

YASODHARA ASHRAM YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM INFORMATION

(Written by Young Adult Program participants)

The intent of this question-answer information sheet is to provide young adults (18 - 30 years) interested in Yasodhara Ashram's Young Adult Program a clear idea of what Ashram life is like (from a young adult perspective). Please read it thoroughly before completing your application, which is found below.

Every young adult who applies needs to include at least two work/character reference letters with their application. We ask all accepted applicants to make a minimum two-week commitment. This has been found to be the length of time it takes to settle into the schedule and practices of the ashram. After two weeks, there is a procedure to go through to extend your stay, if it's agreed that this would be a good course of action.

What is Yasodhara Ashram?

The Ashram is a spiritual community that continues to celebrate founder Swami Sivananda Radha's yogic teachings, which she has adapted for the Western practitioner. Yasodhara Ashram was established at Kootenay Bay in 1963. The ashram is a registered charity, certified Private Post-Secondary Educational Institution, and a thriving retreat and study centre with a diverse offering of yogic practices. Hatha yoga, the physical practice that most people associate with the word "yoga", constitutes but a small part of what we do here. Our practices, as well as courses and workshops that are offered throughout the year, are described in greater detail on the Ashram's website.

What is "Karma Yoga"?

The main spiritual practice here at the Ashram is Karma Yoga, the practice of selfless service. This means the work we do not only contributes to the functioning of the Ashram (from cleaning rooms to preparing meals, and everything in between), but is also used as a tool to help us understand who we are in the world, our life's purpose, and what we have to offer. Participants in the Young Adult Program are required to participate in 8 hours/day of Karma Yoga, as well as the morning Hatha Yoga classes, evening Satsang (chanting and prayers) in the Temple, and weekly classes.

What is the Young Adult Karma Yoga Program?

The Young Adult Program provides an opportunity for personal exploration and growth in a safe, supportive and well-established spiritual community. Participants will be introduced to the different forms of yoga (for example hatha, karma, kundalini, bhakti and mantra), and learn how they can be practically applied in everyday life situations, both within and outside of the ashram. Young adults face a unique set of challenges and opportunities, and the program is designed to give participants the tools needed to build a solid foundation for the present and future.

There are few rules here because the emphasis is on taking personal responsibility for actions and choices. Each person's focus is on PERSONAL development. We support the best aspects in each other. Keep in mind that you are entering a community, which is the home of permanent residents who are committed to Swami Radha's teachings.

What is a day like for a young adult at the Ashram?

During your stay, you will become an important part of the community, attending morning chanting or Hatha Yoga, evening Satsang, and weekly classes to help strengthen your connection with the Teachings. Participating in all aspects of the Ashram also helps us support the atmosphere that has been built up over many years of spiritual practices.

6:50 – 7:50	Hatha Yoga class, or Chanting in The Temple, if available
8 - 8:30	Breakfast
8:30 -12:30	Karma Yoga
12:30 -1:30	Lunch
1:30 - 5:30	Karma Yoga
3:30 - 4	Reflection Break
6 - 6:30	Dinner
8 - 9	Satsang in The Temple of Divine Light. Satsang is a Sanskrit word meaning “in the company of the wise”. The community gathers in the temple for devotional singing and talks about experiences on the spiritual path.

Please note that all meals are eaten in silence to support personal reflection.

Can I use drugs and alcohol?

No and no. The ashram is a spiritual community. Neither drugs nor alcohol are necessary for spiritual growth. Upon your arrival you will be asked to sign an agreement that you will not use or possess drugs or alcohol. Anyone found possessing or using these will be asked to leave the Ashram within 24 hours. Smoking tobacco is allowed but only in the parking lot at the southern end of the Ashram, and only during scheduled breaks.

What about relationships and sex?

The Ashram is a celibate community. At the Ashram you have the opportunity to look inward and develop a solid foundation for yourself. Because our focus is on character building, self-reliance and emotional independence, we do not encourage romantic or exclusive relationships. Men and women are asked to dress modestly, and do not enter each other’s private living spaces.

Is it a Closed Retreat ?

Yes. Participants in the Young Adult Program are asked to remain on the Ashram property for the duration of their time in the program. If it becomes necessary to leave at any time due to unforeseen or extenuating circumstances, the applicant is asked to notify the office in writing.

There are a number of ways to reach us if you have questions or need to call for more information.

Yasodhara Ashram

PO Box 9 • Kootenay Bay BC • V0B 1X0 • Canada
registrations@yasodhara.org • www.yasodhara.org
250.227.9224 or 1.800.661.8711

**YASODHARA ASHRAM
YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM APPLICATION**

Name _____

Gender _____

Birth Date ___/___/___ Age _____

Today's Date _____ (m) (d) (y)

Phone Day (____) _____

Phone Evening (____) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Permanent Home Address _____ City _____

Province/State _____ Post/Zip _____

Country _____

PERSON TO CALL IN EMERGENCY

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Province/State _____ Post/Zip _____

Country _____

Phone (____) _____

E-Mail Address _____

We have intake days every other Monday throughout the year.

When do you plan to arrive? _____

How long do you want to stay? _____

Would you be willing to make a minimum of a two-week commitment? Yes No

How did you hear about the ashram? Circle all that apply

Internet Yoga Teacher Program Brochure Ashram website Retreats on Line

Radha Yoga Centre Word of Mouth Publicity Card Other: _____

Food Preference

Most of our meals are vegetarian. We occasionally offer chicken or fish. Please indicate if you would eat these by circling below:

Chicken Fish

Please indicate if you are vegan _____

If you have any special dietary restrictions please discuss this with us before arriving.

Financial Considerations

The Young Adult Program is an opportunity for people aged 18-30 to contribute to and support a thriving spiritual community. Unlike a work exchange program (where work is exchanged for room and board), the Young Adult Program engages you in the practice of Karma Yoga or selfless service. Learning to work with mindfulness, quality and an understanding of symbolism are all skills that are transferable to your work when you leave the ashram.

All participants of the Young Adult Program are expected to make a financial contribution towards the cost of their stay, which is \$35 per day, or \$490 for the first two weeks of the program. If you are unable to afford the full cost the balance can often be covered by donors who make charitable donations to support this Program.

Please indicate your financial contribution:

- I am able to cover the full cost of my first two weeks (\$490)
- I am able to contribute \$_____ toward the cost of my first two weeks and request funds from donors to cover the balance.

At the end of your initial two-week commitment, you may apply to extend your stay. The cost is \$35 per day and we ask that you make a financial contribution toward the cost of your additional stay. If you stay for an additional two weeks, and it is needed, you may ask to have the fee for your additional stay waived entirely.

In addition to the cost of your program, most Young Adults find they need at least \$35/ month for telephone, laundry and other sundries.

Do you have these funds available? __ Yes __ No

Health Information:

Do you have any physical conditions that could affect your participation in daily activities? If yes, please describe.

Do you have any emotional or mental conditions that may affect you during your stay? If yes, please describe.

Are you currently under the care of a therapist, counselor or physician? If yes, please describe.

Are you currently taking any medication? If yes, please describe.

Do you smoke?

Are you currently or have you in the past struggled with substance abuse, dependency or addiction? If Yes, please provide details including any treatment or recovery program:

Do you have any communicable health conditions that may require extra precautions be taken to protect others with whom you may be living? (e.g. athlete's foot). If yes, please describe the condition and precautions you take.

What additional support would you need from us to enable you to be here given what you have stated above?

We are located quite a distance from health care and emergency services. Health services can be quite costly for individuals who do not have adequate health insurance coverage. For example, one trip to the hospital in an ambulance costs about \$400.00, just for the trip alone! If you are from outside the country then you will need to send us a copy of your health insurance policy that is valid for your time in Canada. If from Canada, you will need to have a valid health care card. Your acceptance into the program is dependent on this document.

What is the status of your health insurance coverage? Briefly describe what is covered under your health plan.

Do you have funds available to you to cover possible medical related costs that may be incurred while you are here at the Ashram? Please describe how you would be able to access these funds in the case of an emergency.

Other

If you have been part of our Karma Yoga or Young Adult Program in the past, please provide the dates.

When you register at Yasodhara Ashram you will be asked to sign an agreement taking full responsibility for yourself physically and emotionally. Drugs and alcohol are not permitted. We are a celibate ashram and the focus is on inner spiritual development. Are you willing to sign such an agreement?

Please answer the following questions in-depth, essay style.

1. What is your work experience? What are your skills and interests? What is your education? What are you looking for in life?
2. Why do you want to come the Ashram?
3. What do you want to focus on or learn about yourself at the Ashram?
4. What are your expectations of yourself and the Ashram Community?
5. Please give a brief description of your previous experience with yoga.

At least two letters of work/character references are also required in your proposal to come as part of the Young Adult Program.