



Awake Yoga  
Meditation

# Darshan

Summer Solstice  
2020



# Divine Nectar

Sri Swami Nityananda Giri

**Awake Yoga Meditation** is a vibrant spiritual community oriented around awakening to our true divine nature. With love and good humor, our community helps each other to wake up through yoga philosophy, Advaita Vedanta, and the mystical teachings of Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism, Zen, Hinduism, and Judaism. Meditation, Kriya yoga, self-inquiry, and devotional practices are integral to these teachings.

We offer weekly meditations for adults and children, spiritual discussion, and meditation instruction. All are welcome.

## Schedules and Information

Sunday Morning Meditation for Adults  
Sunday Morning Meditation for Children (Sept - June)  
Every Sunday at 11:00 a.m.

Friday Night Healing Meditation, every Friday at 7:30 p.m.

Visit our website: [AwakeYogaMeditation.org](http://AwakeYogaMeditation.org) for more information on schedule and special events.

## Temporary Location of Sunday Meditation

Waldorf School of Baltimore  
4801 Tamarind Road  
Baltimore, MD 21209

## Temporary Location of Friday Night Meditation

Ruscombe Mansion Community Health Center, Hill House  
4803 Yellowwood Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21209

## Additional Resources

Join our free eYogi Community at  
[AwakeYogaMeditation.org/eYogi](http://AwakeYogaMeditation.org/eYogi)

Swami Nityananda offers private instruction in meditation (including Kriya yoga) and private spiritual counseling sessions by appointment. Call Lakshmi at 410-591-2646 or email [Swami@AwakeYogaMeditation.org](mailto:Swami@AwakeYogaMeditation.org) to schedule a conference.



Lahiri says the love of the heart is the supreme power of humankind. We are invited to always respond generously, not grudgingly. Whatever comes up, work with it willingly and the heart will expand. Invite the mind to merge with the love of the heart. As the Amrita Bindu Upanishad declares with much good humor, all else is just verbiage and argumentation.

If you are asking, "How can I practically use clarity and insight to access the Supreme?," tune in and ask yourself which foods strengthen you. The body wants neither too much nor too little food. Eating just the right amount helps you access spiritual energy and enjoy bliss always. Too much food yields sluggishness and heaviness, a feeling of torpor. You're diverting energy into digestion that would otherwise be connecting you with bliss. Trust yourself to eat the optimal amount so that it's not too much or too little. When you build a campfire you don't want too much wood because it overwhelms the flames, and you don't want too little fuel because the flames go out. Trust yourself to neither punish the body nor indulge it. This is part of the middle path advocated by the Buddha.

Beware the thought demon inside that wants to go on a rampage and eat everything in sight! Indulge instead with the sweetness of divine nectar. In balance, the digestive fire burns steadily and is a vital part of upward flowing energy that connects you with divine nectar, immortality, the energy of life itself.

The classical Greeks had a word for the smell of earth after rain and that word is connected with the fluid that flows through the veins of the gods. That's life! The fluid of divine nectar is simply the energy of pure life! It's the smell of the earth after rain. Connect with that energy as

***Invite the mind to merge with the love of the heart... all else is just verbiage and argumentation***

often as you possibly can. I give my nervous system permission to reset. I give my brain permission to reset. I give the cells of my body permission to reset. Reset at least once a day, or as often as you like, in whatever ways you can. Be in conscious contact with the rhythms of life that always move through us and help us respond. In contact with life energy, we're always surfing, and life itself lifts

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us up as the wave lifts up a surfer. Life energy flows, helps, supports us always. The more we connect with the earth, the more we can aspire spiritually and the more we can be of service right here. Pragmatically, this practice helps us maintain balance and harmony. It helps us be here in embodiment as long as we can in a supremely healthy, happy, vital, responsive way.

Also called the Drop of Immortality, divine nectar is simply life energy which is of course already within us, flowing through us. Cool, kind, sweet, soothing light, one focal point of divine nectar is at the spiritual eye in the center of the forehead. Allow that nectar to flow down through the chakras. Radiant, shining, blessed insight, pure life energy, immortality. Allow sweet, kind energy to pour through the entire body. This light allows us to unify ourselves where before we had created sep-

**Trust yourself to neither punish the body nor indulge it. This is part of the middle path advocated by the Buddha.**

arateness. Divine nectar sweetens, connects, harmonizes, unifies.

St. Augustine says of the Divine, "In my deepest wound I see

your glory and it dazzles me." Allow your deepest wound to be held in this sweet, caring light. Silently say, *I take full responsibility for the deepest wound I have been carrying.*

*Anywhere I have created separateness, I fuse. I allow this light of divine nectar and sweet healing to harmonize, to unify, to connect, to remind me I am wholeness forever.*

*I am connectedness always. I am radiance. I am good humor. I am forgiveness. I am kindness. I am caring.*



Photo by SHAH Shah on Unsplash

*I am responsiveness. I trust myself to listen to the body, to navigate this divine vehicle as a pure expression of the One. I trust myself to listen to the heart, to work with spiritual honesty with the human feelings that I have, offering them into this light, allowing myself to gain wisdom and clarity and insight, allowing myself to let go of resistance, unwillingness, resentment. I trust myself to work with my patterns of thinking, to choose to focus on being seated in the Kingdom of Heaven rather than the kingdom of sleep. I choose to be awake always. I trust myself to work*

*to transform the deep, unconscious patterns that I have been carrying and have not been able to see. I trust myself. Even the deepest wounds are not separate from the One. Even in the deepest of wounds is divine glory and, when we know and feel that, we are always in the presence of the One. We are always awake and aware, always in contact with reality, always living the love of the heart, the supreme power of humankind.*

Thank God and God bless us all.

# Steadfastness in the Yoga of Self-Knowledge

Sri Swami Shankarananda Giri

If you are steadfast in your desire to know the truth, to realize oneness, you come to a realization wherein you say, “I don’t care how long it takes me to feel, to experience, to realize this blissful unity. I know intuitively, inwardly, with utmost clarity, that there is nothing more important to me than to regain that which seems to have been temporarily lost, to regain full awareness of that Reality that all the enlightened ones have spoken of as bliss. I long to live and move and have my being in that creative consciousness and to be able to love everything as an expression, or an extension, of the nonphysical Reality.”

When you can see every physical expression, not as an obstacle but as an extension of the nonphysical Reality, you will understand that the manifestations came into being in response to human desire. Whatever you see in the world is not good or bad; it is simply an extension of the nonphysical Reality, called forth into manifestation through someone’s desire or the desire of many. Whatever someone’s desire is, the very desire will bring its fulfillment into manifestation, if one is steadfast in holding to the desire. Others may have the benefit of it or experience it detrimentally, but you cannot experience any-

thing that anyone creates unless you have the consciousness for it.

All the wisdom that yogis have realized will not even approach the periphery of our individual awareness, unless we have a desire to grow in wisdom and understanding, in Self-knowledge and Self-realization. Everyone is called to a life of joy, growth, lovingness, expansion, and fulfillment; but few choose to follow that calling because there are so many different reasons to justify not answering the call, for putting it on hold, and then forgetting what that was all about.

What we’re dealing with here is the desire to realize God, the desire to realize that which is the nature of God, the desire to realize whatever is possible for us to realize. You may say, “I don’t know what it means to realize God.” Then let this be your prayer: “My

***Whatever you see in the world is not good or bad.***

desire is to realize whatever there is to be realized.” Put your mental and vocal thoughts into a positive frame of mind. Please watch your language and mind your own business which is is-ness, the business of being.

O Lord, dweller within;  
You are the light  
In the heart’s lotus.  
Aum is your very self,  
Aum, holiest word,  
Seed and source of the scriptures.  
Logic cannot discover  
You, Lord, but the yogis  
Know you in meditation.  
In you are all God’s faces,  
His forms and aspects,  
In you also  
We find the guru.  
In every heart you are  
And if but once, only,  
A man will open  
His mind to receive you,  
Truly that man  
Is free forever.

Shankara  
(translated by Swami Prabhavananda  
and Christopher Isherwood)

# The Power of Righteousness

Sri Swami Premananda Giri

Righteousness is inner sanctification. It is the spiritualization of our total being from within by the divinity of God. We can make our inner life righteous by meditation, prayer, and benevolent deeds. Meditation is the establishing of thought on the consciousness of God. Thought reveals reality. The thought on God reveals the reality of God. The constant thought of soul's oneness with God fills the entire being with divine effulgence. It brings into conscious realization the permeating presence of the holiness of the supreme Spirit within the body, mind, and heart.

Prayer resolves all dissonance from within us. It gently absorbs all objective thoughts and transmutes them into expressions of adoration. It quietly pervades the mind with serenity, tenderly

***In his soul, man is a universal being. Our life must express the qualities of our soul.***

fills the heart with devotion, and silently inspires the soul to surrender itself to God in the illumination of abounding peace. In this complete self-surrender to God all the virtues of the soul are unfolded to their supreme perfection and righteousness blesses our inner life.

Acts of kindness, compassion, charity, and other deeds of benevolence, when wisely performed, unfold the qualities of righteousness within us. Each of us has a soul and every one of us is endowed with the divine attributes which comprise the very essence of righteousness.

Righteousness transforms our life. When the inner life is sanctified, all expressions of the self conform to the principles of purity and holiness. A righteous heart carries holy hands. In individual life, righteousness ensures inner strength, calmness, a feeling of personal sanctity and joy. In the world of collective existence righteousness is the foundation of mutual trust, understanding, appreciation, and peace. Righteousness establishes a spiritual bond among fellowmen. It orients

the entire viewpoint of thought and action to the ideal of universal good. In his soul man is a universal being. Our life must express the qualities of our soul. Because in the manifestation of the divine attributes which are inherent in our soul, we fully enjoy the divine grace of life. A man of righteousness is a godly force in the world.

# Fullness of Emptiness

Srimati Shanti Mataji

In the inner life, there are times upon times when the path may feel dry, the heart may feel empty, and meditation may feel fruitless. When the devotee knows what it is to feel the presence of the Beloved, has experienced the stirring of the heart, has known clarity of vision, and has tasted the certainty of wisdom and inner guidance, then the seeming absence of divine presence—in whatever form has been known or longed for—feels barren, indeed. Also, the discovery of areas within ourselves that need to be uplifted or healed may make us feel bereft of any claim to our divinity in conscious awareness. A great lover of God before us has called these barren times “the dark night of the soul.”

At such times, we can remember that the path up a mountain is not evenly inclined. One must also cross level plateaus, seemingly going nowhere, which are still integral parts of the climb. There may even be momentary dips

before the path turns steeply upward again. Plateaus and dips are normal and essential, for we often need time and space to assimilate what has gone before.

At such times, we can also refocus our perception to know that the emptiness itself is the presence of God. Then we can focus on the apparent emptiness as yet another way to experience the divine presence. When we do that, we will discover that what before

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***Remember that the path up a mountain is not evenly inclined.***

seemed bitter has become sweetness itself; for we have found God in one more of the infinite garbs in which the Beloved comes to us. Truly, there is no experience, no condition, no being that cannot

be uplifted in our consciousness into the blissful perception that, behind what it seems to be to the mind's first glance, it is in its depth the manifestation of God!

# Planting Seeds of Creativity

Karuna

***“Today I will plow the garden of life with my new creative efforts. Therein I will sow seeds of wisdom, health, prosperity, and happiness. I will water them with self-confidence and faith, and will wait for the Divine to give me my much-needed harvest.”***

—PARAMHANSA YOGANANDA

Creativity is the voice of God, the Divine expressing through each of us. When we allow our creativity to come forth, we are tuning in to the energy of the Source of all manifestation. Our very lives reflect the ultimate creative process.

One bright spot in what could be described as a bleak time has been the joy of witnessing an abundance of creative expression. It is clear that we are not content to accept separation as a fact of life. The creative imperative can't help but bridge the gap of physical distance to build community and celebrate oneness.

Early on in this time of social distancing, our hearts were moved by members of a world-class symphony playing Beethoven's Ninth together, yet each from a separate location. The video is a beautiful and powerful demonstration of

many people coming together in love to share their unique talents, bringing us together with an exquisite common experience. Many others have been inspired to come together to share their gifts in a similar fashion, from deejaying Saturday night dance parties on Zoom to making masks for health care workers and friends.

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***Our very lives reflect the ultimate creative process.***

Divine Grace is reflected in the countless ways people have infused fun into the midst of a stay-at-home order. While taking a walk through the neighborhood the other day, I came across a charming zoo. There was a variety of stuffed animals—snakes, lions, dogs, crocodiles—occupying the front yard. Each was accompanied by a poster in a child's handwriting, reciting obscure, fun facts about each species. (Who knew that although a crocodile has the strongest bite

Photo by Sebastián León Prado on Unsplash



of any animal, the muscles that open its mouth are so weak you can hold its mouth closed with your hands?) The zoo was joyful to behold. Someone had taken the time and energy to give form to a joyful idea, no doubt hoping, but not knowing, that it would bring joy to another.

What better way to honor the

Divine than allowing the Divine to share its infinite reservoir of joy and creativity through us? According to Ram Dass, inspiration is God making contact with Itself. Therefore, the result can't help but be a gift to ourselves and to others.

# Revelations of a Cosmic Traveler

Sri Swami Nityananda Giri

One light shines within all. As we cultivate awareness of this shimmering, dancing, sacred light within ourselves and within all, the whole universe shines from within, illumined with love. The whole planet becomes visible as God's world. We see that all existence lives and moves and breathes and has its being in a field of divine energy, an ocean of grace, a waterfall of bliss.

With our whole life, breath, and being, we give thanks for that divine energy called Guru Grace, expressed through our blessed line of teachers so clearly, purely, directly, showered down upon all of us to help us purify our hearts, our consciousness, our awareness, so that we truly see, all is light. All is love. All is peace. All is beauty.

All is blessing made visible. Thanks to Divine Grace, the guru helps us clear our vision and step forward to serve the Divine within all.

We expand our circle of kinship to include our neighbors, our whole country, all countries, everyone on our planet. We expand

our circle of kinship to include the earth, and all that walk upon it. We expand our circle of kinship to include the birds of the air, the beautiful animals, the marvelous insects. We expand our circle of kinship to honor divine life energy that

flows through trees and plants. We take our place within a sacred circle of birth, life, and death, a wholeness that makes visible God's grace in all that is.

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***All is love. All is peace. All is beauty. All is blessing made visible.***

# Anyone Can Knit

Murali

One of my favorite cartoons shows a snake sitting on his recliner reading a book entitled "Anyone Can Knit." Next to the snake is a pair of knitting needles. The caption reads "Leonard was hopeful."

The narrating voice in Leonard's head assured him that knitting was a fine choice for a snake and his idea went unchallenged. In fact, we all have a narrating voice that tells us what to focus on and what to believe. This narrator, the conditioned mind, has an opinion, interpretation, and label for every experience. It tells us what should be happening and shouldn't be happening; what we should want and not want; and what will make us happy and unhappy.

Usually, the narrator tells us that something or someone in our life needs to change in order for us to feel better.

The narrator believes it is the most true, important, and relevant news source. This is why we get hooked by this voice, with all its limited points of view. Even when the narration creates fear and painful emotion, it usually goes unquestioned. When we do try to make the narration stop or try to replace it with more uplifting narration, we experience just how

difficult it is to make this conditioned voice obey. One alternative approach is to challenge the belief that this narration is actually worthy of our attention and trust. Is this voice really necessary or is it simply repeating learned perspectives and beliefs? Is this narrator up to the task of telling us what is true and significant in each moment?

When we deeply question this voice, we see what it's like to cease engaging with conditioned thoughts, beliefs, desires, and opinions. We notice how it feels to live without the part of us interpreting and labeling every

***Challenge the belief that this narration is actually worthy of our attention and trust.***

experience and feeling. When the narration is allowed to be, with no effort to control or change it, there is an opportunity to be and move in the world in a new way. When we are no longer defined or led by the changing narration, we can explore the changeless part of our being in which all thoughts and feelings come and go. It is this exploration that reveals the truth and infinite beauty of what we are!

# Teachings of the Gurus

## Sri Swami Nityananda Giri

“Wherever we are, we are walking the eternal teachings of truth and we’re asking that they come to life and be lived in us and through us and as us. We’re reminding ourselves, this is exactly why we’re here! We are here always to share our divinity, to honor divinity within ourselves, to honor divinity in all. And the beautiful blessing of divinity is that it is everywhere always. So no matter what the realm of time and space is moving through, divinity is equally there always. We are simply connecting with that bedrock of spiritual strength, that delight of soul, that is able to encourage us and uplift us and elevate us and steady us and help us be kind, help us honorably fulfill with joy everything that the Divine would love to fulfill through us. To help bring those truths into lived realization, into our bodies, our hearts, our minds, our lives, offer three AUMs, energizing pure love, energizing pure light, energizing what is truly

of service, what is courageous, bright, and gorgeous, filled with glad, lighthearted caring, and the steady energy of being here to be of service.

“Anytime you want, come back to the AUM, come back to the freshness of the heart, come back to the revitalizing energy of

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***We are here  
always to share  
our divinity, to  
honor divinity  
within ourselves,  
to honor divinity  
in all.***

the lungs. Connect with that first before you do the email, before you make the phone call, before you have the meeting on Zoom, before you have whatever conversation you were having. Come back to that first, always.

If you give your life to the Divine, the Divine will prioritize your days, will prioritize your nights, will always show you, with incredible grace, good humor, and lots of laughter and fun, what comes next. This will very often not be what your human mind thinks should come next, and that’s why there’s a lot of humility and large-hearted good humor involved in giving one’s life to the Divine in this way!”

## Sri Swami Shankarananda Giri

“To meditate means to be in the center of everything and of everyone. Being centered within oneself is being in the meditative state of consciousness. All the techniques and spiritual disciplines are the means to help us discover the center. Being centered means to be in a state of balance, which signifies knowing and experiencing harmony. To meditate, therefore, is to be in harmony with one’s own divine essence, or to be in balance. The outpouring of meditation brings equilibrium and

moderation in everything we do.

“If we have difficulty with a particular technique of meditation, we generally practice it all the harder. Thus we give more attention to the technique than to the reality behind the technique. Let us listen with the heart, technique or no technique. This is where my understanding has brought me in the practice of meditation and of techniques: Listening with the heart is the essence of it all.”

## Shyamacharan Lahiri

“The light of God shines in perpetual effulgence at the inner door of the spiritual eye which leads to the presence of the indwelling God. Soul alone knows the way to the cosmic Soul. Always remember that you are a soul and that your soul is a spiritual son of God.

“He who has seen the light of God within him never again walks in spiritual darkness. He remains constantly aware of the sacred-

ness of his body, the righteousness of his mind, the purity of his heart, and the divinity of his soul. An illumined soul lives in the holiness of spiritual consciousness. By the illumination and divinity of soul the entire being is spiritualized and all expressions of life become the adoration of the all-pervading and ever-abiding God. That is the most blessed fruit of meditation and the supreme grace of yoga.”

***“Come out of this cage of flesh. Thou art the immortal soul. Thou art that. Feel, assert, recognize, and realize.”***

—BABAJI



# Joy of the Infinite

Sri Swami Nityananda Giri

I invite you to place your hands in prayer. Connect with the sacred energy of balance, strength, poise, peace, and joy deep within yourself. Raise your prayer hands to your spiritual eye, bowing in humility, reverence, and respect to the sacred life energy that flows through every vein in your body, forms your bones and your marrow, and courses through you in the form of rivers of breath.

The sacred life energy is pure. It is divine. It is the breath of the Eternal. It is the breath of God. We place ourselves reverently in the presence of that sacred life energy, the sacred teachers, and the teachings that make it possible for us to connect very clearly and directly, in this time and place, with the energy, consciousness, light, love, laughter, steadiness,

***Allow yourself to sit in the stillness, in the consciousness of being welcomed and cared for.***

wisdom, forgiveness, kindness, gladness, and generosity of all of our sisters and brothers who have ever walked this way before us, everyone who loves the Divine, everyone who is here consciously to share, to be of service, and to shine.

We seat ourselves with our feet consciously contacting the

earth, connecting us to all of life, reminding us we cannot take a single step, speak a single word, or breathe a single breath without creating effects for ourselves and others. We ask to be so filled with the energy of unconditional love, divine grace, and wisdom, that all that we do blesses ourselves and everyone we encounter in any way.

We are seating ourselves in the presence of stillness, of sacred quiet, the presence that welcomes us home with a giant embrace of warmth, brightness, caring, unconditional support, and laughter. We allow ourselves to be welcomed Home, deep within our ourselves. Allow yourself to sit in the stillness, in the consciousness of being welcomed and cared for, in the consciousness of allowing yourself to receive.

Be filled to overflowing with direct, pure energy of kindness. The energy of the Eternal is the energy of kindness, spontaneous effortless caring. We allow ourselves to let go of any strain, sorrow, tension, pain, struggle, or fear, and we relax into the nourishment, the sacred, quiet welcome that is always right here.

# Swami Shankarananda's Pearls

Sri Swami Shankarananda Giri

ॐ We are born of the light. That is what each of us needs to honor, to remember, to respect, to love. The only reason any of us can see the world is that the light of the Eternal I Am, the Eternal Spirit, the Eternal One, is within us and illumines the world for us. It illumines every object of its manifestation by its own light.

ॐ As embodiments, we are children of light. O ye children of light! O ye children of immortal bliss! The Upanishads remind us again and again that our origin is bliss.

ॐ You are the one that illumines every object in your experience by the light that is within you. When you understand that everything you see is by the light of soul within, how can you any longer believe that you are separate from God? That very light is God. Everyone you behold is God, or an expression of God.

ॐ My guru, Swami Premananda, speaks of serenity as the fruit of peace. We could call it peace of mind also. You can reverse it, peace can also be the fruit of serenity.

ॐ When you read anything that you want to understand, ask the light of your being to shed light on it, to reveal the truth. Whatever problem, conundrum, puzzlement you are presented with, ask your inner light to give you spiritual discernment so that you know how to go to the heart of the matter instantly.

ॐ Krishna tells us that one of our divine qualities is serenity. We are all born with divine attributes, and we are blessed with spiritual wealth to the degree that we are able to manifest and share it.

ॐ It is our inherent birthright and nature to manifest, to reflect, to expand the light, or expand as the light. Let your light shine. All you have to do is remember that you are the light.

ॐ I ask you to take a moment and ponder: What does serenity feel like? Please close your eyes for a moment and ask yourself, "What does serenity feel like?" It feels good, so good. It feels light, unencumbered, totally present within us.

# Garland of Truths

ॐ “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”  
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

ॐ “Each one of us has lived through some devastation, some loneliness, some weather superstorm or spiritual superstorm. When we look at each other we must say, I understand. I understand how you feel because I have been there myself. We must support each other and empathize with each other because each of us is more alike than we are unlike.”  
—Maya Angelou

ॐ “When you face difficult times, know that challenges are not sent to destroy you. They’re sent to promote, increase and strengthen you.”  
—Joel Osteen

ॐ “During challenging times and when impassioned to act, human beings can be capable of miracles.”  
—Fabien Cousteau

ॐ “I find hope in the darkest of days, and focus in the brightest. I do not judge the universe.”  
—Dalai Lama

ॐ “Wherever the invitation of men or your own occasions lead you, speak the very truth, as your life and conscience teach it, and cheer the waiting, fainting hearts of men with new hope and new revelation.”  
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

ॐ “Everything will be okay in the end. If it’s not okay, it’s not the end.”  
—John Lennon

# Rumi Quotes

ॐ “Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it.”

ॐ “Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing there is a field. I’ll meet you there.”

ॐ “Stop acting so small. You are the universe in ecstatic motion.”

ॐ “What you seek is seeking you.”

ॐ “When you do things from your soul, you feel a river moving in you, a joy.”

ॐ “Silence is the language of God, all else is poor translation.”

ॐ “Sell your cleverness and buy bewilderment.”

ॐ “In your light I learn how to love. In your beauty, how to make poems. You dance inside my chest where no one sees you, but sometimes I do, and that sight becomes this art.”

ॐ “Goodbyes are only for those who love with their eyes. Because for those who love with heart and soul there is no such thing as separation.”

ॐ “I have lived on the lip of insanity, wanting to know reasons, knocking on a door. It opens. I’ve been knocking from the inside.”

**“Knock, and He’ll open the door  
Vanish, and He’ll make you shine like the sun  
Fall, and He’ll raise you to the heavens  
Become nothing, and He’ll turn you into everything.”**

—RUMI

# Standing Firm on Unity as Spiritual Athletes

Sri Swami Nityananda Giri

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna is the voice of wisdom, light, and love, the voice of the all-beautiful, all-perfect Divine in each of us. Krishna is the energy of the whole universe that animates every cell of our body, the energy that says when we stand firm on unity, we commune with the Divine that abides in all beings. When we commune with the light that abides equally in all beings, the ones we like, the ones we don't like, the ones who help us stretch and expand our ability to love unconditionally and to practice kind, calm, clear awareness and compassion, only then, in whatever state we find ourselves, we live in God, we abide in the Divine.

Krishna also says to each of us, when you do this, when you stand firm on unity, you are an athlete of the spirit. It is exactly times like these in which we get practice in being spiritual athletes. Very playfully, silently identify to yourself the spiritual qualities that have seemed stable, steady, and in place within yourself. You might say something like, *Okay, this past week I've done a good job of remaining in contact with kindness. I've been able to remain calm. I'm definitely in contact*

*with compassion and caring.* Then notice for yourself, again with a calm, neutral, nonjudgmental awareness, what are the spiritual qualities in which I'm invited to expand? Where am I receiving training as a spiritual athlete? Am I receiving training in courage, in nonattachment, in letting go of sorrow, or letting go of the appearance of separateness? Am I receiving training in forgiveness, in letting go of judging myself or others? Am I receiving training in patience, in steadfastness, in fortitude, and faithfulness, and being honorable and practicing forbearance?

Whatever it is, notice both the spiritual qualities in which you are invited to expand, and those you have been lovingly, wonderfully able to count on and rely on in yourself. Those are gifts of the Divine to you, and the more you notice them and express thankfulness and gratitude for them, the more they will be strengthened and energized and the more you'll be able to share them.

Whatever it is that you have moved through, whatever it is that you are facing now, you are adored, and you have the strength to share blessings always, no matter what.

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**Whatever it is  
that you are  
facing now, you  
are adored.**

# Spiritual Readings

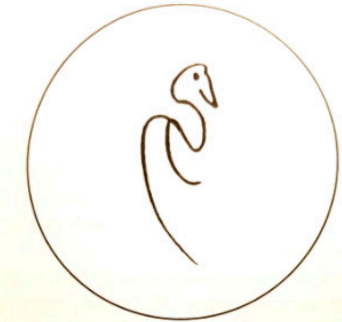
*Garden of the Soul: Lessons on Living in Peace, Happiness and Harmony* by Sri Chinmoy

Ananda

Sometimes a book appears like the teacher who arrives when the student is ready. I don't recall how this book came to my house, but I really enjoyed spending time with it while sheltering in place.

The author, Sri Chinmoy (1931-2007), was a spiritual leader and prolific writer, artist, poet, and musician who advocated a path to God through prayer and meditation. He was born in India and spent 20 years at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. He moved to the U.S. in 1964 and established his first meditation center in New York a few years later. He offered peace meditations for the United Nations staff and ambassadors for 37 years and organized Peace Runs and marathons to share his love of sports. Before entering mahasamadhi, Sri Chinmoy had 7,000 students in 60 countries.

First published in 1994, *Garden of the Soul* is a series of parables and true short stories from India interspersed with Sri Chinmoy's meditations and soul-bird drawings. A few stories were drawn from the lives of gurus such as Shyamacharan Lahiri and Swami Vivekananda. Though some stories seemed too trun-



*The heart of every human being  
Can leave behind a legacy  
Of world-illuminating  
compassion.*

cated, I loved the transcendent simplicity of the meditations and soul-birds. (Example from page 157 above.) Sri Chinmoy drew more than 15 million soul-birds beginning in 1991. He said, "The bird-consciousness represents the consciousness of our soul's inner freedom." Now I'm looking forward to discovering more of them.

# Paying it Forward

Padma

**“Do you want the whole divine channa (milk curd) for yourself alone? Could you or anyone else achieve God-communion through yoga if a line of generous-hearted masters had not been willing to convey their knowledge to others?”**

—SWAMI SRI YUKTESWAR

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna tells us that all beings have embedded within them the desire to realize their forgotten spiritual perfection and that those who have already attained higher states of realization bless and assist others on their journey. In turn, our appreciation and efforts to practice the teachings and truths they share with us bless and assist these beings in progressing further on their own path. In a wake-up bolt of admonishment, Krishna also says that by accepting and prospering from the gifts of great souls without fulfilling our duty to honor them, we are actually thieves.

The Sanskrit term “guru” is often translated as “remover of darkness.” Some Eastern traditions celebrate Guru Purnima, a

time to honor the guru, the teacher who shows the way, removing the darkness of ignorance and revealing the light of wisdom and truth. While all illumined teachers say that the true guru is the Divine that resides within every heart, it

is also true that the Divine manifests as illumined teachers in embodiment for seekers ready and so inclined.

In the West, Guru Purnima is usually observed on the full moon in July. While a typical celebration is a joyous occasion that may include singing,

dancing, chanting, feasting, and garlanding the guru with flowers, the enduring honor we offer our teachers, and indeed, the one supreme Teacher, is to live their teachings by sharing unconditional love, wisdom, forgiveness, service, compassion, peace, and

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**The enduring honor we offer our teachers... is to live their teachings.**

Photo by Sebastián León Prado on Unsplash



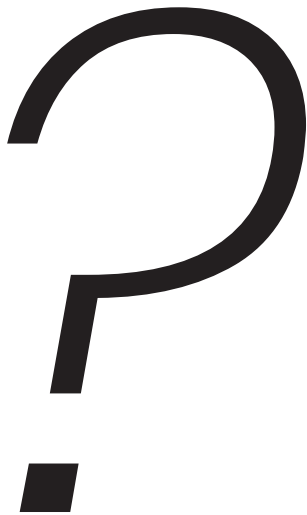
generosity with all we encounter.

Whether we feel we have a guru in or out of embodiment, we all have the Divine within who is lovingly guiding and supporting our unfoldment day by day through all our experiences. We

can celebrate Guru Purnima every day by giving thanks for all teachers and every being who helps us progress on our path, and paying it forward by sharing that progress with all.

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# What DO WE DO WITH ANGER



Sri Swami Nityananda Giri

## ANSWER:

The *Yoga Vasistha* says that as long as there are sesame seeds, there will be sesame oil. As long as there is a body, there will be moods. We can never assume it's going to be completely easy and as comfortable as if we're lying on our back in the grass in moments of perfect unity and connection. Growing up some of us learned quickly to suppress anger, to zip it and not express anything except smiles and politeness. Suppressing anger creates a coiled spring that eventually comes bouncing up, expressing quite awkwardly. Neither do we want to be burned by anger. If we allow ourselves to be wrathful, the Buddha teaches, we become like a log from the pyre, burnt from both ends and be-fouled in the middle, unfit to be of service in a fire in the village, unfit to stand in the forest as timber.

If you look back just five minutes ago when you were feeling anger, or into the distant past,

you can reflect, "What was I doing giving way to that contorted mask of rage? Why was I allowing myself to express myself in such an unskillful manner?" Come back to the Buddha's teachings. He says you will encounter people who are harmful, unskillful, harsh, cruel, and unkind. You get to choose how to respond. You can respond, "I shall be harmless."

Be so open that there's no inside of you and there's no outside of you. Even if someone directs arrows of anger toward you, there's nowhere for the anger to lodge in you. You're as wide and clear as the sky.

If you ever find that you unintentionally have allowed yourself to take and hold on to some of those energy darts, let them go. The Buddha says if you keep holding on to the beliefs, he beat me, he abused me, he reviled me, he robbed me, you will never clear yourself of enmity. Unless we want to burn ourselves, we get to stop rehearsing it, to stop reciting

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***The Buddha says if you keep holding on to the beliefs, he beat me, he abused me, he reviled me, he robbed me, you will never clear yourself of enmity.***



Photo by Nathan Dumlao on Unsplash

it. Yes, the harm happened. Others may be harmful. *I shall be harmless.* He's saying we get to transmute it and transform it. No one can do this for us except us.

Practice, practice, practice. You become steady and then you gradually establish yourself in equilibrium. It does get easier as you go, even if it takes a million

times. *I shall be harmless. I shall be harmless. I shall be harmless. This is my choice. This is my intention. This is my vow. There is nothing that can sway me if I give myself to that commitment.* With that practice we build our lives upon a rock so that when the rains come we're not built on sand and we don't wash away. That's how we're always in

God's house. We're giving ourselves strength, steadiness, and opportunity to always come from stillness, non-harming, non-anger.

Thich Nhat Hanh says, "It only takes one calm person in the boat to keep it from sinking in a storm." We can be the one calm person in the boat. Another way to play with this is to ask, "Can I be the calmest

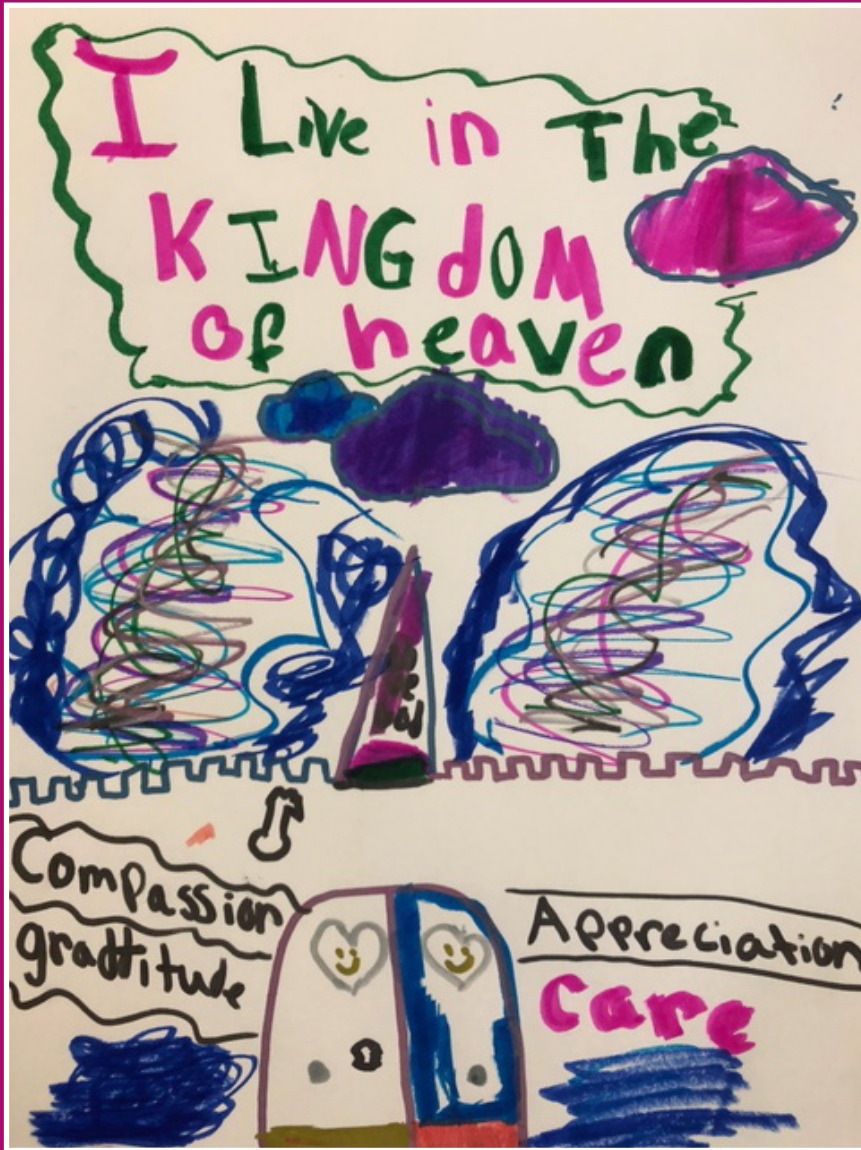
person in the room, in my family, in the waiting room, on the negotiating team?" It's a wonderful, playful challenge to set for yourself.

Here is an energy clearing technique to practice at least twice a day. When you wash your hands, visualize any static energy, any anger, going down the drain. When you take a shower, visualize that a shower of light pours over you and down you. When you take a bath, visualize that you're immersed in a pool of light and it washes away anything that you're ready to clear. Allow light to sweep

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**When you wash your hands, visualize any static energy, any anger, going down the drain.**

through your conscious and your subconscious mind. You're allowing light to transform and heal anything that is ready to be healed, even what you haven't been able to see with conscious awareness. This practice combines compassion with the practical wisdom of the body. Remember, wherever there are sesame seeds there will be sesame oil. As long as there is a body, there will be moods. May we always respond to our moods and everyone else's with the unveiled light of unconditional illumination.



## From the Sunday Meditation for Children

# Light of the Upanishads

Amritabindu Upanishad  
(translated by Eknath Easwaran)

The mind may be said to be of two kinds, pure and impure. Driven by the senses it becomes impure; but with the senses under control, the mind becomes pure.

It is the mind that frees us or enslaves. Driven by the senses we become bound; Master of the senses we become free.

Those who seek freedom must master their senses.

When the mind is detached from the senses one reaches the summit of consciousness.

Mastery of the mind leads to wisdom. Practice meditation. Stop all vain talk.

The highest state is beyond reach of thought, for it lies beyond all duality.

Keep repeating the ancient mantram Aum until it reverberates in your heart.

Brahman is indivisible and pure; realize Brahman and go beyond all change.

He is immanent and transcendent. Realizing him, sages attain freedom.

And declare there are no separate minds. They have but realized what they always are.

Waking, sleeping, dreaming, the Self is one. Transcend these three and go beyond rebirth.

There is only one Self in all creatures. The One appears many, just as the moon appears many, reflected in water.

Aum shanti shanti shanti

# Light of Vedanta

Nisargadatta Maharaj

We miss the real by lack of attention, and create the unreal by excess of imagination.

You imagine yourself to be what you are not. Stop it.

It is the cessation that is important, not what you are going to stop.

You know that you are.

Don't burden yourself with names, just be.

Any name or shape you give yourself just obscures your real nature.

Stop imagining yourself as being this or doing that, and the realization that you are the source and heart of all will dawn on you.

# Our Line of Teachers

## **Swami Nityananda**

Joyfully following the path blazed by our founding teacher, Swami Shankarananda, our presiding teacher, Swami Nityananda, emphasizes our connection and oneness with all life, selfless service, meditation, Self-realization, and unconditional love. She is dedicated to helping us apply these ideals in our everyday life and promoting the progress of all beings – our global family.

## **Swami Shankarananda**

The spiritual founder and preceptor of the Divine Life Church of Absolute Oneness in Baltimore. He was the disciple of Swami Premananda. Swami Shankarananda left the body on November 24, 2014. He appointed Swami Nityananda as his successor.

## **Swami Premananda**

A direct disciple of Swami Yogananda. Swami Premananda established the Self-Revelation Church of Absolute Monism in Washington, D.C.

## **Swami Yogananda Paramhansa**

He was the first of this line of gurus to come to America, and was the guru of Swami Premananda, ordaining him as a minister in India and later consecrating him as a Swami in America.

## **Swami Sri Yukteswar**

A man of profound wisdom, a great astronomer, and adept in the science of astrology. He was a self-dedicated humanitarian. He was the guru of Swami Yogananda Paramhansa.

## **Shyamacharan Lahiri**

He attained the supreme illumination of God-realization while living an exemplary family life. He was the guru of Swami Sri Yukteswar.

## **Aum Babaji**

A guru of divine revelation and a man of supreme compassion. He was the guru of Shyamacharan Lahiri.





# Awake Yoga Meditation

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DARSHAN is a nonsectarian magazine dedicated to the preservation, perpetuation, and dissemination of the ideals and the philosophy of Absolute Oneness.

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