



B a b a j i ' s

Kriya Yoga Journal

Kriya Yoga's prescription for good relationships

By M.G. Satchidananda

"By cultivating attitudes of friendship towards the happy, compassion for the unhappy, delight in the virtuous and equanimity towards the non-virtuous, the consciousness retains its undisturbed calmness."

- Kriya Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and the Siddhas- I.33

The mind can be an obstacle or an aid in the process of Self-realization. To facilitate it, the cultivation of these four attitudes is recommended in dai-

ly life. Even if we do not aspire toward spiritual goals, following this advice will make anyone's life serene. The mind tends to do the opposite at times.

Friendship or goodwill (*mettà*) towards the happy (*sukha*): It is necessary to cultivate this because we sometimes feel jealous or envious toward those who are happy and are censorious toward them. For example, if someone is enjoying the fruits of their labor in a material way, we may be

jealous. Rather we should say: "May they continue to prosper time and again."

Compassion (*karuṇā*) toward the suffering (*duḥkha*): Even if what we can do by our thoughts or our actions for another is only a little, by opening ourselves to the compassion, our own mind and emotions are transformed. We should avoid judging them by saying, for example, "they suffer because of their bad karma."

Delight (*muditā*) in the virtuous (*punya*): Emulate them and rejoice that such people exist.

Equanimity (*upekṣā*) towards the non-virtuous (*apunya*): Do not allow the mind to be colored by such negative persons. Do not judge others. Nor should we disregard those who may be suffering but love them as well. We may love someone, without judging their behavior. Judging others only reinforces in one's own mind the negative

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Good Relationships *continued*

qualities one is condemning. We generally condemn in others what we harbor in ourselves. The world is within us. To change the world, we can change our thoughts. Overlook the lapses of others. Do not dwell on their weaknesses. By dwelling on their weaknesses, we transmit thoughts to them which only reinforce their weaknesses and our own.

By cultivating these attitudes, the mind becomes purified, and one-pointed serenity results.

Practice: Meditate on, and cultivate friendliness towards the happy, compassion for the unhappy, delight in the virtuous, and disregard for the wicked. Use interpersonal relations to develop these qualities and be aware of ensuing calmness.

Patanjali also prescribes five social restraints, known as the yamas

"The restraints are non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, chastity and greedlessness."

– Kriya Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and the Siddhas
– II.30

Non-violence (*ahimsà*) includes non-harming, whether it be by action, words or thoughts. *Himsà* means injury, so *ahimsà* is not to cause injury. Our words and thoughts have great power. They can harm others. They can stimulate harmful actions. When we cease to do harm to others, we find that the mind ceases to harbor resentment, envy, anger and fear. Consequently, our consciousness becomes purified. By cultivating forgiveness, we can turn away from such feelings, which harm not only others, but ultimately ourselves.

Truthfulness (*satya*) implies not only the avoidance of lying, but also exaggeration, deceit, pretending, hypocrisy and truth in advertising. Otherwise, we deceive ourselves, postpone the working out of actual karma, and create or reinforce new karmic consequences. By leaving aside all fiction, all imaginary or unreal things, in mind, speech and action, one quickly discovers what is truth. To speak only what is true is very revealing. So much of what is spoken is so

unnecessary, so trivial and unreal. To cultivate silence, or to speak only what is edifying, after reflection, brings great clarity to our minds and relationships.

Non-stealing (*asteya*) includes avoiding the taking of something that does not belong to oneself. Stealing engulfs our consciousness with darkness, wherein we fail to see our essential unity. It closes our heart, strengthens egoistic tendencies, and drives us away from the path of Self-realization. It is a manifestation of fear and weakness in the face of desire. By indulging it, we give up our power of self-control and strengthen the hold that negative forces may have upon us.

Chastity (*brahmacarya*) involves sexual abstinence in the physical, emotional or vital, as well as mental planes. Its cultivation facilitates letting go of what is usually a great source of distraction and suffering for most persons, and consequently the process of Self-realization. Even if one lives in a committed relationship with a partner, if one can cultivate moderation and awareness in one's sexual relations, most distraction and dispersion can be avoided. One loves the other as oneself. When a vow is observed incorrectly, there is the danger of suppression, and consequently, dangerous psychological effects. One must be careful not to develop antipathy towards members of the opposite sex, or feelings of guilt, shame, or frustration with regards to sexual impulses. In today's hedonistic culture, the ideal of sexual abstinence and purity will strike most people as not only odd, but also impossible. It is neither. However, it may be necessary for the individual who wishes to practice it to reflect deeply upon the values and expectations of contemporary culture, as well as the nature of sexuality. To succeed in fulfilling this ideal one must take a wholistic approach and apply it patiently and persistently.

Greedlessness (*aparigraha*) includes not fantasizing over material possessions, nor coveting things belonging to others. Often people fantasize that if they could only become suddenly rich, by winning the lottery or marrying someone with a lots of money, or winning big in the stock mar-

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Good Relationships *continued*

ket, they would find lasting happiness. This is pure folly. Indulging in such fantasy simply distracts one from the inner source of lasting joy.

Tirumantiram lists ten restraints (*yama*) in verse 554:

He does not kill, he does not lie, he does not steal,
Of marked virtue he is good, meek and just;
He shares his joys; he knows no blemish;
Neither drinks nor lusts.

The restraints (*yamas*) regulate and harmonize the yogin's social life and create the foundation for our practice. They may be difficult to observe at first, and require much conscious effort and exertion of will, but as we develop, their observance becomes not only habitual, but virtually effortless - a function of our Self-realization.

Practice: Without judging yourself or others, calmly observe your actions and feelings in relationship to others and observe the results. Remember the restraints (*yamas*), as a means of cultivating detachment (*vairàgya*) and discernment between the Seer and the Seen (*viveka-khyàti*). Take note of times when you forget these restraints. Cultivate affirmations to reinforce your practice of the restraints. (see verse II. 33 and II,34)

“This Great Vow is universal, not limited by class, place, time or circumstance.” - Kriya Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and the Siddhas – II.31

Here Patanjali affirms that these ethical principles are to be followed regardless of our status. Even the accomplished yogin does not have a license to ignore them. Crazy wise adepts of various spiritual traditions have at times ignored them, and as a result have brought controversy or ruin upon themselves.

This great vow (*mahà-vratam*) greatly aids the student of Yoga in surmounting egoistic desires and in the attainment of surrender. To be totally undisturbed by whatever happens outwardly we need purity of heart. To keep equanimity and

absence of reactions, even the great ones must be freed of anything which would taint their character.

Why do spiritual masters fail to live up to these restraints ?

Many practitioners of Yoga are surprised when “spiritual masters” fail to live up to the restraints (*yamas*) and observances (*niyamas*). They fail to realize that one can have great spiritual realization and yogic accomplishments (*siddhis*) and still have a subconscious filled with negative tendencies. This is why in *Babaji's Kriya Yoga* we begin with *shuddhi dhyàna kriyà*, the first *dhyàna kriya* taught in *Babaji's Kriyà Yoga* level I initiation, to cleanse the subconscious mind. It is a long process, but even a little effort will help dispel many of the distractions. As will be seen in verses II.33 and II.34, aside from cleansing the subconscious, the student of Yoga will find it useful to counter-act negative thoughts with positive ones. When others, including “spiritual masters”, do fail to live up to all the *yamas* and *niyamas*, we should not condemn them. We should give them a “broom,” and encourage them to clean up their basement, just as everyone else must. We must not, however, give away our power to them. Everyone is responsible for his or her own acts and failings. Furthermore, until and unless the higher consciousness has completely descended even into the vital and physical bodies and transformed them, there is always a great risk that the egoistic tendencies will resist and create problems. Constant vigilance and self-control are required to apply these first two limbs right up to the highest level of Self-realization.

Practice: Apply these restraints (*yamas*) in various situations, for example at work, in dealing with “difficult people” or in facing temptations. Reflect upon the following: “The body is supple and impersonal, without personal will. Without any personal will, like a transmitter, let That pass through, untainted.” Practice *shuddhi dhyàna kriyà* in daily life.

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Good Relationships *continued*

Source: Kriya Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and the Siddhas, by Marshall Govindan. 2000. Available on our website ecommerce in 10 languages:

In English : https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#patanjali_book

In India: <https://www.babajiskriyayogastore.in/>

For more on the yamas, the social restraints order the Ebook “Opposite Doing: the Five Yogic Keys to Good Relationships” available in 5 languages.

In English: https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#opposite_doing_ebook

Kriya Hatha Yoga works for what ails you.

By Durga Ahlund

These days, more and more of us treat as normal, persisting anxiety, anxiousness, fear, anger, depression, worry and sadness. We just deal with, or medicate to deal with, our stress and triggers. We don't get enough sleep nor give priority to time to manage the effects of stress, imagining that “I don't have the time.” When these effects accumulate too much, and we fail to reestablish equilibrium, our physical, emotional and mental health deteriorates. It is proven that chronic stress affects absolutely every physical and psychological system in the human being. Stress is not only the main cause of muscle and back pain, depression and poor sleep, but also high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, digestive problems, headaches, loss of focus, loss of creativity, poor memory and increases in emotional intensity and sorely reduces our adaptability to normal situations in life.

In the U.S. current estimates put the rates of adult stress and anxiety at 59 percent and adolescent stress and anxiety at 32 percent. An educational environment that increasingly focuses on testing and evaluation over exploration and the joy of learning, puts pressure on our children in a way that guarantees stress, and its triggers are established at an early age. While it appears that the U.S. leads the world in mental, emotional and existential angst, debilitating stress and anxiety is rising globally. Violence, social discord and political uncertainty, work uncertainty and the polluting of our planet and natural catastrophes due to climate change, are all affecting us at very deep levels. We are an anxious species looking for some calm, looking for mental and emotional stability

and looking for happiness. Yoga is no longer appropriate only for those looking for physical or gymnastic perfection, or spiritual enlightenment. People are turning to Yoga for what ails them. To enable healing the focus of Yoga, like education, must be on exploration and the joy of learning and practicing it, not on skill of performance or evaluation.

Scientific research has provided evidence that regularity of an integrated system of Yoga helps to build stress tolerance and resilience. Yoga has the potential for self-regulation. While one size will not fit all, when Yoga is offered as an integrated practice of asana with breath awareness, and, in addition, includes pranayama, the use of bandhas, and instruction of sense withdrawal, concentration and meditation any student will benefit! It is the combined practice of Yoga and meditation that has the potential to relieve the pain of physical tension and imbalances in the body. A practice of asana, pranayama and meditation is required to reduce mental and emotional restlessness. To build a strong nervous system and reach physical, mental and emotional balance, a practice needs to be one that relieves tensions in the body that encourages the mind to ruminate on negative or discomforting thoughts. To be effective, a dedicated practice of at least three to five times a week is best.

Sat Bir Singh Khalsa, PhD. has been doing clinical research on Yoga as therapy for persistent stress and anxiety, trauma, and burnout or work-related exhaustion at Harvard Medical School since 2001. He has done studies in public

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schools to determine how Yoga can best support adolescents. Dr. Khalsa continues to partner with the International Association of Yoga Therapists, promoting Yoga as therapy. His research has focused broadly on chronic stress symptoms, panic attacks, persistent low back pain, insomnia, lack of creativity, depersonalization and emotional intensity.

Dr. Khalsa told me, that he believes the most important evidence he has provided to medical professionals, is that an asana practice alone is not enough for healing. Successful treatment comes from a consistent practice of an integrated system of asana, pranayama, meditation, mudras and mantras. He was involved with the research, testing and publishing of the benefits of a well-known kundalini yoga practice, known as kirtan kriya (mudra-mantra practice). Kirtan Kriya has been researched intensively and its benefits for brain health are wide ranging. I specifically asked Sat Bir what Pranayama was found to be most useful. He said that only diaphragmatic breathing with a 1:2 ratio (inhalation to exhalation) was studied, but it was proven to be significantly beneficial, as it increases the parasympathetic response and builds stress-tolerance and resilience. He said the unfortunate problem regarding Yoga research is that there just isn't the funding for more intensive and larger studies, which could bring dramatic and emphatic results. He said there is so much more that could and should be researched.

Sat Bir's interest in Yoga research was originally piqued, when in 1971, Swami Rama quite publicly demonstrated an extraordinary ability to self-regulate his internal states. In those early years, several yogis, including Yogi Ramaiah willing participated in scientific research as they meditated and practiced Yoga. After this, there was interest in kundalini research, but the money soon dried out. One boost to funding happened a few years ago when research demonstrated that Yoga practices directly increase levels of Gaba (gamma -aminobutyric amino acid) in the brain. Increasing Gaba produces a calming effect and plays a major role in controlling nerve cell hyper-

activity associated with stress, anxiety and fear. It also helps with sleep.

Sat Bir seemed resigned to the state of his research. He shook his head and said, "Yoga research demands long term funding as regularity of a practice over time is required and we are never going to get direct results quickly." But he quickly added that he was certain that Yoga and meditation can directly address and relieve stress and anxiety, so we need to persevere. I think with seriousness, he turned to me, asking if I knew any billionaires who might be interested? I did not.

Kriya Hatha Yoga offers a perfect system for healing what ails you.

What I do know, is that Kriya Yoga is a perfect system to address stress and anxiety. Kriya Hatha Yoga alone is an integrated, willful, intentional practice, and the 18-asana work like acupuncture on the material part of our physiology, targeting the subtle channels within the physical body. They work not only toward releasing tension in the tissues of the muscles and connective tissue but releasing blockages in the subtle nadis, thus increasing the flow of energy. Blocked energy can result from poor posture, poor eating habits, over-indulgences, and poor elimination of toxins, physical, mental and emotional.

The body has an innate protective mechanism, an "emotional memory," which encodes into our body's muscle memory any trauma it experiences. Every strong emotional memory can create tension in the body, contracting us, blocking our energy and our ability to let it go. While at first we may experience joint stiffness and inflexibility, if it persists, pain, disease or anxiety can follow. The body consciously and subconsciously will discourage any movement that touches near this memory and so we forget or reject the real source of our discomfort and can end up with some generalized anxiety. Our Hatha Yoga practice is an opportunity to confront and relieve obvious physical tension and discover the source of what is restricting us in our bodies, and perhaps

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even gain insight into what we may be resisting in our life.

This series is practiced in stages and should never exhaust you, in fact, the more you do, the more relaxed you become. Each posture takes you into a deeper state of relaxation and grants you more and more energy. The more asana you do the more energy you receive. It will noticeably provide you dynamic confidence to take off the mat with you.

It is the movement of prana, not the asana that heals.

Kriya Hatha Yoga works so well to work on what ails us because it relaxes, strengthens, balances and calms us. It is an art and science, designed to work on all levels of our being through the evolutionary potential of consciousness and prana. Asana can draw us deep within, melting away the physical barriers, the physical waste products, and emotional toxins that prevent us from experiencing the full range of sensations of enlivened prana in the body. It is the bodily sensations that indeed create a direct path to renewed energy, steadiness and rejuvenation.

It is through proper alignment, directed by external and internal cues that we are led into a relaxation so deep that the asana directly stimulates, and liberates bodily sensations. These bodily sensations are the rejuvenating aspects of asana. The sensations are micro vibrations, creating mudras of our prana, our life force. Again, it is the movement of prana not the asana that heals us. Bodily sensations are felt as tactile sensations, perhaps prickly, or as a flickering or flutter, or as waves flowing up and down the spine and throughout the nervous system, responding to the prana, which animates them. These micro-vibrations can clear blockages from the subtle nervous system, strengthening our nervous system, leading us into a calm physical and emotional space of deep relaxation.

Asana, when held with intent and awareness, for longer periods of time (5-10 min.) can help to release long-held feelings of sadness, fear, or anger, emotions that may be responsible for

one, *feeling* blocked. Hatha Yoga: asana, pranayama, bandhas, mudras can stimulate the movement of old, toxic emotions stored in the musculature and nervous system. Awareness, intention and conscious ujjayi breathing are key to removing them. I know from years of personal experience as a practitioner and a teacher how emotional entrapments and unnecessary personality traits, deeply held under decades of armoring can dissolve in an instant, with only perhaps, a shift in the rate of your breathing, or the release of tears. You may be able to taste the emotion, but you don't relive the memories that stored it. You may have the taste of deep sadness, fear, or anger, but once that taste is released, it's gone. Once these toxins are released, what you experience is a sense of lightness and buoyancy in the body and the sense of your innermost self as empty space. Holding the posture becomes effortless. The effect of an evolving practice of the 18 asanas is that you, and your personality lighten up and gain confidence.

To evolve, we must become aware of our personal challenges or shortcomings and be willing to work on our self, not just perform asana.

Purification of the physical, mental and emotional bodies is critical to healing and rejuvenating oneself. To practice powerful techniques of Yoga without equal focus on cleansing the nadis, runs the risk of activating, but damming up, strong energy. Energy that gets blocked will create excess energy in one area and deficiencies in other areas. Strong energy which is blocked in a specific nadi or chakra can create more difficult physical or mental/emotional imbalances.

Intention and effort are critical to success.

Understanding what your Kriya Hatha Yoga practice is, what it can do for you, and, defining what you want from your practice, will ensure progress. Setting an intention creates the interest your mind needs to remain engaged in the practice. If your intention is to utilize the power of

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the will, the mind and the breath in your asana practice, that is enough to benefit you. But, if you also intend that your asana practice will enable you to let go of what is causing you to suffer, or holding you back, or will initiate, the grace of the prana animating you to move you forward in your life, that too, is possible. Intention and effort are developed from the practice, not just flexibility and strength. Effort does not mean forcing the body into a posture. Effort is a mental state of allowing and encouraging the body to move deeper into postures. One must be willing. One must be willing to change. Much of what we consider to be physical stiffness or stagnation, is in the mind and our emotions due to past experiences and conditioning. When you relax the mind's need to control everything, muscular tension, and physical and emotional restlessness can be released.

The key to balancing intention and effort is to maintain alignment and relaxation simultaneously. The balance of alignment and relaxation is created through body awareness, ujjayi pranayama, bandhas, and mudras. The **ujjayi pranayama** is particularly helpful. It is the ocean-sounding breath. It slows and regulates breathing, relaxing the body and releasing tension. This breath invites us to consciously deepen in the postures, without force or moving too quickly into them. It allows you to explore and release the tension slowly, without fear. Ujjayi means victorious breath: victorious over the inhalation and exhalation (nadis open); victorious over the duality of breath and breather, as the breather and breath become one; victorious over the conditioned mind. It holds great potential.

The bandhas, especially the Moola and Uddiyana bandhas, the pelvic and abdominal contractions, are utilized in all the asana for balance, alignment, safety and efficacy. They create that core support of the spine, strengthening the lower back and stimulating the flow of energy in the subtle energy channels. All three bandhas are often used to positively affect the nervous and circulatory systems. The bandhas enforce the sympathetic activities of the body, encouraging relaxation but they also work to rebalance auto-

nomic nervous activity. This rebalancing positively affects the hypothalamus and endocrine system and relays information to the emotional system of the brain, the limbic system and to the cerebral cortex. Alpha brain waves are stimulated boosting creativity and minimizing depression. When the whole personality participates, use of the bandhas encourages right exertion, right will-power, and you can even gain conscious control over the energy flowing in the asana.

When part of you is disinterested or distracted, the mind wanders off and the prana is dispersed. It is important that the whole personality participates in your practice.

Chanting the mantra, Om Kriya Babaji Nama Aum and singing the Song of Sun Worship, will engage the mind, heart and prana, right from the beginning. The mudras from Kriya Asana Vane-kom through the Sun Salutation can create that conduit to concentrate the mind and channel prana right from the start.

Key reminders:

1. Alignment will bring Relaxation.
2. Relaxation releases tension in the muscles so they work more efficiently. But relaxation also creates space for the releases of blockages in the nadis, which stimulates and liberates bodily sensations. Bodily sensations are micro-vibrations, mudras of enlivened pranic energy.
3. The activation of bodily sensations brings calm stillness to body and mind. Stillness allows for awareness to arise in the mind
4. The activation of bodily sensations and the cessation of involuntary thought brings awareness of the life force energy coursing in the body.
5. Surrender – letting go into life force energy allows the prana to create more refinement of energy and more refinement of balance, a sense of joy rises in the body and mind.

Once alignment and relaxation are established,
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Kriya Hatha Yoga *continued*

asana will deepen without force or strain, and they can be held longer. You will want to hold them longer. The asana should be held regularly, at least three minutes with awareness, to stretch the connective tissue and allow the asana to begin to enliven the energy within the body. Awareness of, and relaxation with, what is happening in the body is necessary to maintain bodily sensations.

Remember that these sensations, or mudras, sometimes called the “pose” of an asana are what perfects an asana, so perfection comes from the inside pose, rather than the outside. Simultaneous alignment and relaxation allows you to drop down into yourself and create these mudras of evanescent energy. These transitory waves of energy, sometimes like sparks will come and go, appear and vanish. We do not try to hold onto the vibrations. These vibrations release tension, creating empty space. The longer you remain in an asana like this, aligned and relaxed and aware of what is happening, the deeper the asana will work, the prana, refining your energy.

If you continue your practice of the 18 asana over the years, incorporating bandhas, pranayama, mudra, mantra and awareness you will naturally work at the deepest levels, working to even balance the elements in the body and the gunas themselves, those modes or forces of nature *rajas*, activity or movement, of *tamas*, inertia or lethargy and *sattva*, balanced harmony, which make up the objective universe. Thus, with regular practice over the years, excess rajas (passion and restlessness) and excess tamas (lethargy and laziness) can be eliminated to change mood, temperament and even personality traits. One becomes more sattvic, that is mentally and emotionally calm and balanced, and in harmony with oneself.

Ask yourself: Do you practice Kriya Hatha Yoga regularly? Do you appreciate your regular practice of the 18 postures more than other yoga practices you have done in the past? What do you appreciate most about them? Do you begin with kriya asana vanakom and sun salutation with the mantra and Song of Sunworship? Do you consciously incorporate breath, bandhas and

awareness to direct prana as you move through the asana? Do you notice bodily sensations as you hold yourself in an asana? Do you experience a calming of the mind and body as you move through a few, or all of the asana? Have you ever just dropped into one of the asanas so deeply that you experienced absolute stillness in your body and mind? In addition to calming the mind, do you also experience an increase of energy, strength, force, vitality and happiness after your asana practice?

If you want to deepen your understanding and practice of the 18 posture series why not consider **next summer's Kriya Hatha Yoga Teacher Training, July 31, - August 15, 2025, to deepen your own practice, whether you want to teach or not.**

<https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/pdfs/events/Kriya-Hatha-Yoga-Teacher-Training-quebec-2025.pdf>

French: <https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/french/pdfs/flyer-formation-professeur-2025-Quebec.pdf>

Kriya Yogi Amman Pranabananda, “the saint with two bodies”

By José Tadeu Arantes (Acharya Ganapati)

For practitioners of Babaji's Kriya Yoga, Swami Pranabananda is known as Amman, the third immortal of Gauri Shankar Pitam [1]. Reborn shortly after his mahasamadhi in 1918, he is said to have joined the supremely advanced yogis orbiting the Satguru in the mysterious Himalayan ashram. His new spiritual name, Amman, is invoked after those of Babaji and Mataji (Annai) in the penultimate verse of the Dipam, the Song of Salutation to the Sun.

Millions of people around the world have read about Pranabananda in the *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramahansa Yogananda. Among the plethora of miraculous ascetics mentioned in the inspiring pages of the book, Pranabananda is the one whom the author nicknamed “the saint with two bodies.” I do not intend to repeat here the information conveyed by Yogananda. No matter how hard I tried, I could never preserve the freshness of the firsthand testimony of the original account. Moreover, the *Autobiography of a Yogi* is available in any bookstore.

However, there are other sources of information about the great adept. One is the small, rustic biography written by Sri Jnanendranath Mukhopadhyay. His father was a direct disciple of Pranabananda, and he himself received initiation from the master after his father died. However, having met Pranabananda quite late and only sporadically enjoyed his presence, he conveys information that was passed on to him by others and which he interpreted according to his viewpoint. Still, despite the causal inconsistencies and poor writing, his text, published as a preface to *Pranab Gita*, Pranabananda's commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita* [2], is a precious source.

I used much of his information, supplemented by other research, to write this brief profile [for a better understanding of the Sanskrit terms, see the glossary at the end of this article]. What most caught my attention in Pranabananda's journey was realizing how the road that leads a great yogi to self-realization can cross completely unconventional and even bizarre territories. And also how huge difficulties can be overcome through an un-

breakable will.

The spiritual rebirth of India

Sri Jnanendranath Mukhopadhyay does not provide the childhood name of Pranabananda. Nor does he say on which day, month, and year he was born. He states that he was between 70 and 75 years old when he reached mahasamadhi. Since this happened in the year 1918, it can be deduced that he began his previous earthly existence between 1843 and 1848. He came into this world in a century characterized by intense spiritual revival in India.

As a matter of curiosity, here are, in chronological order, the birth dates of some notable exponents of contemporary Indian spirituality: 1828 (Lahiri Mahasaya), 1830 (Keshabananda), 1836 (Ramakrishna), 1855 (Yuktswar), 1863 (Vivekananda), 1863 (Kebalananda), 1872 (Aurobindo), 1873 (Rama Tirtha), 1879 (Ramana Maharshi), 1887 (Sivananda), 1893 (Yogananda), 1896 (Anandamayi Ma). In the same nineteenth century, in an unknown year, Shirdi Sai Baba was born, whose mahasamadhi was also reached in 1918.

Pranabananda (let us call him so from now on, although he only received this spiritual name much later) descended into matter in a rural village of Bengal, less than a hundred kilometers from Kolkata (Calcutta), in a locally important family of the Brahmin caste. His father was a police inspector and, by professional duty, lived part of the time in Kolkata. Therefore, the boy was raised mainly by his mother, under the care of an uncle, the father's older brother.

Mukhopadhyay states that from a very early age, Pranabananda showed signs of intelligence, sympathy, and generosity. He was loved by all, regardless of gender, age, and social condition. But, despite his abilities, he was never a diligent student. And, later, he abandoned formal studies altogether. Later, as we shall describe, he would also abandon his job and marriage.

I may be mistaken, but I consider these three resignations quite revealing. It is very difficult, if

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The saint with two bodies *continued*

not impossible, to scrutinize the inner world of an individual. We do not know even ourselves, let alone someone whose figure we glimpse from afar, beyond the heavy mists of space, time, and cultural context. In describing his encounters with Pranabananda and conveying what others said about him, Yogananda emphasizes the supernatural behavior of the accomplished yogi. Mukhopadhyay, on the other hand, sticks to external facts and trivial incidents of the man's life. Seeking a middle ground between the two narratives, I try to imagine the most intimate motivations of this great adept, the lines of force that conditioned his trajectory.

The idea that comes to me is that of a highly gifted soul, a born yogi, a traveler who had already arrived on this planet with a long history of spiritual acquisitions in his luggage. For someone like this, and especially when the sadhana is not yet stabilized, the social conventions and daily routines that fascinate the average individual and consume all his attention must constitute very difficult detours to endure. That Pranabananda was already from the start this ripe fruit, ready to be harvested, is attested not only by the extraordinary realization he achieved in life, but also by the statement of his future guru, Lahiri Mahasaya, that he had been, in a previous incarnation, a great rishi, a luminary of the spiritual path.

Devotion, Music, and Drugs

Pranabananda's uncle was a devout Brahmin who worshiped the Shivalingam and recited the shastras. This devotional domestic vibration resonated in the boy's soul, resonating an ancient note in his young chest. After receiving his sacred thread [3], probably at the age of eight, according to tradition, the little one began to worship Shiva and Vishnu daily and became an enthusiastic singer of the translation, in the Bengali language, of the great epic Mahabharata.

The spiritual vocation blossomed in him along with a taste for music. Years later, in the company of other village boys, he formed a band dedicated to performing yatras. To develop his talent, he sought the guidance of a music teacher. But this man was a user of hashish and opium, who consumed it un-

restrictedly during lessons. In his company, the student also ended up becoming dependent. It was at this delicate moment that his mother died—a fact that caused a serious imbalance in the family.

Pranabananda was then about 20 years old and had left the English school to lead a dissolute life. He used drugs, did not study, and spent his money helping the poor or paying for his friends' expenses. Such behavior caused a serious conflict with his father. Reproached, the young man left his father's house, in search of his own path.

After wandering through various localities, starting with the holy city of Varanasi (Benares), he found employment in the railway network, which the British colonialism had introduced in India, and which to this day is one of the institutions that work best in the country. He quickly learned telegraphy and became the favorite employee of the English supervisor, being promoted to station master at Samastipur, in the state of Bihar. However, he maintained his heterodox behavior, spending what he earned on music, dance, hashish, opium, and alms for the poor and sannyasis.

In addition, in his still erratic search for self-realization through unconventional paths, he found a tantric master who introduced him to the practice of meditation with corpses. Although repulsive to contemporary Western sensibility, meditation with human bones or in the macabre setting of crematoriums is a well-established tradition in the multifaceted body of Indian spirituality. Entire lineages are dedicated to it. And even ascetics who do not belong to these schools occasionally resort to such exercises, to remind themselves of the impermanence of the phenomenal world and to develop equanimity in the face of the multiple aspects of existence. Even Yogananda, who years later would develop a yoga format that could be accepted in the conservative and prejudiced North American society of the first half of the 20th century, meditated with human bones in the initial phase of his sadhana.

In the case of Pranabananda, this bizarre practice lasted only a short time. He soon abandoned it. Just as, some time later, he also abandoned his job.

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The saint with two bodies *continued*

Despite being highly valued by his superiors, especially the English supervisor, who condoned all his eccentricities (such as the habit of not cutting his hair, beard, and nails, in the manner of renouncing ascetics), an urgent impulse to seek made him, one fine day, without asking permission or notifying anyone, simply leave work and go on pilgrimage.

The Initiation into Kriya Yoga

From holy place to holy place, he arrived at the famous Shivaite sanctuary of Pashupatinath, in Nepal. The telegraph was then being introduced in that remote kingdom. And the maharaja needed someone who mastered the new technology. Upon learning of Pranabananda's skills, he tried to retain him by all means, including offering him in marriage a young Nepalese woman. When he realized the direction of events, the future swami left Nepal as quickly as he could and returned to Varanasi. There, he finally found what he was looking for, when he prostrated himself before the great yogi Lahiri Mahasaya and received initiation into Kriya Yoga.

After allowing his young disciple to partially quench his immense spiritual thirst, meditating in the isolated mountains, Lahiri Mahasaya sent him back to his job and his father's house. At both places, Pranabananda was welcomed with open arms. And he could not say "no" when his father, moved by the most Indian of values, the sense of family continuity, asked him to marry. He was the only son, and if he did not produce offspring, he would end the family lineage.

The young man agreed to participate in an arranged marriage, in the traditional manner. The bride was chosen based on caste, family, and astrological affinities. However, all these arrangements would have limited effect, for, although the marriage would reward Pranabananda with a pair of children, such an arrangement was not destined to last, as we shall see later. Before that, however, the great adept firmly took the reins of family and professional life. He worked diligently to support his wife, children, and other relatives.

In his spare time, he resumed his relationship with his old music, entertainment, and addiction

companions. However, whenever he could, he went to Varanasi, for the darshan of Lahiri Mahasaya. His great aspiration was to be able to reside near the guru. And one day, the master told him that all the "preparations" had been made for that to happen. Subsequently, the disciple received, and more than promptly accepted, the invitation to head a railway station near Varanasi. The wife and children remained in the ancestral village, at her family's home.

With the death of his father, Pranabananda assumed, according to Indian custom, the responsibility for all his relatives. But, whether due to the weight of worldly duties, the dissatisfaction of a spiritual longing only partially fulfilled, or the insidious dynamics of addiction, he plunged even deeper into the abyss of dependence. And he began to consume, daily, large amounts of hashish and opium. The contradiction between the spiritual exercises, which projected his consciousness upward, and the drugs, which pushed it downward, grew proportionally within him. How could he aspire to self-realization if he could not master himself?

Facing the Horrors of Hell

It was in this anguishing context that, one day, when his music teacher asked him to fill the pipe for both of them, an imperative decision burst forth and took shape in his consciousness. Feeling a deep aversion to his condition as a dependent, he spoke in a solemn tone to the teacher: "It was you who initiated me into drugs. So, before you, whom I take as a witness, I swear to leave them forever." The teacher laughed sarcastically and said, "We'll see how strong your will is. You won't be able to leave this thing. Not in this life."

Pranabananda turned his back on him. The next morning, lashed by withdrawal syndrome, he had no strength to get out of bed. In the following days, he experienced the horrors of hell. When informed of his condition, his boss went to visit him. And he found an individual engulfed in a whirlwind of physical and emotional symptoms, a castaway clinging to the only rope that Destiny offers a hu-

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The saint with two bodies *continued*

man being in such a situation: the force of will.

"They want to give me medicine that contains opium. But I'd rather die than touch opium again," Pranabananda told him. Touched by his determination, the boss encouraged him to keep his vow, granted him indefinite leave, and promised to pay all his medical expenses. After spending a month bedridden and overcoming unspeakable sufferings, the great adept recovered his health, and, as he had sworn, never consumed drugs again.

Day followed night, the seasons succeeded one another, and in due time, a flood of the Ganges washed away the house that Pranabananda had inherited from his father. The adept, who had foreseen the inevitable disaster, had taken prior precautions. He had chosen a good place and sent money to his father-in-law to build another dwelling there. However, the father-in-law appropriated most of the resources. He built a large house for himself and a small house with only two rooms for his son-in-law and his family. This dishonest behavior created an insurmountable gap between the two men.

Pranabananda demanded that his wife and children leave his father-in-law's house and come live with him, near Varanasi. But the woman was very attached to her father and, quite in accordance with the traditional Indian pattern, had stronger ties to her family of origin than to her husband. She refused to leave, which caused the end of the marriage. The adept, who had always felt a strong attraction to the life of renunciation but had been prevented from becoming a sannyasi by Lahiri Mahasaya, now had nothing to stop him. Free from marital obligations, he asked for and received initiation into the ancient monastic order of swamis, founded in the 9th century AD by Adi Shankaracharya. His initiator was Adhiswara Srimat Swami Atmananda Giri Maharaj.

After being initiated, Pranabananda divided his attention between two masters: his sannyas-guru Atmananda and his yoga-guru Lahiri Mahasaya. As he recounted many years later to Yogananda, it was thanks to the hidden intervention of Lahiri Mahasaya that he obtained his early retirement from the railway system. The text of Mukhopady-

ay informs us that this pension was modest, even by the standards of the time: only seven rupees a month (which, by the current exchange rate, which obviously cannot be used, but allows an estimate, is less than 13 cents per month). Despite the paltry sum, the great adept was delighted, for, leading a completely stripped-down life, he could, with this lifetime pension, devote all his time and energy to spiritual practices. He made rapid progress and, in a short time, reached the spiritual status of paramahansa. (continued in the next issue of the Journal)



Swami Pranabananda

Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas welcomes three new members in July 2024

Ramadevar

Ramadevar, Acharya in Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas, offers seminars with initiation into Babaji's Kriya Yoga in India, and is a Trustee of Babaji's Kriya Yoga Ashram and Publications Trust. He is born into a traditional Sri Vaishnava family with inclination towards spirituality starting at a young age, which also led him into studies related to mind control and healing. He is an experienced Banker, having worked in the largest public and private sector banks in India, married with two sons and stays in Mumbai. Now he is dedicated to intense study of Babaji's Kriya Yoga and to serving its mission and the Sangha in India.



Email: Ramadevar@babajiskriyayoga.net

Ramdas

Ramdas (Armound Mahmoudi) was born in Iran into an Armenian family in 1971. After migrating to several countries. His family finally settled in Los Angeles where he was initiated into Babaji's Kriya Yoga in 2003 and has been devoutly practicing the art since then.



He was initiated into the Order of Acharyas in 2024. He stays committed to practicing Babaji's Kriya Yoga and initiating willing souls into the practice. Currently, he resides in Providence, Rhode Island, USA, with his family and as a professional dentist he manages his own dental practice and teaches Babaji's Kriya Yoga.

Email: Ramdas@babajiskriyayoga.net

Neela Saraswati

Ever since she was a child, Neela Saraswati asked

herself the big questions: Why are we here? Who am I? Where to align myself? And very quickly, these questions turned into a scientific and spiritual orientation. She began practicing Hatha Yoga as a teenager and delved deeply into Western and Eastern philosophies and their interconnection. After studying economics in the USA and Europe, she worked for an auditing company and taught economics at the University.

For about 10 years she was deeply rooted in a Buddhist tradition with emphasis on the Bodhisattva teaching. She now lives with her family in Munich and works in the field of science. In 2016, she discovered Babaji's Kriya Yoga, to which she has devoted herself intensively ever since. The practice fulfils her physically, intellectually, as well as spiritually and helps her to find answers to her questions. Neela Saraswati offers initiations, satsang meetings and Kriya Hatha classes in Munich and a daily online satsang.



"Babaji's Kriya Yoga makes me happy and I want to share this happiness with others. I am deeply grateful to my teachers Satchidananda, Satyananda, Durga and Nagalakshmi."

Email: Nila@babajiskriyayoga.net



Order of Acharya's: Annual report and plans for 2025

DO HELP US BRING BABAJI'S KRIYA YOGA
TO PERSONS LIKE YOU ALL AROUND THE
WORLD

This is a good time to donate to "Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas", which will help us to continue to bring Babaji's Kriya Yoga to persons who otherwise would not be able to receive it.

In the past 12 months, since September 2023 the members of the Order of Acharyas did the following:

- Brought more than 100 initiation seminars to more than 1,000 participants living in 18 countries including Brazil, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Japan, Spain, Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, Australia, Costa Rica, Bulgaria, the USA and Canada.
- Sponsored and helped organize weekly online Satsangs via Zoom in India, North America, Brazil, Germany, Sri Lanka, Italy and France, and daily sadhana meetings via Zoom in India.
- Maintained an ashram and publishing office in Bangalore, India. It published and distributed most of our books and tapes throughout India.
- Maintained an ashram in Badrinath, India.
- Helped financially to complete the construction of a new ashram in Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- Published in the Turkish language *The Voice of Babaji: Trilogy on Kriya Yoga*, and *Babaji and the 18 Siddha Kriya Yoga Tradition*; in Hindi, the book *Kailash*; in Malayalam, the book *Babaji and the 18 Siddhas*.
- Sponsored free public classes weekly in Babaji's Kriya Yoga, and kirtan events at the Quebec ashram
- Organized two pilgrimages of 24 persons in English and 19 persons from Brazil to the Badrinath ashram in September 2024.
- Completed the training of a new Acharyas Neela Saraswati of Munich, Germany, Ra-

madevar of Mumbai, India and Ramdas of Rhode Island, USA

In the year 2024 - 2025 the Order plans to do the following:

- Bring initiation seminars to Estonia, Turkey and most of the above-named countries,
- Conduct free bi-weekly public asana and meditation classes at our ashrams in Quebec, Bangalore and Sri Lanka.
- Publish the book *Thirumandiram: A Classic of Yoga and Tantra* in German and French and possibly in Italian and Portuguese. Publish in Hindi volume 3 of the *Voice of Babaji* in Hindi. Publish the *Yoga of Tirumular: Essays on the Tirumandiram* in French, and possibly in German.
- Complete the training of new Acharyas in Estonia and Canada.
- Organize 3 pilgrimages to Badrinath: one in French, in June, one in English, and one in French, and one Portuguese in September and October 2025.

The 39 volunteer Acharyas of the Order and many other volunteer organizers need your support to fulfill this program for the year 2024-2025. Your contribution is tax deductible in Canada and the USA. Send it by December 31, 2024, if possible, and receive a receipt for your 2024 Income tax return. Use your credit card! I live in Europe and prefer to transfer the funds to: Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas, account number 406726-0, bank: Caisse Centrale Desjardins du Quebec, SWIFT code: CCDQCAM-MXXX, branch: La Caisse populaire Desjardins du Lac Memphremagog, transit number 50066-815 or to your Deutsch Bank account: payable to "Marshall Govindan" Deutsch Bank International, BLZ 50070024, account number: 0723106, re. IBAN DE09500700240072310600, BIC/Swift code DEUTDE33HAN. Please inform info@babajiskriyayoga.net when the transfer is made.

Continued on Page 15

Order of Acharyas *continued*

Our work is financed entirely by your contributions. There are many persons all over the world waiting to receive initiation. We will send acharyas

as we receive the funds needed to pay for travel expenses.

News and Notes



Quebec Ashram initiation seminars with M. G. Satchidananda. (in English) 1st initiation: August 30 to September 1, 2024; 2nd initiation: and October 4-6, 2024; 3rd initiation: and July 18-27, 2025. **In French:** 1st initiation, September 6-8, 2024, 2nd initiation: October 18-20, 2024; 3rd initiation: June 28 to July 7, 2025.

[pdfs/events/Kriya-Hatha-Yoga-Teacher-Training-quebec-2025.pdf](https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/pdfs/events/Kriya-Hatha-Yoga-Teacher-Training-quebec-2025.pdf)



Quebec ashram lake with clouds



Quebec Ashram Third initiation with 26 participants July 2024

Kriya Hatha Yoga Teacher Training at the Quebec Ashram. July 28 to August 15, 2025, with Acharyas Nagalakshimi, Durga, Chaitanya, Satchidananda and Dr. Nicole Marquis, Ph. D. Go to <https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/>

Pilgrimage to Badrinath, India with MG Satchidananda, September 12 to 29, 2025 <https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/Pilgrimages-himalayas.htm>

Pilgrimage to Badrinath, India with Acharyas Sita and Muktananda, May 30 to June 15, 2025. <https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/>

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pilgrimages.htm



Ashram with of Mt. Neelakantan

Pilgrimage to Badrinath with Acharyas Ganapati, Annapurnama, Shivadas, September 27 to October 15, 2025. <https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/pilgrimages.htm>

“Homage to the 18 Siddhas” – a music album that pays tribute to each of the 18 Siddhas. A collection of songs generated with the help of Artificial Intelligence.

You can find it in Spotify, YouTube Music, Apple Music and other music apps, the title is “Homage to the 18 Siddhas” by Nityananda. By the same author you can find other albums adding music to mantras and texts from Babaji's Kriya Yoga and the Siddhas.

Feed your Kriya devotion with them!

Help us to share with others your positive experiences of Babaji's Kriya Yoga by leaving a review on our Google GMB profile: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/SP9NVspKdwgsWe1N9>

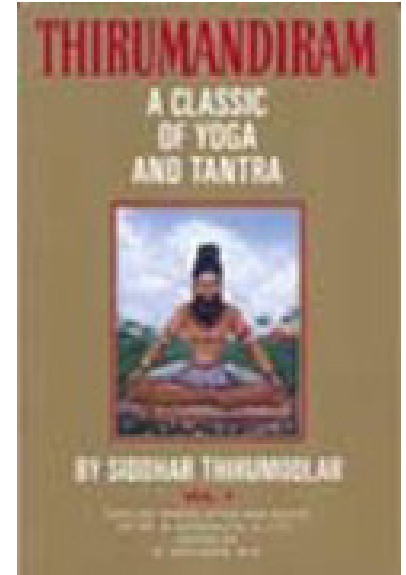
Your feedback is invaluable to us, not only because it helps us improve, but also because it enables others to discover and appreciate the transformative experience of Kriya Yoga. If you have attended our seminars and/or read our publications and found

them beneficial, we would be grateful if you could share your thoughts through a review. Your support helps others find us and experience the same benefits. Feel free to write your review in any language.

We are looking for volunteers to help us review the translation of the

Thirumandiram: A Classic of Yoga and Tantra, in French, German, Italian and Portuguese, which has been made using the software Deepl. First, **some volunteers** correct typographical errors, and after these are corrected, other

volunteers who know English well, to correct errors in translation. Contact: satchidananda@babajiskriyayoga.net Read about the English edition here: https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#thirumandiram_book



Receive our new Babaji message cards! They inspire and remind you of Kriya Babaji and the wisdom of our tradition. We will send them to you via **Whatsapp** 2-3 x per week in 6 languages as per your choice. Simultaneously, we will post them in English on Instagram ([instagram.com/babajiskriyayoga](https://www.instagram.com/babajiskriyayoga))

For more information [Click here](#) to Download PDF.

Online satsang meetings, Yoga classes, questions and answers. Many of our Acharyas are offering their support to initiates and non-initiates through online streaming Hatha Yoga classes, as well as satsang meetings through cyberspace communications like Zoom. However, other Kriya Yoga techniques which are taught during initiation sem-

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News and Notes *continued*

inars cannot be shared during these. Their purpose is to encourage participants to meditate, and secondarily to give some inspiration. Questions from initiates about the Kriya Yoga techniques will be answered only *in a personalized one-to-one setting, where confidentiality is ensured, either by email or a phone call or in person.*

Use Zoom to join online Kriya Hatha Yoga classes, meditation and satsang meetings. Watch recordings of these from 2020 to 2024 on [patreon.com/babajiskriyayoga](https://www.patreon.com/babajiskriyayoga)

International satsang for initiates: Every first **Sunday of the month.** 13:30 GMT+1 (15.00 Central European Time; 9:30 Montreal time) 14.30 Central European Time, 8.30 Montreal Time

International online Zoom satsang for initiates: We are doing our daily practice including pranayama, meditation and mantra and are looking forward for you to join us!

We meet online every day for one hour at 12:30 CET, and every **Sunday at 13:30 UTC**, which is 8:30 am Montreal time. The language is English. Contact nathalie.kriya@gmx.de for particulars of how to join the group. Please state where, when and by whom you were initiated.

Daily Satsang – Babaji's Kriya Yoga Sri Lanka: Every day (Monday to Saturday) 11:30 GMT (5 p.m. India Standard Time. For details: https://kriyababaji.it/babajiskriyayoga_online_satsang/

In Sao Paulo, Brazil: for initiates: Satsang every day, 6:30 p.m. (São Paulo Time Zone). Hatha Yoga class every Friday, at 8:00 a.m. for everyone.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5184926117?pwd=UnFVWmdSZC9PK0JoN0xPTGMxd3pSQTO9>

ID: 518 492 6117 Password: babaji

At Flora des Aguas, Cunha, Brazil: Monday to Friday: 6:30 am to 7:30 am: Kriya Hatha Yoga and classical Yoga asanas: 7:30 am to 8:10 am: Pranayama, meditation, reading and Vedic mantras. Con-

tact: fabifsamorim@hotmail.com. In Portuguese.

In India: Sunday Satsang. 12.00 GMT+1 (14.00 CET) duration: 60 to 90 minutes. <https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/pdfs/events/english Intl-satsang-infotext-suday.pdf>

Visit our e-commerce site www.babajiskriyayoga.net for purchasing with your VISA, American Express or Mastercard all of the books and other products sold by Babaji's Kriya Yoga Publications, or for donations to the Order of Acharyas. Your credit card information is encrypted and kept secure. Check it out!

Subscribe to the correspondence course, The Grace of Babaji's Kriya Yoga. We invite you to join us in this adventure of Self-exploration and discovery, drawn from the books dictated by Babaji in 1952 and 1953. Receive by mail, each month, a lesson of 18-24 pages developing a specific theme, with practical exercises. For details go here: <https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/grace-course.htm>

Visit Durga's blog. www.seekingtheself.com

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