



Awake Yoga
Meditation

Darshan

Summer Solstice
2021



The Energy of Liberation

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 (currently suspended)
Every Sunday at 11:00 a.m.

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

Please note: Our Sunday, Tuesday, and Friday meditations are currently being live streamed. Connect by phone, Zoom, Facebook, or YouTube.

Visit our website: AwakeYogaMeditation.org for more information on schedule and special events.

Additional Resources

Join our free eYogi Community at 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 to schedule a conference.



Liberation is clear, expanded awareness. The Buddha tells his students that everyone is always in a chariot, and asks, Am I driving the chariot or am I allowing the chariot to roll away from me? One who controls rising anger, a rolling chariot, that one is a good driver. Everyone else is just holding the reins. Am I being a good driver?

A freeing, healing gift is reminding ourselves that equilibrium is built into our architecture. Claim it. Right at the foundation of our spine, when we are sitting in meditation, or when we are involved in activities and relationships, there is always an inherent equipoise, steadiness, and balance. The moment we realize this, we are in liberation. Or as the Buddha says, "We are this freedom."

From this point of stability, the awareness of liberation reveals ourselves to ourselves in an entirely different way. We become more present, more of service, more humble, more pure of heart, more in love with the Divine, more able and responsible and reverent, knowing everyone and everything comes from the energy of liberation.

This energy of vast insight and

expansiveness always finds a way forward. See if you can feel how supported you are by this energy of liberating awareness, which can sweetly manifest as the energy of kindness. If you notice a wave of anger arising within you, notice also that your greater awareness can hold this wave of anger. Your larger awareness is as large as the universe. It certainly can hold one individual human wave of anger. Know that your vast, supportive equilibrium and liberation is much larger than a human's individual wave of anger.

**Equilibrium is
built into our
architecture.
Claim it. Right at
the foundation of
our spine**

See if you can direct that wave of anger up the base of the spine into the heart. Offer it into the heart. The heart is a doorway into vastness. You thus give permission to universal caring to dissolve the wave of anger, to melt it back into our pure energy. Then you become free. In relation to that wave of anger, you chose to drive your chariot. You did not allow the wave of anger to make you into a dangerous runaway car.

This practice transforms feelings of frustration, rivalry, and overwhelming past trauma. Gradually, waves of pain and trauma, those feelings of being wrong and



Photo by Randy Fath

wronged, melt into the energy of liberation and you become a liberated driver of your chariot. No longer do those patterns, those old energies of the past, those old judgments or beliefs, drive you.

Instead, you reclaim your natural, eternal, ever free, always joyful, always delightful, always kind, always shining energy of freshness, the energy of liberation.

Loving Attention

Sri Swami Shankarananda Giri

If you want to feel oneness with all, ask yourself what you want to experience, and forget what you don't want to experience anymore. Feast on what you want to realize. Feast on the feeling of joy, of well-being, of understanding, of harmony, of success, of victory, triumph, freedom, fulfillment, wholeness, and strength. When you give your loving attention to any of those aspects of your nature, that is what you will bring into your experience.

When you give loving attention to yourself, you cannot help but start feeling better and better. You will have initiated the most important work you can do, and that's the healing process for yourself and the world. You are not whole until you realize your oneness with all. You cannot be whole as long as you harbor a sense of lack, limitation, fear, or insecurity.

Wholeness means knowing that you are sustained and maintained moment by moment by the source of all that comes into manifestation. You are connected intimately with that creative Reality, which is your own consciousness. Whatever you impress in your consciousness determines what you bring into your experience. To

be consciously in charge means to give loving attention, and to give loving attention means that you have to voice it at least within: *I choose to give my loving attention only to what promotes my well-being and the well-being of all.*

Then you can break well-being into its components such as harmony, peace, enlightenment, fulfillment, understanding, patience, joy, freedom, ecstasy, and so on. As you keep doing that from day to day, the state of well-being

will become your new reality. You discover that the law of attraction is fulfilled in your experience, through your feelings and your power of imagination.

Whatever you are unhappy about in your life creates

disturbances in your mind. To overcome these disturbances, identify with the quality that brings you a sense of peace and self-confidence, restfulness, healing, and inner strength. As you keep doing that over and over, you'll wean yourself away from passing judgment on the world of appearances, the world of change, the world of duality. Then you are no longer living under the law of karma. You are living by the law of grace.

When you give loving attention to yourself, you cannot help but start feeling better and better.

The Inner Life

Sri Swami Premananda Giri

Man is a thinking being, a contemplative spirit, and a wise soul. Introspection, contemplation, and revelation are the three blessed qualities of man. We all possess them. Introspection is the directing of our mind within ourselves. Contemplation is profound reflection upon the spiritual qualities of our inner self. Revelation is the perception of truth within our consciousness.

Introspection, contemplation, and revelation unfold within our consciousness the truth, power, and beauty of our inner life. Becoming identified with the objective world and thereby overpowered by its sensory effect, we have forgotten the reality and blessedness of our inner life. Our inner life is real and true. It is eternal and everlasting. It is infinite and illimitable. In it is our spiritual existence and unfoldment. Our inner life is the source of all our righteous powers. It is the fountainhead of fortitude and courage. The potency of self-determination and self-advancement stems from the power that is generated within our inner life. There is a mystic beauty that pervades our entire inner life. What is beauty? Beauty is the perfection of harmony. It is

the perfect blending of all aspects of co-relationship. There is no discordance within our inner life. It is a life of subjective harmony wherein all the faculties of soul function with the ideal of self-perfection.

What constitutes our inner life? All the attributes of God and all the righteous qualities of soul comprise our inner life. God and soul comprise our inner life. The divinity and light of God, together with the virtues and illumination

of soul, make up our entire inner life. Our inner life is pure and holy. It is the sacred abode of our spirit. It is within our consciousness but beyond the domain of mind and acquired impressions and concepts. It is

the realm of righteousness and the kingdom of divinity within our pure consciousness. In order to enter this subjective sanctuary of God and soul we must journey within our consciousness beyond the domain of mind and finite concepts. It is the realm of effulgent pure consciousness wherein we regain the full possession of the wealth of righteousness of our true self and the attributes of our supreme Spirit. It is the Kingdom of Heaven within us.

Our inner life is pure and holy. It is the sacred abode of our spirit.

The Guru-Disciple Relationship

Srimati Shanti Mataji

The guru-disciple relationship is the most profound, the deepest, and the most transformative of all relationships, because it is not based on human relationship. It is at the very core of our being. It is a divine relationship. The core of our being is our divinity, and the core of being of the guru is divinity. There is a connection at this deepest level beyond what is in most human relationships that I know about—no matter how wonderful they are.

When I speak of the guru this way, I want to make a distinction and call it the true guru, one who has attained full illumination, who has been commissioned by God to take on the role or the function of a guru, and whose motives are totally pure, whose intention is

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for the well-being of the devotee, and whose purpose is to assist the devotee to attain their own illumination.

There are two ways to look at what the guru is. One is as the person that we call the guru. If we were to introduce somebody, we would say, “This is my guru,” and give the guru’s name. In that way,

we would be talking about the human being. The second way is as the God-consciousness within the human being, within the one we are calling the guru. It’s all the guru, but when we think about the guidance that can be given, it’s important to know that it isn’t coming from the human being. It’s coming from the God-realization, and is God-realization, God-consciousness, separate from God? If we think the guidance is coming from the God-consciousness and it feels right and uplifts us and, even when the lessons are not so easy, we feel the rightness of them, we trust it. We will know, because our inner Self will guide us.

It’s important to remember the human part also, because there is a human being there who has allowed himself or herself to be the instrument or the mouthpiece for this God-consciousness that flows through. And like all human beings, that human being has the need for water and food and everything that all the rest of us need. It is important to honor that aspect also, of the one that we think of as the guru.

There’s a third way to look at the guru. That is to realize that when we perceive the unconditional love, the manifestation of



Photo by Caroline Veronez on Unsplash

divinity, the wisdom, the guidance, the purity, and everything that we perceive there, in fact what we're truly seeing is a mirror. The guru comes and forms himself or herself into one giant mirror, so that we can look into that mirror and see who we truly are. We are everything that we perceive in an illumined being, or an avatar, or a guru, or whatever holy one it is. That's who we truly are! If we perceive lovingness there, it is our lovingness. If we perceive wisdom there, it's our wisdom. If we perceive the divine radiation, it's our divine radiation. And this is, as far as I'm concerned, the ultimate realization about the guru—that God comes in and embodies itself as everything that we are, except that one is able to manifest it in fullness. And we are still manifesting it in part, but perhaps not in fullness. Nor are we confident

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in our identity as the Divine. But when we encounter someone who is confident of his or her identity, not only in the Divine but as the Divine, then we have a mirror for what we are.

The reason the grace of God can come to us as the guru and through the guru, is because of our connection in oneness, the deepest place of our being. It is the most profound relationship, it is eternal, and it is based in oneness. It is because of that oneness, that melding, that all the alchemy can take place in our unfoldment, so that the heavy lead of our ignorance, whatever little pockets there may be, are transformed into the golden light and clarity and beauty of bliss consciousness, of God-realization, because that is our true purpose and destiny on this planet.

Shearing the Sheep

Karuna

A recent news article tells the story of a rescued sheep that was found in a forest outside of Melbourne, Australia. The remnants of an ear tag showed he had been owned at one time, but this sheep had gone years without being shorn. Annual shearing is generally recognized as essential to a domesticated sheep's health and allows the sheep to live comfortably. Without annual shearing, a sheep's fleece continues to grow and grow and becomes hopelessly matted and filthy, infested with flies, maggots and other pests. This rescued sheep could barely see because of all the wool around his face. After he was shorn, his fleece weighed in at 73 pounds! Under all that wool, the sheep was malnourished and underweight.

Imagine if you were forced to wear a 73-pound garment everywhere you went for many years. It sounds exhausting, doesn't it? But this is exactly what we do to ourselves when we carry around judgments, hold grudges or regrets about the past. The more negativity and unresolved hurts we hold on to, the more our energy is diverted away from what nurtures and supports us. We're like the sheep that suffers because it

is carrying extra fleece, weighed down by the burdens we insist on lugging around. If we don't tend to our spiritual hygiene, we become weighed down and forward motion becomes increasingly difficult.

Unlike sheep, we can choose if or when to let go of what's weighing us down. Whatever limits us, whatever we want to heal, whatever we want to let go of, we can place on the altar of light to be transformed by the Divine. We don't have to live with feelings of unworthiness or resentments we have harbored for years; we can give them over to divine love. If we find ourselves repeatedly in conflict with another, we can offer the relationship to the Divine and place the weight of discord on the altar of light and step away lighthearted.

If we meditate regularly, engage in karma yoga, and follow our other spiritual practices we are like a sheep that gets shorn annually—we have the opportunity to transform our wool ongoingly into beautiful sweaters and warm mittens that can be shared for the well-being of all. When we let go of the things that hold us back, we can frolic in the fields with joyful bleats.

If we don't tend to our spiritual hygiene, we become weighed down.

Revelations of a Cosmic Traveler

Sri Swami Nityananda Giri

The Ashtavakra Gita teaches us that when we let go of identifying with any human categories or classifications, we remember, I am essentially divine! I am ever-free! I am a child of Immortality! As we remember, as we fill our entire being with pure light and supreme love, we naturally and effortlessly become one with Bliss, which flows forth through us to bless everyone we meet.

Like an ice cube in the summer sun, let us invite our ego to let go of all hardness and become shining, flowing light and oneness. As we open to light, as we offer ourselves totally to the Divine to be

As we open to Light, as we offer ourselves totally to the Divine to be transformed, we let go of our limitations.

transformed, we let go of our limitations. We heal ourselves from deep within. We resonate with divine song. We become able to respect and honor that same symphony of grace within all beings, all life. We become light-hearted, calm, cheerful, steady, kind, able to be infinitely helpful and hopeful.

Let us invite Jesus's stepfather, Joseph, to show us how to be with our human family members who need our support. Let us respond instantly to divine guidance, as this beautiful human father does. Let us give our lives to caring for those who are nearest to us and need love. Let us offer ourselves to our daily work, our life's service and faithfulness, like Joseph with his giant heart and capable hands, knowing that whatever work is before us, that is exactly where the Divine invites us to share light right now. In that awareness, we open ourselves to receive and pour forth such blessings. God is so good!

Go straight to God, straight to supreme Love and radiant Oneness, and God will accomplish through you the true miracle of helping you be fully human, fully yourself, free, joyful, true, loving, strong and beautiful, in your daily life. Light can do anything it wants, any time. The real miracle is when we open to Light in our whole life, manifesting our divinity right in the midst of daily demands.

Pure Perceiving

Murali

While hiking recently, I noticed a family gazing over the side of a bridge. I joined them in watching a very relaxed beaver gathering greens and transporting them under the shallow water to eat. The beaver repeated his dinner ritual a few times and although it wasn't the exciting scene you might see in a National Geographic documentary, I was totally absorbed and filled with a quiet serenity and stillness.

Anyone watching me could conclude that the source of my happiness was simply in observing this beautiful creature close-up. That is certainly true but there was also another kind of peace that came online in that event. That peace arises spontaneously whenever our attention shifts away from our thinking and feelings and we enter a gap where we no longer reference the mind for anything or listen to whatever narrative the mind is cooking up.

If we replay this gap in super slow motion, we notice that we are perceiving in an unfiltered way without the distortions of the conditioned mind that is forever interpreting, labeling, and comparing experiences. In that gap, we have

effortlessly stopped resisting any experience, stopped asking the moment to be different in any way, and stopped trying to control or manage anything at all. In fact, we have spontaneously lost interest in our mind, mood, or anything else we were previously conscious of in ourselves. This complete lack of self-consciousness is what we adults long for when we watch children absorbed in their play.

This gap of pure perceiving can provide enormous spiritual insight if we explore it with genuine curiosity and openness. These gaps are a taste of our natural state of being, our unconditioned, uncontrived, and uncontrolled state of being. Our true being is sensing, perceiving, and navigating life just fine without its circular thinking, beliefs, and opinions. That peaceful feeling is a byproduct of that natural state of being and perceiving and can lead to the recognition, *Ohhh! This peace that I have been struggling to achieve and maintain, perhaps it is already right here! What would this moment be like without controlling anything, without trying to get somewhere or make something happen?*

Peace arises spontaneously whenever our attention shifts away from our thinking and feelings.

Teachings of the Gurus

Sri Swami Nityananda Giri

“Let us activate both courage and connectedness within ourselves. Like the sky they are always there. Any fear or isolation is like a passing cloud. We are connecting with expansiveness, the vastness that is with us always. Connect with what you love: *This I love.*

This I cherish. This fills me with joy. Connect with that feeling of warmth, brightness and delight in your heart. Invite it to sweep through you, to fill the body with wholeness, with the energy of love. Let it remind you of the eternal vitality that pours through you always, the inspira-

tion, the constancy, the gladness that is present just because you are awake and alive, just because of beingness, just because you are of love. Let courage make its way before you and speak through you, let it think and move and live

and breathe and have its being through you. Simply by remembering this for yourself, silently you become an invitation, a witness, a reminder, a bell, a chime, an Aum, letting everyone whom you encounter come into the same

harmony, resonance and energy. According to their current consciousness, as you remember your own whole-heartedness, you also make it possible for human beings across the planet to remember the same for themselves in their own lives. Allow yourself to rest in this energy of courage, of

connectedness to all of life—wondrous, bright, hope-filled, joyful, radiant unfoldments in our lives and in our worlds. Open to receive this energy. Open to seeing in a new way. Open to feel and be of love in a new way.”

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Sri Swami Shankarananda Giri

“If you would diligently search the scriptures for evidence of the creative power of the word, the Supreme and all-loving will of the originating consciousness of the whole universe, you would rejoice to be led into ever-greater Self-realization. Such realization is possible when you open your mind and heart to the Spirit behind the

words. Ask, *O perfect Spirit of light and truth, reveal to me in my meditation on the scriptures whatever is true of my Self and all Selves.* Do this with brightness of mind, openness of heart, and steadfast trust in the revealing power of your soul, God within you. What a blessed way to be taught by the Spirit within.”

Sri Swami Premananda Giri

“We are from Spirit. Therefore, we reach out for the perfection of God. We intuitively know our ultimate spiritual destiny. We are convincingly aware within our consciousness that the perfection of God is the divine destiny of our soul, of all souls. We feel that God is the source, the substance, and the sustenance of all. Desire to know God, soul, and truths, which are infinite, eternal, and absolute,

is the strongest of all urges within our innermost self. Nothing can obliterate this inner longing of the human spirit. Impelled by an irresistible force that is already within us, our mind, heart, and soul ascend in continuous aspiration, transcending all concepts of time, space, and duality, to gain the vision of the reality, perfection, and glory of God.”

“God manifests himself through man when man dedicates himself unto God.”

Swami Sri Yukteswar

Babaji

“Let the world scorn and scoff at you. Let showers of insults be poured on you. Let people call you scoundrel and rogue. Fear not! Thou art none but Brahman Supreme. Learn to discriminate.

Learn to give what you have. Learn to look within. Subdue your little self. Keep the heart pure. Build the bridge of love and enter the Kingdom of Peace.”

Joy of the Infinite

Sri Swami Nityananda Giri

Heaven itself is ours, if we but ask. And the receiving of Heaven is the practice of a lifetime, making visible in our every thought, word, and action the grace of infinite love that pours through us every moment we are in embodiment. We are never done shining. We are never done singing. We are never done sharing our adoration of the bliss that we are. With our entire being, we bow to the Divine that makes possible every step of our ongoing journey.



Letting go of all limitation, all that binds us, we may allow ourselves to be the fullness, the completeness, the perfection of Heaven. We are invited to realize the Infinite, that we may also realize that all we encounter in this realm is embraced by the Infinite—nay is one with the Infinite. We are oneness, journeying through duality back to oneness, and when we realize that, then even this realm, this madly beautiful world, is a blessing, Oneness itself, an expression of infinite grace, light, peace, hope, wonder, awe, magnificence. The whole journey to healing is wholeness itself. The whole journey to creativity is in-

spiration itself. The whole journey to union is love itself. Let go of all concepts, all constrictions, all suffering, and be free. Let go of the illusion of separateness, and rejoice in serving divinity in all. Let us walk hand in hand, side by side, every step of the way to Heaven, and let us rejoice that we are in Heaven all along.



Spirit of infinite light and compassion, lift us into pure awareness, flood us with your all-revealing presence, embrace us with awareness beyond thought. Let us be your loving kindness beyond limits. Let us see, hear, and feel only your divinity, shared through all. Let us be your oneness in action, knowing that all we think, say, and do, creates the path that comes into view.

Swami Shankarananda's Pearls

Sri Swami Shankarananda Giri

How blessed are they who realize that God's guidance never fails. How blessed are they who turn within to the sacred place of the heart for strength and inspiration, for they have all they need for the journey from sense-consciousness to Self-realization. Will you remember, my friend, that the living and all-loving spirit within you grants you the wisdom and the healing power to make your journey successful? Remember to keep your vision established on the spiritual ideal, and every experience will be a blessing.



You can make fear work for you by making fear your teacher.



None can live without love, for love is our true Self. None can receive love unless they are willing to share love. None can find love who does not transcend ego-consciousness, and none can be an embodiment of love except by falling in love with the Beloved and being reborn in love. The light of love is the unflinching guide to freedom, bliss, and oneness. Let your light of love shine brightly and you will see the world with the eyes of love.

Only one who listens to the voice of soul can recognize the spiritual authority of the God presence empowering one to know the truth, and achieve true understanding, wisdom, and Self-liberation. The devotee knows the voice of the indwelling deity and rejoices upon hearing the call and bows in profound gratitude with tears of joy at the altar of divine grace.



Our search begins with the realization that all experiences of duality and material achievements still leave a hunger in the heart. And we cry out, "What more is there?" And the heart responds, "Come rest on the cushion of my love, and I will soothe you with the answer: I Am is the one you are seeking." For I Am, though it is always with you, appears to be elsewhere. Such is the veil of separation. But now you are ready to awaken with joy in your heart, for you have heard the answer, that your hunger can only be fulfilled by remembering who you are.

Garland of Truths

“I have decided to be happy, because it’s good for my health.”

—Voltaire



“Your success and happiness lie in you. Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invisible host against difficulties.”

—Helen Keller



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

—Rumi



“Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.”

—Thich Nhat Hanh



“I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.”

—Rabindranath Tagore

“Spiritual joy arises from purity of the heart and perseverance in prayer.”

—Francis of Assisi



“Joy is the infallible sign of the presence of God.”

—Pierre Teilhard de Chardin



“Real joy means immediate expansion. If we experience pure joy, immediately our heart expands. We feel that we are flying in the divine freedom-sky. The entire length and breadth of the world becomes ours, not for us to rule over, but as an expansion of our consciousness. We become reality and vastness.”

—Sri Chinmoy



“Let your joy be unconfined!”

—Mark Twain



“Allow yourself to trust joy and embrace it. You will find you dance with everything.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Light of the Upanishads

Svetasvatara Upanishad
(translated by Swami Premananda)

In the realization of Brahman is the severance of all bondage of self-limitation. In the light of wisdom vanishes the illusion of birth and death. By meditation on Brahman, consciousness is liberated from sense identification and mental servitude and is transported into the state of the inherent perfection of the indwelling self, and finally the absolute Self is realized in endless bliss.

Realize the eternal Brahman as thy indwelling Self. There is no knowledge superior to the realization of one’s highest Self. Man, nature and creator are essentially one. Everything is Brahman in different states of manifestation. Realizing this, the man of wisdom lives in subjective freedom and inner contentment.

As fire, though invisible, is hidden in the firesticks and is ignited by continuous friction; even so the supreme Self is concealed as the individual self in this body and is

realized by right meditation on Aum.

The body may be considered as the lower firestick and Aum as the upper one. By practicing the rhythmic meditation, the initiate realizes Brahman, God, the supreme Self, as the boundless, effulgent pure consciousness.

As oil in sesame seeds, butter in cream, water in riverbeds, and flame in firesticks, even so the supreme Self is realized in one’s own Self, if sought with harmony of life-force, serenity of mind, and purity of cognitive consciousness.

As butter permeates cream, so Brahman pervades all

objects and beings. Brahman, the source of the highest good, is the subject matter of the Upanishads. Verily, if sought with purity of body, mind, and heart, in one’s own self is realized the supreme Self.

Aum Shanti Shanti Shanti

As butter permeates cream, so Brahman pervades all objects and beings.

Connecting with Our Soul's Purpose

Sri Swami Nityananda Giri

I invite you to join me in embarking on a wonderful adventure. We are inviting ourselves to remember our soul's purpose. We are inviting ourselves to let go of any concepts, ideas, images, or what that might look like or be like. We are inviting ourselves to feel directly the energy of spiritual victory, the energy of our soul's goodness, connectedness, faith, trust, love, delight, inner eternal security, generosity, freedom, wholeness, and healing.

Place your hands in prayer at the heart and silently vow, *I am open to feeling my soul's energy. I am open to directly contacting the felt awareness of my life's purpose. I am open to spiritual victory.*

Open to a willingness to let go of where you have been judging yourself, where you have perhaps been berating yourself, where you have perhaps been feeling not good enough. *I open to the willingness to let go of the pain I've been holding on to that I have not been able to see or face. I'm willing to let go of feeling sorry for myself. I'm willing to let go of judging myself or anyone else. I open my heart and ask God to love and forgive and let*

go through me. I ask God to help me love and forgive myself. I ask God to help me trust the goodness, joy, delight, love, and healing energy of my own soul. Take a few moments of stillness for that deep intention and vow to be received on all the levels and layers of your body and being. Be aware that the intention, the healing energy, the transformation you just set into motion continues onward.

If you like, take a piece of paper and a pen and ask yourself this question: What does my soul want me to know right now in relation to my life purpose? Give yourself the freedom and permission, in an uncensored, no-holding-back way, to write or draw whatever comes in response to this question.

Be open to directly feeling your soul's purpose. And the purpose of your soul very often will be something as simple as "continue onward as you are doing." And there is a feeling of, "That's it? Really? It's that simple? Carry on as I am doing?" But the yogis are absolutely clear that the message our soul gives us is this: Whatever work comes to you, that is the Divine greeting you in that work. Take care of

Be aware that the intention, the healing energy, the transformation you just set into motion continues onward.



that work with love, with joy, with willingness, with generosity. And trust that whatever the results are, are for the highest good.

See if you can imagine what it's like to live life with that felt awareness. It is a life of peace. It is a life of purpose. It is a life of delight. It is a life of ease inwardly, even if outwardly we're working 12- or 14-hour days, we're leaping oceans, we're lifting mountains, we're performing feats of enormous human ingenuity and creativity and genius and accomplishment. It's the quiet remembrance that whatever work comes to you, that is the Divine. Greet the Divine right in the midst of the daily tasks, the daily conversations, right in the midst of whatever work arises, whatever it is we are

lovingly invited to help fulfill, to help complete, without personal desire, without hankering for results. That's liberation, right in the midst of daily life.

Be cheerful, be kind, be thoughtful. Be considerate, be generous, be willing, be joyful. Quarrel with no one. Wherever you are, that's exactly where your soul has appointed you to be and God is right there with you.

And remember, the teachings, the learnings, the lessons of a lifetime cannot be rushed. They unfold over the course of your whole life. Give yourself the gift of resting in that divine assuredness. Allow the Divine, without rush, without hurry, to fulfill all things through you.

Quotes from Anthony De Mello

“As soon as you look at the world through an ideology, you are finished. No reality fits an ideology. Life is beyond that. That is why people are always searching for a meaning to life. Meaning is only found when you go beyond meaning. Life only makes sense when you perceive it as mystery and it makes no sense to the conceptualizing mind.”

“Wisdom tends to grow in proportion to one’s awareness of one’s ignorance.”

“What I really enjoy is not you; it’s something that’s greater than both you and me. It is something that I discovered, a kind of symphony, a kind of orchestra that plays one melody in your presence, but when you depart, the orchestra doesn’t stop. When I meet someone else, it plays another melody, which is also very delightful. And when I’m alone, it continues to play.”

“Do you want a sign that you’re asleep? Here it is: you’re suffering. Suffering is a sign that you’re out of touch with the truth. Suffering is given to you that you might open your eyes to the truth, that you might understand that there’s falsehood somewhere, just as physical pain is given to you so you will understand that there is disease or illness somewhere. Suffering occurs when you clash with reality. When your illusions clash with reality, when your falsehoods clash with truth, then you have suffering. Otherwise there is no suffering.”

“If what you seek is Truth, there is one thing you must have above all else.”

“I know—an overwhelming passion for it.”

“No. An unremitting readiness to admit you may be wrong.”

“You know, all mystics, no matter what their theology, no matter what their religion, are unanimous on one thing: that all is well, all is well. Though everything is a mess, all is well. Strange paradox, to be sure. But, tragically, most people never get to see that all is well because they are asleep. They are having a nightmare.”

Spiritual Readings

I Am

Written and Directed by Tom Shadyac

Ananda

This engaging and thoughtful documentary from 2011 follows Hollywood director Tom Shadyac as he explores the questions “What is wrong with the world?” and “What can I do about it?” He begins by showing the enormous wealth he amassed from *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective* and other comedies, followed by a serious bicycle accident that left him with multiple injuries and severe depression. The film then documents his search for answers through conversations with Archbishop Desmond Tutu, philosopher Noam Chomsky, historian Howard Zinn, physicist Lynne McTaggart, and poet Coleman Banks, among others. Shadyac pokes fun at himself by showing that only one of the many people he interviewed had ever heard of *Ace Ventura*.

Though the director initially focuses on the materialism and competition that appears to dominate many cultures, he soon delves deeper into the innate spirit of cooperation and democracy that exists among all sentient beings. He notes that Charles Darwin mentions the phrase “survival of the fittest” twice, but repeats the

word “love” 95 times in *The Descent of Man*. Through other conversations he learns that the heart, not the brain, is man’s primary organ of intelligence, and that human consciousness and emotions affect the physical world, as demonstrated by measuring the impact of his feelings transmitted through a bowl of yogurt.

Interspersed through the film, along with lively music and beautiful cinematography, are quotes such as “It was easy to love God in all that was beautiful,” and “The lessons of deeper knowledge, though, instructed me to embrace God in all things.” (St. Francis of Assisi)

At the conclusion of the film, we see how Shadyac has transformed his life: living in a mobile home, riding his bicycle to work, and teaching about his life-affirming discoveries at a local college. *I Am* is ultimately about personal transformation—and being the solution for the world we want to live in.

Available on Amazon Prime Video, Comcast, Direct TV, and Dish Network

The heart, not the brain, is man’s primary organ of intelligence.

The True Guru

Padma

“Life itself is the supreme guru; be attentive to its lessons and obedient to its commands. When you personalize their source, you have an outer guru; when you take them from life directly, the guru is within.”

“The true guru will never humiliate you, nor will he estrange you from yourself. He will constantly bring you back to the fact of your inherent perfection and encourage you to seek within. He knows you need nothing, not even him, and is never tired of reminding you.”

—SRI NISARGADATTA MAHARAJ

For those steeped in Eastern traditions, the guru is always honored and particularly celebrated during Guru Purnima, a festival held at the time of the full moon in July. For those not steeped in or drawn by Eastern traditions, there may still be a resonance with recognizing and honoring teachers, embodied or not, who help us progress on our spiritual journey to remember who we truly are.

We may honor many teachers throughout our lives that introduce us to a new perspective or awaken us to a higher awareness. I honor my mother who let me know as a young child that God exists and shared her faith and practice of compassion and generosity with me. I treasure the friend who first

introduced me to meditation, and the teacher who mentioned that she prayed for all her students every day, launching me on a daily path of prayer for others. But what Nisargadatta refers to as the “true guru” is beyond those examples. The true guru is an illumined being who has taken a vow to serve by assisting others to realize their own divinity, completely without self-interest or desire for personal gain.

To me, the true guru in human embodiment, who continually points us to the truth that what we seek is what we actually are, is like the mother who patiently teaches and nurtures her child at the level of the child’s development. As the child grows and matures, so

too the mother’s lessons expand, becoming more nuanced and fostering greater understanding and self-reflection until the child becomes fully independent and self-sufficient.

It’s an always engaging, never boring, practice to pay attention to what is happening in our lives and attempt to understand the lessons life is offering for our unfoldment. And it’s a blessing beyond measure to have the

companionship of an illumined teacher in embodiment to help expand and strengthen our ability to discern the lessons and apply

Pay attention to what is happening in our lives and attempt to understand the lessons life is offering for our unfoldment.

the teachings. And let’s not forget the blessings of the unembodied ones—illumined beings in higher dimensions who continuously radiate the fruits of their realization to support and accelerate our unfoldment. The love, wisdom, joy, compassion, kindness, and generosity of these selfless beings, embodied or not, are boundless, eternal, and free to all open to receive them. Let’s celebrate and honor

their gifts by living the teachings and sharing whatever degree of realization unfolds for us, that all beings may come to know we ourselves are that divine perfection!

Photo by Sandra Seitamaa on Unsplash





Sri Swami Nityananda Giri

QUESTION:

IS THERE A WAY TO
PRACTICE HUMILITY
IN DAILY LIFE?

ANSWER:

If we practice humility, we are already in the Kingdom of Heaven. It is most profoundly vital to stay continually connected with our feet upon the earth, being of service, seeing everyone and everything as reminders of the Self, of what is real and what is meaningful, what matters and what lasts, what is beautiful, bright, and shining within ourselves and within others. The more we practice that, the more we activate humility in our daily lives.

Connect with your very own signature energy. A clear, simple, direct way to encounter the awe-inspiring life energy of you is to place your hands in prayer at the heart. Allow yourself to feel the vibrant, divine, pure signature energy, the vibration that is you! We are here freely in love and courage, in connectedness, to be of service, to share what is kind and beautiful and wise and good and healing, what is highest and deepest and best.

You can also come into contact with the fluid aspect of your energy, with your ability to be pure of heart, steady and strong, courageous and brave, wise and also adaptable. In this way, we

are continually open to revelation, renewal, and revitalization. We let go of any separateness or rigidity. The *Tao Te Ching* advises all of us to be fluid like melting ice. Anywhere we have been cold and rigid with ourselves, with others, with ideas, with our planning or with our expectations, we're allowing ourselves to melt like ice, to flow like water. Water joins other streams and merges into the ocean. Water triumphs, conquering all it encounters. It always finds a way forward. Water sings as it travels over rocks, over boulders, and around bends in the river.

St. Francis advises us, Do not dwell upon the mistakes of others. Do not dwell on others when they miss the mark of perfection. If you focus on the errors of others, it doesn't help you to be generous or

charitable or kind. The yogis would just say it doesn't help you. Period. The yogis say what we focus on we magnify in our own lives. Swami Shankarananda used to say, "Focus on the solution rather than the problem." We are not to dwell on the problem but to shift instantly to what would be most helpful in healing it.

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The teaching of humility is a welcome reminder that anything that we are aware of in the realm of time and space, we are capable



my connectedness with every other human sister and brother. I choose to remember my interconnectedness with all of life. I choose to remember this teaching from the Tao Te Ching: "Heaven's net is vast and yet nothing escapes it."

Be your true Self. Be your pure, eternal Self which is effortlessly of the nature of ahimsa—it is effortlessly non-harming. I adore Sri Yutekswar's translation of ahimsa as non-meanness. Every single one of us is invited to practice non-meanness first, last, and in the middle always.

These teachings are reminding us of what is true always. This reality is with us here already. It has been here since before you were born. It is here every moment of your life in embodiment. And it will always be with you. You can never be separate from the effortless humility, the oneness with all of life,

of ourselves. It's only when we honestly admit that and heal within ourselves what we seem to see in another that we will have the compassion to recognize what to say and do that would be of the most service.

Choose to remember what is real in the midst of life's pleasurable experiences and in the midst of life's deeply challenging experiences. *I choose to remember*

the connectedness across ages with everyone who has ever lived, who has ever loved God. They are with you right now in your heart, in your consciousness. They are uplifting you, encouraging you, strengthening, supporting, and healing you, reminding you of what it is possible to live.

My Kingdom

Robert Louis Stevenson

A little kingdom I possess
where thoughts and feelings dwell,
And very hard I find the task
of governing it well;
For passion tempts and troubles me,
A wayward will misleads,
And selfishness its shadow casts
On all my words and deeds.

How can I learn to rule myself,
to be the child I should,
Honest and brave, nor ever tire
Of trying to be good?
How can I keep a sunny soul
To shine along life's way?
How can I tune my little heart
To sweetly sing all day?

Dear Father, help me with the love
that casteth out my fear;
Teach me to lean on thee, and feel
That thou art very near,
That no temptation is unseen
No childish grief too small,
Since thou, with patience infinite,
Doth soothe and comfort all.

I do not ask for any crown
But that which all may win
Nor seek to conquer any world
Except the one within.

Be thou my guide until I find,
Led by a tender hand,
Thy happy kingdom in myself
And dare to take command.

Light of Vedanta

Aphorisms 67–71 from Narada's Bhakti Sutras

The highest class of devotees are those who have one-pointed love for God, and for love's sake only.

When devotees talk of God, their voices choke, tears flow from their eyes, their hair stands erect in ecstasy. Such men as these purify not only their families but this whole earth on which they are born.

These great illumined souls, the lovers of God, sanctify the places of pilgrimage. The deeds they perform become examples of good action. They give spiritual authority to the scriptures.

Every one of these devotees has become filled with the spirit of God.

When such lovers of God dwell on earth, their forefathers rejoice, the gods dance in joy, this earth becomes sanctified.

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 a 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 Paramahansa

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 Paramahansa.

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.



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