



May 2020

Spiritual World Society Theme of the Month

The Heart's True Feeling

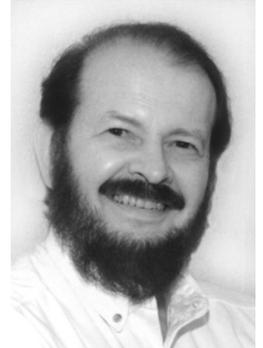
Love. It's about love. That's the main thing that's involved in this Center going on through all of these years. And love it turns out is the essence of yoga. That's what it is. The great yogi, Sri Yukteswar says, "Yoga is the cultivation of the heart's true feeling." That's what yoga is—cultivation of the heart's true feeling, which is love.

All of the different paths of yoga which we teach—and it's wonderful to know all these different paths—they all arrive in love. Whether you do the yoga of wisdom, jnani yoga; the yoga of attuning the will, raja yoga; or karma yoga, the yoga of service, you will discover love is its essence. Love is the whole point. Through this wonderful experience of yoga, we realize the goodness, the greatness, the magnificence and the transforming power of the love of God. Just marvelous.

Sri Ramakrishna, whose ideals are deeply dear to us here at the Yoga Center, Sri Ramakrishna said love is the yoga for this age, bhakti yoga, devotional yoga. Love is the yoga for this age. Sri Ramakrishna, on the occasion of speaking to a number of devotees and answering their questions and helping them with their problems, he says, "The one essential thing."

Isn't it nice when you get it so clear? "The one essential thing is bhakti," which is loving devotion to God—the one essential.

He says, "A man should practice sadhana"—sadhana means your spiritual path, yoga, practice yoga. "And pray to God with a longing heart." There it is. That's how in a nutshell. Sounds easy. "He should direct his mind to God alone, withdrawing it from various objects of the world."



Ramakrishna Ananda

"Yoga is the cultivation of the heart's true feeling."

The Master *then* of course then jumps into a song. (Laughter.) It's such an eloquent song. "How are you trying oh my mind to know the nature of God? You are grasping like a mad man locked in a dark room." That's the way most of us go about it—"grasping like a mad man locked in a dark room." Whereas He sings on, "He is grasped through ecstatic love."

You want to know the Lord? You will grasp the Lord through ecstatic love. How can you fathom him/her, the Divine One? How can you fathom the Divine without ecstatic love? That's what's needful,

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Important Message

Meet Us Online

We know hunkering down at home can be difficult, and we all miss being together at Yoga Center. However, as the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, the health and well-being of our members, as well as that of our local communities, continues to be our number one priority. And for that reason, we made the difficult decision to continue

suspending all Yoga Center classes and events through May.

But, with every challenge comes an opportunity. That's why we're excited for you to continue your journey with us through our online classes and events. We got started last month, and we're adding new online activities all the time. You'll get a rare

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The Heart's True Feeling

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loving God so much that your love has turned into ecstasy. Your love becomes constant and ecstasy comes and this ecstatic love reveals the Divine. That's it. "He is grasped not like a mad man reaching around in his dark room. He has grasped through ecstatic love. How can you fathom Him without it?" And for that love the mighty yogis practice yoga from age to age.

You can do a lot of yoga without loving. You can't do it well, but some day the yoga enables you to discover the heart's true feeling. Love occurs. "When love awakes, the Lord, like a magnet, just draws you into embrace."

When the love in your heart wakes, the Lord

takes you to Him like a magnet—draws that soul to Himself. When there is bhakti, love for God awakens in your heart, God will draw you to Him, to Her. That's how it happens. Whether you are doing the yoga of the will or of the mind, love comes.

Love unfolds your way to God and to the soul. Through love you discover the presence of God and you discover the presence of God within you as soul. As you grow in yoga, in the love of God, the soul begins to experience the consciousness, revealed to the mind, the ego, consciousness of God. And the spirit of God, the spirit of love, fills you and comes through you. The heart's true feeling reveals God and the heart's true feeling allows God to live in your consciousness and moves through the way you think about things, the way you feel about things, the way you do things, the way you say things. Love.

Meet Us Online

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chance to hear Ramakrishna Ananda teaching the week's higher yogas class as well as special messages from him.

We're also offering weekly classes for Chair Yoga, the Power of Pranayams (breathing practices) and Meditation. A Hatha Yoga class is in the works. In addition to the calendar on the next page, also

refer to the weekly email invitations which have updated information on any new classes and/or date and time changes. And, please bear with us as we strive to make these online experiences hassle and bug free.

Each week we are also adding a Sunday Morning talk from last year at YogaCenter.org. Simply go to the *Events* dropdown on the main menu and pick *Spiritual World Society*. It is a great way to be inspired and enjoy fellowship.

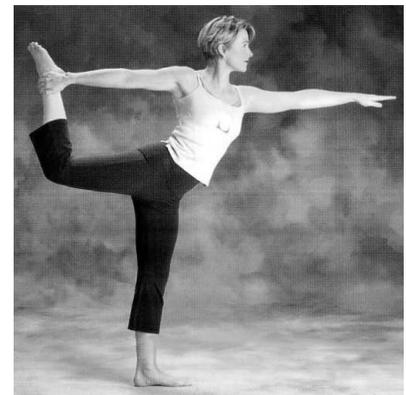
Posture of the Month

Lord Nataraja

Why do it? This asana stretches the upper body, expands the chest and stretches the pelvic ligaments. Most importantly, it helps you develop poise, focus, concentration, and both physical and mental balance.

- Standing straight, bend your right knee and hold your ankle firmly with your right hand.
- Bring your ankle close to your buttock.
- Inhale and stretch your left arm up, close to your left ear.
- Slowly begin to shift the line of your body, stretching your right foot away from your buttock. Try to align your right thigh parallel

- to the floor.
- Slowly shift your weight forward until your chest and left arm are parallel to the floor.
- Hold the position for as long as comfortable.
- Release the pose by bringing your left arm back close to your left ear and your ankle close to your buttock. Then lower your leg and arm.
- Repeat this pose on the other side.



Yoga Center Theme of the Month

Levels of Love

Who doesn't want more love in life? We all come into this world with a deep desire to both love and be loved. We know instinctively that love is a force for good in our lives and in the world, that it leads to growth and enlightenment.

Some of the definitions of love include: appreciation, self-giving, cultivation of the heart's true feeling. Many of us have heard these famous words:

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not

dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres, never fails.”

—1 Corinthians 13:4-8

This drive to experience and understand love is universal. It is key to—and reaches beyond—all faiths and cultures. Ancient yogis developed techniques for exploring the countless aspects of love, as we might expect, and many of the most enjoyable yoga practices help us understand what love really is so we can explore its levels more deeply and cultivate more love in our lives.

MAY CALENDAR

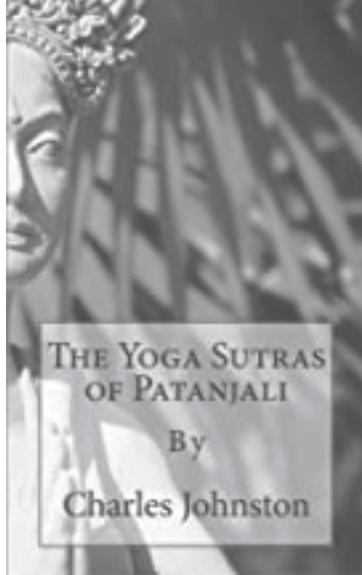
SUN	<p>Sunday Morning Services</p> <p><i>Yoga Center doors may be closed for now but we have many talks at Yogacenter.org.</i></p>	MAY 7	<p>Higher Yogas Class—The Levels of Love</p> <p><i>Audio by Ramakrishna Ananda, with Kali Devi</i></p>
TUE	<p>Chair Yoga Tuesdays 11:00am</p> <p><i>This new class is led by Radha each week</i></p>	MAY 14	<p>Higher Yogas Class—Stages of the Heart</p> <p><i>Audio by Ramakrishna Ananda, with Kali Devi</i></p>
TUE	<p>The Power of Pranayams Tuesdays 5:30pm</p> <p><i>Join our popular series with Kali Devi each week</i></p>	MAY 21	<p>Higher Yogas Class—Shortcut to Enlightenment</p> <p><i>Audio by Ramakrishna Ananda, with Kali Devi</i></p>
WED	<p>Free Meditations Wednesdays 5:30pm</p> <p><i>Bharata hosts a different technique each week</i></p>	MAY 28	<p>Higher Yogas Class—How to Meditate with More Success and Joy</p> <p><i>Audio by Ramakrishna Ananda, with Kali Devi</i></p>

Book of the Month

Yoga Sutras of Patanjali:

by Charles Johnson

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali are in themselves exceedingly brief, less than ten pages of large type in the original. Yet they contain the essence of practical wisdom, set forth in admirable order and detail. The theme is the great regeneration, the birth of the spiritual from the psychical man: the same theme which Paul so wisely and eloquently set forth in writing to his disciples in Corinth, the theme of all mystics in all lands.



Pranayam of the Month

Surya Bheda

Why do it? When you inhale solely through the right nostril, heat is created in your body and impurities that impair the flow of prana (life force or energy) are dispelled. This pranayam helps to open your heart.

How to do it:

- Close your left nostril with your ring and little fingers of your right hand, and inhale slowly through your right nostril.
- Close both nostrils, press your chin firmly against your chest in and retain your breath. Hold only as long as comfortable. Don't strain to hold your breath. As you continue to do this pranayam, you can gradually increase the retention.
- Close your right nostril and exhale through your left nostril.
- Repeat up to ten times..

Gift of the Month

Discover the Miracle of Prayer

This online booklet is a priceless treasure by Ramakrishna Ananda. You will discover:

- Twelve major forms of mystical prayer
- Three higher dimensions of prayer
- How to better approach and release prayers

As you practice these magnificent forms of prayer, you may experience your own higher levels of consciousness including serenity, ecstasy and perfect intuition. Entering the dynamics of spiritual awareness, you will pray in the manner of saints and mystics. Your prayers will become a sacred privilege and a personal delight. Check your email!

Inspiring Quotes

Your task is not to seek to love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built.

–Rumi

Each of us is a lake of love, yet strangely enough, we are all thirsty.

–Swami Kripalu