

YASODHARA ASHRAM'S

YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM APPLICATION

(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). The questions at the end of this sheet are for your personal clarification and to be included in your application.

Every young adult who come needs also to include at least two work/character reference letters. We ask all accepted applicants to make a 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, it is possible to extend your commitment, 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 audience. Yasodhara Ashram was established at Kootenay Bay in 1963. The ashram is a registered charity and a certified Private Post-Secondary Educational Institution. It is a retreat and study centre for personal development with a synthesis of different yogas. Hatha yoga, the physical practice, that most people associate with the word "yoga" constitutes but a small part of what we do here. The courses and workshops that are offered are described in greater detail in the Ashram's program brochure and on our website.

What is "Karma Yoga"?

The ashram's primary focus is that of karma yoga, which is a practice of making work selfless service. Here we clarify our ideals by putting them into action in all aspects of daily life. We work seven and a half hours a day (with a half an hour afternoon reflection), six days a week. Karma Yoga is an approach to life using work as a tool for personal development and reflection.

What is the Young Adult Karma Yoga Program?

It is an opportunity for personal growth in a safe, supportive and spiritual environment. One learns about the different types of yoga (for example, hatha, karma, kundalini, mantra and bhakti). This program is generously funded by donations. It is not a work exchange program. One does not work for his/her room and board. Rather, it is an opportunity to support and contribute to a thriving spiritual community.

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?

You are expected to attend 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.

7 - 8 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 to possess illegal drugs 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.

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 relationships. Men and women do not enter each other's private living spaces.

Closed Retreat

Participants in the Young Adult Program are asked to remain at the Ashram 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.

QUESTIONS for CLARIFICATION (to be addressed in your application)

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. Have you studied Yoga? No _____ If Yes, please describe briefly:

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

Further Information

It is helpful to look through the Ashram's Program Brochure or look at our website to get a better idea of what the Ashram is and what is taught. Contact us if you would like a brochure. Our website address is: www.yasodhara.org.

Name _____ Male/Female

Birth Date ___/___/___ Age _____

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

Phone Day (____) _____

Phone Evening (____) _____

Fax (____) _____

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 _____

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? Please Circle

Internet Yoga Teacher Program Brochure Ascent Magazine Ashram website

Retreats on Line Radha Yoga Centre Word of Mouth Publicity Card other

Food Preference – circle one or all.

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

You will need about \$35 per month to cover laundry, toiletries and other sundries.

Do you have these funds? _____ Yes _____ No

Health Information:

Do you have any physical conditions that could affect your participation in daily activities?

No _____ If Yes, please specify:

Do you have any emotional or mental conditions that may affect you during your stay?

No _____ If Yes, please specify:

Are you currently under the care of a therapist, counselor or physician?

No _____ If Yes, please specify:

Are you currently taking any medication?

No _____ If Yes, please specify medication and condition:

Do you smoke? No _____ Yes _____

Are you currently or have you in the past struggled with addiction?

No _____ 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) No _____ If yes, please specify:

What 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! What is the status of your health insurance coverage? (Briefly describe what is covered under your health plan). 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. Your acceptance into the program is dependent on this document.

Also, 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 give 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.

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

phone (250) 227-9224 or 1-800-661-8711 • fax (250) 227-9494

• email: yashram@yasodhara.org • website: www.yasodhara.org