

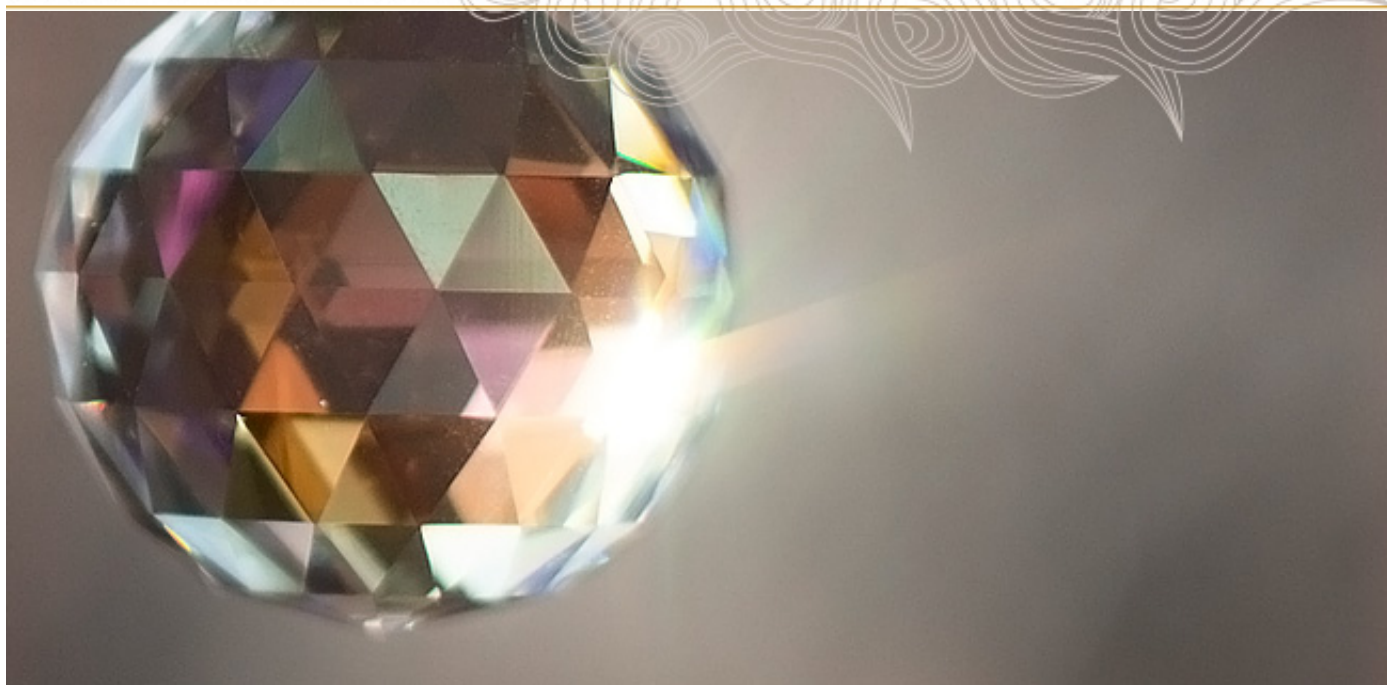
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Yasodhara Ashram
YOGA RETREAT & STUDY CENTRE

CELEBRATING
50
YEARS
1963-2013

GRATITUDE - DECEMBER NEWSLETTER



It was almost a year ago that Swami Radhananda extended a warm invitation to Yasodhara Ashram's 50th Anniversary. That year is now drawing to a close.

Thank you to everyone who joined us - either in person or virtually through our Bhajan Blasts and newsletters.

Thank you to Swami Radha for her vision and promise.

Thank you to Swami Radhanada for leading a vibrant Ashram into its 50th year and beyond.

Thank you for the support we've received all year long from you, our Ashram friends.

In our featured video, join us in celebrating the highlights of this very special year.

Much Light of the season to all of you! Many blessings from all of us at the Ashram!

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- [Festival of Light](#): Step out from the pressure of the holidays and honour the Light in the tranquil and beautiful setting of Yasodhara Ashram. Join us at any point from the Winter Solstice to the New Year, as we celebrate the gifts of the year and enjoy the peace of the season.

UPCOMING ASHRAM COURSES



December 21 - January 1

- [Yoga Development Course \(YDC\) 2014](#): There is still time to sign up for this life-changing course! The YDC is an intensive three-month program designed to give students an in-depth introduction to the major branches of yoga and a foundation in personal and spiritual development. The course is of lasting value not only to potential yoga teachers but also to all those who wish to deepen their yoga practice and make permanent changes in their approach to life.

January 8 - April 8

- [Stilling the Mind Retreat](#): What is the mind? How can it be directed? You will learn various practices - including visualization, breathing techniques, concentration and reflection to help you understand different levels of mind.

February 7-9

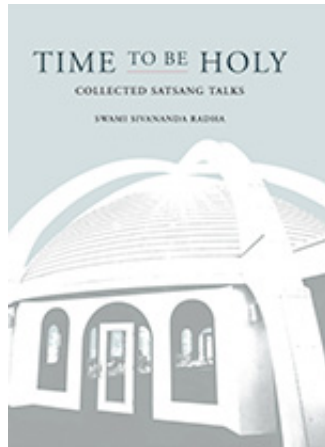
- [Relaxation Retreat \(Spring Equinox\)](#): As winter turns to spring, find balance and renewal within yourself. Focus on going inward, stilling the mind and body, connecting to your inner source of peace, harmony and joy.

March 21-23

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

- **NEW!** 2014 Yasodhara Ashram Program Calendar [now online](#)

Featured Book



Time to be Holy

by Swami Sivananda Radha

www.timeless.org

Video - 50th Anniversary Year in Review



A celebratory retrospective of the Ashram's 50th Anniversary year.

[Watch the video](#)

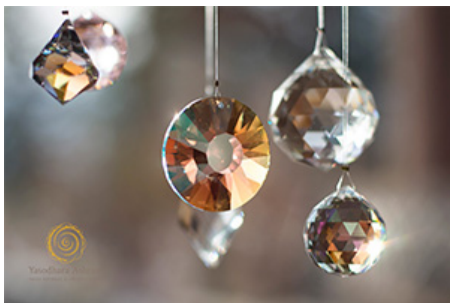
The Gift of Giving Swami Jyotihananda



December Recipe:
[Holiday Cookies:](#)
[Vegan & Gluten Free](#)

*"Take time off to think,
to reflect. This is your
time to be holy."*

Swami Sivananda Radha
Time To Be Holy, p 13



**Desktop Photo
of the Month**

[Make this photo my
desktop image](#)



Our 50th Anniversary has been a year of abundance - most recently through the generosity of donors to the Yasodhara 108 fundraiser, which will help sponsor the Young Adult Program.

Swami Radha said that we have to give back to life. She often told the story about a merchant who promised, when he returned home, to send his guru a carpet. When the gift didn't arrive, the guru finally sent another disciple to remind him. This disciple went resentfully, thinking the guru should be above desiring worldly goods. He found the merchant, who, alarmed at his forgetfulness, sent an even more beautiful, thick carpet back with the struggling disciple. The guru then explained that by asking the merchant to follow through, he saved him from the karma of a broken promise and sustained the good will that was at the basis of the promise.

How do we find the willingness to give in our own lives? What does it mean to give back to life? The answer lies in recognizing that we each have something unique to offer. In some ways the act of giving is an act of surrender. We're not holding onto to our own gifts; we're letting them go. Karma Yoga is a practice where we learn to give without expecting anything for ourselves. In giving, we become more whole, more light, more fulfilled.

Yasodhara 108 - Thank you!



"The best part was when my 90-year-old mother insisted on donating and said how good it made her feel to give back!"

45 days
58 participants
364 donors
\$32,000 raised!

The results are stellar! The initiative, creativity and enthusiasm of each participant was uplifting; the generosity of each donor, humbling.

Thank you from the Ashram's Young Adult Program!

Last year Yasodhara Ashram awarded \$60,000 in bursaries so that young adults could experience life in a spiritual community, learn new skills and participate in yoga courses - including the YDC.

"...my participation in this program had an immensely positive influence on me, and changed the course of my life in remarkable ways..."

Learn more about [Yasodhara 108](#).

Your generous gifts of support are always greatly appreciated. In this season of giving, [please consider supporting the Ashram](#) in our ongoing projects and programs - help us maintain this sacred space and keep Swami Radha's vision alive. www.yasodhara.org/give

My Professional Retreat

Mona Afary



Mona Afary is the Executive Director of a California-based [non-profit center](#) providing social services to refugee families dealing with trauma and exposure to violence.

"Your light is out." When Mona heard this message from the chair of her board, she knew it was time to renew. Her Board raised the funds to send Mona to Yasodhara Ashram for a three-week retreat.

"At first I wondered how I would relate to the Ashram, not knowing what to expect. What I discovered is a beautiful venue, people I easily relate to and the beginnings of friendships.

"During my time at the Ashram, I came to realize how this wonderful force called Divine Light has supported our center, our clients and me. Despite the atrocities our clients have experienced, they are loving and generous. Despite ongoing funding challenges, our center continues to operate. This sense of appreciation has changed my focus from seeing what is lacking to seeing how much is there.

"This insight applies to my personal journey as well. The classes in Dream Yoga, mantra and Hidden Language were immensely beneficial. Self-reflection guided me to understand the importance of balance for my well-being.

"I'm leaving the Ashram filled with Light and knowing that my commitment to my personal journey will also enrich my role as a professional."

Learn more about [Artist and Professional Renewal Retreats](#)

vision was fulfilled. Satsangs continue in this beautiful space dedicated to the Light.



Teaching Guide - Retreat

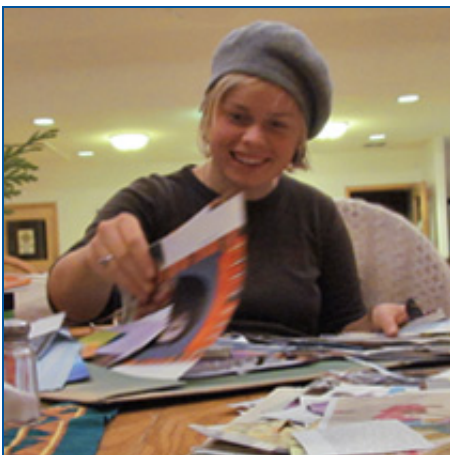
We are celebrating December, the final month of the Ashram's 50th Anniversary, with the theme of "Retreat." It's been a busy time for us, and we're ready to retreat! We know that December is also a busy month for many people, so we hope you lead the way for your students by being relaxed and enjoying some special retreat time this month.

[Click here](#) for reflections and practices.

"Retreat" is the theme for December 2013.

Swami Radha passed into the Light on November 30th, 1995. In this video, Swami Radhananda talks of Swami Radha as a bodhisattva or "diamond being" and reads Swami Radha's Last Message. In the Last Message Swami Radha encourages us to see life as the play of Radha and Krishna and asks those involved to stay together and love one another.... Lots to reflect on for Retreat Month. What would your last message be? [Click here](#) to view the video.

In this month's audio excerpt, Swami Radha encourages us to consider the need in this approaching winter season to retreat, restore and rejuvenate our energy. She suggests that relaxation brings renewal to the body - discovering the inner wells of energy - and deeper, more interconnected reflections to the mind. [Click here](#) to listen to the audio.



December Art Project - Relax and Create

On Friday nights before satsang, karma yogis at the Ashram are dedicating an hour to creative expression. Some people dance, others play music or create collages or draw. During this busy time of year, why not [join us](#) and find relaxation through your favorite creative activity?



NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE

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