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 Newsletter - Nov 2012

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Featured book:



November at the Ashram - Nourishing From Within



The first snowfall at the Ashram, patio tables stored, flowerbeds prepared for the winter, the canvas tipi cover removed... Not only has the season shifted but the Ashram has as well, to a focus on planning and thinking ahead for the future.

The Ashram planning process reflects the process of evolution that we travel as individuals: awareness, reflection, choice, action, devotion and union. Discovering that spark within the community that leads to growth, to creating sustainability, to leaving the Ashram better than we received it - this is our focus in November.

How will you nourish the spark within you?

Nourishing From Within, Swami Radhananda

Mantra Initiation

by Swami Sivananda Radha
& Swami Radhananda

www.radhananda.org



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Excerpt from Satsang, May 2001.

[Watch the video](#)

Preparing for Families - Family Week 2013



“Mom, can we go to the Ashram again?” my son still asks me - his first visit at age 3 made a sustaining impression.

He will turn 5 just before the Ashram’s 2013 Family Week. Á Children soak up the caring, support, joy and freedom they feel at the Ashram. These are the qualities we hope adults and kids alike will experience during the family retreat. Much of the week will be spent together, in family Hatha Yoga classes, Karma Yoga work bees, and child-friendly satsang. Time will also be reserved for parents



Photo of the month

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to practice and reflect, in class and by themselves. Family Week will be an intergenerational space - grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles are invited too!

*Juniper Glass
YDC graduate and one of the organizers of
Family Week 2013*

Plan to join us with your family for Family Week, July 8 -12, 2013!
We also have a Children's Program through the summer so adults can do courses while children are cared for.

Designer in Residence



Michael Wou, Creative Principal of [Origami](#) design studio in Montreal, the designer of the Ashram's beautiful new logo, recently spent three weeks at the Ashram as a Karma Yogi, absorbing the Ashram experience, designing within the day-to-day flow of life here and applying this new look to signage, stationery, brochures, posters... Michael describes his experience:

"The Ashram is a place of personal peace and spiritual reflection. Each path is an internal process - though external senses such as sight, and how we process what we see plays a significant role in our tranquility. To understand this, I've lived both as a guest and as part of the internal team observing how various forms of "visual pollution" affected people. The subsequent redesigns aren't simply about making functional visuals beautiful, but also consider the intent and love inspired by the people at the Ashram. The result is a visual harmony that is an extension of the Yasodhara experience."

Thank you Michael for creating visual harmony with your designs!

Leading by Example: Yasodhara Ashram Lightens its Ecological Footprint



Following the announcement of the Ashram's official Carbon Neutral status in the October newsletter, we are now sharing this achievement with the media. Here is an excerpt from the news release:

Dr. William Rees, professor emeritus of the University of British Columbia, an internationally acclaimed ecological economist and winner of a 2012 Blue Planet Prize, said of the Ashram achievement, "By striving for carbon neutrality, Yasodhara Ashram shows that communities can take significant steps to address global warming that are neither arduous nor a threat to their economies and lifestyles. Other communities should follow this example as if their lives depended on it - because ultimately they do!"

Dr. Rees developed the 'ecological footprint' concept and enthusiastically supports the Ashram's efforts in this area.

As Swami Radhananda shared in her *Nourishing from Within* satsang: "We all have to take care, in some way, of the life we have been given and the opportunities we have been given - taking care of the Ashram... there is the care that's needed to keep it alive!"

The commitment to the Ashram's future is a practice of *satya* - living truthfully, in ourselves, in our community and on this planet. We simply must lighten our environmental footprint.

Stay tuned for more news on the Ashram's 2020 Renewable Energy Plan.

Read the [Press Release](#) & [Backgrounder](#)

The Hoop House Has Arrived!



Normally we head indoors once we have officially closed the garden - this year we're heading into the mobile hoop house!

Karma Yogis have been working intensely on constructing the mobile hoop house and as you read this assembly is complete. The hoop house covers a 1000 sq. ft., has a plastic/steel frame and is covered with a double layer of UV treated poly.

Paris Marshall Smith, who oversees the Ashram's food flow, tells us: "The new mobile hoop house will extend garden production by 3 to 4 months, giving us the opportunity to eat more Ashram grown greens through the winter as we move towards [4-season harvesting](#)."

This winter YDC participants, Karma Yogis and Ashram residents will enjoy Ashram grown cabbage, rapini, kholabri, salad greens and kale - the result of this resourceful production and the planting of seeds that are carefully nourished and protected.

The New Queen Bee



Beekeeper Christina, of [The Queens Bees Project](#) recently delivered our new Queen Bee. We had lost our Queen Bee to the bear that wanted honey so badly he succeeded in getting past the electric fence and attacking our hive.

An interesting development took place during the period in which we had no Queen Bee. Normally, the death of a Queen Bee is a major event because only the Queen Bee can reproduce which ensures a colony's survival. Without a Queen Bee, the worker bees can become lethargic and the colony ultimately fails. In the case of the Ashram bee colony, the worker bees kept working - collecting pollen and nectar! The Beekeeper remarked on how unusual this is but we're certain that our committed bees were doing the work of Divine Mother.

We're really pleased to work with The Queens Bees Project because their philosophy is to contribute to food sustainability and a model for sustainable living that involves remembering who we really are and how we are meant to live on this earth - as one living organism.

The beehive is another example of the Ashram's commitment to the sustainability of food flow through natural harmony.

Visit the Ashram's [facebook](#) page to learn more about Queen Bees and their symbology.

***Living The Practice: Collected Writings on the
Transformative Potential of Yoga
By Swami Radhananda***



[*Living the Practice*](#) has sparked an opportunity for many around the globe to [live their practice through the conversations, book-readings and gatherings](#) that have manifested since the book was released in May.

On Sunday, April 29th Swami Radhananda's much anticipated release of her second book was launched with a gathering at the Ashram. From there, the conversations kept going! Here's a tour of the activity that took place this year:

- Calgary Radha Yoga has held a series of conversations - one of which took place at Self Connection Books
- Nanaimo has a *Living the Practice* book club that meets on Wednesday afternoons
- Kelowna offered a half-day workshop on the chapter, 'The Four Powers of Divine Mother'
- Radha Yoga on Vancouver Island has introduced readings into their Hidden Language classes
- The group in Portugal also reflected on 'The Four Powers of Divine Mother', watched the Ashram Prayer Dance video and then offered the Divine Mother Prayer Dance
- Toronto Radha Yoga held a *Living the Practice* evening at Wonderworks bookstore
- Ottawa Radha Yoga Centre held several *Living the Practice* gatherings in the spring and early summer and then utilized *Living the Practice* as the basis for the fall Kundalini session
- Radha Yoga Centre Spokane held an evening conversation in May. "This is what I have been looking for," was a thought echoed by a number of the participants
- Roseanne Harvey, author of the blog [it's all yoga, baby](#) and a former *ascent* editor, describes her approach to the book: "I

found myself not inclined to read the book from cover to cover, but to pick it up, scan the table of contents and go to a title that enticed me. All of the pieces... easy-to-digest gems of wisdom that can be integrated into the course of my day, when I feel the need to pause and nourish myself.'

- The Vancouver Radha Centre group integrated a reading from *Living The Practice* into their satsang creating an opening to insights for those gathered. 'Offering this conversation at satsang was a beautiful way to enter into the book.'

And for the twenty participants that took part in Swami Radhananda's five-day course, *Living the Practice*, the accessibility and simplicity of the book transferred into a memorable and Light-filled week. Swami Radhananda will next offer the [Living the Practice five-day course in October 2013](#).

Rays of Light - News at a Glance

- **School visits at the Ashram:** Over the past month we have welcomed several school groups to the Ashram.

On October 31st, twenty-one grade 12 honour students from Creston spent the day at the Ashram learning about sustainable, intentional community. They also participated in karma yoga and spent time in the temple.

And ten students and four teachers from the Crawford Bay Elementary and Secondary School were here on Saturday, November 3rd to press apples for a fundraiser. They used our well-worn but reliable wooden apple press to press 800 pounds of apples - 274 litres of juice were bottled!

- **What Youth Need To Thrive:** Guenevere Neufeld, who originally came to the Ashram on the Young Adult Program and who went on to become a certified teacher and an Ashram resident, will be speaking at SelfDesign High's 3rd annual TEDx event in Nelson, BC on Saturday, November 17. The theme for the day is *What Youth Need To Thrive*. Guenevere's talk is entitled *Clarity in the Midst of Illusion*.

What is TEDx? In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, [TED](#) has created a program called TEDx - a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. We look forward to sharing more of Guenevere's experience in the December newsletter.

- **Bhandara:** Friday, November 30th is the 17th anniversary of Swami Sivananda Radha's passing into Light. A Bhandara celebration dinner will be held at the Ashram to honour Swami Radha's life and work. We will host those from the community who have been part of this work for many years as well as Ashram residents, karma yogis and guests. It will be a get-together of friends and their families. We are also planning to donate to local East Shore organizations that serve and

hold so much of what keeps this region working in a compassionate way, from our first responders to the Christmas Hamper program. A Bhandara is a symbolic offering from a storehouse of abundance to honour and celebrate the life and teachings of a guru who is no longer living.

- **Yoga Development Course:** Is this your year to take 3 months to be with a group of like-minded people -- exploring questions of meaning, identification and ideals and learning powerful tools for transformation to become the kind of person you want to be? Join us for the 2013 YDC. Contact [Swami Samayananda](#).



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