and that which brings us endless pain and suffering.

Seven Bhumikas

The seven stages of wisdom are:

1. **Subheccha** (yearning for truth)
2. **Vicharana** (enquiry, investigation)
3. **Tanumanasi** (fading of mind)
4. **Sattvapatti** (attaining purity)
5. **Asamsakti** (detachment from the world)
6. **Padartha Bhavana** (awareness of the Higher Self)
7. **Turiya** (the superconscious state)

You can do this, or you can do something else. The choice is yours.



In order to grow a crop of sweet potato, one must first prepare the plot by removing rocks, tree roots and rubbish. Next one has to carefully dig and work the soil to make it loose and ready for planting. Once we plant the sweet potato shoot (or seed), we carefully tend the plot, weeding, watering and fertilising as required. After some time we are able to harvest the fresh sweet potato tubers. If the soil has been prepared and nurtured carefully, the tubers will be large and consistent in size and shape. They will also be sweet and nutritious. It is the same for meditation. We must first do all of the necessary groundwork and attend to each and every detail of preparation in order for meditation to be successful. All of the thoughts, words and actions must be cultivated towards this goal. There is no such thing as 'easy meditation'.

Wrong and crooked thoughts, harsh and deceitful words, unfair and unjust actions all tend to make the individual coarse, uncultured and untrustworthy. This is analogous to the sweet potato planted carelessly in rough uncultivated soil and not properly nurtured. The resulting crop will be knotty, rough and lacking in taste. As you think, so you become.

If you try to force the mind to meditate, it goes 'zing burru burru vapum' (which sort of means 'out of control' or 'haywire'). Meditation comes naturally to the mind that has been properly prepared through years of protracted self discipline and yoga sadhana. It is not something that can be forced; nor does it come easily.

If through pride you try to run away from the shame of doing a wrong, then this will create a barrier to doing good. Just as it takes a long time to develop a base character, it also takes time and effort to become self cultured and noble. A noble character will be naturally inclined to do good.

The mind that entertains wrong thoughts, cannot get peace or rest. To attain peace of mind, it is necessary to have only good thoughts and a clear conscience.

The tongue has to be restrained. One cannot eat anything and expect to meditate. To believe so would be to deceive oneself. Perfect restraint is necessary. Without restraint, the mind will run wild.

Law Of Karma - Action And Reaction

Generally, most people have only heard the word '**karma**'. They may have only a vague idea of its meaning. Even in India where children have been trained to understand the word karma from a young age, the lower qualities in the mind such as anger, lust and greed, blur the understanding and cause the idea of karma to be forgotten eventually. This is especially so if exposed to foreign television and movies. **Maya**, the veiling power of material existence, prevents proper understanding when the senses are in a lower state, when there is 'worldly mindedness'.

By practising tapas, or discipline of the senses, and by consuming pure food, one can gradually get a clearer understanding of the true meaning of karma. One cannot do wrong repeatedly and expect to be constantly forgiven. The habit of doing wrong becomes embedded in the mind and is difficult to eradicate. Once you do a wrong, and get punishment, or pain, as a result of doing that wrong action, you must learn the lesson and resolve not to repeat the same mistake again. This is the first step to becoming a divine personality.

If one has a keen memory and sees a blind person, or a diseased person, this forms a strong impression in the mind and serves as a reminder of the consequences of karmic law. We reap as we sow. This is quite noticeable in the present age. We just have to observe. Everywhere we can see the effects of karma. If we learn from our mistakes, we will not make the same mistakes again. It requires just a little bit of discipline, a little self restraint. It begins within the mind. One does not have to be an adept at yoga exercises to lift the consciousness; and the practice of Yoga will be fruitless if done out of egoism.

As Swami Sivananda put it, you sow a thought and reap an action; you sow an action and reap a habit; you sow a habit and reap a character; you sow a character and reap a destiny. Hence destiny is of your own making. This is how karma works, in this world and the next.



Samadhi Hall - Sivananda Ashram Rishikesh 1991

An **ashram** is not the place for showing-off wealth and status. A great opportunity may be lost by visiting an ashram with the wrong attitude. One must visit the ashram and approach the teacher with humility, honesty and the idea to learn.

A guru who is only interested in money will not deal with the truth. He will only be interested in living a comfortable life and will lose the real essence of practising yoga. Money cannot buy peace of mind. It matters not what you wear, what really matters is the quality of thoughts that are cultivated within the mind.

There are many gurus and swamis in India. How many get Self Realised?

A wealthy man once gave a **sadhu** a blanket to keep warm. After some time he had regrets, and so he went and asked the sadhu to give him back the blanket. Attachment to some material possessions took priority over serving the needy.

'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven'.

Ratnakar was a rogue. He became Valmiki after doing great penance and deep meditation. He wrote the Ramayana out of a vision. This was after he became a saint. Every saint had a past, every sinner has a future. Every saint made mistakes in the past, however after some time, they corrected themselves. They elevated their consciousness through self culture and self discipline. It is a process of learning from mistakes and correcting oneself.

We would be wise to follow the ancient Vedic system laid down by the saints and sages. If the whole world follows this ancient system, there would not be oppression and depravation, conflict and war.

How long have politicians and dignitaries being talking about world peace? Think about this. Politics and religion have become entangled. Religion has been used as a means to political power and powerful rulers have sided with religious institutions to legitimise their power. In this context, religion can become a divisive force, when it should be a unifying force. There is only one Supreme Reality, beyond names and forms, beyond religious ideology, beyond politics, transcendent and eternal. The paths are many, but the truth is one.

A man comes into this world after his mother carries him for nine months in the womb. As a baby he lived on the milk of his mother. Mother is '**Mataji**'. If a husband sees his wife as Mataji he would think twice before wanting to treat her baldly. By seeing her as Mataji it also helps to erase sexual desire.

Disagreements occur between husband and wife because they are not perfect. The husband should not beat his wife because they cannot agree. If one cannot get along, it is best to separate and keep peace. To harbor malice or resentment is harmful to oneself most of all.

There was a lady by the name of 'Gladys'. She was a regular visitor to the yoga centre in Dunedin, New Zealand. She had a very good job at the university. She lent half of the money to buy a second hand car for the centre. As a result, she seemed to think she could rule the place. When Swami Vishnudevananda visited, he noticed this peculiar attitude of Gladys. Consequently he told Swami Anasaktananda to sell the car and give Gladys her share of the money. The car was quickly sold, she got back her money, and Swamiji was actually able to buy a much better car!

Reaching The Guru

One of the great saints of India said that one can become a great person and also survive successfully in any place on this Earth, if he knows three important things, namely:

- The ability to swim, to help prevent drowning
- The ability to cook and serve tasty meals to others
- The ability to speak amicably, without hurting another's feelings.

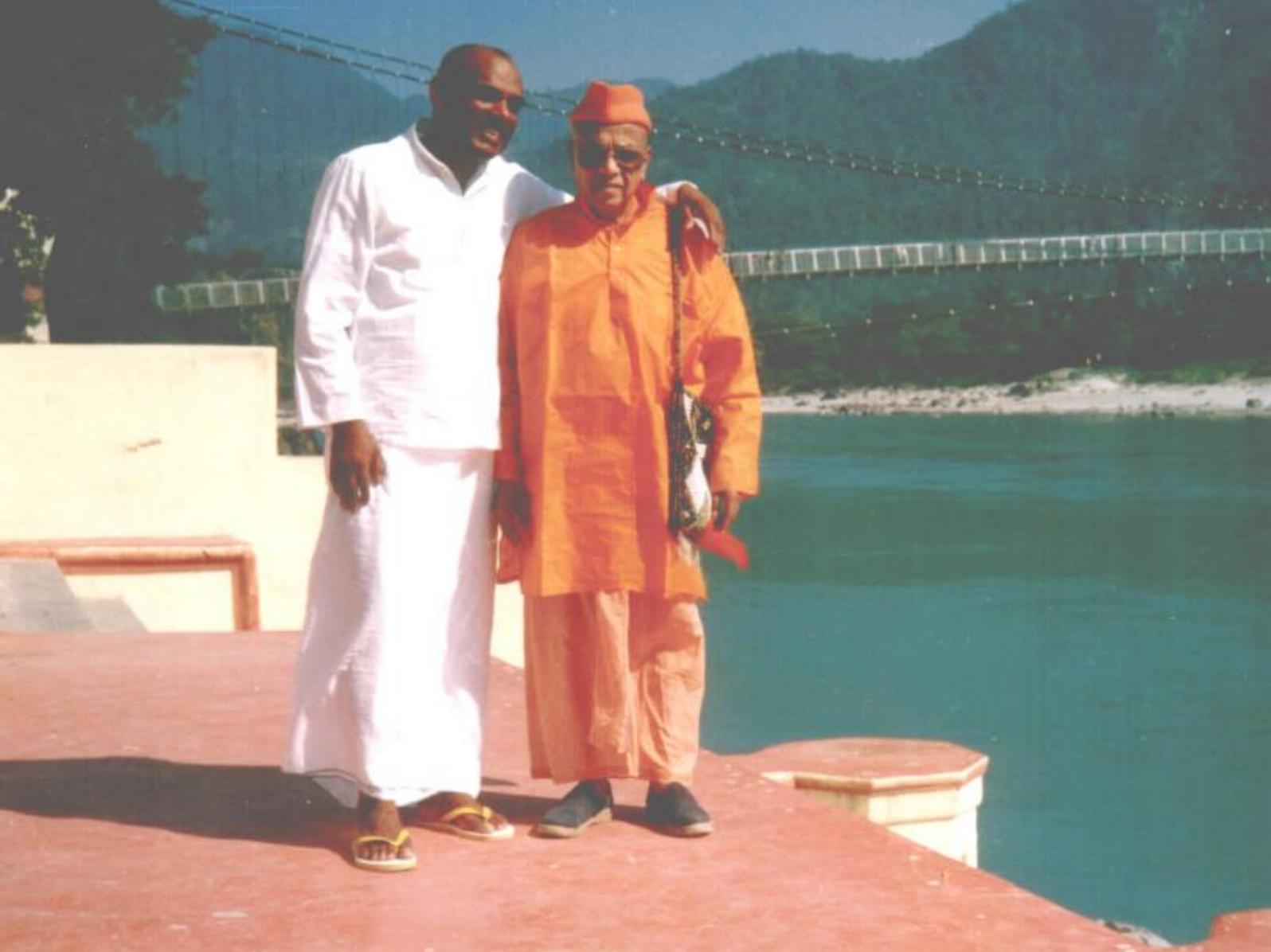
These qualities promote friendship which paves the way to success in life.

Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati (1887-1963) of Rishikesh, India, was one of the greatest spiritual persons, a self realized Yogi, a person who was able to translate spirituality into practicality. Swami Anasaktananda was first introduced to the teachings of this great saint through Swami Vishnudevananda. One of the greatest teachings of Swami Sivananda was "Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realise".

Swami Anasaktananda had learnt yoga asanas in British Guyana at twelve years of age. He learnt from Krishna, a nephew of Pandit Deeman Prasad. He first met Swami Vishnudevananda in 1968. Then in 1976, he joined that organisation for several years and took up a lifetime of yoga practise. This period helped and encouraged him to sacrifice all personal wants and to do Karma Yoga for purification and control of the mind. It was the initial period of shubheccha (longing for Truth) and vicharana (self inquiry).

Even Bhagavan Sri Krishna had a guru. His name was Sandipani. Krishna, and his brother Balarama, had to stay in the guru's ashram for many years to serve and imbibe the wisdom of the teacher.

The flute of Sri Krishna is symbolic. One must empty oneself of the ego and become hollow like the flute, in order to become close to God.



Swami Anasaktananda (prior to sannyas) and Swami Nada Brahmananda
by the Ganges River, Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh circa 1987

Swami Anasaktananda learnt **Nada Yoga** from Sri Swami Nada Brahmananda. Actually, he learnt much more than this, as Swami Nada Brahmananda shared his life's experiences and practical wisdom. He was an encyclopaedia of vedic wisdom and music.

Swami Nada Brahmananda urged Swamiji not to go after iron and brass, when he had already obtained diamonds and rubies. He said this after smashing some 'yoga music' cassette tapes with his walking stick. He did not approve of listening to music which was not technically correct.

Singing God's name does not incur any pain. However, worldly music which is often about passion, excites the senses and may very well lead to pain. **Rajasic** (passionate) and **tamasic** (slothfull) living gives one lots of pain. Until experiencing this pain, one is unlikely to turn to the spiritual path. In order to overcome the three gunas (qualities) one has to strive to increase **sattva**, and at the same time decrease and diminish rajas and tamas.

Three Gunas

1. **Sattva** (light, purity)
2. **Rajas** (passion, activity)
3. **Tamas** (darkness, inertia)



Valmiki was going to a river to take bath. As he approached the river he saw a couple of cranes mating. Suddenly the male bird was struck and killed by the arrow of a hunter (**nishad**). The female bird died of shock. Valmiki cried in protest and unleashed a torrent of words in sanskrit language. The words issued out in the form of poetry. He created the first ancient poem in the sanskrit. He became known as **Adi Kavi**. He was not a sage previously. He was a dacoit in the forest, breaking peoples heads and depriving them of their possessions. If he can become a sage and write the Ramayana, any dacoit, or robber, can become a saint. The hunter is predominantly motivated by rajas and tamas, and his actions cause pain and suffering. The saint or sage is motivated mainly by sattva, and so his actions bring peace, joy and happiness. You too can become a saint by overcoming the downward pull of rajas and tamas, and by increasing sattva until it is the predominant guna, by which time all of the thoughts, words and actions become pure and compassionate.

Detaching From The Three Bodies

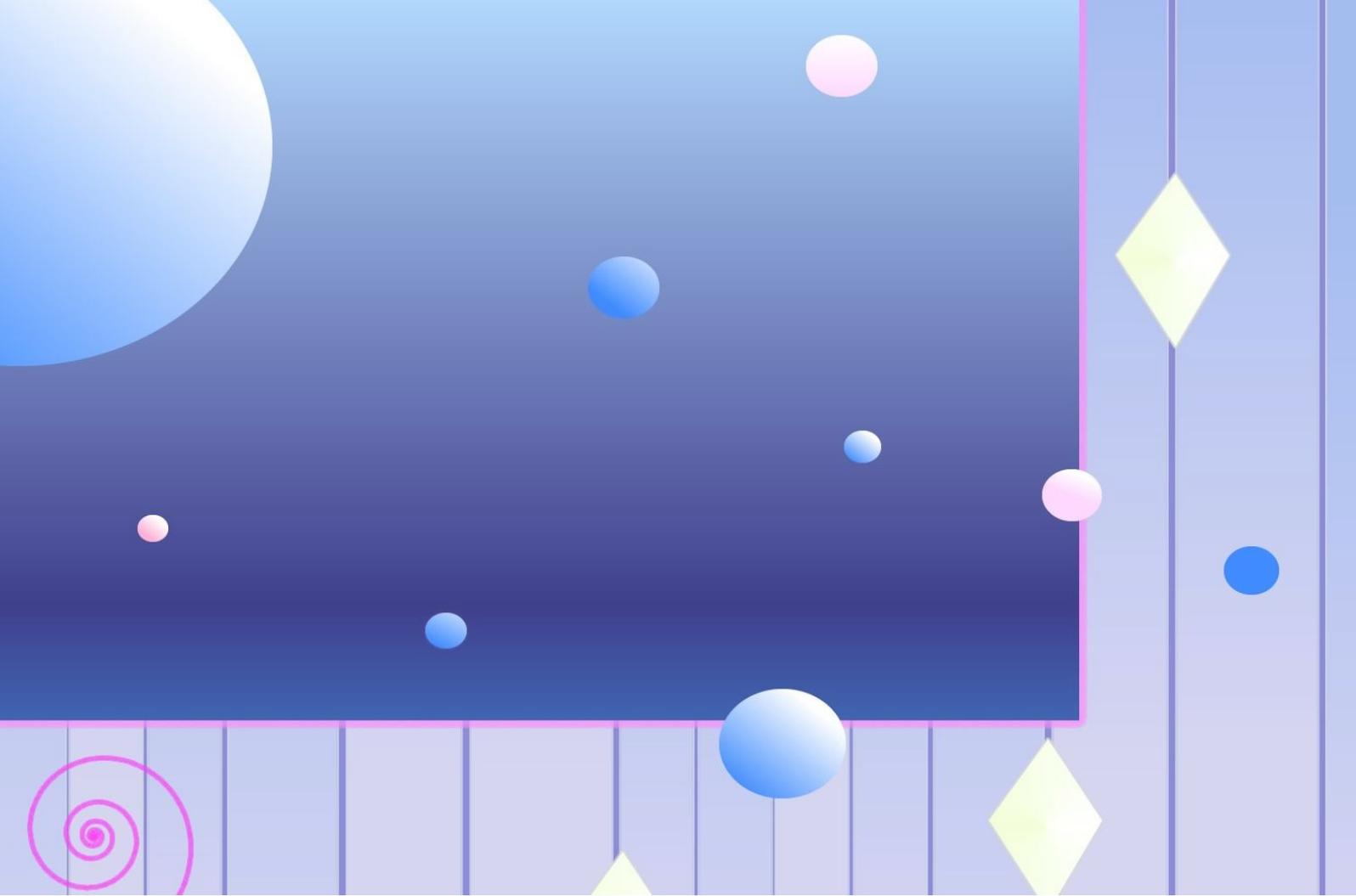
Previously we looked at the three bodies, namely, the **physical**, **astral** and **causal** bodies. These delimit us as separate entities. Ultimately even the causal body, the most subtle, the most pure, has to be transcended in order to merge completely with the Universal Self. So long as there is still the subtle limitation of the causal body, there will remain a very subtle ego, or sense of 'I-ness', or individuality.

Roughly speaking you could say that the physical, astral and causal bodies correspond with the three gunas, **tamas**, **rajas** and **sattva** respectively. It is said in the Bhagavad Geeta: **Mana eva manushanam, bandha-mokshayoh karanam. Mind alone is the source of both bondage and liberation for human beings.** The verse goes on to state that both rajas and tamas are the source of bondage, whereas on the other hand, through increasing sattva, the mind becomes fit for liberation.

In the Upanishads it is said that the **pranava** (OM) is the symbol of Brahman. It is a word of power. From **OM** this world has been projected. In **OM** it exists, and in **OM** it is re-absorbed during the cosmic dissolution (Pralaya). **OM** is the essence of the four vedas (books of knowledge of the ancient rishis).



*Start the day with OM
Fill the day with OM
End the day with OM
That is the way to
OM Brahman*



There are two kinds of **Samadhi**:

Savikalpa - mind, the knower, and samskaras still exist

Nirvikalpa - idea of separateness vanishes, and the samskaras cease to exist (samskaras are latent mental impressions)

Nirvikalpa Samadhi is the highest state of consciousness. It is beyond human comprehension. Beyond the mind and intellect. It is beyond words. Any attempt to describe it is futile. It is indescribable, infinite peace and bliss.

Soham soham soham sivoam, Soham soham soham sivoam

I am neither body or mind, Immortal Self I am

Neither body or mind, Immortal Self I am

If we tell ourselves, whilst we are in a human body, that we are Immortal Self, then half the job is done. The rest is much easier.

Appendices

Five Paths Of Yoga

Yoga is generally grouped into four main paths. However, **Hatha Yoga** sometimes comprises a fifth path which has evolved out of **Raja Yoga**.

Bhakti Yoga

The yoga of devotion. It involves the singing of the names of God and other devotional practices, such as Japa or repetition of mantra. Singing of bhajan and kirtan invokes divine joy. **Nada Yoga** is the more advanced practice of devotional music and requires tremendous concentration and practise.

Karma Yoga

Selfless service is the goal of Karma Yoga. It requires that one work without the desire for personal gain and involves seeing God in all other beings.

Jnana Yoga

Wisdom derived from the scriptures of yoga and vedanta leads to the elevation of the intellect. It provides the intellectual basis for the other yogas.

Raja Yoga

The process of yoga demands the the frying of samskaras (mental tendencies). When you fry a seed in a frying pan and try to grow it, will not grow. This is the scientific truth that the saints discovered. The whole of the **Raja Yoga** system can be said to be a method of frying the samskaras of the mind.

Hatha Yoga

The Hatha Yoga practises are a subset of Raja yoga. it includes yoga asana (postures), bandhas and kriyas. It can also be said to comprise the third, fourth and fifth sections of the raja yoga Niyamas namely:

- **Asana** - posture
- **Pranayama** - breath control
- **Pratyahara** - withdrawal of the senses



Vijaya Dasami

Sri Swami Sivananda wrote:

The Mother aspect of Godhead is the source of power, prosperity and learning and is worshipped during the Navaratri or Dassera, as Durga, Lakshmi and Sarasvati. Each aspect is worshipped for three nights.

It was on the Vijaya Dasami day that Arjuna, the Pandava hero worshipped the Goddess before starting the fight against the evil-minded Kauravas. It was on that day that Ravana was killed in battle by Sri Rama.

It is the day of victory. Boys are put in the school on this day. 'Hari Om Narayanaya Siddham', 'Om Sri Ganesaya Namah', 'Om Sri Hayagrivaya Namah' are taught to them. Aspirants are initiated on this day.

On this memorable day, the carpenter, the tailor, the mason, the artist, the songster, the typist and all technical workers do Puja for their instruments and implements. This is Ayudha Puja. They behold and recognise the Sakti or power behind these instruments and worship the Devi, for their success, prosperity and peace.

Sri Rama built a united India. Sri Rama gained victory over Ravana who had his capital in Lanka, but whose dominions had been extended over a large part of India. Vijaya Dasami is the day of anniversary of the birth of one united India. It is observed in commemoration of the great victory (Vijaya) of Sri Rama over the Rakshasa king, Ravana. It is the day of triumph of righteousness over unrighteousness. Angada, Hanuman and others celebrated the victory of Sri Rama over Ravana with great religious ardour, under the leadership of pious Vibhishana, embraced one another in friendship and showed their intense devotion and reverence to Sri Rama. From that day onwards this great victory (Vijaya) has been commemorated year after year by all Hindus.



Sri Rama's victory over Ravana is the victory of spirit over matter, the victory of Sattva over Rajas and Tamas, the victory of soul over mind, sense and body, the victory of idealism over materialism, the victory of goodness over evil, the victory of love and truth over hatred and falsehood, the victory of self-sacrifice and renunciation over selfishness and possession, the victory of the oppressed over the oppressor, the victory of the labour over the capitalists and the imperialists. The memory of this day brings hope and joy to the hearts of the poorest and the most depressed. It humbles the pride of the rich, the strong and the learned, and inspires them to embrace the poor, the weak and the illiterate in love and brotherliness. It awakens a sense of unity among all classes of people.

The Vijaya Dasami has thus become a festival for awakening of universal unity, fraternity, peace and bliss.

The Sakta Puranas interpret this in another way. Rama tried to attain victory through His own valour and prowess but failed. Afterwards, He surrendered His egoism to the Maha Sakti or Devi, and placed Himself as an instrument in Her hands. Thereupon, Devi really fought with Ravana and brought the victory for Sri Rama.

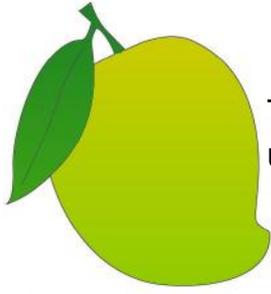
There is an eternal fight going on between Devas and Asuras, between Sattva and Rajas-Tamas, between evil tendencies and virtuous tendencies in man. Gods represent Sattvic forces. The demons or Asuras represent the evil forces. That day on which one kills these evil tendencies, viz., lust, anger, greed, egoism, hatred and attains knowledge of Self or illumination through the grace of the Divine Mother, is the real Vijaya Dasami day or the day of real **victory of Self over the non-Self.**

May the Devi, Mother Durga teach mankind the way of Dharma and righteousness and bestow peace, bliss and contentment and the final beatitude!

Swami Sivananda: Lord Siva and His Worship <https://www.dlshq.org/download/lord-siva-and-his-worship/>



Two types of teachers



The green mango tastes sour. It is undeveloped and not quite ready.



The ripe mango tastes sweet. It is fully developed.

There are different kinds of teachers, just as there are different kinds of mangos.

If a person is not a vegetarian and practises 'yoga', it is merely a show. When a yoga teacher who is vegetarian helps to change a person from a meat eating diet to a vegetarian diet, that teacher is worthy of respect. That teacher has helped the student to gain a foothold on the long path towards spiritual evolution.

Yoga teachers at various levels are able to help students according to the degree of development of the teacher, and the stage of evolution of the student. The best yoga teacher will be a **nishkama karma yogi**, one who is dedicated to selfless service, without 'I-ness' and 'my-ness'.

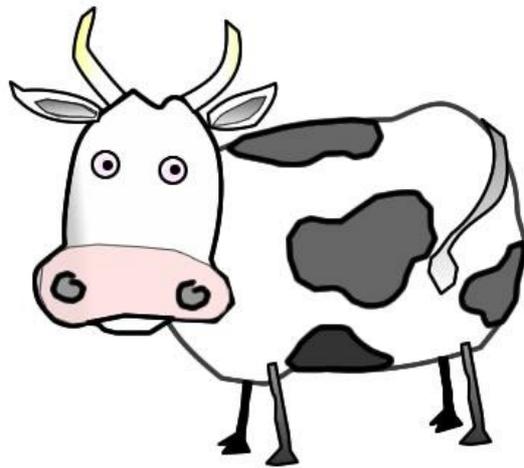
Yoga of Synthesis

By practising the synthesis of yoga, one can experience the Supreme Self. By controlling the senses and overcoming restlessness of mind through dhyana, or raja yoga, the veil of ignorance is removed.

One needs to wash the mind in the same way that you wash a dirty piece of cloth to make it clean.

Vedanta is the experience. Practise yoga to attain knowledge of the Self. It is possible, provided you have a proper understanding and you are practising in a sincere manner. You will get that vedantic realisation. Your quality of life will be transformed. You have been given the gift of this body to achieve that. Start now. Practise that.





Cunning people often outsmart themselves,
just as 'smart fly get catch up in cow a...se'



A dog has a habit of 'sucking eggs'. If you want to the dog to stop this habit, you put hot hard-boiled egg for it to snatch, in place of a normal egg. It snatches the egg and burns its tongue. Despite the pain, the dog will still go back to the chicken coop to snatch another egg.



One God Many Names

*R*ama kaho ya Rahima kaho
Krishna kaho ya Christa kaho
Krishna kaho ya Buddha kaho
Krishna kaho ya Allah kaho
Matalab tu si eka baat se hai

Mandira meh raho ya masjid meh
Mandira meh raho ya church meh
Matalab tu si eka baat se hai
Rama kaho ...

Rama Kaho – song meaning

Sing God's name, or the names of the prophets and saints, whoever they may be; Rama, Rahim, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus or Mary. This alone matters. Visit the Hindu temple, the Masjid, or the Christian church. Repeat God's name with meaning. This alone matters. There is only one earth. Only one God. We should be united as one human family, beyond distinctions of race and religion.

