



Svaroopaa[®] YOGA  MEDITATION

kaadaa!

Svaroopaa[®] Yoga: Experience Your Divine Self

Volume 1 No 10

October 30, 2013

Editorial

How Long Will it Take?

By Swami Nirmalananda Saraswati

One of my favorite outings is Sea World. When I lived in San Diego, I bought the annual pass for locals and went frequently. I particularly loved going to the whale show, with the giant splash as part of the grand finale. The lowest 6 rows in the grandstands get totally drenched with VERY cold seawater, as Shamu leaps and splashes each section of the audience in turn. People bring raincoats and umbrellas in the winter, but simply strip down to swimsuits in the summer, all for the delight of getting drenched by Shamu. Participation is the key.

Many people think yoga and meditation is about sitting around with a peaceful smile on their face, never going anywhere and never doing anything. They may even deem this to be a spiritual practice, trying to attain peace by

withdrawing from their life and their relationships. We do it differently. *Svaroopaa*[®] yoga re-enlivens your body, making you feel more alive — both feeling your body's aliveness as well as feeling your emotional responses. Participation is the key: participating in the yoga makes you able to participate in your life.

Yet if you haven't found the deeper inner core of your own being, the re-enlivening of your feelings can be overwhelming. They might make you want to shut down again. That's why *Svaroopaa*[®] yoga prioritizes the experience of the Self. Whether you are doing core opening or japa, access to your own Divine Essence is guaranteed. Poses, breathing, meditation, chanting — you get to choose, but every choice takes you to the same destination — *svaroopaa*.

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Tadaa!

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Editorial *continued from page 1*

In the early days of Svaroopaa® yoga, I moved Master Yoga from a small studio to a bigger one, only two blocks away. Many students moved over in the first week, not missing any of their yoga classes. Some even came on moving day and helped haul blankets and bookcases. Others stayed away for six months or more. I confess, I never did understand why they couldn't drive their car to a new location, technically shortening their commute by two blocks. But it was just too much change for them. They were the ones who missed out; they missed out on six months of classes. Participation is the key.

You may have been watching Master Yoga from the sidelines, thinking that there's just too much change for you, but I must tell you — it's really still the same. I'm blessed to work with so many dedicated yoginis and Teacher Trainers, beautifully led by Vidyadevi and Karobi, and we're all still teaching the same programs. We've got the same handouts, the same blankets, the same adjustments (and a bunch of adjustments you haven't learned yet!). We have taught these trainings in yoga studios, barns, hotel conference rooms, living rooms — it really doesn't make any difference. It's all about what is happening inside.

You might think that Svaroopaa® Vidya Ashram has been through a lot of change, but it's really still the same. The same free programs continue, with our virtual Ashram offering hundreds of free audios and articles online. Our staff and sevites support me in leading the Year-Long-Programmes and Shaktipat Retreats. We have expanded our yoga and

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meditation courses in Downtowntown — but it's the same yoga and the same meditation: totally reliable Svaroopaa® yoga and Svaroopaa® vidya meditation!

Yes, we have a new voice answering the phone — but that means we actually have someone answering the phone! Try it out at 610.644.7555. We love to help you. Yes, we have a new Enrollment System processing your payment plans, SATYA dues and monthly donations — but it is all still the same pre-planned amounts happening at the same time in the month. Yes, I can assure you that we will identify and make more changes, any time we can find a better way to serve you or to streamline our behind-the-scenes processes (in order to save you money!).

SVA is a living breathing organism, based completely on your participation. Participation is the key. Without you, we have no reason to be here. Without us being here, you have no reason to participate. Isn't relationship wonderful? When will I see you again?

Stepping Up, Going Deeper

By Betsy Ayers



Photo by Betsy Ayers

Betsy Ayers

Once I finished YTT Level 2 and could register officially as a yoga teacher with Yoga Alliance, I wasn't sure that I wanted to enroll in Levels 3 & 4. As an RN, I already work full time as a lactation consultant for new, nursing mothers. Also I was already teaching, with two classes of consistent, motivated students, which offered me both challenge and reward. But my DTS Mentor, Sheynapurna (Sandy) Peace, assured me I would receive so much more from Level 3, so I took her advice and registered. Of course, she was so right!

In Level 3, I first noticed that, for me, the Forward Bends were so much deeper. The poses were very hard for me, but then Kundalini began to rise and the changes She brought about kept me going. I

had heard about Kundalini and I had been reading about Kundalini. When I began to experience intense heat followed by equally intense cold as well as kriyas (spontaneous movements), I had a profound awareness, "This is working! This is deep! This is moving stuff!" In the journal I was keeping during training, I recorded my first experience of Kundalini:

I experienced Kundalini today — my low back got very warm, areas of bright sparks in my arms with jerkiness and swaying of my torso during meditation. The area between my hips felt full and then sloshed as a bowl of water might slosh from side to side. It was pretty amazing to have my body move without my direction. Then the tears came — the flood gate opened with jerky sobs. I went into Shavasana and my peers gave me the special propping we had just learned. I continued to sob for a bit while the rest of the class had their morning break. I can't really remember what triggered my tears. The tears subsided, I asked a peer to do the *Embodiment*® seal while I was completely covered up. It just felt like that would feel good and it did. I noticed feeling a

strong sense of community and feeling very safe. I was able to come up and continue class. The same heat and swaying happened during our evening philosophy discussion and during our dharana (contemplation).

The Kundalini that had been awakened in me continued in other ways. At the Ashram, after we did japa (mantra repetition) before lunch, I bowed to Swamiji and started to cry — with gratitude and a sense of surrender to the whole process.

After completing Level 3 and returning home, I pored over my DTS Yellow Sheets. When I read about all of the potential effects of the Forward Bends, I was so excited, because the descriptions exactly matched my own

experiences of Forward Bends in training. How wonderful to have felt all that and then to see it all confirmed in print.

In my teaching, the first change that I noticed was increased confidence. I had a new understanding of what to look for in pose angles and alignments — and how to address misalignments effectively. I was no longer trying to fix every little thing, but had a better handle on prioritizing what is needed to get more effectiveness in a student's pose. Now that I have completed Level 4 as well, my students say they enjoy the greater variety of poses. They are also enjoying all of the changes, outside and inside.

Most of my students say they love *Svaroopa*® yoga because their bodies just don't hurt anymore; that keeps them coming to class. Shan says, "I just couldn't get along without *Svaroopa*® yoga, because of my misaligned disks. My body doesn't hurt when I do my practice as well as come to class." Marti, a longtime student, says that her daily practice still consists of the Primary Spinal Openers, but the great change for her is that now she feels that experience of opening "within" instead of just in her physical body. Julaine, whose daily practice has been Ujjayi Pranayama for more than four years, says, "It's increased my Consciousness." And that, of course, is the wonder of it all. After stepping up to Levels 3 and 4 and opening myself, I see my students delving in so much deeper.

"Thank you" Seems Hardly Enough

Both sweet and powerful, seva is one of the most profound practices of yoga. It is selfless service — giving of yourself without expectation of acknowledgement or compensation. Ask anyone who has ever offered seva to the Ashram or Master Yoga, and the answer returned is bound to be "because I've received so much, I just want to give back." Even though sevites serve without the desire for acknowledgement, we want to acknowledge those who served during our Conference: *Alignment with Grace*, sponsored jointly by Master Yoga and *Svaroopa*® Vidya Ashram.

If you attended the Conference, you learned that it was the last, though in the future we'll have new community retreats, geographically widespread, led by Swami Nirmalananda. These retreats will better support the teachings she brings us. With this Conference, it was clear that we saved the best for last.

Our many conference sevites served as the enlivened, supportive spine of this radiant gathering! These sevites served at the registration table to welcome you and to orient you. They cheerfully and clearly answered your questions about where to go and what to do. They hauled blankets as needed from session to session. They handled a plethora of behind-the-scenes tasks, which ensured you could just "go with the flow" of Grace.

So for their Grace-full and generous hearts and for their loving, skillful attention to all of the Conference tasks and details as they unfolded in real time, we thank the following Svaroopis:

Devapriyaa (Denise) Hills,
Seva Coordinator

Pat Morisson

Kim Buyers

Pooja (Erica) Andersen

Shanti (Ellan) Catacchio

Glen Christiansen

Sri McNeill

Sarvataa Christie

Christopher Horner

Antarajna (Debbie) Mandel

Kanchan (Connie) Mohn

By Marlene Gast



Photo by Kerm Sarver

Devapriyaa (Denise) Hills

Vicharinee (Su lee) Chafin

Bindu (Maureen) Short

Ajeet Khalsa

Gayatri (Barbara) Hess

Amber Quinn

Karuna (Carolyn) Beaver

It's a Gift & It's Good

By Rudrani (Rosemary) Nogue



Rudrani & Bob in India

"Once Grace is involved, everything is good," stated Swami Nirmalananda when I asked about my meditation experiences in her Shaktipat Retreat. My husband Bob and I always wanted to take a Shaktipat Retreat together, and were planning to go to PA for our seva at the annual Ashram Board retreat afterwards, so the timing was great.

My biggest learning — "Once Grace is involved, everything is good" — shone through a range of experiences. In

meditation things were happening in me and the old judge in my head was critical of them. I wasn't able to stay conscious for the whole Guru Gita. I kept passing into dream clips. When I asked Swamiji about this, she explained, "Grace is clearing your mind." I kept that thought with me the whole weekend. It really helped.

I had taken my first Shaktipat Retreat with Swamiji in Boise ID last May. After receiving Shaktipat I had experienced a meditation full of physical kriyas, as had happened in India with Swamiji a few years before. My leg moves all over the place; it's achy and awful. It's really hard for me to stay in my body. Inwardly I wonder, "What I am doing here!" When the same things happened in this Shaktipat Retreat, I remembered afterward (though not at the time) that whenever Grace is involved, it's all good. There are places that need the shaking and the rocking to clear out. This new perspective is so important. I view the experience of these kriyas in a new way: It's a gift and it's good — even when it doesn't feel good.

Even though I've had similar conversations with Swami Nirmalananda before, I never really understood it before. Now I understand that the practice for me is to repeat the mantra, and to be here now with "What Is." It was easier because I was understanding it differently. My mind

says everyone else is having sweet, lovely rocking experiences, and I'm the only one having an unpleasant experience! Knowing that, "Once Grace is involved, everything is good," leads me to being in the experience I am having instead of judging it. This time I was able to be in the agitation that I found in my mind, add mantra to it, and know that mantra would take me through. The wiggles and extreme face twitching is not what I want, but it is what I need. Thankfully the mantra takes me away from judging and lets me allow the experience to be OK, even when uncomfortable. It's a key point for me to accept what's happening and to use mantra.

I really got the importance of mantra. Repeating it — repeating it all the time but not by rote, as much as possible. Rather, I brought my awareness and presence to it and noticed how it really brings me inside and home to myself. I had a lovely experience helping with the "bhasma" (the three white stripes of sacred ash across your forehead) and applying the bindi, dabbing the "kumkum" (red powder) on the spot between your eyebrows. When I was doing this and repeating mantra internally, offering this from the whole of my being and looking in the eyes of sister and brother retreatants, I could see them for who they really are. It was very beautiful as well as a bit scary. There's that experience of when you really see someone. It was big for me — I was looking from my wholeness, looking from my Self.

My gratitude to Swamiji is huge! The Grace that she is in my life and being so accessible is amazing. To have a Guru who is so willing to teach and so willing to be available is an immense blessing.

It was also very special to have my husband with me in retreat, especially being able to dialog together about our experiences. I love sharing my world with him. Even though it's his world too, now he'll know firsthand about the Shaktipat experience I've been talking about! In relationship it's so important to have experiences that you do share: our mutual love and respect for Swami Nirmalananda, for this path and these teachings.

What? Me Teach Yoga?

By Kanchan (Connie) Mohn



Kanchan (Connie) Mohn

Gentle Yoga at DYMC

One of the last things in the world I ever thought I'd do is teach yoga, and yet on Thursdays I find myself at the [Downingtown Yoga and Meditation Center](#) teaching a Gentle Yoga Class — at my age and at my weight. It's a perfect made-to-order, identity crushing experience. Pure Grace.

It's also such an incredible privilege and joy to offer this seva to my beloved Guru, who is also the Founder and Master Teacher of *Svaroopa*® Yoga. And it's such a privilege and joy to be able to offer this teaching to local folks who need the added support that a Grace-filled gentle yoga class offers...on so many levels.

Those of you who teach *Svaroopa*® Yoga already know the bliss of being able to connect with people in such a deep, meaningful way; to be able to offer physical support, mental-emotional support, and so much more. What a gift to be able to see the results of your offerings, to see the physical changes, to see and feel the deepening taking place, to see the bliss and wonder in your students' eyes after their

final Shavasana. If you haven't taught and haven't had this experience yet, I highly recommend it!

With so little experience and so many doubts, teaching Gentle Yoga has taught me, once again, to get out of my own way, act from a deeper place, stay present, and allow the experience to unfold as it will...while at the same time sticking to the protocols! Thankfully, Grace does most of the work. It has taught me to trust Master Yoga's training programs. They are, as you know, so thorough, precise, and reliable that success is ensured.

As a special bonus, my own practice has changed and deepened as a result of teaching. How many times can I slowly talk a class through the practice of Ujjayi Pranayama, gently encouraging students to reap the benefits of a regular practice, before I am compelled to take my own advice, begin a regular practice, discover its incredible power and become a true believer? It has to do with integrity. It has to do with yoga.

Teaching a class also provides a wonderful opportunity to introduce students to Swami Nirmalananda. I offer a Swamiji contemplation during their Shavasana. Questions are answered. Students are reminded that Swamiji is the Founder of *Svaroopa*® Yoga; what a gift it is that she lives right here in Downingtown and offers meditation programs, satsangs and Swami Sundays to all who are interested in deepening their experience and understanding of life or deepening their practice. Everything that happens at Downingtown Yoga is yoga. It's designed that way for you!

TRAINER PROFILE

Margo Gebraski CSYT, RYT 500

Foundations Teacher Trainer

By Rob Gold



Margo Gebraski

Foundations Teacher Trainer Margo Gebraski remembers her own Foundations well — especially the part where she saw the trainers and thought, “Oh, I want to be one of those people!” It remained on her mind as she went through YTT and ATT. When the second training of Foundations Trainers came, Margo “jumped in with Devi McKenty and Kamala Gross.” Margo admits also to having “a lot of fun doing it.”

One of the things that interested Margo most about Foundations was gaining a deep understanding of how the five days are planned and coordinated, not to mention just how much the trainers know and understand. She says, “You learn the whole process and support students through it in a very precise manner. Starting with when they walk through the door, you know where the whole journey is going to go, and you watch them transform from Day 1 to 5.”

Margo’s connection to *Svaroopaa*® yoga goes back to her first class, taught by Swami Nirmalananda (then Rama Berch), a workshop at the Midwest Yoga Conference. “I’d been doing yoga for years before that but

immediately I knew in that first class this was totally different than anything out there. More profound, much deeper — it took me places I’d never been and that yoga hadn’t taken me before.”

Even with a start like that and years progressing through the many levels of trainings to become a Leading Teacher, Margo has found that like for many of us, sometimes life amps up and practice slips. Margo says, “It’s been a very stressful summer, and I haven’t done as much yoga as in the past.” She jokes, “What’s it like to do yoga?” The journey back to the blankets has been an interesting one for her. “I think drift happens with everybody. My mind has a cycle of ‘yes I can do it, no I can’t’ that has me feeling like I’m beginning again, and all the little tricks I know aren’t the same as sitting down and doing a practice.” With experience in multiple styles of yoga, Margo is acutely aware of how deeply and quickly you experience your own *svaroopaa* with just a few poses. She says that’s the impetus to her enjoyment of Foundations. “In Foundations, we quickly give students the deepest experiences they’ve ever had in their lives. And when people get that, it’s just priceless.”

Margo is finding that anticipation of this October’s *Svaroopaa*® Yoga Conference in Philadelphia is a strong motivator for returning to her yoga practices. As they again become routine and Margo fine-tunes her own Alignment with Grace, the result is likely to be classes filled with her beaming smile, Mid-Western warmth and, of course, her “bag of tricks” for everyone to enjoy.

Meditation & Sutras Programs

with
Swami Nirmalananda



OCTOBER 2013

23 [I Am Shiva](#)
multi-media course begins
(enrollment open through December 2013)

JANUARY 2014

24 - 26 [Shaktipat Retreat](#)
West Chester PA

FEBRUARY 2014

Feb 19 - [Meditation Teacher Training](#)
Mar 2 PA Retreat Center (tba)

Svaroopaa® Yoga TEACHER TRAININGS

NOVEMBER 2013

6 - 11 [Foundations](#) of *Svaroopaa*® Yoga
Brisbane Australia

8 - 12 [Foundations](#) of *Svaroopaa*® Yoga, Exton PA

15 - 24 [YTT Level 3](#), Exton PA

JANUARY 2014

4 - 8 ATT 201: [Teaching Half Day Workshops](#)
Exton PA

17 - 21 [Foundations](#) of *Svaroopaa*® Yoga, Exton PA

13 - 18 [Svaroopaa](#)® *Sutras*, Teacher Training
Retreat, Downingtown PA

26 - 28 [Experiential Anatomy](#), Exton PA

28 - [Embodiment](#)® Yoga Therapy Training
Feb 2 Exton PA

FEBRUARY 2014

14 - 16 [Foundations Review](#), Exton PA

16 - [Embodiment](#)® *Weekend*, Exton PA

A Swamiji Moment

By Lisa Spangler



Lisa Spangler

And Now I'm a Yoga Teacher!

I had not intended to teach yoga. I was a yoga student at Downingtown Yoga & Meditation Center from its opening days. I went through the Introductory and Yoga 101 classes, and Meditation class with Swamiji. I attended Satsang and Swami Sundays regularly. The next step for me was Foundations. I never even realized that at the end of the Foundations course

in 2011 I would be eligible to teach Introductory yoga classes. I was impressed when I received a certificate stating that I was a Certified Introductory *Svaroopa*® Yoga Teacher, but again I did not intend to teach.

Then I had a "Swamiji" moment! I was leaving Satsang one Tuesday evening and Swamiji was openly chatting with someone in the room and I heard her say that she needed teachers for DYMC. ZAP! What could I do? It was one of those moments when the stars align and you know what you must do! From that day on, teaching Introductory *Svaroopa*® Yoga at DYMC has been a delightful way for me to give back to one who has given me so much.

Rukmini served as my mentor and helped me to put together a six class introductory series. My first class was offered for free and the students

were mainly family and friends. Even so, I was very nervous. But following the Shavasana and Ujjayi Pranayama practice, it was so rewarding to see the bliss starting to overtake the stressed-out faces of my students that I was encouraged to move forward with ease. The Foundations training is completely thorough and effective and I can honestly say that Swamiji has everything laid-out precisely in the training materials to support successful teaching.

Since those early classes, I have continued to teach the six class introductory series at DYMC on a regular basis. Teaching the classes has given me a deeper understanding of yoga and its limbs. Now I clearly see the interconnection of the teachings, asanas, seva, japa and meditation. Being fortunate enough to teach at Downingtown Yoga, I am able to share this deeper understanding with my students. I always enjoy beginning and ending class with Swamiji's monthly contemplations.

Once the students have a few classes and are familiar with the routine, the questions begin. "Who is Swami Nirmalananda?" They browse the Amaya® shop. Some will buy her books. We begin to have discussions about *Svaroopa*® yoga. It is delightful to be able to extend an invitation to the students to attend Satsang to meet Swamiji for themselves and experience the teachings first hand. Some of my students have continued to attend Satsang and Swami Sunday, while most participate in the many online offerings that are available. And there are those too that are now devoted to Swamiji and *Svaroopa*® yoga beginning from a simple Introductory series, just like me.

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TEACHINGS

Conscious Community

By Swami Nirmalananda

When you go to a yoga class or participate in a bigger yoga event (like our recent Japathon! and conference), you can count on spending time with some wonderful people. Everyone is coming to get pain and stress relief, plus they want the “something more” that yoga is known for. When you begin to chat with other yogis and share your experiences, relationship develops. It is a different kind of relationship, a relationship based on consciousness.

So much of your life is about relationship. Nothing else in life is as important. When you have too little money, you can still be rich in relationships. But those who have great wealth and terrible relationships cannot find peace or happiness.

Unfortunately most relationships are based on desire. When you are not feeling happy, you turn to another person in the hopes that they will make you happy. You are motivated by a desire, or more strongly — by a need. You want them to fill you up.

Yoga relationships are different. They are based on inner fullness. With other yogis, you share the reliable inner bliss provided by *Svaroopaa*® yoga. This fullness arises from your own Self; it doesn't come from the other person. You start with the inner feeling of fullness, then you turn to the other person to share it.

What kind of community can we build together when we start in bliss? When consciousness is the basis for relationship? What a way to live! Do more yoga.

The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same

By Marlene Gast

What changes can you expect, now that all *Svaroopaa*® programs are under [Svaroopaa® Vidya Ashram](#)? The answer is this: more and enriched opportunities for what you have always loved.

You will find programs that excel in offering clear, comprehensive and reliable teachings to open your spine from tail to top, all in service of yoga's purpose of using your body to calm your mind, so that you know your own Self. Plus our full menu includes programs that focus on clearing and re-patterning your mind and accessing your own Self directly.

Amala (Lynn) Cattafi, President of the Ashram Board, says what excites her most is that we, as a *Svaroopaa*® Sciences, community are moving forward together. “Every communication, every Satsang, every yoga class, every YTT program, every Weekend Workshop, every Shaktipat Retreat will have the full range of completeness behind it; all events and programs going forward will have the *Svaroopaa*® Sciences lineage fully behind it. Having two separate organizations converge as One means a wall has been removed. No matter whether you want just asana programs, or just Guru programs, or a blend of both, the completeness of everything will benefit us all. Whether you choose to partake of the whole banquet or select a serving here or there, you will benefit from this interweaving, offering a new freedom in your yoga.”

Plan now for 2014! Our Yogimmersions and Teacher Trainings continue as previously planned; plus you will find new events on the calendar, including two new Shaktipat Retreats, as well as “On the Road” weekends and Swamiji's 2015 India trip. Now, as in the beginning of Master Yoga, Swami Nirmalananda serves as the conduit of the authentic teachings. Vidyadevi Stillman and Karobi Sachs continue in their roles and service as Premier

Svaroopaa® Yoga Teacher Trainers, even as new Trainers Devi (Elizabeth) McKenty and Julia Djaic continue their interning process. Plus we have nine additional faculty members, teaching Foundations courses and Weekend Workshops in their home town as well as yours. If you want to have one of us come, please invite us at programs@masteryoga.org. We love to deliver *Svaroopaa*® yoga to your doorstep!



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Love Those Phone Satsangs

By Priya Kenney

Whether you live one mile or thousands of miles from the Guru, the free [Q&A Phone Satsangs](#) and [Shishya Calls](#) are a fabulous opportunity to be in Swami Nirmalananda's presence and in the flow of Grace.

Living on the "left" coast of the US means I have to work a bit harder to be in the presence of the Guru but that is not a problem because I'm highly motivated. I crave being in her presence. When the time lapses between visits, I feel parched; my longing intensifies, sometimes to the point of it being painful. Lucky for me, the Shishya and Q & A calls come every 6 – 8 weeks.

These phone calls offer many additional benefits. We get to be in community with other yogis, hear about their experiences, learn from their questions and receive teachings from Swamiji. Many times, people ask questions that I didn't know I needed to hear the answers to. At some point during the 90-minute call, my perception of light changes. I am in deep meditation, drinking deeply of the presence of the Guru. Even if I don't get to ask a question, it doesn't matter. All my questions are answered; I am full and satisfied.

Saguna Goss and Jyoti Yacobi shared what it means to be on the calls. Saguna really values them. "It is an opportunity to be in Swamiji's presence even when I am not in Downingtown," she says. "It's an opportunity to be in a concentrated flow of Grace! How amazing! These calls always calm my mind and bring me back to my Self! Of course, that's the most important thing. But I also get a teaching that helps me with integrating yoga into my worldly life. And even if it is the common teaching of, 'Do More Japa!,' it's so wonderful to hear it again and again and again. Every time I hear it, things shift!"

While the Shishya and Q & A calls each have a different format and focus, they are also the same, says Saguna. "On the last Shishya call Swamiji gave us a summary of her recent trip to India. We all listened as she took us with her through the journey. In contrast, on the Q & A call, people ask questions about their *sadhana* (spiritual path) and Swamiji answers. Ultimately, at least for me, it's all about being in Swamiji's presence and the Grace. Grace flows through all the calls and therefore has the same effect — quieting my mind and opening me up to the experience of my Self."

Jyoti concurs, "Being on these calls and hearing Swamiji's voice connects me to the Source, to the Guru and keeps the practice of yoga alive and present in my life in every moment. They are an easy, tangible way to connect with Swamiji. She is so generous and gracious as she makes herself accessible for us to be in her presence, even when it is long distance. As I sit in my meditation room, I am immersed in the flow of Grace on the calls.

"In the Shishya calls, Swamiji tells personal stories, delivers beautiful teachings and elicits comments and questions from the Shishyas on the call. In the Q & A calls, yogis get the opportunity to ask personal questions about life, their yoga practice and the ways in which they integrate their spirituality in worldly life. It is tantra in action.

"I learn a great deal listening to other yogis' questions, dilemmas, struggles and successes. All of Swami's guidance and answers apply to me, as well. There is so much to discover about our own humanity and divinity, so much to experience and so much to integrate. It becomes so easy, graceful and palpable with the guidance of the Guru. Swamiji is walking the path in front of me and guides me every step of the way to the timelessness and vastness of my own being."

How and why do Jyoti and Saguna make time for the calls? Jyoti says, "How can I not? It is a chance to get answers to questions I have asked

myself for so long. Why was I born into this life? Why and who am I? Why do I even exist?"

Saguna describes how she makes time for the calls. "I put them in my calendar early and try as much as possible to have my work schedule fit around the calls. Of course, that isn't always possible and sometimes I have to leave the call early or arrive late but any bit of time on the call is worth it. Because I have a 9 – 5 office job, the calls often occur during my work day. I try my best to actually leave the office and go to a nearby coffee shop so that I can focus more on the call and don't get pulled away by co-workers. Sometimes I escape to a meeting room to get more privacy. Given my job; I do the best that I can because the calls help so much!"

To take advantage of the rich resource of Q & A and Shishya Calls, click [here](#).

Free Services

By Swami Nirmalananda

One of the specialties of an Ashram is free access to the teachings, in accordance with the tradition of the ancient and modern sages of India. *Svaroopā*® Vidya Ashram is supported by many generous yogis, through their donations as well as their seva, which makes these many free services available. Now consolidated with Master Yoga's programs, our free services have expanded and include the many services below.

ON-SITE PROGRAMS [click here](#)

Satsangs with Swami Nirmalananda (*free chant & meditation*)

Shree Guru Gita programs (*chant & meditation*)

PHONE CALLS [click here](#)

Q&A Phone Satsang with Swamiji

Shishya Member Phone Call with Swamiji

ONLINE SERVICES [click here](#)

Over 200 recordings of Swamiji's discourses

400 Shree Guru Gita pronunciation lessons

(*2 recordings per verse*)

Over 300 articles on yoga's teachings

E-MAILED TO YOU

Daily E-Quotes [click here](#)

"Tadaa!" e-zine [click here](#)

TEACHER DIRECTORY

Svaroopā® yoga teachers [click here](#)

Meditation teachers [click here](#)

It is your support that makes our offerings possible. To make a donation, [click here](#). To offer seva (volunteer work), [click here](#). Thank you for your interest.

Take the Road to Freedom: 2014 Initiatives

By Marlene Gast

You are the priority in our [2014 Initiatives](#). Designed to address the concerns you and other yogis raised, as well as difficulties you described in our recent Questionnaires, these Initiatives prioritize your yoga studies. At the same time, Swamiji and our Board recognize their fiduciary responsibility, so several initiatives are purely administrative, streamlining and organizing operations in order to be more efficient, reducing overhead while remaining dedicated to the yogis who share their lives with us.

We began our new organizational coherence last month. In our new consolidation, *Svaroopa*® Vidya Ashram took responsibility for the *Svaroopa*® yoga programs previously offered by Master Yoga (MYF). Last year's grave financial crisis was a stunning call for MYF's revitalization, with Swami Nirmalananda climbing aboard in the nick of time to steer the ship off the rocks. We could add "miraculously" — the miracle of unwavering dedication to the work of bringing the teachings of the *Svaroopa*® Sciences into the world. The Reawakening Initiatives she designed and executed built us a better ship to sail rough seas in the interim. To review the Reawakening Initiatives on page 8 of the February 2013 issue of *Tadaa!* click [here](#).

For me, it has been a privilege to serve as Vice-President of Communications on the MYF Board. With Swami Nirmalananda always at the helm, the rest of the crew who kept their footing in high seas and hauled hard are Shuchi Cilley (Board President), Louise Davis (Treasurer), Peter Gallagher (Secretary), Saguna Goss (Governance Chair & Recording Secretary), Prakash (David) Falbaum (Member at Large).

Survival was the first motivator, calling us into action last October. The 2013 Initiatives broadened the thrust into transparency, efficiency, modernization and prioritization of student needs. We accomplished a lot, prioritizing regular, robust communications so that you would know what's happening. We created this *Tadaa!* e-zine and our new blog, as well as providing SATYA members with newsletters and email updates as well as new benefits. We joined the 21st Century by implementing an online Enrollment System, making it quick and easy to register as well as providing financial systems that support quality management. Reconfiguring our Exton classroom along with the availability of the new meal plan also helped us move forward.

Our [2014 Initiatives](#) have a different flavor, due to moving forward under the (highly auspicious!) care of the Ashram.

- How wonderful to be looking forward to a residential training format with housing and meals on-site. In our Immersions, we can immerse in bliss and in the flow of Grace; we can look forward to having a true retreat, even when we are doing a professional training. We will share information with you as soon as we have some!
- No changes in 2014 programming, unless a program has low enrollment. Plus the Ashram is leaving the tuition structure the same, even through 2014 was the year that MYF was scheduled to raise their fees.
- We have heard your concerns about the expense of traveling to PA for trainings. Or maybe you need to return to Current Standing? Or you want to satisfy your yearning for more: you need the Quantity Discount. Click [here](#) to read the eligibility rules and dates on all of these, and get your 2014 plans going now!
 - Travel Subsidy — for SATYA members in current standing
 - EZ Return — 25% tuition discount (SATYA member returning to current standing)
 - Quantity Discount — 25% tuition discount on your 2nd and 3rd program in 2014

- Too much to read? Consolidated communications means fewer emails, yet continuing with the transparency that keeps you in-the-know. Our consolidated website and calendar has undergone a few upgrades since its debut a month ago — [click here](#) to check it out now!
- Want to phone? We now have a staff member answering the phone on Monday - Friday from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. Call us at 610.644.7555 — our new consolidated phone number. The other numbers you have will still work, as they simply forward to our new number. We want to be available to you!
- ATT prerequisites have been restructured.
- More free marketing support for teachers is coming.
- SATYA membership is now "Open Enrollment" with a two-tiered Teacher Directory on its way.
- Restructured SATYA dues give discounts to CSYT's (Certified *Svaroopa*® Yoga Teachers) as well as to those who pay on the annual enrollment basis.

You love *Svaroopa*® yoga. You love *Svaroopa*® Vidya meditation. You love retreats and phone courses with Swami Nirmalananda. Perhaps you love all of what is offered to you as a Svaroopi — or perhaps some offerings at this banquet appeal to you more than others. It's your choice! In the words of the philosopher William Curtis, "Our greatest power is the power of choice; our greatest freedom lies in the exercise of our power of choice." Let the 2014 Initiatives set you free!

Yogimmersions:

*weekend or longer programs
without prerequisites*

NOVEMBER 2013

- 2 - 3 [Connect with Your Breath](#)
East Falmouth MA
- 6 - 11 [Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga](#)
Brisbane Australia
- 9 - 10 [Svaroopa® Yoga & Meditation](#)
Canton NY
- 22 - 24 [Gateway of Your Heart](#)
Kripalu Center, Stockbridge MA

JANUARY 2014

- 24 - 26 [Shaktipat Retreat](#)
West Chester PA
- 26 - 28 [Experiential Anatomy](#)
Exton PA

FEBRUARY 2014

- 28 - Mar 2 [Weekend Workshop](#)
Brisbane Australia

Seva Is My Life

By Sarvataa Christie



Sarvataa Christie

It is my nature to be of service; always loving volunteer work, so seva as a yoga practice is a natural fit for me. I began doing seva because I wanted to put my time and energy to good use. I began with helping people make donations, then became an Enrollment Team member. Now I am an Ashram writer and soon to be an

Ashram musician. I've been able to do several short term projects and other sevas along the way; I am always quite pleased to be seva-ing!

Seva has changed the way I do things on the inside, not only during my "seva activities," but during all the activities of my life (which have all become seva). My teaching is seva, my sadhana (yoga practices) is seva, my seva is seva, my family is seva; everything is seva. My life is seva.

With seva, it isn't about what you are doing; it is about what's being done to you *while* you are doing seva. Seva will bring stuff up. But, isn't this why we practice? Because of Grace, stuff comes up, we experience the fire, and it is cleared! Yay!

I love being able to support my Guru and my community, all while deepening my sadhana. Seva has allowed me to detach from how it gets done, who gets it done, when it gets done, and getting it done in a certain way and with a certain result. There is always change! Change is good.

Service to the Guru is a very deep practice with such benefit. My seva is deepening my Guru-Disciple relationship. Swamiji can see me, truly see me, and puts me to task at things I never would have thought I could do. I am continually amazed! For Her, I can accomplish anything. She sees in us what we may not see in ourselves and draws out these hidden treasures.

For instance, when I initially applied for seva, a definite "NO" was my response to writing. I had always wanted to write, but had a crippling shyness; thus avoided it. I would have so many ideas rushing out and around, so unorganized and overwhelming. Now, I am fearless in my writing. Not only because of a clearer mind, but because I know Swamiji will edit it. Freedom...What a gift!

Seva has given me freedom. Freedom from seeking praise and avoiding blame; freedom to act; freedom to share my energy for the betterment of the planet; freedom to make mistakes; freedom to work without frenetic activity; freedom to learn and grow; freedom to do simply for the doing, instead of for a reward; freedom to be more me; freedom to work with fellow Svaroopis as a team; freedom to talk on the phone! Seva is healing. Seva is truly a gift!

Through my seva, I have forged relationships within our community. I am in contact with so many of you, so often! What a joy! I am continually in the flow of Grace, all while serving my beloved Guru. Seva is my life. My life is seva.

Words Can't Truly Express...



Kalyani Zavolas-Wallis

Kalyani Zavolas-Wallis, interviewed by Sarvataa Christie

I began seva because I felt that I wanted to give back to the Ashram, because of the experiences that I have had there with Swamiji. At the Shaktipat Retreat, my experiences were so profound and wonderful. I wanted to do what I could to help the Ashram function on the many levels that it does.

First I went to assist when the Ashram was being built, which was a fun and memorable experience. My job was to frame the many beautiful photos of Swami Nityananda, Swami

Muktananda and Swami Nirmalananda. I remember sitting in one of the bedrooms, cropping photos and putting them in frames, feeling blessed to be surrounded by them! After getting married, I wanted to do more. Even though I live about 2 hours away, I was able to come once a month on a day off, and help with cleaning Downingtown Yoga. Now I assist with listing events and updates on Facebook, which I can do from home. I still offer to assist in PA whenever I can take a day to drive out there. I enjoy making a day of it!

My experience of seva is a feeling of peace, a feeling of "doing what needs to be done". It helps to quiet my mind. I also enjoy knowing that I am helping to share the teachings, and that they can affect others' lives as much as they have affected mine.

Seva has taught me to work diligently. It has given me the confidence in knowing I can accomplish a task, even when it seems like something daunting, or something I hadn't done before.

I truly enjoy the feeling of helping others by spreading the work of Swamiji. Words can't truly express how *Svaroopaa*® yoga and the Ashram have affected my life, so it feels good to be able to give something back. I appreciate that my seva fits into my current lifestyle, something I can do from home.

The challenge I face with seva is that sometimes I want to be sure I do the work correctly for Swamiji. I want to do what needs to be done, and do it right! With my Facebook seva, and I am quite familiar with Facebook, I am still learning new things. I'm in the process of learning how to post links. Once I accomplish that, I will be thrilled!



Janice O'Brien

Janice O'Brien, interviewed by Sarvataa Christie

I volunteered to provide seva for the Ashram because I wanted to give back to Swamiji for all I have received. I am a webmaster. I have worked on both the Ashram site, as well as the Amaya Yoga Products site. Most recently, I created a page on the Ashram site to support the recent Japathon! I also was requested to write a blog about my recent seva, which I just submitted.

My experience is that seva is a wonderful way to show dedication and appreciation. I have also found it a great learning tool, for both worldly knowledge and knowledge of myself. I enjoy that I work with wonderful people, and I know I'm always doing something to help an organization that I believe in. I feel I get as much as I give.

My biggest challenge has been fitting seva into my busy life. I work full time, teach 2 yoga classes a week and just returned from *Embodiment*® Yoga Therapy training. Yet I always manage to carve out a few minutes to do what needs to be done.

From the Japathon!



"It was a glorious first Japathon. Led me deep within, then a beautiful pulsating mediation after. It was wonderful to share this moment with so many around the world. What a community! Happy Birthday to our Ashram." — Denise Hills

"In Richmond, 10 yogis came to the 10 a.m. celebration and 7 to our later local gathering. Some comments: 'Mantra became my breath. I had never experienced this before.' and 'Mantra, breath, life; waves of peace carrying me forward.'" — Deborah Woodward

"Loved the Japathon! After the initial chaos of multiplicity, a sweet coming together in the flow. Waves and waves of upwelling bliss!" — Priya Kenney

"We were 4 yoginis together doing the Japathon here in Denmark. I felt the connection with all of you doing the Japa together, as if I was sitting in the Meditation room in the Ashram together with my Guru. It was beautiful and deep!" — Trine Medhira Larsen

"We too were 4 yoginis together in Wisconsin joining with our huge kula of Svaroopis around the world. Thanks for providing our version of feeding the multitudes gathered together, hungry to experience the Divine within. And what a sweet meditation it was afterward. The flow of grace was palpable in the room-like a gentle warm fall breeze." — Maitreyi Margie Wilsman

"It's as if we all shared a meal together, a divine meal dripping with the sweet nectar of the mantra, from all over the world." — Vicharine Su Lee Chafin

"In Richmond, 10 yogis came to the 10 a.m. celebration and 7 to our later local gathering. Some comments: 'Mantra became my breath. I had never experienced this before.' and 'Mantra, breath, life; waves of peace carrying me forward.'" — Deborah Woodward

"I was here, alone, in my meditation spot. Was totally resistant to this at first. But had an amazing experience!!!! When all quieted, by the third meditation teacher, I was feeling cool heat along my upper spine. Went straight into meditation afterwards, keeping my ear bud in, feeling connected to all the other yogis doing the same thing. My spine began to gently sway, rocking, side to side, back and forth. And my day was brilliant as well. Loved the Japathon! Thank you to all that worked to get this together." — Diane Wells

I Am Shiva

You might ask, "Who or what is "Siva?" Swami Nirmalananda uses ancient mythology, psychology, classical teaching stories and yogic practices to answer that question, revealing your inherent Divinity, in Sanskrit named svaroop or "Siva (pronounced Shiva). Choose from four enrollment options, beginning October 23, 2013:

[Free intro phone call](#) — Wednesday October 16 from 7:00 - 8:30 pm

[Option #1](#) — monthly articles

[Option #2](#) — monthly articles & online audios

[Option #3](#) — monthly articles, audios and phone calls with Swamiji

[Option #4](#) — articles, audios, phone calls plus weekend retreat



Photo by Karabi Saha

Upcoming Programs

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

November 2013		
2 - 3	Connect With the Power of Your Breath	Addie Alex in East Falmouth MA
3	Diwali Swami Sunday 8:30 am - 12:15 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
4	I Am Shiva audio #1	Swamiji
5	Satsang 7:30 - 9:00 pm	Swamiji at DYMC
6 - 11	Foundations of Svaroopaa® Yoga	Janaki Murray in Brisbane Australia
7	Shishya Guru Gita 6:30 - 7:45 am (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
8 - 12	New Dates! Foundations of Svaroopaa® Yoga	Bhakta & Devi in Exton PA
9 - 10	Svaroopaa® Yoga & Meditation	Addie Alex in Canton NY
10	Swami Sunday 8:30 am - 12:15 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
11	Meditation Made Easy 8:00 - 9:00 pm (EDT)	Vidyadevi at DYMC
12	Satsang 7:30 - 9:00 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
13	I Am Shiva call #1 7:00 - 8:30 pm (EDT)	Swamiji
14	Shishya Guru Gita 6:30 - 7:45 am (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
15	Bondage and Freedom call #7 11:00 am - 12:30pm (EDT)	Swamiji Phone
15 - 24	YTT Level 3	Karobi and Vidyadevi in Exton
16	Teaching Svaroopaa® Sutras 1:30 - 3:30 pm (EDT)	Swamiji Phone
17	Swami Sunday 8:30 am - 12:15 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
19	Meditation Made Easy 8:00 - 9:00 pm (EDT)	Vidyadevi at DYMC
21	Shishya Guru Gita 6:30 - 7:45 am (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
22 - 24	Gateway of the Heart	Vidyadevi at Kripalu Center in Stockbridge MA
24	Swami Sunday 8:30 am - 12:15 pm (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC
25	I Am Shiva article #2	Swamiji
28	Shishya Guru Gita 6:30 - 7:45 am (EDT)	Swamiji at DYMC

Master Yoga & Svaroopaa® Vidya Ashram

*From a single source,
Two streams emerged.
Now flowing together — strong, clear, pure;
Still dedicated to the One,
That One that is your own Self.*



PLAN AHEAD

Plan your trainings for the coming year with the calendar below.

NOVEMBER 2013		
2 – 3	Connect with Your Breath	East Falmouth MA
6 – 11	Foundations	Brisbane Australia
8 – 12	Foundations	Exton PA
9 – 10	Svaroopa® Yoga & Meditation	Canton NY
15 – 24	YTT – Level 3	Exton PA
22 – 24	Gateway of Your Heart at Kripalu Center	Stockbridge MA
30 – Dec 1	Gateway of Your Heart	Niantic CT
DECEMBER 2013		
3 – 9	ATT 403: Lower Spinal Release	Exton PA
JANUARY 2014		
4 – 8	ATT 201: Teaching Half Day Workshops	Exton PA
17 – 21	Foundations	Exton PA
13 – 18	Svaroopa® Sutras Teacher Training Retreat	Downingtown PA
24 – 26	Shaktipat Retreat	West Chester PA
26 – 28	Experiential Anatomy	Exton PA
28 – Feb 2	Embodiment® Yoga Therapy Training	Exton PA
FEBRUARY 2014		
7 – 9	The Shavasana Course	Rhode Island
14 – 16	Foundations Review	Exton PA
16 – 18	Embodiment® Weekend	Exton PA
18	Guru & Self begins	Multi-Media Course
19 – Mar 2	Meditation Teacher Training	PA Retreat Center
21 – 23	Weekend Workshop	Atlanta GA
28 – Mar 2	Weekend Workshop	Brisbane Australia
MARCH 2014		
1 – 2	Weekend Workshop	Australia
7 – 16	YTT – Level 2	Australia
19 – 23	ATT 201: Teaching Half Day Workshops	Australia
19 – 23	Foundations	Exton PA
28 - 30	Shaktipat Retreat	Calgary Canada
APRIL 2014		
4 – 13	YTT – Level 2	Exton PA
11 – 15	MYF – SVA Retreat	PA Retreat Center
18 – 20	Gateway of Your Heart	TBD
25 – 26	Gateway of Your Heart	Virginia
25 – 27	Foundations Review	Exton PA
28 – 30	Teaching Without Props	Exton PA
30	Meditation Teacher Upgrade begins	Multi-Media Course
30 – May 1	Shaktipat Retreat	West Chester PA

MAY 2014		
1	Sutras on Self begins	Phone Course
3 – 9	Teaching at Yoga Conferences	Exton PA
16 – 25	YTT – Level 4	Exton PA
JUNE 2014		
3 – 9	ATT 411: Upper Spinal Release	Exton PA
11 – 13	Foundations Review	Exton PA
13 – 22	YTT – Level 1	Exton PA
20 – 22	Shaktipat Retreat	tba
26 – Jul 2	ATT 531: Abdominals	Exton PA
JULY 2014		
6 – 9	Enliven & Advance – Level 2	Exton PA
11 – 13	Svaroopa® Yoga & Meditation	Boise ID
11 – 13	I Am Shiva Retreat	tba
14	Purposeful Living begins	Phone Course
16 – 20	Foundations	Exton PA
AUGUST 2014		
8 – 10	Experiential Anatomy	Exton PA
10 – 15	Embodiment® Yoga Therapy Training	Exton PA
15 – 17	Shaktipat Retreat	West Chester PA
17 – 21	MYF-SVA Retreat	PA Retreat Center
22 – 24	Weekend Workshop	San Juan Capistrano CA
SEPTEMBER 2014		
3 – 5	Foundations Review	Exton PA
4 – 7	Meditation Teacher Upgrade Retreat	PA Retreat Center
5 – 14	YTT – Level 1	Exton PA
19 – 23	Foundations	Exton PA
20 – 27	Meditation Group Leader Training Retreat	PA Retreat Center
29 – Oct 5	ATT 262: Yoga Therapy — Treating Pain	Exton PA
OCTOBER 2014		
10 – 19	Swamiji on tour in Australia	Australia
10 – 19	YTT – Level 3	Exton PA
24 – 26	Guru & Self Weekend Retreat	PA Retreat Center
NOVEMBER 2014		
3 – 9	ATT 402: Deeper Practice	Exton PA
14 – 16	Weekend Workshop	Warren MA
15 – 16	Slow Down!	Dekalb IL
DECEMBER 2014		
5 – 14	YTT – Level 2	Exton PA

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.

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

Pawanmuktasana

Alt Leg (Alternate Leg Pose)

Variation: Around the Block

Sanskrit: *pawana* = air, *mukta* = liberating

Concerns & Dangers: If you had hip replacement surgery more than 6 months ago, this variation is safe. If your doctor told you NOT to move your knee past the midline of your body, do NOT do this variation.



This info is in addition to the Alt Leg Basics (Basics Pose Cards)

INSTRUCTIONS

To Do Before: Alt Leg is usually done after Shavasana & Ujjayi.

Preparation: Lie on your back holding your bent knees with both hands, your knees touching. Soften your legs so their weight sinks your lower spine deeper into the floor.

Moving In: Move both hands to your right knee & lay your left leg on your Shavasana stack. Use your hands to support & align the knee of your bent leg in line with your earlobe, so your leg will soften fully. Don't let your knee drift out toward your side or in toward your midline.

Around the Block: You'll be moving your knee "Around the Block" — meaning you move it to three distinct locations in the air (like the corners in going around the block) & returning back to where it is now.

- Use your hands to move your right knee away from your chest, toward the ceiling, until your elbows lock straight. If you raised your foot, allow it to lower again. This is the first "corner." Pause here, holding your knee & allowing your leg to relax, for 2-3 easy breaths.
- For your next move, keep your elbows straight so your knee is "far away" from your chest. Move your right knee slowly across your centerline, while leaving the back of your right hip resting on the floor. Use your hands to glide your knee over into alignment with your left earlobe. Pause here, allowing your leg to relax, for 2-3 easy breaths.
If the back of your right hip lifted, return to home base (your knee in line with your right ear) & go through your first two moves more slowly, with your knee farther away from your chest. You may need to place your hands in your knee crease or hold onto your pant leg (see "Pose Angles") in order to get your knee farther away while still your hands still support your knee.
- For your third move, bend your elbows to slowly move your knee in toward your left ribs, still keeping it in line with your left ear. The back of your right hip may lift a little off the floor as you do this. Your knee will not be as close to your ribs on this side as it was on your other side. If your knee comes in toward your ribs as much as on your other side, you have "Deceptive Flexibility" (see *When to Use).
Do not pull your right knee toward your left shoulder or toward the floor on your left side — only toward your ribs. Make sure your right knee is still in line with your left earlobe. Pause here, holding your knee & allowing your leg to relax, for 2-3 easy breaths.
- Your last move, completing your trip "Around the Block" — with your elbows bent, slowly move your knee back into line with your right earlobe. Your knee will sink closer toward your chest.

Daily Practice Theme

Pawanmuktasana – Variation: Around the Block

Alt Leg (Alternate Leg Pose)



T
FB
LSR
RRP

Pawanmuktasana

Alt Leg (Alternate Leg Pose)

Variation: Around the Block

Staying in the Pose: Allow your bent leg to soften so its weight leans through your hip for a deepening release from your leg through your hip & into your tailbone. [Minimum: 45 seconds; Maximum: 90 seconds]

Moving Out: Bend your straight leg, bring it toward your chest & hold both knees.

Resting/Observing: Notice the differences in your legs, hips & the two sides of your low back. Can you identify the length in one side of your tailbone? Do your other side.

To Do After: A pose for your sacrum, the best one to do next is Alt Leg Diagonal.

PROPS

Shavasana Stack: If you don't have blankets for a Shavasana stack, use *Props – Chair (like in Shavasana).

Head Cushion: If your head tips back when you reach your hands & arms forward to hold your knees & it doesn't relax back down once you have a firm hold on your knees, you need a folded blanket or two under your head.

POSE ANGLES

Hands Holding Knee: Hold near your knee in one of these ways —

Holding the top knob of your shinbone, or in the soft space of your knee just above your shinbone knob. Intertwine your fingers if you can do so without having to pull your knee toward your ribs. The weight of your hands may make your knee lean toward your ribs, but don't "pull" it in.

Holding in your knee crease (along the back of your thigh, in the back of your knee). Get your palms in as deep as possible & tuck your thumbs in alongside your fingers.

Holding fistfuls of fabric on the sides of your pant leg near your knee.

Extended Leg: Your leg that is resting on the Shavasana stack must be in the Shavasana leg alignment.

Reliable Spinal Release: Your tailbone (T)

Possible Spinal Release: Your sacrum

Benefits of Around the Block: In addition to the basic Alt Leg benefits, this "seats" your thighbone properly in your hip socket, so the changes get past your hip all the way into your spine, giving deeper & more reliable tailbone release.

Movement Type: Lower Spinal Release Pose (LSR); Forward Bend (FB); Re-Release Pose (RRP)

When to Use: This variation deepens the reliable tailbone release in Alt Leg Pose. It is especially beneficial if you have "Deceptive Flexibility," overstretched hip ligaments & very tight spinal muscles (especially tailbone & sacrum muscles).