



*Svaroopaa<sup>®</sup> Vidya Ashram*

*kaadaa!*

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

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## **Editorial**

# ***Lifestyle Change***

**By Swami Nirmalananda**

Modern medicine excels at many things, but confesses they can do little for conditions that require “lifestyle change.” Fortunately, yoga excels at creating lifestyle change, simply because it makes you feel so good that you don’t want to go back to feeling bad.

Once you experience the benefits of an open spine, open breath, open heart and expanded mind, you can’t go back to how you used to be. Once you experience the deeper dimensions of your own existence, you can’t go back to who you used to be. This is a lifestyle change.

One of my favorite programs to teach is the “Yoga Pain Clinic,” where I explain how *Svaroopaa<sup>®</sup>* yoga works to people who need help with their bodies. In my introductory remarks, I tell them, “Yoga will change you. It will make you happier, friendlier, kinder, more understanding and compassionate, more intelligent, more efficient, less anxious, and you’ll find it easier to love and to feel others’ love for you.” This is a lifestyle change.

If that were all that yoga offered, it would be fantastic. Yet yoga offers more; particularly *Svaroopaa<sup>®</sup>* yoga offers more. Any yoga is good yoga, for it changes how you feel, but *Svaroopaa<sup>®</sup>* yoga specializes in changing who you feel yourself to be. Instead of being at the mercy of life’s events and the people around you, you discover an inner sense of self that gives you both

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# Tadaa!

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Swamiji

peace and confidence. Your choices come from a deeper inner knowing so they are more dharmic, more right-on for you and for the reason you were born.

It isn't yoga that is changing you. It is the

deeper inner experience that changes you. A famous psychologist, Abraham Maslow, studied "peak experiences," like when you climb to a mountain peak and have a life-changing experience. But I call them "peek experiences," because Svaroopa® yoga gives you a peek at your own Divine Essence every time you decompress your spine, tail to top. The stories of yogis in this issue of "Tadaa!" share their peek inward, that change in who they are, as well as the changes in how they are. Your future holds the same promise. Do more yoga.

# Embodiment® Yoga Therapy: Amazement after Amazement

By Barb Helms-Bot



Barb Helms-Bot

I have given well over 100 *Embodiment*® Yoga Therapy sessions since taking *Embodiment*® Yoga Therapy training last year. I must say that it is amazing to see the results clients are having, but I want to tell you about the healing of my 91-year-old father. I started an Overlap Healing program of 90 sessions with my dad right after I completed my August 2014 training. As of December 4 he is on his 50th session, and the changes we are seeing are truly heartwarming and life changing. His quality of life has improved so much!

We visit relatives in Hawaii every December. In 2013, Dad managed to make the plane ride but was so weak, tired and riddled with back pain that he could not even take a short walk. He was unable to walk at all unless assisted. He was not sleeping and had severe restless legs.

Fast forward to December 2014 — he is taking walks every day unassisted. He has gone from a walker to a cane, which he sometimes doesn't need. His walking is more fluid, faster and less wobbly. There are days he has little-to-no back pain on his walks. He is sleeping better at night, and his restless legs are under control. He is more aware of his body and mind. He is simply more alive, engaged and joyful. He honestly keeps looking younger. He is interested again in activities such as reading, and his mind is sharper, including his sometimes slightly inappropriate humor. Part of his charm! As old mental and physical patterns are unraveling, I have observed him "retrace" old issues: lung congestion, digestive issues, impatience, etc. Moreover, Dad measured an inch taller at the doctor a couple of months ago. As we got ready to leave cold Minnesota for another Hawaiian Christmas, I remembered watching Dad deteriorate a year ago. I never dreamed he would be able to make this trip again, let alone be well enough to take walks and enjoy himself.

How synchronistic that, as I was writing about his progress, the phone rang and guess who it was. My dad! He rarely picks up the phone to call me, but he wanted to give me a report of how he was feeling. I document everything he

*"This time with my Dad has truly been a spiritual journey for both of us; it has been perhaps the single greatest joy of my life."*

reports and I video tape him periodically to reinforce for him that he is improving, since he can be a bit cynical. Here is his report for December 4th: "I slept the best I ever have. I woke up at 7:00 am and wasn't tired like I normally am. I have never awakened so early and felt that refreshed. My neck and shoulders feel good, and even my lower back is better. Plus, my bowels are working." (That has been an ongoing issue. I will spare you the details.)

This time with my dad has truly been a spiritual journey for both of us; it has been perhaps the single greatest joy of my life. I lost my mom over 10 years ago to a disease similar to Lou Gehrig's. I always wished there was something I could do to help her. Being able to provide something that allows Dad to heal is profoundly rewarding and humbling. I am deeply grateful to Swami for her Grace and this beautiful practice. I am also indebted to Kusuma, and all of the Teacher Trainers who dedicate their time, heart and expertise to training people like me.

I am especially grateful to my amazing teachers in Minnesota: Bhakta (Leslie) Johnson and Ekamati (Diane) Tsurutani. I came to *Svaroopaa*® yoga with debilitating pain, and the body I am living in now is pain free most of the time. It is through their guidance, patience and talent as *Svaroopaa*® yoga teachers and therapists that I was able to heal on all levels. I have always said I was searching for an actual experience of the Divine, and here I am. My whole way of being in this world has transformed on every level, and it is affecting the people in my life as well. I know that will continue to change and evolve with time.

Receiving positive feedback from the rest of my yoga clients as well propels me forward. It is such a joy to teach this style of yoga to others. Although I resisted teaching initially, Grace intervened and the students showed up in spite of my reservations and insecurities. I was an elementary teacher for many years. I guess once a teacher always a teacher.

*"tadaa dra.s.tu.h svaruupe'vasthaanam"*

— Patanjaliís *Yoga Sutras* 1.3

*"In the moment your mind stops, you experience the bliss of svaroopaa."*

— Rendered by Swami Nirmalananda

# Deceptive Flexibility

By Rama (Ruth) Brooke



Rama (Ruth) Brooke

It's good to be flexible, isn't it? Swami Nirmalananda coined the term, Deceptive Flexibility, but when you first hear it in reference to your own body, it sounds full of criticism and judgment. Yet Svaroopa® yoga has a highly compassionate approach to treating this dangerous condition. It begins with the experience, as is so often true in this yoga, with the understanding coming later.

When I first began practicing Svaroopa® yoga, I could not identify the spinal release. Long after yoga peers began to feel their bodies and the changes the yoga provided, I still could not feel my spine changing. I could not find my tailbone in Slow Motion Dive or Alternate Leg. The sacrum poses were uncomfortable for me, not blissful. I knew the yoga was good for me on some level; I could tell it was quieting my mind, relieving stress and even easing tension

"somewhere" in my body. I was used to physical activities that were strenuous and painful, and wasn't aware that yoga should be different. When I heard other students' physical descriptions of spinal release, I just couldn't relate.

Only in Yoga Teacher Training (YTT), when I began receiving the customized Deceptive Flexibility alignments and propping, did I begin to feel the physical changes more tangibly. Spinal release became real and reliable, less ethereal and theoretical. I learned to prop and align my body more carefully, backing off on how far I was going into the angles, so I began experiencing the poses in a whole new way. Initially, it seemed as though I was getting worse instead of better, but I had been pre-warned that this was part of the process. Gradually my joints began stabilizing, and the chronic pain I had lived with eventually subsided.

I took the Deceptive Flexibility training because I needed it. A detailed review of our

foundational poses is a precursor to the customizations you learn in order to treat Deceptive Flexibility. Swami Nirmalananda describes the treatment:

Your joints must be stabilized in order for you to get spinal release, but you must get spinal release in order to stabilize your joints. This Catch-22 leaves most yogis in pain! So we customize the pose angles and propping to protect your joints and effectively target your spine. Once you get the spinal release, you get everything.

Most yogis have at least a little Deceptive Flexibility, so the specialized training gives you tools to work with your own body as well as learning how to identify and treat deceptively

flexible students. Most importantly, you learn about the mindset that underlies the condition. These yogis are highly intelligent, but often resistant to taking care of themselves, so they need meaningful and thorough explanations about the problem and the process. A deceptively flexible yogi moves into many poses more easily or more deeply than others so they don't want to give that up, but they pay the price in pain and eventually arthritis, so they truly need this intervention.

*"Most yogis have at least a little Deceptive Flexibility, so the specialized training gives you tools to work with your own body as well as learning how to identify and treat deceptively flexible students."*

Overstretched joint ligaments mean that the usual propping and alignments aren't enough for you. Your joints are "floppy," so the angles of the poses cannot get past your joints to reach your spinal muscles effectively. But once you get aligned and propped for the condition, you'll be hooked on spinal release and on Svaroopa® yoga — because it works. You'll want to *do more yoga!*



*"If you have or suspect you have deceptive flexibility, or have students you suspect have deceptive flexibility, you need to do this class. The information is invaluable."*

— Eliot Hanuman Tigerlily

## EYTS Deceptive Flexibility

April 26-29 in Malvern PA

Learn how to spot deceptively flexible students, how to prop them for maximum benefit, and how to help them heal the damage they are unknowingly causing.

Successful completion of this course will maintain your Current Standing status for Continuing Education. To register or for more information, call 610-806-2119 or email [programs@svaroopayoga.org](mailto:programs@svaroopayoga.org)

# Nora Beckjord, CSYT

By Premdas (Rob) Gold

Hailing from the Twin Cities, Nora Beckjord was introduced to Svaroopa® yoga while working as an International Sales Director for a large manufacturing company. After a decade of traveling nearly every week for work, Nora was looking for yoga she could do on-the-go to manage the pain she was experiencing in her body. Within a year of her first class, her job was eliminated from her company. Since she loved the way her body felt from classes, it was an easy decision to head off for YTT, though she admits to not having any clear expectations.



Nora Beckjord

Now a Certified Svaroopa® Yoga Teacher, Nora's continuing her education through in a variety of professional trainings focused on a gentle yoga track. She feels these trainings will make her a better teacher, and give her a lot of special skills that will provide the greatest benefits to her students. She found the variations and adjustments from two recent trainings, Teaching Half-Day Workshops as well as Deeper Practice, to be of value for students who need extra propping and support. She says these trainings have provided her with "enough material to teach new things

for a long time." She also loved the study of Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* and looks forward to more from that quintessential text in trainings to come.

Her current life circumstances are completely different from when she began Svaroopa® yoga, yet Nora continues with her own practice and teaching regular classes. When asked why she teaches, Nora's response isn't about herself. "I have some really great students and I've enjoyed

*"I always hope that my teaching is worthy of their dedication, because (my students) not only do the practice in class, they also live it."*

watching them blossom through their yoga practice over the years. I always hope that my teaching is worthy of their dedication, because they not only do the practice in class, they also live it."

**"Yoga makes you feel better before you step out, so you go into the world carrying that sense of inner fullness with you."**

— Swamiji & Vidyadevi

## Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga

"This program had a very profound effect on me. I left having a deeper understanding of Svaroopa® yoga and a better sense of myself."

- Apr 9-13 [Foundations](#) in St. Paul MN
- Apr 21-25 [Foundations](#) in Atlanta GA
- May 6-10 [Foundations](#) in Boise ID
- May 13-17 [Foundations](#) in Malvern PA

### Are you a SATYA Member?

SATYA Members in Current Standing get a 40% discount off tuition when they retake a Foundations Course in PA! To register or for more information, call 610.806.2119 or e mail [programs@svaroopayoga.org](mailto:programs@svaroopayoga.org)



# New Website & Teacher Directory

By Priya Kenney



David Falbaum

After his day job as a project manager, Prakash (David) Falbaum, Board Member and Sevite Web Wizard, puts in two to five hours of seva weekly on the website. During the most intense crunch time, the development of the new consolidated website took him 40 hours a week in addition to his regular job. That is taking your seva seriously.

A team of sevites work with Prakash to keep our new website functioning smoothly. Pam Church manages the daily E-Quotes, and Susan Daniel is migrating documents from the old website to the new one. The old Ashram site is linked to the new one and functions like a library, holding all the articles and audios Swamiji has created, which Glen Christensen has managed for several years. Now all these free resources will be moved over as well.

*“Out of everything I’ve done for both our organizations [Master Yoga and Svaroopā® Vidya Ashram] the Teacher Directory is my karma burner... it almost felt like vichara, like a moving mind that kept on looping around over and over again.”*

—David Falbaum

Developing our new Teacher Directory also has a lot of people working behind the scenes. Hard work and perseverance is paying off. Prakash is confident our new enrollment system will be synched successfully with

the on-line Teacher Directory and operating smoothly in the next month or two. At that point, as teachers’ contact information changes and as they complete certifications, their new data will be automatically uploaded, eliminating the need for manual updating.

Keeping our on-line Teacher Directory current in the last two years has been challenging due to the Reawakening and the Consolidation, changes the Ashram has been through. We’ve been through three different enrollment systems in three years. The Ashram has hired a top-notch web-site/database developer who is working to move the data through an API (Application Program Interface) so the enrollment system and website will be in sync with one another.

“Out of everything I’ve done for both our organizations [Master Yoga and Svaroopā® Vidya Ashram] the Teacher Directory is my karma burner,” says Prakash. Making it all work with so many moving pieces, including merging organizations, staff changes, five websites and changing enrollment systems, Prakash says that “it almost felt like vichara, like a moving mind that kept on looping around over and over again.” He is relieved things are on a stable platform now.

Svaroopis have given us a lot of positive input about the new website. People say they like the clean look of the site, it’s laid out well and they can find what they’re looking for. Prakash welcomes input and is continually refining the site to make it as user-friendly as possible. Your feedback has led to the addition of an Enrollment System login on the main page and adding several places where you can access your online Course Materials.

This process is a wonderful example of Shiva’s dance: proper functioning of the system being “veiled” from us, evolution and destruction of the old system and site, creation of the new system and site, and now maintaining and nurturing the new site. Once we are in the site, it’s all there for us to discover — the revelation of Grace.

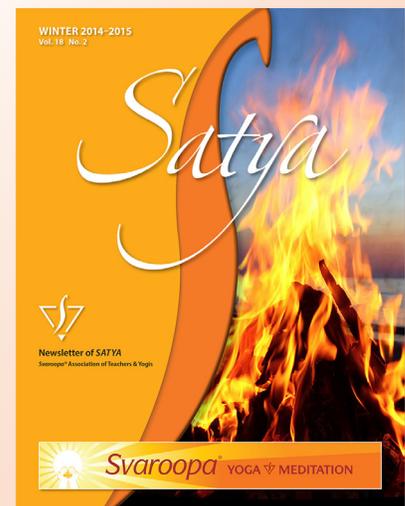
*Relish in the continuous flow of deeper teachings, stories and clarifications in your practice.*

**As a SATYA Member, you receive exclusive access to our SATYA pages — a collection of teacher resources ranging from marketing info and support to insurance information.**

**Benefits include:**

- Monthly Contemplation articles for distribution to students
- Monthly Quotes for you to offer at the end of class
- Free Marketing Course (monthly telephone calls)
- SATYA E-letter...And much, much more.

[Click here](#) to learn more about SATYA Membership or contact us at **610-806-2119**.



# Shifting Gears

By Amala Lynn Cattafi Heinlein,  
SVA Board President



Amala Lynn Cattafi Heinlein

During our recent Ganeshpuri Retreat, it became very evident to me that our organization has entered into a new phase. We are no longer “reawakening”; we are fully alive and awake! We are no longer experiencing a rebirth; we are now in young adulthood, stepping out into the world. We are consolidated and moving into a new phase, shifting gears.

Swamiji’s teachings in Ganeshpuri were focused on

Vishnu, the cosmic energy of nourishment, sustenance, maintenance and compassion. Vishnu’s Divine energy is enshrined in your heart. While the energy of Shiva is about destruction, ending that which no longer serves you, Vishnu is nurture. I can see why Swamiji gave these teachings; it is about where we are as an organization.

The Ashram is now fully formed, yet growing every day. Our growth focus this year is on our new local building called Lokananda (Abode of Bliss), on expanding the national and international *Svaroopaa*® yoga footprint, and on training sevites & staff to provide you with exceptional service.

While there will always be change, even the chaos of creativity, within the Ashram, it is actually the play of Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu — destruction, creation and nurture respectively — removing what is not working for us, creating what is needed from the ashes and nurturing you all with Grace. This happens for you on a deeply personal level too; it’s part of the cycle of life.

OM svaroopaa svasvabhava namo namah



## Shaktipat Retreats

The profound inward path of *Svaroopaa*® Vidya begins with you receiving shaktipat diksha, which is the initiation that awakens your Kundalini energy for the highest purpose of human life — the knowing of your own Divine Self. Attend an upcoming weekend meditation retreat to receive shaktipat formally given by Swami Nirmalananda.

May 1-3 [Malvern PA](#)

Sept 25-27 [Malvern PA](#)

Oct 23-25 [Boston MA](#)

For more information, contact our Enrollment Advisors today. Call 610.806.2119 or email [programs@svaroopayoga.org](mailto:programs@svaroopayoga.org).

## Vata Calming Roasted Cauliflower

An Ashram favorite!

- 1 head fresh cauliflower broken into medium florets
- 1/8 c warmed coconut oil
- 1/2 c veggie stock
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon tumeric
- 1 teaspoon fenugreek
- pinch salt
- pinch pepper

### Instructions:

Warm oven 375°F degrees.

Combine oil and stock in large bowl and add florets. Toss to coat evenly then place on foil lined sheet tray or roasting pan (to simplify clean up). Sprinkle evenly with seasonings.

Place in oven for 20 minutes. Remove and stir on sheet tray to further allow seasoning and stock mixture to coat.

Serve warm in nice bowl. Can be reheated in microwave if need be.

A great side dish or vegetable, with seasonings that are suited for the cold winter months.

Enjoy!

योगा युक्तमिदं

By Chef Anthony



# Beyond My Idea of Grace

By Matrika Gast



Matrika Gast

By definition Grace is a gift; you can't earn Grace. You satisfy no requirements in order to receive this gift, the gift of revelation of one's self as the One Divine Self. Yet there is a process, a set of practices, to cultivate the opening to Guru's Grace.

On our recent group yatra (pilgrimage) to Ganeshpuri, India, there was a process, a set of practices in which we were immersed to systematically turn our awareness inward, day by day, to create the inner opening to Grace. Our practices included the familiar and always powerful immersion ingredients: Shree Guru Gita chant, asana class and satsang (meditation program) with Swami Nirmalananda. Yet it was the practice of daily visits to Bhagavan Nityananda's mahasamadhi temple that took so many of us so deep into the experience of Self.

Well before dawn each morning, we went to the temple for Nityananda's abhishek (ceremonial bath) and arati (candle flame ceremony). Bhavani (Belle) Mann describes her experience on our first morning:

*At 4:20 this morning most of our group, even many who had arrived only two hours before, were sitting on the floor in the Nityananda Temple. Suddenly, the air was rent by a thunderous chorus of soundings from a conch shell, ringing bells, cymbals and kettle drums. What a nice way to wake up Nityananda's bigger-than-life size, golden murti for his morning bath! A murti is an enlivened statue, and Nityananda's "Sakti was certainly present.*

*For the next two hours, He was bathed with water, yogurt, milk and honey and then rinsed off so lovingly by the Temple priests and the four women guests who were honored with the opportunity to help today. With priests chanting in Sanskrit the whole time, Nityananda was bathed, dressed and adorned with garlands of flowers that we had just bought from the vendors outside. To reach Nityananda's head when draping the garlands, the priest and guest assistants climb on a tall stool behind the murti. At the end of the ceremony He was shining and bedecked.*

Recalling her experience, Betsy Bommer says:

*In the abhishek I became aware once again that I am the silence in the midst of activity of my senses. I am the silence out of which comes the activity. India has deepened, expanded, enlivened my living. My heart and mind are open to the more of living. I am graced beyond words.*

Yogeshwari (Lissa) Fountain shares the insights that unfolded for her:

*Of all our practices, attending the 4:30 am abhishek, the bathing and adornment of Nityananda's murti (statue) continues to reveal new inner truths each day... the awareness that I am that source of the Divine. It is worthy and holy to bathe the murti of Nityananda, but how am I handling this murti — me? My body, my mind, my soul? Proper diet? Discipline in practices? This is*

*"Of all our practices, attending the 4:30 am abhishek, the bathing and adornment of Nityananda's murti (statue) continues to reveal new inner truths each day...the awareness that I am that source of the Divine."*

*worthy and holy. And yet I realize that without a continued inner worship of my Divine Self, it all becomes mere ritual. This retreat has made me want so much more.*

"The More" that doubtless each of us sought in going on this yatra flowed through all the practices. Our daily Svaroop® yoga classes were supervised by Vidyadevi Stillman and taught by Bhakta Johnson, Kamala (Michele) Gross and Yogeshwari (Lissa) Fountain. Yes, our spines were reliably opened, and through our bodies we enjoyed immersion in the deeper dimensions of Being.

Two hours of satsang with Swami Nirmalananda each day immersed us in the ancient tales of Vishnu's incarnations through the ages. Vishnu is the sustaining power of God — the cosmic energy of compassion and nurture. Swamiji told us the stories of 9 incarnations including Krishna, Arjuna's charioteer and teacher in the Bhagavad Gita. And then she explained that some see Nityananda as an incarnation of this powerful and protective power of the Divine. Thus we dove deep into a veritable flood of Grace.

As with any Svaroop® yoga and Svaroop® Vidya Meditation immersion, every activity and event is designed to turn our attention inward. The goal is always your own individual experience of the one Self, beyond emotion, beyond thought, beyond mind. In Ganeshpuri, the home of our lineage, the whole process is supercharged with incarnated cosmic force.

On our last day in Ganeshpuri, Swamiji served as "guest assistant" in the bathing of Nityananda's murti, accompanied by SVA Board members Amala Cattafi, Saguna Goss, Karuna Beaver and myself. I had always envisioned our lineage as a line of Gurus on a path extending back into history — Bhagawan Nityananda who settled in Ganeshpuri in the 1930's; Swami Muktananda who received Shaktipat from Nityananda in 1947 and established Gurudev Siddha Peeth in the village; and our own Guru — Swami Nirmalananda who became enfolded in the teachings of Muktananda, her Baba, beginning in the 1970s.

But in this abhishek, I saw our lineage as uplifted beyond the constraints of ordinary time and space. I could feel our eternal, enlivened and fully present lineage in every moment. The existence of our lineage in the Eternal Now was palpable. It's an awareness that changes everything.

Feeling the Present Moment-ness of our lineage is an aspect of Guru's Grace, just a wisp of a breath away, so easy to simply open to the Knowing of Self. It's so easy to turn inward to the fullness of ever-present Self, and simply rest in the incarnated power of Vishnu's Divine Protection. What an unending and priceless immersion!

# Diving Deeply into the Self

By Karuna Beaver



Maitreyi (Margie) Wilsman



Betsy Bommer

In Ganeshpuri, we dove deeply into our eternal essence, into Self with a capital S. We replaced normal routines and external busy-ness with the ebb and flow of full days of consciousness practices, Grace and introspection.

This little village northeast of Mumbai is where Swami Nirmalananda sat at the feet of her beloved teacher and Guru, Swami Muktananda. It's where Muktananda sat at the feet of His Guru, Bhagawan Nityananda. Ganeshpuri is truly Nityananda's village; the temple there is dedicated to Him as are the village residents. Pilgrims come from India and around the world to pay homage to Nityananda, in formal temple ceremonies like the morning ritual bathing (abhishek) of His murti (statue) as well as in meditation periods in His home or the bungalow where He took mahasamadhi (when He left His body).

Our *Svaroopa*® group started each day at abhishek and had time for meditation afterwards. After breakfast, we chanted the Guru Gita and then enjoyed a yoga class. After lunch we had free time, followed at 4 o'clock by a daily satsang with Swamiji. After our early dinner, we could pay another visit to the temple, where Nityananda, wrapped in shawls and warmed by a knitted stocking cap, was tucked in for the night. Thus closed a full day of full-spectrum yoga in the village where *Svaroopa*® yoga and *Svaroopa*® Vidya Meditation were born.

First-time visitors to Ganeshpuri included Maitreyi (Margie) Wilsman and Betsy Bommer. Maitreyi is a long-time *Svaroopa*® yoga and meditation teacher from Wisconsin. She does seva for the Ashram and is a devoted disciple of Swami Nirmalananda. Betsy is a retired *Svaroopa*® yoga teacher from Florida and longtime student. Both say they found it easy and fulfilling to slip into Self in Ganeshpuri.

Roommates, they were staying in a guest house in the center of the village, down the street from Nityananda's temple and across the street from the Devi (Goddess) temple. Each morning, bells to awaken the Goddess and chants to Nityananda awakened Maitreyi and Betsy. "I found myself drawn into meditation just hearing the sounds," Maitreyi said.

"The feeling of love for Nityananda, the honor, respect, and service to Him pervades the morning air. I

cannot remember ever before waking up in such a location. This must have been the way cities awakened during Satya Yuga, the first age of the world, when the Grace of the Guru flowed freely, everywhere, and all was filled with Divine wisdom, inside and outside. Nityananda's love for the people of this tiny village and area has been a palpable feeling to me," she added, and continued, "At each place where Nityananda was present, I felt a strong blast of His Divine energy. My meditations continued to deepen.

"Rather than going out to get the morning paper, drinking a cup of chai, listening to the day's weather and news and checking email, each morning in Ganeshpuri I stayed in my Self; I opened to the Grace of Nityananda; I went in and out of meditation. An extra bonus was having Swamiji with us at Temple each morning and experiencing the Grace of my Guru, too. Overwhelming is the word I am still using to describe my experience of waking up each day in Ganeshpuri."

Maitreyi continues, "This was my first trip to India and Ganeshpuri. I absorbed all that was possible for my small-s self. I did not do a lot of shopping or exploring. I focused on staying within my Self. Again and again my Self was blasted by the energies of Grace, and I welcomed each zap, whether weak, mild or strong. For me it's a palpable feeling that enters my body and sends me behind my mind. It enters mainly in my face and head areas, sometimes in my heart area. It sends me into meditation again and again, even now back in Wisconsin."

While this was Betsy's first trip to Ganeshpuri, it was not her first trip to India. But she had been wanting to visit Ganeshpuri since the late 1990s. She said being called to Ganeshpuri by Nityananda "is the gift of my lifetime. I knew I

must go when this trip was announced. Yet I had no idea how deeply it would impact me. I am still realizing it with my return to Florida."

Whenever Betsy travels to India she feels like she is home. She said, "This means I am entering into a greater ease and presence in 'beingness.' I feel I am even more deeply and joyfully connected in my Self. In my life I feel this state of 'beingness' as an ongoing state. However, when I arrived in Ganeshpuri it was magnified thousands of times — or more. It was as if I were embraced, infused, immersed and contained as myself in The Self as the Self. No stopping. No beginning. No ending. Vastness. Mind silent. Large spaciousness. Open heartedness and awe sweeping in and through me." She said she often had no words to speak of what was occurring except, "Thank you."

Betsy said the loving presence of Nityananda pervades Ganeshpuri. "His Presence was so palpable and alive for me; it felt like the trigger that brought me more deeply into the Self. It felt so simple. It is hard to single out an event that ignited such bliss, for it seems it was everywhere. However, sitting in meditation in His Mahasamadhi room is a peak for me. His breath and stillness were everywhere and He drew me in. When I would leave the room it was as if everyone I met was another version of Him. It was magical and earthly simultaneously."

Betsy has returned home to Florida with a reconnection to *Svaroopa*® yoga and the Ashram. "I am grateful to Swami Nirmalananda for the years of guidance, teachings and love she has given to me. It was a blessing to be with her, for which again all I could say was, 'Thank you.' I am changed in my depth of awareness of what a Guru or Great Being is," she said.

Having purchased a Nityananda murti, Betsy finds herself taking care of it with great devotion. "I have found my ishta-devata (personal form of God). He continues to make me smile and laugh. He finds my lost items. He holds my family together in a large container of love and silence. He dances with me." She said, "One day in the Mahasamadhi room, I was sure that if I opened my eyes quickly, I would see Him standing right before me or loping across the room. It feels that way now. This is the beginning of more to come, for which I can only say again and again, 'Thank you.'"

# Treasure the Ancient Wisdom

By Aanandi Annie Ross



Aanandi Annie Ross

A line in our January Contemplation Article stirs my yearning. Swami wrote, "Understanding yoga's ancient philosophy makes you a master of life, not just of your body." This says it all.

When I first discovered Eastern philosophy, the texts that drew me in like no others were the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Upanishads*. I was fascinated by the teachings on life and the deep wisdom that filled the pages. Back then, I yearned to understand more, but didn't know where to look for more. Now, the vast array of offerings from Swami and Svaroop® Vidya Ashram makes a wealth of ancient knowledge accessible.

Not only do the yoga poses offer amazing benefits, but we also have the opportunity to study the ancient texts and yoga's philosophy in any amount desired. Simply reading the contemplation article or hearing the contemplation quote in a yoga class can be just enough to give you insight into the deeper meaning of life. Or we have the opportunity to study the sutras in Sutra Studies from Home, following in the footsteps of the ancient sages without having to leave our houses. You can explore the path leading to the realization of your own true form, which is the purpose of yoga, as defined by Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*.

These sutras are a compilation and reformulation of earlier yogic teachings, which were restated by Patanjali for the seeker of his own period, 1700 or more years ago. His work is a guidebook to classical yoga philosophy, known as raja yoga, which is the yoga of the mind, with the goal being Self-Realization through quieting your mind.

Once I cleared my shelves of books that no longer seemed important, and took a long drive to a little bookstore and sold them all. I wandered down the aisles of books and found

the perfect take-home book, *How to Know God, the Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*, by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood. I love to open it up to any page (even though sutras evolve one to the next), and take just a few words, a paragraph or a page of commentary, to contemplate. These rich teachings and wisdom offer a way to live your life.

Sutras are worth the time in study and contemplation. The basis of our English word *suture*, the Sanskrit word *sutra* means a thread, the bare bones of a teaching. Sutras were

composed before writing was invented, so they comprise few words, often not even complete sentences. Sutras are aphoristic verses, words of wisdom, containing many meanings and meant to be expanded and explained by the ancient teacher. They help to answer the questions: "Who am I?" "Where am I going?" "What is the purpose of life?" "How do I get there?"

*"Reading the ancient texts will give you something to chew on, to contemplate, even giving you ways to dissolve the obstacles in your mind."*

Reading the ancient texts will give you something to chew on, to contemplate, even giving you ways to dissolve the obstacles in your mind. As Swami says, "Understanding yoga's ancient philosophy makes you a master of life, not just a master of your body." By including a component of yoga philosophy in your practice, you will discover not only a new way to live in your body, but also a new way of being present to your own svaroop, your own Divine Self. Treasure the ancient wisdom. Do more sutras.

## Sutra Studies From Home

*"These phone courses are my Svaroop® yoga 'life line.'"*

Follow in the footsteps of the ancient sages without having to leave your house by enrolling in Svaroop® Vidya phone courses. Designed to support you from a distance, each phone course includes teachings grounded in your real life experiences.

**There's still time to register!**

To register or for more information, call 610-806-2119 or email [programs@svaroopayoga.org](mailto:programs@svaroopayoga.org)

This amazing 3-course study package includes:



Starting March 24  
**Yogify Your Life**  
taught by Vidyadevi Stillman



Starting June 8  
**My Mind is Driving Me Crazy!**  
taught by Kusuma (Karobi) Sachs



Starting September 23  
**Who Will I Be?**  
taught by Rukmini Abbruzzi

# Upcoming Programs

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

APRIL 2015		
2	<a href="#">Shishya Guru Gita</a>	Phone
5	<a href="#">Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
7	<a href="#">Q&amp;A Phone Satsang</a>	Phone
7	<a href="#">Satsang: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
9	<a href="#">Shree Guru Gita</a>	DYMC
9	<a href="#">Shishya Guru Gita</a>	Phone
9 – 13	<a href="#">Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga</a>	St. Paul MN
9	<a href="#">Meditation 101</a>	DYMC
11	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Embodied Bliss &amp; Beyond</a>	The Desmond
11 – 12	<a href="#">The Yoga of Yes</a>	Cumberland RI
11	<a href="#">Meditation Made Easy</a>	DYMC
11 – 16	<a href="#">Embodiment® Yoga Therapy Training</a>	The Desmond
12	<a href="#">Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
14	<a href="#">Satsang: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
16	<a href="#">Shishya Guru Gita</a>	Phone
17	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Finding the Key to Everything</a>	The Desmond
17 – 19	<a href="#">Experiential Anatomy</a>	The Desmond
18 – 19	<a href="#">More Alive, More Joyous, More You</a>	Calgary AB, Canada
19	<a href="#">Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
21 – 25	<a href="#">Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga</a>	Atlanta GA
21	<a href="#">Satsang: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
23	<a href="#">Shree Guru Gita</a>	DYMC
23	<a href="#">Shishya Guru Gita</a>	Phone
23	<a href="#">SATYA Marketing Call: Preaching Social Media</a>	Phone
25	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Create Inner Space</a>	DYMC
25	<a href="#">Meditation Made Easy</a>	DYMC
26	<a href="#">Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
26	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Open Spine Stable Joints</a>	The Desmond
26 – 29	<a href="#">EYTS Deceptive Flexibility</a>	The Desmond
28	<a href="#">Satsang: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
30	<a href="#">Shishya Guru Gita</a>	Phone
30	<a href="#">Shishya Phone Satsang With Swamiji</a>	Phone
MAY 2015		
1	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Bliss and Beyond</a>	The Desmond
1 – 3	<a href="#">Shakipat Retreat</a>	The Desmond
2 – 3	<a href="#">More Alive, More Joyous, More You</a>	Rehoboth Beach DE
5	<a href="#">Satsang: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
6 – 10	<a href="#">Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga</a>	Boise ID
7	<a href="#">Shree Guru Gita</a>	DYMC
7	<a href="#">Shishya Guru Gita</a>	Phone
7 – 10	<a href="#">DIY: Knots in Your Neck</a>	The Desmond
10	<a href="#">Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC

12	<a href="#">Satsang: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
13	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: The Power of Opening</a>	The Desmond
13 – 17	<a href="#">Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga</a>	The Desmond
13 – 17	<a href="#">Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga</a>	Fairfield IA
14	<a href="#">Shishya Guru Gita</a>	Phone
17	<a href="#">Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
19	<a href="#">Satsang: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
21	<a href="#">Shree Guru Gita</a>	DYMC
21	<a href="#">Shishya Guru Gita</a>	Phone
24	<a href="#">Swami Sunday: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
26	<a href="#">Satsang: Free Meditation Program</a>	DYMC
28	<a href="#">Shishya Guru Gita</a>	Phone
29	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Taking It Into Its Fullness</a>	The Desmond
29 – Jun 7	<a href="#">YTT Level 4</a>	The Desmond
JUNE 2015		
1	<a href="#">SATYA Marketing Call: Chat Up Your Target Market</a>	Phone
6 – 20	<a href="#">Meditation 101</a>	DYMC
8 – Jul 27	<a href="#">My Mind Is Driving Me Crazy</a>	Phone Course
9	<a href="#">Shishya Phone Satsang With Swamiji</a>	Phone
13	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Ending Back Pain</a>	The Desmond
16	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Taking It Farther and Deeper</a>	The Desmond
16 – 19	<a href="#">EYTS Foundations Review</a>	The Desmond
19 – 28	<a href="#">YTT Level 1</a>	The Desmond
20	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Going Deeper</a>	The Desmond
25 – 29	<a href="#">Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga</a>	Westford MA
JULY 2015		
7	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Develop Your Inner Warrior Steady, Strong, and Clear</a>	The Desmond
7 – 12	<a href="#">ATT 201 Leading Half-Day Workshops</a>	The Desmond
12	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Vitality and Stamina</a>	DYMC
15	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Easy and Powerful</a>	The Desmond
15 – 19	<a href="#">Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga</a>	The Desmond
17	<a href="#">SATYA Marketing Call: How to Effectively Use Brochures, Flyers, and Coupons</a>	Phone
23 – 26	<a href="#">YTT Modules #1A Daily Practice</a>	The Desmond
28	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Deeper and Deeper Within</a>	The Desmond
28 – Aug 2	<a href="#">MTT Retreat &amp; Continuing Ed</a>	The Desmond
AUGUST 2015		
5	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Getting Grounded</a>	The Desmond
5 – 9	<a href="#">EYTS – Embodiment® in Poses</a>	The Desmond
19	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Beyond Your Limits</a>	The Desmond
21 – 23	<a href="#">DIY Strength &amp; Flexibility</a>	The Desmond
23	<a href="#">Half-Day Workshop: Happy Body!</a>	DYMC
25	<a href="#">SATYA Marketing Call: Communicating Via Email</a>	Phone

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# Upcoming Programs continued from page 11

SEPTEMBER 2015		
2 – 6	YTT Modules #1B Lower Spinal Release	The Desmond
2 – Nov 18	Leading a Discussion Group	Phone Course
11	Half-Day Workshop: Improving Your Neck & Shoulders	The Desmond
11 – 20	YTT Level 3	The Desmond
23 – Oct 21	Who Will I Be?	Phone
25	Half-Day Workshop:	The Desmond
25 – 27	Shaktipat Retreat	The Desmond
28	Half-Day Workshop: Finding Ease in Your Neck and Shoulders	The Desmond
28 – Oct 5	ATT 463: Yoga Therapy – Neck & Shoulders	The Desmond
OCTOBER 2015		
9	SATYA Marketing Call: Conversing About Surveys	Phone
10	Happy Body – Peaceful Mind	Milton DE
10	Half-Day Workshop: The Controlling Tailbone	The Desmond
10 – 15	Embodiment® Yoga Therapy Training	The Desmond
16	Half-Day Workshop: Where is my Tailbone?	The Desmond

16 – 18	Experiential Anatomy	The Desmond
21 – 25	Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga	The Desmond
23 – 25	Weekend Workshop	Brisbane, Australia
23 – 25	Shaktipat Retreat	Boston MA
25 – Nov 1	ATT 262: Yoga Therapy – Treating Pain	Qnsland, Australia
NOVEMBER 2015		
1	Half-Day Workshop: Bliss	The Desmond
1 - 5	Retreat – Bliss is Your Birthright	The Desmond
8 – 15	ATT403: Lower Spinal Release	The Desmond
11 – 15	Foundations of Svaroopa® Yoga	Calgary AB, Canada
17	SATYA Marketing Call: How To Market a Special Event	Phone
19 – 22	YTT Modules #1C Upper Spinal Release	The Desmond
DECEMBER 2015		
4	Half-Day Workshop: Itty Bitty Details	San Diego CA
4	Regional Conference: Full Spectrum Yoga	San Diego CA

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