



GITANANDA YOGA

NEWSLETTER

DOWN UNDER

Official Quarterly Newsletter of the Gitananda Yoga Association of Australia Inc
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NAMASTE!



Welcome dear members, benefactors and students to our second edition of the Gitananda Yoga Newsletter Down Under. The newsletter is the voice of the Gitananda Yoga Association of Australia Inc. The Association was created in July 2003 to promote Gitananda Yoga and its trained and qualified teachers in Australia as well as create and maintain an educational cultural link with Yoga Jivana Satsangha (international), Tamil Nadu, South India.

The launching of our first quarterly Newsletter was a success and the feedback received was very encouraging indeed. The reward of course is in having done it. Much contentment and peace is experienced in Seva, selfless service to the Guru and the classical Yoga path Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj so earnestly taught his students.

The feature article in our second edition is an exposition of what Gitananda Yoga is and how it differs from other Yoga schools. This really provides an insight into the rich tradition which is Gitananda Yoga.

Please also do not miss our **OTHER IMPORTANT DATES** feature where Yogacharya Muralidharan Giri brings our awareness to the new Australian Gitananda Yoga website and our 2007 Gitananda Yoga Down Under Get Together.

I wish to extend my thanks to all who have contributed and continue to contribute to not only the Newsletter but to holding the flag of Gitananda Yoga in this sun drenched land of ours spreading our Guru's message and example. Please feel free (and we encourage you) to make copies of the newsletter to give to your students and anyone sensitive enough to be interested in our great art and science.

May your Yoga practices and life become Sukham – pleasant.
Yours in Yoga – The Editor



WHAT IS GITANANDA YOGA AND HOW DOES IT DIFFER FROM OTHER YOGA SCHOOLS?

☺ GITANANDA YOGA - SOME CORE CONCEPTS

In a modern world where Yoga has been equated to mere physical postures with a little breath manipulation and so called meditation, Swamiji's contribution to the development of Yoga in the past century and his codification of the ancient teachings in a modern scientific manner is unparalleled. Swamiji's teachings like him are huge and seemly never ending in their depth. I am presenting some of the core concepts that I feel are a unique feature of this tradition that is now known as Gitananda Yoga or Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga tradition.



1. YOGA IS A WAY OF LIFE

Yoga is not something you do but a way of life to be lived 60/60/24/7/365/x. This requires a lot of introspection, consciousness, awareness, dedication and determination. Easy to say, tough to do but Swamiji showed us how and it is unto us to follow him.

2. CREATE GURUS NOT FOLLOWERS

Swamiji never wanted to have a huge number of students or a huge million strong organisation. He was more interested in bringing out the potential inherent in each one of his students even if they later hated him for it! Each and every one of Swamiji's students is the best they could have been in this lifetime. Each is an individual and Swamiji brought out the best in each one. No stereotyping or mass mould production at all. Swamiji made them so aware of their Divine nature that many times they forgot him!!

3. BREATH IS LIFE

No other system comes close to Swamiji in terms of the vast repertoire and depth of his Pranayama teachings. Starting with the Vibhagha Pranayama and then step by step building up to more than 120 intricate Pranayamas is done in a manner that Prana, that vital cosmic catalyst fills every cell with life and light.

4. NO OPTION YOGA

Swamiji termed Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga as the No Option Yoga and placed great importance on a deep understanding of the Yamas and Niyamas which are the firm foundation upon which the real Yoga life can be built. "You wouldn't build a colossal building without a foundation but you want to do it with Yoga?" he would ask numerous easy going aspirants who wanted some 'quick fix' Yoga.

5. STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH

Every aspect of Swamiji's teachings follows a step by step structured approach that is easy to follow and methodical. Emphasis is placed on learning and re-learning the proceeding steps and then proceeding further. *No shortcut please* was his refrain for it is always better to be slow and steady than fast and sorry. The emphasis is **on growing into the practice** rather than forcing oneself into it and that is why the use of props and other contraptions that make Yoga so costly today have never been part of this tradition.

6. LOVE FOR INDIAN CULTURE

The major problem facing Yoga in the West is the fact that Yoga has been cleaved away from Indian Culture (Sanathana Dharma). Without an understanding of the Indian (Hindu) culture and the way of life where Yoga originated, it is very difficult to find answers to many of the questions that confront the sincere seeker. Swamiji tried to inculcate in all students a deep love and understanding of the culture from which Yoga has sprung.

7. BOUNTIFUL PRACTICES

Scores and scores of practices and techniques are part of this tradition that has numerous Hatha Yoga, Laya Yoga and Jnana Yoga practices for the sincere aspirant. Polarity practices and the Mantra Laya deserve special mention as also the Laya Yoga Kriyas. The in-depth understanding of the Chakras, Nadis and Bindus etc from the Dakshina Marga Tantra tradition of Swami Kakananda is not found elsewhere.

8. YANTRA, IN TUNE WITH NATURE

In this Paramparai there are three important sciences, namely Mantra, Yantra and Tantra. Yantra is the mystical science of number, name and form and is a method by which one can learn to live "in tune" with the cycles of the universe rather than be "off tune" with those very cycles. According to the Yantric concept as taught by Swamiji each number has a special quality to it and is not merely

a measure of quantity as is usually presumed. Every aspect of life goes through a phase of Nines. This phase may be nine years, nine months, nine weeks or even nine days. This concept can be further extended both ways to go up to nine milliseconds on one hand and nine lifetimes on the other.

9. MUDRAS, DIVINE COMMUNICATION

One of the main features of the Gitananda tradition is the detailed exposition and understanding of Mudra, the ancient Yogic art and science of gesturing and sealing vital Pranic energies. These advanced techniques designed to improve neuromuscular coordination, culture, human emotions and still the restless mind are a means of non-verbal communication that is subtle and refined. They enable us to communicate intrapersonally with our inner self, interpersonally with others and transpersonally with the Divine. The Oli Mudra teachings as well as the usage of Hastha Mudras with the breath in Vibhagha and Pranava Pranayamas are unique to this tradition.

Swamiji was in tune with the Akashic record and there is no other way one can explain the phenomenal and limitless knowledge and wisdom that sprouted forth through his eloquent roar of truth. May we always be worthy of these great teachings and may his blessings always be with us as we traverse the evolutionary path he envisioned for us.



Yogacharya,
Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
Chairman ICYER and Yoganjali
Natyalayam, Pondicherry, South India

😊 THE ESSENCE OF CREATIVITY

Gitananda Yoga has made so many significant contributions marking it as a true "Ashtanga Yoga" that is so much more than the mere vigorous Asana practice popularly pedalled around the Western World.

The Rishi culture teachings of Guru Dr. Swami Yogamaharishi Gitananda Giri represent unique and innovative approaches.

Swamiji was the most creative mind I have ever encountered and he taught me the essence of creativity. He seemed to be able to access the Akashic records and even now when we look back at his insights and teachings we have no other plausible explanation for his brilliance.

The techniques that he released to the Western world in the early 1950's were unknown and include Chakra Dharana, Polarization and Solar Plexus Charging and in fact only became widespread in the mid 1960's through my writings. Anything resembling these techniques originates from the boundless alchemical crucible of Swamiji's wisdom.

His system of Hastha Mudras are another polished methodology that is unequalled as well as his Hathenas, and exposition of the secret 3-5-7 rhythm in Raja and Laya Yoga to mention just a few of the distinguishing features of Gitananda Yoga.

These are some of the features that characterize “Gitananda Yoga” as an unique and distinctive style taking a well deserved place amongst the traditions of Yoga, the sacred science.

Swami Anandakapila Saraswati
Yantrashiromani; Ambassador Gitananda
Yoga Association of Australia Inc

😊 ...AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD

The biblical saying “In the beginning was the Word; the Word was with God; and the Word was God” always intrigued me, till Yogananda Paramahansa revealed that the saying ended thus: “All things were made by Him (the Word or **AUM**) and without Him was not anything made that was made”. Also that “all created things originate in the cosmic vibratory energy of AUM or AMEN, the Word or the Holy Ghost”.

The practical usage of the cosmic vibratory AUM was fortunately introduced to me by a Yogini in 1988. She gave me a practice and program to use AUM for self-healing. Soon after revered Swamiji taught me the scientific basis of AUM and its therapeutic usage.

After twenty years of learning under many distinguished gurus at highly reputed schools, I had become disillusioned learning that their practices were not taking me deep within. My learning commenced when Swamiji instructed me to sit facing the north to align our electromagnetic field/Pranamaya Kosha with the North-South magnetic meridian.

Different: Facing the North or if lying down, the head pointed to the North



Multiple energy bodies

I learned that we live in physical (1) astral (3) and causal (1) planes of existence (comprising five subtle energy bodies) which are energy bodies vibrating at the frequency of the primal sound AUM

Different: Live in five energy bodies

The five Energy Bodies (including the cells) needed daily sustenance of Energy - 99.56% of energy was obtained by breathing daily in Mahat Yoga Pranayama at 70% plus of the lung intake.

Different: Breathing was into the frontal, side and back lobes and out from the back, side and frontal lobes at the lower, mid and upper lungs.

Hathenas made it possible

Chakras were at the Anandamaya Kosha

Chakras, Mandalas, Bindhus and the Nadis served as step down transformers to supply energy to the nerve plexuses and endocrine glands under each Chakra.

The enzyme ‘elastin’ produced in the mid lungs, made the 62 trillion cells biologically young.

The five Energy Bodies (including the cells) needed daily the vibratory resonant frequency of the primal sound AUM.

Each of these planes of existence had a vibratory resonant frequency attuned to the primal sound. ‘AUM,’

Different the very concept and its practical application... Swamiji had a **different** and deeper version of all practices.

Sri Bala
Founder: Vibrational Breath Therapy
based on Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga

😊 BEING CONSCIOUSLY AWARE

Yoga is Adwaita or Non-Duality, which becomes a way of life, based on one of the six classical views of reality or “Shat Dharshans”, a collection of positive attitudes in harmony in natural law. This could classify Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga which has it’s foundation or “groundings” in Yama-Niyama, assisting the Sadhak to come out of “Animal Conditioning”, towards potential divinity which separates animals from humans. Here Swamiji taught that as humans when we stand, gravity loads the vertebrae of our spine, crawling with awareness, followed by Vyaghras Pranayama (Tiger Breath), can rejuvenate the spine.

Every posture is not an asana, whilst every breath is not a pranayama, if not consciously aware. Asana’s are static postures, which when practised regularly, allow the body to respond and maintain homostatis or balance as well as creating an energy necessary to practise Pranayama.

This is where the first visible difference between schools of yoga may appear, we are taught to sit in Vajrasana when practising Pranayama and Hathenas, which opens up the “vital” capacity of our chest. As the sadhak must become a “Deep Breather” taking conscious control of the “respiratory” centre within the reptilian brain. Patanjali maintains that this pranayama, builds up a pranic energy bank. We use appropriate hand gestures (mudras) to direct the breath into low, mid and high sections of our lungs. We also practise Mukha Bhastrika, to remove (Carbon Dioxide) from the blood.

The sadhak starts with sukha (easy) breathing, when practising asana’s, as asana’s without breath control are not asana’s. The importance of relaxing prior to and at the conclusion of a hatha yoga class, helps maintain this energy bank whilst becoming sensitive enough, for the higher practises. (In this relaxation, what we teach as “Jnana Kriyas” may be called meditation in gym yoga.)

Pratyahara: Here Swamiji differed by taking the legitimate path, of positive pratyahara, or offering the “senses” first to God, Yoganjali Natyalayam has many examples, in the form of dance, music, yoga quiz etc. Senses are offered as “innocent enjoyment”, by all those involved and in return self-control, steadying of the “whirlpools” of the sub-conscious mind result in a very natural way.

With the restraint of the activities of sub-conscious mind, comes dharana (concentration) when this concentration becomes “free-flowing”, dhayana (meditation) results. This meditation finally becomes Samadhi (completing 8 stages of ashtanga yoga). Explained in the following mantra as “Om asato ma sadgamaya, tamasoma jyojir gamaya, mriyora ma amritangamaya, hari om tat sat Om”.

(Lead us from untruth to truth, lead us from darkness to light, lead us from death to immortality).

Just as Swami Gitananda paid respect or gratitude to the Rishiculture system of yoga taught to him. To prevent these teachings from becoming too “splintered”, whilst enhancing the structure based on these values, we now identify this same system of yoga as the “Gitananda Yoga teachings” in the tradition of Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga.



Yours in Yoga
Yogacharya Muralidharan Giri

☺ YOGA – SKILL IN ACTION

As the Gita instructs us: ‘Yoga Karmasu Kausalam’ – Yoga is skill in action – not a part time endeavour but a way of life, a state of being that is developed through concerted actions led by and with awareness.

As with and per the perennial teachings of the Rishis of yore, Dr Swami Gitananda taught us to be conscious in all circumstances. Gitananda Yoga is firmly grounded in the Yamas and Niyamas, the foundation of living an ethical life and creating / maintaining a sane psyche. As Swamiji used to say: ‘Yoga is a step by step process’ and ‘one cannot break the Yamas and Niyamas but only break themselves over them’.

Gitananda Yoga observes in theory and practice Rishi Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras and its techniques / Sadhana is rich in the Bengali tantric tradition. All this makes it unique from most other Yoga schools – a system rich in tradition, grounded in Santana Dharma, true to itself and that cannot be taught superficially in sweaty, ego promoting, unaerated gyms.

There are many techniques that are unique to this Paramparai, some of these are:

- **Hathenas** – a complete system of developing the breath in the three distinct lobes of the lungs which include Asana, Pranayama, Vedic Surya Namaskar, Mudra, Mantra, chanting meditation and even a self-administered Yoga Chikitsa Kriya, Kaya Kriya.

- **Loma-Viloma** a set of postures and Prakriyas integrating polarity in one’s being.
- **Classical methods** of practicing Yoga Nidra (sleep of the Yogis) and Kapalabhati (skull cleansing).
- **Oli Mudras** – advanced and very difficult set of Asanas designed to awaken the Maha Shakti within, Kundalini Ma.

The spirit of Gitananda Yoga is poles apart from the extreme display of Yoga in the West – on the one hand hedonistic, rarely going beyond the concepts of stretching and relaxation with no notion of the transcendental aspects of Yoga – the uniting of the self with the Greater Self or Atma with Ishwara. At the other extreme, we have Gurus that thrive on adulation from gullible Western disciples seeking to be piggy-backed to Enlightenment.

Swami Gitananda was a Yoga master who desired to breed masters (masters of their ‘self’ and their destiny, champions of humanity and society) and in return Swamiji taught us and left us a rich tradition (‘a bag full of tricks’ as Amma tells us) to do just that.

Prem
Yogacharya Devidasan Giri

ASHRAM DIARY DATES

IMPORTANT GURU PUJAS AND EVENTS OF THE RISHICULTURE ASHTANGA (GITANANDA) YOGA PARAMPARA

2nd October 2006:

Inauguration of the 38th International Yoga Teachers training and Yoga Sadhana course at ICYER

17th to 19th November 2006:

21st Pondicherry State Yoga Sport Championship

20th December 2006:

133rd Guru Puja for Srila Sri Kambaliswamigal Swamigal

20th December 2006:

13th Guru Puja for Srila Sri Gitananda Swamigal

26th December 2006:

Srila Sri Velu Swamigal Guru Puja

December 2006 and January 2007:

7th Annual Swami Gitananda Best Youth and Children competitions conducted by Pondicherry Yogasana Association

2nd January 2007:

Purnima Puja for Srila Sri Gitananda Swamigal

4th to 7th January 2007:

14th International Yoga Festival conducted by Government of Pondicherry

***** Yantra course with Dr Swami Anandakapila at ICYER will be conducted in 1st three weeks of February 2007**



OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Sunday	1 st October	Navaratri ends
Monday	2 nd October	Vijaya Dashami / Dusshera Gandhi Jayanti
Saturday	7 th October	Full Moon Valmiki Jayanti
Friday	20 th October	Kali Puja
Saturday	21 st October	Diwali
Sunday	22 nd October	New Moon
Sunday	5 th November	Full Moon
Tuesday	21 st November	New Moon
Tuesday	5 th December	Full Moon
Wednesday	20 th December	New Moon

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- In pursuit of the best website for dollar value for members, we had Gitananda – Australia.org website, designed in conjunction with Dr. Ananda at ICYER. It is to be noted here, that new entries, will only be made on a quarterly basis, with our newsletter.
'The web address of the Australian Gitananda Yoga website is: <http://www.gitananda-australia.org/>
- 2007 Gitananda Yoga Down Under Get Together will require planning and also feedback from members, as a few existing as well as potential members showed interest during new website creation.

Gitanjali has kindly offered her beach house again. Space is limited for the beach house, however other accommodation can be organised. The dates for our Get Together are Thursday 22nd March through to 26th March 2007 inclusive. Those interested please contact muralidharan33@yahoo.com.au so details can be finalised, including "deposits" by 3rd November.



OZ GITANANDA YOGA SCHOOLS AND CONTACTS



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