



B a b a j i ' s

# Kriya Yoga Journal

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## Yoga is the practical side of All Religions

By M. G. Satchidananda

What is Yoga? What is religion? In this article, I invite you, the reader, to reflect deeply on these questions to align your practice of Yoga with your deepest held religious convictions, values, and aspirations.

In recent decades, the word Yoga has become a homograph, a word with multiple meanings. Most often, it refers to physical exercises that improve health and relieve the effects of stress. Because it has become a commercial product, its meaning is further obscured by attempts to dif-

ferentiate it in the competitive marketplace. Our materialistic culture, which seeks to reify or objectify all experience as a means of overcoming existential suffering, has even commodified Yoga as a product or service to be consumed. It has become a billion-dollar business. Too often, even its so-called teachers view it as merely a means of making a living. Its original meaning, whether referring to Yoga as a process of purification of the egoistic perspective or to its ultimate goal,

union with the absolute reality, deserves more than commercial recognition in our society.

Currently, Yoga is most often characterized as Hatha Yoga. Yet, the physical postures are referred to in only two of the 195 verses of text that serves as Yoga's classical foundation, Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, and the postures count as only one of the eight limbs that Patanjali's work refers to: (1) the yamas, or moral and social restraints, including non-harming, truthfulness, non-stealing, chastity, and greedlessness; (2) the niyamas, observances, including purity, contentment, constant practice, self-study, and surrender; (3) asanas, physical postures; (4) pranayama, breathing exercises; (5) pratyahara, sense withdrawal; (6) dharana, concentration; (7) dhyana, meditation, or the scientific art of mastering the mind; (8) samadhi, cognitive absorption, Self-realization, God realization (Note 1).

In his lectures, Yogi Ramaiah often said that "Yoga is the practical side of all religions." This was a helpful way to encourage anyone, whatever their religious beliefs, to practice it. Furthermore, he also defined Yoga as "the scientific art of perfect God

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## Yoga, the practical side *continued*

Truth Union." If it were merely a science, we would only need to understand it to reach its goal. But human nature, with all of its flaws and habits, resists transformation of its limitations, and therefore one must practice the "art" of Yoga.

"Union" points to the experience of transcendence of the materialistic, objective, and temporal approach to existential challenges and suffering. But what about God and Truth? These terms are not usually associated with Yoga today. Why is that? Perhaps because the need to appeal to the greatest number of paying students coming through the doors of a typical Yoga studio precludes Yoga teachers from mentioning such terms. Generally, this can apply to any term commonly used in religion that might dissuade students from continuing, so great is the prejudice against and ignorance of religion. This may be because organized religion has imbued the discussion of religion with the emotions of fear and guilt, as well as concerns about sin and evil. Furthermore, widespread ignorance about religion, even about one's own, let alone the religion of others, creates fear of the unfamiliar and leaves little room for discussion.

### **Organized religion is being replaced by private, individualized religion**

Religion is usually used as a noun and, as such, it becomes an object. Consequently, if we represent ourselves to others as adhering to a religion, it creates an immediate barrier to familiarity. As a result, religion today has become one of the greatest sources of societal division and conflict. Consequently, its divisiveness is one reason that a growing number of people reject religion. Churches in Western countries are emptying in droves. As people become confident as consumers in their ability to choose what they wish to consume, they also become confident in what to believe and practice. Consequently, organized religion is being replaced by private religion, a personal collection of beliefs and practices cobbled together over time, the result of each individual's search for both existential purpose and well-being in a variety of sources. This highly individualized, personal process implies that religionizing, as a verb, or religious, as an adjective, better characterize the practices of those who have turned away from the dogmas and social mores of organized religion. This is sometimes reflected in the response of many of them who claim, "I am spiritual, but not religious." But even this retort, by implying that religion cannot be spiritual, confirms widespread ignorance of the meaning and significance of religion.

### **A multi-dimensional definition of religion**

To capture its complexity, those who study religion have defined it in multi-dimensional ways. One of the most highly appreciated definitions by a current scholar is that of Thomas Tweed in his book *Crossing and Dwelling* (Note 2), who writes that:

*Religions are confluences of organic-cultural flows that intensify joy and confront suffering by drawing on human and*

*suprahuman forces to make homes and cross boundaries.*

He devotes an entire chapter to unpacking each of the terms used in the definition. I will attempt to summarize his explanation.

**Confluence** is an aquatic metaphor that indicates that religions are complex processes, or flows, ever changing and evolving, like various currents in a river. They are not static. As such, we can better understand how they relate to one another and transform each other through contact. This metaphor also allows us to understand how religions relate to the economy, society, and politics. They also flow across time, from one generation to the next, and across space geographically as they are carried by missionaries and immigrants. They are simultaneously individualistic and collective. They flow organically, biologically, like the human mind works, including perception, inference, and memory. It must also be acknowledged that they include complex interactions or flows of organic constraints (neural, physiological, emotional, and cognitive) and cultural mediations (linguistic, metaphoric or tropic, ritual, and material). Religions shape and are shaped by cognitive (beliefs), moral (values), and affective (emotional) processes. Religions, as affective processes, help determine what humans want and how they feel. In believing and valuing, the devout offer assertions about the nature of things and prescribe moral codes to guide conduct. Religion turns to tropes, especially analogical utterances, to discuss suprahuman forces and ultimate horizons. Artifacts anchor the tropes, values, emotions, and beliefs that religious agencies, such as institutions, transmit and prescribe rules for their use. These may include dress, ritual objects, sacred buildings, and a wide range of embodied practices, including ceremonies, prayer, bowing, worship, reading, singing, fasting, dancing, meditating, and chanting.

**Intensify joy and confront suffering** This means that religion provides the lexicon, rules, and expression for many different sorts of emotions, including those framed as most positive and most negative, most cherished and most condemned. Religion labels, prescribes, and cultivates some emotions and obscures, condemns, and redirects others. For example, in some forms of Christianity, regret – framed as guilt for sin – is valued as a necessary condition for any genuine turning of the heart to God. On the contrary, practitioners of Zen Buddhism might be told to notice the arising of regret – or any other emotion – and be encouraged to put it out of the mind by returning their focus to the breath.

Religion has long been recognized as a response to evil. This includes incessant human hopes and fears, the dread of true misery, and the terror of death. Max Weber put it more positively: Religion deals with the world's imperfections. These imperfections include all sources of human suffering, such as disease, disaster and death. It also reaffirms a sacred order in the cosmos in the face of chaos. Religion lets humans imagine and enhance the

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## Yoga, the practical side *continued*

joys of encountering the environment, the beauty of nature, and the transitions in the lifespan. Religion celebrates not only birth but also marriage, harvest, the rising and setting of the sun, and death. Religion interprets and eases the suffering of life in all its forms.

**Human and suprahuman forces** can be imagined in various ways, and they distinguish religion from other cultural forms. They are called upon to intensify joy and avoid human suffering. They may be embedded within each of us as potential, such as kundalini, the Tao, the image of God, and the Buddha nature, or outside each of us as a Supreme Being, whether personified or not.

**Make homes and cross boundaries** One of the imperfections of human life is the danger of being disoriented. So, religion involves finding our own place and moving through space. Charles Long defined religion as orientation, in the ultimate sense; in other words, it helps us come to terms with the ultimate significance of our place in the world. Or more succinctly, religion answers the question "Why am I here?" Answers to such questions are partial, tentative, and continually redrawn sketches of where we are, where we've been, and where we're going. Religion creates a sense of belonging. Religion sets aside sacred sites. Religion involves pilgrimages. The term cross boundaries refers to three kinds: terrestrial (enforcing social spatial rules, including personal space and property), corporeal (transitions during the phases of life), and cosmic (ultimate horizons). Most important for delineating religion, religion marks and crosses this cosmic boundary into what may be imagined as heaven, an afterlife, liberation, nirvana, or even a more favorable future incarnation.

### Why is religion important?

An appreciation of religion – as it has been comprehensively defined above – can serve as an antidote or alternative road map to the numbing materialism, consumerism, individualism, hedonism, and alienation infecting society and causing climate change today. Whereas humanism and scientific rationalism dismiss consciousness as mere epi-phenomena of the brain, religion affirms, with wonder, the mystery of consciousness and the human spirit, and its potential for the perfection of human nature. As Jesus said, "Be ye perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect" (Mt. 5:48). The wisdom teachings of all religions provide us with philosophical guidance in how to live our lives, to avoid suffering, and to reach perfection. Without this wisdom, can we really expect science and technology to save our planet from environmental destruction? In the Yoga and Tantric traditions, a spiritual technology, or sadhana of disciplined practices, is also provided to the practitioner, the sadhak. One who masters these becomes a Siddha or perfected one.

As discussed in an earlier Journal article, "How do we know whether we are progressing spiritually?", our conception of God and religion evolves as our conception of our own identity evolves (Notes 3 & 4). From being some-

thing that is out there, God is realized progressively within ourselves as "ever new joy" in the words of Yogananda. The literature of religion provides an inspiring roadmap.

### Is Yoga religious?

#### **The Superior Court of Quebec said "Yes," after I testified for 12 hours over three days**

I am reminded of the last time I was interviewed on the question of whether Yoga is religious. It was in the Superior Court of Quebec at the Palais de Justice in Old Montreal in 1979. The occasion was a lawsuit that our Canadian Babaji Yoga Society, a non-profit registered educational charity (not a religious society), launched against the City of Outremont, for its refusal to grant us a property tax exemption for our ashram, a triplex apartment building in Outremont, Montreal.

I was required to testify in court for 12 hours over three days in response to questions from three opposing lawyers about the meaning of Yoga and why our Yoga ashram should be accorded equal status with the Church, and other religious institutions, and be granted the exemption from property taxation that they enjoyed.

At the end of the first day, an expert witness, a professor of religion at the University of Montreal, who was assisting the lawyers representing the city of Outremont, told me in private that he thought he was on the wrong side. The opposing lawyers wanted to know everything from A to Z about Yoga and how we lived at our ashram. Answering their questions was like playing chess, as they attempted to lead me into legal traps. Each day, to prepare for my testimony before going to court, I meditated on the answers to all of the questions I hoped they would not ask me.

At the end of the trial, the elderly judge stated that he had presided over court hearings for more than 30 years and that he had never been so spiritually elevated. He said that our trial had been like a seminar on God. He ruled in our favor, and our ashram benefited from a property tax exemption.

Two years later, after Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau managed to repatriate North American law and Canada created its own Human Rights Commission, a lawyer from this new commission informed me that, by winning this case, we had created an important precedent for all of Canada with respect to Yoga and other alternative spiritual and religious organizations.

### **The Parliaments of World Religions and Yoga**

A memorable occasion, on which I enjoyed hearing various views about the relationship between Yoga and religion, was the 33rd Parliament of World Religions and Yoga in November 1986. It was the first and largest conference on Yoga in Montreal's history. I had organized several parliaments previous to this, beginning with the 26th at the University of California at Los Angeles in

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# Preserve your health and the planet with plant protein (Part 1)

By M. G. Satchidananda

Like many of you who have been alarmed by the existential threat to life due to climate change as reported by the overwhelming body of scientific evidence, I am wondering, "What can I do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?" While there are many checklists containing such recommendations such as recycling of garbage, composting, carpooling, turning down the thermostat, using renewable sources of energy, the one thing which would be most effective is almost always ignored. Twenty years ago, John Robbins (the heir to the Baskin-Robbins ice cream enterprise) wrote a book entitled "Diet for a New America." It was an exceptional work as it proved through a whole raft of statistics that if even half of American became vegetarians, we could eliminate our dependence upon foreign oil, greatly reduce the incidence of the most common source of death in North America (cancer, heart disease, diabetes) and largely resolve the problem of global warming. This is because nearly twenty percent of the world's production of greenhouse gases is a result of the methane gas produced by livestock and the burn-

ing of fossil fuels needed to produce livestock feed and fertilizer.

Therefore, I believe that the single most important thing that all students of Yoga can do to resolve the crisis in global warming and the overconsumption of non-renewable fossil fuels, is not only to become vegetarian, but to encourage friends, family and colleagues to become vegetarian. Invite them to dinner! It's easy and it's fun. Share your favorite recipes with them. Inform them of the benefits of becoming a vegetarian. Introduce them to plant protein. Start contributing to the solution, rather than contributing to the problem of global warming.

Perhaps the greatest source of resistance to becoming a vegetarian for many persons is an obsession with protein because it builds muscle and helps people feel full. Most Americans, Brazilians and Europeans eat too much protein everyday, especially animal protein. Therefore, aside from introducing family and friends to new plant

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## Yoga, the practical side *continued*

1970. To organize it, I devoted most of my free time for one year to meeting representatives of more than 25 different local religious and Yoga organizations. More than a thousand people attended the three-day event at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in the downtown area. It was open to the public, completely free of charge. Even the meals were provided free of charge. It had a budget of more than ten thousand dollars, which I donated. At its end, a request for donations from the parliament's participants brought in more than this amount in response.

This experience confirmed in me the power of presenting Yoga as a religious and spiritual offering. It also confirmed that such gatherings are a powerful antidote to fanaticism, the disease of religion. By listening to the presentations of ministers, rabbis, monks, priests, and yogis, we grew in appreciation of each other's religious beliefs and spiritual practices.

Babaji himself ordained these gatherings at their inception in 1954, when the first one was held at the Divine Life Society in Rishikesh, under the honorary presidency of the great Swami Sivananda. Their theme has always been "unity in diversity," as fully presented by Babaji in *The Voice of Babaji: A Trilogy on Kriya Yoga* (Note 5). Yogi Ramaiah referred to our tradition as Kriya Yoga Siddhantham, where Siddhantham refers to the teachings of the 18 Yoga Siddhas. This includes the literature of the Yoga Siddhas, which is filled with religious concepts and practices. An example is the yamas and niyamas (social restraints and observances) from Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, given at the beginning of this article. Tirumular wrote "Anbu Sivam" (Love is God). He also summarized the monistic theism of Yoga Siddhantham in his famous saying "The jiva [individual soul] is becoming Siva" (Notes 6

& 7).

May an appreciation and study of religion – including the literature of the Yoga Siddhas – whether private or organized, individual or communal, combined with the practice of Yoga, continue to grow and evolve in each of you, dear readers, in wisdom and joy.

### Notes:

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2. Tweed, T.A. (2008). *Confluences: Towards a Theory of Religion*. In *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (pp. 54–79). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

3. Govindan, M. (2007). *How do we know whether we are progressing spiritually?* Kriya Yoga Journal, 14(3), Fall 2007.

4. Govindan, M. (2008). *How do we know whether we are progressing spiritually? In Kriya Yoga: Insights Along the Path (Part 3, Chapter 7)*. St. Etienne de Bolton, Quebec: Babaji's Kriya Yoga and Publications, Inc.

5. Neelakantan, V.T., Ramaiah, S.A.A., & Babaji Nagaraj. (2003). *The Voice of Babaji: A Trilogy on Kriya Yoga*. St. Etienne de Bolton, Quebec: Babaji's Kriya Yoga and Publications, Inc.

6. Tirumular, Siddhar. (2010). *The Tirumandiram*. St. Etienne de Bolton, Quebec: Babaji's Kriya Yoga and Publications, Inc.

7. Ganapathy, T.N., & Arumugam, K.R. (2008). *The Yoga of Siddhar Tirumular: Essays on the Tirumandiram*. St. Etienne de Bolton, Quebec: Babaji's Kriya Yoga and Publications, Inc.





## Preserve your health *continued*

based recipes, it will usually be important to introduce them to some facts about plant based protein, especially with regards to their health and green house gas emissions.

Many recent studies have confirmed the link between excessive consumption of animal protein, particularly from red meat, and many chronic diseases, including Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. Red meat comes with high amounts of saturated fat, and processed forms, like bacon and sausage, often contains carcinogenic preservatives and other chemicals. But protein found in plants is linked to the opposite: lower rates of many of the same diseases and longer lives, thanks to the fiber, health fats and micro-nutrients that come with it.

Replacing beef with protein-rich plants like beans, peas and nuts not only has many benefits for people's health and longevity, but also for the health of the planet, according to a report published in January by the World Economic Forum. This report estimates that if people all over the planet made one change – switching from beef to other sources of protein – global greenhouse gas emissions would fall by 25% and diet-related deaths would drop by 5% in wealthy countries. This is because red-meat production is hard on the environment as raising cattle requires large plots of land and water and it emits lots of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

If people are willing to expand their protein palate, the news gets much better. In another report, published January 16, in the Lancet, thirty-seven experts from sixteen countries devised a diet they agreed was ideal for people and the planet. According to the group, Americans – who eat more than six times the recommend amount of red meat – should aim for little or none of it and instead get little or none of it and instead get most of their protein from plant sources.

A third of U.S. consumers in 2018 said that they planned to buy more plant-based products in the next year, according to data from the independent market-research firm Minitel. Companies are now racing to create or improve plant protein foods using beans, algae, nuts, soya, peas and grains.

### **Beans**

Switching to beans means big gains for health, since they are rich in fiber, iron, potassium and amino acids, as well as protein. They are great for the planet also: a 2017 paper published in the journal Climatic Change predicted that the U.S. could achieve up to 74% of its greenhouse gas reduction goals by 2020 if Americans would just begin eating beans instead of beef. "Beans really fit that profile of being the best available replacement for beef, at least in terms of minimum environmental impact and maximum health impact," says Helen Harwatt, an environmental social scientist at Harvard and co-author of the paper. Livestock farming accounts for about 15% of all greenhouse gas emissions, but beans take far less energy to produce and harvest; and they are much less expensive than meat and most meat substitutes.

### **Nuts**

Making nuts a main protein source not only reduces the risks for diseases linked to red meat, but also offers important nutrients. The benefits vary by the type of nut, but almost every nut has protein, healthy fats, vitamins and minerals. The World Economic Forum report says that nuts are the best protein alternative to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide because they release virtually none during production.

### **Meat Mimics**

People who want plants to taste and feel like meat have more options today. The most common meat alternative, soy-based tofu, has almost 10 grams of protein per three ounce serving, along with fiber and healthy fats and lecithin. It is also lighter on greenhouse gas emissions than meat. Wheat gluten is growing in popularity as it can easily be made to feel and taste like meat and it is rich in protein. Pea protein is also being increasingly used in many products such as veggie burgers.

### **Algae**

Spirulina, or blue-green algae, has been a common ingredient in juice bar products. It has a similar nutritional profile to eggs according to the report in the Lancet. It can be mixed into many other foods. It produces few greenhouse gases and can reduced deforestation due to soy and other feed production if consumed instead of meat according to the World Economic Forum report.

### **How much protein does an adult need per day?**

Many persons justify eating meat because they do not know the answer to this question.

Most official nutrition organizations recommend a fairly modest protein intake.

The DRI (Dietary Reference Intake) is 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight, or 0.36 grams per pound.

This amounts to:

- 56 grams per day for the average sedentary man.
- 46 grams per day for the average sedentary woman.

Though this meager amount may be enough to prevent downright deficiency, studies show that it's far from sufficient to ensure optimal health and body composition.

It turns out that the right amount of protein for any one individual depends on many factors, including their activity level, age, muscle mass, physique goals and current state of health.

### **What "Grams of Protein" Really Means**

This is a very common misunderstanding.

In nutrition science, "grams of protein" refers to grams of the macronutrient protein, not grams of a protein-containing food like meat or eggs.

An 8-ounce serving of beef weighs 226 grams but only

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# Identifying useless thoughts

By Acharya Nityananda

In my early practice of Babaji's Kriya Yoga I was able to experience joyful and peaceful states of mental silence, but only momentarily, due to the intrusion of thoughts, and often painful thoughts. But then, that is what the mind does. The mind is a great tool for reasoning and analyzing; it helps to solve problems and create realities however it also creates problems and situations that we do not want to experience. Knowing how to concentrate the mind is important for life, but we also need to learn how to cleanse and widen it into awareness.

"I think therefore I am," declared the French philosopher Descartes. In the East, the Siddha Patanjali declared "Yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations arising within consciousness, then the Seer abides in his own true form or nature" (Yoga Sutras I.2-3). This is a radical change of perspective, which brings unconditional joy, as one realizes how to differentiate the movements of the mind, including sensations, emotions and thoughts

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## Preserve your health *continued*

contains 61 grams of actual protein. Similarly, a large egg weighs 46 grams but only packs 6 grams of protein.

### What About the Average Person?

If you're at a healthy weight, don't lift weights and don't exercise much, then aiming for 0.36–0.6 grams per pound (0.8–1.3 gram per kg) is a reasonable estimate.

This amounts to:

- 56–91 grams per day for the average male.
- 46–75 grams per day for the average female.

### Exceptional circumstances

People who are physically active do need more protein than people who are sedentary.

If your job is physically demanding, you walk a lot, run, swim or do any sort of exercise, you need to eat more protein.

Endurance athletes also need significant amounts of protein — about 0.5–0.65 grams per pound, or 1.2–1.4 grams per kg

Older adults have significantly increased protein needs as well — up to 50% higher than the DRI, or about 0.45–0.6 grams per pound (1–1.3 grams per kg) of body weight.

This can help prevent osteoporosis and sarcopenia (reduction in muscle mass), both significant problems in the elderly.

People recovering from injuries may also need more protein.

### Gaining muscle mass

A high protein intake also helps you build and preserve muscle mass, which burns a small number of calories around the clock.

People who want to hold on to muscle they've already built may need to increase their protein intake when losing body fat, as a high protein intake can help prevent muscle loss that usually occurs when dieting.

When it comes to muscle mass, studies usually don't look at the percentage of calories but rather daily grams of protein per kilograms or pounds of body weight. A common recommendation for gaining muscle is 1 gram of protein per pound of body weight, or 2.2 grams of protein per kg.

### Weight loss and protein

Protein is incredibly important when it comes to losing weight. As you probably know, you need to take in fewer calories than you burn to lose weight. It's well supported by science that eating protein can increase the number of calories you burn by boosting your metabolic rate (calories out) and reducing your appetite (calories in).

Protein at around 25–30% of total daily calories has been shown to boost metabolism by up to 80–100 calories per day, compared to lower protein diets.

Yet, probably the most important contribution of protein to weight loss is its ability to reduce appetite and cause a spontaneous reduction in calorie intake. Protein keeps you feeling full much better than both fat and carbs. One study in obese men showed that protein at 25% of calories increased feelings of fullness, reduced the desire for late-night snacking by half and reduced obsessive thoughts about food by 60%.

In another study, women who increased their protein intake to 30% of calories ended up eating 441 fewer calories per day and lost 11 pounds in 12 weeks — simply by adding more protein to their diet.

But protein not only helps you lose weight, it can also prevent you from gaining weight in the first place. In one study, a modest increase in protein from 15% to 18% of calories reduced the amount of fat people regained after weight loss by 50%.

Eating more protein makes it much easier to stick to any weight loss diet — be it high-carb, low-carb or something in between.

According to these studies, a protein intake of around 30% of calories may be optimal for weight loss. This amounts to 150 grams of protein per day for someone on a 2000-calorie diet.

You can calculate it by multiplying your calorie intake by 0.075.

But protein not only helps you lose weight, it can also prevent you from gaining weight in the first place.

*(Continued. In part 2 we will examine the best protein sources for Vegans and Vegetarians, and how much protein is available in typical servings of plant based sources of protein.)*



## Identifying useless thoughts *continued*

from consciousness. We are not the thoughts; we have thoughts that come and go. But we are not what we think. We are the consciousness, that observes thoughts, and which is always present. In fact, consciousness is the only thing that has always been present throughout all of the moments of our lives. Everything else in our life is subject to change. Absolute Being, Consciousness and Bliss, is who we truly are, according to the Yoga Siddhas.

Trying to stop the mind is like trying to hold water between our hands. "The mind never stops, impetuous, self-determined, difficult to tame... Taking control over my mind seems as difficult as appeasing the powerful winds" says Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita (VI.34). Fighting with the mind to stop it, is not an effective practice. A better strategy is to observe it as a witness, without getting involved in it. The book *The Voice of Babaji: Trilogy on Kriya Yoga* declares the following about the mind:

"When we just begin to reflect to trace its source, it vanishes away. If we stoop to follow it, it tries to conquer us. It does not obey us, if we obey it. If we are the Witness, merely an onlooker, noticing its rises and its falls, it cannot but become submissive to us. We are to be unconcerned with it and work in us the attitude of an unaffected witness." (pg. 451).

Normal day-to-day thoughts can be grouped into several categories. Many are useful, but also many are useless and distressful. I found that by recognizing these different categories and how they work, I have been able to rid myself of the grip that the negative ones have had on me.

I invite you to read through the following categorization of recurring thoughts. My strategy is not to resist thoughts, but to recognize them for what they are, as soon as they appear, and to immediately let them go. I compare this process to being at a party and recognizing a person who is very tiresome, someone who always repeats the same stories. You see him, recognize him and avoid engaging with him, just that. The more you do this with habitual and useless thoughts, the quicker they will lose their power to grab you and hold onto your attention.

**Thoughts from the past** Memories that bring up negative emotions. Thoughts that linger within, tinged with fear, anger, resentment or vengeance for things done to you or guilt, repentance, embarrassment for something you did.

The past steals the present! Looking backward, creates a very heavy load preventing you from looking forward. Attending to your past, distorts and limits your vision of the present. Don't allow the mind to define you by your past. Once your lessons are learned, you don't need to repeat them. The lessons of the past, like food that you have eaten, must be digested. Once digested, each new day can be fresh, free and full of possibility.

Digestion of the past means to realize that thoughts of the past are personal, biased interpretations about what

really happened. You must observe the old thought, identify it as memory, noticing its emotional charge without letting it affect you. Then, you let it go more easily. It may take a while to let go of the emotion but continue the process. Perhaps, look on a negative memory, as if it were a hoax, a mere ghost that exists only in the mind.

**Thoughts about the future** There are two, especially annoying thoughts of this kind:

1) fearful anticipation- when you visualize something negative that could happen in the future, adding fear to it. You do not know what tomorrow will bring! How many times, a certain future was not as you imagined? When things ended up being much better, than anticipated? Some people use fear as a vital strategy, visualizing what can go wrong and then struggling so that it does not happen. This is an emotionally exhausting strategy that make life full of anguish! Living without fear, seems scary, because the ego thinks that you must live in survival mode in order to be able to control things in your life.

Although it is appropriate to plan well for the future, it is more important to identify and release these fearful thoughts as soon as they appear, so that they do not grip the mind and emotions. A better strategy, to avoiding what you do not want to happen, is to visualize positively what you really want to create, and put your energy there.

2) exhaustion by anticipation: this second type is when you think about what you have to do, tomorrow, this week or in the future, and allow yourself to be overwhelmed by feelings of fatigue, inadequacy, or despondency. Better to live one day at a time engaged fully and contentedly in what there is to do today. Instead of identifying with the frequency of the mind to judge every situation, identify with the presence of the witness. Anticipation takes us away from the present, the witness, the only thing that exists and the only thing we have. "Sufficient to the day is the trouble thereof" - even as every hour has its own. If you observe you will see that each day has its own opportunities for learning. The lessons and preoccupations change over time and are replaced by new ones. So as soon as one of these thoughts appears, discard it knowing that "tomorrow will be another day". One day at a time is enough.

**Thoughts of desire or aversion** When an image of an object of desire or enjoyment arises, along with fantasy about how happy you will be, when you are able to get it. The mind imagines that you will be happy once you attain whatever it is you desire, sex, a specific meal, an expensive purchase, whatever, it may be. The mind is disturbed by your decision that you must have this. Or, on the other hand, the opposite distraction is a reoccurring thought that involves aversion, something you do not want. Your mind, disturbed by apprehension, perhaps fear can become obsessed in avoiding whatever this is.

Desire is the base, they say in India, of Creation. But

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# News and Notes

**New audio recording. Listen to this very interesting 1.5 hour interview with M. G. Satchidananda** recorded on the radio in Quebec, Canada on February 14, [www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/mp3/KriyaYogaMarshallGovindan-edited.mp3](http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/mp3/KriyaYogaMarshallGovindan-edited.mp3)

It covers a wide range of subjects related to Kriya Yoga, the teachings of Babaji and the Siddhas, his early experiences, and how to meet the challenges of modern life. A Youtube version of this with 108 rare photographs from his archives can be viewed here:

[www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/videos/videos/welcome.html](http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/videos/videos/welcome.html)

**Pilgrimage to the new Badrinath Ashram with Acharyas Kailash and Brahmananda:** September 19 to October 7, 2019, Join them in a life changing, unforgettable pilgrimage to the place where Babaji attained soruba samadhi, the ultimate state of enlightenment. Details are here: [www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/Pilgrimages-himalayas.htm](http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/Pilgrimages-himalayas.htm)

**Third level initiations** will be offered with M. Govindan Satchidananda in Quebec July 15-24, 2019. They will also be offered in 2019 by Satyananda in Germany, by Nityananda in Spain, by Sita Siddhananda in France, by

Ishvarananda in Estonia. Attain the goal of Self-realization with powerful kriyas to awaken the chakras and to go into the breathless state of samadhi.

**Second level initiations** will be given by M.G. Satchidananda in Bangalore, India, May 3 to 5, and in Quebec June 14-16 and October 11- 13, 2019.

**Teacher Trainings in Kriya Hatha Yoga** will be offered in Quebec in English June 27 to July 12, and in French August 5-16, 2019. [www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/hatha-yoga-teacher-training.htm](http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/hatha-yoga-teacher-training.htm)

**Babaji's Kriya Yoga in Chinese and Polish:** our website has been translated into these two languages by Kriya Yoga sadhakAnjani Yan Gao of Shanghai, China and a team of translators hired by Kriya Yoga sadhak Tomek Niewiadomski of Warsaw, Poland. The website is now translated into 18 languages.

**Marshall Govindan celebrates 50 years as a Kriya Yoga sadhak.** In 1969, he read the Autobiography of a Yogi, began a one year preparation to enter the SRF

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## Identifying useless thoughts *continued*

the Siddhas remind us that desire makes us forget the true unconditional bliss or ananda, the joy of the Self. All desires are poor substitutes, in comparison, with this Ananda. The mind makes us both want things and reject things, and these perpetuate themselves due to the ego. But when we experience the ananda of just Being, dualities disappear. Desire and aversions dissolve. Everything becomes neutral. It is fine either way.

It is interesting to then, observe the thoughts of desire, how the objects of desire are sweetened and made attractive by your mind, and how their final satisfaction differs greatly from your original fantasy about them, or how short-lived satisfaction lasts. For the mind, if left on its own, will generate another new desire before you know it. Look deeply and discover just how often your mind deludes you with things that do not last, and how you still are dominated by it.

**Thoughts about your own worth and acceptance/respect of others** As children, we develop strategies to achieve the attention, recognition and affection of our authorities and others. We learn to be entertaining, witty, polite, or quiet and respectful? What is your strategy when interacting with others? Sometimes past conditioning from childhood create monsters of mental thoughts and strategies that can sabotage our sense of self-worth and self-respect, self-confidence. We perhaps experience restlessness, jealousy, pride, defensiveness, and have a general lack of confidence. The mind plays with us but we don't know we are playing a game with

it. Recognize these mental and emotional tensions as soon as they appear and take control over them by labeling them as childhood conditioning.

The ego's need to attract attention and be loved, results in tension, loneliness and long-term suffering. When you find yourself suffering from these kinds of thoughts, remember that there is no sustainable strategy to receive love. It all comes down to this: Love others. You get as much love as you give. There's no more than this.

Also remember that it is exhausting and unfeasible to try to receive through others the love that you do not give yourself. Be true to yourself and follow your heart. From that place everything will flow, and those who resonate with you will come into and nourish your life. Recognize, that loving and serving others, is one of the main sources of happiness that exists.

## Identify your own thinking categories

Surely too, you can add other categories of thoughts, those which you discover reoccurring in your own mind. By learning to identify the types of thoughts you are having, as soon as they appear, and detaching from them, and by not giving them more energy, you will remove contractions from the mind and widen the space for an experience of awareness, the silent Presence, the unconditional joy of Being. You begin to do whatever comes your way to do, without feeling ruffled. You are generally happy.

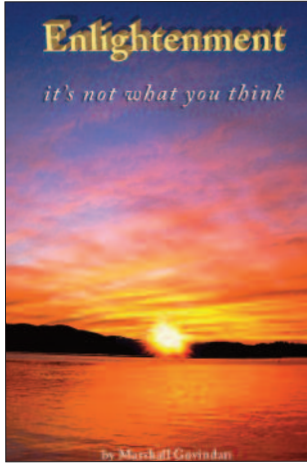




## News and notes *continued*

monastery, abandoned a career in the U.S. Foreign Service, and subsequently, with the endorsement of Yogi S.A.A. Ramaiah, received the first and only exemption from military service ever granted by the Selective Service commission to someone on the basis of residing in a Yoga ashram as a student of divinity. Jai Babaji!

**Enlightenment: It's Not What You Think**, our latest publication, by Marshall Govindan, reveals how you can replace the perspective of the ego – the habit of identifying with the body, emotions, and thoughts – with a new perspective: the Witness, that of your soul ... pure consciousness. With compelling logic, practices for everyday life, and guided meditations, the book explains how you can free yourself from suffering, enjoy inner peace, and find intuitive guidance.. Enlightenment: It's Not What You Think is a must-read, for it is practical, simple, and meaningful... It is a decisive tool we can use for finding life's purpose." - Pandit Rajmani Tigunait, Ph D, Spiritual Head, Himalayan Institute. 192 pages. US\$14.95 CN\$18.75 Order your copy from our website: [www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#enlightenment\\_book](http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#enlightenment_book)



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