

# Yoga Tyoti



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# CALMNESS

*MARCH 2025 EDITION*



# SUPERCONSCIOUS CORNER

## *Calmness Amidst Chaos*

In the spring of 2024, I experienced the blessed moments of visiting the sacred Jyotirlingam at the Pashupatinath temple in Kathmandu, Nepal. The temple complex is huge, having many smaller temples, open areas and the magnificent, square-shaped 'sanctum sanctorum' where resides the Shivalingam. I happened to attend one evening arti/prayers at the temple with throngs of devotees occupying space on the grounds, corridors and staircases. Though saturated with devotion, the chaotic temple scene runs before my eyes each time I think of it.

Amidst the chanting of mantras, lighting diyas, clapping and singing, there was a sudden commotion as the inside temple gate was opened for darshan. What was to follow in a few moments made me squeeze like a lemon as the frenzied crowd caused a stampede! In this state of absolute chaos around me I realized, as I felt choked, that my family was expecting me back in the hotel. The next thought was that I am not alone as the all-powerful Shivalingam is just a few steps away. This very moment of reflection, empowered me and I began to inwardly chant Yogananda's affirmation: "God is with me, I am protected", becoming oblivious of the crowds weighing heavy on me.

This calm surrender in the moment of chaos had an instant result as I saw a guard directing the crowd. The moments thereafter are inexplicable in words as moving along the pushing crowd, I beheld the Shivalingam before me. Drenched in deep calmness never felt before, I got pushed further along the inner square corridor and witnessed, one-by-one, all four faces of the blessed deity. Joy descended upon me with a feeling of contentment that is ever fresh.

Surely, a moment of pause is a blessing as only then we experience calm inner awareness – the key to arriving at balanced, unbiased decisions. That is why Yogananda said, "We must be actively calm and calmly active."

~By Dr. P. Cheena Chawla



# INSPIRATION'S CORNER

## Experiencing Calmness

**Paramhansa Yogananda said:**

*The calmer you grow, the more you will see the reflection of the universe within you.*

*Yogananda highlighted the importance of being “calmly active and actively calm.” It is not enough to be calm only during meditation; one must carry this calmness into daily life. Be like a pendulum, remaining calm at your center but ready to swing into action when necessary. This enables us to navigate the challenges of life with a sense of peace and balance.*

**Swami Kriyananda explains:**

*The more you consciously withdraw your energy inwardly through meditation, the more you experience an enormous revitalization of energy and consciousness. When you get into a deeper level of calmness, what you begin to feel is something very powerful indeed. It is an expansion of consciousness that begins to take you away from the ego. It is almost overwhelming, much more than a simple state of peace might be. This profound calmness is the soil in which cosmic consciousness begins to blossom forth in your consciousness. Calmness gives us an exceptionally clear mind and a very keen understanding that cannot come without deep inner calmness.*



### **Calm the Mind - A Guided Meditation**

*A powerful visualization combined with breathing technique and soothing music to help calm the mind and expand consciousness. The visualization and breathing technique are by Swami Kriyananda. Guided by Nayaswami Diksha.*







# PEARLS OF WISDOM

*Excerpt from 'Whispers from Eternity' by  
Paramhansa Yogananda*

## **Demand for Calmness in Activity**

*Father, teach me to be calmly active and actively calm. Let me become a prince of peace, sitting on the throne of inner poise as I direct my kingdom of activity.*

## INSPIRATION FROM THE TEAM



Our Guru Paramhansa said that chanting is half the battle. I like to chant often. When we chant for a longer duration or even for a short duration, usually we pause for some time before going to the next chant.

That pause between the two chants is really very important. That is the time when I usually feel deep calmness. I always wonder from where this calmness comes, whether it was always there, or the chant helped me to feel it and be in tune with it.

As an Ananda Yoga teacher, I practice Yoga Asanas along with its Affirmations. There is one Asana named Adho Mukha Shvanasana — Downward-Facing Dog Pose. Its affirmation is “Calmness radiates from every fiber of my being.” Once the physical posture instructions are done, we usually say the affirmation and it elevates the effect of the Asana completely. Not only while doing the Asana, but after each Asana we pause for some time to integrate the effects of the Asana. And this is the time when one can feel deep calmness, as the affirmation says “Calmness radiates from every fibre of my being.”

If done with proper awareness one can feel calmness during Asanas, Pranayama, Energization Exercises, Meditation and in daily activities also. I would like to share this quote by Paramhansa Yogananda - "Remain ever calm within. Be even-minded. When working, be calmly active."

~By Amruta Dubal



# MEDITATION INSIGHTS

## The Power of Calmness

“Though the winds of difficulties howl around me, I stand forever calmly at the center of life’s storms,”– Swami Kriyananda.

This affirmation on calmness by Swamiji, beautifully reminds us that external turbulence does not have to dictate our internal state. A person who remains calm amidst life’s challenges is truly invincible. No wonder calmness is considered one of the eight manifestations of God.

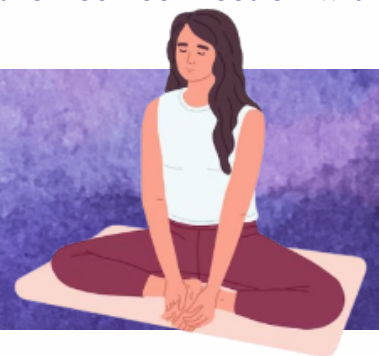
Our beloved Gurudev Paramhansa Yogananda says, “Calmness is the ideal medium through which we should receive everything. Nervousness is the opposite of calmness. Today, nervousness seems to be the world’s disease.”

Just as clear water reflects light perfectly, a calm mind allows us to perceive everything around us as it is. When we move through life with calmness, we absorb our experiences wisely and with an open mind. A calm mind allows us to navigate challenges with strength and grace.

Neuroscientific research confirms that a stressed and agitated mind is not just an emotional state; it profoundly impacts the body, brain, and overall well-being. Chronic stress activates the body's fight-or-flight response, which when prolonged leads to various physical, mental, and emotional ailments.

Imagine your body as a house and your nervous system as the electricity that powers it. If the electrical currents are unstable then the wires spark, and the lights flicker, disrupting its functionality. But when the electricity flows steadily, everything runs smoothly: lights shine brightly, appliances work efficiently, and the house feels safe.

Meditation is one of the most effective tools for cultivating inner steadiness. When we meditate, the parasympathetic nervous system is activated, it slows the heart rate and reduces cortisol levels—the primary stress hormone. At the same time, activity in the prefrontal cortex, responsible for emotional regulation and decision-making, increases, while the amygdala, the brain’s fear center, becomes less active. Through meditation, we strengthen our connection with the Divine—the ultimate source of all calmness.



Calmness makes us more receptive to insights and intuition. As our consciousness expands, we discover our interconnectedness with the Divine.

*Paramhansa Yogananda reminds us, "If you want to live in peace and harmony, affirm divine calmness and peace, and send out only thoughts of love and goodwill. Live a Godly life, and the mere contact with you will help everyone who crosses your path."*

~By Devika Mitra



# DEVOTEE'S CORNER

## Pilgrimage on Wheels – The Inner Awakening at Dwarka and Somnath

On the serene beachside of Dwarka, our first meditation with Nayaswamy Gyandev began. As I tuned into Krishna's presence at dawn, my mind eased out of thoughtful distraction and into a deep calm. This calmness transcended time and context, rendering me unmindful of my surroundings.

As Paramhansa Yogananda so eloquently stated, "This profound calmness is the soil in which cosmic consciousness begins to blossom forth in your consciousness."

The expanded calmness in meditation at Dwarka was sustained in trust and devotion. At Bet Dwarka, I felt a deep sorrow upon my first sight of Shri Krishna. Reflecting on the contrasting energies of Dwarka, I gained insight into his multiple roles.

At Bet Dwarka, Shri Krishna embodied the dutiful king in stoic calm, veiling his joy while aware of the impending doom of his kingdom and dynasty. I felt grateful for this experience, a poignant lesson from the Bhagavad Gita.

Meditation at Bhalka Tirth, where Shri Krishna left his mortal frame, was a profound experience. Nayaswamy Gyandev's blessing and guidance helped me develop the skill of staying centred in calmness.

Somnath symbolised the Victory of Spirit over Time. The crescendoing cries of "Har Har Mahadev" paused time and breath. Was the magic moment woven during the wait for Dharshan, or at the moment of Dharshan, or simply the rising devotion of meeting the Beloved within the calm space?

What magic was this pilgrimage, where the ordinary was transformed by the Alchemist. Grateful that knowledge had blossomed into experience, I felt a shift from thought to feeling in the heart. The key takeaway remained – to stay centred in calmness.

Aum Guru

~By Uma Subbaraman







## DID YOU KNOW



The path of Karma Yoga is a perfect place to start, for it offers a meaningful orientation for our daily lives. It addresses how we live, how we act, and the way to inner freedom through action.

Let's examine some of the key tenets of Karma Yoga and explore how to apply these in our practice and teaching, as well as how to begin to give our students a feel for the deeper aspects of Yoga.

### KARMA YOGA COMES TO LIGHT IN ASANA PRACTICE

PART 1 OF ASANAS CAN TEACH US THE DEEPER SIDE OF YOGA

*Nayaswami Maria*

*Inspirational teacher of Ananda meditation & yoga philosophy; Ananda Minister & Spiritual Counselor.*

BELOW IS AN EXCERPT FROM  
THE PART 1 BLOG



### Action vs. Inaction

The question "To act or not to act?" can confuse beginner yogis, who sometimes obsess over making the right choices and doing the right thing for fear of creating bad karma, which hinders spiritual growth.

It's essential to focus not just on our actions, but on how we act. Asana practice helps develop awareness of our physical movements, revealing the energy and consciousness they generate. Over time, we connect our actions to their spiritual outcomes. The reverse is true also: from consciousness flows energy and movement. Do our movements make us ego-centered or feel liberated in body and mind? By making a connection through phrasing and imagery, as well as using the power of affirmations, we can foster a positive attitude and harmony among body, mind, and soul.

One helpful tip is to repeat a pose two or three times in a row, going slower each time. Another helpful aid is to deliberately delay part of the pose. For example, when coming out of Chandrasana, to stop and hold the hands overhead for longer than usual, then allow the hands to float slowly and gently down to the sides. After doing this a couple of times, one will feel the difference and follow suit in other poses as well.





Another exercise is what Swami Kriyananda calls “breathing your way to better spirits.” Sit comfortably with a tall, relaxed spine. Choose a positive quality that you would like to develop. Inhale slowly and deeply. Imagine the breath filling your lungs and whole body with that quality, starting at the feet and culminating at the point between the eyebrows. Hold the breath and focus at that point for as long as is comfortable. Feel that you are burning up all negative thoughts in the blaze of divine light. As you exhale, do so forcibly, expelling forever from your body and mind any last vestiges of weakness and negativity.

### ***Pausing Between Asanas: The Fruits of Inaction***

As Krishna emphasized in the Bhagavad Gita, true inaction is not a passive state. It is a heightened state in which our awareness is total. The pauses between the poses are perfect for cultivating this state, where we are listening to and responding to the subtle movements of energy in our bodies and in our consciousness. In a very tangible way, the pause between poses sensitizes us to the energy around us and to our influence upon that energy field.

### ***Desireless Practice: Nishkam Karma***

Nishkam karma (acting without desire for the fruits of action) is the most beautiful of attitudes. It immediately generates a flow of surrender and serenity.

Concentrate on the joy your practice gives you. Feel that joy. No more worries, no more expectations, no more judgments. With that joy comes relaxation and ease — and eventually the ability to go deeper than you imagined possible. The affirmation for Savasana captures this perfectly: “Bones, muscles, movement, I surrender now; anxiety, elation and depression, churning thoughts — all these I give into the hands of peace.”

### ***Serving God***

Karma Yoga means acting to serve God. Swami Kriyananda said, “Think of Him and His energy will flow through you.” Then no matter where we are, whatever we’re doing becomes God-reminding. When we practice Hatha Yoga, “think of Him” and feel His energy flowing through every cell of your body, moving through the breath, vibrating through bone, muscle, organs and tissue.

“God is the Doer, I am His instrument.” With this attitude, everything is possible! The energy of the universe becomes ours and we experience it moving through us at all times. Our bodies change, our moods change, our thoughts change.

With the mindset “God is the Doer, I am His instrument,” we harness the universe’s energy, leading to constant changes in our bodies, moods, and thoughts and we are transformed from a lackluster diamond to one that reflects light at every angle.

Our yoga practice is not about doing more and more; it’s about going deeper in the Self. It’s about discovering who we really are, and living that realization.

“I am free! I am free!” This is the highest affirmation and the ultimate goal of Karma Yoga.

~By Mary Agnel



# ACTIVITY CORNER

In the 'Autobiography of a Yogi', the following sentences with the word 'calm' or 'calmness' are present. Answer the questions below. The first one is done as an example.

In the AOY, following sentences with the word 'calm' or 'calmness' are present. Answer the questions below. First one is done as an example.

*With calmness and insight, he solved the various family problems.*

Q: Who is 'he'?

A: Yogananda's Father

1

*His ironical smile implied that visitors, despite their noise, were powerless to disturb the calmness of a saint's home.*

Q: Whose home is being referred to here?

2

*On an immense neck, the swami's fierce yet calm face was adorned with flowing locks, beard and moustache.*

Q: Who is the Swami?

3

*"Must you test me?" His calm eyes were full of understanding. "Could I add a single word this morning to the assurance you received last night at ten o'clock from the Beautiful Mother Herself?"*

Q: Who is the person talking to Yogananda?

4

*His public speeches emphasized the value of Kriya Yoga, and a life of self-respect, calmness, determination, simple diet, and regular exercise.*

Q: Who was giving the public speeches in the above context?

5

*The afternoon brought an opportunity for a chat with Gandhi's noted disciple..... Her strong, calm face lit with enthusiasm as she told me, in flawless Hindi, of her daily activities.*

Q: Who is the person being referred?

Answers: 1. Tiger Swami's home 2. Tiger Swami 3. Master Mahasaya 4. Swami Sri Yukteswar 5. Miss Madeleine Slade, called Mirabai.





# CREATIVE CORNER



~Poem written by Dr. Sharmila Ramachandran



## Calmness

*I am the prince of peace,  
Sitting in the throne of poise.  
Never lose that kingly attitude  
Let poise be your center and beatitude..*

*Calmness the source of power,  
Calmness, a friend forever  
Calmness never fails us, never  
So, Be a calm warrior*

*With whole hearted meditation,  
Leave bodily limitation,  
Meditate away delusion,  
Get freedom from thought pollution..*

*Like ripple less Lake, free from waves,  
Calmness inside always saves..  
True nature is bliss, nothing else  
The Soul inside always tells..*

*Realise you are far from above,  
Omniscient and formless full of love,  
Fear not friend, Come what may,  
with calmness, the heaven and earth give way..*

*Be calmly active and actively calm  
No one can touch you in the deeper realm..  
It's deeper than the deep ocean  
It's stronger than the gale motion*

*In the depth of serenity,  
There's undoubted clarity,  
Calmness the sattvic weapon  
Can win all hearts use it often 😊*

*So, Affirm  
The light of Christ shines in me,  
And my mind is clear  
Order and harmony reign in all my affairs*

— Dr. Sharmila R.

Inspiration based on Paramhansa Yogananda Wisdom Book Series  
“How to Have Courage, Calmness, and Confidence”



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