



October 2020

Spiritual World Society Theme of the Month Relationship with the Lord

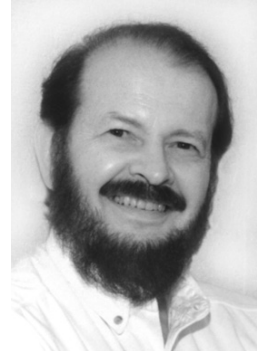
What would I recommend you do about all of this? Well for one thing just start out yearning. Don't be appeased by the toys. Again and again, when you yearn a bit, Divine Mother comes across with yet another interesting thing that will keep you going for a decade or maybe a whole life. Accept no substitutes. Want God and keep up the yearning for God because it's just so easy to suddenly get a whiz bang or some special thing or special person and forget about God entirely. And that's the way of the world.

Again and again we get an offering from the Divine Mother that just preoccupies us and takes away all our time and another life has gone by. So, yearn for the Lord. Don't be appeased by the toys. You just keep calling out, "Ma, Ma," whether you get toys or not. You will certainly get toys.

This yearning is the yearning and the ache of your heart. And the ache of your heart will develop, if you yearn deeply enough, into bhakti, which is devotional love for God. Your yearning somewhere becomes devotional love for God. And bhakti is God's great treasure and God's great pleasure. God gives you a treasure and a pleasure,

once you get bhakti.

The secret is bhakti. Once you have bhakti deep enough, it takes you into a bhava. Bhakti is a state of actual love you feel in your heart for God, just like you feel love for others. That love gets so you can just feel love in your chest. You just feel this love—this delight, this sweetness, this joy, this depth of caring. You feel that in your heart or in your chest, in what yogis and mystics call the heart. And the secret is: your bhakti will grow and go into a bhava. You can't say that your



Ramakrishna Ananda

*"Bhakti is God's
great treasure and
God's great pleasure."*

ego so much goes into a bhava; your ego kind of cooperates enough to let the heart go into a bhava.

The secret is bhakti. You just get so much of a feeling of love for God that it changes your sense of self and it changes your emotional flow.

And then bhavas are easy. You've got to get bhakti. You just walk around in love. That's how it goes. You're not just trying to love God and yearning for God and doing all the techniques and

Continued on page 2

Important Message Meet Us Online

With COVID-19 still being a serious risk, in-person Yoga Center classes and events continue to be suspended through October. That doesn't mean we aren't getting together!

We're having a very special *Yoga Center 50th Anniversary Celebration* on Zoom on October 4th at 10:00 am. Everyone is invited! In addition to a video with an important message from Ramakrishna Ananda, you'll hear inspiring words of gratitude

from devotees on different aspects of Ramakrishna Ananda's teachings, uplifting chants and arati. And, since it's on Zoom, there will be a chance to see each other and chat virtually at the end of the celebration.

It's been great to see so many of our members, both out-of-town and local folks, on our online events. We continue to add new ones, and, if you can't make an event at a specific time, check out our Members page on our website to access most of them on-demand. We're getting a lot of feedback that you appreciate going to the Members page and viewing classes and events whenever you like.

Relationship cont.

everything. You actually feel love for God in your heart just like you have felt love for others. Only this is a very sweet and strong love and that sweet and strong love will grow on you.

Basically, Yogananda used to watch devotees to see how their bhakti was. And if their bhakti was coming on strong, he was very happy. And if they didn't have bhakti, he would be wondering why. Why no bhakti yet? And he felt that was one of his main jobs. And so what happens is, one of his devotees, leading devotees, who was an intellectual type but busy working really hard doing intense sadhana and everything. And Yogananda said one day after this guy had been there for two years, "Look what I've done for him," because finally he had bhakti.

The devotee thought, "I've been working really hard for two years. What does he mean, look what he, Yogananda, has done for me? I've been really pouring it on and doing all this." And Yogananda basically felt that he had given this young man the gift of bhakti and that it had grown and developed over two years. So, there was a difference of perspective about where the bhakti came from.

Bhakti is the key to the kingdom. It's the emotional state necessary to enter into bhavas. You

need bhakti. You need to walk around with it, feeling it every day for quite a while because you've got to be changed over to, from being a yearner or even a complainer, into a lover. If you've got bhakti, this is a pleasure and a treasure. So, the secret is bhakti—just having it smolder like embers burning in your heart, passion for God. That's the answer. It automatically takes you into bhavas.

The great big question is how to get into bhakti? And yearning will do it, adoring God. If you can lend yourself to days of adoration, just adoring God all day will do it. Trouble adoring? Just appreciate God all day—that leads to adoring.

What's the difference between love and bhakti? In bhakti you humble yourself before the Lord. You feel privileged to be in the Lord's presence. You humble yourself. You just feel so grateful. Like very often in love, "Big shot me and big shot you, we're having this big shot love. We are alive, we are in love, everything's special." That's not the way bhakti is. Bhakti is like Sarada Devi said, looking at her husband, "How could I ever be so privileged—honored to be here beholding this man?" That's bhakti.

You feel honored and privileged to be in the company of God and you're mindful in bhakti of that honor and privilege. You feel so blessed and so humble before the Beloved. It takes that kind of love, humility. "What have I ever done to deserve this?"

Posture of the Month

The Tortoise

This asana stretches the spinal column and rejuvenates the whole nervous system. The shell of the tortoise protects it from danger and when we do this pose, we can feel the protection that surrounds us like the tortoise shell. It gives us a sense of peace and removal of fear during these challenging times. It also releases tension from the shoulders, which is important for people who work on computers or drive a lot.

- The starting position begins by bringing your legs as wide apart as comfortable.
- Inhale with both arms up with straight elbows alongside the ears. Toes point upwards towards the head.
- Exhale as you bend forward and bend the

knees lifting them up slightly.

- Place your hands with palms down and fingers pointing back beneath the knees.
- Slowly try to straighten knees and bring the chest and chin to the floor.
- Variation—if necessary, bend your knees slightly more and wrap your hands around the ankles with arms under the knee.
- Return to sitting position, stretching upward and relaxing.



Pranayam of the Month

Brahmari

Why do it? Reduce stress and blood pressure, sooth the nerves, dissipate anger, remove throat ailments and it is beneficial in regulating the thyroid gland.

- To practice Brahmari, you partially close the glottis as you inhale through both nostrils

- When you inhale with your glottis partially closed, you will hear a slight snoring sound
- Then exhale slowly, humming like a bee
- The inhalation clears and vibrates the throat area
- Humming while you breathe out enables you to spin out the breath and make a longer exhalation
- Try to keep exhale a little longer each time.

CALENDAR

| | | | |
|--------------|---|-------------|---|
| OCT 4 | <p>50th Anniversary Special Zoom Event</p> <p><i>Join us on Sunday Oct 4 at 10 am</i></p> | WED | <p>Hatha Yoga Asanas Wednesdays 4:00 pm</p> <p><i>Join Radha weekly</i></p> |
| SUN | <p>Sunday Morning Services</p> <p><i>See Members page link for a new weekly service</i></p> | WED | <p>Weekly Meditations Wednesdays 5:30 pm</p> <p><i>Join Bharata weekly with Ramakrishna Ananda's audios</i></p> |
| MON | <p>Hatha Yoga Asanas Mondays 4:00 pm</p> <p><i>Join Kali Devi weekly</i></p> | THUR | <p>Higher Yogas with Ramakrishna Ananda Thursdays 5:30 pm</p> <p><i>Audios by Ramakrishna Ananda, hosted by Kali Devi</i></p> |
| TUE | <p>Gentle Chair Yoga Tuesdays 11:00 am</p> <p><i>Join Radha weekly</i></p> | | <p>This month's great topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Superconscious & Living in the Now • Mind Drift • Contemplation—Directed Drift • Meditation—Samyama • Yearning & Your Nature |
| TUE | <p>Experience the Power of Pranayam Tuesdays 5:30 pm</p> <p><i>Join Kali Devi weekly</i></p> | FRI | <p>Open Your Heart Meditations Fridays 5:30 pm</p> <p><i>Join Sumedha on Zoom</i></p> |
| WED | <p>Support Group Wednesdays 10:30 am</p> <p><i>Give and receive support</i></p> | | |

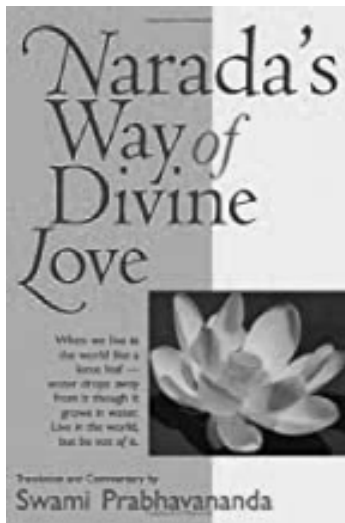
Book of the Month

Narada's Way of Divine Love

Translation and commentary by Swami Prabhavananda

Enjoy this fine translation of the *Narada Bhakti Sutras*. "When you live in the world like a lotus leaf—water drops away from it though it grows in water. Live in the world but be not of it."

Love has a divine essence. The love that we feel for one another is actually the attraction of God dwelling within. This love can lead us to God-realization, for, as the ancient sage Narada teaches, God is love.



Yoga Center Theme of the Month

Living in the Now

Almost everyone has a turbulent mind, living in mental/emotional chaos with a short attention span. This turbulence is the cause of great turmoil in life, with the mind creating stress and acting as an enemy instead of an ally. Most people rarely live in the conscious present because the mind is lost in thoughts of the past and future. This keeps people from being their best and leads to worry and paralysis. Our lives are a moment-by-moment relationship with the world and with ourselves, perpetually colored and influenced by our mind drift.

We typically don't know about the levels of the mind, including the *objective consciousness, subconscious and superconscious levels*. By practicing these, you'll find you can relate better to the outside world and be more aware of feelings and memories that shape your sense of self. You can also seek inspiration, motivation, appreciation for new endeavors. You can face, love and forgive the past, and therefore behold, forgive, release and transform much that thwarts your progress.

Gift of the Month

The Little Green Gospel

To celebrate our 50th anniversary we offer you readings of the 1947 version of *Gospel of Ramakrishna*, which we affectionally call the *Little Green Gospel*. Most of the 9 ½ hours were recorded by Narendra in 1985-86. This has been digitally restored and supplemented by several readers from 2020.

Sixty two devotees participated in this wonderful offering. You will find that some of the readers have since passed away including Bhaktiram, Hri Devi, Jyotiprem, Padma, Prema and Umadas.

Inspiring Quote

Many are the names of God, and infinite the forms that lead us to know Him. In whatsoever name or form you desire to call Him, in that very form and name will you see Him.

—Sri Ramakrishna