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**Yasodhara Ashram**  
YOGA RETREAT & STUDY CENTRE

CELEBRATING  
**50**  
YEARS  
1963-2013

## GROWTH AND RESILIENCE - MAY NEWSLETTER



May - extending light, chaotic growth and call to action. Seeds planted, seedlings transplanted, weeds uprooted. Courses starting, guests arriving, Ashram thriving...

How do you direct energy? What actions do you need to take? What needs to be cleared away?

- 
- [Who Am I? Self-Image & Identification](#): By exploring your self-image and questioning who you really are, you can peel away external layers and come closer to your essence. These two original workshops developed by Swami Radha are often a pivotal point for self-understanding when offered in the Yoga Development Course. In this five-day intensive you are given the opportunity to face yourself and to see yourself in a new way.

## UPCOMING ASHRAM COURSES



*May 31 - June 5*

- [Key to the Unconscious: Dream Yoga & Straight Walk®](#): Learn to open the doors to your unconscious through the exploration of your personal symbolism. The combination of Dreams and Straight Walk® encourages a deepening trust in a source within yourself that you can count on. Included in the program is time to gather your symbolic messages in order to apply your insights to your real life situation.

*June 14 - 19*

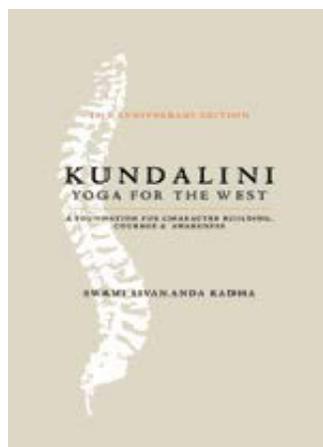
- [10 Days of Yoga](#): One of our most popular programs for students of all levels, this course is designed to offer practices that support your personal and spiritual development. Instruction is given in a variety of traditional yogic practices combined with original courses Swami Radha created for personal development. Give yourself ten days to expand your understanding of who you are and who you want to be.

*June 20 - 30*

- [Personal Retreats](#) and [Artist and Professional Retreats](#) are available year round at the Ashram - take time to renew spiritually and creatively.

[Visit our 2013 program calendar](#)

### Featured Book



### *Kundalini Yoga for the West*

by Swami Sivananda Radha

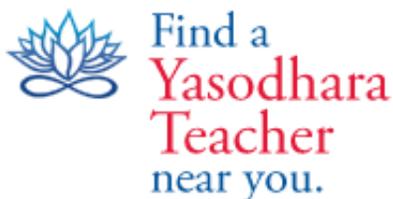
[www.timeless.org](http://www.timeless.org)

### The Resilient Mind

*Swami Sivananda Radha - 1985*

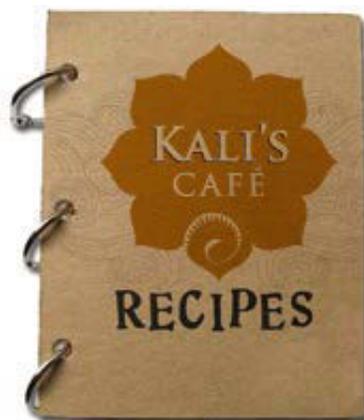


In this 1985 talk, originally titled "Demons & Dragons," Swami Radha describes thoughts as flowers with seeds that the wind can scatter into the air, causing them to land in the minds of others. And how individually, without awareness, we might be the recipients of the thoughts of others. By using reflection, discrimination and



awareness, Swami Radha encourages us to be proactive in understanding what makes life worth living and the kind of person we want to be.

[Watch the video](#)



**May Recipe:**  
[Ashram Garden Salad](#)

*"The sword of discrimination, having two edges, indicates the seriousness of the aspirant's situation; to cut away the undesirable characteristics without hurting oneself demands great skill and strength and clear assessment of what needs to be cut and what needs to be preserved." (p 235)*

Swami Sivananda Radha  
*Kundalini Yoga for the West*

## Teachings for a New Generation



Arlene Elliott and her six-year old son, Gabe, recently spent time at the Ashram.

Arlene's life from childhood had been dedicated to the performing arts. In her mid-twenties she found herself at the Ashram with a newly shaved head, and a disturbing feeling of uncertainty. She no longer knew who she was. Swami Radhananda put a question to her in a workshop, "What is the purpose of your life?" This question landed and launched her on a search that opened up her path. Still involved in singing, Arlene observes that the inner change was from performing for others to finding her true voice.

Arlene now shares the experience of the Ashram with her son, who clearly stated at the end of his visit: "I'm coming back here every year!" And Arlene said, "The Ashram did a wonderful job of filling my son and I up with Light. We have been able to approach each other with much more patience and willingness. For that I am truly grateful."



## Natal versus Mortal, Vimala



## Desktop Photo of the Month

[Make this photo my  
desktop image](#)



In *Kundalini for the West*, Swami Radha tells us that every word or sound has power and is connected to a spirit of the highest order. The power is Sakti, the goddess of speech.

The provocative political theorist and philosopher Hannah Arendt who lived in the last century tried to turn on its head the way human beings refer to themselves. We tend to call ourselves "mortals," from the Latin *mors*, meaning "death." She invited us instead to consider ourselves as "natales," from the Latin *nasci*, meaning, "to be born." She put the emphasis on the potential inherent in each human being as we enter the world rather than on the fact that one day we will leave it.

Each time we hear ourselves say the word "mortal," there is a somewhat muted resonance, 'Yes, one day I will die.' But how could I forget! Having reached the age of eighty-four, my limbs and muscles remind me daily, especially when I see folks skipping along in a way that was delightful for me in my younger years.

I don't need to be reminded of my mortality. I can live my life, focusing on my human potential, enjoying the clouds and the rain and the sunshine and also the occasional thunderstorm.

I am a natal, ever being born to the moment and ever growing into Light!

## Extended Learning



*Guenevere Neufeld came to the Young Adult Program (YAP) in 2010 and then returned for an extended stay. During her three years at the Ashram, she completed the Yoga Development Course, book reports and Hatha, Hidden Language and Kundalini teacher certifications. She also oversaw the Ashram Bookstore and helped manage the YAP. In April 2013, Guenevere transitioned from the Ashram to start the next phase in her life.*

"My time at the Ashram was not so much about change as continuity - how I have grown and evolved. The essential being that I am has been revealed, by clearing away gunk and stuff through the spiritual tools and support. I have been fortunate to experience life in community. The fact the Ashram exists means more to me than the perfect house, car or job.

What I take with me is my love for Swami Radha, the teachings, and her example. Finding my voice through teaching and leading the Light has contributed to my evolution. And I will always remember the silent laughter in the dining room."

"Om Namah Sivaya!"  
Guenevere

## **Searching for Energy Independence**



For the first time in two million years, levels of chief greenhouse gas emissions hit 400 parts per million - levels the Earth has not seen in three to five million years - long before humans existed. Now more than ever, the search for alternative energy sources is crucial especially for Eastshore communities that are remote and vulnerable to energy outages.

The Ashram continues to search for alternatives energy sources to create [energy independence](#). Recently the Ashram applied for a Teck Service Learning Internship grant and was selected to receive the 2013 grant for the *Alternative Power and Heat Systems for the Eastshore of Kootenay Lake* project. This summer, Eva Synder, a long time karma yogi and 2012 YDC participant and now a first year student of Integrated Environmental Planning at Selkirk College, will lead this project.

Eva will research, analyze, evaluate and assess how to work with energy conservation and renewable energy technologies, assemble a guide of prototypical solar photovoltaic cells and a small hydro system that could be replicated on the Eastshore of Kootenay Lake, and share findings with Eastshore residents.

Look for updates as the year progresses on this exciting project.

## **Lavender Garden Manifests**



The gardens at the Ashram have a reputation! Summer guests and day visitors often express their appreciation for the beauty and serenity of our grounds. Scattered throughout the property, these tended gardens offer spaces for reflection and deep connection to the gifts of nature.

For our 50th celebration, we have created a special place of beauty - a lavender field right in the heart of the Ashram. Swami Radha encouraged us to refine our senses, and this new garden will offer opportunities to see a variety of colours, smell the scents, hear the bees gathering nectar, be touched by the generosity of the plants, and taste the flowers in our teas. And you will be able to take some of this garden home with you in lavender-scented sachets, eye pillows, dried bouquets, Ashram teas and bath salts.

A special place to stop and pause as you head down to the beach or over to the Temple or return to your room from karma yoga in the garden.

Special thanks for the generous support from the 2013 YDC and other lavender donors.

## **"50 Reasons" Spring Fundraising Campaign Launches**



"Because the Teachings saved my life"

"Because I want to put my gratitude into action..."

"Because everyone needs a home they can truly call home..."

The theme of the Spring Fundraising Campaign is "50 Reasons to Donate to Yasodhara Ashram in its 50th Anniversary Year".

Everyone has a unique connection to the Ashram, a story of why they come, a story of why they share their experience with friends and family, and why they want to give back.

Fifty years ago Swami Radha laid the foundation for our enduring and vibrant spiritual community. Today our commitment is to instill quality, care and awareness in all that we do so that Yasodhara Ashram can truly be a spiritual home to all. Our goal is to support each person in experiencing, as one guest says, "a safe place for deep, profound healing like no other place in the world."

To continue to create a sustainable community for future generations - to maintain this enduring and evolving centre of Light - we rely on the generosity of our donors to make ends meet. Fees fund only a portion of our annual budget.

We invite you to [support](#) the Ashram. Each offer of [support](#) - no matter the size - is deeply appreciated and makes a difference.

Everyone has a unique reason to give to the Ashram. What is your reason? Please [donate](#) now and tell us your reason.

## New Hatha Teachers



*Andrej Galic is the Ashram's resident IT specialist and now one of our newest Hatha Yoga teachers. Andrej participated in the Yoga Development Course this winter and continued on with thirteen other students to complete the Hatha Certification course. Congratulations to Andrej and to all of our new Yasodhara teachers!*

"The experienced teachers here make teaching look easy, but now I appreciate the effort and responsibility involved in holding the space for the class and the attention to detail required. I'm learning to observe my thoughts and judgments in class as reflections of my own inner work. Teaching offers me a pathway to deeper awareness.

There was no doubt in my mind that I would take the Hatha Certification because I see teaching as an offering, and my intention is to be in service as a committed member of the community. I am happy to be manifesting a new and different way of being at the Ashram."

Andrej

**Annual General Meeting, May 2, 2013**



The Annual General Meeting of the Yasodhara Ashram Society (YAS), the Friends of Radha Foundation (FRF) and the Association for the Development of Human Potential (ADHP) was short (2 hours vs 2 days) but inspiring, as our next phase opens up.

The three boards will work even more collaboratively. FRF will expand its constitution to also hold "the Institute," which will translate the teachings for a wider audience and in a more educational context. We imagine the boundaries of Yasodhara Ashram becoming more permeable with teachers moving inside and outside the Ashram, and courses taking place in a blend of city/Ashram contexts. Upcoming initiatives include the Virtual Teacher Room and a regional network in the East, focused on generating new interest and supporting existing teachers.

We brainstormed online courses, micro-grants, an ethical design studio functioning as a social enterprise, and potential partnerships with universities. We want to respond to the need for people to understand work as practice, and we have ideas for developing new karma yoga curriculum that involves a city/Ashram blend.

Rebecca Dale was elected as a new director on the YAS Board, and Swami Samayananda for ADHP. Marlene Roza was re-elected as FRF secretary, and Swami Radhananda will be continuing as President of the Yasodhara Ashram Society and spiritual director of all three organizations. Members will be receiving more detailed minutes...stay tuned!

## News at a Glance

- **Bhajan Blast 5:** We're preparing to offer [Bhajan Blast 5](#) on Sunday, May 26 from 7 - 8 pm

Pacific. The dance offering will be the Mandala Dance, choreographed by Shymali. [View](#) the live streaming of the event and help us generate positive vibrations by joining us in lively song and devotional dance!

- **Taste of the Ashram:** This year, we are inviting friends, neighbours and travellers to register for a short day program that gives a taste of this special community. The first Saturday of each month - June through September - people can [join us](#) for a yoga class, lunch and guided tour of the grounds, including an overview of our environmental initiatives and gardens.
- **Musical Performances:** It was a magical evening in The Temple as we enjoyed a dynamic sitar concert with the Mishras from Benares, India. [View](#) the photo album on the Ashram's [Facebook](#) page. Next in our 50th Anniversary musical line-up is Classical Indian Dance with [Anusha](#) Fernando on Saturday, May 25 from 7 - 8 pm. Anusha will offer two solo Bharata Natyam performances: "Earth" and "Water," blending tradition with innovation.
- **Note Program Date Change:** The July **Power Pack: Life Seals® and Straight Walk®** dates have changed from July 12th - 17th to July 13th - 18th.

About the Power Pack, **Joan Gamble from Ottawa** writes: "From May 3rd to 8th, I participated in the first offering of the 'Power Pack: Life Seals® & Straight Walk®', one of the 50th Anniversary Signature courses. I felt the power of Swami Radha's teachings and her genius in creating such potent teaching tools. My stay at the Ashram this time was short but very full, and I left with new insights and a deeper understanding of myself. I highly recommend this program!"

- **Upcoming Workshops in England:** Jayne Boys will be offering two workshops in England:
  - 1) Relaxation and Light, May 25 - 29th at the Pakefield retreat centre in Suffolk
  - 2) Dream Yoga, Saturday, June 1st, London

Please visit <http://europe.radha.org> for all details.

## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

May's theme is **Resilience**.



### Historical Moment - Yoga Works!

Yoga works. One of its manifestations is resilience, the capacity to respond to challenge and change while maintaining balance, harmony and health. The Ashram itself is testimony to yoga's effectiveness. In the five decades of its being, many unanticipated events had to be met: financial requirements, unexpected departures and arrivals, illness and injury. The wisdom of the teachings allowed adaptation, response, renewal and alteration while holding to the core ideals that brought the

Ashram into being. Anticipating change - learning to embrace it with practices like the headstand that turn the world upside down for a new view, learning to prepare for it through creating garden space and growing food - the Ashram's capacity to respond and change is what has maintained it as the vibrant, thriving community it is today.



## Teaching Guide - Resilience

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This May we are celebrating the theme of "Resilience," which is the ability to bounce back and thrive.

Whether you are at the Ashram or in our extended community, we invite you to explore resilience. How do you encourage yourself to bounce back and thrive? How do you support resilience in your community, the environment, the world?

***"Resilience" is the theme for May 2013.***

Click [here](#) for ideas on how to explore your understanding of resiliency in your life. View Swami Radhanand's video, "Challenge to Change" in which she encourages us to start with ourselves to bring peace to the world. Listen to an archival audio of Swami Radha describing yoga as a do-it-yourself (DIY) path to Liberation. Celebrate resiliency in your life through this month's teaching reflections.



## May Art Project: Seed Bombs

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Seed bombing is a technique of introducing vegetation to land by throwing or dropping compressed bundles of soil containing live vegetation. Often, seed bombing projects are done with local fields and rooftops.

The term "seed grenade" was first used by Liz Christy in 1973 when she started the "Green Guerrillas". The first seed grenades were made from balloons filled with tomato seeds, and fertilizer. They were tossed over fences onto empty lots in New York City in order to make the neighborhoods look better - this was the start of the "guerrilla gardening" movement.

Create resiliency in local empty fields and rooftops in your area! [Click here](#) for a "seed bomb" recipe.



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