

B a b a j i ' s

Kriya Yoga Journal

Showing the Path to others: *Arrupadai*

By M. G. Satchidananda

Do you feel a need or a responsibility to help others? As a student of Kriya Yoga do you wonder how you could or should do so? Do you wonder whether your knowledge and experience in Kriya Yoga can be put to good use to alleviate the suffering of family, friends, co-workers, or acquaintances?

Throughout the writings of the Tamil Yoga Siddhas one finds references to the concept of *arrupadai*, showing the path to one and all, irrespective of case, creed, sex, reli-

gion or nationality. It emphasizes a vow of helping humanity by one's own enlightenment. Closely related to it is the saying of the Siddhas: the bliss I enjoy, may it be enjoyed by everyone. They sincerely felt that genuine freedom from suffering is not in isolation. Showing the path to perfection or *siddhi* is the highest altruistic action. They aspired to show everyone the path of liberation from the endless sorrows of the world. Their aspiration was for the many to attain a one eternal, all-relating, all

united self knowledge.

The Kriya Yoga Pledge is an expression of this *arrupadai* concept. In it, one vows to practice Kriya Yoga not merely for one's own benefit, but for the benefit of everyone. "My own being and pleasures, I surrender absolutely and entirely to Kriya Babaji, such that all creatures may find their end. The stillness lies in surrender of all things, and the spirit is fain for the stillness. If I must surrender all, it is best to give it for fellow creatures." As I often say to new initiates, when introducing them to this pledge, "even if you do not feel like practicing Kriya Yoga some days, do it anyway, because those around you will find it much easier to get along with if you do."

The pledge continues, "I will be a balm to the sick, their healer and servitor. I will quench with rains of food and drink the anguish of hunger and thirst." By sharing the teachings of Yoga with those who are sick (physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually) you also fulfil this pledge.

You do not have to be trained as a teacher to share your love and appreciation for how Yoga has helped you. As you will see at the end of this article, there are many ways you can do so. Expressing it will deepen your understanding of Yoga. As you will

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Eastman, Quebec, Canada J0E 1P0

Telephone: (450) 297-0258, Fax: (450) 297-3957 email: info@babajiskriyayoga.net
Internet home page: <http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net>

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Satsang at Quebec Ashram.

also see below, doing so becomes a form of yogic sadhana enabling you to overcome many sources of internal discomfort and to surrender as an instrument of the Divine or your higher Self.

The Yoga Siddhas have a loving desire to secure the welfare, happiness, and solidarity of all beings. Love is the purpose of life, the vehicle and the destination. The Siddhas said: anbu Sivam, which means, love is God. They sincerely believed that to realize God, one must become free from human imperfections, born of egoism and its manifestation, including attachment or desire, aversion or fear. While the spiritual path is singular and requires periods of isolation to turn inwards, the transformation of human nature requires one to become aware of one's imperfections, which are like one's shadow, and cannot be seen by oneself. If you live alone, you may think that you are superior to others, even almost perfect, but when in contact with others, your rough edges or shadow is exposed, and even rounded off.

The mantra of the Tamil Yoga Siddhas, Sivayanama, is not merely a philosophical concept or mystical instrument, but a social concept also. Nama means tyaga or sacrifice, and Siva means bliss (Ananda). Aya means outcome or result. The term Sivayanama means "the result of sacrifice is bliss." The Siddhas felt the bliss in sacrifice and they considered sacrifice as an opportunity to serve. To them, service and work begin with one's own Self-realization. That is, the social concern of the Siddhas provided them with another means of Self-realization. The mystic experience of the Siddhas gives us a new meaning to the concept of social service.

The positive and negative aspects of arrupadai

Showing the path to others includes showing what to

do and what to avoid, or not do. The positive aspect includes sharing the methods of Yoga, the yamas, the social restraints or ethical principles (non-harming, truthfulness, chastity, not taking what does not belong to you, greedlessness), the wisdom teachings of the Yoga Siddhas, their dietary and healthy living recommendations. Teaching by example can be complimented by discussing with others why and how you have found such methods, principles, teachings and recommendations to have positively impacted your life. Their contributions in many fields of science also exemplify the positive aspect of their social mission, and may inspire us to do likewise.

The negative aspect of arrupadai includes sharing what to avoid, that which creates delusion. In their literature, the Yoga Siddhas recommended avoiding emphasis on performing external rituals and worship in temples, as well as casteism because they distract from seeing the Di-

vine within through meditation and Kundalini Yoga, as well as from the necessary efforts of purification of habits and tendencies born of egoism. Institutions associated with organized religion also create mental delusion. The Siddhas dedicated themselves to the upliftment of humanity, while enjoying freedom from human imperfections, rather than trying to renounce the world. Their teachings provide a new paradigm for humanism on a world scale, born of Yogic wisdom rather than social theory.

Cultivating gratitude, goodwill, empathy, sympathy and compassion

In our present materialistic, consumer culture, it is easy to feel spiritually isolated from others, unable to share one's deepest values or to assistance to others who are suffering. Consequently, one may feel inadequate about sharing the path with others, arrupadai. To overcome such feeling of isolation and inadequacy, I recommend that you cultivate progressively the emotions of gratitude, goodwill, empathy, sympathy and compassion.

Gratitude is the feeling of love which arises with recognition for each and everything which has helped you to succeed in reaching your goals, to become a better person, and to understand your purpose. Ultimately, it identifies the Divine as their source of providence. Cultivating it dispels resentment, neediness, desperation, aloneness, all forms of desire and fear. Practice it daily by "counting your blessings," or "seeing the glass half full, rather than half empty." By doing so, you will feel more loving and willing to give to others.

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Showing the Path *continued*

Goodwill means that you wish someone well without necessarily knowing how they're feeling. Bless others rather than criticizing or judging them. It may be expressed universally rather than personally.

Empathy means that you understand what someone feels. You detect distress. Perhaps you've had a similar experience in the past. This may give rise to sympathy, being emotionally moved by distress.

Compassion is empathy plus goodwill: you understand how they feel, and you wish them well. You are moved to act in a way which expresses that you care for the well-being of the distressed person.

Fortunately, humans are hardwired for compassion due to the social requirements of our evolution. To develop your capacity for compassion towards another person imagine their past, and how it has shaped them. What heartbreaking situations did they face? Imagine what it is like to be inside them now, in their present emotional state.

Stretching your internal comfort zone

You may feel uncomfortable with "showing the path to others." Emotions such as anxiety, shame, sadness and mental habits such as timidity, lack of self-esteem may prevent you from reaching out. To become comfortable with being uncomfortable, (a very yogic form of *tapas*) here are some methods to broaden your comfort zone. Begin by using them in low stakes encounters with others, for example, in conversation over dinner.

- Hold eye contact longer than is comfortable;
- Move closer to people than you usually would in an elevator; try to resist moving away;
- Start a conversation with a complete stranger, using for example, an open ended question.
- Destigmatize internal discomfort by reminding yourself that it is a normal by-product of one of our brain's survival mechanisms. When they arise, think of someone you admire who manages them well. Remind yourself that you are not alone in dealing with such emotions.
- Neutralize negative thoughts by realizing that they may not be accurate, and they are biased towards seeing the negative, like graffiti. Assume that you are missing many elements, some of which are positive. For example, the other person's body language may be in response to something that happened to them earlier in the day. Instead of seeing them as "my" anxiety, depersonalize them: "there are anxious feelings."
- Rewrite reality. For example, if the other person expresses doubt or confusion about what you are sharing, ask yourself the question "Maybe their reaction is a good thing?" Watch how your creative mind can produce positive answers.

Surrendering responsibility

At the beginning of this article I asked the question: "Do you feel a need or a responsibility to help others?" While the "need" to share may be born of love, as dis-

cussed above, "feeling a responsibility," to share the path with others may bring about mental discomfort if you allow the mind to return again and again to planning various strategies, or to anticipating possible outcomes or reactions from others. As humans, we have a low tolerance for uncertainty, and this breeds anxiety. Anxiety prevents you from being fully present in any situation. It also lowers your confidence. So, when you are sharing with another person, you need to be fully present to be able to accurately read and carefully respond to their reactions. Anxiety, low presence and low confidence will show up directly in your body language and your ability to emanate warmth.

This issue of uncertainty can be resolved by surrendering responsibility for the result or outcome. You will probably never know how this conversation or discussion will impact the other's life. What chain of events it may start or add to. Just give your concern to God, the Guru, Babaji, the Universe. Let go and let God. This is an expression of karma yoga, acting with skill but being unattached to the result, not as the doer, but as an instrument. Automatically the uncertainty of the outcome becomes less uncomfortable, and you become unaffected by it.

Suggested ways of showing the path

1. Engage others in conversation and discussion your passion for Kriya Yoga and its wisdom teachings. While doing so, be a good listener and respond after reflection, speaking only what is edifying, without creating offense. Instead of preaching, share how you apply them personally.
 2. Send articles from our website's past issues of the Kriya Yoga on topics to those persons with whom you already have communicated about Kriya Yoga.
 3. Recall with gratitude how your Kriya Yoga path began after someone shared a book with you. Make gifts of your favorite books on Kriya Yoga. See our website's bookstore for gift ideas.
 4. Offer to teach some of 18 postures and basic meditation techniques. Use our publications Babaji's Kriya Hatha Yoga: 18 postures for relaxation and rejuvenation, and Kriya Yoga Insights Along the Path as references.
 5. Recommend our correspondence course, The Grace of Babaji's Kriya Yoga.
 6. Attend and help to organize local meetings of Kriya Yoga initiates and initiation seminars.
 7. Teach by example. Walk your talk!
 8. Seek inspiration, wisdom and knowledge which you can share with others by studying the publications listed on our website's bookstore. Reread them with this purpose. Internalize them by meditating on them with Arupa Dhyana Kriya. Remember them when sharing their wisdom with others who are suffering.
- Begin now by composing a *sankalpa*, a vow or auto-suggestion which expresses your intention to skillfully share your path of Babaji's Kriya Yoga with love and wisdom. Repeat it daily while in a relaxed state. □



Classical Yoga and the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius (Part 2)

By M. G. Satchidananda

As I wrote at the beginning of Part one of this article, in the Summer 2017 issue of the Kriya Yoga Journal: "I recently finished reading the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius. I was so moved by his stoic philosophy that I have decided to share with the readers of our Journal my explorations of its parallels with that of Classical Yoga. I will first introduce the reader to the person of Marcus Aurelius, the celebrated Roman emperor, the composition of his Meditations, the origins of stoicism, its influence in the Western Classical philosophical tradition to this day, before discussing the major tenets of the Meditations. A comparison of these with the tenets of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras will follow, and will hopefully illuminate the wisdom of both. After this, the question which I will ultimately seek to answer is how the Stoic admonitions and aphorisms of the Meditations can be applied by the modern student of Yoga as auto-suggestions. It has come to my attention that the Meditations are among the favorite philosophical works of today's millennials. Its prescriptions for self mastery, community, virtue, and inner peace are just what we need in the 21st century, and as we will see, can guide and inspire your practice of Yoga. I encourage the reader to purchase or download the Meditations." What follows is a continuation of the first part of the above discussion.

The cultivation of social virtues

Patanjali prescribes a dozen ways to calm the mind in a series of verses in the first chapter of the Yoga-sutras. Mental calmness is the prerequisite for Self-realization, or samadhi in Classical Yoga. The yogi is "calmly active and actively calm."

Similarly, Marcus Aurelius underlines the importance of turning inwards and with calmness in the mind to act rationally, rather than by emotional impulse.

"Withdraw into yourself. It is in the nature of the rational directing mind to be self-content with acting rightly and the calm it thereby enjoys." -Book 7, chapter 28.

One of Patanjali's prescriptions for calmness concerns our social attitudes.

"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." -Yoga-sutra I.33

Marcus' prescription for social virtue is no mere moral control of outward action, but extends to its inner causal source:

"Do not waste the remaining part of your life in thoughts about other people, when you are not thinking

with reference to some aspect of the common good. Why deprive yourself of the time for some other task? I mean, thinking about what so-and-so is doing, and why, what he is saying or contemplating or plotting, and all that line of thought, makes you stray from the close watch on your own directing mind. No, in the sequence of your thoughts you must avoid all that is casual or aimless, and most particularly anything prying or malicious. Train yourself to think only those thoughts such that in answer to the sudden question: 'What is in your mind now?' you could say with immediate frankness whatever it is, this or that: and so your answer can give direct evidence that all your social being who has no regard for the fancies of pleasure or wider indulgence, for rivalry, malice, suspicion, or anything else that one would blush to admit was in one's mind." – Book 3, chapter 4.2.

Because our social relationships can be a big source of disturbance, the fundamental first step or limb in Classical Yoga's astanga or 8 limbed Yoga is the social restraints or yamas: non-harming (ahimsa), truthfulness (satya), non-stealing (asteya), chastity (brahmacharya), and greedlessness (aparigraha) in Yoga-Sutra I.30.

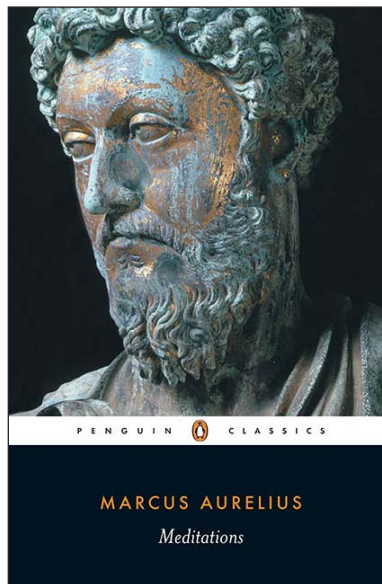
Marcus speaks at length of the virtues:

"Whenever you want to cheer yourself, think of the qualities of your fellows – the energy of one, for example, the decency of another, the generosity of a third, some other merit in a fourth. There is nothing so cheering as the stamp of virtues manifest in the character of colleagues – and the greater the collective incidence, the better. So, keep

them ready to hand." Book 6, chapter 48

"Kindness is invincible – if it is sincere, not fawning or pretense. What can the most aggressive man do to you if you continue to be kind to him? If, as opportunity arises, you gently admonish him and take your time to re-educate him at the very moment when he is trying to do you harm? 'No, son, we were born for other purposes than this. There is no way that I can be harmed, but you are harming yourself, son!' And show him delicately how things are...But your advice must not be ironic or critical. It should be affectionate, with no hurt feelings, not a lecture or a demonstration to impress others, but the way you would talk to someone by himself irrespective of company." Book 11, chapter 18, 9,

"If someone can prove me wrong and show me my mistake in any thought or action, I shall gladly change. I seek the truth, which never harmed anyone: the harm is



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Marcus Aurelius *continued*

to persist in one's own self-deception and ignorance." Book 6, chapter 21

"It is ridiculous not to escape from one's own vices, which is possible, while trying to escape the vices of others, which is impossible." – Book 7, chapter 71

"Take care that you never treat the misanthropic as they treat mankind." Book 7, chapter 65

"Love only what falls your way and is fated for you. What could suit you more than that?" -Book 7, chapter 57

"Dig inside yourself. Inside there is a spring of goodness ready to gush at any moment, if you keep digging." Book 7, chapter 59

"What does not benefit the hive, does not benefit the bee either." - Book 6, chapter 54.

"The best revenge is not to be like your enemy." - Book 6, chapter 6

"Let one thing be your joy and comfort: to move on from social act to social act, with your mind on god." - Book 6, chapter 7.

Marcus lists virtues in many places, for example: "So display, those virtues which are wholly in your own power – integrity, dignity, hard work, self-denial, contentment, frugality, kindness, independence, simplicity, discretion, magnanimity." Book 5, chapter 5.

The governing principle of the world order and how to know it

Marcus Aurelius uses a variety of expressions to refer to the governing principle of the world order. These include God, gods, Zeus, Nature, the Whole, the Universe, Law, Providence, Fate. They really are equivalents which he interchanges depending upon the context or perhaps emotional response. He gives a clear statement of Stoic doctrine: "There is one universe out of all things, one god pervading all things, one substance, one law, one common reason in all intelligent beings, and one truth." Book 7, chapter 9.

Reason is the means by which one can perceive how the one has become many, and that the many are all part of one Whole.

"Well, what is the mind of true skill and wisdom? It is the mind which knows the beginning and the end, and knows the Reason which informs all of existence and governs the Whole in appointed cycles through all eternity." Book 5, chapter 32.

"For a rational being, to act in accordance with nature is also to act in accordance with reason." Book 7, chapter 11.

The Stoic ideal, and a constant underlying theme in the Meditations is of a life lived in conformity with reason, the rationality inherent both in human nature and in the nature of the universe, the Whole, of which human nature is a part. Marcus expresses gratitude in the first book to all who have guided him in this.

"That I acquired a clear and constant picture of what is meant by the life according to nature, so that, with regard to the gods, their communications from that world, their help and their inspiration, nothing now prevents

me living the life of nature: my falling somewhat short, still, is due to my own fault and my failure to observe the promptings, not to say the instructions, of the gods." Book 1, Chapter 17.6.

The above suggests that aside from reason, he was also informed by inner communication with the gods, and that his religious experience was not limited by conventional piety.

Classical Yoga reflects Samkhya, which posits two poles of reality: Prakriti, or Nature and Purusha, Consciousness. Samkhya analyzes Nature in twenty-three principles, beginning with the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and space, similar to Greek philosophy. Samkhya also posits three modes or qualities of Nature, known as the gunas: inertia, activity and equilibrium, which rule the deep sleep, dream and waking states. Yoga also explains how the One appears to be many, but it says that only by samadhi, or cognitive absorption, is it possible to truly experience Oneness, Union or Yoga. The first chapter of the Yoga Sutras discusses samadhi, and the means to arrive at it.

"Yoga is the cessation of identification with the fluctuations arising within consciousness." Yoga-sutra I.2

"By constant practice and with detachment arises the cessation of identifying with the fluctuations arising within consciousness." Yoga-sutra I.12.

The final chapter of the Yoga Sutras discusses the purpose which the gunas fulfill in providing the setting and functions wherein the individual soul can go beyond its ignorance, and return to union with the Supreme Lord, referred to as ishvara. Ishvara is a compound word, which refers to "isha," the Lord, and "svara," one's own true self.

"Ishvara is the special Self, untouched by any afflictions, actions, fruits of actions or by any inner impressions of desires." Yoga-sutra I.24.

And aside from the various practices of Yoga for attaining samadhi, Patanjali prescribes "surrender":

"Or, because of one's surrender to the Lord, one successfully achieves cognitive absorption."

In absorption, the subject and the object become identified. Patanjali tells us in Yoga-sutra I.17 that the first stage of samadhi, samprajnata, "with distinctions" is accompanied by inspired products of this fusion: observations, reflections, bliss, and the realization of "I am-ness". This reminds us Marcus's reference, cited above, to the communications, inspiration, promptings from "the gods."

What is truly unique about Marcus Aurelius is the fact that his Meditations were not composed by a mystic in some cave, monastery, ashram or spiritual retreat far from society, but near the front lines of battle with the barbarians, on the frontier of the Roman empire, and by the most powerful man in the world, the Emperor, when the Empire was near its peak in influence. Battling the barbarians on the frontier of the Empire is such a won-

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Yoga for children

By Acharya Maitreya

In order to understand the relevance of yoga for children, it is necessary first to understand the dynamics of the human psyche from the yoga perspective. The human being is a spiritual essence with the latent potential for manifesting cosmic virtues and forces. As a soul, it is in a material experience, in a learning process. The individual's conditions for manifesting this potential is determined by karma and by the quality of conception, gestation, birth and education. In this process, the psychic structure body-mind-personality is consolidated, grouping the samskaras, habits or mental tendencies. These habits are the main obstacle for human being to experience the essential state of consciousness and, thus, to express its Divine potential of the true Being.

Yoga is the pedagogy of Being, the method to access and develop this potential. Siddha Tirumular says in his Tirumandiram that “the five functions of Shiva/God – creation, preservation, dissolution, obscuration and Grace – aim at the education of individual souls in their journey of separation, imperfection and existential suffering towards Unity, Perfection and happiness.”¹ The practice of yoga for children is an integral education that uses the sensory-corporeal experience as a foundation for learning as a whole, but mainly for learning about themselves. By integral education it is understood here an education that contemplates the development of the potentialities of the human being in its totality, in its physical, vital (emotional), mental, intellectual and spiritual aspects, as well as its social and environmental relation. Yoga is a process of purifying egoism so that the true Self expresses itself through its vehicles, the complex body-mind-personality. So, what is the best age to start practicing yoga? The answer is: “As soon as possible”, with appropriate adjustments.

In India, since ancient times, children traditionally received their initiation in yoga in a ceremony at the age of eight, in which they learned asanas, pranayamas and mantras. There were no prescriptions for practice before this

age. However, the reality of children today is very different from ancient India. Nowadays, most children live in cities, with little contact with nature, often spending much of their time indoors, protected from the violence of the streets and entertained by “electronic nannies” (tablets, smartphones, videogames). They are overstimulated not only by the electronic devices, but also by a full schedule that includes school, courses, sports, foreign language classes, etc. This creates unhealthy conditions of stress and anxiety that becomes part of the constitution of this developing organism. Therefore, yoga for children is a remedy for these unhealthy conditions, rather than a learning activity to be added to the routine. .

Until the age of seven, the muladhara chakra (root or basic chakra) is at its greatest activity. It is related to the earth element that provides the “grounding” of the spirit and establishes the relations of attachment and aversion, survival, stability or fear. Physiologically, it is the period in which the brain is developing and, at the end of this cycle, the system creates the immune memory through the thymus gland. The practice of yoga provides a more effective training of the brain and the immune system. Enabling a healthy, nourished, resilient physical body and a sense of emotional security.

At the beginning of this phase children naturally live in a state of contemplation, observing and experimenting in order to apprehend how things work. At the same time, they are active and excitable, characteristics that increase with time. Yoga in childhood ideally balances these qualities and the development of the two cerebral hemispheres, alternating more dynamic techniques like asanas and pranayamas with static techniques like deep relaxation and meditation. This preserves the contemplative aspect, stimulates the ability to concentrate and memorize, helps the child to channel his or hers incredible vital capacity, to develop self-regulation, which in turn reduces anxiety, impulsiveness and aggressiveness. The techniques of yoga are a training of the

¹ Marshall Govindan Satchidananda in “Enlightenment: It's not what you think”, 2016.

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Marcus Aurelius *continued*

derful metaphor for the stoic's and the Raja yogis' efforts to subdue the fears and desires in everyman's human nature. How much more difficult it must be to exercise virtue and wisdom amidst the horror and slaughter of war? His example reminds me of Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, whose setting is the battlefield during a civil war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. Marcus, I imagine, with his stoic wisdom, could have replaced Krishna in counseling Arjuna to fulfill his duty as a warrior, maintaining the calm perspective of the witness.

How to practice Yoga using the Meditations

Patanjali tells us “When bound by negative thoughts,

opposite (i.e. positive) ones should be cultivated,” in Yoga-sutra II.33. By doing so, as auto-suggestions, the Yoga sadhak can replace deep seated habits and mental tendencies with new subconscious programs. These will then help one to respond virtuously, rather to react in anger, fear or impulsive desire. Commit to memory some of the Meditations, and to program them into the subconscious, repeat them several times, at the end of a meditation, just before going to sleep, while relaxing physically at the end of a session of postures, and during the day. In this way, the wisdom of Marcus Aurelius will inspire and empower your yogic sadhana, and the fulfillment of your Divine potential. □



Yoga for children *continued*

nervous system. As it is still in formation, often the child can not deal with the emotional/hormonal load that is released in situations of conflict. For example, when something he or she wants very much is denied, and brings suffering with

Being and allows the child to increase the ability to perceive thoughts and emotions without judgments and not to react impulsively. Staying in this inner space creates a sense of trust and closeness to peers, as well as the ability to address



Children practicing Hatha Yoga and meditating.

anger or frustration. They can cry and scream, incapable of harmonizing emotional impulses and aggressive reactions.

By developing bodily awareness and perceiving their emotions, yoga leads the children in the process of self-knowledge and possibly knowledge about the other, also assisting their relationships. Yoga theories agree with modern psychology and pedagogy when they claim that a good relationship of the individual with himself is the best way to establish an environment of peace and serenity around him. Asanas help motor, emotional and intellectual development. By associating the practice of asanas and pranayamas, one can positively influence the central nervous system, helping the child in the emotional and psychomotor balance. It releases and channels the psychic energy that usually causes the psychophysical restlessness, common in many children. In this way, the vitality is increased and so is the calmness.

The deep relaxation performed after the postures allows the body-mind system to have the opportunity to reestablish organic homeostasis and create the sense of the presence of an inner space of peace. This is recorded in the cellular and psychic memory. Meditation retains the connection with the

stressful events as challenges rather than threats.

Recent scientific research has demonstrated the benefits of practicing yoga and meditation for children, such as:

- Improved attention and concentration. Decreased symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder; of stress levels and, as a result, improved academic performance. It may become a complement to medical interventions and behavioral disorders commonly used for children with attention problems.

- Benefit from peer engagement, as well as improvement in strategic planning, visual perception, motor skills, decreased levels of anxiety and a significant decrease in post-traumatic stress disorder.

- Reduction of body dissatisfaction in girls. Improvement in the spacial memory performance, which is mainly a function of the right cerebral hemisphere, suggesting that the practice facilitates the operation of the right cerebral hemisphere.

- Decrease in absences and suspensions, as well as the

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Yoga for children *continued*

time required for completing plastic arts tasks; decrease in aggression and feelings of contempt.

Yoga in education

Authorities in the areas of education, science and contemplative traditions have set the guidelines for education at the conference entitled "Educating the World's Citizens for the 21st Century", and concluded that the world's contemplative traditions are a precious resource that contributes to the development of compassionate people, ethically responsible and in control of their mental lives. As a result, they will be perfectly positioned for the huge political, social, and spiritual challenges of our time.

Yoga is one of these traditions and its variety of precepts and techniques allows this integral development. Generally, techniques are related to the qualities or values that stimulate observation and development. The yamas and nyamas, ethical principles such as non-violence, truth, purity and joy can be taught through stories narrated in a playful and archetypal language that speak to the soul of a child.

When the children have a good motor development and social and emotional skills, this helps them not only in school, but also in all vital aspects. Numerous studies show that young people who have these social and emotional skills are happier, have more self-confidence and are more competent as students, family members, friends and workers. At the same time, there are fewer predispositions to drug abuse, alcohol, depression and violence.

In Brazil, since the sixties, yoga has been inserted in school education, both in private and public schools. Currently there are many schools that offer yoga to students. I started my yoga practice at this stage and because I now realize the effect it had in my development, I have been deepening my studies in this area. I teach Kriya Hatha Yoga classes and meditation to children at a public network school and carry out studies and academic research on the subject. In addition to promoting the practice of yoga in schools, I aim to give voice to the perception of children about the practice and recognize them as protagonists of their story and the production of knowledge. From these experiences I perceive the need for sensitivity, creativity, spontaneity; of balance between play and discipline aspects, and of self-regulation. In yoga classes in schools, there is a rich possibility of using a transdisciplinary approach connecting the knowledges of geography, history, languages, mathematics, biology, physiology, philosophy with the elements of the yoga culture. This process helps children to learn yoga, the application of their philosophical techniques and concepts in daily life more effectively, as well as aspects of school subjects. In this context, it is important to be careful when presenting philosophical concepts, moral principles and universal values, to avoid generating intellectual or belief system conflicts. Otherwise it may restrict the magnitude and salutary practice of this activity in an environment of multiple cultures, religions and ethnicities.

Teaching yoga for kids

One can approach the teaching of yoga in childhood in

two phases: before seven years old and after the age of seven years old. Before the age of seven a playful approach is needed, but after the age of seven, it is possible to establish more vigorous discipline with less need for adaptations and games. The child learns mainly by practical examples, by imitating. This is the beginning of the teaching of yoga for children: through example. There is no single approach or method to follow. However, there are some principles that should be considered. For example, the execution of the postures is adapted to the phases of the motor development, making it possible to begin at any age, provided there is a structured program to modify the practice over the months or years. From two to three years old you can start a playful practice and teach about emotional and social skills through meditation, short stories, myths and stories that address human emotions, virtues and values. At this first stage it is natural that everything becomes a play, so it is not necessary to exaggerate in the playful adaptation of the techniques. Children can play and learn postures so they grow naturally without the imposition of rigid discipline.

The first contact with yoga is extremely important. Therefore, it is noteworthy that yoga for children has become another product in the yoga industry. For example, a research has found that parents with no time to play with their children have stated that yoga classes are another option where "teachers make the activity a great way to play". It has also been found that Hatha Yoga is the most popular form being taught, and there is little or no teaching the practice of meditation. Many teachers doubt that children are able to practice meditation, projecting on them their own difficulties. We must be careful so that the child grows with the clarity that yoga is not too difficult nor a mere joke.

It should not be forgotten that the child, when well guided, knows how to listen to silence, to be still and, above all, to give wings to the imagination. It is in this dance of stillness and movement that the childhood universe is revealed and expressed in its fullness. It is necessary to use creativity, adding sounds, chants, inner listening (sounds of the breath and heart) and the representation of mythical characters, animals among other components of yoga, adapting them to the infant universe, as well as variations and new ways to learn and play within each posture. The proposed asanas should be demonstrated by the teacher without imposition, so that students can observe and then perform their own way. This ludic aspect makes it possible to stimulate human values in a natural way, without taxing rules. In this way the child is led to investigate his or hers own body and movement, assuming physical postures and incorporating psychic qualities, such as trying to be as firm as a tree, free as a bird, strong as a warrior, and as bright as the sun.

And it is in this solar brightness that I aspire to see our children bloom like seeds in the Divine dawn of earthly paradise, to which Beloved Satgurudeva Babaji Nagaraj works joyfully, lovingly and relentlessly; inspiring and nourishing this Reality in our hearts and minds. Om Kriya Babaji Nam Aum! Aum Tat Sat! □



Order of Acharyas Annual Report and Plan for 2018

Do Help to Bring Babaji's Kriya Yoga to others like you around the world

This is a good time to consider making a donation to "Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas", to enable us to continue to bring Babaji's Kriya Yoga to persons who otherwise would not be able to receive it.

In the past twelve months, since September 2016 the Order of Acharyas did the following:

- * Brought more than 130 initiation seminars to more than 1,000 participants living in 20 countries including Brazil, India, Japan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Estonia, Spain, Colombia, Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, England, Bulgaria, Belgium, Australia, the United Kingdom, the USA and Canada.

- Maintained an ashram and publishing office in Bangalore, India which organized seven initiation seminars all over India. Vinod Kumar, the ashram manager, conducted free regular public asana and meditation classes there. It published and distributed most of our books and tapes throughout India.

- Maintained and developed the ashram in Dehiwala, Sri Lanka, where free public yoga classes and initiates satsangs are given weekly. Initiation seminar were given there. Distributed three of our books in Sinhala, and others in Tamil and English.

- Completed the training of one new Acharya in India, Gurudasan (Gowri Varadhan). Continued the training of one Acharya in Austria, two in France and one in Brazil. Completed the training of Acharya Amman in Canada to give the 2nd initiation.

- Completed the construction of the second phase of the new ashram in Badrinath, Himalaya, including two more apartments and a community dining room. Two pilgrimage groups lead by five members of the Order resided there in the fall of 2016, and one pilgrimage group from south India in May 2017 with Vinod Kumar. Sponsored public Yoga classes and satsangs there.

- Sponsored free bi-weekly public classes in Babaji's Kriya Yoga, and kirtan events, in 2017 at the Quebec ashram.

- Conducted a two week Teacher Training in Kriya Hatha Yoga for 7 participants in English, and another one with 13 participants in French at the Quebec ashram in July and August of 2017. Also one in Switzerland attended by 5 participants.

- Sponsored a mission to introduce Yoga and meditation instruction in public school education, in northern Sri Lanka, attended by more than 700 school

children and more than 60 educators..

In the year 2017 - 2018 the Order plans to do the following:

- Bring initiation seminars to most of the above named countries.

- Conduct free bi-weekly public asana and meditation classes at our ashrams in Quebec, Bangalore and Dehiwala, Sri Lanka.

- Publish the book Babaji and the 18 Siddhas in Malayalam and Kannada, the book Voice of Babaji in Marathi and Kannada, and its second volume in Hindi, and the book Kailash in Hindi.

- Complete the front entrance gate and painting of the Badrinath ashram. Finalize fiscal requirements pertaining to it.

The 31 volunteer Acharyas of the Order and many other volunteer organizers need your support to fulfill this program for the year 2017-2018. Your contribution is tax deductible in Canada and the USA. Send it by December 31, 2017 if possible, and receive a receipt for your 2017 Income tax return. Use your credit card!

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.

Use your credit card! Or send your cheque to "Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas,

196 Mountain Road, P.O. Box 90, Eastman, Quebec, Canada J0E 1P0.

You may use our e-commerce www.babajiskriyayoga.net to encrypt your card authorization or simply send your authorization by e-mail to info@babajiskriyayoga.net.

If you live outside North America, you may 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: CCDQ-CAMMXXX, branch: La Caisse populaire Desjardins du Lac Memphremagog, transit number 50066-815 or to Deutsch Bank account: payable to "Marshall Govindan" Deutsch Bank International, BLZ 50070024, account number: 0723106, re. IBAN DE09500700240072310600, BIC/Swift code DEUTDE33. Please inform info@babajiskriyayoga.net when the transfer is made.



ABCs of deepening your practice of Babaji's Kriya Hatha Yoga (Part 5)

By Durga Ahlund

How Babaji's Kriya Hatha Yoga purifies, strengthens and integrates the body, mind and spirit can seem to be mysterious! In this series of article I hope to demystify their effects with some clear explanations. Babaji has designated its practice in pairs, with unique phases and kriyas, utilizing bandhas, pranayama, mudras, and mantras. Daily practice of these postures with awareness and devotion will strengthen the body and mind, and it will align all levels of our being towards "right living." They are not merely a physical exercise. The aims of Kriya Hatha Yoga include: 1) to experience deep relaxation; 2) to develop inner strength and vibrant health; 3) to purify the physical body, mind and subtle energies; 4) to eliminate physical and mental impurities; 5) to calm and steady the mind through a devotional and meditative practice; 6) to open the subtle channels; 7) to awaken the potential power and consciousness (kundalini); 8) to develop detachment and equanimity, both on and off the mat. 9) to master asana as a means of mastering oneself.

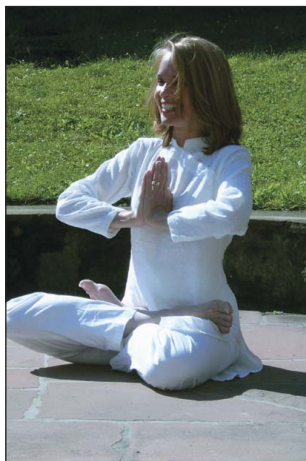
The ABC's will continue as a regular column in the quarterly, Kriya Yoga Journals. Please refer to previous journals for more information on ways to achieve all the benefits possible from your practice of the 18 postures. Learn these techniques from an experienced authorized instructor.

-H-

Health benefits of asana – A regular practice of asana increases flexibility, strengthens muscle tone, improves posture, improves balance, nourishes tissues, maintains bone density, improves joint health, improves lung function, leads to slower and deeper breathing, nourishes invertebrate disks, improves circulation of venous blood and lymph, relaxes and improves function of the nervous system, increases body awareness, improves mood, lowers blood pressure, improves digestion.

-I-

Integration – Integration is important in the practice of Babaji's Kriya Hatha Yoga. It is a path of realizing the self through physical and mental and spiritual development. The Kriya Hatha Yoga system utilizes not only physical movement but incorporates concentration. Kriya Yoga is defined as action with awareness. A con-



scious and willful practice of the 18 postures series, based upon action with awareness will purify and unify the body, breath and mind. First actively enter the asana through all the specific steps and stages, consciously deepening as you let go of tensions, both physical and mental. Next, passively establish yourself in the pose; observe what is happening in your body, with your breath and all the sensations of tightness and release. Then, with bandhas engaged, steady and calm, focus on your third eye center, and surrender to the energy of the asana. This practice of asana utilizing kriyas, pranayama, bandhas, mudra, mantra and devotion will encourage harmony within the body. Instead of relying on excessive effort, use awareness, breath and bandhas. You are not depleting your energy, but instead receiving an increase of energy. You are never exhausted by this dynamic practice, but energized and harmonized with a sense of wellbeing.

Immobility – We say that the first goal of our asana practice is relaxation. However, our objective goes way beyond the normal conception of relaxation, our objective is really immobility and stillness. To reach the state of immobility you must first get rid of all restlessness in your body. For the experience of deep relaxation in asana, is not that, which is due to a cessation of energy by inertia, but instead, it is due to an increase of energy, an in-pouring and circulation of force, within a still, immobile and receptive body.

-J-

Jalandhara bandha – The compression of the throat that harmonizes functioning of the endocrine system. Jalandhara stretches the neck and spinal cord. influences the pituitary, pineal, thyroid, parathyroid and thymus glands. It stimulates the parasympathetic spinal area as it stimulates medulla oblongata at the top of the spinal cord. This regulates heart rate, respiration and blood pressure. Jalandhara's seal brings a sense of relaxation, rest and wellbeing to the whole system, as energy is stilled within the subtle central suhsumna nadi channel. It, along with mulabandha and uddiyana bandhas are utilized subtly, and without vibration within many of the asana.

-K-

Kriyas – Babaji's Kriya Yoga is a system of 144 distinct kriyas or practices. Kriyas are purifying actions that develop awareness. However, in our Hatha Yoga practice we incorporate kriyas as tiny, micromovements that ease the body deeper into the musculature. These dynamic kriyas are subtle, incorporating not only physical, but energetic

Continued on Page 11



Deepening you practice *continued*

movement.

Kundalini – Kundalini is shakti power. It is the creative energy of the Universe and is the fundamental power that governs each human organism, body, life, mind. Kundalini is fueling life, however, it is potential power and consciousness that most never tap into. It lies dormant within each human being. Asana and other Yoga practices can awaken her potential energy. Awakened and made to rise in the central subtle channel, sushumna nadi, the kundalini can still be shaky and erratic. Only when, through Yoga, she moves unencumbered and becomes firm, not shaking, will the whole body become firm, become like the scriptural “flame in a room where there is no breeze.” Everything becomes steady—voice, eyes, hearing, consciousness.

-L-

Letting go – This is an important practice and benefit of asana! Asana can disengage the practitioner from tension, negative or repetitive thinking, emotions, desires, fears. A regular practice of the 18 postures can help you develop a strong, calm and receptive body and mind, as asana helps you let go of tension from daily stress and botherations of body, mind and emotions. Asana will teach you how to let go of tension and restlessness in the physical body. Only then, can you begin to truly let go of anything else. Next, you will have to learn to let go of effort and ambition or competition you might feel in your practice. Learn just to enjoy practice. Finally, then you may find yourself letting go of identification with all kinds of negative conditioned thinking. i.e. “I can’t do this, or that.” Practice Kriya Hatha Yoga, let go and live positively.

-M-

Mantra – Mantra is a sound syllable or syllables, seeds of shakti, power in various forms. Mantra creates a subtle energy that has the potential to emote or remove emotional charges. Mantra can eliminate negative feelings and anxiety. Mantra can bring repose and relaxation to body and mind. Mantra can inspire the movement of the forces within it.

Meditative practice – Meditation is a state of consciousness. It can be aroused through the asana practice. Regular asana practice will ultimately balance the pranas in the body and bring the mind into a calm state, a simple, natural state of awareness. There are several routes that may take you from asana right into meditation.

The first route towards meditation is through the natural practice of a daily asana practice. This occurs when the physical body, strengthened and disciplined by bandhas, breath and awareness comes under the control of the mind. The asana series slows, deepens and regulates breathing and harmonizes the pranas so that the body becomes so stable and at ease that physical and mental restlessness is eliminated. The physical body can then rest in stillness, and this enablest the mind to enter into subtle states of awareness. The second route into meditation

from your asana practice is through a willful practice with concentration on spinal breathing. (Spinal breathing will be discussed at length in a later issue). As you concentrate internally on the ujjayi pranayama and the movement of prana within the spine, the breath becomes quite subtle. As the space between the breaths lengthens, the asana series becomes meditative. The third route to meditation is through shavasana. There is a short shavasana after each asana, which helps to incorporate its benefits and shifts in circulation. The asana is an act of purification; an act of moving and twisting the body, in order, to cleanse, balance and increase energy throughout it. A sustained shavasana at the end of your practice can help eliminate residual tensions and toxins from body and mind and drop you in a deep, still, receptive state of awareness.

Mudra – A mudra is a psycho-physical gesture that represents a physical and mental attitude, enabling a steady, meditative mind. Mudras connect the physical body with the pranic (vital) body which in turn influences the mental body. Mudras are like electrical switches and most often take the form of gestures using the fingers and hands. However, they are really expressions of the mind through the hands, eyes, muscles of face and tongue. Mudras are also postural and can include the use of bandhas, pranayama and kriyas. They develop the practitioner’s awareness about the flow of prana within the subtle body. Postures effortlessly held for at least 3 minutes will stimulate a softening and a fluidness within. Tiny mudras, vibrations of prana arising from pulsating energy set up a healing resonance and nourish the whole being.

Mulabandha – Mulabandha is a muscular contraction of the perineum that has a powerful effect on the nervous system and endocrine glands but also on the energy system of the body, the prana. It helps to align and strengthen the spine in postures, and its perfection can realign the physical, mental and psychic bodies. It helps maintain hormonal balance and regulate the functioning of the internal organs. It redirects upwards prana in the subtle central sushumna nadi channel and has an immediate effect of creating a deep sense of mental relaxation as it stimulates awareness. It should be engaged in the 18-posture series for safety, strength and effectiveness. (there is no need for it in shavasana).

-N-

Niyamas – The second step of classical Yoga. Niyamas are the observances stated in Astanga Yoga and are included within the practice of Babaji’s Kriya Hatha Yoga. The five niyamas are 1) saucha or purification, 2) santosha or contentment, 3) tapas or intense practice, 4) svadhyaya or self-study 5) ishvara pranidhana or devotion. A daily practice of the 18 postures offers students a disciplined ritual of worship, a means of cleansing of body and mind of toxins and negativity, as well as a means of developing awareness, detachment, emotional calm and contentment.

(to be continued)



News and Notes

Pilgrimage to Sri Lanka December 29, 2017 to January 12, 2018, with Acharyas Satyananda, Kailash and Kriyananadamayi. See details www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/pilgrimages-srilanka.htm

Pilgrimage to the new Badrinath Ashram with M. G. Satchidananda and Durga: September 20 to October 8, 2018. Join us for 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



The new Ashram in Badrinath.

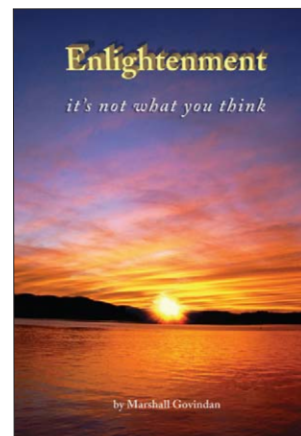
Second level initiations will be given by M.G. Satchidananda in Quebec October 20-22, 2017 and June 15-17, 2018.

Third level initiations will be offered with M. Govindan Satchidananda in Quebec July 14-23, 2017 and in Brazil in November 2017. They will also be offered 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.

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

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