



B a b a j i ' s

Kriya Yoga Journal

A pilgrimage is an adventure in Consciousness

By M. G. Satchidananda

Pilgrimages have been among the most significant activities of my life over the past forty-seven years, ever since my first one to South India in 1972. Unlike tourists, pilgrims are not looking for new experiences out there; they are not seeking diversion, entertainment, or amusement. On a pilgrimage, we should seek to know the truth of our Self, the Divine, the ineffable, beyond names and forms.

Pilgrimages are found in all spiritual and religious traditions

For two thousand years, Christians of all denominations have made pilgrimages to Bethlehem and the River Jordan. Roman Catholics also go to the Vatican in Rome, Lourdes in France, and St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal. Catholics and many others also walk hundreds of miles to the Cathedral of St. James at Santiago de Compostela in northwest Spain.

Jews make pilgrimages to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Buddhists go to Bodh Gaya in Bihar,

India. Muslims go on the Hajj in Mecca. Hindu devotees of Shiva go on pilgrimages to Varanasi, Kedar-nath, and Amarnath in the north of India, and to Chidambaram, Arunachala, and Sabari Malae in the south. Devotees of Ram travel to Ayodhya, devotees of Krishna to Brindavan, Puri, and Srirangam, and devotees of Muruga to his six major shrines, including Katargama, Palani, and Tiruchendur. Hindus of all traditions make pilgrimages to Rameswaram in South India and to Badrinath in its northern-most point, the Garwhal Himalayas. Hindus and Buddhists make pilgrimages to Mt. Kailash in Tibet. In the American Indian tradition, pilgrimages take the form of a vision quest or visits to sacred places such as Sedona, Arizona, or Mount Shasta in northern California. There are hundreds of other pilgrimage destinations around the world, many of which are associated with saints, sages, and gurus.

The universal and ancient nature of the pilgrimage is compelling evidence that it is not limited to a single religious teaching A pilgrimage is a spiritual exercise in self-transcendence. As with any spiritual exercise, our purpose is letting go of the mundane pre-occupations of our lives and cultivating

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196 Mountain Road P.O. Box 90

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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the aspiration for the sublime, that which cannot be limited by time, space, thought, or emotion. In other words, we are going away from that which has become tiresome, troubling, and ordinary, and we are going toward the unknown, uplifting, and ineffable. A pilgrimage is therefore a spiritual adventure, an adventure in consciousness.

Unlike desire, which the ego imagines will bring some experience of happiness, however fleeting, in the vital body, aspiration is the call of the soul for the True, the Good, the Beautiful, the Infinite, and the Eternal. Aspiration seeks to move away from the ego's game of liking and disliking and the ensuing suffering. Aspiration is the soul's quest for union with the One.

Aspiration is the soul's desire to triumph over all limitations and divisions born of the mind and emotions.

Consciousness is the greatest mystery of life. It is that which simply observes. It is individualized in every living creature. At the same time, a universal consciousness is observing every individualized consciousness. It is That which the pilgrim is ultimately seeking. At the pilgrimage destination, we find the mystical Presence of the Lord. In the Yoga Sutras, verses I.24 and 25, Patanjali describes It this way.

Ishvara is the special Self, untouched by any afflictions, actions, fruits of actions, or any inner impressions of desire. There (in the Supreme) the seed of the manifestation of complete omniscience is unsurpassed.

The pilgrim maintains an inward focus, by cultivating choice-less awareness. Tourists seek happiness in the passing show of new sensory experiences out there, grasping at likes and avoiding dislikes. But pilgrims try to maintain calm equanimity and presence in the face of any challenge.

Getting to places of pilgrimage typically involves hardship, which causes resistance. Resistance tests our capacity to persevere and maintain the perspective of the Witness soul, and to avoid succumbing to the perspective of the ego, with all of its attachments and aversions. Experiences during a pilgrimage may also push our buttons, provoking memories of unresolved conflicts, dreams, or hopes, known in classical Yoga as *vasanas* (tendencies), or in today's body-mind literature as blockages. By cultivating choice-less awareness, the pilgrim practices letting go of these, and so finds liberation from the suffering that such memories always contain.

What makes a pilgrimage destination worthy of our aspiration? The profound spiritual experience of a saint or the founder of a spiritual tradition or religion impregnates such sacred pilgrimage destinations with a sublime energy, or seeds, which empower pilgrims to access or at least glimpse their spiritual experiences, realizations, and higher states of consciousness. As those who

venerate such saints or sacred places deposit the seeds of their own aspiration, love, and devotion, they increase their power to uplift the consciousness of all who will visit after them. Sacred places thus become dynamos of spiritual energy, where the devout add to and take away spiritual energy.

Quantum physics and Yoga Siddhantha both tell us that the fundamental building block of the universe is conscious energy, Shiva-Shakti. Nothing exists except conscious energy. In the eyes of the pilgrims, the apparent laws of Newtonian physics, the *gunas* (modes of Nature), and the agents of *maya* (delusion), including time, partial knowledge, partial power, passion, and destiny, all dissolve into That. All limitations are transcended as the pilgrims draw close to the sacred space of conscious energy at the destination. Having arrived and having purified themselves of all manner of resistance, memory, and mental distraction, they will remain there indefinitely, enjoying the bliss of spiritual fulfilment.

The pilgrimage begins the moment we form the intention, the *sankalpa*, to go

This intention is not a wish or a hope. It is a commitment. "I am going..." Often, when we make the commitment, we realize that we may need years before we can amass the resources necessary to go and before we can end or suspend our other commitments, for example, to family or employers. We may have to overcome our own specific limitations, for example, those involving our health, education, physical conditioning, and even legal problems. However, the very commitment to go provides the essential and powerful means to overcome every obstacle and every manner of emotional resistance.

During the pilgrimage, the pilgrim will maintain this commitment to spiritual aspiration by avoiding familiar distractions, indulgence in sensory pleasures, sources of entertainment, family responsibilities, and in the digital age, work conducted via cell phone and email. Depending on the spiritual tradition or religion, the pilgrim will also practice continuously or regularly certain spiritual practices, including prayer, mantras, breath awareness, and meditation. *Vairagya* (detachment) is therefore to be cultivated both inwardly as desirelessness and outwardly by avoiding activities that distract from the inner focus. *Vairagya* is Patanjali's main method of attaining Self-Realization. In the Yoga Sutras, verse I.12, he tells us: *abhyasa vairagyaabhyam tan-nirodhah*.

By constant practice, and with detachment, arises the cessation of identifying with the fluctuations arising within consciousness.

The goal of a yogic or spiritual pilgrimage – liberation

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Pilgrimage *continued*

from the suffering born of the ego's perspective that I am the body and the mind – is only realized to the extent that the pilgrim succeeds in maintaining such a constant practice of detached witnessing. This is the sattvic approach, which seeks to maintain calm equanimity no matter what transpires during the pilgrimage.

Unfortunately, in today's materialistic culture, which has become universal, many pilgrims often make the fulfillment of a lesser need their purpose: conceiving a child, getting a good job, or obtaining some other material boon. As with petitions communicated in prayer, such pilgrims before departing promise God to complete the pilgrimage in exchange for their fervently expressed desire. This approach is adopted by those in the grip of rajas, Nature's mode of action, dispersion, and passion. Others undertake pilgrimages as a penance, hoping to expiate the consequences of bad karma or sinful actions, guilt, and fear. They are in the grip of tamas, Nature's mode of inertia, doubt, and confusion. In India, astrologers often prescribe pilgrimages for such rajasic and tamasic purposes.

Why is Badrinath the most important place of pilgrimage in Babaji's Kriya Yoga? There are many places of pilgrimage associated with Babaji and the tradition of the eighteen siddhas. The most important are associated with Babaji's birth, Parangipettai, and where he was initiated and did tapas, Katargama in Sri Lanka and Courtrallam in Tamil Nadu. But Badrinath, where he realized the ultimate state of soruba samadhi, is the most important. As Babaji continues to maintain his divine form here on the physical plane, Badrinath is the place where his devotees and disciples can experience him most intimately, depending on the degree to which they have surrendered. Complete surrender is the ultimate means of the yogic process on all five planes. In the Yoga Sutras, verse I.23, Patanjali tells us: *ishvara-pranidhanad-va*.

Or because of one's surrender to the Lord one achieves cognitive absorption (samadhi).

As a Guru yoga, where the Lord is most highly revered in the form of the Guru and not in the names or forms of deities, Babaji's Kriya Yoga seeks to realize ultimately the universal vision of love. Anbu Shivam, "Love is God," says the Siddhar Tirumular in the Tirumandiram.

For this reason, an ashram has been under construction in Badrinath since 2008. As I write this, the ashram's twelve apartments are being occupied by the first group of Kriya Yoga pilgrims, eighteen blessed souls, led by four members of Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas. It has been designed with the primary purpose of supporting Kriya Yoga initiates who aspire to do intensive practice. In contrast, almost all Hindu pilgrims who go to Badrinath to worship in the sacred and ancient temple of Sri Badrinarayan spend only two days there.

Babaji's guru Agastyar told Babaji to go and do tapas in Badrinath. The Pandavas, the ancient royal leaders in the civil war described in the epic Mahabharata, also attained

liberation after the war by performing tapas in Badrinath. So have countless other yogis. Yogi Ramaiah my teacher was initiated into the 144 Kriyas of Babaji's Kriya Yoga there. And on two occasions in 1999, I had darshan of Babaji at Santopanth Tal, above Badrinath.

Although the Guru tattva (the principle of Nature that reveals Truth, unconditional Love, Beauty, and Bliss) can be accessed anywhere, the intensity of pilgrimages and yogic practice performed at Badrinath is unsurpassed for sadhaks of Kriya Yoga. Situated at an elevation of 3,000 meters (10,000 feet), surrounded by towering mountains rising to 7,000 meters (23,000 feet), and closed by snow to the outside world from November to May, Badrinath provides a pristine and highly charged spiritual environment, ideal for the practice of Kriya Yoga.

Our offering to you, as a pilgrim The new ashram in Badrinath was designed to fulfil the particular needs of Kriya Yoga sadhaks who wish to remain there for prolonged periods of intensive practice, from a single week to four months. Members of the Order of Acharyas will be present at the new ashram to support visiting sadhaks and visitors for much of May and June each year, the most popular pilgrimage season. July and August is less popular because the monsoon season occurs during these months.

Seventeen-day pilgrimages to Badrinath led by Acharya members of the Order will be organized in September and October every year. Pilgrimages to sacred places associated with the eighteen Siddhas in South India and Sri Lanka will be held during the cooler months of January and February each year. The Acharyas will lead group practice of Babaji's five-fold path of Kriya Yoga twice daily; they will deepen your understanding of Kriya Yoga with lectures and satsang meetings. Our Badrinath ashram manager will accompany the pilgrimage groups and will make all of the logistical arrangements involving transportation and accommodations. These organized pilgrimages will usually include only seven or eight days in Badrinath itself. The other days will be spent on the journey to and from Badrinath, on a spectacular, 330-kilometer, cliff-hugging road; in Rishikesh, where the Ganges River exits from the Himalaya mountains; and in nearby Haridwar. These are two major sites of pilgrimage, tapas, and kumba melas.

Applications to stay in the new Badrinath ashram during the recommended months of May and June, or possibly even July or August, or to participate in one of the pilgrimages led by an Acharya in September or October, or participate in a pilgrimage to South India and Sri Lanka, may be sent to the author at satchidananda@babajiskriyayoga.net. Make your dream a reality today by forming a clear, firm intention to become a pilgrim to Badrinath or to participate in our pilgrimages to South India and Sri Lanka during the coming years. Plan, save, and visualize it. Cultivate action with awareness from this moment onward to overcome all obstacles and in so doing liberate yourself from all suffering. May your life's pilgrimage result in enlightenment. □



Kriya Yoga center and Lilleoru community Estonia

Preparing for a worldwide conference of conscious communities

By Ave Oit

The practice of Kriya Yoga has an enormous potential to make us more conscious human beings and to bring thus more awareness, health and happiness to the world and all living beings around us.

Babaji's Kriya Yoga Acharya Ishwarananda and his students have created a spiritual center and intentional community in Estonia. This beautiful place is called Lilleoru in Estonian, Valley of Flowers in English, and its spiritual name is Sat Chit Agastishwarar Gurukulam. The lifestyle here is based on "Action with Awareness".

Ingvar Villido Ishwarananda has developed and taught the application of awareness since 1992, and as a result of this work, he has developed a series of courses, The Art of Conscious Change, based on the ancient knowledge of Kriya Yoga. The teachings are brought to a level which anyone can easily understand and take into daily practice. Since 1992, more than 15 000 people from Estonia and abroad have attended his lectures and courses. Over the years, we have also built a strong student community and its core group of 108 people, members of the Lilleoru NGO, is managing the activities and develop-

ments in Lilleoru, based on the teachings of The Art of Conscious Change and Babaji's Kriya Yoga. Here you can take a look at unique coverage on Estonian National Television about Ishvarananda's courses (please choose English subtitles):

www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOhpU0TwRi0

Babaji's Kriya Yoga was first taught in Lilleoru by Acharya Durga in 2004. Within the next three years, and a half dozen times since then, the first, second and third initiations were taught there by M. G. Satchidananda. They also taught the Kriya Hatha Yoga Teacher Training to 20 initiates. Satsang meetings of initiates in all three levels of training are conducted here regularly. Kriya Hatha Yoga classes are also taught regularly at Lilleoru and in many yoga centers throughout Estonia. With a population of only one million persons, the ancient nation of Estonia, only 200 km, (135 miles) south of St Petersburg, Russia, has become a leading light in the European ecological community and Kriya Yoga movements.

Lilleoru's original buildings were originally made for the needs of about 20 people. During the past eight years, fourteen beautiful houses have been built in our ecological village. These have all been built using environment friendly building materials and geo-thermal heating and cooling. It received a grant from the European Community for their design. Currently, sixty persons live in these and other homes and apartments built earlier.

In 2011 we began the construction of a new building to host the School of Practical Awareness. There have been remarkable changes over the 20 years and today we host much bigger student groups – hundred people and more – on a regular basis in the very same facilities. The number of students and people interested in both Babaji's Kriya Yoga and The Art of Conscious Change is growing

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School of Practical Awareness construction.



Flower of Life park and community in Lilleoru.



Aerial view of School of Practical Awareness.



ABCs of deepening your practice of Babaji's Kriya Hatha Yoga

By Durga Ahlund

Babaji's Kriya Yoga is the path of realizing the self through physical and mental development. The Kriya Hatha Yoga system utilizes not only physical movement but incorporates concentration. A defining component is action with awareness. Kriya Yoga is Action with Awareness. A conscious and willful practice of the 18 postures series, based in action with awareness will purify and unify the body, breath and mind and bring the body to a higher state of development and under control of the mind.

The ultimate objective in Hatha Yoga is to bring perfect harmony between the flows of prana in the subtle

pingala and the ida nadis, to unite/yoke prana (ha) and mind (tha). When the flows of pingala and ida are perfectly balanced, the prana will merge and become one flow within sushumna nadi. The term Hatha Yoga used in this context means the regulation of breath or union of the two breaths into one. This awakens the intelligent energy, pranashakti, which sustains and transforms you.

Just as you have a nervous system in your physical body, similarly there is a nervous system in the subtle body. The nervous system of the physical body is con-

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Lilleoru community *continued*

both in Estonia and internationally; also, inner teachings and conscious lifestyle are attracting more and more people in wider society. Lilleoru's current indoor premises are far too small, and outdoor programs can be offered only during summer months. Therefore we are currently not able to host all courses and welcome all interested people.

The School of Practical Awareness will be our new main building. With a main hall of 130 m² together with several smaller seminar and therapy rooms it will open up a lot of new possibilities to make teachings of Kriya Yoga and The Art of Conscious Change accessible to more people both in Estonia and internationally. There will be also much better dining and accommodation facilities and the building will be surrounded by a big permaculture garden.

We are building mostly with volunteers, using recycled materials as much as possible. Funding for the construction comes from donations and from a not-for-profit organization Lilleoru NGO. Since 2011, more than 400 individuals and companies have contributed to the construction of the School of Practical Awareness, and volunteers have contributed in total more than 20,000 work hours. In addition, in the period from 2011 to 2016, the Lilleoru NGO has invested close to 100,000 euros to this building's construction from its own resources and close to 250 000 euros from donations made by individuals and companies. With the help of the Estonian crowd funding platform Hooandja, we raised 21,463 euros in donations for buying windows for the school in December 2015.

Our goal is to open The School of Practical Awareness in May 2018. The building is our gift to the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia. With this step we will make Lilleoru even more to the public. In July 2018, Lilleoru will host the Global Ecovillage Network's conference "Wisdom of Conscious Communities" to inspire liv-

ing in better balance with ourselves, each other and the nature. We are expecting close to 500 guests. These will include practitioners of sustainable intentional communities from all over the world. Presentations will be made leaders in sustainable and conscious approaches to education, culture, health, economy, ecology, energy and social sphere.

We kindly ask you to help us to open the School of Practical Awareness for students and guests! In 2017, our main goal is to install and furnish kitchen and dining facilities and to complete construction of the accommodation wing with guest rooms. The budget for the completion of these works is 100-150 000 euros.

Donations can be made to beneficiary MTY Lilleoru. Address: Lilleoru, Aruvalla küla, Rae vald, 75320, Harjuma, Estonia. Account/IBAN: EE202200221053475791. Bank: Swedbank AS, 8 Liivalaia Street, 15040 Tallinn, Estonia. SWIFT/BIC code: HABAEEX. Explanation: "school donation".

Donate 50 Euros and you'll get a brick in the wall of the School's supporters! Via bank transfer with the details shown above, but indicate "brick donation" in the explanation field.

With standing order, e.g. 5 / 15 / 25 EUR per month.

Contact: Ave Oit, ave.oit@lilleoru.ee, +372 56499199. www.lilleoru.ee, www.facebook.com/lilleoru, www.facebook.com/ishwaranandaingvarvillido.

Thank you! Om Tat Sat

Editor's Note: From August 22 to September 1, 2016, I visited again the Lilleoru community, and was very impressed with its recent development. I also completed the training of Ishvarananda as an Acharya, who is now authorized to give the third initiation. Durga and I are planning to attend the Global Ecovillage Network's conference "Wisdom of Conscious Communities" there in July 2018.



Deepening you practice *continued*

trolled by gross prana (the breath), whereas the nervous system of the subtle body is controlled by subtle prana (charged particles of vital energy). The two pranas are inter-related. It is through the harmonious development of the gross and subtle prana, through asana and pranayama that you progress in Yoga. Hatha Yoga can connect you with an unlimited source of prana creating a practice that is soothing, healing and revitalizing. Babaji's Kriya Hatha Yoga utilizes ujjayi and spinal breathing, bandhas, mudras, mantras and concentration so you benefit as widely as possible from its practice.

The following column, ABC's of Babaji's Kriya Hatha Yoga will better explain how you can experience the 18 asana as a total hygiene, a complete purification of the total organism, the physical and the subtle bodies – all five levels of your being – physical, vital energy, mind, consciousness, and superconsciousness. Asana works directly on the physical, but targets the subtle levels that lies behind it. Why not let your asana create a bridge between your physical and spiritual being so you gain not only in vitality and health but also in dynamism, compassion and self-confidence. The ABC's will continue as a regular column in on-going quarterly, Kriya Yoga Journals.

-A-

Asana – “seat;” “to establish steadiness (sthira) and ease (sukha), harmonizing, ‘to breathe with that which is eternal.’ Steadiness and ease of the body cannot occur independently of the mental and emotional states that regulate it. Asana nourish the body by encouraging harmony in both body and mind. Asana stretches the body into postures to directly target the subtle channels and stimulate and liberate bodily sensations. When asana are practiced willfully but without force or competition they can access and release tensions in the physical, mental and emotional bodies. When they are held for extended lengths of time they invite impressions to arise from the subconscious to be released. Asana can help us work through our personal fears, physical inhibitions and self-concepts. They build inner strength not just physical strength.

Asana is the foundation of Babaji's Kriya Yoga and is taught with regard to its physical, mental and spiritual disciples to harmoniously integrate the entire being. When the physical is isolated from the mental, emotional and spiritual components, it loses its integrative core benefits. This practice works with the body consciously and deliberately to open the door to pranashakti. This potential energy can be nudged awake through the purification, awareness, concentration and effort that our daily asana and pranayama provides. Ours is a practice that never overrides the wisdom of the body, but instead encourages and works with it.

Alignment – Alignment is taught through the use of both external cues and internal cues. The aim is always to be aligned and relaxed. Alignment allows you to relax, and relaxation releases the muscular tension blocking

body sensation. It is important that you are consistent in your use of all the external structural cues: proper position of hands, feet, the spinal column, the shoulders, head and neck, but also that you must understand the importance of bandhas, mudras, drishtis (eye gaze), and ujjayi breathing (ocean-sounding breath). Internal cues are those things essential to finding your best personal alignment. Internal cues teach you how to align, deepen and hold the pose through awareness of how the posture affects you from the inside. It is importance to sense and remain aware about what is happening in your body. Observe and Ask: Is my breath smooth and even? How does the pose feel? Do I have a sense I am nourishing a tight or the right area? Is there an increasing sense of tension, discomfort or pain? Or, do I have a good feeling about the intensity in the stretch? Do I notice a release of tension or a new vibrant flow of energy through the body? It is important to be ever aware of your experience so that you can adjust to create ease and to extend safely. Each posture should be held for two minutes with stability and relative comfort and you should always know when and how to come out safely.

Active Stretching – Enter slowly, gently, intentionally and consciously into each posture, respecting where your body is at the moment. Attention is focused on alignment and form in each stage, not on performing picture perfect asana, or looking like the next person. Asana is an experience not a performance. Each posture should provide benefit for you from where you are, not where you are not. Active stretching will take you into physical tensions that are most often avoided. Asana can relieve deep-seated tension, but that requires an intentional, willful practice and constant attention to what is happening in your body. Asana will provide the feedback. They can only benefit you from where you are, not where you are not. So you must pay attention to what your body can do and also what it can't do. While on one hand you must accept physical limitations, on the other you must be willing to drop internal resistance to trying certain postures or to holding them longer.

Visualization aids active stretching. Stretch actively, by extending fully through your musculature as you direct (envision) energy moving through lines of the stretch. Imagine the energy flowing in lines through your subtle body; energy (prana) flowing from your core at your navel center, in nadis, down through your legs and feet, and from the navel center up and out through your arms, and from your navel, up to the crown of the head. The outer body is firm and taut, but the inner body is soft, fluid, relaxed. Active stretching will help increase circulation and open and better lubricate joints. Visualizing energy moving in the subtle channels and the use of ujjayi will simulate relaxation from the parasympathetic response.

Active stretching carried on by the higher centers could lead to overstretching, which can result in damage

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The Delicate Charm of an Enduring Babaji's Kriya Yoga Sadhana

By Durga Ahlund

I am dedicated to a lifelong practice of Babaji's Kriya Yoga because, over the course of two decades, I have seen how the asanas, pranayama, dhyanas, meditation, and mantras continue to evolve and remain fresh, as they enliven and soothe my energy, balance my emotions, strengthen my mind, and keep me feeling youthful.

The benefits of moving inward through Hatha Yoga

Through the gentle intensity and inwardness of a regular asana practice, it is possible to release not only tight-

ness and tension in the body but also pre-programmed tension in the body and mind, and to release even pre-programmed attitudes, memories, and emotions from the mind. It requires the proper use of bandhas, ujjayi breathing, and awareness, ensuring that your asana practice is safe and effective. Bandhas and ujjayi breathing increase mobility and balance, and allow you to go deeper into the musculature and better experience your

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Deepening you practice continued

to a joint, muscles or tendons, if you force a stretch or hold to a point of pain. You do not want to stimulate the sympathetic nervous to function to produce more tension in the body. Tense muscles will naturally send stress signals to the brain, through what is known as the "stretch reflex." Muscles must be stretched gently, slowly, in a proper balance of strength and flexibility - aligned and relaxed, so that the signals are automatically switched off.

Adjustment - Going into a posture should be a series of push-and-pause, of reaching into a stretch and yielding to the sensations. Allow time for your body to become at ease, more comfortable in each stage, before moving on to the next stage. Each stage is preparation for the next. These stages are unique to Babaji's Kriya Hatha Yoga. Each stage relaxes muscular and mental tensions and opens more energy into the pose. The 18 postures are designed to prepare, relax and attune body and mind to each posture, so that you can remain in it for two minutes or longer. You can always return to and hold a previous stage longer. But seek the still-point in each pose by remaining in it. Each posture should "feel" beneficial. You may have to adjust your body, while in the pose, in order to find your best energy flow. That free flow of energy will help you experience stability and ease, which will benefit you the most. An asana should not consume too much vital energy. Instead, each asana should increase energy and strength and create an internal softening that relaxes body and mind. Ujjayi breathing and awareness will bring about autonomic balance and emotional stability. Use ujjayi and your senses will internalize and establish you in the pose. This will invite you to explore bodily sensations. Monitoring sensations as the body organizes and reorganizes itself will help you make the right adjustment and find the right balance.

Awareness - We deliberately incorporate awareness in our practice so that others, or our own thoughts do not distract us. Invite whole body awareness. Awareness develops as you use ujjayi and observe your movements. It

is important that you explore asana with an intention to bend and move in a new way. Your body will respond to asana differently each day. By choosing to be mindful you will maintain an interest in sensations and not let your mind wander. You will want to stay present to every changing sensation of stretch and discomfort, intensity and release. This will assure cooperation between body, mind and prana. By attending to each movement you will experience your body responding to the prana. This is a safer practice as you won't be inclined to go too far, too fast and hurt yourself.

Asana is a powerful means of uniting body, mind and prana together on the same activity. When you are able to remain focused, concentrated on something undistracted, the normally scattered energy of the body is united with the energies of the mind. This creates a more efficient use of energy both on and off the mat. Awareness is a conscious linking of body, mind and prana and it is a powerful tonic for mind and nervous system. Asana practiced with awareness establishes soothing vibrations that penetrate the body and create new currents of moving energy you can feel.

Attention - Where do you place your attention? Focus on your breathing and the sensations. Focus initially on your ujjayi breathing and on the sensations of the stretch to become aware of your body's limitations. With steady and relaxed, mindful breathing, meditative attention develops and you can then become aware of the energy you are freeing up through your work with postures. Become aware of the position of your spinal column. As you deepen your practice your attention can widen to a sensation of breathing in the spine (spinal breathing), and on enlivening energy. And as you hold your fullest expression of the pose with steadiness and ease for two minutes, attention can be directed into the increasing sense of emptiness, buoyancy, lightness, light. With practice, awareness will widen and you will begin to take in all these experiences.

To be continued



energy.

The eighteen postures generate releases in muscles and connective tissue to reduce pain and increase strength, as they cultivate dynamic energy through the deep relaxation that the bandhas and breath provide. The body and prana is balanced and enlivened through a deep practice of the eighteen asanas. Enlivened prana will be free to flow throughout your body, removing blocks in the physical body and subtle nervous system of nadis. You will feel it. This transformed energy increases your capacity, deepens your meditations, brings up buried emotions and memories to be released, opens your heart, and increases courage to support change.

Increasing vitality and calming the mind through Kriya kundalini pranayama

Regular practice of Kriya kundalini pranayama increases mental vitality and ensures that our normal breathing is slow and deep and complete. It also creates a way to have some positive, conscious influence on internal processes of the generalized system, such as heart rate, pulse, blood pressure, digestion, elimination, and absorption.

The pranayama technique traces a path of energy from the left side of the nadis to the right side of the nadis, creating an optimum flow of energy throughout the nerves, organs, and glandular system. The abdominal organs are massaged, increasing muscular tone and stimulating the autonomic nervous system through the shifting pressure in the internal organs. When autonomic balance is achieved, emotional stability is also achieved.

But the aim of Kriya kundalini pranayama is to develop a relationship with the conscious part of the breath in order to influence the deeper and even subconscious parts of consciousness. Kundalini pranayama is about bringing conscious awareness down into the sea of unconscious prana in the body. It is about awakening the dynamism of the pranashakti.

Repeating this pattern twice daily gradually establishes a smooth and consistent course that illuminates the ida and pingala nadis. The nadis can be sensed and mapped within your internal consciousness. The pranayama practice itself can become quite subtle when a conscious flow is experienced within the nadis. It will increase the flow of a higher quality prana, which balances your energy and helps you maintain higher levels of mental energy. If you are to progress in your sadhana, it is important that you are able to consciously experience internal energy pathways and become sensitive to energy, so enabling you to become aware if and when your energy patterns become disturbed.

Mental cleansing through meditation

Through a consistent practice of the ever-evolving

Kriya dhyanas and samadhi techniques, you will develop the ability to burn off samskaras: your mental and emotional tendencies, the residue of your habitual thinking – the broken records in your mind. You learn to witness your thought processes. You experience yourself as separate from your thoughts and learn to observe them as something merely moving through the space of your mind. The Consciousness underlying your thoughts becomes apparent. The dhyanas become awareness.

Each Kriya meditation is designed to harness the underlying energy of the mind and focus it in concentrated awareness. The mind is taken into a different state of internal consciousness, where it disconnects from outer sensing – and the senses follow the mind – and the energy of the body is united with the energies of the mind in vibrant awareness.

Meditation arises spontaneously out of a concentrated mind. As the mind becomes more and more focused and unified through concentration, the usual distractions and disturbances fall away, and the mind quiets down, allowing the pure state of meditation to emerge. You come to understand that consciousness can only expand when it

is not limited or obscured by thoughts or shifts in the mind and emotions.

Practice of the Kriya dhyanas leads to a strong and energetic flow of consciousness during and after meditation. This increased awareness enlarges your perception and links the perceiving mind directly to the world. Fewer of your memo-

ries and emotions will influence or interfere with that direct link.

You learn to so appreciate the expanded awareness – the freshness, luminosity, clarity, stability, and peace – that you chose to observe your mind regularly and work to voluntarily regulate your thoughts and emotions. For when consciousness expands in meditation, your mental and emotional strength, stability, and equanimity are enhanced. Calming and quieting the mind and prana is no longer a great feat. You can easily connect with a higher consciousness that observes errors in your thinking and quells disturbing thoughts and agitated emotions as they begin to arise.

Babaji's Kriya Yoga meditations help us to stop living on the surface of our consciousness and emotions. Instead, they allow us to live from the depths of our center. As you allow yourself to rest inwardly through regular meditation, the mind becomes less attached to having things a certain way. Your being and presence choose to remain steady and calm, and the prana remains calm and regulated even in difficult situations because the heart is content. The mind has been unraveled and only the soul's impulses are left, giving you insight into the nature of your mind and behavior.

The charm of Babaji's Kriya Yoga is how it supports your health, well-being, peace, and life. □



Order of Acharyas Annual Report and Plan for 2017

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 2015, members and supporters of Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas has done the following:

- Brought more than 140 initiation seminars to more than 1,000 participants living in 20 countries including Brazil, India, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Estonia, Spain, Colombia, Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, England, Australia, the United Kingdom, USA and Canada.

- Maintained an ashram and publishing office in Bangalore, India which organized eight 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. It published a new Kannada edition of the Kriya Hatha Yoga book, the Tamil language Treasure Trove of Tamil Yoga Siddha Manuscripts with 650 manuscripts on an enclosed CD, and the Indian edition, in English of Enlightenment : Its Not What You Think.

- 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 in record numbers.

- Completed the training of two Acharyas in Brazil, Annapurna and Kabir (Tadeu and Marica Arantes), and Gurudasan (Gowri Varadhan) in India. Continued the training of one Acharya in Austria, two in France, and one in Bulgaria. Completed the training in France and Estonia of two Acharyas in giving the third initiation of the 144 Kriyas.

- Completed the construction of the first phase of the new ashram in Badrinath, Himalaya, including eleven apartments, two meeting halls, office, bookstore and grounds, and half of the second phase, 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.

- Sponsored free bi-weekly public classes in Babaji's Kriya Yoga, and kirtan events, in 2016 at the Quebec ashram.

- Conducted a two week Teacher Training in Kriya Hatha Yoga for 23 participants at the Quebec ashram.

- Conducted a two day Gathering of 48 initiates near Blois, France.

- Co-sponsored International Yoga Day, June 21, in northern Sri Lanka, attended by 1,500 school children.

- Added the Grace of Babaji's Kriya Yoga correspondence course to the curricula of Tamil University, Thanjavur, India.

In the year 2016 to 2017, 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.

- Conduct 300 hour trainings in Spain, Switzerland and Quebec of teachers of Kriya Hatha Yoga.

- 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 construction of the Badrinath ashram.

The 32 volunteer Acharyas of the Order and many other volunteer organizers need your support to fulfill this program for the year 2016-2017. Your contribution is tax deductible in Canada and the USA. Send it by December 31, 2016 if possible, and receive a receipt for your 2016 Income tax return. 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.

For each donation of US\$70/Cn\$75 or more, receive a free copy of the new book "Enlightenment: Its Not What You Think" in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese

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: CCDQCAM-MXXX, 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 DEUTDEDBFRA. Please inform info@babajiskriyayoga.net when the transfer is made.



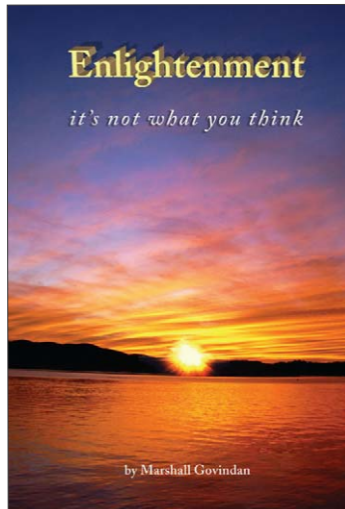
News and Notes

Pilgrimage to sacred sites in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, February 9-23, 2017, with Acharyas Satyananda and Siddhananda Sita. Experience a profound spiritual culture, meet with several living spiritual masters, practice daily guided Kriya Yoga in sacred sites at ashrams, old temples, samadhi shrines, on mountain tops and at the water front. Visit our own ashram in Bangalore and two ashrams of world-renowned saints in Tiruvannamalai and Pondicherry, and travel through the beautiful nature of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, touching the sunny countryside of countless coconut trees, the beautiful Western Ghats mountain range, and the shores of the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. New destinations. Contact: satyananda@babajiskriyayoga.net, sita@babajiskriyayoga.net, satchidananda@babajiskriyayoga.net
For information go here:
www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/pilgrimages.htm

Pilgrimage to the new Badrinath Ashram with M. G. Satchidananda and Durga: September 21 to October 9, 2017. Join us for a life changing, unforgettable pilgrimage to the place where Babaji attained soruba samadhi, the ultimate state of enlightenment. For the first time we will be able to reside in its eleven apartments fully use its facilities. Details are here:
www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/Pilgrimages-himalayas.htm

Second level initiations will be given by M.G. Satchidananda in Quebec, October 21-23, 2016, June 16-18, 2017.

Third level initiations will be offered with M. Govindan Satchidananda in Quebec July 14-23, 2017. And by Satyananda in Germany and India, by Sita Siddhananda in France, and 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.

Teacher Training course in Kriya Hatha Yoga: June 28 to July 11, 2017:

See details at:

www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/hatha-yoga-teacher-training.htm

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.

"Here, he delineates succinctly and clearly the time-tested techniques of these masters for eliminating obstacles—our deepest afflictions of fear, doubt, and all forms of grief and sorrow which obstruct the incessant flow of our intrinsic luminosity and happiness. Enlightenment: Its 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

Badrinath Ashram construction is nearing completion. We need your help! We are pleased to announce that the new ashram in Badrinath is now connected to the municipal water, sewage and electrical lines, and that hot water tanks and bedding is now being installed in all eleven apartments. Our first pilgrimage groups will reside there in September and October. We are also begin-

Continued on Page 11



Ashram under construction at Badrinath.



News and Notes *continued*

ning the construction of Phase 2, which includes two more apartments, a communal dining room, entrance gate, protective walls, yagna peetam, and outdoor platforms.

Our registered educational charity, Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas, needs your contributions to complete the construction of the ashram in Badrinath. See the latest progress report and photos here:

www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/News-Notes.htm#badrinath_construction.

We also need your help fulfill the Order's planned 2016 program of sponsored activities. Make your contribution online and see details of our Annual report and plans here:

www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/kriya-yoga-contribution.htm

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

Subscribe to the correspondence course, The Grace of Babaji's Kriya Yoga We invite you to join us in this adventure of Self-exploration and discovery, drawn from the books dictated by Babaji in 1952 and 1953. Receive by mail, each month, a lesson of 18-24 pages developing

a specific theme, with practical exercises. For details go here: www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#grace_course

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