



Svaroopaa[®] YOGA  MEDITATION

kaadaa!

Svaroopaa[®] Yoga: Experience Your Divine Self

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Editorial

I See the Difference

By Swami Nirmalananda

When I went to live with my Guru in His Ashram, I found myself in the most supportive environment I had ever experienced. It wasn't an easy lifestyle, with nine or more hours of required practices daily, but everything in the environment, including the practices, supported the thing I wanted most — to know my own Self.

I loved the intensity! Each day pushed me to my edge, but it was clearly inner edges that I was bumping into. All those edges dissolved away, some easily while some were harder. By the time Baba sent me back to the USA, I was ready to share what I had been given. I thought it was the intensity that had made the changes in me, so I created that intensity under the umbrella of Master Yoga Foundation. Over 3,000 yogis benefited from those intense Teacher Training programs and took *Svaroopaa*[®] yoga home to share with others.

Yet it wasn't the intensity that made the changes — it was the Grace. While I was not authorized to do so, I held back from talking about Grace, yet the Grace was always there. It is such a joy to now provide immersion programs and trainings under the sacred umbrella of *Svaroopaa*[®] Vidya Ashram. Our retreat environment is just part of what makes the Grace so tangible, even undeniable. The big difference

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Swamiji

is that these are Ashram programs.

I've been watching yogis in the Ashram programs for eight months now, especially in our recent Meditation Teacher Training. You'll read it in their stories, but I see it in their eyes. Even when they are in an intense course, I see the difference in their unfurrowed brows. I see it in their longer tailbones, their deeper and

easier breathing and in their open hearts and minds.

What I see in them makes me able to see what my Baba gave me in a whole new way. I am still learning from Him; I am sure it will never end. When I sat with Baba, I became my Self. When He looked at me, I felt loved like I'd always wanted to be. When I looked at Him, I saw the promise of yoga, my own future. Living in His Ashram was like sleeping in a featherbed, even when I slept in a dorm with 40 women, each of us on a 2" thick cotton mattress on a wooden bed frame. The cushy beds at the Desmond Hotel are an improvement over that, but they aren't really what makes the difference. It's the Grace, in an organization devoted to Grace. Thank you for helping me create an Ashram for you, like my Baba did for me.

Winning the Lottery

By Maitreyi (Margie) Wilsman



Maitreyi (Margie) Wilsman

Last fall a student told me that she felt like she had won the lottery. Her employer, the Veterans Administration, is allowing her to work full-time from home. She has regular conference calls with over 200 participants, and they are productive, satisfying, informational, and helpful — all those adjectives we use when describing a good workday or week.

Then early this past winter, I had the same experience. I asked my neighbor to take the snowblade off my mower and put the snowblade on my tractor. He said “NO. I am going to do your snow plowing this winter, Margie.” Talk about feeling like I had just won the lottery! What took me 2-3 hours to plow my drive and yoga studio parking lot, he does in 20-30 minutes.

Then I started thinking: I also feel like I have won the lottery with my Guru. While I do not live next door to Swamiji, I can be in contact with her every day — even multiple times daily, without leaving my home. Could it be that aligning myself with Grace is the yogic version of winning the lottery?

Earlier teachers who also reshaped my life were never so readily accessible as Swamiji. I had to make appointments way ahead of time. I struggled to organize how I would use my meeting time most efficiently and successfully. Not so with Swamiji. I just find ways to connect with her each day, to build my relationship with her, and step aside to allow Grace to flow.

Winning the lottery is an idea that works with my yoga buddies too! One of them coached me on the importance of daily chanting at least one verse of the Guru Gita. So I started listening to and doing the Swamiji’s free, online Guru Gita translations and pronunciation lessons as well as participating in the Thursday morning Guru Gita telephone calls with Swamiji — other connections and other ways to align with Grace.

While checking into the Ashram website for Sanskrit pronunciation lessons, I began listening to the library of Satsang talks that go back to 2010, another connection and way to align with Grace.

Of course, in meditation I get to connect with Swamiji through my deepening awareness of her residency not next door, but right here in my heart! What kind of winning is that one? Embodied awareness of Grace and Guru — a “twofer” as they say.

In my yoga studio classroom are pictures of Swamiji, Baba and Nityananda. As I lead the Guided Awareness and students lie in Shavasana, I can feel the flow of Grace in the room. Similar pictures surround me as I sit in the little “reading nook” set up in my house. There I read yogic texts, take notes, and write my own contemplations. I sit there to read and contemplate the monthly readings from the yearlong courses that I have taken. These courses not only allow me to deepen my relationship with Swamiji but with the other yogis on the discussion phone calls and at the course year-end retreats.

Recently the [Daily Quote](#) from Swamiji (another way I stay connected each day) reminded me that without yoga, all we have is karma and aging — neither of which feel like the experience of winning the lottery! As Swamiji has said,

“A yogi is always growing, challenging herself or himself to the next level. Without that challenge, there is only karma and aging, neither of which is enjoyable. The Svaroop Science path makes your changes easy. While it’s an easy path, it still means you are going somewhere. You’re headed inward to the knowing of your own Self.”

Knowing your own Self — is that winning the lottery or what? It’s the gift of life and this universe, knowing and experiencing Self. My Guru, yoga buddies, other teachers and yoga students, so readily accessible, like my good neighbor, help me on this life path.

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— Niranjan Matanich

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The Gift of Teaching

By Sarah Hunter



Devi (Elizabeth) McKenty

Devi (Elizabeth) McKenty, our newest Teacher Trainer, first took Foundations 11 years ago. After teaching local classes for 9 years, she felt ready to become a Foundations Trainer, completing her training in 2010. Last year she applied to become a YTT Teacher Trainer and began her interning. Devi has now qualified as an authorized Teacher Trainer for Foundations Review and *Embodiment*® Review and is also interning in almost every YTT training level, so you will likely see her at the Desmond Hotel when you attend your next course!

Devi first met Swamiji in a weekend immersion at the Kripalu Center. Devi recalls Swamiji repeating the phrase “being aware of your whole body all at the same time” in numerous Shavasanas over the course of the weekend. Swamiji also repeated the word

“more” as in, “Body, mind and more” and “You are more than you think you are.” More, more, more! Devi says, “I wanted to know what was ‘the more’. I wanted to be aware of the more, all at the same time!” Devi’s quest to know “the more” and her desire for deeper understandings directed her to continue her yoga journey through many milestones on her way to becoming a Teacher Trainer.

She laughs about the number of times she enrolled as a student in courses she had already passed: Foundations four times, *Embodiment*® yoga therapy training at least twice, a few Foundations Review courses as well as YTT Levels 1 and 2 twice each. With each training her perception of herself and of yoga shifted more. These experiences have served her personal growth as well as her capacity to work with students’ bodies and minds more effectively. Devi compares her process to unwrapping a gift each time she took a training. “The gift is Grace,” she says. “Grace is present in every aspect of YTT trainings and programs. Grace leads the way, through the body and through the mind, to the knowing of the more.”

Even though Devi dove right into Foundations and then YTT after her first encounter with Swamiji, many aspects of Devi’s process were difficult. Devi had injured her back while working as a nurse, and she was in immense pain. The six-hour drive from her home in Connecticut to Rehoboth Beach DE required an overnight stop. “Now,” Devi says, “driving to trainings is easy. But back then it was a nightmare.” From this experience, she knows that it can be difficult for students to make their own journeys to YTT.

YTT Level 2 was particularly a challenge. Every backbend reached excruciatingly into her back injury. Devi says, “The pain was both emotional and physical. Every time I received

a sacrum press, it was like a knife plunged into my emotional heart.” She was unable to even stand up during class and had to crawl back to her Shavasana stack. “I attributed my difficulties to the injury, the travel and the monetary costs involved. Now, I know I was muddling through the contractions in my mind that made me believe life is hard and that I couldn’t do it. Miraculously, I persevered. That’s what Grace is: the miracle that allows you to persevere and want more.”

She continues, “I have heard Swamiji say that, in manifesting this world, the momentum of the Shakti is toward contraction. Through

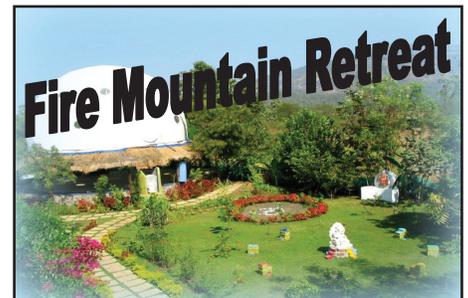
Devi laughs about the number of times she enrolled as a student in courses she had already passed: Foundations four times, Embodiment® yoga therapy training at least twice, a few Foundations Review courses as well as YTT Levels 1 and 2 twice each.

yogic practices, you can harness that power, and boomerang it back up the spectrum, through the 36 tattvas, to Pure Consciousness... Even while beginning the journey back to Consciousness, I felt like I was swimming upstream in a battle against the current. My mind kept asking ‘are we there yet?’ every step

of the way. There is no question this path requires personal effort. And there is no doubt, in my mind, that Grace supported each step I took then and continue to take now.”

“There is no question this path requires personal effort. And there is no doubt, in my mind, that Grace [has] supported each step I [have taken] and continue to take now.”

With this as her experience, Devi welcomes each student with the assurance that the investment you make in yourself is worth it. She says, “Changes at this level require effort, yet Grace is taking care of you every step of the way.”



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Leaps & Bounds: Svaroopa® Yoga in Australia

By Rama (Ruth) Brooke

In the late '90s and early '00s, Svaroopa® yoga leaped from the U.S. over the ocean to Australia. Now Svaroopa® yoga is bounding across the Outback and beyond. On March 16th, ten more Svaroopa® teachers



completed YTT Level 2 in Brisbane, Australia. While most hailed from the Brisbane area, a few were from far and wide, including: Ocean Grove in Victoria, Wagga Wagga in New South Wales and Perth in Western Australia. These teachers have already begun to grow Svaroopa® communities in their local regions.

Leading Svaroopa® Yoga Teacher and Teacher Trainer Janaki (Janet) Murray estimates this year's YTT courses will double the number of Svaroopa® yoga teachers in Australia. There are currently 21 active teachers in the country, 10 of whom are CSYTs. Some of these teachers have done their training locally, while others have come to the U.S. to complete their certifications.

Swami Nirmalananda will be teaching in Australia again this fall, giving Shaktipat at a weekend retreat and leading a series of satsangs in Melbourne and in Brisbane. Janaki anticipates the tour will "support our existing Svaroopa® community here. It will stimulate interest in Svaroopa® yoga, and will help to deepen our current Svaroopis' practices and experiences."



YTT Level 2 — Brisbane, Australia

By Rama (Ruth) Brooke

Jules Watson, from Brisbane, Queensland, agrees that YTT Level 2 is a huge leap from YTT Level 1. Level 1 provided her with a sound understanding of the basic poses, plus she felt there was "much more being layered in than just the poses." Her whole YTT group was at a new level. She felt areas of her body that she had never felt before, and experienced her "tailbone lengthen in the poses — it was amazing!"

In moving from floor poses to Level 2's standing poses, she commented that she has "a new sense of being grounded, a feeling of strength in body and mind... and I feel more able to bring my yogic state into my daily life."

Jules says, "Level 2 has been like a turbo charge to my own yoga practice and has developed my confidence to teach. I feel much stronger in my daily life, and the feeling of peace and contentment I experienced during the course continues each day, reminding me of the inner

tradition, and was truly surprised by Svaroopa® yoga. She found it to be "subtle and deep... a powerful combination," and she was hooked. When she returned home after Foundations, she decided to drop the other yoga style and to focus solely on Svaroopa® yoga.

"I love the Svaroopa® yoga approach to standing asanas. I could feel the openings that had been created on the floor still being carried through to the standing poses."

— Mimi Saunders

Prior to Level 2, Mimi had been experiencing knee problems. She had seen a physical therapist, who gave her a series of exercises. During the course, Mimi decided to "follow the Svaroopa® way." When Vidyadevi gave her talk on feet and legs, she used Mimi's body to demonstrate the correlation between her knee problem and her tailbone tension. Mimi says, "Vidyadevi performed a rotation on my thigh to change the alignment of my knee, which, of course, I felt right through to my tailbone. Amazing! Also, with some pain relief, came an experience of bliss!"

When asked about learning the standing poses, Mimi states, "I love the Svaroopa® approach to standing asanas. I could feel the openings that had been created on the floor still being carried through to the standing poses. My body felt ready. And of course it felt quite energizing to be up off the floor. I would also like to add that these standing poses did not put any stress on my knee, whereas in my previous style of yoga that was always a challenge."

In summary, Mimi says she didn't expect to have Kundalini moving through her as much as she was, and she didn't expect to have such a heart opening experience. "Vidyadevi and Karobi taught with such grace, understanding and patience. What an inspiration they are to me. They truly embody their yoga."

"[I have] a new sense of being grounded, a feeling of strength (in body and mind). I feel more able to bring my yogic state into my daily life."

— Jules Watson

journey to the Self. Before this course I always felt like I needed to get away from others to experience my Self, and I mainly only experienced the bliss when I was doing poses, meditating or talking about yoga. Now I feel a new kind of acceptance of people around me, and I can observe without getting caught up in the drama..."

Mimi Saunders is from Perth in Western Australia (a five-hour plane ride from Brisbane, where Level 2 was held). She states, "Level 2 felt like a giant but natural step from Level 1." Her first experience of Svaroopa® yoga was when she took Foundations in October 2012, after seeing an advertisement for it in Australian Yoga Life magazine. She felt intuitively that it might be that for which she had been searching. She had come from another yoga

Ayurvedic Meals at the Ashram: An Interview with Swami Nirmalananda

By Sarvataa Christie

Sarvataa: Why Ayurvedic meals at the Ashram?

Swamiji: Ayurveda, the ancient medical system developed by sages of India, is a sister science of yoga. Food is considered as medicine. When you integrate Ayurvedic principles into your other practices, it supports your inner changes, which include the physical changes that people seek from yoga as well as deeper inner experiences. Serving Ayurvedic meals at the Ashram has been important to provide a comprehensive structure that supports yogis in the changes they want to make. Cooking with Ayurvedic principles in mind at the Ashram and at our retreat center is not yoga — but it's very yogic.

Sarvataa: We all love the Ashram food. How do the chefs determine what to prepare?

Swamiji: Focusing on seasonal foods, our chefs use veggies from our Ashram garden and local CSA (community supported agriculture) from spring through fall. As needed, they buy foods (organic, whenever possible), and I've trained our chefs to include a good quantity of vegetarian protein in each meal.

Sarvataa: What are the Ayurvedic guidelines followed?

Swamiji: Cooking with the seasonally recommended foods is the simplest guideline. The second one is to bring in all six tastes in every meal: sweet, salty, sour, pungent (i.e., spicy), astringent and bitter. This food chart shows each taste category and its effect, and tells you how to get each taste into your meals. For example, simply add a side dish or season a dish to bring in the taste you need. Our chefs work with this chart to make sure no taste is missing.

Sarvataa: Can you explain the importance of the six tastes?

Swamiji: A trained Ayurvedic practitioner can fill on book on this subject; I can't. However, the six tastes not only balance nutrients but also give you a feeling of satisfaction. If you eat a meal with fewer tastes, you eat and eat and eat and never feel full. With all six tastes you feel more fed, with a much more reasonable quantity of food.

We also look at each person's unique needs for the type of foods that will balance them from an Ayurvedic viewpoint. That is, we pay

attention to their dosha (constitution) — pitta, kapha, vata.

When the ancient sages explained how to be healthy and live in relationship with the earth, they focused on food selection, because digestion is the key to health and your relationship to your food extends to your relationship to the earth. The ancients didn't have microscopes and couldn't take blood samples. They explored foods through changes in their body chemistry while eating, tracking them through taste.

You can experiment with this yourself. For example, most absent from the American diet is the bitter taste. Vegetables such as kale, celery and broccoli provide the bitter taste. When you don't get the bitter taste in meals, you crave chocolate (bitter with sugar added) and coffee. When you put bitter into your meal, even just a little bit, you lose your craving for chocolate or coffee. If you are not getting enough of the bitter taste, notice what happens when you first eat a food with it. The first day you wrinkle your nose; by the third day it tastes better; and by fourth or fifth day it's really good! Your body's first reaction told you that you were out of balance.

Sarvataa: When I eat at the Ashram, I always feel full. Fuller than full, for days after returning home.

After several Ashram meals, I experience grounding, better energy, improved rest, better digestion and more clarity. I really notice the difference compared to eating my usual way at home. It's astounding! So now I'm developing Ayurvedic practices in my own cooking, which is supporting my deeper yogic practices as well as

TASTE	FOOD SOURCE	BASIS OF TASTE	EFFECT ON MIND/BODY
SWEET	Grains, pasta, rice, bread, starchy vegetables, dairy, meat, chicken, fish, sugar, honey, molasses	Carbohydrates, protein, fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soothing effect on the body. • Brings about satisfaction and also builds body mass. • Balances Vata and Pitta doshas • Excessive intake can aggravate Kapha dosha
SOUR	Citrus fruits, berries, tomatoes, pickled foods, salad dressing	Organic acids: ascorbic acid, citric acid, acetic acid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulates the appetite and aids digestion (but can be irritating to those suffering from heartburn) • Balances Vata • Excessive intake aggravates Pitta and Kapha
SALTY	Table salt, soy sauce, salted meats, fish	Mineral salts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhances the appetite and makes other tastes more delicious • Balances Vata • Too much salt increases Kapha and Pitta elements
PUNGENT	Peppers, chilies, onions, garlic, cayenne, black pepper, cloves, ginger, mustard, salsa	Essential oils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes sweating and clears the sinus passages • Balances Kapha dosha • Excessive intake irritates Vata and Pitta doshas
BITTER	Green leafy vegetables, green and yellow vegetables, kale, celery, broccoli, sprouts, beets	Alkaloids or glycosides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detoxifying to the system • Balances Kapha and Pitta • Excess intake increases Vata and may cause some gas or indigestion

supporting health for my body and mind. Yay! Why is this type of menu so effective?

Swamiji: This is the magic of Ayurveda, especially the way it is customized to individual needs. At the Ashram, we plan meals for individual needs as well as to meet the needs of yogis with food sensitivities. Our chefs have cultivated expertise in nondairy and gluten-free dishes. For example, when making lasagna, which traditionally has gluten and dairy, the chefs also prepare a nondairy and non-gluten lasagna for those who must avoid dairy and

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Ayurvedic Meals at the Ashram: An Interview with Swami Nirmalananda

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gluten. Often our chefs prepare two separate main dishes for a meal.

Sarvataa: How can off-site Svaroopis follow these guidelines for tasty, satisfying home meals?

Swamiji: Ashram food is tasty because we have professional chefs! Over the past several years, however, we have published 30 to 40 of their recipes, all Ayurvedically balanced and easy to prepare. There is a recipe in every [Tadaa! ezine](#), with all the prior issues online, and we published recipes monthly for three years in the SVA Community E-Letter, which was the precursor to "Tadaa!". You can also buy a book or go online to find straightforward guidelines to begin converting to an Ayurvedic eating style. This information is widely available.

Sarvataa: Besides incorporating the six tastes and having professional chefs, what else contributes to the delicious Ashram meals?

Swamiji: Planning menus in advance! We plan and prepare menus one to two weeks in advance. Whatever menus are being proposed, I review all of them, so I ultimately am the one who determines and approves menus or who asks for changes, so I am overseeing the foods that are being prepared for our Ashram residents and guests. Which is one of the ways I get to feed you, just like my Baba taught me.

Transformation through Immersion

By Marlene Gast



Vicharinee (Su) Lee Chafin

"My name means One Who Needs Vichara," jokes Vicharinee (Su) Lee Chafin. She recently completed Meditation Teacher Training, the first MTT program in our new retreat setting at the Desmond. This course was a change of direction for Vicharinee even though *Svaroopaa*® yoga and meditation practices have been a significant part of her life for 12 years. In addition to personal practice, Vicharinee has used her yoga training in her professional practice as a child, adolescent and family therapist, but until now she was never interested in solely teaching yoga as a career.

Vicharinee says that her involvement in the *Svaroopaa*® Sciences "had always been about me and my life." Pain first led her to "wander into *Svaroopaa*® yoga classes taught by Ishvari (Terry) Gardner and Rukmini Abbuzzi in Rehoboth Beach," leading her to going "along for

the ride when they went deeper." Vicharinee says, "I became a bliss junkie, but I also wanted a spiritual lifestyle. That's what led me to take Bliss classes. When Swamiji traveled to Rehoboth to teach immersion weekends and offer Pain Clinics, I was there! When she moved from California to the East Coast, I started to drool. Now I get to the Ashram as often as I can."

Vicharinee is also delighted to say, "Rukmini got me pregnant." Yoga Therapy with Rukmini Abbuzzi resolved Vicharinee's fertility problems, and she now has a three-year-old daughter. Vicharinee says, "I experienced a lot of physical opening. The Grace was always prominent for me, even before I knew what to call it."

All of this led her to MTT. When she enrolled, says Vicharinee, "The motivation was not so much about integrating teaching meditation into a career. MTT was more of the next step of going deeper." But by the end of MTT, Vicharinee found her orientation to *Svaroopaa*® Sciences reversed. She says, "The MTT opening made me want to share what I've learned." This applies to *Embodiment*® Yoga Therapy (which training she took as a prerequisite for MTT). Vicharinee now also loves sharing this profound yoga therapy with others.

"Being immersed with Swami for 12 days was just like being at the Ashram." Vicharinee continues, "My meditations were sweeter and easier, and the clarity from them has created a deep change; it is now established in me unlike anything in the past."

Initially, Vicharinee did have concerns about fitting the MTT immersion into her life. She worried about her youngest child missing Mommy. She says, however, "Nothing was going to keep me from doing MTT, and now I understand the reason for the immersion and its benefit. A visit from a three-year-old would have interrupted the flow!"

The immersion gave Vicharinee a sense of being "fully supported as she encountered deep seated fears" and ultimately experienced "deep emotional release." Vicharinee especially values the luxury of being in the continuous company of other yogis as well as Swamiji. "I could deeply let go," says Vicharinee, "being responsible only to get to class. I could stay in the fire, know I was in the fire, and come out on the other end without feeling burned. Now there is a deeper knowing, a deeper 'seated-ness' in my Self. It is more integrated, and I lose it less easily. If I do lose it, it's easier to return to it. Even at the grocery store, I can look at things from the inside out. My practice is stronger, and I can set boundaries for it that I haven't set before. It's less easy to slip back into the same old schedule, when I couldn't find time for practice. It is amazing how much time you can find for practice when you prioritize it."

"Yes," she concludes, "I appreciated the MTT immersion!"

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— Belle Mann

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From Pain & Frustration to Relief & Empowerment

By Rob Gold

In the 1980's a car accident left Caroline with severe chronic low back pain. Two years later she developed "body-wide, head-to-toe connective tissue misery" — fibromyalgia. Caroline spent years of time, money and energy going from one doctor to another without getting any answers or real relief. Six years ago, while still living in Connecticut, Caroline discovered *Svaroopaa*® yoga classes at Niantic Yoga Center, where she also took private sessions with Kathy Monte. Caroline quickly found *Svaroopaa*® yoga to be her lifeline for managing the chronic pain that had kept her from being fully functional in caring for her husband and two school-age children, chronic pain that she had endured for more than 30 years. In just a few classes she had clarity that *Svaroopaa*® yoga "was something that was really going to help." So she continued one class weekly and invested in enough blankets to practice at home at least once daily, and often more frequently when the pain flared during the day.

A few years later, when her husband's job required them to move to Massachusetts, one of the first things Caroline did was look to see if there was *Svaroopaa*® yoga in her new town. As it turned out Becky Bronson was about 20 minutes away from their new home, and Caroline began going to weekly classes at [Tranquility Yoga](#) in Westford MA.

In October 2013, Caroline's pain increased dramatically and some new symptoms appeared, making it physically impossible for her to leave her home. Becky suggested doing Overlap Healing through *Embodiment*® Yoga Therapy, and offered to travel to Caroline's house to give her the sessions. Caroline says, "I saw Becky's offer as a huge investment on her part — a very generous gesture beyond any I had ever received from anyone."

Becky saw the experience as being a "real journey" for them both, with a commitment from each of them to the other. In the first week, Caroline's confidence in the approach grew because the relief from physical pain increased incrementally each day and her anxiety decreased, because she knew Becky would be back the next day. Over subsequent weeks, the openings held longer; Caroline's body began to learn that it was possible to do something other than tighten in response to pain. Becky also customized Caroline's home practice to support the changes she was getting from sessions and address the specific pains from the accident years before, from fibromyalgia, and from lifelong hyperflexibility. Caroline's diligence with her home practice keeps the pain in check, even when a full week goes by between visits from Becky.

"Becky is just phenomenal in the ways that she's helped me," says Caroline. Since sitting down remains a painful position for Caroline's body, recently Becky drove Caroline to a specialty back-care store and found a kneeling chair that worked well for her — it's very similar to the one Becky herself uses. Taking your client shopping isn't exactly among the protocols on the yellow sheets, but it is indicative of the months-long, deep level commitment that therapists take on with an Overlap Healing client, day or night, good day or bad day. Maybe it's "support equals release" in a different form and without any plaid blankets.

As transformation unfolds, the journey for both practitioner and client is rewarding as well as demanding. Relationships deepen and healing blossoms. Looking back to 1980, Caroline says "so much money, time and emotion was spent trying to improve the quality of my life," noting that nothing in those efforts indicated that she could take charge of it or do anything for herself. "By contrast," Caroline says, "*Svaroopaa*® yoga has had a huge impact on the quality of my life. I feel so empowered because I now know many ways to help myself."

Swami Shaktipat Anniversary



**Saturday May 31 Satsang
7:30 – 9:00 pm at DYMC**

Come help Swami Nirmalananda celebrate at our free program. She says, "This is my true birthday, the day I was birthed into consciousness, the day I received shaktipat from my Guru. "

No gifts please, but your donations to help her mission are appreciated.

Your Body Is a Temple

By Janaki (Janet) Murray



Janaki (Janet) Murray

Swamiji's recent contemplation article began with the words, "Your body is a temple." We can understand it on an intellectual level, but do we understand it as our experience? A temple is a place we treat with reverence and respect, and yet most of us do not readily respect and revere our bodies. In fact, we tend not to treat our bodies well at all, paying them attention only when they are causing us difficulty or pain, or when we view them as "wrong" in size, shape or appearance. Even then the attention we pay them may not be

respectful or kind. Eating disorders, cosmetic surgery, punishing diets or fitness regimes are common, yet they are extreme ways of abusing a body.

This morning I had a new yoga therapy client, referred to me by her teacher after taking just three classes. She is in her sixties, has pain and has recently come to the decision to stop going to the gym. At the end of the session I asked her the usual question, "What are you aware of?" She answered, "My body feels at peace with me." When asked "In what way?" she answered, "It doesn't feel like it has been assaulted like it does when I leave the gym." She recognized that she has been consciously "assaulting" her body for years.

What a gift is *Svaroopā*® yoga, where you really do get to treat your body like a temple, with reverence and respect, and your teacher does too. How can this not rub off? Every time you take or teach a class, you are planting seeds, seeds of understanding that deepen your knowing that your body really is a temple. But there is so much more.

Citi samkocatma cetano'pi samkucita visvamayah
— Pratyabhijnahridayam 4

Consciousness (Chiti), by assuming contraction, becomes both the universe and the individuals, who have the universe as their bodies in a contracted form,

योगिक कला by Sarvataa Christie



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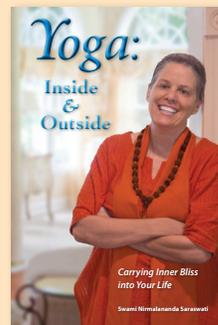
I used to think I was in the universe. While I understood the words of this sutra, my mind could not grasp it. I could not understand it because it was not my experience. It was like trying to know what mango tastes like when I had never eaten a mango.

Svaroopā® yoga first taught me how to treat my body with more respect, kindness and, yes, even reverence. But going "into my body" in the way that *Svaroopā*® yoga allows, I discovered a whole lot more. I discovered the truth: the universe is in me. I discovered that we are unique, individualized forms of all that exists; we are all little packages of infinity. We are all made of the same stuff and each individual contains the whole of creation. I am the universe in a contracted form.

Consciousness has gone through many levels of contraction to become you, an individual. As you travel the spiritual path, an inward exploration, you experience an inward expansion into a state of knowing that you really are the universe. If you look inward deeply enough, often enough and consistently enough, you ultimately find that you are the center of the universe.

One of my favorite childhood birthday party games is called "Pass the Parcel." A package is passed around a circle of eager children, and when the music stops the child holding it gets to unpeel one wrapper to reveal a small prize. Then the music starts again and so it goes on until the center of the parcel is reached and one child gets the big prize in the middle. I always wanted to be that kid. Do you want to be the kid who gets the big prize in the middle? Keep unpeeling the wrappers. There is a prize under every one, and the big prize is yet to come!

We experience everything with our mind and our body, but Consciousness (Chiti) is experiencing it too, at the same time and as us. This is the divine "play" of Chiti. This is why your body is more than a temple. It is a Divine temple. As Swamiji says in the contemplation, "Your body is a Divine temple. It is Consciousness-Itself that houses the Divinity (you) that is Consciousness-Itself."



Yoga: Inside & Out

The newest collection of Swami Nirmalananda's monthly teachings shows you how to carry your yoga into your life. The basis is bliss, the inner bliss you experience when you do yoga. Once you have experienced your own innermost Self, life looks and feels different to you.

Each article weaves the inside and outside together, with profound teachings and practical pointers, with Sanskrit sutras, as well as down-to-earth methodologies for making your life a yogic life. Swamiji's first collection, *Yoga in Every Moment*, offers 10 years of articles, which cover the breadth of yoga's philosophy.

This collection covers eight years with more in-depth teachings that are still accessible to the brand new reader. You can read it from front to back, or wander around in any order that suits you — Swamiji's unassuming manner and unfailing good humor will open you to a new way of living your yoga.

[Click here](#) to purchase for yourself or a friend.

Because You Care

By Karuna (Carolyn) Beaver

I ask myself, “Why do I donate to Svaroopa® Vidya Ashram?” The answer is simple: I give because I care. I care about the organization that has given me so much. It’s MY yoga school. These are MY teachers. It’s MY ashram. Swami Nirmalananda is MY Guru. While it might seem like my donation is about an organization or a person, it isn’t. It’s about me.

Swamiji says that you support the organization “because you have deep feelings about it. This makes it your organization.” She describes that she feels this way when she chooses where to donate. She gives annually to an elephant sanctuary in Tennessee. “I kind of think of them as my elephants. They send me lovely photos of what my elephants are doing in the rolling hills of Tennessee. They have a deep meaning to me.” She continues, “When you make a donation, you’re stepping into an expanded relationship. You don’t give money to every organization, only to those you really care about.”

Of course, Swamiji’s largest donation is to us. She is a volunteer, a sevite, taking no salary and relying on our donations to support the teachings she offers us. These are the last few days of our annual spring fundraising campaign, so it is time to take a look at what yoga means in your life and how you can support the organization that brings it to you.

Any amount you feel you can donate is deeply appreciated. When Swami Nirmalananda talks about the organization’s budget, she doesn’t talk about the Ashram’s money. “It’s the yogis’ money. We’re very careful with how we spend the yogis’ money. I feel that very deeply. I am responsible for what happens with the funds that people send. Any amount sent is used carefully and wisely. And when you feel you can make a monthly donation, it provides ongoing support.”

Although many of our programs are fee-based, many are offered at no cost. But those “free” programs, including all the wonderful content on the website, are not free for the Ashram to provide. SVA also makes trainings available to yogis who need financial assistance. While the spiritual head of our organization donates all her time, she has staff who assist her, and they must be compensated. A generous 33 percent of Ashram services is supported by donations.

Our donations make a difference in the Ashram, yet mainly they make a difference in us. Give because you care.

MAY 2014		
1	Discovering Your Own Self begins	Phone Course
2 – 9	EYTS Teaching at Yoga Conferences	The Desmond Hotel
16 – 25	YTT Level 4	The Desmond Hotel
30 – June 1	Shaktipat Retreat (cancelled)	The Desmond Hotel
JUNE 2014		
2 – 9	ATT 411: Upper Spinal Release	The Desmond Hotel
11 – 13	EYTS Foundations Review	The Desmond Hotel
13 – 22	YTT – Level 1	The Desmond Hotel
20 – 22	Shaktipat Retreat	Centerville MA
25 – Jul 2	ATT 531: Abdominals	The Desmond Hotel
JULY 2014		
5 – 9	EYTS Enliven & Advance: Level 2	The Desmond Hotel
11 – 13	I Am Shiva Retreat	The Desmond Hotel
11 – 13	Svaroopa® Yoga & Meditation	Idaho
14	Purposeful Living begins	Phone Course
16 – 20	Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga	The Desmond Hotel
AUGUST 2014		
8 – 10	Experiential Anatomy	The Desmond Hotel
10 – 15	Embodiment® Yoga Therapy Training	The Desmond Hotel
15 – 17	Shaktipat Retreat	The Desmond Hotel
17 – 21	Svaroopa® Yoga & Meditation Retreat	The Desmond Hotel
SEPTEMBER 2014		
3 – 5	EYTS Foundations Review	The Desmond Hotel
5 – 14	YTT Level 1	The Desmond Hotel
15	Sutras: From Here to THAT	Phone Course
17 – 21	Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga	The Desmond Hotel
20 – 27	Meditation Group Leader Training Retreat	The Desmond Hotel
28 – Oct 5	ATT 262: Yoga Therapy — Treating Pain	The Desmond Hotel
OCTOBER 2014		
10 – 19	Swamiji on tour Australia	
10 – 19	YTT Level 3	The Desmond Hotel
24 – 26	Guru & Self Weekend Retreat	The Desmond Hotel
NOVEMBER 2014		
2 – 9	ATT 402: Deeper Practice	The Desmond Hotel
14 – 16	Weekend Workshop	Warren MA
15 – 16	Slow Down!	Dekalb IL
DECEMBER 2014		
5 – 14	YTT – Level 2	The Desmond Hotel

Corn Casserole

- 1 16 oz. package frozen corn, drained.
- 1 stick butter or ghee, melted
- 1 can creamed corn
- 8 oz. sour cream (vegan)
- 1 8 oz. package corn muffin mix - Gluten Free

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl mix together both kinds of corn, sour cream, muffin mix and butter or ghee. Stir together until combined. Pour into a 8" x 8" baking dish. Bake at 350° for 50 minutes or until golden brown.

Tips: try adding scallions or jalapeño's or dried cranberries, etc.



By Jennifer Saville, Ashram Chef

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

Upcoming Programs

May 2014		
15	Sri Guru Gita 6:30 – 7:45 am	Swamiji at DYMC
15	The Magic of Ujjayi 7:00 – 8:30 pm (Thursdays)	Swamiji, Phone Course
18	Swami Sunday 8:30 – 12:15 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
16 – 25	YTT Yoga Teacher Training Level 4 (FULL!)	Vidyadevi, Karobi & Swamiji at The Desmond
20	Satsang 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
21	Q&A Phone Satsang 12:00 – 1:30pm	Swamiji
21 – June 4	Meditation 101 (1 of 3 classes) 7:00 – 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
25	Swami Sunday 8:30 – 12:15 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
29	I Am Shiva article #7	Swamiji
30 – June 1	Shaktipat Retreat (cancelled)	Swamiji & Vidyadevi at The Desmond
June 2014		
2 – 9	ATT 411: Upper Spinal Release	Swamiji, Vidyadevi & Karobi at The Desmond
5	Sri Guru Gita 6:30 – 7:45 am	Swamiji at DYMC
5	SATYA Marketing Call # 5 10:30 am – Noon	Sharada FREE Phone Course
8	Swami Sunday 8:30 – 12:15 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
10	Satsang 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
11 – 13	EYTS Foundations Review	Devi McKenty at The Desmond
13 – 22	YTT Level 1 Yoga Teacher Training	Swamiji, Vidyadevi & Karobi at The Desmond
14	I Am Shiva audio #7	Swamiji
15	Swami Sunday 8:30 – 12:15 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
17	Satsang 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
20 – 22	Shaktipat Retreat	Swamiji in Centerville MA
25 – July 2	ATT 531: Abdominals Advanced Teacher Training	Swamiji, Vidyadevi & Karobi at The Desmond
26	Sri Guru Gita 6:30 – 7:45 am	Swamiji at DYMC
29	Swami Sunday 8:30 – 12:15 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
July 2014		
1	Satsang 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
2	Q&A Phone Satsang 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm	Swamiji
5 – 9	EYTS Enliven and Advance: Level 2	Swamiji, Vidyadevi & Karobi at The Desmond
8	Satsang 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
11 – 13	Svaroopas® Yoga & Meditation Retreat Weekend	Vidyadevi in Boise ID
12	Baba's Shaktipat Anniversary Satsang 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
14 – Sept. 2	Purposeful Living Phone # 1	Karobi Phone Course
16 – 20	Foundations of Svaroopas® Yoga	Vidyadevi, Karobi & Margo at The Desmond
22	I Am Shiva article #8	Swamiji

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