

Gitananda Yoga Australia

eNews: Vol 3.2 June 2017

NAMASTE!

Welcome to the June edition of eNews for 2017. How quickly the year is flying by, in just a few months we will be welcoming Dr. Ananda back to our shores and the good news is that the Adelaide retreat is now fully booked and we are all looking forward to a wonderful yoga reunion with him in the beautiful Adelaide hills venue.

DR ANANDA IN SYDNEY:

For those sadhaks who live in Sydney or who have booked to go to the Sydney IYTA convention, there may still be an opportunity to have some informal reunions with Dr Ananda sometime during the week prior to the IYTA Convention which begins 20th October 2017. If you would like to be contacted about this please email Murali who will keep you updated about this.

BOOKS AND DVD'S

Dr Ananda is also generously providing members with an opportunity to purchase his books and DVD's at special prices. (See the list attached at the end of this newsletter). Items can be ordered now and either collected at the October Retreat if you are attending; or posted to you if you would prefer.

To place an order, select the books or DVD's you wish to purchase from the attached list and email your order including the listed price of the item/s to Murali. Make sure to include your Name and Postal Address and whether you wish to collect in Adelaide or have the order posted to you - this may incur postage charges.

Transfer the money to the GYA account below:

Gitananda Yoga Association

BSB: 015-025

Account: 498569383

Reference: your name

Then send confirmation of your payment to Murali at: muralidharan33@yahoo.com.au . When your payment has been confirmed the items will be ordered for you.

ANNUAL FEES

Thank you to all the members who renewed and are now financial to March 2018. Annual Membership Fees for 2017/2018 were due in April; however some fees are still outstanding. As you all know, GYA is a non-profit association created to promote and disseminate the teachings of Dr. Swami Gitananda by funding Dr. Ananda's visits to this part of the world. Please help us by renewing your membership if it has lapsed, your annual membership fees are essential for the organisation to continue and also to be able to give some financial support to our mother ashram in India.

ANNUAL YOGA SATSANG - MERMAID BEACH - GOLD COAST

Bookings are still open for our Annual Satsangha at 251 Hedges Avenue, Mermaid Beach. This will be held from Thursday 2nd November to Tuesday 7th. All members are welcome to attend; the cost for the 5 days excluding food is \$450 live-in and \$150 live-out. A deposit of \$100 is required to make a booking and membership must be current for 2017/18. Please contact Murali for further information muralidharan33@yahoo.com.au .

"TASTE OF INDIA" - JUNE 2018



Four Gitananda members have already shown interest in visiting Ananda Ashram – ICYER, Pondicherry next year, to attend the 2018 International Day of Yoga (IDY) events to be held in conjunction with ICYER. This event has grown enormously since its inception and is a huge cultural event all around the world now.

The group will arrive at ICYER [Pondicherry] India on Saturday 16th June 2018 and the IDY Events / Functions will start on Monday 18th June and continue till Tuesday 26th June. This will be followed by a three day Tour of South India and departing from Chennai on Friday 29th June 2018.

Contact Murali at muralidharan33@yahoo.com.au if you are Interested in joining us.

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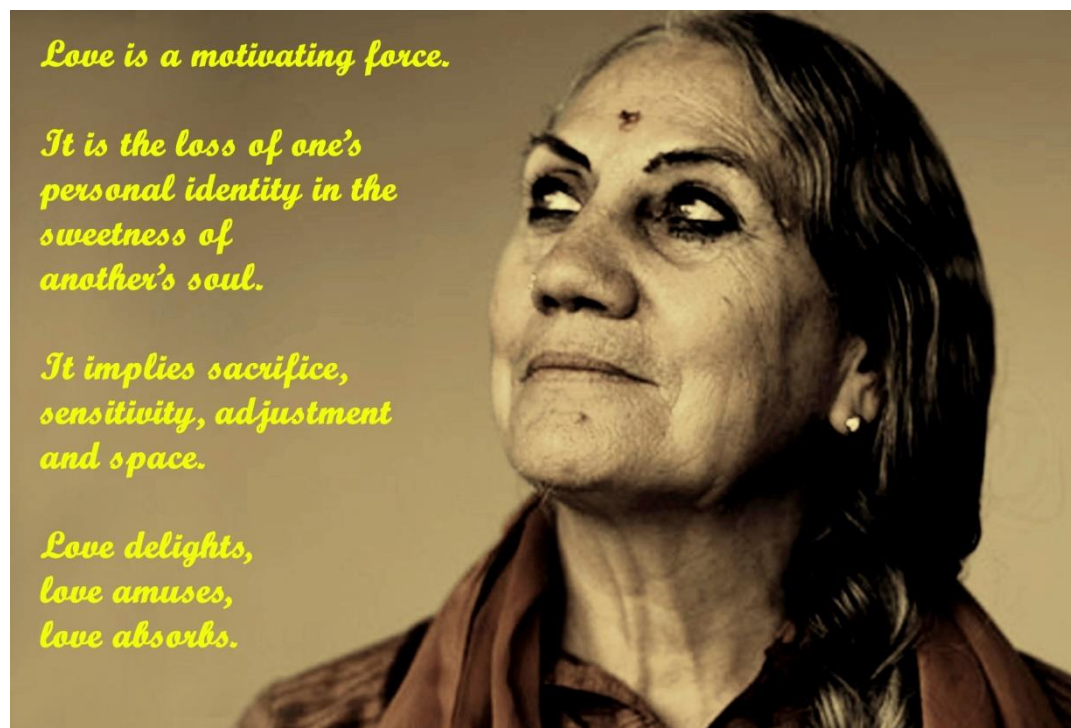
FROM NEW ZEALAND:

The generosity and goodwill forthcoming from members and friends of the Lotus Yoga Centre in recent months has been abounding in abundance. A team of willing helpers gathered to prepare and paint the Southern side of Whare Ora, while others contributed food items and baking to feed the hungry crew.

The colonial homestead was built in the early 1900's and the kauri cladding was in urgent need of some tender loving care. Those who have wandered along the path to the Sanctuary will have noticed what a difference the fresh coat of paint has made. The homestead is looking radiantly pristine.

Autumn has gracefully moved on as the deciduous trees surrounding the Centre and neighbouring areas have finally shed their red, orange and gold leaves. The threadbare branches remind us that winter is upon us.

A special gathering was held in the Sanctuary on Sunday 18th June to celebrate the Winter Solstice and free yoga classes were held at the Centre on Saturday 24th June to celebrate the 3rd annual International Yoga Day. Both events were a great success.



Divine Selves,

Sometimes we go through “down times”. It is the natural cycle of things. It can be bad karma getting paid out, a “4” period in the nine year cycle, the “bad” position of stars and planets. It doesn't really matter what has caused it. It does no good to analyse it as every situation has multi-dimensional causes. One tries to live a noble, Sattwic Yogic Life, and is reviled or taken advantage of by the people around one. At that point, discouraged with many situations the question rises, what is the use of it all!”

One must guard against allowing such an emotional black hole to emerge in one's Pranamaya Kosha. It is through those types of “holes” that a flood of negative energies will flow. Sometimes due to karmic factors we are forced to live in close contact with undeveloped, ignorant insensitive souls. Even great saints have had such people as wives or husbands or even children. Such a circumstance means we must become very strong in our commitment to the noble life as these people will pressure us day in and day out to come down to their low crude level. They will do their best to convince us that their vision of life is superior to ours and we are the foolish ones. I have had such experiences. These have caused me to contemplate the idea of “**Noble Souls**”. I share this contemplation with you.

Dr Ananda says in his book, **An Exploration of the Yoga Sutra**.

“A momentary lapse will spoil all previous efforts. The message is that one needs to be ever vigilant. The universal rule is, “The higher you rise in consciousness, the more vigilant you must be”. Beings at lower levels of evolution can get away with many mistakes as they live in such dissipated states of consciousness that their thoughts, words and actions have little power. But once the being evolves to higher levels, possessing great powers of concentration, even a small slip may result in catastrophe. Vigilance is the eternal price of liberty. Noble souls must be prepared to pay that price.”

NOBLE SOULS

The word noble may soon have to be dropped from the English dictionary, as it is a quality of character rarely encountered in the world today. Nobility implies so many traits! Restraint being the foremost. Conscious restraint of anger and all vices; self-discipline; cleanliness; dignity of body position and speech and actions ; selflessness; generosity; quietude; intelligence, high standards of behaviour; courtesy in actions and speech...seeking to achieve high ideals of service to mankind and evolution of consciousness; the list goes on ... in Yoga such a person is called an Adikaran. A “person fit to enter higher realms of consciousness”. Such a person is also called Sattwic, or pure of nature. The word “Aryan” is sometimes used, which literally means “pure one,” to describe such noble souls.

Another word used to describe a “Noble soul” in India was the term “Brahmin” .The word “Brahmin” originally meant “one who had realized Brahmin (Cosmic Consciousness) an Adhi Karan, a pure one, a noble soul. The term “Brahmin” later degenerated to mean one born into the priestly caste. Through time, the high standard of character traits of the Brahmin priestly caste degenerated into mere ritualistic behaviour. The essence of the Brahmin character had degenerated so much by the time of the **Mahabharata**. (About 5000 years ago). That Ved Vyasa, the author of the epic, has Yudishthira the eldest of the Pandavas, answer the Yaksha in the PRASNA PARVA, who questioned him. “Who is a Brahmin? Is one a Brahmin by birth?” Yudhishtira the King answers: “A true Brahmin is known by Guna (Qualities of character) and not by Janma (birth).”

In today's society, many persons born to the Brahmin caste have a very deceptive veneer of softness, gentleness and refinement, because of their ancient holy genes, but their essential character is vicious. They are like chocolate coated scorpions or as Shakespeare had Othello lament: “**Ah! Villain! Fair without and black within!**” This is true for so many crude and vicious characters who are beautiful of body, charming in manner and speech, but totally cunning and vicious within. Because of their charisma they are able to easily lure weak souls from the higher to the lower life. Many a young woman has learned this lesson the hard way!

The opposite of the noble personality which we may call ignoble has gained prominence in almost all fields. Crude behaviour, crude speech, crude goals, crude attire, self –seeking, self –promoting; In –your-face egotists rule the roost. They elbow “noble souls” out of their way and kick them in the face on their way to the top!

Virtue appears to be a vice in the rat race! Of course, rats are hardly noble creatures, one must admit, so it is best to drop out of such races. It is necessary to remind ourselves of the great importance of a noble life on a daily basis, lest we too lose our ideals and fall into the muck surrounding us. So common is crude behaviour that we are in constant danger of thinking that ignobility is normal and nobility is abnormal.

To refresh our spirit we must time and time again refer to the behaviour of heroes of our Indian culture. Sita especially comes to my mind. Sita is not very popular these days, especially amongst young women. The majority of young women consider Sita foolish at best, and Rama as a male chauvinist. They see her nobility of character as a vice, a detriment to her happy successful life and “personal fulfilment,”

Valmiki loved Sita and portrayed her true noble character in his great epic the **Ramayana**. After Rama's coronation when things seemed to have settled down in Ayodhya, there was further unexpected sorrow for Sita. Rama sends Sita to the forest based on the rumours doing the rounds that she must have been violated by Ravana, a notorious womanizer, since she spent three years in his palace. Valmiki captures the poignancy of the situation as felt by Sita.

When the truth that she is to be left all alone in the forest is clear to her from Lakshmana's words, she displays a momentary sense of helplessness. Her mind falters and for a moment she seeks to blame Rama for his action. She tells Lakshmana, who had been entrusted by Rama to drop her in the forest as an exile: “I married Rama

while young and since then I have considered him as my father, mother, and everything till date.” But the innate courage of a Kshatriya queen surges in her to subdue this feeling as she steels herself up to face the situation of going into forest exile, having to give birth without her husband.

She tells Lakshmana: “Though Agni himself testified my chastity, Rama has done this to me. But Rama is a noble Kshatriya ruler of boundless repute. So if this has happened to me it is my fate and ill luck and not Rama’s fault.” She informs Lakshmana about her pregnant state and accepts the offer of Rishi Valmiki to live in his hermitage and be under his protection. Sita’s distress is mitigated by the wise words of the Rishi sage who says to her, “When sorrows come, it makes no sense to analyse the cause: rather one should try to resolve the problem and learn to cope with them in a noble manner.” Valmiki offers solace to the sorrowing Sita by asking her to worship the Ikshvaku clan deity Sri Ranganatha.

For Rama’s part, he did not doubt Sita’s chastity. His commitment to the Kshatriya Dharma demanded that he bow to his people’s sentiments. They could not accept a queen whose chastity was in question. Sita had lived three years in Ravana’s palace as his captive. They could not believe she had not been violated. Rama rose above personal likes and dislikes. He too felt the pangs of separation from Sita and after her exile, lived in austerity while ruling Ayodhya righteously.

Such nobility of character and sentiment would be considered a “madness” in today’s contemporary world. Perhaps it is true. Nobility has no survival value in the crude material world. Noble souls may have to accept exile, perhaps even humiliation and death in such circumstances. However, in the spiritual world, nobility is the coin of the realm. Great spiritual riches are attained with this quality.

Nobility and loneliness, or crudity and oneness with the masses; it is a hard choice. But do we, who are on the Yoga path, have any other choice? The higher we go the greater is the danger of the fall. One must be ever alert. If one gives in even for one moment to negativity, a tsunami of low minded thoughts and feelings will engulf the soul. In IV: 27 Yoga Sutras Patanjali says, “**If there is even a small gap (in higher conscious thought) other deep impressions will take over the soul.**”

The higher one rises in consciousness, the more vigilant one must be. The crude person can carelessly move through life without feeling too much pain. The noble soul will be badly hurt by even a small mistake.

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Affectionately Yours in Yoga,

AMMAJI

This too will pass...



This is an image post fire in Noosa National Park. One can already see early signs of nature on the path to rehabilitation. At least, I think I can see it, and have certainly witnessed the recovery process in the past. What you cannot see is the burn smell all around and the skinny goannas dragging along, half stunned. I am sure that they too will recover.

Life is fragile, but also resilient. I try to maintain that attitude when I see people around me in various stages of collapse, but find it ever so difficult to maintain objectivity. My usually clear vision gets overlaid with a smoke haze of pain and grief. I find it difficult to see beyond. I am deep into samsara.



However this too will pass.... and as you can see above, the new growth is very apparent. The original picture was more a growth in my imagination. I was certainly feeling the devastation, and hoping for the growth. It is strange, I realise as I write this that my pictures express more of what I felt than my words could. *Tat Twam Asi.*

Zigi Georges

*"I know God won't give me
anything I can't handle.
I just wish
He didn't trust me so much"*

Mother Teresa

WHAT IS TRUTH?

We tend to define the word 'truth', as truth as we see it. At the lowest worldly level truth should at least conform to fact, or a generally accepted version of reality. There are new scientific discoveries being made all the time, and we are warned to ignore them at our peril, but these are the outer truths of the material world.

To be credible, scientists have to tell the truth and be true to themselves. The saying coined by Shakespeare in his play, 'Hamlet', "to thine own self be true", has become hugely popular, if we are true to ourselves, we are then not able to be false to anyone. Einstein admitted that something greater than his world of science and facts had to be included in his calculations; he said, "Science without religion is lame, and religion without science is blind".

The singular truth that lies within goes beyond and above shallow belief systems and the generalised truths of politics, business and bureaucracies. The search for this inner truth can be a lifelong struggle. Mahatma Gandhi, the great pacifist who set India free from British rule, started his search with the belief that God is truth, but after a lifelong struggle with the forces of untruth, corruption and self-centeredness, he came to the enlightened realisation that truth is God!

Of the Holy Spirit, the greatest yogi Jesus Christ said, "This is the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees Him nor knows him. You know Him because he abides in you, and will be in you". (John 14:17)

Truth is not for the weak, it is an ornament of the strong, the loving.

References:

1. 'Gitananda Yoga presentation of Yoga Chikitsa, the Yoga of Delight.' Feb. 2nd to 21st, 2008, Yogamaharishi, Dr. Swami Gitananda
2. The new revised standard version of the Holy Bible.

Gowri (Wendy Snape)

Man is the most insane species.
He worships
An invisible god
And slaughters
A visible nature
Without realizing
that this nature he slaughters
Is
His invisible God he worships.

~ Hubert Reeves~

Your contributions are always welcome for our next eNewsletter, if you have a favourite practice, a meditation, a recipe, an anecdote, an interesting story, a favourite quote or something you could share with us all please email it to marg0yoga@bigpond.com for the September issue. ~