



Svaroop[®] Vidya Ashram

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Svaroop[®] Yoga: Experience Your Divine Self

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Editorial

Choosing to Grow?

By Swami Nirmalananda

You sculpt time by your choices. This is obvious when you miss your turnoff, especially when the next one is 20 miles ahead. It will take 45 minutes longer to get there. While you might not say you made that choice, you had been choosing to pay attention to something else or simply to be unfocused while cruising along.

Yoga is the science of consciousness. You spend time doing practices which make you more and more conscious until you go beyond merely conscious and become Consciousness-Itself. No amount of thinking can get you there, yet you must not abandon your mind along the way, so beautifully described by yogis in the personal stories they share in this issue.

Becoming conscious is not always easy. You begin to notice things you didn't notice before, including tensions or pains in your body, your mind, your heart or your life. You've got work to do and it's all inner work. I'll compare it to the remodeling we've undertaken in our "new" 130-year old building, Lokananda.

Fortunately the structure is sound. Our town required structural testing, which the grand old dame passed with flying colors. But her plumbing was leaky and her nadis (energy

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Swamiji

currents = electrical systems) needed some work, plus her roof will need some TLC soon. But she's coming along well.

Even more heartening, response to our Capital Campaign is building. Yogis have already

given and pledged almost \$30,000. On October 10, we will house our first immersion at the Ashram's new campus! Not only will you will enjoy reduced Housing & Meals costs, you will stay in a dedicated spiritual environment.

In the same way, the remodeling you're currently undergoing absolutely leads to where you want to go. There's some debris to clear, new ways to see and be — yoga makes you all new. Do more yoga.

Letting Go in All Ways

By Katie Hauser



Katie Hauser

About five years ago, I began taking classes with Pepper Wolfe CSYT in upstate New York because of extreme physical pain. That has certainly improved as a result of my *Svaroopa*® yoga classes, but recently I became aware of how deeply the practice has changed me as a person.

At the end of a class, Pepper offered us Patanjali's Sutra 1.5. She said:

"Patanjali explains that your mind is very repetitive. It repeats the same things over and over. Know who you are, beyond your mind — know *svaroopa*, your own Self."

I understood that the sutra had to do with letting go. It prompted me into thinking about everything I had experienced. When Pepper asked us in the class to share our responses to the sutra, I said:

I see my repetitive mind getting stuck and spinning. It feels dysfunctional. Yoga helps to interrupt that process. Giving up physical exercise (I ran competitively for about 7 years and then, post-injury, continued obsessively exercising in any way that wasn't too painful in a blindly repetitive way), it never occurred to me that I could change. My *Svaroopa*® yoga practice interrupted a dysfunctional process. I had to walk away from that, which is not that easy, especially when you do it for 20-30 years. The yoga practice showed me that I could stop compulsively exercising, which demonstrated a whole bunch of other things too. It is hard to convey how big that moment was. *Svaroopa*® yoga slowly opens you to you. It started out a physical practice but to really change the physical, I had to make emotional and mental shifts.

When I began the yoga, I was just looking for pain relief. Two different friends who take Pepper's class told me to try it. They are quite different people, and they did not talk with each other about it. One had known me a long time; the other a short time. Each had a sense of the pain I was experiencing, and each one was looking out for me. One is rigorously logical and analytical, and the other is not. Getting the same advice from two very different friends, each of whom I respect in different ways, was intriguing.

At that time I was seeing a physical therapist, and we both knew we weren't getting anywhere. She is an excellent, nurturing practitioner of an alternative, hands-on bodywork, and she was willing to accept Pepper's invitation to meet about my case. She went on to give me her blessing on trying *Svaroopa*® yoga's approach to healing once she heard about it from Pepper. This change was my first experience of "letting go": I had to let go of my physical therapist, who had my best interests at heart, and she had to let go of me.

I am now 48 years old. Since my twenties, chronic debilitating foot and back pain (from my sacrum through L5 and L4) has led me to try everything short of spinal surgery. Actually, I did have two "noninvasive" procedures that involved wrapping a hot wire around a spinal disk. After each one I could not sit for a year. I also tried other types of nerve blocks. In the pursuit of easing pain, I saw the best doctors on the East and West Coasts, including at John Hopkins. After exploring all conventional avenues, including surgery on my ankles, I found out that my foot pain was really a back problem.

The yoga practice showed me that I could stop compulsively exercising, which demonstrated a whole bunch of other things too. Svaroopa® yoga slowly opens you to you. It started out a physical practice but to really change the physical, I had to make emotional and mental shifts.

So when I first met Pepper and she said, "Yes, I can help you. I can make the pain go away," I thought she might be overconfident and perhaps even arrogant. At the time I was waking up nearly every night with excruciating bilateral sciatica (amongst other foot and back pain). Then as I continued with Pepper, the sciatica went away in the first month. That convinced me of the effectiveness of *Svaroopa*® yoga's approach to healing, so when she suggested Overlap Healing, I accepted, even though I was anxious and nervous about

it. This change was another deep experience of "letting go." I did around 30 treatments, still going to classes. Then I took Foundations to solidify my practice.

That experience was amazing: I am a high-achiever, a perfectionist. In the training, I saw that the process of seeing, doing, teaching was so effective; all of us, no matter our level of experience with yoga previously, were going through the same kind of learning experience. It was rigorous, unrelenting, eye-opening, empowering. I felt so much more confident: I felt our Teacher Trainers (and, of course, Pepper) were saying, "Here are the tools, we're enabling you to do your own healing process."

Always a diligent practitioner, I was even more empowered after Foundations. The *Svaroopa*® Sciences offer such a different approach compared to medical methods. The Foundations program seemed to me so much more ethical, giving you what you need to heal yourself. In Foundations you can understand the incremental nature of the process; you realize it took a long time for your body to get where it is, and will take time to get out of it. A radical surgical or pharmaceutical intervention only treats the one part, not the whole.

Pain is tough to live with, and I was looking to get out of it. I had been a runner until I was 20, then got injured. So I continued with swimming, walking, elliptical training, biking. Pepper never said "don't do that," but during Overlap Healing, I realized that compulsive exercise was not good for me; I had to experience a death of my vision of myself as an athlete. That was major. Now I walk my dogs and garden. I am active in a holistic way, with activities that are part of my life.

That process of release, letting go in my body as well as my ideas of who I am, has made me more open, less adamant. I am learning to stand and walk differently, something I always think about now. I know a person's gait is distinctive, so changing it was a part of becoming a different person. Not being in pain is a changed state for me, and generally it is easier to let things go. Although I feel adamant about spreading the word, it feels counter to the *Svaroopa*® methodology to try to be a zealot about it. Being in pain and then out of it is one of the biggest things in the world. In the past I would have wanted to make everyone pain free. But as with the blankets and the blocks, while I can support others, they have to heal and open on their own: it's a paradox. So I just tell others, "Well you could try this."

Dhanurasana Leg & JP

By Nitya (Caroline) Kutil



Nitya (Caroline) Kutil

I once read that yoga is a “sacred technology.” In this context, asana is sacred geometry. Each pose angles into your body in a particular way giving specific results. *Svaroopa*® yoga poses target your spine, the conduit of consciousness, infusing your body and mind with what makes you truly alive.

It isn't easy for me to choose just one favorite pose as each one offers its own unique, laser-like effects. My favorites have changed over time as I have changed, based on what I am exploring and opening

in myself. At one time Ardha Mandukasana (Half Frog) was my favorite, then Shavasana. Since returning from a July training in Pennsylvania, now I have two new favorite poses: Dhanurasana Leg (Leg of Bow Pose) and JP — Jathara Parivrittanasana (Rotated Stomach Pose).

Dhanurasana Leg

I find Dhanurasana Leg challenging. My impulse is to avoid this one. Since taking ATT 201: Teaching Half Day Workshops, I've developed a deeper appreciation of Dhanu Leg. The pose you avoid is one you need to practice. If I don't practice it, how will I experience its benefits? Yoga is about practice and, as with all practice, true effort is essential. The *Bhagavad Gita* says no effort you make is ever lost. Effort itself is transformation. Effort carries you to the point where Grace comes to meet you and carries you the rest of the way.

It is hard for me to get hold of my foot on one side, so when I practice on my own I have to work a little to get into the pose. I can feel the tension along the front of my spine and it takes me a while to settle in. But when I let go of my foot on that side, I immediately feel the changes: a lengthening through the front of my spine that extends to my toes, a surge of energy through my body and an expansion through my heart and into my head. Even though this pose is challenging it is always energizing and, with use of my abs, clarifies my mind. I've also noticed that I'm always more decisive after including Dhanu Leg in my practice.

JP

I find JP to be so delicious. I remember doing this pose in my very first *Svaroopa*® yoga class and feeling a pain under my left shoulder blade that extended into my sacrum. I could immediately track something that had eluded me after more than 20 years of practicing other yoga styles. I could feel how tight I was. I was shocked and grateful at the same time. That process of tracking through my body, especially in this pose, continues to get deeper and more “mapped out” as I continue to practice.

In Teacher Training, we learn to teach JP over and over again, in Foundations, Level 1 (more in depth), in the Twists theme in YTT Week 3 (variations), and in ATT Twists (more variations!) and other ATT courses. JP is a VIP (Very Important Pose). Twists are bliss poses. Twists untwist the twists in your spine. JP is the most reliable twist and has so many benefits: lengthens your spine, opens your upper spine, calms and soothes your mind and nervous system, massages your internal organs, improves your digestion, opens breathing space, and many other benefits, all in one pose. Add a slow head roll to experience even more traction through your spine and more bliss.

The sacred geometry of asana practice is like a mathematical equation. Practicing and teaching *Svaroopa*® yoga poses = more + more inner spaciousness. Inner spaciousness transforms your mind. Your mind needs more transformation = Yoga.

For me, both Dhanurasana Leg and JP have a heart opening effect. As my heart space expands, my mind is naturally drawn to rest within that space; less reactive, more joyful, and at peace. Yoga describes it this way: your heart is the seat of intelligence. The space inside your heart is an infinite space. It has no boundaries! When your mind rests in your heart, it shines with the light of the Self. Have you had this experience? It is waiting for you.

Butternut Squash Casserole

Flavorful and easy to prepare. Just in time for our harvest.

- 1 cup organic coconut milk
- ½ cup coconut flakes
- 1 cup water
- 1 butternut squash cut into ½"
- pinch salt and pepper
- 2 tablespoons ghee
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- ¼ cup leeks
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- pinch ground fennel
- ¼ cup maple syrup

Instructions:

- Heat medium pan, add ghee to sauté leeks and squash. Add water and cover to cook for 10 minutes (until softened).
- Add coconut milk and coconut, cook uncovered stirring often until liquid slightly reduced.
- Add seasonings then put into oven safe dish. Coat top with maple syrup.
- Broil until golden brown and serve.

योगा पुल्लोड

By Chef Anthony



When Everything Changes

By Tirtha (Terese) Richards, interviewed by Priya Kenney



Tirtha (Terese) Richards

Everything changed the day Vibhuti (Sandy) Courtney King walked into Tirtha's hair salon for a haircut. "I loved her energy immediately," said Tirtha. "We started a conversation about what she does. I thought yoga and *Embodiment*® sounded wonderful and said, 'Book me — I'm in!'" That day 13 years ago was the beginning of a beautiful journey on the *Svaroop*® path, powered by Guru's Grace shining through Vibhuti's skill and compassion.

Embodiment® Yoga Therapy was Tirtha's doorway to the Self. Almost as soon as that door opened, she unintentionally added another practice. Vibhuti had already let Tirtha know that things might come up during the sessions. As many of us do, Tirtha did bring all the hard things in her life with her to the sessions — family issues and a sick mother as well as limiting self-concepts. "In hindsight, says Tirtha, I see that without even knowing it, I started doing vichara (self inquiry) during *Embodiment*®."

For a long time, Tirtha did vichara and *Embodiment*® sessions, occasionally adding in a few poses. Later she added japa and has increasingly woven it into her life. After Vibhuti did Meditation Teacher Training, Tirtha went to a couple of meditation classes and was hooked. All the practices have helped change the way Tirtha thinks, dramatically changing her perspective on life, death and her family. "It's just as Swamiji says," emphasizes Tirtha. "Once we quiet the mind, we lose the concepts or belief systems that constrain us."

When Tirtha's mother died, it was a big loss and very scary. With a husband who is much older than herself, Tirtha began to fear his death. So even though it was one of the hardest things she has ever done, she started working on the concept of death in her vichara sessions. During the process, her two dogs died. Tirtha says, "The deaths were gifts. I could see them, sit in them, be in touch with them."

This difficult time also increased Tirtha's compassion. "I totally understand why people quit vichara and back off from yoga. It's not always easy to see the truth. The questions moved me from the place of frustration to revelation. I let go of my concept of death as being associated with sadness. Letting go of the sad story was so difficult for me, but letting go was freedom. Now I feel just as connected to my mother as if she were living. It's so beautiful."

At one point, Tirtha became curious about *Sri Guru Gita* and the teachings. She bought Swamiji's e-book and was filled with bliss after only two pages, amazed that all that energy came through the Guru's words on a computer screen. This increased her longing for more of Swamiji, so she signed up for a Shaktipat Retreat. "I've never been the same since," said Tirtha. "I didn't even have to get to the retreat location to receive Shaktipat! I was driving there in rain, thunder and lightning, and even though I usually get nervous in traffic, I was joyous."

"When Swamiji entered the room at the retreat, the whole room was immediately filled with such an overwhelming beauty! She is beatific!! I was brought to tears — not just a little tear in my eye — a sobbing that over took my being. Looking in her eyes, she showed me the Self I was seeking! All of yoga changes you forever, but that event made changes so profound that no one close to me missed noticing. I returned from

that retreat glowing and vibrating. This was when yoga became my life, not my hobby."

At the retreat, Tirtha asked Swamiji for a Sanskrit name. Soon Tirtha also became an Ashram donor, and says, "I increase it every year to offer this wonderful experience for others." Enthusiastic about all the practices, Tirtha meditates daily and loves chanting *Sri Guru Gita*. Even with these deep practices, she wondered whether she might yet be missing something, and realized it was seva.

She says, "Just like when you sign up for Shaktipat, when you sign up for seva, profound changes happen before you even start." Tirtha was given a seva using the computer. Not being computer savvy, she got frustrated during the phone training. Her mind started telling her: "I'm not good enough; I can't do this." When the training session was over, Tirtha lay on the floor and, "...cried like a baby. It was like going through things with my family." During this powerful emotional kriya, Tirtha turned to Vibhuti for support. Now on the other side, Tirtha sees, "This is what seva is all about."

With her mother's death, Tirtha began to understand her family

"I totally understand why people quit vichara and back off from yoga. It's not always easy to see the truth. The questions moved me from the place of frustration to revelation. I let go of my concept of death as being associated with sadness. Letting go of the sad story was so difficult for me, but letting go was freedom."

dynamics differently. Having previously thought her family was perfect but that she was the problem, Tirtha had a revelation regarding her relationship with her father: "Speaking up for myself was unbelievably frightening. Just saying 'treat me better' was so hard. I did lots of vichara." Having experienced how vichara changed her concept of death made it easier to trust using vichara on this challenge. One particularly illuminating question propelled her, "In that moment, I was the Self and saw the perfection with clarity. He was the perfect father for me. It was such a powerful place. Speaking the truth serves everyone for the best. I then had a fabulous conversation with my father and it was 'Namaste' — we could see the light of God in each other."

With her seva and now taking the Year Long Programme, Tirtha's relationship with Swamiji has grown more intimate. "I take her everywhere. I took her with me to Dad's, asked her to be with me, to be my words. The more I ask for her, the more I bow to her, the more I become the Self. I call her presence before meditating and see her when I'm doing my seva. I play the *Sri Guru Gita* and the other chants in my car all the time. I listen to the teachings every morning. Just recently I started eliminating meat from my diet, and it's helping me to feel better and to see the world through the Self. I've interwoven yoga in my life. The revelations of bliss that come from this journey are never ending."

Something's Missing?

By Yogeshwari (Lissa) Fountain



Yogeshwari Fountain

that was what I was longing for. It took me years of trainings and immersions with Swamiji to discover what yoga was really going to offer me: my own Self.

In the video, Rukmini's narration and invitation to "take a peek" and "discover an 'Uncommon Yoga'" transported me back to that earlier time. This video is designed to attract students that may want to become yoga teachers as well as those already established teachers in another style. I can imagine what it would be like, as an earnest or perhaps even dissatisfied yoga teacher, to step through this video into our Svaroopa® world. What a relief! How wonderful to be granted permission to "transcend" the world of athletic yoga and find the inner Divinity hidden within myself. What a startling revelation! In this video, you are given the highest teaching, in full disclosure, right at the beginning. It's really quite wonderful: it's either going to grab your attention and pull you in, or you'll click elsewhere (for such is the freedom of the Internet age).

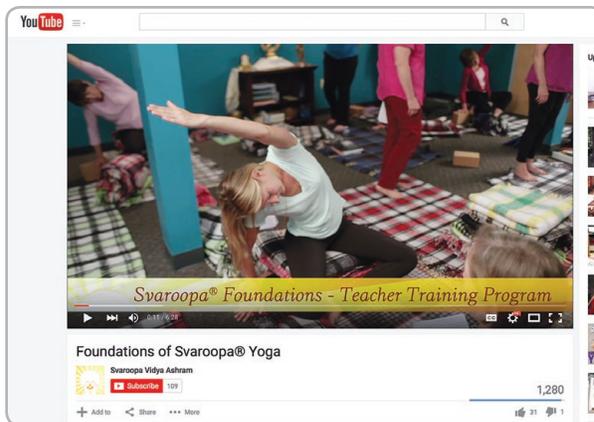
This Foundations video interweaves the true purpose of yoga (through philosophy spoken in voice-overs) with the practical and visually clear demonstrations by our Teacher Trainers and their students while in the poses. My favorite is Vidyadevi's description of core opening while handling a full size skeleton: "Many people think we're working on back muscles connecting here (she touches the back of the spine); we're actually working with the core muscles and they connect to the front of your tailbone (now touching the front of the spine), to the front of your sacrum, through the front of your waist vertebrae and up through the front of your ribs. We call this core release, or core opening."

Now, were I a yoga teacher used to stretching my hip ligaments to get into the classical poses,

The "Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga" on YouTube is a comprehensive and beautifully produced video by our Svaroopa® Vidya Ashram. Very publically, it introduces Svaroopa® yoga and our Teaching Trainings to those seeking the "more" that yoga promises. Watching it was a déjà vu experience for me.

The narration begins: "Do you feel like something is missing?" Eighteen years ago, when I joined Swamiji's "Experiential Anatomy" class at Kripalu, deep in my heart I knew something was definitely "missing." After having been a professional dancer, I'd been teaching hatha yoga, and although I was "flexible" (or so I thought), I was always in physical pain. Yet the something that was missing was a quiet mind and deeper sense of Self. In the beginning I didn't realize

that one visual explanation would have blown my mind. It's unfortunately true that too many yoga teachers are in a lot of pain. They mask it well, and teach through it. I know, I was one of them. But this video shows there is another way.



A viewer who has [Yoga Journal](#) models in her mind may be surprised to see normal looking people, with realistic bodies, blissing out in well propped and aligned positions. The narration goes on to say: "It's not about how you look, it's about how you are within yourself." What a freedom! Teaching Svaroopa® yoga is not about performing, it's about Being, it's about Presence. And somehow, in this 6-minute film, that Truth is made visible and accessible. Even if you don't want to do a Teacher Training, this video invites any potential yoga student to discover a radically different approach to what they think "yoga" is all about.

One of the images that stays with me is of two yogis sitting in Sukhasana, eyes closed, with the camera shooting from the base up, as Swamiji's describes the "Bliss of Consciousness arising within you." She calls it "Spinal Magic." If I had been watching this in 1997, I'd feel the same way

I do today: "Sign me up!" As one of the students in the film said, the other styles of yoga she had tried "didn't speak to my mind, my emotions, my spiritual side." That was certainly true for me, and for many of us. I came to Svaroopa® yoga to fix my body and my life, but what I found was so much more than that: "Yoga reveals health and happiness, and your own inner Divinity."

Swamiji's Grace was always there, even in the earlier years. Yet now, without holding anything back, she infuses that Grace into Foundations and all our trainings, at a much deeper level. Ultimately, Svaroopa® yoga brings you to the most essential practice of all: meditation. The Foundations training plants the seeds for that too.

How amazing it is to be a Svaroopa® yoga teacher and to guide others along this path. I encourage each of us, teachers and students, to show this video to our yoga buddies, friends and especially to those who want to be yoga teachers. Let's keep the conversation going. Why keep it a secret? This yoga is our gift to share in the world.

Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga

Upcoming DATES

[Oct 21-25 in Downingtown PA](#)

[Nov 11-15 in Calgary AB, Canada](#)

[Nov 25-29 in Brisbane QLD, Australia](#)

[Jan 27-31 2016 in Downingtown PA](#)

[Mar 21-24 in Downingtown PA](#)

Are You A SATYA Member?

SATYA Members in Current Standing get a **40% discount** off tuition when they retake a Foundations Course in PA!

To register or for more information, call 610.806.2119 or email programs@svaroopayoga.org

Teaching from Source

By Nityaa (Robin) Blankenship



Nityaa (Robin) Blankenship

Teaching two weekly classes in Roswell GA, I am a certified *Svaroopa*® Yoga Basics Teacher and an Embodiment® therapist. Next summer I will continue with YTT Levels 3 and 4. But I never set out to be a yoga teacher, and in the beginning of teaching I had no single reason for teaching. Becoming a *Svaroopa*® yoga teacher has evolved from a combination of personal preferences and changing circumstances. Having taught piano for more than 30 years, I love inspiring students and teaching in small steps so

that it is easy and they want to do it. I simply wanted to learn more about *Svaroopa*® yoga and to go deeper in my own practice and understanding.

During the five years that I attended classes with Mangala (Cayla) Allen in the Atlanta area, I never had the desire to teach the classes. Attending her classes brought me closer to what I perceived as “the Source.” When Mangala moved away from Atlanta, however, I knew I had to teach to help support *Svaroopa*® yoga in my area. As a Meditation Group Leader, Mangala had held regular satsangs, and I wanted them to continue, so initially I thought of teaching meditation. But I felt that I first needed to be able to bring yoga poses (asana) to students before I was ready to share meditation. Also, because I loved to take the Teacher Trainings, I had to teach classes in order to continue to fulfill the DTS (Develop your Teaching Skills) requirement.

Beyond that requirement and wanting to serve my community, I teach to keep myself diligent in my own practice. Needing to have a lesson plan internalized in my own body in order to teach a class means I must practice the plan myself several times; that keeps me practicing consistently. I do the same lesson plan every day for a week, and take notes of different perceptions I experience in my body, and words that I can use to describe it. Since the ultimate purpose of doing yoga is to experience one’s own Self, I must be aware and teach from that place of pure consciousness in order for my students to experience their own Self. To teach from that place, I must of course work on my own state, which means that I must attend to my own practice of yoga poses and meditation.

When I first began to teach two years ago, my body would become very tense during a class. After a class I felt like I needed a complete rejuvenation! The cause was my mind, worrying and becoming anxious about how the class would go. The more I planned – the more anxious I became. But now, while I do a certain amount of planning and preparation, I trust that Grace will carry me through. And it works. Now, when I teach I get the same openings the class is receiving, maybe even more, without even doing all the poses. Now while I am teaching, I experience being in the flow of Grace. Afterward, I feel totally rejuvenated!

Of course, a centrally important reason for why I teach is that I love sharing the beauty, simplicity and power of *Svaroopa*® yoga. I love to teach and reach people. I love working on lesson plans and developing new plans over time. It is a fascinating puzzle that has a myriad of “right” answers. I can even adapt the class and poses for the needs of individual students. I love the sequential aspect of teaching and building on what the students know and developing it through the themes.

I love seeing the changes and the smiles on their faces when they experience their own *svaroopa* after Seated Side Stretch or at the end of class. I love hearing how they recognized the differences in the final marker pose at the end of class compared to in the beginning. I love when a student gets their own blankets to practice at home and then tells me their life has changed. I love seeing when a student “gets it,” when they experience how lower spinal release can help with neck tensions so that they don’t get frequent headaches anymore.

Also, I do intend to serve my local community by teaching meditation: I plan to take Meditation Teacher Training (MTT) in January 2016. Even while MTT will give me the holistic understanding and experience of the full spectrum of *Svaroopa*® Sciences, being able to teach *Svaroopa*® Vidya Meditation will help fill the gap left by Mangala when she moved away.

That all sounds good: I teach to help others. But, honestly, I teach for my Self. Teaching yoga challenges me in all ways, and that helps me to grow and learn about myself (my small-s self). And I teach yoga to know my Self (with a capital “S”). Teaching opens me inward to my Self, and teaching continues to support me on my path to live in my Self all the time. Now I realize I AM the source.

Svaroopa Vidya Ashram

Svaroopa®
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Mission Valley Hotel
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December 4 - 6 2015

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Treat yourself to a weekend of luxury; enjoy the retreat setting with your workshops, your bed and your meals all in one location, as well as new friends and long-time yoga buddies.

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Teaching Meditation

By Swami Nirmalananda Saraswati



Swamiji

Near the end of Muktananda's life, he sent me back to the USA, back to my family and to teaching. That was over 30 years ago. I settled in San Diego but knew that I couldn't hang out my "shingle" as a meditation teacher because no one would be interested. So I taught yoga classes and introduced meditation slowly. If I were returning from India today, I'd step right out of the closet and simply teach meditation, there's such a demand for it. Meditation is getting good press. New students have arrived to my Downingtown classes saying, "My doctor told me I need to meditate." I agree with them. Everyone needs to meditate!

Until now I've always said that the world needs

more yoga teachers. While this continues to be true, I am delighted to now be able to say that the world needs more meditation teachers, especially the Western World. This is why I simplified the prerequisites for Meditation Teacher Training, so you could learn to teach meditation without having to become certified as an asana (poses) teacher. At the same time, I needed to make sure you will be deeply enough established in your own meditation experience that you can be effective as a teacher. Thus, I both simplified and deepened the prerequisites: Foundations (50 hours) instead of 600 hours of Teacher Training (simplified), and taking a Shaktipat

Retreat instead of a Learn to Meditate Course (deeper).

My first training as a meditation teacher was a three-week immersion in one of Baba's Ashrams, led by Western swamis and lay teachers. This comprehensive training prepared me to teach a beginners' meditation course, lead regular group meditations (satsangs) and offer short introductory programs. When I began offering Meditation Teacher Training (MTT) in 2005, I shortened the course, being respectful to yogi's available money and time. Shorter courses inherently provide less training, so the graduates learned only to teach a three-week Learn to Meditate Course. As more became trained and also I opened the Ashram, I added two more

trainings: Meditation Group Leader (MGL) and Leading Short Meditations.

January-February 2016 is the first time I'm offering them all together! This MTT Package is a delicious three-week immersion, a sweet echo of that pivotal training I took in 1978, holding a profound promise of total breakthrough for everyone involved. While you may elect to take only a single course, the power of the courses will build, each day on the previous one, so that the later sections will offer more than ever before.

Most important is your own meditation experience, of course, so our first week of training focuses on deepening and extending your meditations until you are meditating three hours daily. In the sheltered environment of our yogimmersion, especially with our housing and meals onsite, this is easy to accomplish. Next you learn how to function while you are in a meditative state: studying the teachings as well as writing and practicing your talks. You learn to be an instrument of Grace in all that you do. This is how I became a meditation teacher. This is how you become a meditation teacher. It's sweet. It's amazing. It's delicious. It's coming up soon...

Meditation Teacher Training

Spread the meditation revolution, now medically researched and mainstreamed. Everyone knows they should be meditating! Make it easy for them, by bringing the easy path of *Svaroopā*' Vidya meditation to their home town.



Meditation Teacher Training: January 25-February 5 2016
Leading Short Meditations: February 6-8 2016
Meditation Group Leader Training: February 9-15 2016

MTT Package: includes all three trainings listed above

Prerequisites in preceding 18 months:

Foundations or Foundations Review
Shaktipat Retreat (Oct 23 - 25 in Boston)

Register online or call us at 610.806.2119

Shaktipat Retreats

Swami Nirmalananda awakens your Kundalini, the spiritual power that is hidden within. Honored as the divine feminine and the power of creation and revelation, once awakened by the Guru, Kundalini climbs your spine from tail to top. Jump start your spirituality and rocket light-years ahead in one weekend:



October 23 - 25* in Boston MA
March 4 - 6 2016 in Downingtown PA
May 13 - 15 2016 in Downingtown PA

*may be used as a prerequisite toward our January 2016
Meditation Teacher Training

Enrollment Advisors

Call direct 610.806.2119 programs@svaroopayoga.org

Lokananda — Your Bliss Place

By Karuna (Carolyn) Beaver

Where is your place of bliss? Is it where you do your yoga or meditation? Or perhaps there is a special spot in nature that calls you back again and again. Maybe your bliss place is inside you, a place that you notice when your mind becomes still. Perhaps it is both outside and inside, just as our guided awareness in Shavasana directs you.

My “outside” bliss place is my stack of blankets next to my puja (altar) where I meditate every morning. I settle onto my blankets, settle into my mantra and settle into my Self, my “inside” bliss place. The bliss of meditation keeps me coming back for more, the “more” I know I am. Luckily, my bliss isn’t restricted to my meditation spot. More and more often, I take it with me everywhere I go, because I recognize my bliss IS me. Yet I do notice that my “outside and inside” bliss can be deeper when I am in trainings or on retreat.

I remember opening my eyes after a deep Shavasana in my early days of Teacher Training, feeling that things were bigger and brighter. What I’ve come to know is that I am “bigger and brighter.” The practices, the teachers grounded in these practices and the energy that is grounded in our practice space has helped me see this.

The “Siva Sutras, and Swami Nirmalananda’s rendering, explain it this way:

Lokaananda.h samaadhi sukham — Siva Sutra 1.18

The bliss of Self-Knowingness is experienced in its fullness in every place and every time.

In Sanskrit, *loka* means location, and *aananda* means bliss. *Samaadhi* is a deep inner absorption and *sukham* means full of sweetness and ease. A yogi can live in the easy and constant bliss of Self-Knowing; such a yogi also transmits it to everyone nearby. A place that houses the deep practices of yoga also absorbs and transmits this blissful energy. With Swami Nirmalananda, we are fortunate to have such a yogi serving as our Master Teacher and Guru. She is based in the bliss of Self-Knowingness, and all the practices she teaches come from this deep well.

Now we’re also fortunate to have a dedicated building to absorb the bliss from Swami, from all the practices and from all the yogis who come. This place is Lokananda, our new teaching campus for *Svaroopā*® Yoga and *Svaroopā*® Vidya Meditation. Lokananda can be YOUR bliss place and you can be a part of it. In October Lokananda opens its doors to our retreats and professional trainings, including providing our housing and meals.

It’s been a year-long process to remodel and update this lovely and historic building, which sits right in the middle of downtown DOWNTOWN. It’s been an expensive process, too. Those of you who have remodeled a home know that there are always unexpected costs. We were able to fund the building purchase and the initial remodeling through donations and tuitions from our meditation-based programs. Our many sevites, including Swamiji’s seva, helped create the surpluses which we’ve invested in a new campus for your immersion experience. Not surprisingly, there were cost overruns for the renovations, so more funding is needed to finish many needed tasks.

Ashram programs are residential “yogimmersions.” Many yogis have asked us to once again have our own yogic space, so we searched over a couple of years. We found it, bought it and have moved in, but we need your help to truly make this wonderful old building into a fully functional yoga home. Your financial support will fund the overruns, remodel and furnish the upper floors for residential use, and provide funding for repairs we know are coming, including a new roof.

At our annual retreat last July, the *Svaroopā*® Vidya Ashram Board of Directors voted to conduct a Capital Campaign. This is in addition to our annual fall and spring requests for donations, which are essential for our ongoing operating expenses. Capital Campaigns are time-limited and happen only when there are extraordinary needs: for buildings, equipment or other major expenditures. Certainly we have extraordinary needs, and we’re calling on you, our extraordinary community of yogis. We’ve set a cautious and conscious goal of \$150,000 in the campaign we’re calling *Lokananda — Your Bliss Place*.

What would it be like to have programs located in a space that grounds and holds the energy of bliss to support you? Imagine yourself there, in the place of bliss. Now imagine that you can make it happen. I have just made the largest financial pledge in my life to a non-profit organization (yes, your donations are tax deductible). I am already imagining myself there. I can already feel the bliss. Join me in our Bliss Place. Dig deep and give what you can. You can make a one-time donation or make a pledge over two years. And when you do, know that you are supporting the bliss of your own Being. You couldn’t make a better investment!

Lokananda: Your Bliss Place



Capital Campaign

Help us create a Bliss Place for all, a home for our retreats and trainings. Just as you are a modern day yogi, practicing an ancient science, Lokananda is also both old and new — our 130-year old building is all-new on the first floor. All new floors, walls, wiring and plumbing make it a pristine space, decorated with vibrant colors, but we have more work to do to get this building yogified. We need your help!

Donation Levels:

Bliss Builder

Platinum Level

Gold Level

Silver Level

Donate Now or phone 610.644.7555

Doing Even More Yoga By Janaki Murray



Janaki Murray

When I teach Foundations, I talk to the students about the fact that they will be doing yoga for many hours of the day. I tell them that, if they ever get to a point during the course where they feel they just can't do any more yoga, then they need to do more yoga — and that will get them through. If a yogi is having a difficulty during the course, whether it be mental, emotional or physical, then the way I, as a Trainer, assist them is to have them do more yoga. That could take the form of vichara or some yoga therapy or *Embodiment*®, whatever it is that they need at that moment.

Have you ever had a time when you felt like you have had enough or even too much yoga, you have become bored with the practice, or you're not getting anywhere or making any progress? I know I have had these times! Fortunately, Swamiji's words (usually) echo in my mind and I do the practices anyway. I do more yoga to get me

through the not wanting to do more yoga. I know the phase will pass; the key thing for me is to "maintain" the practice because I will get too far from my own Self if I don't.

I know people who stopped doing yoga for many reasons. I had one student who used to come back to yoga every time she got sick. She was very enthusiastic about it, and I heard her more than once say it saved her life. I did suggest to her, of course, that she could try continuing yoga when she was well as it would help to maintain her health, but she didn't. Unfortunately she did pass away when her cancer returned for the fourth time.

I figure a lot of people stop because they are happy. I nearly did that myself. I have become so much happier from doing yoga practices that it would be easy to think, "That is enough; why would I continue?" The moment that I want to slacken off is the moment to Do More Yoga. It gets me through and gives me a deeper sense of

my own Self than previously. Don't settle for just "happy." There is so much more!

If the idea of "doing more yoga when you don't really feel like doing more yoga" does not motivate you greatly, there is another aspect to contemplate. Vidyadevi and Swamiji talk about maintenance in their recent contemplation article. It is easy for us to recognise the power of the Divine in the maintenance of the universe. The sun rises and sets, rises and sets. The tides go in and out. Trees and flowers grow. Nature is pretty awesome! The power of Divine maintenance is at work on a universal level.

Then there is maintenance on a personal level. You repeat the mantra: Om Namah Shivaya.

I honour my own Self as Consciousness Itself. You are divine Consciousness too and you know this at a deep level within. So what about your impulses, decisions and actions? Your impulse, decision and action to do your yoga practice is divine Consciousness too. How could that not be the case? Thus, who is really making the decision, who is really taking action? Swamiji says in the article:

"In the midst of life, while you experience and express your powers, simply recognize where they arise from."

So, while you can see the Divine at work on a cosmic level, you can also know you are Divine Consciousness. Now recognise that you are not the "doer." Your own actions are Divine actions. If you are dissatisfied with your yoga practice, try taking the "I" out of the doing, and instead contemplate that it is a Divine action while you are doing it.

Swamiji says: *"It is truly liberating when you recognize the power of the Divine in the midst of every action you take."*

When I really feel the Divine working through me, I find it both liberating and blissful. At the times when that is my experience, I am not doing yoga for me anymore. It becomes a Divine action, an action for my students, my family, my friends, for the whole of mankind. Who are you doing your yoga practice for?

Bliss is Your Birthright



Five-Day Retreat Nov 1-5 in Downingtown PA

As a human being, you were born with the right and the ability to live in a steady state of bliss, the bliss of Consciousness-Itself. Swami Nirmalananda leads this five day retreat at our new campus, Lokananda — Your Bliss Place. You will be exploring the inner realms, using the whole spectrum of Svaroopā® Sciences: yoga for your body, for your mind, and for the knowing of your own Self. This is why you were born. This is what you have come here to do — to know your own Self.

Register [online](#) or call us at 610.806.2119

Upcoming Programs

Click on [titles](#) for info about Programs. DYMC is **Downingtown Yoga Meditation Center**.

OCTOBER 2015		
1	Shishya Guru Gita	Phone
3 – 4	Be Your Bliss: Bliss Weekend	Canton NY
4	Swami Sunday	Downingtown PA
6	Satsang: Free Meditation Program	Downingtown PA
7	Phone Q&A Satsang	Phone
8	Shishya Guru Gita	Phone
8	Shree Guru Gita	Downingtown PA
9	SATYA Marketing Call: Conversing About Surveys	Phone
10	Half-Day Workshop: The Owner's Manual for Your Body	Downingtown PA
10	Meditation Made Easy	Downingtown PA
10 – 11	Retreat: Happy Body – Peaceful Mind	Milton DE
10 – 15	Yoga Therapy Training	Downingtown PA
11	Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program	Downingtown PA
13	Satsang: Free Meditation Program	Downingtown PA
15	Shishya Guru Gita	Phone
15	Meditation Made Easy	Downingtown PA
16	Half-Day Workshop: Where is my Tailbone?	Downingtown PA
16 – 18	Radical Anatomy for Yogis	The Desmond
18	Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program	Downingtown PA
18	Half-Day Workshop: Yoga Makes You Taller	Downingtown PA
19	Free Intro to Yoga Teacher Training	Downingtown PA
20	Satsang: Free Meditation Program	Downingtown PA
21 – 25	Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga	Downingtown PA
22	Shishya Guru Gita	Phone
22	Shree Guru Gita	Downingtown PA
23 – 25	Weekend Workshop: Slow Down	Brisbane, Australia
23 – 25	Shaktipat Retreat	Boston MA
25 – Nov 1	ATT 262: Yoga Therapy – Treating Pain	Queensland, Australia
27	Satsang: Free Meditation Program	Downingtown PA
29	Shishya Guru Gita	Phone
31	Meditation 101	Downingtown PA

NOVEMBER 2015		
1	Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program	Downingtown PA
1 – 5	Retreat – Bliss is Your Birthright	Downingtown PA
3	Satsang: Free Meditation Program	Downingtown PA
5	Shishya Guru Gita	Phone
5	Shree Guru Gita	Downingtown PA
6 – 8	Radical Anatomy for Yogis	Downingtown PA
8	Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program	Downingtown PA
8 – 15	ATT 403: Lower Spinal Release	Downingtown PA
11 – 15	Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga	Calgary AB, Canada
11 – 15	Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga	Sheraton Great Valley Hotel, Frazer PA
11	Diwali Satsang: Free Meditation Program	Downingtown PA
12	Shishya Guru Gita	Phone
15	Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program	Downingtown PA
15	Half-Day Workshop with Devaraja	Downingtown PA
17	SATYA Marketing Call: How to Market a Special Event	Phone
19	Shishya Guru Gita	Phone
19	Shree Guru Gita	Downingtown PA
19	Phone Q&A Satsang	Phone
21	Free Newcomers Class 1:30 – 3:00	Downingtown PA
21	Free Newcomers Class 3:30 – 5:00	Downingtown PA
25 – 29	Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga	Brisbane QLD, Australia

DECEMBER 2015		
4	Preconference Workshop: Itty Bitty Details	San Diego, CA
4 - 6	Regional Conference: Full Spectrum Yoga	San Diego, CA
10	Shishya Guru Gita	Phone

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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.

ADVERTISING RATES Size	1 time	6 times \$ per issue	Graphics Charge
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1/4 page (3.625 x 4.825 in.)	\$85	\$80	\$40
1/2 page (3.625 x 9.875 -or- 7.625 x 4.825 in.)	\$170	\$160	\$80
Full page (7.625 x 9.825 in.)	\$310	\$300	\$100

2015 - 2016 Program Calendar

Currently planned events & trainings and Svaroopaa® Yoga & Svaroopaa® Vidya professional trainings plus retreats with Swami Nirmalananda.

DECEMBER 2015		
4	Half-Day Workshop: Itty Bitty Details	San Diego, CA
4-6	Regional Conference: Full Spectrum Yoga	San Diego, CA
JANUARY 2016		
2-5	Leading Teacher Training	Downingtown PA
8-17	YTT Level 2	Downingtown PA
22-25	Foundations Review	Downingtown PA
25-Feb 5	Meditation Teacher Training	Downingtown PA
27-31	Foundations of Svaroopaa® Yoga	Downingtown PA
FEBRUARY 2016		
6-8	Leading Short Meditations	Downingtown PA
9-15	Meditation Group Leader Training	Downingtown PA
24-28	EYTS: Intro to Teaching Gentle Yogis	Downingtown PA
MARCH 2016		
4-6	Shaktipat Retreat with Swami Nirmalananda	Downingtown PA
8-11	Foundations Review	Downingtown PA
11-20	YTT Level 1	Downingtown PA
21	Year-Long Programme with Swami Nirmalananda begins (theme TBA)	Multi-media course
21-25	Foundations of Svaroopaa® Yoga	Downingtown PA
25-30	Enrich & Advance - YTT Level 2	Downingtown PA
APRIL 2016		
1-3	Radical Anatomy for Yogis	Downingtown PA
5-10	Embodiment® Yoga Therapy Training	Downingtown PA
22-May 1	YTT Level 4	Downingtown PA
MAY 2016		
5-8	DIY 1: Deepen It Yourself (3-month mentored practice program)	
9-12	DTS Mentor Training	Downingtown PA
13-15	Shaktipat Retreat	TBD
13-17	Foundations of Svaroopaa® Yoga	Downingtown PA
20-24	Australian tour: free programs	Australia
25-29	5-day Retreat with Swami Nirmalananda	Australia
18-25	ATT 221: Twists	Downingtown PA

JUNE 2016		
2-5	YTT Module #1-A	Downingtown PA
9-12	DIY 2: Deepen It Yourself	Downingtown PA
14-21	ATT 402: Deeper Practice	Downingtown PA
24-26	Radical Anatomy for Yogis	Downingtown PA
JULY 2016		
7-10	DIY 3: Deepen It Yourself	Downingtown PA
13-17	Foundations of Svaroopaa® Yoga	Downingtown PA
15-17	Shaktipat Retreat	TBD
19-22	Foundations Review	Downingtown PA
22-31	YTT Level 1	Downingtown PA
AUGUST 2016		
5-14	YTT Level 3	Downingtown PA
17-21	5-day Retreat with Swami Nirmalananda	Downingtown PA
24-28	YTT Module 1-B	Downingtown PA
29-Sept 2	Foundations of Svaroopaa® Yoga	Downingtown PA
SEPTEMBER 2016		
9-18	YTT Level 2	Downingtown PA
21-28	ATT 522: Beginner's Bliss	Downingtown PA
30-Oct 2	Shaktipat Retreat	Downingtown PA
OCTOBER 2016		
2-6	Vichara Therapist Training	Downingtown PA
7-9	Radical Anatomy for Yogis	Downingtown PA
15-20	Embodiment® Yoga Therapy Training	Downingtown PA
21-23	Year-Long Programme Retreat	Downingtown PA
27-30	YTT Module #1-C	Downingtown PA
NOVEMBER 2016		
2-6	Foundations of Svaroopaa® Yoga	Downingtown PA
8-15	ATT 415: Leading Weekend Workshops	Downingtown PA
19-22	Half Day Workshops	Australia
23-25	Foundations Review	Australia
25-Dec 4	YTT Level 4	Australia
DECEMBER 2016		
8-11	EYTS: Deceptive Flexibility	Australia