

Gitananda Yoga Australia

ENews: Vol 3.3 December 2017

NAMASTE!

Our last eNews for 2017, and Christmas is just weeks away, so this is a good time to wish you all the joy and blessings of the season and an abundantly healthy and rewarding year in 2018. How quickly the year seems to have flown, it does make you wonder if time is speeding up? Well according to the author of this blog it could be and maybe, for yoga sadhaks that is a good thing.

"Do you seem to have fewer hours in your days? Do you feel as though time is speeding up? Is it our imagination? Einstein proved that it isn't, that time is in fact speeding up. Einstein's calculations showed that the closer an object comes to the speed of light, the slower time passes. Scientists have done experiments that prove Einstein's theory to be correct using clocks moving at different speeds.

The opposite then must be true that as our speed decreases, time speeds up. Researcher Greg Braden confirms this, he says that the rotation of the Earth is slowing down, and time is speeding up. Evidence for his assertions comes from the Schumann Resonance. The Schumann Resonance is like the Earth's heartbeat. It is the Extremely Low Frequency (ELF) of the Earth's magnetic field. In the 1950's, when the Schumann resonance was discovered, it was recorded to be an average of 7.8 Hertz. Now, according to Swedish and Russian researchers, says Braden, it is an average of 12 Hertz. This means that the normal 24-hour day feels like a 16-hour day.

Eventually, Greg Braden says, the Earth's rotation around the sun will stop and start rotating in the opposite direction. Scientists know there have been reversals in the Earth's magnetic field once about every 10-12 thousand years, but they don't know why or how. Braden gives us the answer. Our Earth is a gigantic magnet. Elementary physics show that if we change the direction of the rotation of the electro-magnet we reverse the direction of the magnetic field.

Braden says that when the Schumann Resonance hits 13 Hertz, time will speed up to infinity. The outcome of this has been explained as: those living at this time will experience a shift in consciousness. There will be no 'separation' between this mortal existence and the spirit realm. Some call it ascension.

<https://www.lifeenergysolutions.com/blog/is-time-speeding-up/>

A shift in consciousness sounds like *conscious evolution* which is what most of us are aiming to achieve with our yoga practices.

ANNUAL YOGA SATSANG - 2018 MERMAID BEACH - GOLD COAST

We have decided that we have found our GYA spiritual retreat venue on the Gold Coast. As you will see from reports later in this newsletter, we all had such a wonderful time at 241 Hedges Avenue, Mermaid Beach that we all decided to make it our annual spiritual retreat and are hoping to make a permanent booking at approximately the same time every year. At this time of the year, late October to early November, the weather here is balmy and there is still a chance to catch a glimpse of the last whales departing for their southern home.

You are invited to join us next year from Thursday 25 October to Tuesday 30 October 2018 and as usual, the retreat is limited to 16 maximum. The cost will be \$550 for those staying at 241 Hedges (shared bedrooms) and \$200 for those staying externally. If you prefer a single room we recommend Montego Sands which is nearby and has been used by members for the last three years <http://www.montegosandsresort.com.au/>

A deposit of \$100 is required to make a booking and membership (due April) must be current for 2018/19. Full payment is required by 25 July 2018 and no refunds will be given after 25 August 2018. Please contact Murali for further information muralidharan33@yahoo.com.au.

"TASTE OF INDIA TOUR" - JUNE 2018



A tour group has been organised to visit Ananda Ashram Pondicherry, India to attend special events organised by the Ashram in conjunction with outside events for the 2018 International Day of Yoga, which is now a significant event all over India.

We will depart Australia independently to rendezvous at Singapore Airport on Tuesday 19th June 2018 and will depart Singapore for Chennai at 20:25 on Singapore Airlines Flight SQ528. Please make your own airline bookings accordingly.

On arrival we will be transferred by bus to a Hotel in Mahabalipuram for overnight stay. Please advise whether you require a single room or shared. The following day Wed 20th June, we shall continue our journey by bus to the Ashram (ICYER) in Pondicherry.

Our accommodation will be at the air-conditioned Quiet Healing Center a short walk from the ashram <http://quiethealingcenter.info/>. This will be an additional cost; however meals will be taken at the ashram.

During our stay we will join in events at ICYER and visit the Yoga Research Centre at Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth University (SBV) where Dr. Ananda is the Director of studies. We will also take day bus tours to Arunachala and Chidambaram (additional cost). Arunachala is a spiritual site for many Hindus and Chidambaram Temple is one of the five holiest Shiva temples in Tamil Nadu. http://www.chidambaramnataraja.org/about_temple.html

We shall depart from Chennai for Australia on Fri 29th June. 2018.

The expenses involved will be:

- Airfares
- Accommodation at Mahabalipuram (TBA)
- Accommodation at **Quiet Healing Center** – (TBA) current online price is \$49 AUD per night
- Tours (TBA)
- Personal expenses
- The ICYER component will cost 600 Euro - at today's rate about \$900.
- A non-refundable deposit of \$230 AUD which includes membership for 2018 is required by January to secure the accommodation and tours.
- NZ Members pay equivalent in NZD please contact Cathryn for NZ Bank Details

Further details can be obtained from Murali muralidharan33@yahoo.com.au and if you wish to book for this trip you can post a cheque for the deposit to Murali and made out to "Gitananda Yoga Association"

26 Trevitt Road
North Ryde 2113 NSW –

Or transfer the deposit to the GYA account below:

Gitananda Yoga Association
BSB: 015-025

Account: 498569383 Reference: your name –

Then send confirmation of your payment to Murali at: muralidharan33@yahoo.com.au .

ANOTHER WONDERFUL TIME WITH DR. ANANDA - Cathryn Doornekamp - New Zealand

Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani deserves a big applause for the delivery of yet another highly successful retreat down under! Nearly fifty yoga teachers and students from Australia and New Zealand gathered in Adelaide (12 – 15 October) with much enthusiasm, to participate in an inspirational weekend entitled “Modern Medicine Meets Traditional Yoga”, organised by the Integral Yoga Academy of Australasia in collaboration with the Gitananda Yoga Association. The retreat provided an ideal opportunity for myself and four other members of the Lotus Yoga Centre (in NZ) to connect with Dr. Ananda and fellow Australian yogis. It was truly a *yogic* gathering in the highest sense. As Dr. Ananda said, he felt the right people were all there in the right place, and the teachings flowed as required.

The venue, Woodhouse Activity Centre in Piccadilly, Adelaide proved to be the most ideal setting for the 3 day retreat. Set amongst pockets of Eucalyptus trees and open grassland areas, a sense of peacefulness exuded. We were warmly greeted on arrival by Linda Burr and crew. After registration and general housekeeping, Linda acknowledged Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri and his long string of accomplishments in the field of yoga and medicine, introducing Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani (son and successor) with an equally long string of credentials accredited to his name. Dr. Ananda was emotionally moved to tears and truly humbled by the introduction, especially the reference to his father. Dr. Ananda's opening statement was “**We are all Connected**”. He further elaborated that EVERYTHING is connected. There is nothing that is not connected. Therefore, Yoga relates to EVERYTHING.

On this note, we then joined in unison chanting the “*Om Tat Krishna Arpanamastu*” mantra before dinner, creating a warm sense of togetherness. Our taste buds were far from disappointed. Meal time was something spectacular to look forward to. Sumptuous ayurvedic vegetarian meals were prepared by Mrs Surbhi Bhutada direct from Pune India, along with the loving seva of kitchen assistants Alexandra Sghendo, Anita Grantham, and Laura Wareing. We were truly spoilt when these lovely ladies served us with willing smiles.

During the satsangha delivered by Dr. Ananda that evening, he posed the question:

What is Yoga?

His answer:

“Yoga is connectedness, cohesiveness, integratedness; Yuj, the glue that holds everything together.

Yoga is that which enables us to be an integrated being. Yoga percolates every aspect of life.”

“Yoga is skill-full action: to know what is to be done, to have the capacity to do it, and then do it.”

The ensuing schedule was busy and comprehensive. Each day the bell rung at 5.00 am and we eagerly climbed out of our dormitory bunk style accommodation (some were camping in tents) to partake in *Ushapan*, the drinking of hot water, in silence before the 6.00 am session with Dr. Ananda. One never tires of listening to Dr. Ananda. His charming way of captivating an audience along with his ability to reinforce even the most abstract of concepts in a concrete way with analogies, metaphors and imagery, must surely rank him amongst the most talented of speakers.

Topics covered by Dr. Ananda included the stress/relaxation response, the *Pancha Koshas* and *Nara*: the misalignment of the *koshas*, Relaxation: *Spandha/Nishpanda*, Polarity: *anuloma/viloma*, the importance of stress *EUSTRESS* – the good stress and *DISTRESS* – the bad stress, the role in understanding one's *Dharma* and creation of *Karma*, and the exploration of the *Chakras*, *Bindus*, and *Gunas* while bridging the concepts of yoga and modern medicine. These were complemented with practical sessions in meditation, *jattis*, *asana*, *pranayama*, deep relaxation and *yoga nidra*. We also got to recite *mantras* and *bhajans*, creating positive healthy vibrations, as we chanted to our heart's content.

During free time there was an opportunity to look through the books displayed for sale, or go for a walk. It was always a delight to venture outdoors and take in the unfamiliar sights and smells. You can imagine our excitement as we saw a koala bear in the flesh for the first time. On one occasion my walking companion and I got a little too adventurous, and became lost. We found ourselves running to find our way back in time for the next session. Fortunately, we arrived seconds before Dr. Ananda entered the room!

It just so happened to be my birthday on Saturday, the 14th. I love surprises, but little did I know it, I was in for the biggest surprise of my life. Nothing could have prepared me for this one. I was totally overwhelmed when Dr.

Ananda presented me with Amma's latest masterpiece *The Rishi and The Rakshashas*. What a memorable moment! This book I will always treasure and hold close to my heart.

Sunday afternoon came around all too quickly and before we knew it we were gathered for the certification ceremony. It is always an honour to receive Dr. Ananda's blessings. One feels so humble being in the company of such a learned soul. He truly is an excellent role model of the full potential one can achieve from adhering to yoga as a way of life. The retreat provided a marvellous opportunity to 'top-up', 'tank-up' or 'recharge the batteries' so to speak. Dr. Ananda shared of himself so freely, showering us with an abundance of joy, love and pearls of wisdom.

Some pearls that resonated and struck an inner chord included:

"When we are in tune with life we don't hear any noise."

"We are ALL connected to the Universal Spirit much like a child is always and forever connected to the mother by an invisible umbilical cord."

"IMPOSSIBLE becomes I AM POSSIBLE."

"Respond rather than React. Response is a choice. React is impulse."

"A drop of the ocean is a drop until it goes back into the ocean. Then it becomes the ocean."

"We are not a physical being which encompasses the Spirit, but rather **we are Spirit which encompasses physical, mental, emotional and energetic bodies.**"

"We are born on an inhalation and die on an exhalation. Life is the space between the first and last exhalation. We are constantly reminded that each breath is a mini lifetime within the whole lifetime."

There is so much to be gained from removing oneself from the busyness of everyday life to be in the presence of someone more enlightened. This is the beauty of coming together for *satsangha*. The general feeling amongst those in attendance was that of being physically, emotionally and spiritually nourished. I am still bathing in the afterglow of being in Dr. Ananda's Divine presence and have returned home feeling rejuvenated and inspired.

A big heart-felt thank you is due to Murali, Linda Burr and her helpers, for their amazing organisational skills in making the retreat happen and of course, all those glorious yogis whose presence made the retreat possible. We eagerly await Dr. Ananda's next visit, down under in 2019. May the great *rishis* grace him with a multitude of blessings.

Final Presentations – Adelaide Retreat





A well-earned rest on Sydney Harbour for Dr. Ananda

IYTA 50TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE SYDNEY – Margo Hutchison - Brisbane

After the retreat in Adelaide, Dr Ananda had the opportunity to take a well-earned rest and do some sightseeing in Sydney before presenting at the IYTA 50th Anniversary conference. Some of us were fortunate to have dinner with him at Govindas restaurant Ultimo and spend a glorious sunny day taking a ferry trip across beautiful Sydney Harbour to Manly for a pleasant walk and a delicious vegetarian lunch..

Friday 20th October saw Dr. Ananda giving his introductory talk "Energy Matrix in Yoga" to the conference at Sydney Town Hall. Other conference program presenters included: June Henry, Chris Barrington of Dru Yoga, Donna Farhi and Simon Borg-Olivier all giving diverse approaches to Yoga Sadhana.

The out-going president Mary-Louise Parkinson highlighted the fact that IYTA was the first Yoga Teachers Association in Australia and one of the first in the world; and the longevity of IYTA is due to the fact that it has always maintained high standards of teaching and conduct and does not follow one particular lineage or guru. IYTA students are introduced to the broad scope of classical yoga encompassing many traditional lineages, in fact IYTA has been responsible for inviting many world recognised teachers to Australia over the last 50 years which has enriched the standard of teaching in this country and as a result, many of those people gained a following which enabled them to establish centres here.

Dr Ananda's two and a half hour presentation was one of the most inspiring sessions of the conference, he has the skill to summarize complexity into simplicity and I was amazed at how much information he was able to include in that short space of time. He has a wonderful sense of humour which appeals to his Australian audiences, and his down-to-earth manner endears him to everyone. The conference concluded on a high note with singer and entertainer Toni Childs who motivated everyone to dance and sing and generally let their hair down. When the conference finally ended the 300 or so yoga mats which had been donated by Sydney yoga teachers and used for the event, were collected and given to a charity.

FIVE DAYS R & R AT MERMAID BEACH - MURALI - Sydney

Seven GYA Members gathered at mermaid beach, Gold Coast from November 2nd 2017 for our annual Yoga Retreat. We have decided that the Gold Coast is an ideal location for our retreats due to convenient accessibility and good weather, especially at this time of year. The purpose of the retreat is to review and share Gitananda yoga practises and techniques with like-minded sadhaks. We reviewed Hang-Sah Kriya and the Hathenas as well as some of the practises that Ananda had given us a few weeks earlier at the Adelaide retreat

This year we were blessed with mild sunny days so we were able to walk along the beach in the evenings. November seems to be the end of the whale migration south so we only saw a few whales on Saturday afternoon and Karien also spotted a few dolphins on one of the beach walks. We did not go out for meals as in previous times, but enjoyed fabulous meals prepared in house.

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### ***WHAT A WONDERFUL RETREAT - Dawn Williams – Sydney***

What a wonderful retreat! Perfect weather (including visits by whales, dolphins and a friendly lizard) was the backdrop to 4 days of communion with yogic souls who were steeped and practiced in the traditions of Gitananda Yoga. Greeting the sun on the beach each morning was an experience to be cherished.

Thanks have to go to our devoted leaders, Margo and Murali, who gave of their time and expertise so generously, to our talented chefs and their assistants who kept us all well "fuelled" and to all participants who shared their wealth of talents and life experiences. It is difficult to isolate any particular highlights. However, the fact that there was more opportunity to practise various asanas, breathing and relaxation techniques in greater depth than is possible in weekly yoga sessions was a significant advantage. Pranayama sessions were extremely well received as was evident by the obvious resultant state of relaxation of all participants. Yantra sessions were most interesting and informative. Thanks again for an inspirational weekend.

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YOGA RETREAT AT MERMAID BEACH - Gowri (Wendy Snape) Cooktown

This annual event is much appreciated by Rishiculture Ashtanga (Gitananda) teachers and students. This year only seven people attended as unfortunately several others who came on previous years were unable to come. When I left North Queensland the forecast for the Gold Coast was rain, but it turned out to be ideal weather, sunny and not too hot or cold. Our yoga program was similar to ashram times:- morning and evening aarti, salutes to the sun and yoga on the beach at sunrise, pranayama at 11 a.m., lunch 1 p.m. Chikitsa or Yantra yoga 3 p.m., which left plenty of time for swims and walks on the beach. Once again we have to thank Murali and Margo for their wonderful lessons. Out in the ocean just in front of our house, we were lucky to see what were probably the last whales migrating south this year. Was it the Buddha statue in the front garden that caused so much positive energy, and showered us with yoga blessings?

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### ***THANKS TO ALL - Louise Sharman – Brisbane***

Thank you Margo and Murali for a wonderful Gitananda filled weekend and thank you to Gowri, Karien, Dawn and Zigi for their inspiring companionship and sharing of life stories. Our wonderful cooks produced an endless variety of tasty and lovingly prepared food. Murali gave us wonderful sessions from Hathenas to Pranayama to Asanas to Yantra. We meditated on Bindus and did a lot of deeper practices that were new to me. Thank you for this. A wonderful experience; Thank you again.

### **THOUGHTS AFTER MERMAID BEACH RETREAT– Zigi Georges - Noosa**

*Today I watched, fascinated, wondering who would win;  
the question mark shaped cloud or the rising sun obscured by the cloud.  
I waited.*

*There was a cosmic tug of war happening.*

*Eventually the sun was triumphant. But it could equally have been the cloud.*

*Life is frequently balanced on a pivot around Yes/No, both sides equally attractive or repulsive.*

*How do we decide what to do?*

*Or is life a constant struggle with yes/no until the last breath?*

*Sometimes one does get respite, as when doing yogic pranayama, particularly doing Trikuti Bindu breathing and concentration.*

*One experiences almost total cessation of normal bodily activity.*

*Even the ever active mind gets absorbed into an infinite blue space that extends forever. Is this called bliss?*

*I do not know now, nor did I know in the past. But the effects are visible.*

*I came away from our sadhana feeling like I had been released from a shadow cast across my being.*

*It was a subtle thing and I did not perceive it.*

*But now I sense its absence.*

*Suddenly laughter bubbles at our human lot and I know I will handle whatever comes.*

*There is again a sense of freedom of Spirit unencumbered by loves, hates, wants*

*Just to be is enough.*

*Will it last, who knows?*

*If it does not, I know the way back now.*

A million times a million thanks to Murali and Margo for perpetuating the Gitananda teachings and ashram routine in a corner of Australia far, far away from Pondicherry. We made up a small but eager group of seven people meeting every morning for sunrise yoga and then onto pranayamas later in the day. Afternoons were also busy with Yantra, some chakra breathing, yoga nidra, and healing. We all could benefit with some kind attention to bodily frailties; interactive sharing in practice.

Thanks to everyone for their fabulous energy: Karien and Wendy from Cooktown; Dawn, Louise, Margo from Brisbane; Zigi from Noosa Heads; and of course Murali from Sydney.

As for sunrise pictures, Margo excelled us all. Show us Margo, show us!

### **Zigi ready for action**





***Sunrise at Mermaid Beach – Margo***



***Garden guardian – Karien Francois***

***WHALE SPOTTER - Karien Francois – Cooktown***

Margo thanks for your lovely presence and inspiring yoga classes. It was great to be participating in the retreat. The yoga sessions were awesome. The food was great, and the company fantastic. To top it off, we saw frolicking whales! I am going home rejuvenated with I fond memories and new tools for living wholesomely



## **MORE PEARLS FROM DR ANANDA**

- *‘Guru is a magic Sanskrit word which can expand to include the universe and everything in it, and yet simultaneously contract to be as small as the finest of our innermost thoughts. The Guru is the mirror, clear, without distortion, which reflects back to the disciple their very own self:*
- *“What is a yogi, a yogi is one who is a good human being.”*
- *“Forgive the person but don’t forget the lesson. To err is human, to forgive is divine; but to forget is stupid”*
- *“Never say yoga EXERCISES; say yoga practices or yoga techniques.”*
- *“The yogis were the first to use simulation; to ask how it FEELS to be a cat.”*
- *“Wisdom does not belong to anyone and knowledge is universal, it is to be shared.”*
- *“Responsibility means the ability to respond. Dharma is the ability to fulfil the responsibility.”*
- *“We need a shift in consciousness from ‘I’ to ‘We’ from (I)-Illness to (We)-Illness.”*
- *“Healthy is an attitude. You can be healthy despite the disease.”*
- *“What if is a dangerous thought; it takes you around in circles; it becomes emotional and if not resolved it settles in the body.”*
- *“Awareness is knowing what to do and having the skill to do it”*

### **~~~~~ DELIGHTFUL SLEEP – Ammaji -13 October, 2015**

“Sleep is the best meditation” declared the irrepressible Dalai Lama, giving comfort and solace to all who fall fast asleep when they try to meditate.

Consider! Is not sleep the great gift of the God to suffering humanity, and in truth, probably the closest most will come to Samadhi in this lifetime? Some of my most blissful experiences in consciousness have been in a sleep-awake zone, when the sense of I soaks down into unconscious realms, and the conscious mind roams freely in a joy without a cause.

The Japanese as usual have the edge on this idea, rooted as their culture is in the Zen ethos.

**Inemuri** is the Japanese practice of sleeping on the job, a “delightful sleep.” The word in the literal sense means “sleeping while present.” This is an acceptable endeavour where the employees take a “sleep break” when they feel tired. This is an apt description of the Yogic idea of Yoga Nidra, or “conscious sleep.”

The 19<sup>th</sup> century Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge composed his poem Kublai Khan one night immediately after he had a vision in his sleep. He experienced an opium-influenced dream after reading a work describing ‘Xanadu’, the summer palace of the Chinese emperor Kublai Khan. Creativity sometimes springs from a deep sleep.

Sleep is often called “death’s counterfeit.” Sleep is the great social leveler, rendering kings and paupers as equals. Once asleep, it does not matter whether one is sleeping on a dirty pavement or a thick feather-stuffed silken bed. A guilty conscience is the enemy of sleep. Did not a sleepless Macbeth lament to his doctor. “Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased/pluck out from the memory a rooted sorrow/raze out the woe some troubles of the brain?” William Shakespeare loves the metaphor of sleep; “We are such stuff as dreams are made of and our little life is rounded with a sleep.”

Sleep is the promise of release from all travails. Indeed a “good night’s sleep” is known to pacify many a troubled soul and heal many an illness. Yet, there are pinpricks as Hamlet laments, “To sleep, to sleep, perchance to dream. Ay! There’s the rub!” For dreams may become nightmares creating even more torment for the tortured soul. What a mystery is the phenomenon of sleep. Learning to “sleep consciously” is a Yogic art which has the potential to reveal deeper layers of mind. Yogic sleep provides such delight it seems “flights of angels sing us to our rest.”

### ***CONTRIBUTIONS REQUESTED***

Your contributions are always welcome for our next eNewsletter, if you have a favourite practice, a meditation, a recipe, an anecdote, an interesting story, a favourite quote or something you could share with us all please email it to [marg0yoga@bigpond.com](mailto:marg0yoga@bigpond.com) for the next issue due in March 2018.