

# Yoga Bharati



Issue 1: January 2010



**One's dharma is  
other's adharma**  
-*"Swadharme nidhanam  
shreyah, paradharmo  
bhayavahah"*  
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## Did you know?

The Mahavakya **Tat Tvam Asi** comes from Chandogya Upanishad

## Chairman's Message

This is to congratulate the members of Yoga Bharati for launching this Newsletter.

Yoga is a conscious process of going back to one's nature. Hence the Sanskrit term for health is "swastha" – being myself - and the term aswastha – not being myself - is used

Yoga is a wonderful answer to come back to our nature since yoga builds that awareness and consciousness towards health and happiness.

As Patanjali puts it – *Chitta vritti nirodha* – yoga is removing the modifications of the mind.  
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## Feature of the Month



**Surya Namaskar** or Sun Salutation is a common sequence of Hatha Yoga Asanas. It is also a *sadhana* which incorporates *asana, pranayama, mantra* and *chakra* meditation  
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## Swamiji's Ashirvachana (Blessing)

I am very happy to know that Yoga Bharati is bringing out a News Letter. They have been doing yeomen services in the cause of yoga for almost a decade in the Bay Area and other parts of United States. Yoga is very popular in the West and Bharat, alias India, the birthplace of yoga has been the center of world culture from time immemorial.

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## Upcoming Events

- ✓ Surya Namaskar Yagna 2010
- ✓ Yoga for kids
- ✓ Prenatal yoga
- ✓ Yoga therapy

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*Vivekananda's call "Utthish Tata, Jaagrata, praapyavaraan nibodhata". Which Upanishad is this from? Watch the next issue for answer!*



## Chairman's Message

- Shri. N.V.Raghuram

Yoga is a conscious process  
of going back to one's nature.

This is to congratulate the members of Yoga Bharati for launching Yoga Bharati Newsletter. Yogabharati is helping many yoga enthusiasts to improve their life style through yoga classes, therapy classes for various ailments, teachers training programs, satsangs and other periodical activities. Through the news letter Yoga Bharati will be able to reach wider audience.

Yoga is a conscious process of going back to one's nature. Hence the Sanskrit term for health is "swastha" – being myself - and the term aswastha – not being myself - is used to define lack of health. To be healthy and happy is our very nature. Due to different reasons, we have gone away from our health. Our lack of being conscious of it results in this drift. Yoga is a wonderful answer to come back to our nature since yoga builds that awareness and consciousness towards health and happiness.

As per the definition given in Kathopanishad - tam yogamiti manyante sthiram indriyadharanam - yoga is calming down the mind (senses). As Patanjali puts it – Chitta vritti nirodha – yoga is removing the modifications of the mind. Sage Vashista says – **Mana Prashamana upayah** – yoga is a way to calm down the mind. All these great ancient authors conclude that yoga is a conscious process of bringing harmony to the mind through various means and at various levels of our personality. An integrated approach to yoga addresses health at the physical level through asanas, bandhas, kriyas, mudras; at prana level through pranayama; and at the emotional, intellectual or spiritual levels through meditation and other techniques.

This concept of total personality nurturing and making life a celebration is the goal of yoga. The realization that we are not the body but the consciousness within, results in a clear discrimination and freedom to choose right things in life for self and for others. This way, yoga helps the individual move towards better harmony within and outside.

Of the several words of wisdom of sages which have inspired people, Yoga Bharati adapted the idea "SAHANAU BHUNAKTU.." may we nurture together which is taken from the famous mantra "Sahana vavatu". Yoga Bharati brings courses such as Yoga Foundation and Yoga Teacher's training from Vivekananda Yoga Research Foundation (VYASA) is one of the premier Yoga Universities and yoga research institute in India with its rich background in research on yoga and its healing effects for various ailments.

Modern society has a subtle misunderstanding that yoga is associated with a religion, a geographic area or a particular ethnic society. Hence there is an attempt to divorce yoga from its philosophy such as that given in Bhagavad Gita, Yoga Vasistha, Upanishads, etc. However, they belong to each other and yoga is essentially derived from its philosophy. At our satsangs, workshops and our Yoga Foundation/Teaching courses, we particularly emphasize on this aspect.

Once again, congratulations to all Yoga Bharati volunteers in spreading the message of yoga through the Newsletter.

Shri N.V.Raghuram is the international coordinator of SVYASA (Vivekananda Yoga Research Foundation), Bangalore, India. He is the spiritual founder and chairman of Yoga Bharati.

For details about his vision and thoughts, please visit <http://www.nvrghuram.blogspot.com/>.



## **Ashirvachana (blessing)**

- *Swami Bodhananda  
Saraswati*

I am very happy to know that Yoga Bharati is bringing out a News Letter. They have been doing yeomen services in the cause of yoga for almost a decade in the Bay Area and other parts of United States. I personally know hundreds of people who are beholden to Yoga Bharati for bringing the light of yoga into their lives.

Apart from imparting yoga they also train yoga teachers who in turn take it their life's mission to spread the message and practice of yoga in their respective areas. Thus the tree of yoga is growing lushly in the U.S. with the unique and selfless work of Yoga Bharati.

Yoga is very popular in the West and Bharat, alias India, the birthplace of yoga has been the center of world culture from time immemorial. The Greeks, Iranians, Arabs, Europeans and the Chinese came to India to learn our philosophy and sciences and carried away volumes of literature to their respective countries. They acclaimed our Gurus as world teachers.

Alexander ended his ambition of world conquest and returned from Punjab after losing an argument with an Indian sage who taught the young conqueror that the conquest of mind is more important than conquering countries and peoples.

That has been consistently the message of Bharat for the world--conquer the mind and be happy. The irony of the modern world is that even after conquering outer spaces, oceans and atoms, humankind is still unhappy and restless. The philosophy of 'bhoga' has come to full circle in the collapse of the western capitalist materialist

Swami Bodhananda Saraswati is the spiritual founder of Sambodha society. Swamiji conducts Gita and management courses for institutions of the calibre of IIM and other management institutions. He has authored many books on yoga philosophy and its applications in day to day life.

For details, visit [www.samodh.com](http://www.samodh.com).

The philosophy of yoga alone can heal the planet, bring warring people together and realize the goal of world as one family "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.*"

culture of mindless consumerism. Now is the time of yoga and its message of restraining mind, plumping the depths of the spirit and living life of inner fulfillment. The philosophy of yoga alone can heal the planet, bring warring peoples together and realize the goal of world as one family--Vasudhaiva Kudumbakam.

There are many superficial types of yoga being taught in the United States. Other faith systems have also started adopting yoga to ride on its popularity. There is Christian Yoga, Hot Yoga and Bikram Yoga and a host of other exotically packaged yogas. The yoga accessories have become a billion dollar business. The capitalist market has completely commercialized yoga into a hugely successful business product. I don't consider this as an unmitigated disaster as such. As result of this craze yoga has become a household word. The word 'yoga' has also entered into the heart of American health discourse. These are all welcome signs.

Now discerning practitioners will ask for more from yoga, will ask about yoga's ethical and spiritual dimensions. It is to such people that Yoga Bharati's teachings will appeal. They are authentic and practical and are taught by teachers who sincerely follow the spiritual tradition of yoga. I have no doubt that in years to come the yoga teaching perfected by Yoga Bharati and their culture of selfless service will gain more and more acceptance in the community at large.

I wish all success to Yoga Bharati and their great work in spreading the message of Yoga

## Feature Of The Month

### Surya Namaskar yagna

**Surya Namaskar** or Sun Salutation, is a common sequence of [Hatha yoga asanas](#). Its origins lie in a worship of [Surya](#), the Hindu solar deity. This sequence of movements and poses can be practiced on varying levels of awareness, ranging from that of physical exercise in various styles, to a complete *sadhana* which incorporates *asana*, *pranayama*, *mantra* and chakra meditation.

These *asanas* are ordered so that they alternately stretch the spine backwards and forwards. When performed in the usual way, each *asana* is moved into with alternate inhalation and exhalation (except for the sixth *asana* where the breath is held in external suspension). A full round of *Surya Namaskar* is considered to be two sets of the twelve poses with a change in the second set to moving the opposite leg first through the series.

Proponents of the use of *Surya namaskara* as part of the modern yoga tradition prefer to perform it at sunrise, which the orthodox consider to be the most 'spiritually favorable' time of the day.

At the beginning of each year, a Surya Namaskar Yagna or Sun Salutation marathon is organized by Yoga Bharati. As a proponent of yoga awareness, Yoga Bharati organizes this Sun Salutation marathon to encourage everyone to add yoga to their list of New Year resolutions and start the New Year on a healthy note. The Surya Namaskar Yagna is a wonderful incentive for people to experiment with and practice sun salutations.



Surya Namaskar, performed in a specified sequence of a series of 10 or 12 poses linked by a continuous flowing motion and synchronized with the breath, can serve as an integrated yogic exercise set. The sequence can be performed slowly as an **asana** or briskly as an aerobic/cardio workout.

For people with limited time, this practice can be used to exercise every muscle and joint while stimulating the body. Thus practice of sun salutations is an ideal way to incorporate yoga into a busy lifestyle.

Some notes on this practice:

- Surya Namaskara is practiced only after a gap of 2 hours of having food, generally in the morning time or evening.
- Surya Namaskaras are performed on a mat and not directly on the floor.
- In some traditions, 12 Surya Namaskaras are performed at one practice. If starting that practice for the first time, it is generally started with fewer (3 to 6) Namaskaras per day and then gradually increased to 12 Namaskaras in a week's time
- 'Shavasana' is typically practiced at the end of practice for rest.

*hiranmayena patrena  
satyasyapihitam mukham |  
tat tvam pusannapavrn  
satyadharmaya drstaye*

## **One's Dharma is another's Adharma - From Bagavadgita**

The correctness of our response to situations may depend on who we are and in what circumstance we are in. While Ahimsa is a great virtue, it might become cowardice if a soldier practices it in the battlefield. A sanyasin can forgive a thief or a murderer, but a judge in a trial of the same thief/murderer cannot. It is in this context Lord Krishna says to Arjuna, "Swadharme nidhanam shreyah, paradharmo bhayavahah" - it is okay to die following your dharma, but following other's dharma is dangerous.



*Next issue: What is Pravritti Dharma and what is Nivrutti Dharma...*

## **Report on Activities of 2009 (SFO Bay Area)**

### **YICC 2009**

Yoga Bharati conducts Yoga Foundation Course/Yoga Teachers' Training as a three month weekend course consisting of 120 hours of yoga training. This course consists of yoga practice, theory of yogasanas, their benefits/limitations, yoga philosophy, yoga field practice and yoga report by the student. Nearly 30 enthusiastic students took this course. This course is run by Yoga Bharati volunteers. The Yoga Philosophy is taught by the Yogashree awardee and International Coordinator of SVYASA University, Shri. N.V.Raghuram. The course is affiliated to the acclaimed Swami Vivenkananda Yoga Research Foundation in Bangalore, India.

### **Camp Bonita – Yoga Retreat**

Yoga Bharati conducted a three day Yoga Retreat from July 03 to July 05, 2009 at Camp Bonita, San Fransisco. The theme was Happiness and Spirituality. This retreat was also blessed to have both Swami Bodhananda Saraswati and Guruji Raghuramji –both stalwarts in their own right! Nearly 50 people participated in the camp and enjoyed laughter yoga, satsangs, bhajans, meditations, hiking, and cultural activities. A typical day at the camp was like an ashram where people arose at 5:00 AM, chanted pratasmarana, practiced pranayama/yoga and moved on to various activities throughout the day. It was an exhilarating experience.

### **Yoga for Kids 2009**



Yoga for Kids - A 4 days winter camp specially designed for the little ones was held at Sunnyvale Temple during winter break. This camp was a tremendous success with over 40 kids, well appreciated by both the participants and the parents. The camp was a fun filled education for children on yoga, pranayama, Vedic math, samskritam, shlokas and presentations on nutrition and environment awareness,. Children enjoyed yogi Mahendra's laughter yoga, Geetha aunty's shlokas, Reshma Aunty's presentations, and Gulshan Aunty's yogic games.

A similar camp was held by our volunteer Savitha Nanjanagud at Chinmaya mission campus for teenagers. Youth enjoyed this camp while learning tid-bits of Yoga Philosophy.

## **Upcoming Yoga Bharati Events**

### **Surya Namaskar Yagna 2010 - January 1 to 22, 2010**

Leading the yoga awareness movement all over the world, Yoga Bharati organizes Surya Namaskar Yagna (Sun Salutation Marathon) this year as we do every year. We encourage everyone to add yoga to the list of New Year resolutions and start the New Year on a healthy note.

We welcome you, your family, friends and coworkers to participate in the SNY 2010. All you have to do is to register at our site [www.yogabharati.org](http://www.yogabharati.org) for yourself and your family, practice suryanamaskars and submit the count. You can practice as less as 5 rounds or as many as 200 rounds. Challenge yourself and aim high!

For more details about Yoga Bharati events, please visit [www.yogabharati.org](http://www.yogabharati.org), or email us at [info@yogabharati.org](mailto:info@yogabharati.org).

### **Yoga for Special Groups**

Yoga Bharati runs regular ongoing classes for the following special groups at nominal charges.

- Yoga for Pregnant Women (Prenatal Yoga)
- Yoga and Gita for Kids<sup>1</sup>
- Yoga for Back Pain and psychosomatic ailments<sup>2</sup>
- Yoga for Personal Growth & Stress Management<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Yoga teaches children to concentrate, improves their intellect and calms down their mind. It prepares them to handle pressures of life. Bhagawad Gita is the compilation of Vedas from which yoga philosophy flows just as Ganga flows from Himalayas. Introduce your children to this wonderful text of human mind, through simple and easy chanting, they learn to get the best of Indian values.

<sup>2</sup> Yoga Bharati also offers one-one sessions for special conditions such as Hypertension, Arthritis, Digestive Disorders, Asthma/Nasal Allergy, Diabetes, Obesity, Menstrual Disorders, most of the auto immune diseases.

<sup>3</sup> Yoga for Personal Growth and Stress Management is a special Yoga class for serious sadhakas. Whether you are in perfect health and a true seeker of peace and harmony or you are experiencing mild psychosomatic ailments, yoga is a great way to keep yourself fit and happy! We perform yogasanas for body, pranayama for mind and meditation for the spirit in one and a half hour session. People with any serious conditions cannot take this YPGSM class.

**Contact:** [therapy@yogabharati.org](mailto:therapy@yogabharati.org),

Please visit [www.yogabharati.org/therapy](http://www.yogabharati.org/therapy) for more information.

*\* Disclaimer: Please consult your doctor before starting any Yoga class.*

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