

# Gitananda Yoga Association Australia Inc.

## eNews: Volume 8:1 March 2022

### **NAMASTE DEAR MEMBERS OF THE GITANANDA FAMILY**

Our annual retreats provide a convenient occasion for us to hold our Annual General Meeting and this year we have some interesting changes to report.

Jean-Michelle Ruffier (Devidasan) from South Australia, was initially responsible for setting up GYAA to become incorporated in South Australia in 2003. He was the original Public Officer, Treasurer, Secretary and Editor of our first official newsletter (Vol 1, June 2006). Chairperson Muralidharan took over as treasurer a role he has held for the past 16 years, and now he has handed this role over to Rebecca Foster. We welcome Rebecca, a chartered Accountant from South Australia, who has also agreed to be our new Public Officer and extend our thanks to Murali for his dedication to the task for all those years. We also welcome a new general committee member, Hwamin Fettes from South Australia.

This year we also took the opportunity to also hold a regular General Meeting to review the rules of GYAA and make sure that we were still ticking all the boxes. For those of you who may not be aware of the Rules of our Association, they begin by stating, that the purpose of the Gitananda Yoga Association of Australia Inc. is:

**1. *To promote Gitananda Yoga in Australia.***

We do this by encouraging people interested in Gitananda Yoga to join the association and remain connected to the Parampara.

**2. *To promote the interest of Gitananda Yoga trained and qualified teachers teaching the Yoga: Step-by-Step Correspondence course in Australia (with the understanding that the property and fee obtained from this course remains the entire property of Yoga Jivana Satsanga, Tamil Nadu, South India).***

We are fortunate to have Yogacharini Niraimathi Nicole Rubio, from Ocean Grove, Victoria, Australia who is a Senior Gitananda Mentor and Tutor of the 52 Step by Step lessons. Yogacharini Niraimathi has led numerous students through the 52 lessons in the UK and Australia as well as being a Senior Mentor for the global Step by Step online course facilitated by Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani. Studying this course under the supervision of a Gitananda Guide allows a more thorough and deeper understanding of the concepts covered as well as a personalised approach to the practices and how they are best suited to you.

**3. *To create and maintain an educational and cultural link between Yoga Jivana Satsangha (now ICYER) and GYAA.***

In the past we have done this by inviting Dr. Ananda to Australia whenever possible, in conjunction with other likeminded organisations. Our plans for his last visit were cancelled due to COVID19 and it is uncertain when he will be able to visit again. However, COVID also delivered us a bonus because during this time he has connected with the Gitananda family world-wide in ways we could never imagine. His Scintillating Saturday's have

enabled us to hear his dissertations on every yoga topic imaginable. We have also had the opportunity to study Yantra, Yoga Psychic Neurology, Patanjali's Yoga Sutra Ashtangam, Nada, and of course the 52-week Yoga: Step by Step course. Now more than ever, there is an enormous wealth of knowledge available on-line for all serious Gitananda sadhaks.

### ***GET-TOGETHERS***

Apart from Dr. Ananda's visits, when we have held rather large conference type/get-togethers, there has been a core group of members who have felt the need to have a reunion once a year to practice and consolidate Gitananda techniques; and in recent years this has become an annual pilgrimage to the Gold Coast where we have a unique opportunity to spend a few days absorbed in our yoga sadhana without family or work commitments. We are also fortunate that our Chairperson and Senior Acharya Muralidharan, is willing to share with us his considerable knowledge of Yantra and he ably leads us through the deeper practices that we might only ever do at the Ashram.



***DIAMOND BEACH RESORT  
BROADBEACH GOLD COAST***

October is the preferred month for holding our retreats and the next one will be at Diamond Beach Resort in October 2022 and is open to members who continue to maintain their **annual financial status**.

### ***YOGA RETREAT for GYAA MEMBERS***

Wednesday 26th October 2022 to Monday 31st October 2022

This is a wonderful opportunity to learn or refresh Gitananda Yoga practices under the guidance of senior Yogacharya Muralidharan.

Contact [muralidharan33@yahoo.com.au](mailto:muralidharan33@yahoo.com.au) for further details.





### ***GOLDEN DAYS AT OUR YOGA RETREAT***

After 700 days of COVID19 restrictions, Murali from Sydney, Hwamin from SA, and Margo from QLD arrived at gold coast on 16<sup>th</sup> February for a belated October retreat at Broadbeach Diamond Beach Resort. Rebecca arrived from SA on the 17th and Amba from Southport, attended pranayama and evening sessions.

Each morning at 5 am we walked to the beach and greeted the sun with Vedic, Aruna and Rishikesh Surya Namaskaras. We practiced eye exercises as the sun rose over the horizon; and over the 4 days we did polarity loma/viloma asanas, Pavana Mukta asanas, and spinal twists. One morning whilst performing Kukkriya Pranayama on the Beach, a Labrador puppy named Justice heard Murali and thought he was another puppy friend, and broke ranks to give him a big wet kiss and jump all over us. His owner hosts an Instagram page for the exploits of Justice and Napoleon <https://www.instagram.com/p/CaLSgrhtvG5/> And posted a video of the event. [https://www.instagram.com/napoleon\\_and\\_justice/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/napoleon_and_justice/?hl=en)

At first, we held our Pranayama sessions by the pool however when other guests began to appear, we relocated across to the nearby park under a large tree for Hathenas, Sukha Purvaka, Savitri Pranayama and Pranava Aum followed by Jnana Kriyas. We prepared our own food for most meals, however our afternoon Yantra sessions were sometimes followed by an evening meal at a local restaurant. We found that our closest Indian restaurant had closed due to COVID19 but a little further away we found



Saffron, another lovely Indian restaurant and their delicious kofta proved to be a favourite with us all. <https://www.facebook.com/saffronbroadbeach/>

On returning to our unit, thanks to Hwamin's technical know-how, we were able to watch Dr. Ananda's Scintillating Saturday session #84 as well as Swamiji's DVDs on karma. It was refreshing to have some of the newer GYAA members join us for their first get-together, and we hope they will join us again for our next one.

### ***A GOLDEN MORNING***



### ***REFLECTIONS ON OUR RETREAT***

***Hwamin Fettes***

Thank you, Murali, and Mathaji Margo for organising a wonderful retreat where we were able to connect with each other and learn from both of you who are Senior Gitananda Yoga teachers with experience of more than 60 years combined. It was great to meet Rebecca Foster from Adelaide who is also a member of Team 52 in person and Amba from Gold Coast who has done some brilliant work at CYTER as a Yoga Therapist. The dynamic

energy created by 5 of us were just amazing, I felt each one of us was meant to be there to make this retreat successful.

Every day we would start the day with Hatha Yoga class at the beach, followed by mid-morning Pranayama and Jnana Yoga Kriya class, with Yantra class in the afternoon and Satsanga by Swamiji in the evenings. During the 6 days, many practices I learnt in Yoga: Step by Step were covered in detail, with added input from Mathaji or Murali saying, "Swamiji used to teach/say/do this...". I loved listening to everyone's experiences at the Ananda Ashram and CYTER. I felt so blessed to be part of this retreat and able to spend 6 days in Gitananda Yoga immersion with like-minded cheerful people who share love of Yoga.

I look forward to attending more of GYA retreats in the future. Again, thank you Mathaji Margo and Muralidharan for your Seva for this magnificent Parampara.



### **MEMBERSHIP FEES 2022-2023**

Fees for 2022-23 are now due for renewal.

Here are the details:

- Pay Account: 498 569 383 - BSB: 015 025
- email Murali when fees are paid via EFT.
- **\$30 for Associate membership**
- **\$50 for ICYER Accredited/Teaching members** who wish to be listed on our website <http://www.gitananda-australia.org/>

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### **THOUGHTS ON THE 52 LESSON STEP BY STEP COURSE**

***Niraimathi Nicole Rubio.***

In 1995 I was fortunate enough to be introduced to Gitananda yoga by a director of the Australian Yoga Teacher Training Association. I had just wound up a long bout of training and she could see my hunger. I wanted more. To be breathing, living, and eating yoga. She took me aside from the graduating pack and revealed the name of a place in India that ran a correspondence course. Ananda Ashram. It was like a little secret she was just passing on to me. Her advice was to do the course but not to go over because it was pretty

intensive training. I took the piece of paper and carried it safely home, sensing that the address was going to be an important part of my life. I was right.

Within a month I had signed up and received a beautifully printed and bound book. This was to become my Yoga bible. It still is. If I need to know something about the body, about the systems or how to help them, this is one of the first places I look. In the nearly 30 years that I have owned and loved this book, I have nowhere near been able to absorb all of its wisdom. It would take lifetimes. But to open its pages allowed me to dive into a deeper understanding of yoga. It resonated with my entire being and showed me that most the yoga classes I had thus far experienced were rather missing the mark. The personal relationship with yoga was intimate and profound and the 52 lessons helped develop that into something with greater authority. I began to know why I was doing what I was doing, and it awakened a connection to yoga that felt innate. Instead of 'doing' yoga, the wisdom of Swami Gitananda prompted me to 'be' yoga. It would take me many years to complete the 52 lessons because before I was even halfway through, I had jumped on a plane and headed for the residential course under the wonderful guidance of Ammaji and Renukaji.

Many, many years later when opening my beloved yoga bible, it suddenly occurred to me that it was time to finish the course. Beginning at the start, I made my way through the 52 lessons, understanding them in new and deeper ways than I had previously. It made a difference to do the course sequentially rather than dipping in and out as I had been inclined to do. Reading each chapter and then undertaking the written lessons meant that I needed to focus, to reflect, to be engaged in the process. I still had the previous bunch of Q&A's and to see the contrast in the answers showed me the path I had travelled. To commit myself to this level of learning and dedication to something that had been in my life for so long was deeply rewarding.

Before long, I found myself guiding others to do the same with the encouragement of Ammaji. Even as I mentored different people across the UK and England in these lessons, I felt as though I could never truly be equipped to 'teach' this body of work. To this day I do not feel an adequate source or representation for the vast wealth of knowledge and insight that every paragraph of this book contains! However, I know that by tutoring this course over the years, I have enabled others to take their first steps into its pages. People that would not have had the courage or endurance to sign up or finish on their own. We are not here to be perfect; we are here to do what we can and so my steps along the Step-by-Step course have simply allowed others to follow in turn and I have been privileged and honoured to watch students transform and grow in so many ways under the divine direction offered through Swamiji in this course.

Recently I undertook the training again in the wonderful zoom classes held by Dr Ananda. Our beloved zoom womb was a place for me to stand in my role as mentor of the course, but I also took the opportunity to be the student again too. Once more I found that committing to the teachings, to the concepts and practices helped me to traverse a whole new sphere of understanding, aided and brought to life under the skillful direction of Dr Sir. I could once again reflect on the growth of my answers and see where my path had ventured since my last study of the course. We are always learning, always growing and I can truly say that the wisdom and development that comes through the 52 lesson Step by

Step course will never fail you nor fall short. It is always here, always waiting to show you more, to take you deeper and higher. It is up to you to simply commit.

With love and gratitude  
Niraimathi Nicole Rubio.  
0448 599 661



***SPECIAL OFFER TO ALL GYA FINANCIAL MEMBERS.***

Current financial members are now entitled to receive a **10% discount** on the Euro cost of any of Dr. Ananda's Online Courses. Please contact [ananda@icyer.com](mailto:ananda@icyer.com) for pricing or to register in upcoming sessions and/or to purchase a complete set of recordings of these earlier Zoom sessions.



**CONGRATULATIONS** to our members who have studied or completed courses with ICYER in recent times.

- **Judith Moloney** (Victoria) did **Yoga Step by Step** several years ago with Niraimathi and has now completed online courses in **Yogic Psychic Neurology** in 2020 and **Yogasutra Ashtangam** in 2021.
- **Rebecca Foster** (South Australia) our newly elected Treasurer and Public Officer completed the **52-week Yoga Step-by-Step course** with Niraimathi in 2019.
- 4. **Hwamin Fettes** (Committee member, South Australia) completed **52 Lesson Yoga Step-by-Step** course in October 2021. Hwamin is now studying **Nada Yoga Immersion** with Dr Ananda and Yogacharini Sangeeta Laura Biagi

5. Yogacharini Niraimathi (Victoria) and Yogacharini Mathaji Margo (Queensland) were awarded **Certificates of Honour** by Dr. Ananda in recognition of their Seva as Mentors for Team 52 of the **Yoga: Step-by-Step** course.

### **GITANANDA EYE EXERCISES -**

*Notes from a class with Swamiji - Ananda Ashram 1979*

*Mathaji Margo*

Good physical sight leads to inner sight, which leads to cosmic sight, which leads to psychic sight etc. As above/so below; as on earth/so in heaven; inside/outside. It is extremely important to improve physical sight so the other sights will improve. (Glasses are a crutch, do not use unless necessary). You must hyperventilate the back part of the brain by the breath, but the amount will depend on the quantity of the breath you bring in. (Practice Vibhagha Pranayama).

**Pranic Poulitice - Palming:** With elbows rested, head relaxed in hands, palms covering the eyes; no tension to the back of the head and neck to relax the occiput (seat of the sight centre). Repeat the high-pitched sound for the eye - EEMM. Flood the eyes with sound. We did this at least 6 times.

**Coming out technique:** Keep eyes closed, take hands away, move the head from side to side slowly six times. Breathe deeply and blink 30-40 times. Learn to blink it rejuvenates the eyes.

**Sunning:** Best time is early in the morning just before sunrise. Evening is also okay. Face the brightest spot on the horizon and turn the head slowly from side to side while blinking and deep breathing with eyes open wide. Follow with palming for as long as possible for most benefit. To release facial tension, stroke face with the fingers.

**Kushala Mudra:** Light tapping of the eyelids, eyebrows, and sinus ridge. Be very gentle, do carefully.

**Kushala pranayama:** Tapping as above (lightly like a butterfly) while holding a full breath.



**Contributions** are welcome for our next eNewsletter, have you a favourite practice, a meditation, a recipe, an anecdote, an interesting story, or something you could share with all. Please email it to the editor at [margosyoga@hotmail.com](mailto:margosyoga@hotmail.com) deadline June 30.