



Svaroopaa® Vidya Ashram

The Yoga of Money #3
The Ancient Model
By Swami Nirmalananda

In ancient times, when a swami arrived in a new town or city in India, the local residents honored him and offered their support in tangible ways. The culture of India has always held those who give themselves to God in the highest esteem, so even today people vie for the opportunity to provide housing for the new arrival, “Oh Swamiji, please stay in my home. My children will benefit from their interaction with you. My home will be blessed by your presence. My whole family will be at your service.”

Other people ask if they may have the privilege of providing one of the swami’s daily meals. A shoemaker offers new shoes; a dentist offers dental care. The swamis don’t need to charge for their teachings because they are completely provided for. The swamis support the community through their deep practice, their teachings, and most importantly their inner state. The community supports them by providing the “stuff” for daily life.

This doesn’t happen in America. Of course, I have had many people lovingly host me in their home when I am teaching in their area. I am grateful for their wonderful care and support; it’s very different than staying in a hotel room while I am teaching. But none of them has yet offered me an opportunity to live in their home. It wouldn’t be appropriate, in America.

In America, students do provide support for the teacher by offering money – the money that buys the home and meals and dental care. No one person takes on the whole responsibility for the teacher’s needs; each gives according to their ability and interest. Their support determines how much the teacher can give them.

As a teacher for many decades, I have worked hard to provide an income stream for myself and for those who teach and work with me. Even in a not-for-profit organization, the money has to add up. The work extends far beyond what happens in the classroom, especially when there are other teachers, staff and sevites. Just being in communication with so many people takes many hours every week, without even stepping into the classroom. The behind-the-scenes work is like any business manager does, and leaves little time for being a teaching swami. Master Yoga has worked hard to transition me out of these important responsibilities, to free my time for teaching and leading our overlapping Svaroopi communities, both with Master Yoga Foundation and Svaroopaa® Vidya Ashram.

In the Ashram, I am committed to teaching and leading the deep seekers, those who want to become realized in this lifetime. To do this, I need support. The Ashram and I both need support. This is completely consistent with the ancient model that comes yoga’s roots in India.

My personal needs would be very easy for me to finance. I have described that if I were moving into a home for just myself, it would be a two-bedroom condo. Getting a home that is large enough for satsangs and retreats is a much more daunting project. Buying and preparing a place that will house residents and guest is a significantly bigger challenge. And you are helping me meet this challenge; thank you!

I have been deeply touched by the community’s response to our Capital Campaign. You have given almost \$120,000 – yet we need another \$30,000 to make our goal. Now is the time! I sign the papers on the building in 22 days. I’m ordering blankets and yoga chairs. I’m shopping for beds and desks. I’m signing an agreement with the contractors. It’s starting to get expensive...

I know that all of this it is not for me – it is for you. Even if you cannot visit the building soon, you’ll know it is there. You’ll see the photos and videos. You’ll know you helped give me a home as well as provide for all the other yogis who are coming and going. You’ll be able to feel this oak tree rooting into the earth, the root system that gives it the strength to reach its branches to the sky and to shade all who come underneath. Thank you for all your support so far, and yet to come. Namaste.

To reach our teachers or to learn more about Svaroopaa® Yoga & Meditation, contact
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