



**Svaroopaa**<sup>®</sup> YOGA  MEDITATION

# kaadaa!

**Svaroopaa<sup>®</sup> Yoga: Experience Your Divine Self**

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## **Editorial**

### **The Svaroopaa<sup>®</sup> Yoga Story**

**By Swami Nirmalananda**

So many life lessons play out in the garden: a plant that is not growing isn't going to last. Even 75-year-old bonsai trees are still growing! If it doesn't leaf out in the spring, it's dying. Nothing remains static. The theme of the universe is change. Yoga supports your growth and change in particular ways, similar to how a bonsai gardener tends the tree, pruning limbs, splitting roots, shaping a perfect reflection of nature in an individualized size. Yoga's template for your growth is to uncover your full potentiality, all the way through to your inherent Divinity, shining through your individuality without being diminished or distorted.

The power of a lightning bolt has shaped itself into your spine and physical body, the physicists affirm. In a single minute, a hurricane generates energy 200 times greater than the world's electrical-generating power; that same energy lies intact within you. The power of your mind makes you capable of accomplishing anything, once you steer yourself out of the internal cul-de-sacs. The power of your heart exceeds all the mother-love in the world. Yet you are too often immobilized by confusion, frustration, anxiety and selfishness. All that energy spins into a web of your own weaving, with you caught in it and unhappy about it.

Some people bust out of their self-imposed prison by expanding their worldly options. You can visit a new country, start a new project or study a new subject area, but

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## Editorial *continued from page 1*



Swamiji

yoga says you're still spinning your wheels in the mud. The more worldly things you pursue, the more muddy you get, with the karmic effects weighing you down lifetime after lifetime. You've done this before.

What is the difference between a rock, a rose and a human being? I.K. Taimni answers, in his commentary on the *Yoga Sutras*, that a rose is more mysterious than a rock, but a

human being offers levels of mystery that philosophers and poets have been writing about for thousands of years. It is inner growth that yoga offers, delving into the mystery of the human being by exploring the multiple dimensions hidden within you. It's a very personal endeavor.

How wonderful that you can do yoga at any of the levels that interest you, from poses and breathing practices, through a qualitative upgrade in your lifestyle (thanks to the yamas and niyamas), all the way through meditation and offering your service to uplift humanity. No matter where you step into the river, you'll get wet. You may think you're doing poses for your body, but what you are getting is so much more.

This is a river of Grace. This is the Svaroopaa® yoga story, how one footstep into the river turns into a tsunami of healing, of inner opening, of grace-full blessings, of Self-discovery. I created Tadaa! to share a few of these stories, but they are happening every day, in every Svaroopaa® yoga class. They are happening to you. My heart melts in gratitude to my Guru for what you receive.

# Tadaa!

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# Again and Again and Again... Turns into Always

By Yogeshwari (Melissa) Fountain



Yogeshwari Fountain

For years, you've heard Swamiji say: "Do more yoga — now, what was the question?" *Do More Yoga* is the closing line of every contemplation article as well. *Do More Yoga* not only asks you to dedicate yourself to daily asana and meditation, but it holds the promise of your future: if you commit to these miraculous practices, you will become a "jivanmukta," a liberated being while alive! You will become established in the permanent knowing of yourself as the One Self, changeless, eternal, and all pervading. You will see that

everything you look upon is only the Self. You are then established in svaroopavidya, the knowing of your own Divinity.

On one level, perhaps like you, I thought I understood *Do More Yoga*. When I first found *Svaroopaa*® yoga, I simply wanted to feel better, to be more peaceful and more open to life. I'd have been happy with just that; that's how small my container was! Yet it wasn't long before I got a taste of the Self, during one of those long Shavasanas in Yoga Teacher Training (YTT). Now I really poured myself into the quest! I was thinking if I kept opening my tailbone and decompressing my spine, one day...poof, I'd be "Realized."

Well, the process has been the ride of a lifetime, because there was a hurdle I had not anticipated: my mind! If you're not working with your mind, no matter how many hours of yoga you do, life will still knock you for a loop, and you'll still think the problem is other people. Despite all the asana I was doing, I remained unsettled inside because the one

practice I waffled on was meditation. Truly, the only antidote to the sword of the mind, the edge that cuts you down and fragments your being, is to meditate. And the *Svaroopaa*® Vidya way to meditate is to pour your heart and mind into mantra, stepping fully into the flow of Grace that opens up for you.

Leaning into the Grace of meditation and mantra helps you shift your focus from perfecting your body (a delusion at best), to getting to know your body and mind, from the depth of their source: the Self. Instead of pushing yourself, you learn to ease into the practices that most support you and reveal your innermost Beingness.

This doesn't mean doing all the practices, all the time. *Doing More Yoga* is a process of becoming more aware on multiple levels. This awareness is tantric: a continual interweaving of the Divine with the everydayness of life, until you see there is no difference between the two. This means that a trip to the supermarket becomes as sacred as your meditation practice. An argument with your loved one becomes an opportunity to find the hidden Grace.

You begin to experience the light of the Self that is shining through your eyes as the same light shining in the eyes of everyone; in this way, the whole world becomes your temple. And still, Swamiji says the goal is "not even about becoming established in the steady state of all knowing, ever-blissful Beingness." What does she mean by this? It is not about adding more hours of yoga practice to your life, but living your life fully, and seeing your life as your yoga practice. When you recognize the Divine in the mundane and the mundane as the Divine, where can you go that Shiva is not?

You already experience this from time to time, because you are doing *Svaroopaa*® yoga, but then you forget you are Shiva. You aren't yet a "jivanmukta" because you think "this" (i.e. bliss) is Shiva, but "that" (whatever you're objecting to) is not. You're back to the cutting edge of the sword of your mind. So you must dive into the practices again. You do more yoga. You see that whatever you are doing is your yoga. To explain this, Swamiji gives us the gift of her sutra:

"Again, again and again turns into always."

Whatever you keep applying yourself to will become your permanent state. To help you find your way, to make it easier, Do More (Mantra) Yoga! Repeat mantra. What you repeat to yourself has a profound effect on you. Therefore, repeated with love and devotion, your mantra — that sacred set of syllables — holds the key to understanding yourself as the Self. It becomes the thread of the tantric weave. The mantra is the vibration of the Self, whether it is out-loud japa or an internal background hum, "Om Namah Shivaya" again and again. Whatever you're doing, wherever you are: there is your mantra, permeating your conscious state. It beckons from within you, until "again, again and again turns into always."



## Namaste Poster

This beautiful poster features hands of *Svaroopaa*® yogis in Anjali Mudra.

Text at the bottom reads:

"Touching my heart, I honor the Divine in yours, from the infinity of my own Divinity — the One in All."

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



# Profile: Maitreyi Wilsman, Bliss Weekend Teacher

By Matrika (Marlene) Gast



Maitreyi (Margie) Wilsman

Maitreyi (Margie) Wilsman CSYT, E-RYT, is a Bliss Yoga teacher, along with her certifications to teach Special Needs and Gentle Yoga, Prenatal Yoga, Svaroopa® Vidya Meditation and as a Meditation Group Leader. With her Living Yoga Business Certification, Maitreyi also owns a yoga studio near Madison WI. Maitreyi attained the advanced certification of Bliss Weekend Teacher as a prerequisite for the Svaroopa® Yoga Medical Therapist, which has been her long-term goal.

Yet her Bliss training means more to Maitreyi than a step toward that ultimate goal. She says, "Beginning and Advanced Bliss classes as well as Weekend Workshops are phenomenal for both teacher and students. The classes are not about the poses, but about the Bliss. Here is what I repeat again and again during the classes:

Bliss Yoga classes are not about the poses. Poses do not provide the bliss. Poses provide enough opening to provide bliss. Bliss provides the deeper openings. Bliss provides most of the opening, not the poses.

Bliss heals. We work on your parasympathetic nervous system — your bliss wiring — for opening you to deeper stages of knowing that you are the source of bliss and peace, the Self, so you can experience this knowing steadily and continuously.

"In the Weekend Workshops, participants have four major class sessions, so they again and again experience the bliss of their own Being. In the workshops I focus on the Goddess Saraswati, to whom I am a devout disciple. I honor her energies in the universe — the energy of speech, knowledge — knowing Truth, beauty, art and appreciation of the One good in all. In the workshops we chant to Saraswati, read about Her, contemplate Her qualities, offer arati (candle flame ceremonies) and bring flowers to Her murti (statue). I also help students develop their understanding of the various forms of bliss — from the beginning stages of peace and a quiet mind, to the deeper stages of knowing Self as the One Reality on a continuous and steady basis."

In 2002 Maitreyi was first introduced to Svaroopa® yoga by Anna Fowler, a physical therapist who practices in London, England, and counts the British Royal Family among her clients. Maitreyi met Anna when Anna's husband was doing medical research at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where Maitreyi was a professor. Anna suggested Maitreyi try the yoga as a remedy for her


severe hip pain and asthma, saying, "All of my clients should be doing Svaroopa® yoga!" Maitreyi remembers that she was "taking high doses of pain killers and anti-inflammatory medications." She says, "For five years I had avoided climbing stairs, stopped running and had given up biking to work and gardening. My life was quickly shrinking. After one Svaroopa® yoga class I was convinced that this yoga was the help I needed. By January 2003, I enrolled in Foundations with (then) Rama Berch and traveled to Master Yoga Foundation in La Jolla California. I was hooked! In 2008, when I became a Certified Svaroopa® Yoga Teacher (CYST) at the 685-hour level, I immediately applied for Advanced Teacher Training."

Maitreyi says her main challenge on this journey has been her "day job," which, until a month ago when she retired, has included "full-time teaching and doing research in teacher education at the University of Wisconsin — working with K-16 math teachers/faculty and K-12 science teachers throughout Wisconsin. So getting all those ATT certifications has taken a while. Not only was I hooked but I am totally committed to Svaroopa® yoga. Fortunately, there is another full-time teacher at my studio, Judy Dettwiler, CSYT. I could not do what I do without her support, teaching, and similar deep commitment to Svaroopa® yoga. Another blessing is that there is another Advanced Teacher, Jennifer Sebastian, who lives nearby and can teach my Deeper Yoga classes when I am away.

"Now teaching Beginning and Advanced Bliss classes is one of my favorites (right up there with Prenatal Yoga and Meditation). My newest goal is to offer Bliss Yoga Weekend

Workshops around the country and the world, as well as here at my Springdale Yoga and Meditation Center. In May I taught a Bliss Yoga weekend workshop in Lisle Illinois at Margo Gebraski's Yoga Rhythms studio. Margo said that the workshop was great at a number of levels. Participants experienced deeper levels of Consciousness than is possible for them in regular classes. She also appreciated my expertise in explaining things a new way, which allowed students to deepen their understanding of poses, principles and philosophy. Now her students who participated in the Bliss Weekend are taking more classes at Yoga Rhythms than before."

As she looks forward to offering Bliss Workshops around the world, Maitreyi says, "I'd like to go to Australia, to Denmark...and beyond...!"




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# Unforeseen Healing

By Matrika (Marlene) Gast

It's been said that Yoga Teacher Training (YTT) Level 2 is where the rubber hits the road. You gain unexpected traction in moving forward into the fulfillment of *Svaroopaa*® yoga's promise. In learning the new, more physically challenging poses and successfully completing DTS, you receive your 200-hour level certification. Then you are eligible to join Yoga Alliance and thus to be recognized as a member of the US professional association of yoga teachers. That's quite an accomplishment. Yet there's even more, which often includes unforeseen healing.



Kathy Gardner

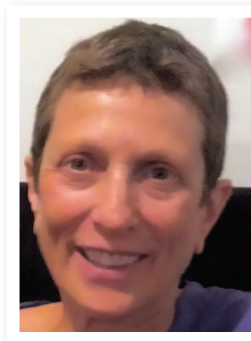
Kathy Gardner recalls the impact of YTT 2 on her own healing. She says, "Level 2 definitely prepared me for meeting the challenges of life." While she didn't know it at the time, her openings in Level 2 helped Kathy handle a diagnosis of breast cancer seven months later. Kathy especially credits "the beauty of abdominal poses. They helped things work automatically, including learning to walk the *Svaroopaa*® yoga way. My walk was more like flowing, everything moved together. I floated. The seamless progression from abdominals to backbends to standing and walking gave me great insights that I

could then share with my students. After that Level 2 experience, my teaching flowed, and I had insight into the connections among my body, mind and spirit. I was less reactive, less stressed, less angry. So, when I got the cancer diagnosis, I knew how to handle it and how to take care of myself on all levels during treatment, which was a huge challenge. Throughout, I never stopped doing the Magic Four and Four on the Floor; I never missed teaching a single class! I know this healed me physically and emotionally. Following surgery, I was able to delay radiation until after taking *Embodiment*® Yoga Therapy training. And after radiation, I was told I would not need chemotherapy. Reflecting on the year after my YTT Level 2, I see that Grace met me with everything I needed to heal on all levels."

This past April's Level 2 brought unexpected healing to Nancy Stachiw, who arrived with debilitating pain caused by ulnar nerve entrapment; the band of nerves were compressed at her elbow, set improperly after a break thirty years ago, with arthritis also impinging on the nerves. In January Nancy had suddenly developed searing, referred pain in her right wrist, making her dominant right hand nonfunctional. Nancy's work as a clinician, educator and advocate for children, adolescents and adults on the autism spectrum requires a great deal of computer work, writing and typing as well as driving her standard shift car across Rhode Island. Losing the use of her right hand brought despair over the possibility of also losing the work to which she is dedicated as well as her livelihood.

Nancy says, "I went to YTT with inward reserve and apprehension. I didn't know whether I would be able to do it. I was wearing a hand brace prescribed by my doctor, but we were doing so much yoga involving hand and arm support that my fear and discomfort were enormous. Then it came to me that I needed to let my teachers know, so I talked with Devi McKenty. Since she'd been one of my teachers in Foundations and Level 1, I already felt a connection to her. She listened so carefully

and respectfully that my trust in her just grew, and I felt comfortable enough exposing my fear and vulnerability. Then she shared with me her own Level 2 experience, during which she had extreme back pain. It was not that she was telling me 'you'll get over your pain.'" Instead, she was sharing her own experience of pain, vulnerability and fear. After that I began to feel stronger. In a few days I removed my hand brace — tangible evidence of the opening I was feeling, first in my tailbone and then into shoulders, neck and down my arm. Now, I experience pain occasionally, but my practice takes care of it. I've arranged for Vichara sessions with my local teacher to explore the fear; *Embodiment*® sessions also help greatly. I do not expect to undergo a complicated surgical procedure to reposition the nerve band at the elbow, as recommended last winter by my doctor. Instead, this condition motivates me to be diligent about my practice. It has also taught me about the potential vulnerability of my own students. I believe that awareness will guide me, and thus I will be able to support them on this path as I have been supported."



Judy Goodkin

Judy Goodkin, CSYT, assisted during April's YTT Level 2, and sees the flow of Grace in this healing just as she was aware of the palpable presence of Grace throughout the training. Judy first noticed an atmosphere of Grace in the openness of the group. She says, "They could absorb so much of what was being taught. Our pink pose sheets are so thorough and detailed — there's a lot of information to absorb. Yet in partner pairs there was no confusion. This group could immediately apply what they'd seen in teacher trainer demonstrations and pose sheet

walkthroughs. This group could focus on what they were learning without distraction. All of us who have experienced trainings know about getting into tight stuff, and sometimes we get cranky with it! This group, too, got into tight spots, but moved through them with more ease, without push back, and they asked wonderful questions when they were stuck. They just slipped through the tight places, and stuck stuff let go and slipped away from them. That's when I had the awareness that they were in the flow of Grace, on a path that had been made smoother, with more awareness and more acceptance. They were the first YTT group since our SVA-MYF Consolidation, and they embraced the practices of puja and japa that honor our lineage. The group's interactions with one another, with the Desmond staff, and our teachers were full of kindness, respect, and honoring the Divine. They lovingly opened their hearts to the whole experience of YTT 2."

Judy recalls, "One teacher-in-training was able to hold his foot in Dhanurasana Leg for the first time ever, and continued with that newfound physical openness throughout the training." Judy noted that everything was easier for this group. From that openness through Grace came the physical healing — outward evidence of profound inner opening to Self.

# This Yogi's Best Friend

By Matrika (Marlene) Gast

Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward Facing Dog) and I have had a long-term relationship. We first met in Community Ed yoga classes in May 1978. From then until my 2005 Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga, Downward Facing Dog was my favorite pose. Even though I now know it's a Possible Spinal Tightener, I still have great affection for it, but for far different reasons than at first.

For more than 25 years, DownDog gave me a huge sense of accomplishment. In contrast to my yoga classmates, I could sink my heels to the floor with ease, but it was because my hamstring muscles were buttery. Hip and shoulder ligaments were loose as well, so I could sink my chest toward the floor. Little did I know that such hyper-flexibility is actually a problem.

That didn't become clear until my mid-fifties, when an SI joint misaligned painfully, my upper back was often on fire, and elbows and shoulders always felt bruised. Even then, I was still practicing Adho Mukha Svanasana. I could get my heels to the floor; that's what I thought the pose was about. That's what I thought yoga was about, even though when I strained in twists my teacher said, "You know, that won't get you any closer to God." (Her own teacher, it turns out, had received Shaktipat from Swami Muktananda in 1974.)

Fortunately, three encounters with Svaroopa® yoga changed my relationship to yoga and to Downward Facing Dog as well as my whole life, of course. I finally signed up for Foundations because of three encounters with Svaroopa® yoga: at a yoga conference in 1999, an Open Your Heart weekend with Swamiji in 2000, and the weeklong Core Opening2 with Swamiji in 2004. In Foundations, I got it that — although my poses were "yoga calendar picture perfect" — my spine was steel-cable-tight as was my mind — the root of physical pain as well as relationship chaos. So for the next three years, until YTT Level 3 in August 2008, I practiced only the Svaroopa® yoga poses I learned in Foundations and Yoga Teacher Training (YTT) Levels 1 & 2. Thus, I separated from my dear friend DownDog, and also gave up hiking, backpacking and mountain biking.

When I went to YTT Level 3 in August 2008, I didn't even know we would learn Downward Facing Dog. But I remember our reunion vividly. Karobi guided our group into Child's Pose with our arms extended alongside our ears and our elbows lifted, and said, "Plant

your hands in place, and spread your fingers wide. Leave your hands in that spot as you come up onto your hands and knees. Bend your elbows and move them close together and parallel..." Then Karobi had us "back into the pose" by lifting our hips up and raising our heels up. Backing into DownDog let me feel my spine lengthening. Wow!! Then Karobi had us step each foot forward to land our heels on the floor. That was the first time ever that

I noticed leaning weight into my leg bones in DownDog. Two other feelings were apparent: very little weight in my hands and arms and a feeling of aliveness in my whole back and spine — tingling, sparkling like a starry night, bubbly, effervescent. My whole body felt alive.

As my personal marker pose, DownDog in YTT Level 3 spoke to me about the power of Svaroopa® yoga asana practice. Yet it was also clear that so much more is involved than just the poses, the precise alignments, or even my own daily practice. I know now that it's the Lineage of Grace that has kept me "in alignment." For three years, with as few external distractions as possible, I aligned myself with guidance from my Teacher Trainers in YTT and with Swamiji's teachings in programs and Contemplations; DownDog simply reflected the filling of not only my body but my whole life with more and more access to Consciousness, to my Self. Even when my mind couldn't comprehend, my heart trusted. Now as I teach Svaroopa® yoga classes, I know that I am blessed in being able to pass the poses — and so much more — to the next generation of Svaroopa® yogis.



## Foundations

"Even if you never teach a yoga class — this is an invaluable experience to deepen and enliven your own practice.

Find your Self in Foundations."

— Carolyn Beaver

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# Inner Exploration

By Priya Kenney



Priya Kenney

## Outward Exploration

The yearning to explore has fueled my experience from the beginning. While these explorations were mostly outward for decades, I see now that the kernel of longing for the inner was there all along. The outward explorations took many forms, including visiting different countries and cultures, often alone. When I ventured far out of my comfort zone into unknown territory, there was always a trusted guide, one more knowledgeable than myself, who showed me the way. It was early training

for my relationship with the Sadguru, the one who teaches us that we are Consciousness.

On one trekking trip in the Andes, our guide taught us a technique that helped with ascent in the thin air — the rest step. It was the precursor to the gap between mantra repetitions. One step up, pause into a delicious rest, one more step, and so on. It was a walking meditation. One day, we had to traverse through wasp nests. There was no way around it, only through it. Though it was very hot, we had to put on facemasks, gloves and long pants and walk at a very calm and slow pace through the wasps. Our guide instructed us what to do, but each of us had to walk that path alone, with the wasps buzzing around us. It was a powerful experience.

Later, in a 4-wheel drive vehicle, I drove solo across Costa Rica, going through rivers and rough terrain. All went well until I descended down one draw to a river wider and deeper than the others. As I studied my predicament, I noticed movement upriver along the bank. A man in black and a sweeping sombrero approached on a white horse! Surmising the situation, he guided me across the river, showing me a route that only one experienced with traversing the river would know.

## Turning Inward

When the Sadguru appeared in the river of my life, I was ripe for what she offered — the path to knowing I am Consciousness. Now, more than anything else, I want what the Guru offers. As fascinating as are the external explorations, I'm seeing more and more clearly the greater greatness of the inner realms. What great karma it is to have Swami Nirmalananda in our lives! Because of her, the promises made in *Shree Guru Gita* are unfolding.

*Guro.h k.rpaaprasaadena*

*aatmaaraama.m niriik.sayet,*

*Anena gurumaarge.na svaatmaj-naana.m pravartate.. (Verse 110)*

One should perceive the blissful Self through the gift of Guru's grace. By the Guru's path, knowing of one's own Self arises.<sup>1</sup>

While all the *Svaroopa*® yoga practices are infused with Grace, I find meditation to be the most direct route to the richest experiences of the Self. Sometimes I float in an ocean of bliss, waves of ecstatic energy pulsing through my being. Other times, I soar like an eagle, riding upwelling Consciousness, knowing mySelf to be without limits, extending beyond what I can imagine.

The more I bask in mySelf, the greater the contrast between that expansive freedom and the cramped places in my mind. I sometimes find myself unwillingly gripping a bedrock of emotion and identification with things I've created around myself over decades. Swamiji tells us to add mantra to whatever is happening. Mantra melts obstructions of the mind. It supports diving deeper and sinking through physical pain and deep pockets of fear or grief. This surrender brings freedom, but sometimes requires crossing a deep river or trekking through the buzzing "wasps" of the mind.

In a recent workshop, Vidyadevi guided us through vichara, asking us to write about someone or something that was difficult for us. After we explored the situation and our reactions to it, we did five minutes of japa aloud together. Coming back to the difficult situation, the earlier niggings were still there yipping around, trying to get my attention, but they didn't interest me. The Grace in the mantra surrounded me, protecting me from the outward pull of the ruminations of my mind. I chose not to engage with the niggings, continuing to float in the sea of mantra-bliss that is the Self. What extraordinary power the mantra has!

My greatest longing is to live in the knowing of mySelf wherever I go, whatever happens, and to see that Self in everyone and everything. For that journey, I have the best guide possible, the Sadguru. She knows the way, brings us the powerful practices and makes available a river of Grace that will take us the distance. *Sadguru-nath maharaj ki jay!*

<sup>1</sup> Rendered by Swami Nirmalananda

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or e-mail [programs@svaroopayoga.org](mailto:programs@svaroopayoga.org)

# The Yoga of Relationship

By Bhanumati (Beth) Cunningham



Bhanumati Cunningham

## Seva: Self-full, not Self-less Service

"You cannot avoid service. Your very life is in service to Consciousness, that It may experience Itself as you. All of life is service to the Self, whether you know it or not. You cannot avoid service. So step more Consciously into That. Be of Service." This message came barreling at me through a vision:

I've wandered lifetimes through the labyrinth of the thousand-petaled lotus,

Vast beyond measure, alive and pulsing.

In its triangular center the Self calls to me with Om Namah Shivaya.

There, at the feet of my Guru, the labyrinth will dissolve and I will rest in That.

This is Yoga's Promise.

I stumble along, slowly making progress,

despite the throngs of people, all stumbling along as well.

I get frustrated with them for being in my way, dragging me down, distracting me.

I get short, impatient and blaming.

I demand too much — more than I give.

I'm told this is Normal.

Well, *this* time *Normal* isn't enough for me.

I want more... so much more...

Indeed, so I must give...

Much more than *Normal*.

This is where seva comes in. Seva is not *Normal* service. Some call it "selfless service." I call it "self-full service." Seva is service-full-of-self. It's the Unavoidable Practice because it's the Yoga of Relationship, and to be alive is to be in relationship. Seva puts me in constant relationship with my Guru, my Self. It is my compass, pointing steadily at the center of the lotus — where Freedom abides.

I'm not the ideal sevite. Like most tantric yogis, I have a very full life, which leaves less time for seva than I would like. Thankfully, my Guru knows this and never demands more than I can give. I do what little seva I can and confess that mostly I'm not that great at it. And yet seva has transformed every relationship in my life. It has taught me the joy of caring about what I do, whom I do it for and who I am when I'm doing it. It has taught me the freedom of not worrying about results. It all results in Grace.

One evening I was making dinner for my family and my husband thanked me for cooking for them. A light dawned:

It only appears that I'm cooking for them. I'm really cooking for my Guru. As I serve my family, I'm honoring my dharma as the wife and mother I choose to be. This is what my Guru would have me do. This is in service

to Her. And on top of that — *na shivam vidyate kvachit* — there is nothing that is not Shiva. So serving my family is serving Shiva.

Everything changed. Making dinner became seva. The warmth of Grace began to flow through me. Indeed, it was as though Grace Itself was making dinner. I melted into the Grace of my Guru and knew we were not separate. She was not just in Downingtown: She was in my kitchen, as me, stirring sauces and setting out plates. What a beautiful meal that was.

This experience has permeated all of my relationships. Seva has allowed me to place myself in service to everyone in my life, without compromising my own needs; without depending on their appreciation; without expecting an outcome; without any of the Normal relationship trappings.

I no longer see people as obstacles. I see my relationships as opportunities to step more consciously into Self. With every opportunity I have to support someone, to allow someone the dignity of their own mistakes, to offer a safe place to someone in fear, I do it as seva to my Guru. Every time I say "No, not today," or return a phone call I don't want to return, I do it as seva to my Guru. My challenging relationships no longer define me or rule my mood. They have become welcome tapas under the umbrella of seva. My other relationships are intimate and easy. I care.

This is compelling transformation for someone who has always based relationships on a tutored aversion to people and fear of intimacy. Seva has quelled my fears and opened my heart. It has settled a lifelong struggle and has taught me how to be in relationship. It has made me a more effective teacher, one who wants to serve my students. Seva has helped me embrace the unavoidable — through Self-Full Service.

This is the Yoga of Relationship — the most powerful yoga there is.

## योगिक कला by Sarvataa Christie



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# Why Doesn't Everyone Want This?

By Kamala (Michelle) Gross



Kamala (Michelle) Gross

When she arrived for her first class about a year ago, my new student, Tricia, rated the pain in her hips a 10 out of 10. Pain kept her awake at night and she had trouble climbing stairs. She had been diagnosed with a herniated disc in her lower back several years prior, and had done chiropractic, acupuncture and physical therapy instead of surgery. "I tried other styles of yoga, but I never continued with classes because of severe discomfort," she says.

Initially, as Tricia lay in Jathara Parivrttanasana (JP) in class, her upper leg floated in the air about eight inches from her lower leg. Sukhasana was not even an option, as her hips hurt too much. But she began to see immediate improvements, noticing that some changes were happening in class. Within the first three weeks, she began taking two classes a week without any prompting. After a few weeks, her hips did not ache so much when she sat in Sukhasana, and she was also becoming aware of how tight everything was in her back and hips. Classes helped her to see that there was more going on in her body than just hip pain. As Tricia began to understand how her spine relates to every other area of her body, she started to commit to a yoga practice at home.

Since Tricia had tried many therapies over 15 to 20 years, and although she was beginning to experience some change and relief in my classes, she had yet to find long-term relief from the pain. So I suggested she try either *Svaroopā*® Yoga Therapy or *Embodiment*® Therapy sessions to help the process move along a little faster. She decided on *Embodiment*® sessions and started a week later. I also encouraged her to start a simple daily practice of Ujjayi Pranayama and Four on the Floor, which she did

do. We took it slowly at first because the openings at her tailbone in *Embodiment*® sessions would bring on a deep throb in her hip joint, and after so many years of pain, this sensation scared her.

Within the first month, Tricia's pain levels did not decrease dramatically, but the way she stood and the way she could move started to change visibly. She decided to continue with a session once a week as well as two classes a week. After five months her pain levels were down to 2 of 10, and her upper leg rested on her lower leg in JP.

As Tricia's lower spine tension began to unravel with *Embodiment*® sessions, I noticed that she was standing up straighter and that she was able to climb the stairs without both hands on the railing. Her hip pain has never been diagnosed. Now, after nearly a year of working together, she now walks in with no pain in her hips. She actually exclaims, "Look! my hips move now!" We have alternated yoga therapy and *Embodiment*® sessions for the last few months as she continues to unravel deeper layers of tension, and we address the knee pain that inevitably showed up as her lower spine opened. Now Tricia says, "I love knowing that as I age, going into my later years, I will be vital and independent and not bent and feeble with tensions. I do not have to rely on medicine — either natural or traditional — as this yoga gives me the tools to keep me moving and pain free."

We've hit plateaus along the way as her knees slowly unraveled and her ankles began to turn, but every week she is amazed at the differences in her body, and still marvels, "I never realized how good I could feel. Let's keep going!" After one year she sleeps all night long and often comes into my classroom announcing, "I have no pain!" Tricia continues to explore and feel new parts of her body, and we continue with sessions weekly. "I have found peace within and a power within me that makes me feel centered and calm, an inner serenity that I am able to maintain in my daily life." As she says now, "Why doesn't everyone want this?"

## Masoor Dhal

2 cups masoor dal (small orange, a.k.a. "red," lentils)  
 6 cups water  
 ½ cup curry powder  
 1 teaspoon cardamom  
 1 tablespoon pickled marcella  
 2 teaspoons ground turmeric  
 2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
 ½ teaspoon brown mustard seeds  
 3 teaspoons cumin seeds  
 ⅛ teaspoon hot red pepper flakes  
 ½ cup well-stirred canned unsweetened coconut milk  
 ¼ cup chopped cilantro  
 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice  
 salt & pepper to taste  
 ½ teaspoon brown sugar

## योगा युक्तमिड

By Joshua

Makes 8 servings

**Active time:** 10 minutes

**Total time:** 50 minutes

### Instructions:

Bring lentils and 3 cups water to a boil with turmeric in a 2-quart heavy saucepan, then gently simmer, partially covered, stirring occasionally, until falling apart, about 20 minutes.

When lentils are cooked, heat oil in a small heavy skillet over medium-high heat until it simmers, then cook mustard seeds, cumin seeds, and red pepper flakes until mustard seeds begin to pop and/or turn gray and cumin seeds brown, about 1 minute. Stir spice mixture into lentils with coconut milk, cilantro, lemon juice, and salt and bring to a simmer.

# Prana & Grace Retreat

by Rama (Ruth) Brooke

## Lifetimes of Change in Five Days

"My life is full of Grace" — Swamiji shared her experience of hearing Swami Shankarananda, who officiated at her sanyassa initiation, make this simple statement. At our Retreat with her, Swamiji taught us that Grace is ever present in all of our lives, explaining that it is our capacity to perceive Grace that is limited. As we continue our *sadhana* (yogic and spiritual journey), our capacity expands. Likewise, as we do Ujjayi Pranayama and other yoga practices to increase *prana* (life force), our *pranic* reservoir will also expand until we are brimming with prana. Then it will be easier to perceive that our lives are always and continually Grace-full.

I know that it was Grace that got me to her **Prana & Grace** retreat at the Desmond Hotel & Conference Center last April, where we spent five days experiencing, studying and comparing the two. The retreat felt almost luxurious, alternating between Deeper Yoga classes, meditation, arati (candle flame ceremony), Guru Gita (sacred chant), seva (selfless service), japa (mantra repetition) and discourse and discussion of the yogic texts that support and define our experiences. There were no "pink sheets," "how to's," "must do's" or "partner pairs," so familiar from Teacher Training courses. We had ample time between sessions to be alone, talk with other Svaroopis in the program, or call home and take care of external essentials. Meal breaks were long and delicious. Our table conversations, although casual and intimate, felt so informative, as though the course continued right through the meal, seamlessly.

Swami Nirmalananda led most of the chant, meditation, discourse and discussion sessions, while Devi McKenty taught the Deeper Yoga classes, assisted Swamiji and was our point person for the course. We had two field trips, both hosted by Swamiji, to DYMC for Tuesday evening satsang and to the Ashram for lunch. With an easy flow to the course format, we also experienced a pervasive feeling of community, supported by shared meals and shared rooms. Yet we were truly free to be absorbed inward, whenever and as much as we chose. This is Grace at work!

Here's how my fellow yogis at the Retreat described their individual experiences:

*I long to be in the presence of Swamiji. I take every opportunity to be with her or to hear her teach or to be in a longer retreat with her.*

*The retreat is especially valuable — to be in a continuous presence of the Guru, of the One who lives in the state of knowing — it is contagious! I don't have to do anything. I am my Self.*

*Swamiji opens one door inside of me and so much opens up spontaneously — the synergy is palpable. It feels like an infinite hallway with many doors. She invites me inside and I just float effortlessly to the core of my Being. Inner knowing arises and washes all over me. This is the magnificence, the mystery and the majesty of the Power of Grace which Swamiji so beautifully described during the retreat.*

*I loved being with other yogis, to share our experiences; the course was well designed in terms of the different practices...*

*Devi McKenty is a very gifted and wonderful teacher — her compassion, knowledge and experience were invaluable. I was very grateful to have her as one of our teachers.*

*...at the Desmond...the staff is very friendly and works with the needs of yogic diet... It is wonderful to be in a retreat setting — there is intimacy, softness and support in not having to worry about meals and lodging. It all works beautifully with what we are trying to create and experience in our practices.*

*...I was delighted to take the Prana & Grace retreat with Swamiji and spend time with the Guru in this way... We were all there to be with the Guru, to receive the teachings and learn together... We were going through our processes individually and collectively at the same time. For me, spending time with the Guru is all about learning, and this is the ideal academic setting, as good as it gets. I am in a room full of yogis, devoted to the teachings, just like me, and with the best possible teacher. The collective experience is incredibly powerful.*

*There is also something about the retreat environment that is very sweet. I was fortunate to have Swamiji as one of my teachers during YTT. I always felt the added intensity when she was there, like I had to be on my "A-game." That intensity is still present in the retreat, but there is a sweetness and a nurturing quality to it. I yearn for the deeper teachings, and I get that at the Ashram, but at the retreat I get the sweet, nurturing experience, too.*

Another [Retreat](#) is coming — August 17-21 — your next opportunity for five days of transformation and illumination with Swamiji. Maybe I'll see you there!

## Shaktipat Retreat PLUS 5-day Retreat

with Swami Nirmalananda

[August 15 - 17](#)  
Shaktipat Retreat  
Exton PA

[August 17 - 21](#)  
Svaroop® Yoga and  
Meditation Retreat  
Exton PA



Experience the deeper dimensions of your own Self at a deeper level, in either program or both together. Join Swami Nirmalananda for the weekend where she formally initiates you in Svaroop® Vidya meditation through Shaktipat — the awakening of your Kundalini.

Extend the bliss by staying for our 5-day Svaroop® Yoga and Meditation Retreat, long delicious yoga classes, vichara, sutras with Swamiji, chanting, meditation and more. Enjoy the whole range of Svaroop® Sciences in this retreat led by Swami Nirmalananda.

Immerse yourself in the timeless wonder that opens up when you do more yoga.

To register for either program or BOTH, or for more information, contact our Enrollment Advisors at 610-806-2119 or [programs@svaroopayoga.org](mailto:programs@svaroopayoga.org)

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

# Upcoming Programs

July 2014		
17	<a href="#">The Magic of Ujjayi</a> (Phone) 7:00 – 9:30 pm	Swamiji
21	<a href="#">Meditation 101</a> begins 7:00 – 9:00 pm	Karobi at DYMC
22	<a href="#">I Am Shiva</a> article #8	Swamiji
22	<a href="#">Improving you Neck &amp; Shoulders</a> 2:00 – 5:00 pm	Vidyadevi at DYMC
24	<a href="#">Meditation 101</a> 7:00 – 9:00 pm	Karobi
22	<a href="#">Satsang</a> 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
23	<a href="#">Stand In Your Strength</a> 5:00 – 8:00 pm	Karobi at Rehoboth Beach Yoga
28	<a href="#">Purposeful Living</a> Phone # 1 4:00 – 6:00 pm	Karobi Phone Course
29	<a href="#">Satsang</a> 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
31	<a href="#">Meditation 101</a> 7:00 – 9:00 pm	Karobi
August 2014		
4	<a href="#">Purposeful Living</a> Phone # 1 4:00 – 6:00 pm	Karobi Phone Course
7	<a href="#">Meditation 101</a> 7:00 – 9:00 pm	Karobi
5	<a href="#">Satsang</a> 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Vidyadevi at DYMC
8 – 10	<a href="#">Experiential Anatomy</a>	Vidyadevi & Karobi at The Desmond
8	<a href="#">The Power of Support</a>	Vidyadevi at The Desmond
10	<a href="#">Swami Sunday</a> 8:30 – 12:15 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
10 – 15	<a href="#">Embodiment® Yoga Therapy Training</a>	Vidyadevi, Karobi & Devi at The Desmond
12	<a href="#">Satsang</a> 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
15	<a href="#">Satsang — Baba's Shaktipat Anniversary</a>	Swamiji at the Desmond
15 – 17	<a href="#">Shaktipat Retreat</a>	Swamiji & Rukmini at The Desmond
16	<a href="#">Shree Guru Gita</a> 6:30 – 7:45 am	Swamiji at The Desmond
17	<a href="#">Shree Guru Gita</a> 6:30 – 7:45 am	Swamiji at The Desmond
17 – 21	<a href="#">Svaroop® Yoga &amp; Meditation Retreat</a>	Swamiji & Devi at The Desmond
17 – 22	<a href="#">Foundations of Svaroop® Yoga</a>	Vidyadevi at Kripalu
21	<a href="#">Shree Guru Gita</a> 6:30 – 7:45 am	Swamiji at DYMC
19	<a href="#">Satsang</a> 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
24	<a href="#">Swami Sunday</a> 8:30 – 12:15 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
28	<a href="#">Shree Guru Gita</a> 6:30 – 7:45 am	Swamiji at DYMC
31	<a href="#">Swami Sunday</a> 8:30 – 12:15 pm	Swamiji at DYMC

## Advertise with Tadaa!

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

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

ADVERTISING RATES Size	1x	6x \$ per issue	12x \$ per issue	Graphics Charge
Business Card ( 3.625 x 2 inches)	\$35	\$30	\$25	\$18
1/6 page (2.375 x 4.825 -or- 3.625 x 3.125 in.)	\$60	\$55	\$50	\$30
1/4 page (3.625 x 4.825 in.)	\$85	\$80	\$75	\$40
1/2 page (3.625 x 9.875 -or- 7.625 x 4.825 in.)	\$170	\$160	\$150	\$80
Full page (7.625 x 9.825 in.)	\$310	\$300	\$290	\$100



## India 2015: Ganeshpuri's Grace

Join us for **an unforgettable yatra** (spiritual pilgrimage) to Ganeshpuri, India – the birthplace of the Svaroopa® Sciences.

Sit with Swamiji as she guides you in daily satsang, yoga class, chanting, meditation and more. Visit sacred sites, attend ceremonies at Bhagavan Nityananda's Temple, experience the beauty and power of yajña (Vedic fire ceremony) and visit Swami Muktananda's Ashram.

Your registration **includes everything** after you have arrived to India until your departure. You are responsible for making your own flight arrangements (use those miles!).

*"If you are seeking to have an experience that transcends beyond being a tourist in India and simultaneously supports you in immersing in the culture, people & yourself, then this is the program for you!" – Tish Roy*

**Dates: February 9 – 21, 2015**

Tuition: Members by January 9: \$2801.00,  
Non-Members by January 9: \$2991.00;  
After January 9: \$3201.00

To register or for more information,  
call 610.806.2119 or email  
[programs@svaroopayoga.org](mailto:programs@svaroopayoga.org)

JULY 2014		
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
JANUARY 2015		
14 – 18	EYTS – Top to Tail	The Desmond Hotel
22 – 25	DIY: Heart Openers	The Desmond Hotel
28 – Feb 4	ATT 262: Yoga Therapy – Treating Pain	The Desmond Hotel
FEBRUARY 2015		
9 – 19	India Retreat – Ganeshpuri's Grace	Swamiji in India
21 – 25	Foundations	The Desmond Hotel
22 – 27	Embodiment® Yoga Therapy Training	Brisbane, AU
27 – Mar 1	Experiential Anatomy	Brisbane, AU
27 – Mar 1	Yatra to Downingtown	The Desmond Hotel
MARCH 2015		
6 – 10	Foundations	Brisbane, AU
6 – 15	YTT Level 2	The Desmond
10	Year Long Programme with Swamiji begins	Phone Course
14 – 15	Weekend Workshop (TBD)	Brisbane, AU
18 – 22	YTT Module #1A – Daily Practice	The Desmond
20 – 22	Shaktipat Retreat	TBD
25 – April 1	ATT 402: Deeper Practice	The Desmond
25	Yogify Your Life Begins	Phone Course
APRIL 2015		
11 – 16	Embodiment® Yoga Therapy Training	The Desmond
17 – 19	Experiential Anatomy	The Desmond
23 – 26	EYTS – Foundations Review	The Desmond
26 – 29	EYTS – Deceptive Flexibility	The Desmond