



B a b a j i ' s

Kriya Yoga Journal

Editorial

The result of sacrifice is bliss

By M. G. Satchidananda

A year ends, a new year begins. The old is sacrificed for the new. And the process of "creative destruction," referred to by the great economist, Joseph Schumpeter, as the hallmark of the modern capitalistic world, goes forward. At this time of the year my thoughts always turn towards time and this process of sacrifice. The image of Mother Nature Kali's dance through time upon the prone

form of Shiva, pure consciousness, springs to mind. I am also reminded of the alternative translation for the great mantra "Om Namah Shivayah" given by the great scholar of the Siddha's literature: "the result of sacrifice is bliss." It is really the other side of the coin for the traditional meaning of this mantra: "Shiva, That Supreme Being, I am."

I grew up with a generation often referred to as the "me" generation.

This referred to widespread view among the baby boomers that one's priority in life was determined by one's own desires, one's own need for self-actualization, and that duty or obligations to ones family, the community and nation were of secondary importance. Despite the fact that John F. Kennedy had inspired us with the words: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country," the Vietnam War, disillusioned many of us, and so we turned to drugs, sex and rock and roll. This attitude continues today, with the need to first be an individual, to look different, be different, to put one's own rights ahead of personal responsibility, the needs of society, and even the critical environmental needs of the planet.

"Sacrifice" is not a word which we hear very often today. Just mentioning it brings about a negative reaction in the minds of most persons. We all want first our piece of the pie of life. We want to know first what I am I going to get in return? Yet, we are all the beneficiaries of the sacrifices made by our parents, grandparents, and the ancestors of everyone around us, even those

Inside

1. Editorial: "The result of sacrifice is Bliss," by M. G. Satchidananda
2. "The Art of Meditation," by M. G. Satchidananda
6. "Question and answer" by Durga Ahlund
8. Book Review by Georg Feuerstein Ph.D.: "The Wisdom of Jesus and the Yoga Siddhas"
8. News and notes



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Continued on Page 2

The art of meditation: You and what you are not

By M. G. Satchidananda

Part 1

The practice of meditation is becoming more and more popular. Yet it remains widely misunderstood, even by those who claim to practice it. If you tell someone that you “meditate” they are likely to ask: “Oh, are you trying to make your mind go blank?” If that is all that meditation is, one might suggest that meditation is simply an unconscious state. Others may even fear meditation, out of ignorance of what it is and what it can do for them. We often fear what we do not understand. In writing this article, I hope to provide some understanding of the process of meditation, its immense benefits and how to get started.

Why has meditation become popular in recent decades?

Meditation has become popular in recent decades for several reasons:

1. many scientific studies have proven it to be effective in controlling the effects of stress, reversing heart disease, reducing blood pressure and in promoting emotional well being. Consequently, doctors recommend it to patients who are suffering from these conditions.

2. a growing interest in spirituality. Many persons who go to church, for example are no longer satisfied with merely an intellectual experience. They want a spiritual experience as well. Spirituality, as distinct from religion, emphasizes that which is formless, and this can be experienced when the mind becomes quiet. Meditation is one means for quieting the mind.

3. a growing dissatisfaction with the religious

Continued on Page 3

Editorial *continued*

who live in distant countries, with the global effects of technology, capital markets and the media.

“Bliss” is not something many experience or even aspire to. Like “beatitude” it seems to be a distant remnant in the memory of saints long since departed from this world. Happiness, fulfillment, success, security, these are the words which spring to mind when most people today think of what they want from life.

Fortunately, as students of Yoga, we may have access to the experience of bliss, through our practice. It is called “ananda” and it means unconditional joy. It does not depend upon anything except our own being. To access it, however, one must cultivate the present, being rather than doing; fortunately, the many practices of Yoga which induce calmness, relaxation, awareness, balance, clarity, appreciation and contentment are all doorways to such bliss.

But what does “sacrifice” have to do with bliss? Think about it. How do we sacrifice? I would like to suggest that it is primarily determined by our internal perspective. When we sacrifice, we do not think “I am sacrificing my time, my resources, my energy, for the sake of someone or something else.” We just give because we are moved by the power of love, by compassion to help someone. Then it is egoless, and bliss ensues. If, however, we get caught up in thinking about sacrificing, the “I” starts to suffer as we start calculating how much and what about me, what will I get.

Karma yoga is the yoga of sacrifice. It can involve any activity which is done without attachment to the return that it may give to one's person. One gives. One does not concern oneself about what I will get from it. In doing so, the ego gets left behind and bliss begins to

appear. Such bliss deepens when one is fully present during the activity, and still further one cultivates the continuous perspective of a Witness.

Karma yoga also provides the wise person the opportunity to replace the consequences of previous bad actions with good karma, consequences which will counteract negative karma. So the wise are always eager to sacrifice their time and energy to help others, knowing that it not only chips away at egoism, brings bliss, but also neutralizes bad karma. The old adages, “it is more blessed to give than to receive,” and “the more one gives, the more one receives” is relevant to this discussion too.

Therefore, as we begin a New Year, remember that every moment is an opportunity to sacrifice the ego perspective and to replace it with the perspective of your soul, the Eternal Witness. Start with selfless activities of service to those who are close to you, like family, and colleagues, but then let it expand to include strangers on the way to work, and those who are suffering in your community. Resolve to be a planetary citizen and to act responsibly towards the environment, despite the ignorant, selfish actions of your neighbors. Bless everyone. Don't judge them. Then you will begin to realize the other meaning of “Om Namah Shivayah,” which is: “Shiva, That Supreme Being, I am.” This is because the more we let go of the contracted perspective of the ordinary ego driven mind, and allow our consciousness to expand, the less it identifies with the little “I,” and the more it identifies with that which has always been, and will always be, the fundamental Being Consciousness Bliss of the universe.

- Satchidananda

□



Art of meditation *continued*

approaches to the great questions of life: why do bad things happen to good people? Why am I suffering? Is there a God? As people become more independent in their thinking, they aspire to find the truth of things for themselves, without adherence to dogma or the belief systems of religious institutions.

4. a large number of books and the arrival of teachers of meditation, particularly from Asia, where meditation has a long history and refined development, has made meditation much more accessible. One no longer has to enter a monastery to learn it. The examples of spiritual masters has inspired many to seek "Self-realization," as the goal of life.

What is meditation?

I like to define meditation as "being continually aware of a chosen object or subject." Therefore, meditation allows you to be who you really are, because your higher nature, which is pure consciousness, is always meditating, always aware. The difficulty arises with the fact that you rarely adopt the perspective of your higher nature, that of your soul, that of a witnessing consciousness, if you like. You are in the habit of allowing your consciousness to become completely absorbed in the experiences that arise within your mind, prompted by what comes through your five senses, memories or emotions. Or, you are dispersed in many directions. It is your lower human nature, which causes your mind to become absorbed in such things, just like when you are absorbed in a book, movie or television program. Meditation is a process of training your mind to "let go" of what it is normally identified with, so that you can remember to be who you really are. In other words, meditation allows you "to get in touch with your self."

All schools of meditation agree on the above definition of meditation. Seeking to become "continually aware" is the goal of all schools. What distinguishes different schools from one another, is the object of subject that is chosen, in order to train the mind to "let go" of its ordinary preoccupations. Many schools choose the breath, and simply follow it, without trying to control it. Other schools recommend a mantra, one or more syllables, which when repeated, induce a higher state of awareness. Other schools focus on a visualized form, like a mandala (a geometric form representing the macrocosm in the microcosm, or the universe within the human body), which serves to center the mind, and to neutralize its tendency to wander. Still others cultivate a train of thoughts related to an abstract subject, such as love, truth, beauty, suffering, or destiny.

Depending upon the goal of the particular practice, the technique may vary. Many schools of meditation seek to quiet the mind in order to transcend it, to seek the deepest peace and tranquility within. In the tradition of Babaji's Kriya Yoga, meditation is defined as "the scientific art of mastering the mind." This implies a broad agenda with many more objectives, because the mind has many levels and functions, and potential fac-

ulties yet to be developed. It includes techniques of meditation to cleanse the subconscious of habitual tendencies that are the source of much suffering. Other techniques are used to develop one's power of concentration, something needed to succeed in all areas of life. Still others develop the intellect and its conceptual power, along with opening one to great insight and intuitive power. Still others encourage one to become a co-creator in one's own life experiences, developing the intuitive, the psychic and the superconscious levels of consciousness. For this reason there are a large number of meditation techniques taught in Babaji's Kriya Yoga. Each technique is like a specialized tool that one may use for different purposes.

How to get started?

"We are dreaming with our eyes open" is a saying of the Yoga Siddhas, the perfected yogis and sages. This saying characterizes the fundamental dilemma of human existence. We are "dreaming" whenever we are absorbed in the movements of the mind: sense perceptions, conceptualizations, fantasies, memories and sleep, according to the Siddha Patanjali in his Yoga Sutras. This incisive diagnosis called for a prescription, and the Siddhas responded with the development of many techniques to wake us up from our dream state. Patanjali prescribes twelve different methods of meditation to calm the mind. Depending upon one's particular nature one method may be more effective than others. Some experimentation with different methods is therefore recommended, to help determine which works best for you.

Meditation is not really something that you do! It is truly who you are! It cannot be divorced from the rest of your life. So, learning to meditate begins with some preparation so that how you live your life does not overwhelm your attempts at meditation. Meditation begins with being present, and this requires several things. When you are present you are giving your undivided attention to what is happening right now. As we are conditioned by life's experiences to dwell on the past or to be apprehensive about the future, some preparation is required to de-condition the ordinary habit driven mind. Formal meditation training in the Eastern schools such as Classical Yoga includes several phases. One of the most well known is the eight limbed (astanga) or steps:

1. *yamas*, or five restraints, which will optimize social relationships and ensure that they do not become a source of mental disturbance. These are five: avoiding any words or actions, even thoughts which might harm others; speaking only what is truthful; seeing others as spiritual beings first and not as sex objects; avoiding taking what does not belong to you; avoiding greed.
2. *niyamas*, or five observances: cultivating pure lov-

Continued on Page 4



Art of meditation *continued*

ing thoughts, words and actions; contentment, being grateful for what one has; continuous practice of remembrance of our higher self, and letting go of false identification with the mind's movements; self-study: through study of sacred texts and such things as recording in a journal one's meditations; turning continuously towards the Divine with love and reverence for all its manifestations.

3. *asana*, the practice of yoga postures to produce stability and relaxation;

4. *pranayama*, the practice of special breathing exercises to calm the mind and to access one's potential power and consciousness

5. *pratyahara*, withdrawal of one's consciousness from the senses, avoidance of mental dispersion in many unnecessary activities.

6. *dharana*, developing one's power of concentration on a single object.

7. *dhyana*, or meditation proper, as defined above, developing continuous awareness, with whatever object or experience.

This leads to the ultimate goal of meditation, referred to as *samadhi*, or cognitive absorption, in which one transcends the ordinary ego perspective of being separate from objects of experience; one becomes Self realized.

By recognizing that so many things including our body and its health, our mental and emotional habits, our social relationships all have an effect on our ability to meditate, one will derive the maximum benefit and avoid many of the pitfalls that beginning meditators experience. So it is recommended that in addition to learning and experimenting with various simple meditations, one begin to observe the first five phases of *astanga yoga*, mentioned above.

In particular, just before sitting for meditation, the beginning student will find that the practice of some yoga postures and breathing exercises will energize and relax the body-mind complex, and help one to avoid sleep, a common source of difficulty.

Posture for sitting

The best posture for sitting is the one you feel most comfortable in. So, experiment with different positions. If your knees are tight and you find it difficult to sit on the floor cross legged, sit on the edge of a chair, with your back erect in its natural "S" curve, and your hand resting on your knees or joined with the palms turned upwards. After doing the yoga postures, which open your hips, strengthen your knees and develop a strong and flexible spine you will be able to sit or kneel on the floor with or without the support of a cushion or small bench. There are many types, and so experiment with them and find the one that supports you most comfortably.

Breathing

Every psychological state has a corresponding rate of

breathing. For example, when you sleep, your exhalation is about twice as long as your inhalation. When you are angry your breath is shallow and fast. When you are sad or depressed, you sigh a lot. When you experience fear or anxiety, you hold the breath. The average person will breathe 30 times a minute. Yoga recommends that you slow and deepen the breath in order to take about 15 breaths per minute.

There is great benefit to take some long deep breaths before you begin your meditation. It can be beneficial to count your breaths, counting how long it takes to inhale and to exhale and then to try to lengthen your exhalation to be twice as long as your inhalation. For instance if you breathe in for a count of 6 seconds, breathe out for a count of 12 seconds. The inhalation is connected to the sympathetic nervous system, which governs the "fight or flight" response; the exhalation is connected to the parasympathetic nervous system, which governs the relaxation response. By emphasizing the exhalation, you begin to relax the body and the mind, enabling you to enter the meditative perspective.

Beginning meditation techniques

As described above, there are many different techniques, and they vary according to their purpose.

1. Hamsa

Breathe deeply several times. As you breathe in, feel yourself filling up with energy. As you breathe out feel yourself letting go of the tension and fatigue.

Now relax into your normal breathing patterns and begin to repeat the word "I", followed by a pause. Each time you say "I," notice what you become aware of. Perhaps at first, there are physical sensations. Then perhaps some thoughts or emotions. Each time you say "I" imagine its like adjusting the lens of a microscope and you're beneath the microscope. At some point you notice that all these sensations, thoughts, and emotions are appearing and disappearing on a kind of screen; like the images of a television screen. Then you notice the screen is made up of particles. As you go deeper and deeper within with the word "I," you notice these particles are moving. Particles of light everywhere, inside you, around you, moving through you. At this level its becomes difficult to distinguish where you end and other things begin. The space is widening between the particles.

If I ask you now, who are you, what would you say? Its no longer adequate to refer to your name or some memory or some sensation. Here, like the mystic, you can say I Am That; That infinite being from which everything comes and to which everything returns. Like a vast ocean out of which so many waves appear on the surface. Up until now you've been living only on the surface of your being. Your consciousness has been focused on the individual waves, thoughts, feelings,

Continued on Page 5



Art of meditation *continued*

emotions. Now your consciousness has expanded and you're aware of that ocean of being that transcends you, that supports you, that contains you, which is infinite and eternal. "I Am That," says the mystic. I was never born. That which I truly am has always existed. I Am That, says the mystic. Everything is within me. I am in everything. Everything comes and everything goes, thoughts, sensations, emotions come and go but I remain.

How do you maintain this perspective? Your breath is always naturally reminding you of the truth of this perspective. The breath gives you a natural reminder. Each inhalation it whispers a sound like "ham," which means in sanskrit "I Am." During exhalation it makes a sound like "sa," which in sanskrit means "That." Whenever you notice the inhalation, mentally say "ham" and remember "I Am." Whenever you notice the exhalation, mentally say "sa" and remember "That." Make no effort to control the breath, simply follow it. If other thoughts come, do not try to chase them away. Just return to "ham'sa." Gradually as your breathing slows down, the thoughts will become quieter. This subtly emphasizes the subjective side of absolute reality. I Am. If you reverse it, it emphasizes the objective side of reality: That, I Am. Two sides of one coin. I am that I am. So for at least ten minutes be very calm, focus on your breath and repeat "ham" as you breathe in and "sa" as you breathe out. And remember, I Am That....

2. Japa or the repetition of a mantra

Repeat continuously, aloud or mentally a thought such as "I AM" or "Peace," or "It's all Divine Mother Nature" or "Om,Om, Om," (the sound of universal energy, which exists in everything as a vibration or sound), "Amen," or "Tat Twam Asi" (That I am). This practice is known as japa, the continuous repetition of mantras. They remind one that all is One, and that everything is only apparent. This allows you to bring a third person perspective into whatever you happen to be doing at the time. There are you digging the ditch, and there is the ditch which is being dug, but there is also third party, one which is disinterested, but which regards it all with total love and appreciation for how it all is. In so doing you can transcend the ordinary egoistic perspective of "I am digging" the ditch, and begin to cultivate the perspective of a witness.

3. Tratak

Set a candle at a distance of about twenty inches from you face. The height of the flame should be level with your eyes. Sit up straight with your spine erect. With your eyes open, gaze at the flame, blinking freely whenever they feel too dry. Start with five minutes, and gradually increase the time. Allow thoughts to come and to go, and avoid trying to do anything. Just be with the flame until you and flame become one. You may repeat a mantra simultaneously if you wish.

The above exercises are formal meditations done with the eyes closed, or with the eyes open as in Tradak. They help one to prepare oneself for meditation in daily life, which is described next.

4. Witnessing

There are hundreds of you's, each a different part of your personality. There is the angry you, the sad you, the nervous you, the proud you, the hurt you, and the lustful you, just to name a few. Anyone of them can make a mistake for which the rest of you may pay a heavy price for many years. But they come and go. There is one You however, which is always there behind all of the others. It is called the Witness. It is not doing anything. It is witnessing everything get done. It is not thinking. It is watching thoughts come and go. It is not feeling any emotion. It is watching the emotions arise and fall. It can be done with eyes closed in formal meditation posture, or during activities, initially routine ones.

You may adopt the perspective of the witness initially by slowing down, perhaps taking a few deep breaths, and watch yourself do whatever you are doing. Initially you are seeking to develop calmness. Calmness is not the absence of thoughts, but being present with the thoughts. The substance of consciousness remains undisturbed, and thoughts, sensations or emotions pass by, like a flock of birds in the sky, leaving the sky undisturbed.

You watch yourself walking, eating, picking up and arranging things. Then the phone rings, and you pick it up and begin talking. At that point you forget to be the witness because some other "you" jumps into the foreground. Only much later do you remember that you were attempting to be the witness. You resolve not to forget, and try again. But many subtle "you's" continue to distract you from your resolve. After awhile you begin to notice that while you still forget often, you remember sooner. Falling asleep begins to set off an alarm which wakes up again. This is an important stage in the development of the witness, as it is beginning to become automatic.

When you continue with the practice, you begin to notice some difficult emotions arising, but before they do, you are able to let go of them, because you are the witness.

As you begin to live more calmly as the witness, breaking identification with the many old "you's," you begin to recognize how the laws of the universe are operating, from a deep intuitive perspective. Bliss ensues whenever you remain in the Witness perspective, even though life may be difficult. The perspective of separation, as the Witness, at some point begins to end. While you have used this dualistic perspective, it is transcended as You the Seer, and everything else, the Seen, is transcended. What remains is the One. Silence

Continued on Page 6



Question and answer by Durga Ahlund

Question from a student of the Grace Course: *First, I acknowledge receiving the first two chapters of the Grace Course. Reading the pages has been a blessing experience. The lines make me think, make me understand and reflect. Thank you.*

I do experience problems. First, I do not have the discipline of writing. I make mental notes on most of the things that I am aware of, reflecting on my reactions and emotions to situations. For example, I mentally note, as objectively as possible, when I have felt a very strong opinion. Is this enough? Is writing that important? How do I make writing easy for my self? I would be grateful for any tips that you can give me.

Currently, I am on the relationship chapter - and intuitively I know every word written there. I do experience unconditional love and those moments are lovely, great and I wish I always stay like that - full with love and understanding for the others! but I can not! My children, who I dearly love, challenge me soooo often! Better say - the conflict situation challenge me so often. I often become him, a demon in my eyes, not being able to control my feelings, emotionally hurting everybody around me. What do I do? How do I stop reacting violently in words and in thoughts? I try to isolate myself from the feelings, to watch them, but I am not that conscious all the time. Would you recommend something that I could do in these moments?

There is one more thing that I have noticed, while observing myself. There is a deep, hidden "envy" in me. For example, somebody got a dream job according to my standards, and I am happy for him, but not completely. There is a little bit of envy in me, in terms I want that, as well. I do not want this feeling. I would love to be able to feel as happy for the other person, as if were for myself. It goes the same for spiritual things. Any recommendations here?

Answer: My dear, how many of us have been able to be hold steady and steadfast on the road to perfection?

Art of meditation *continued*

rules the mind. Into it great insights may then descend from one's higher intelligence.

Patience and perseverance

A beginner may only really meditate for ten percent of a session, because ninety percent of the session, the mind is wandering or falling asleep, or distracted by the body. With practice however, meditation becomes more and more continuous. As with any art, one needs to persevere and be patient with one's self. The practice requires attention and skill and these develop slowly. You can accelerate your development if you practice every day at the same time, preferably at least twice a day. By devising strategies to prevent the following nine obstacles to continuous awareness in daily life you will also make rapid progress in "mastering of the mind." (to be continued) □

How many of us even aspire to perfection? Perhaps, a few Saints? We, who are in training, are trying to walk a road of the Saints, not the usual road of the normal human personality.

Detachment is the means to perfecting the personality. Developing detachment takes us on an arduous, uphill path, strewn with all sorts of emotional landmines. And not until we are steadfast, living in a state of detachment, will we be able to live in unconditional love and equanimity in all the moments of everyday life. Developing steady detachment and equanimity, will allow us to receive more shakti, and the more shakti, the more others around us will experience unconditional love, and the greater our shakti, the more the power of our reason will calm emotional waters for ourselves and others.

Detachment takes much consistent yogic sadhana. Awareness is key, you've found, it is the first step. And so journaling is so helpful...writing down with the hand on paper, everything that comes into the mind. Recording everything, which knocks us off balance, is a very important step in developing detachment. Journaling like this takes a lot of discipline, but it installs a sense that the tests of our personality arrive in every moment. Every moment of pain, of resistance, of aggressive opinion, gives us a glimpse of what in our personality requires change. Every moment of happiness, cheerfulness, acceptance, or calmness in the face of "challenge" is a glimmer of hope, that we are overcoming our limiting tendencies and correcting our negative habits and experiencing our true Self.

Observing both the external expression of and the internal sensations of our reactions is helpful. SMILE...when you want to scream....take a deep breath... these simple things can divert and re-direct the overwhelming energy arising within us. Contemplate on what you find regularly triggers strong emotions to uncover the true source. Use your kriya meditations to redesign your response to these triggers.

In general, I feel that while men may require most work on their ego, women require most attention on their attachments and on their sense of "pride." I think perhaps what you are labeling as "envy" is really an issue of "pride." By visualizing yourself overcoming "pride," as something that you have simply tried on, like a coat, and can be taken off... you can overcome it, both the external expression of it, and the internal "felt sensations" of it. This is not so difficult, as it is the kind of things in our personality that we are here to overcome.

Sadhana, asana, pranayama, meditation, mantra, all these are most useful in purifying us of our physical, mental, emotional and intellectual "trigger points," so that we can reach a state where we are established in psychic awareness, facilitating the process to under-

Continued on Page 7



Question and answer *continued*

stand what is really happening externally and internally.

In the mind are "seeds of impressions" received by consciousness and experienced as a form of memory, knowledge, samskaras and karmas... these are the seeds of consciousness, which direct our personality. Yogic sadhana, awareness, mantra, meditation can create change in the personality. Yogic sadhana can eliminate impressions that cause us pain and suffering, however, we must be willing to clearly see the negativities in our own personality, without trying to justify them. This is the only way we can eliminate them. We must first clearly identify those "impressions" that cause us to lose our temper or to feel envious in order to alter or eliminate them. With awareness we can remove behavior patterns from the deep soil of our psychic personality.

In Yoga, that is what we are doing, we are identifying the patterns of behavior we wish to remove. That is why writing in journal is so useful, why having a notebook with you all the time will quicken your progress. Several little books that fit in your pocket, your purse, a book you keep with you and just jot down anything that comes up. Write as if you are writing to your own soul. Write as much as you can with as much description when you have the time, but be totally truthful and without blame or justification. When you don't have time to write, just grab the book, hold it in your hand as if you were writing on your heart, to rid yourself of a particular negativity. Perhaps, when you are about to lose your temper with your children, just take a long deep breath, and take hold of your book, or place your hands on your heart and breathe deeply. This may ease some tension immediately. Sometimes by taking hold of your book, perhaps it has a silk ribbon on it, there is a sort of tactile reinforcement. Or if there is no immediacy for you to respond at all, just leave the room for a few minutes and jot down what is happening. And, if you lose your temper, don't judge yourself, but do write down what happened... it is a process.

We will continue to be challenged by all those around us. The thing is to keep your sense of humor and sense of balance, and take time for your self. For myself, the key was to be consistent in my physical Yoga. The asana, the pranyama made the difference as they balance the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system. The nervous system becomes strong and doesn't tend to overreact.... balance is maintained...adrenaline is not stimulated...as often... The endocrine system is strengthened and balanced bringing vibrancy, health and calmness to the physical and mental being. Often we react with too much intensity because our nervous system is weak or endocrine system is shot, or we need more rest, more relaxation, more space for just being.

I took the time for my self... I would do asana daily... but also relied on asana, if there was some particular

stress... A standing forward bend, and a nice back bend, perhaps, a cobra, locust, bow... and a knee down twist, and life was good again! Do some asana daily and things are no longer the botheration they once were. Do asana regularly and eliminate all those "hair triggers" we often walk around with. We develop thicker skin and a sense of lightness, humor and cheerfulness so that we can see things from a broader perspective. See what is really going on with our children, with others, and within our self.

Regularly doing a daily practice of Yoga, asana, pranayama and meditation will change our mental attitude, mental environment, mental structure and transform the way we act, think, live, speak and our whole approach to life. Our Yoga is a process of self-psychanalysis, which aims to remove or lessen the intensity of the subconscious impressions...and karmas. It is slow steady gradual process, but you and your family will experience a "newness" about you.

Yoga in general activates Consciousness. Our normal frame of consciousness is experienced in the form of conscious, subconscious and unconscious. The process of Yoga brings to the surface the suppressed stuff of the subconscious and for a time, one may be more sensitive, more reactive, have great sadness or anger arise, but these emotions must come up in order to be eliminated. Then, Yoga helps us to perceive the mental reaction separately from the cause. We become aware of only the inner reaction and become concerned only with quieting it.

It is human nature to continue to create our own difficulties all along the way to perfection. We will continue to try to suppress things in the subconscious that we do not want to acknowledge as existing within ourselves. We will not want to accept that we have weaknesses, vulnerabilities, shortcomings, negativities. We may continue to feel them but not to go in and claim them. This is because our human nature does not want to expose itself, even if only to our Self. Thus, awareness and detachment is required all along the way.

Our Kriya Meditations can be used as a great form of psychotherapy and properly guided can "clear up" many of our samskaras and karmas. But, meditation must also be used in balance with physical Karma Yoga. Meditation requires physical and mental energies to be attuned so that we have the inner strength and aspiration required to overcome the blockages and so to progress and evolve. All the Siddhas have proclaimed the need to balance meditation and Karma Yoga.

Kriya Yoga is a Karma Yoga, which involves a constant energetic flow of energy in which the physical body and mind are fully utilized and attuned to balance body and psyche. Kriya Yoga sadhana is an open-hearted approach to bring about a harmony and integrity between the personality and the spirit, resulting in the experience of enduring quietness, calmness, detachment and love. - *Durga Ahlund*



News and Notes

Second level initiations will be given by M.G. Satchidananda in the coming months in Quebec February 22-24, Valencia May 2-4, Frankfurt May 9-11, Quebec: June 20-22, Boulder June 27-29, Bangalore, India October 17-19, 2008.

Third level initiations will be offered by M. G. Satchidananda in Redlands, Calif. May 23-30, 2008 and Quebec July 18-27, 2008, and near Bangalore January 1-8, 2009. Also by Rudra Shivananda at the end of August in Estonia and the U.K. and in Brazil December 5-12, 2008. Attain the goal of Self-realization with powerful kriyas to awaken the chakras and to go into the breathless state of samadhi.

Teacher Training: July 2-13, 2008 at the Quebec Ashram with Durga Ahlund and M. G. Satchidananda. Beginning of a one year 250 hour curricula which ful-

fills the Yoga Alliance Registry's requirements for certification. Deepen your understanding of Yoga at all levels, and learn to share your love for Yoga with others. See the program at www.babaji.ca.

Badrinath Ashram Report: Visit www.babaji.ca to view the architectural plans and drawings prepared according to Vastu, the Yoga of Architecture. Read about the proposed activities. We are happy to report that the land required has been purchased and that we have raised \$50,000 towards the construction, and received pledges of nearly \$50,000 for 2008. We are approaching our target for financing the construction. This is a good time to be a part of this great project. Any amount of donation will be greatly appreciated. Plan on joining us there in September/October 2008 during a pilgrimage.

Kriya Yoga Pilgrimage to

Badrinath in the Himalayas. We are also planning to lead a Himalayan pilgrimage September 19 to October 7, 2008. \$2250 or 1700 euros. We are planning many activities including a mantra yagna, group practice of Yoga and meditation, hikes to Neelakantan Peak, Vadudeva Falls, Vyasa's cave, and karma yoga to assist with the construction of the new beautiful Kriya Yoga Ashram in Badrinath. Visits to Rishikesh and Rudraprayag. Very comfortable hotel accommodations. Plus an optional guided 7 day trek to Gangotri, and Gaumukh, the source of the Ganges, October 7-12., for an additional \$725 or \$540 euros.

A Second Year of Lesson - The Grace of Babaji's Kriya Yoga Course of Lessons: Enroll for the second year of this course in

Continued on Page 9

Book review

"The Wisdom of Jesus and the Yoga Siddhas"

By Georg Feuerstein, Ph.D

Marshall Govindan. *The Wisdom of Jesus and the Yoga Siddhas*. St. Etienne de Bolton, Quebec: Babaji's Kriya Yoga and Publications, 2007. Paperback, 219 pp., no price given.

I was both surprised and delighted when I received this book. Surprised, because I had not expected Marshall Govindan, a teacher of Kriya Yoga, to be a Jesus scholar. Delighted, because I share Govindan's fascination with Jesus and because the book offers an excellent overview of what are now considered reasonably established facts about Jesus and his teachings. Govindan's clear exposition of the tangled web of New Testament scholarship in itself commends this book to a Christian or Christian-connected readership.

But *The Wisdom of Jesus and the Yoga Siddhas* does more than rehearse the scholarly evidence. As the title suggests, it uniquely relates the teachings of Jesus to those of the Siddhas of South India. This may seem like a rather large intellectual leap, but Govindan has substantially succeeded in making this comparison work. His book is systematic and answers all the key questions one might have. Readers will not only acquire a

much richer understanding of the figure of the God-man Jesus but will also gain a valuable glimpse into the extraordinary spiritual realizations and thoughts of the great Siddhas of Tamil Nadu.

This book will be of particular interest to Yoga-practicing Christians, who will discover a Jesus (based on New Testament scholarship) who is far more plausible and appealing than the re-modeled Jesus of conventional Christianity.

This is possibly Govindan's most engaged and engaging work yet.

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News and Notes *continued*

English; or beginning in September 2007 in French. The first year of the course, is now available in English, Spanish, Portuguese and in French. See www.babaji.ca or contact info@babaji.ca or 1-888-252-9642. Spanish speakers contact nachoe@ono.com to receive a brochure or to enroll. This is a special course of self-study that will not only broaden your understanding of Yoga, but your understanding of yourself, as it opens you to insight, inspiration and new understandings of your personal karmic destiny. Enroll today in The Grace Course at www.babaji.ca.

Quotation: "Do not take what comes through your mind very seriously. Be a witness only. You are

not your mind. You are consciousness. It is like the difference between the furniture in a room and the light and space in a room. You are the light and the space. Be That. Cultivate presence, calm, awareness and bliss." - M. G. Satchidananda (excerpted from recent correspondence with a troubled student)

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