



kaadā!

Svaroopā® Yoga: Experience Your Divine Self

Volume 1 No 6

June 20, 2013

Editorials By Swami Nirmalananda Saraswati

Master Yoga Foundation **Mastering Yoga**

At Cirque du Soleil, I knew the Sanskrit names for almost everything the dancers and acrobats did. Does that mean they are yoga masters? No. Acrobats, dancers and athletes even know that what they do is not beneficial for their body. They know they'll pay the price in the coming years. Unfortunately, Western yoga seems to make body-beautiful the goal. Yoga-athletes jump around and contort their bodies, yet expect to be healthy and pain free, without considering that there's a reason Olympic gymnast Cathy Rigby advertises arthritis medication.

What is yogic mastery? Shavasana is the litmus test, described as the mother of all the poses — the pose from which all the others are birthed and into which all the others resolve. Mastery

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Svaroopā® Vidya Ashram **Surrender**

When you surrender to God, my Baba promised, what you get in return is God incarnate — your own Self. Three problematical words: "surrender," "God" and "Self" are precise terms in yoga. "Surrender" does not mean that you cannot win the battle, so you are giving up and now you are going to be abused. This has already happened to you many times. It's why you live with your guard up. What if you could live with your guard down?

Surrender means you give up your resistances and anxieties. You give up your agenda for how things should be going, because a better plan is already set in motion. This is guaranteed by your karma, especially combined with Grace.

The Sanskrit "tyaj" means you abandon your

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Tadaa!

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Master Yoga Foundation

means, within a few seconds of lying down, every tension releases. This mastery means you don't need other poses to angle into the deepest layers. Your body is open and free, healthy, strong and vibrantly alive.

The only thing in the way is your mind. You've experienced Shavasana with a mind that won't quit. You've glided into a deeply restful state, but surfaced to a screaming sacrum. While this means your deepest tensions are beginning to release, you need the other poses to angle them open. Those deep tensions are created by your mind, and unraveling them (thankfully) frees up your mind and emotions too.

Yogic mastery is mastery of both your mind and body, with your mind being the bigger challenge. My Baba defined mastery of the mind, saying, "My mind wouldn't dare think a thought without my permission." With a mind like that, your body doesn't collect tensions. Both your mind and body become the means by which your inherent Divinity shines into the world. Mastery is found through surrender.

Svaroopaa® Vidya Ashram

need, greed and fear. You let go of pettiness and blame. You leave behind your old obsessions and walk into your life with a sense of freedom and joy. If you want this surrender, you must master your mind.

Your mind spins the spider web of entanglements that bind you. You do the same things over and over. It takes a long time, even lifetimes, for you to realize you're not enjoying them, and then you abandon them. You grow up. With yoga, this happens faster and easier. With Grace, this happens in an instant: you experience your own Divinity, so you cannot go back to being the negative, selfish and unhappy person you used to be.

Except your mind still has all those old behavior patterns imbedded in it. So you must practice. You meditate. You do japa, chanting, breathing and poses, seva and all the other amazing things yoga offers to deprogram you. Then you are able to choose how to use your mind and body. Surrender leads to Mastery.

Experiences of Being a Meditation Student

By Maitreyi (Margie) Wilsman

Two of my students agreed to tell their stories for *Tadaa!* Pat took the weekend workshop, "Meditation Made Easy", with Swamiji ten years ago and again with Vidyadevi a few years later. More recently, she took my Intro to Meditation course two or three times.

"I love being a student, over and over and over again! No matter where I'm at with my practices, my experience deepens with each class. I particularly love the in-class sharing time and feel that being part of a community is uplifting. There is support in the sharing and an integrity of experience we can all tap into. Journaling after meditation allows time for self-reflection and recording experiences, thoughts and insights that I can refer to later. And I see a change in my writing; I'm no longer recording negative experiences. It reads all positive!"

Having meditated with different traditions over the years, Pat is well aware of constant and distracting mind chatter, which she calls "ruminating thought patterns. It's obvious I need a lot of help with my mind!" Of the many tools Svaroop® Vidya Meditation offers, Pat says, "Mantra repetition is what I am most appreciative of. It's a reminder that I'm more than what is going on. I am more than my body." She is learning to be more disciplined with her practice and open to the flow of Grace. She has a renewed interest in the practice of japa (mantra repetition) because it is so helpful in breaking up those ruminating thought patterns.

An area on her upstairs landing serves as Pat's meditation space. She is working on establishing a daily meditation practice. When she meditates, "I get a lot of openings in my skull and I'm aware of improved vision and the release of tensions in my face and mouth. There is an expansiveness and a feeling of support from inside out. Best of all, beyond the physical benefits, I have an expanding experience of the enlivened mantra."

Judy had prior meditation experience through Centering Prayer, focusing on God's love. Though she found it a wonderful experience, she didn't have the support to do it daily. She has taken three of my Intro courses

which have led to having that support now. "Most of my meditation experiences are very comfortable, very quieting, and very calming. I feel very serene, very present within myself, even if I have a busy mind."

Having a busy mind bothered Judy when she first started taking meditation classes. "Now I have just accepted it that this is the way it is and pretty much feel very present to myself when I am in meditation," says Judy. "There are times in meditation that a layer of consciousness emerges where I feel that I am part of this universe, and the universe is a part of me. It's such a gentle, calm place to be. It happens when I least expect it and then it passes."

Using mantra, Judy meditates every day in a dedicated space in her home. Sometimes she chants for ten minutes before meditating and she's slowly adding time to her 20-30 minute meditation. When it feels timeless, she is pulled to sit longer. She tries to meditate at 6:00 am but if she doesn't get to it until 7:00 am, she does it anyway. She has found that following her meditation with some asana works well for her.

Judy notices changes in her interactions with others and is listening better to her husband and children. She is also speaking up where she didn't in the past. "That's a big turning point for me, that what I know to be true inside, I am going to put out there. 'I am feeling very strongly about this so I am going to give you my perspective.' That's the big change for me. I have been one who kept my mouth shut a lot. I don't think that is very good for communication, even if the other person doesn't like it." She has also noticed being less judgmental and being less irritated by things.

The meditation classes have been inspiring for Judy. "I like gathering in a group, learning about meditation and hearing other people's experiences. I feel like I am putting myself in the channel of God's love whenever I sit in meditation. That's what keeps me coming back because I know it's where I need to be."

Do More Japa

Excerpted from "The Root of Meditation" by Swami Nirmalananda, January 22 2013

compiled by Ekamati (Diane) Tsurutani

"The root of deep meditation is japa." I'll repeat that teaching from Baba, "The root of deep meditation is japa."

When you are not repeating mantra, what is your mind doing? What kinds of thoughts does it usually have? Do those thoughts give you a profound, natural, and ecstatic meditative experience? How powerful is your mind? Well, you know how powerful it is. You know because you can see it pulling you away from your own Divinity all of the time.

Does meditation occur naturally? Yes, meditation does occur naturally if you use your mind to turn toward Consciousness.

Japa is mantra repetition. You repeat a single mantra over and over and over. Your mind has a tendency to repeat things over and over again. It loves repetition. You can harness your mind's ability to do this by pouring it into japa.

Inner japa is the heart of meditation. You could be silently repeating japa now while I'm talking. You could be saying, "Om Namah Shivaya. Om Namah Shivaya. Om Namah Shivaya."

Baba told us that you cheat yourself by not doing japa. You keep doing unnecessary things and neglect japa, which is why he put

us to useful work. Because we wouldn't sit. We wouldn't repeat mantra. You can.

How many hours a day of japa do you suppose you could do in the midst of your life right now? You can do japa in the midst of useful work. It stills and purifies your mind. Then meditation comes automatically. Isn't that a beautiful promise?

If meditation doesn't come automatically, what do you have to do? Do more japa.

YTT Level 1: The Experience

By Rob Gold

Profound changes happen at every level of *Svaroopa*® yoga practice, whether it's your first class, an *Embodiment*® session in Yoga Teacher Training (YTT) or your home practice. Now insert the proverbial "but" — it's well known that YTT takes you to another level. The immersion into the practices with your fellow teachers-in-training takes you to places that you likely could not reach on your own. Sarah Hunter and David Falbaum graciously share some of their experiences at their recent YTT Level 1.

What inspired you to take Level 1?

Sarah H: "I had taken Foundations at the urging of my teacher, Cayla Allen, a wonderful teacher who was leaving Atlanta. Cayla was encouraging some of the loyal students that were coming to every class to become a teacher."

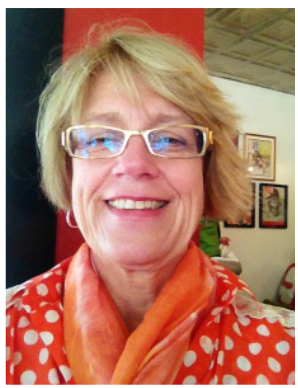


Photo courtesy of Master Yoga

Sarah Hunter

David F: "I got so many changes from the first few months of *Svaroopa*® yoga classes that I knew I wanted to do more and to teach people how transformative this yoga can be. When I started, I'd been on narcotics for two and a half years to deal with back pain. Within a few weeks of classes, I was off that medication. Life started changing that quickly. I started in June with lots of classes as well as yoga therapy sessions; then I took Foundations in October and YTT 1 in April 2013."

What was your overall experience?

Sarah H: "It was a deep immersion into *Svaroopa*® yoga and teaching. There was a real sense of community during the course, something I enjoy so much. Initially I thought it was going to be a little daunting, but overall it was some of the best training I've ever had. It was very particular, specific and descriptive in how to do things, and all of the materials are so well organized and thought out. Personally, I enjoyed very much the evening teachings of Kashmiri Shaivism. At first, yoga poses and the belief system seemed to be two different things, but in the end it all came together in a big 'Oooooohhhh...'"

David F: "I learned that support makes a lot of difference, but it was a struggle at times. I'm a striver and try to push at everything, so having to go up on higher blankets was hard — my old thought process was that it wasn't better to use more support, but I did. And I got blasted open starting from Day 1."

Which experiences stand out the most?

Sarah H: "Even though I'm used to talking in front of large crowds, during the practice teaching I got all tensed up. But when the time came, it went really nicely. Supervising Teacher Devi [McKenty] was so wonderful with her feedback — some of the best I've ever received. The way it was delivered was wonderful, and I came away feeling very positive along with things to work on."

David F: "It's so hard to pick just one or two outstanding experiences. The instructors were all great: Polly [DiBella], Karobi [Sachs] and Devi. My classmates were fabulous. It was really cool to have people from so many different walks of life put together for 10 days to learn about

Svaroopa® yoga, each other and our own selves. It's an environment that fosters growth. I was also deeply affected by an exercise where we read "Namaste" to each other. Just reading the quote to my partner and then listening to what they had to say was profound for me."

What, if anything, surprised you?

Sarah H: "The feeling that I'm not alone in this... A number of us became emotional during the training and were feeling challenged, but in a good way. I didn't know how challenging it would be, but that's what makes it special, what gives it importance. The reality is that to become a teacher takes a great deal of work. I have so much appreciation for my own teachers; how much time and work they've put into it gives it that much more importance and has truly changed my outlook on life."

David F: "*Svaroopa*® yoga — I never stop being surprised by it, because I'm continually surprised by it. I never knew anything about yoga before, and what I'm learning just floors me. It's the yoga itself more than the training that surprises me."

How was Level 1 different than Foundations?

Sarah H: "For me it was getting to know the poses and adjustments that much more. There wasn't a pose I hadn't done before, but to learn how to teach it to somebody else is a different thing. I also learned how to teach poses I can't do because of my knee and got some nice work-arounds on that. The trainings are so concentrated that you come up against things in yourself, and you have to be able to take your thoughts and emotions out of your teaching. Karobi was very helpful with this process and said 'you have to have control of your mind, especially when you're touching someone. You can't bring your fears to the class.' I found this very comforting. I was also aware that my *Svaroopa*® yoga practice and trainings have taken me much further than where I had hoped to be regarding my knee and previous mobility issues."

David F: "Foundations is 5 days long but YTT is 9 or 10. I got MUCH deeper at Level 1. Foundations and the six months following it prepared me, so I got deeper into the yoga and my body than I could before. Being with a group of people trying to get to the same place as I am, I was also able to let go of more of my 'stuff'. You can just be your total Self in YTT; whereas in the real world/other world where we live, I find myself watching what I say etc. as people just don't understand."

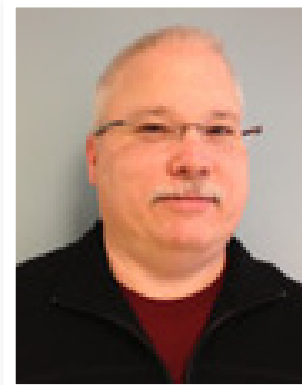


Photo courtesy of Master Yoga

David Falbaum

What are you looking forward to as you move towards YTT Level 2 and beyond?

Sarah H: "I'm definitely taking YTT 2 in October!"

David F: "Being back in that community where I can just be myself 100% of the time. I'm looking forward to more profound changes and learning to teach more of them, but it's really not about the poses — it's about what they get you to. I like the whole intensive practice. For me that's what you get. You're immersed in yoga. It's fabulous."

TRAINER PROFILE

Bhakta (Leslie) Johnson

Foundations Teacher Trainer

By Rob Gold



Photo courtesy of Master Yoga

Bhakta's pivotal experience of *Svaroopaa*® yoga occurred in her very first class. She had been taking classes in various yoga styles over the years and had some meditation experience, when she took a yoga workshop. As it turns out, the workshop was taught by Swami Nirmalananda (then Rama Berch), with the local host teacher assisting. Bhakta says, "I only did one segment, and I can barely find words to describe my experience. I had an awareness in Alternate-Leg that something significant was changing."

Bhakta (Leslie) Johnson

For many years Bhakta had suffered from chronic back pain. Like many others, she had sought relief through many therapies, but the pain always came back and was worse every time. That day in Alternate Leg Pose, Bhakta remembers thinking, "There's something to this yoga and relieving my back pain." It was clear that *Svaroopaa*® yoga was addressing her on a new level. "I had never felt that way after a class before, so empowered and positive and light and happy. So I bought a blanket and a *Yoga for Your Back* video and felt elated." Bhakta also sought out the local *Svaroopaa*® yoga teacher, took her classes and has never stopped learning. That has led her back around to teaching others, now in Foundations courses across the country.

Each Foundations training is taught by both a Primary and a Secondary Trainer, supported by assistants to insure personal attention for every student. The Secondary Trainer focuses on teaching the poses, supporting the students and coordinating the assistant teachers. In 2008 Bhakta undertook special training; plus she interned in several Foundations courses, getting intensive personal coaching in order to become a Secondary Trainer.

After successfully serving as Secondary Trainer in many Foundations courses, Bhakta decided to step up to the next level, Primary Trainer, which involves a different set of responsibilities. She now is part of coordinating, marketing and enrolling the course, in collaboration with the local host. Her teaching still includes the poses, but she is now responsible for the whole course and teaches the more challenging elements, including the Consciousness and Anatomy lectures.

"Composing my own talks, using the guidelines as well as a lot of support from Swami Nirmalananda, gives me the opportunity to refine what I know. That takes me into a deeper process because I'm contemplating profound concepts and principles, yet coming up with my own descriptions. This deepens my state and makes it a fluid writing experience. As a Trainer, it has been important that I become an example of the teachings, which is something I've always appreciated with this particular tradition of yoga. As I am given the teachings, my goal is to experience them and become what the teachings represent. I think *Svaroopaa*® yoga does a really good job at fostering that."

Bhakta adds, "It's a choice and an investment when you train as a Primary or Secondary Trainer, including the training costs as well as

committing a lot of time." By the sound of it, this process has paid off in ways Bhakta might not have imagined at that first Yogimmersion.

"My overall experience," she continues, "is one of Becoming. Becoming what I'm teaching — the concepts and principles. I continue to have experiences of the Knowing, now more than ever. I'm not just saying the words, not just talking about something that I know about — I'm describing the experience itself. That continues to deepen for me. I wonder, 'How can it get any better?' and then it does. There has been a shift for me as a Primary Trainer. Now when I'm giving a talk I feel that I'm having the experience, that I am the yoga. What I'm saying is thus much more alive, just more 'That.'"

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My Experiences as a Meditation Teacher

By Maitreyi (Margie) Wilsman



Maitreyi (Margie) Wilsman

I was fortunate to be part of the first Meditation Teacher Training using the Mantra Syllabus in 2011. What a great group we were: all my Meditation Buddies. Staying together, chanting and eating together, coaching one another's meditation talks — a deeply lasting experience of "community."

Since then I offer "Introduction to Meditation" three times each year. New students keep signing up and previous students repeat, even two and three times. My students have included a 15-year old high school junior, a college freshman as well as

seniors, people who have never attended a yoga asana class or yoga therapy session, regular asana class students and therapy clients, and even other Svaroop® yoga teachers. Some have been husband and wife teams, others mothers and daughters, and some best friends. It is best for them to not "drag" or "convince" another person to come, so I check that each person has his or her own motives and interests.

I want to thank Swamiji for the great preparation and training course — 170 hours of training on 12 topics with a beautiful certificate that is framed and proudly hanging near the entry door of my yoga studio. I previously practiced Vipassana meditation for eight years, even co-leading a monthly group in Madison for five years. My Svaroop® Vidya training has prepared me to help the variety of people coming to classes, many of whom have studied Buddhist or Zen meditation. Knowing the foundational differences in Svaroop® Vidya compared to other systems is very helpful in answering questions and clarifying the essential elements of our practice.

The preparation of my three talks is a deep and profound experience, diving deeper and feeling fuller each time as I write about the philosophy, our tradition and Grace. I rewrite each talk for each course, to share new examples and stories as well as ideas that emerged from students in the last course.

I find myself "walking the talk" of our tradition more and more, through teaching about it. Teaching meditation and giving weekly satsang talks has led me to listen to most of Swamiji's satsang recordings in the SVA free online Library. I do not have her sense of humour and wonderful stories, but I try to listen to her voice every day, loving the sound and love that flows through to me and everyone else. I think my students benefit as well, indirectly and mystically.

Most students have not previously used a mantra, so it takes them a while to master the Om Namah Shivaaya pronunciation and rhythm. Yes, most find that mantra takes them deep inside, beyond their mind, even in their first class and their first week of home practice. Some struggle with their mind; it does not want to quit going and going, like the energizer bunny as Swamiji says. I am delighted when, after three weeks, they can see their progress in using mantra to get beyond their "monkey mind."

Being a meditation teacher is as important to me as being an asana teacher and yoga therapist. These three parts of my professional yoga life seem to make up a beautiful whole and enrich one another. When I first heard Swamiji speak on the physics of yoga, Kashmiri Shaivism, back in 2000, I knew this was a person I wanted to learn from. I never could have imagined

all that she has to teach me, and continues to offer to all of us, guiding us, with wisdom and Grace to become more and more the Self that we already are. 21st Century Yogis — that's Swamiji and the senior teachers, and that is what I see in my students as I introduce them to Svaroop® Vidya meditation. It's all part of Doing More Yoga.

In my Intro to Meditation course, students start their at-home practice with 20-30 minutes a day. As they continue with me, I encourage them to move on to 45 minutes and then an hour. In my own practice, I now think of 90 minutes of meditation like a typical asana class, and two hours of meditation like a deeper yoga class or a bliss class. My next move will be to three hours of daily meditation, comparable to a yoga workshop.

Two of my students attended Swamiji's three-hour meditation, a Post-Conference Workshop at our last Conference. I now wish I had shared that experience with them. Now, can you tell where being a meditation teacher has taken me? Deeper and deeper into daily meditation practice, into a Grace-filled experience that I can share with my students.

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The Guru — Inside and Outside

By Priya Kenney

The Guru is a human being, and so much more. Swami Nirmalananda is a human being who lives amongst us, while knowing her own Divinity completely. This she received from her Guru, who received it from his Guru, and so on. Because she is among us and because she went through the process herself, she can guide us along the path of realizing our own Divinity. Our relationship with her makes everything possible.

While in India this February, we had three delicious weeks to soak in that relationship with the Guru. In the land where Gurus hold a revered place in the fabric of life, our days were filled with Guru Gita mornings; satsang afternoons; darshan evenings. All of it was in relationship to the One who knows her own Divinity. It was incredible. We are still being impacted by that extended contact with the Grace of the Guru.



Photo Courtesy of Svaroop® Vidya Ashram

Kamal and Swamiji Ganeshpuri, India

This prolonged time in Swami Nirmalananda's presence gave us the opportunity to soak up her inside and her outside, which are essentially the same thing. She led us through the Indian culture so we knew what was appropriate and not. We sat with her and chanted the Guru Gita together; we enjoyed eating with her, walking with her, meditating with her, exploring the Self with her and basking in bliss with her. We watched her function as the gracious hostess when the community came to Fire Mountain Ashram to receive blessings and gratitude for all they had done for the two weeks we were in Ganeshpuri. She is a beautifully gracious hostess.

At the same time there was another process unfolding, a beautiful illustration of how the outside is a reflection of what is happening inside. Swamiji had shared a story about how some male Indian swamis had reacted to her a few years ago. As a white, Western and female swami she was shunned. Three strikes of different-ness and she was out. Though she wore the same orange clothing, she was ignored. They were tripped up by the external.

But Ganeshpuri knows more. It was clear during our stay that people knew, respected and honored Swami Nirmalananda. And it was clear that she had a deep respect for them and all that Ganeshpuri is – a vale of devotional Sakti, the home of her Guru and her Guru's Guru. Being there was like being in the sacred house that our parents, our grandparents and our great grandparents all lived in, only exponentially much more.

The first few days at the morning abhishek, the ritual bathing of Nityananda's enlivened statue, we all moved up as close to the front as

possible so we could be closer to the action, to better see the priests lovingly bathing and dressing Nityananda. Swamiji sat in a chair behind us, about two thirds of the way back in the temple, watching it all unfold. As the days passed, a small pod of yogis began to form around Swamiji. It expanded as the week unfolded. We wanted to be close to our living Guru, while we watched the abhishek.

One of the mornings, the abhishek was sponsored by a family who were allowed into the inner sanctum of the temple, customarily reserved for the Brahmin priests. We watched a priest come out and ask Swamiji to join them in the ceremony, a public acknowledgement and honoring of her stature in the Indian system.

Near the end of our time in Ganeshpuri, Swamiji invited the Brahmin priests to the meditation dome so we could thank them for all they did for us during our stay. That morning, she told us they had been invited and that we might have some priests show up and we might not. When ten Brahmin priests arrived, we knew they did not regard Swami Nirmalananda as just another swami passing through. She is recognized in Ganeshpuri, by those who anchor the past of Nityananda to the present, as One who knows. Not only did they show up, they bowed at her feet. These priests bowed to Swami Nirmalananda. They honored the Guru. These priests that every morning lovingly bathe, dress, adorn and coax the formless into Nityananda's form were recognizing our very own Swamiji as One who knows. This show of reverence and honor was very moving.

The ultimate recognition from Ganeshpuri was yet to come, and we learned that even Swamiji can be surprised. Several yogis had the idea to ask whether one of the shawls that are daily draped over Nityananda could be purchased. When asked, the priests offered to give the shawl to Swami Nirmalananda. We were thrilled! We were amazed!!!

Our last evening together, Barbara, our fearless organizer, told Swamiji she had one more item of business before dinner. Both her hands were outstretched, with Nityananda's shawl draped over them as she presented it to Swamiji. Our steady Swamiji, who is not easily surprised, was flabbergasted. She let out a gasp. She laughed, she cried; she was deeply moved. We witnessed something extraordinary happening – the deep recognition of the Brahmin priests in Ganeshpuri – that this white, Western, female swami is the real thing.

Swamiji surprised us too one afternoon. She brought out her peacock feathers after satsang and gave Shaktipat. When I looked into her eyes, I disappeared into that formless, timeless, unmoving, unchanging vastness that she is guiding us to find. By being in her presence, by being in relationship with her on the outside, we have the incredible opportunity to know her inside, the Self, which is in you — which IS you, and me and everyone and everything.

know your Self

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Stoking the Fire of Yoga

By Karuna (Carolyn) Beaver



Photo by Brendan Nogue

"The science of giving is a spiritual science... when you cultivate a feeling of generosity and act on it, you create instant happiness for yourself, plus you attract a flow of abundance and blessings into your life."

— Swami Nirmalananda Saraswati

Didn't it feel good to donate? Every time I make a donation to Master Yoga, it feels wonderful. Now I know the act of donating sustains and nourishes something dear to my heart; it fuels my inner fire. But I didn't always feel that way.

When I began my training as a Svaroopa® yoga teacher, I did not respond to MYF's fundraising requests. I figured I had spent as much money as I could for yoga on my Teacher Training, in spite of the fact that I had a habit of charitable giving to many other organizations. As I progressed in my training, my body and mind were quieted and healed. And along the way something shifted. I shifted. I was transformed. And in a flash of insight, of illumination, I understood. I understood what a gift I'd been given. I knew that I was part of something much larger. From my heart, I wanted to reciprocate. In my charitable giving, I always allocate one large

We did it! YOU did it! The spark of a Matching Funds Donation of \$10,000 for Master Yoga's annual birthday fundraising campaign, "The Fire of Yoga," kindled tremendous generosity. The campaign's total goal was \$20,000. You not only met that goal, you surpassed it. A total of \$17,125 was raised to match the challenge, for a grand total of \$27,125. Thank YOU!

You donated because you love and believe in Svaroopa® yoga. You donated, a gift freely given, yet you get something in return. You get the assurance that our organization will be maintained and continually grow and you get more.

donation each year. For the past three years, it has either gone to MYF or to Svaroopa® Vidya Ashram. Now I realize that I receive more than I give.

Every one of this spring's Fire of Yoga donations, large, small or in between, is fuel that feeds the fire of Svaroopa® yoga. While the money we spend on training covers the cost of the training and facility, our beloved organization needs more fuel to burn brightly. That became clear last fall when MYF came close to closing its doors. But our community, our conscious community, rallied and gave from the heart. We did it! We helped MYF stay afloat. And now, from the heart, we want MYF to thrive.

The spontaneous eruption of giving that flowed from one Svaroopi's idea on the E-Group was a shining example. In honor of MYF's 21st birthday on May 17th, she pledged to donate \$21. It sparked more pledges of support. It's the spark of conscious community. We are supporting what we believe in.

Shuchi (Sue) Cilley, MYF Board President, says a donation "is a heartfelt transaction, not just an economic one. Your support through these donations is moving us ever further into stability."

MYF continues to be short staffed. "All the staff is on overload with multiple tasks, many related to current system changes, like our new on-line enrollment system," Shuchi says. "Swamiji has been bearing the brunt of it." She likens Swamiji to Durga with eight arms, all going at once, lending many hands to do many things. "It's not sustainable," she says, "Nor is it the best use of Swamiji's talents! Your extra support has helped us ease her load."

Shuchi continues, "I love the theme of this campaign — "The Fire of Yoga" — and the image of one candle lighting another, which is how I see Svaroopa® yoga teachers moving about in the world, holding the beacon high. And I can't wait for the October Conference when we all get together in one place at one time — what a yogic fire that will be!"

So thank YOU — even if you were not able to donate in the campaign, even if you cannot donate on a monthly basis, even if you feel you cannot attend the Conference. Your presence in the world makes a difference. YOU are Svaroopa® yoga. YOU are a flame in the fire that is changing the world. What if we set the world on fire with healing, transformation and illumination? Our organization exists for you, because of you. Thank you!

A yoga weekend, three days of core opening through Svaroopa® yoga's amazing techniques and teachings. Align your body, heart and mind with Grace. Deepen your yoga experience, deepen your teaching, deepen your yoga relationships and deepen your Self-Knowingness. Discover what Grace really is and how it empowers your yoga practice and your life.

- ▼ Yoga Weekend Track
- ▼ Ashram Track
- ▼ Community Track
- ▼ Teacher Track
- ▼ Foundations Track
- ▼ Seva Team
- ▼ Pre-conference & Post-conference Programs

Registration: \$175 - 720 based on track.
Your vegetarian meals are included.

Enroll now. First 101 yogis to register receive \$101 discount!

To register or learn more, visit www.svaroopaconference.org

Do the practices, catch the Grace!

Cosponsored by Master Yoga Foundation & Svaroopa® Vidya Ashram



Svaroopa® Sciences Conference 2013

**October 4 - 6
Philadelphia PA**

Alignment
with *Grace*

**FIRST
101
REGISTRANTS
Get \$101
OFF!**

All Aboard!

By Marlene Gast

Think of the Conference that happens every two years as a kind of Grand Central Station for *Svaroopa*® yoga. The Conference opens immense doors to wherever you want to go! And you are traveling with a host of other Svaroopis, so the journey that unfolds takes you to exponentially deeper explorations.

Remember your most recent Foundations, YTT, EYTS or ATT program. Or the Yogimmersion weekend that you treated yourself to. What was it like to do all that *Svaroopa*® yoga under the guidance of Master Yoga Teacher Trainers? And how did you feel in the company of other Svaroopis who love the yoga as you do, who also value the place within where it takes you? This experience — and more — awaits you at the *Svaroopa*® Yoga Conference, [Alignment with Grace](#), October 4-6, 2013, once again located in the Philadelphia Airport Renaissance Hotel.

Asana-Focused Tracks

In addition to the Ashram, Seva, and Community tracks, this year's Conference offers three tracks focused on asana:

Yoga Weekend — for all levels

Choose this track for a profound experience of your own body. This track is designed to give you incredible physical improvements. And it will clear avenues to opening so much deeper inward.

Teachers' Track — maintains your Current Standing with Continuing Education

If you are *now* in Current Standing and have done any level of YTT, this track keeps you there.

Foundations Track — maintains or returns you to Current Standing.

If you are not now in Current Standing, this track returns you to Current Standing

Studying Sutras

By Swami Nirmalananda

I memorized sutras. In Sanskrit and in English, I repeated them over and over to learn them "by heart." It changed the way I use my mind. It changed the way I understand life. It made me able to understand life — both my life as well as yours. The map of consciousness provided by the ancient sages has you sitting right in the middle of it. It's like the blue dot flashing on your iPhone map — here you are!

After many years of study, I began to teach, weaving the sutras through the yoga poses, explaining the openings students were getting, using the words of the sages and of my Guru. People marveled at how clearly I described the subtleties of their experiences. They thanked me for making yoga's profound principles so accessible. I want you to know that I didn't figure this out on my own — I got all those words from the masters. They gave me terminology that works, even in English translation.

So I teach sutra courses now. I always taught the sutras, but you had to live nearby, or you had to come in for a week or month-long retreat. Now I do them by phone. I want you to get these teachings in the midst of your life! I want you to hang up the phone and have to clean up after the dog or a family member, while you have the sutras still ringing in your ears. I want you to understand life, both your own life and life-itself. I want you to know who you are: "Siva."

The necessity for Continuing Education stems from what is truly a sacred trust. You need to maintain and enhance your readiness to handle other people's bodies. Your alignments and adjustments as well as class instructions must be absolutely precise — for safety as well as effectiveness. Drift happens — all of us teachers know that; these tracks keep you on course — or get you on course once again.

And There's More

Swami Nirmalananda is delivering two keynote addresses, one at each evening session. One focuses on the physical benefits when you open and realign your spine. The other gives you a vision of cosmic consciousness.

Each morning you choose how to start your day: Yoga (poses), chant and meditation led by a Master Yoga Teacher Trainer or the Shree Guru Gita with Swami Nirmalananda.

What will it be like to spend so much time with Svaroopis? Together, standing on so much common ground, speaking the same language, sharing so much experience? Imagine being with 250 other Svaroopis! Reciprocal Adaptation at its best!!

Master Yoga began a voyage through rough weather at the end of 2012. But together we have built a sturdier vehicle to take us where we want to go — led and guided unwaveringly by Swami Nirmalananda. We are still implementing her Reawakening Initiatives; Master Yoga is strengthening every day. Your presence at our Conference will add to our growing strength and vigor.

[Click here](#) to register for the Conference now: Be among the first 101 to enjoy a significant discount — \$101 off.

Experience the new vitality surging through the veins of *Svaroopa*® yoga, and be part of creating more! All aboard for Alignment with Grace!!

2014

By Marlene Gast

Plan now for your 2014 *Svaroopa*® yoga trainings and courses!

"But it's summer... Next year is miles away (whine!)..." Yet there is no better time to look at the calendar that lays out a year of opportunity for choosing how you will go forward in the *Svaroopa*® Sciences.

You know how it works with milestone events for family and friends: When you save the date for a family reunion, wedding or graduation, it happens. You show up. Now is the time to save that date for yourself — for your Self — and for the More Yoga that you, if you are a teacher, will be able to offer to your students.

Which courses do you want? What is inviting you to open into deeper dimensions? What do you need for Continuing Education as a *Svaroopa*® yoga teacher? [Click here](#) for your look at 2014, on Master Yoga's Program Calendar.

Ashram Track at the Conference

By Priya Kenney



Photo Courtesy of Svaroopaa® Vidya Ashram

“First you turn your attention inward. That’s not easy! You need training and you need help, which is what I do for you. Then you explore your own existence, to discover your own Self. Then you live from this inner Reality and see that it pervades all that exists. Inside & outside, all at the same time.”

— Swami Nirmalananda

If “your heart’s deepest yearning is to know the Ultimate Reality within,” says Swami Nirmalananda, then the Ashram Track of the [2013 Svaroopaa® Yoga Conference](#) is for you.

Most of us began yoga with the intention of improving our body somehow — reducing pain, increasing flexibility or letting go of tensions. All of these are great motivators, but they are really considered the peripheral benefits of yoga. The core of yoga is to find our own higher consciousness, our own Self.

For those who want to go straight to the pot of gold, the Self, the Ashram Track is for you. “It’s all about meditation,” says Swamiji. “There are no poses, well, except the seated pose. You’re going to sit. This is what yogis traditionally do!”

There are two pieces to this track. The first part will take us deep into meditation. We’ll learn how to keep meditating when we think we’re done — we get antsy, our mind takes over and we have the urge to pop out. A three hour meditation will take us through steps to learn what we can do to dive back in, going deeper within with each successive dive. With that deep inner perspective, we’ll learn how to maintain that state and carry it out into our lives.

There are six delicious tracks to choose from at the Conference, each specifically designed for a deepening experience over the course of the weekend. Yogis won’t have the option of mixing and matching tracks. Imagine trying to come into the Ashram track if you hadn’t meditated and everyone else had already done several hours of meditation!

Click here for more information on the [Conference](#) and take advantage of a fabulous discount — the first 101 yogis to register will receive a \$101 discount!

Quick and Easy Spring Pasta

योगा पुस्तक

By Jennifer Saville, Ashram Chef

8 oz. (half a box) gemelli pasta
(can also use rigatoni, rotini or other fun, short shape)
Salt & pepper
3 medium yellow squash, quartered lengthwise & thinly sliced
1 10 oz. package frozen petite peas
4 tablespoons butter or vegan spread, cut in pieces
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
½ cup grated Parmesan (or vegan substitute)
½ cup torn fresh basil leaves

Instructions:

In a large pot of boiling salted water, cook pasta until 2 minutes less than al dente. Add squash and peas to the pot (yes, the same one); cook until squash is crisp-tender, about 2 minutes. Reserve ½ cup pasta water. Drain pasta mixture & return to pot.

Add butter, lemon juice, half of the parmesan and half the reserved pasta water to the mixture and toss to combine. If needed, add some more pasta water to make a thin sauce to coat the pasta. Stir in basil & sprinkle with the remainder of the cheese. Serve immediately.

2014 Ashram Programs

By Ekamati (Diane) Tsurutani

Look ahead! Plan your 2014 study and retreats with Swamiji now. 2014 is full of opportunities to immerse your Self in the flow of Grace deeply and often, with Shaktipat Retreats, 2 Year-Long Courses, Meditation Teacher Trainings, and long Retreats with personal time with Swamiji. [Click](#) to see our 2014 calendar.

Swamiji is offering four training opportunities for teachers. Meditation Teacher Training and Meditation Teacher Upgrade (for those certified through Master Yoga) are both scheduled. Both courses lead to Ashram certification as a Svaroop® Vidya Meditation Teacher. Further training is available, for becoming a Meditation Group Leader and Teaching Svaroop® Sutras (which begins in 2013).

Our year-long multi-media courses are a unique and very personal way to be in relationship with your teacher on a regular basis, culminating in a weekend retreat that you have been preparing for and propelled towards all year long. The Ashram's foundational course "I Am "Siva" begins soon, at the end of 2013, while a new year-long course begins in February 2014, with the title to be announced later this year.

Retreats with Swamiji are precious occasions to spend dedicated and very sweet time with our Guru. New to 2014 are two opportunities for a limited number of yogis to spend a week with Swamiji immersed in a retreat incorporating the Ashram routine, both resting and renewing, while offering seva and being in community.

And finally, the greatest gift that Swamiji offers to us is Shaktipat. During five special weekends in 2014 this Great Initiation — Maha Shaktipat Diksha — with its promise of living in the bliss of Consciousness, will be given to everyone in attendance. There is no greater or more profound gift of Grace that anyone can receive. We have no greater blessing than Swamiji making this available to us so often and easily.

"Amazing meditations, tangible Shakti, valuable insights, were all part of the weekend for me. The information about Shaktipat and Kundalini that Swamiji presented was uplifting, it made me very inspired about my own practices and meditation. I highly recommend this weekend and hope to do it again..."

"I think the metaphor of one lamp lighting another is an incredible understatement. So much "stuff" that I didn't even know was there is gone. Even as I sit here to write this days later all the cells in my body are suffused with joy."

— Shaktipat retreat participants

Shaktipat Retreats

with Swami Nirmalananda Saraswati

The profound inward path of Self-Discovery (svaroopavidya) begins with you receiving shaktipat initiation, awakening your Kundalini energy. This makes you able to attain the highest purpose of human life — the knowing of your own Divine Self. Kundalini is the force underlying the power and ease of all the Svaroop® sciences designed and taught by Swami Nirmalananda.



Experience the power of your inner force by receiving Shaktipat from Swamiji in 2013:

June 21 - 23

in North Andover MA

Aug. 30 - Sept. 1

in West Chester PA

Post Conference Workshop in West Chester PA

October 6 - 8

Questions? Need extra support?

Contact us at enroll@svaroopavidya.org or 610.644.7555.

Advertise with Tadaa!

Make your product or service available to our 8,000 yogis, including over 1,500 yoga teachers. **Tadaa!** reaches a global yoga market, including thousands of Svaroopis.

If you need any support or have questions about the guidelines, and to submit advertising, please contact us via email at Advertise@svaroopayogateachings.com.

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Full page (7.625 x 9.825 in.)	\$310	\$300	\$290	\$100

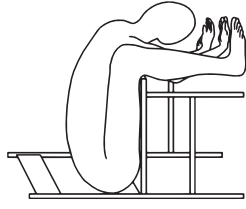
Svaroopa® Sciences Calendar

Click on titles for info about **Master Yoga** and **Ashram** Programs. DYMC is **Downingtown Yoga Meditation Center**.

June 2013		
20	Shree Guru Gita 6:30 - 8:00 am (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
21	New Dates! EYTS Deceptive Flexibility	Karobi in Exton PA
21 - 23	Shaktipat Retreat	Swamiji in Boston MA
25	Satsang 7:30 - 9:00 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
26-Jul 2	ATT 523: Advanced Bliss	Vidyadevi & Karobi & Swamiji in Exton PA
27	Shree Guru Gita 6:30 - 8:00 am (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
27	New! ATT 523: DTS program (phone calls begin Jul 16)	Vidyadevi & Karobi
28	Bondage & Freedom Audio #4	Swamiji
29	Phone Q&A Satsang 10:30 am - noon (EDT)	Swamiji
30	Swami Sunday 8:30 am - 12:15 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
July 2013		
2	Satsang 7:30 - 9:00 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
10 - 12	New Dates! EYTS Foundations Review	Janaki in Brisbane, Australia
11 - 15	Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga	Bhakta & Kamala in Westford MA
12 - 21	New Dates! Level 1	Karobi & Vidyadevi in Brisbane, Australia
14	Swami Sunday 8:30 am - 12:30 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
16	Satsang 7:30 - 9:00 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
18	Shree Guru Gita 6:30 - 8:00 am (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
18	Shree Guru Gita 6:30 - 8:00 am (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
19 - 23	Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga	Bhakta & Kamala in Groton CT
21	Guru Purnima Satsang 7:30 - 9:00 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
25	Shree Guru Gita 6:30 - 8:00 am (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
26	New! Wringing Out the Tension, Half Day Workshop	Vidyadevi in Exton PA
27 - Aug 2	ATT 221: Twists	Vidyadevi in Exton PA
28	New! ATT 221: DTS program	Phone calls begin Aug 16
28	Swami Sunday 8:30 am - 12:30 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
August 2013		
5 - 7	New Dates! Experiential Anatomy	Vidyadevi & Karobi in Exton PA
7 - 12	New Dates! Embodiment® Yoga Therapy Training	Vidyadevi & Karobi in Exton PA
8	New! Embodiment® At-Home Practicum	Phone calls with Vidyadevi & Karobi begin Aug 26
14 - 16	New Dates! EYTS Foundations Review	Polly in Exton PA
15	Bondage & Freedom audio #5	Swamiji
16	New! Embodied Bliss, Half Day Workshop	Vidyadevi in Exton PA
16 - 18	New Dates! EYTS Embodiment® Weekend	Vidyadevi in Exton PA
18	Swami Sunday 8:30 am - 12:30 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
19 - 30	Meditation Teacher Training <i>rescheduled for February 19 - March 2 2014</i>	Swami Nirmalananda
20	Svaroopa® Sutras	Phone Course begins with Swamiji
20	Satsang 7:30 - 9:00 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
21 - 25	Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga	Karobi & Polly in Exton PA
24	Teaching Sutras	Phone Course begins with Swamiji
25	Swami Sunday 8:30 am - 12:30 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
26 - 29	New Dates! Vichara Training	Vidyadevi in Exton PA
27	Satsang 7:30 - 9:00 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
30	New Dates! Lunge Is Your Friend, Half Day Workshop	Karobi in Exton PA
30 - Sept 1	Shaktipat Retreat	Swamiji at Temenos Retreat Center
31	Shree Guru Gita 6:30 - 8:00 am (EDT)	Swamiji at Temenos Retreat Center
Plan Ahead		
Sept 7 - 8	The Shavasana Course, Weekend Workshop	Vidyadevi in Exton PA
Oct 4 - 6	Alignment with Grace, Svaroopa® Sciences Conference	All Teachers in Philadelphia

Prasarita Padottanasana

SloMo, Slow Motion Dive (Magic 4 Pose #1)



Sanskrit: *prasarita* = legs extended;
paada = foot; *uttana* = intense stretch

Concerns & Dangers: If you have one or more of the following conditions, stay in Stage 1 — high blood pressure; history of detached retina, glaucoma, hiatal hernia. DO NOT DO STAGE 2.

If you have one of the following conditions, stay in Stage 1: have a headache right now, just ate a big meal, find it difficult to breathe in Stage 2. These are not dangerous, merely uncomfortable.

INSTRUCTIONS

To Do Before: Do Shavasana & Ujjayi before this pose, or use this as your first pose, especially if you do the variation — SloMo with Ujjayi.

Preparation: Seated in a chair, slide all the way into the back of the seat. Move your knees wide & place your heels directly under your knees. Turn your toes inward. If your knees lean inward when you turn your toes inward, bring your feet closer together until you have your toes turned inward & your heels directly under your knees. Move your feet into alignment instead of moving your knees into alignment.

STAGE 1

Moving In: Tip forward & place your elbows on your knees, letting your hands hang loosely in the middle. Make sure your toes are turned inward. Check that your shinbones are vertical & parallel like the sides of a doorway, or move your feet to get this alignment.

Staying in: Let your belly soften. Allow your neck & head to hang down. Let your breath be soft & easy. [Minimum – 45 seconds; Maximum – 3 minutes, but if you do the maximum, don't do Stage 2.]

STAGE 2 (optional)

Moving In: Slide both hands & arms between your knees, allowing your torso to sink forward. Your arms might push your knees further apart, or your arms might slide out from between your knees. Your hands might touch the floor or they might not.

Staying in: Your big toes & ball joints must stay firmly on the floor, so you may have to use a few toe muscles to keep them there. Tuck your chin in a little to add length to the back of your neck. It's OK if your sitbones lift off your chair a little. Soften your belly all the way down into your hip creases. [Stage 2 Minimum – 45 seconds; Stage 2 Maximum – 2 minutes. Stage 1 & Stage Total Maximum 2 – 4 minutes]

Moving Out from Stage 2: Keep your back & spinal muscles soft as you slide your elbows onto your knees. Use your elbows to push your torso back into Stage 1. Pause for a few breaths with your head still leaning toward the floor.

Prasarita Padottanasana

SloMo, Slow Motion Dive (Magic 4 Pose #1)



Moving Out from Stage 1: Leave your head down & place your hands on your knees. Leave your back & belly soft as you use your hands & arms to push your torso upward. Bring your head up last.

Resting/Observing: Pause for a few breaths while you are seated upright & notice the effects of the pose.

To Do After: Do a sacrum pose. Janu is the best one to pair with SloMo.

PROPS

Blanket Platform: Place both of your feet on a blanket platform, which is a minimum of two stacked flats (wide-folded blankets) or a maximum of four stacked flats. Use for the following —

- If your chair is too tall for you (your thighs are sloped with your knees low).
- If your big toes & ball joints lift up while you are in the pose.

Folded Blanket on Chair: Your chair may be too low for you, so your thighs are sloped with your knees high. Place a folded blanket or two on your chair to sit on, which makes your chair taller for you.

POSE ANGLES

Sit Back: Make sure you are sitting all the way into the back of the chair seat.

Stage 1 — Elbows on Knees: Make sure your arm bones (just below your elbows) are leaning into your thighbones (just above your knees). Your hands dangle softly in the space between your knees. Your hands may be overlapped or side-by-side, but not clasped together, not with fingers intertwined, & not in a prayer position.

Foot Placement: Your toes must be turned inward, with your big toes & ball joints remaining at the same level as your little toes & ball joints. Your shinbones must be vertical & parallel.

Reliable Spinal Release: Your tailbone (T)

Possible Spinal Release: Your sacrum

Other Benefits: Specifically targets the tailbone muscles that span from your sitbones to your tailbone. Your tailbone release triggers the decompression of your whole spine, increases the blood & oxygen supply to your brain & releases neck & shoulder tensions.

Movement Type: Lower Spinal Release (LSR); Forward Bend (FB); Inversion (INV) — either a mild inversion (your head level with your heart) or a moderate inversion (your head below your heart); Re-release Pose (RRP)

When to Use: Doing supported poses, especially in chairs, can help you get a deeper release in your spine because your body is accustomed to the angles in the chair & the support it provides.

Prasarita Padottanasana

SloMo, Slow Motion Dive (Magic 4 Pose #1)



T
FB
INV
LSR
RRP