

Activation

Issue 4, 2014

Spring has arrived with its buds, blossoms, energy and renewed life. In the rush of profusion, how do we find the right mix of rest and activity, inspiration and the effort needed to manifest our ideas into reality? Relaxation often opens the door to insight, and from insight comes action. Life flows with the incoming breath and the outgoing breath and speaks of a healthy underlying rhythm.

On a personal level can we activate awareness to understand our old patterns and commit to life-giving change? On an organizational level, can we see what is happening in the world and live our solutions?

[Power Pack: Life Seals & Straight Walk](#): Gain perspective on your life through two of Swami Radha's most powerful self-development workshops. Life Seals can open doors of awareness and help you understand yourself and your direction in life. The Straight Walk includes several walking meditations practiced with observation and concentration. Integrated in the program is personal retreat time.



UPCOMING
ASHRAM
COURSES

May 2 - 7

[10 Days of Yoga](#): One of our most popular programs for students of all levels, this course offers 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.

May 15 - 25

[Unplug Retreat: A Tech-Free Weekend](#): Leave your cellphone, smartphone, laptop and tablet at home. Quiet the digital distractions and go inward during this two-day retreat. Using meditation, mind-watch and Mantra, this retreat gives you a chance to observe yourself unplugged. *All participants will be asked to sign a contract to 'not plug in.'

May 23 - 25

[Stilling the Mind](#): What is the mind? What are its tendencies? 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 and to approach the mind's expansive potential.

May 30 June 1

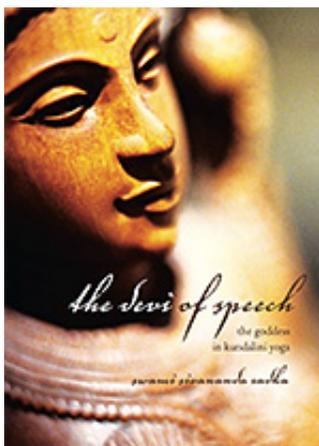
[Who Am I? Self-Image & Identification](#): In this five-day intensive you are given the opportunity to see yourself in a new way with these two original workshops developed by Swami Radha. In the Self-Image workshop you will explore how you see yourself through written reflections and video recordings. The image you put out to others is the basis of responses that you get back. With your learning from the Self-Image workshop, you then deepen your investigation in the Identification workshop. The question, "Who are you?" opens the doors of inquiry and breaks limiting concepts. *June 6 -11*

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

Visit our [2014](#) program calendar.

TIMELESS BOOK
OF THE MONTH

Commitment
Swami Sivananda Radha, 1985

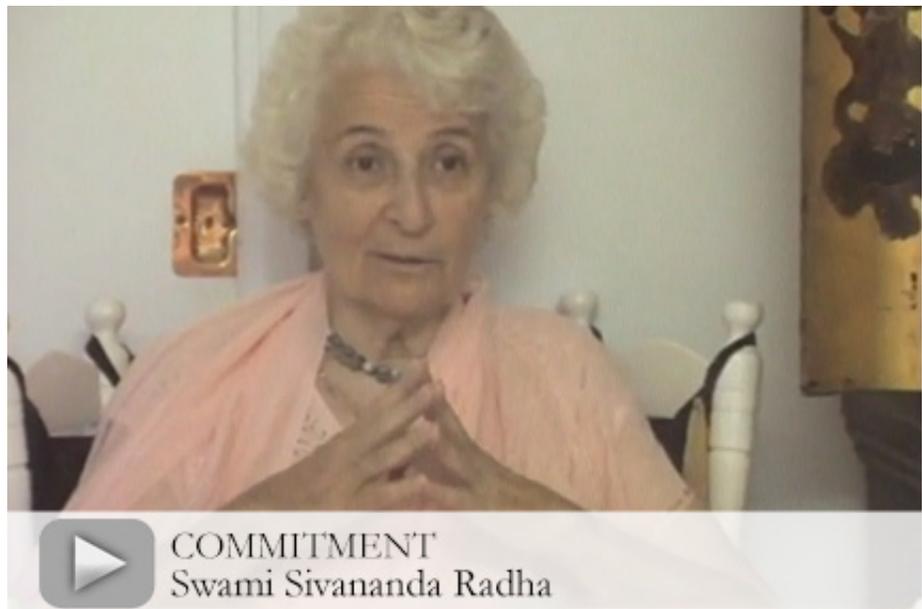


The Devi of Speech: The Goddess in Kundalini Yoga

Swami Sivananda Radha

"Prayer is a conversation between you and the Divine. Meditation means to wait in silence and emptiness of mind for answers from the Divine forces."
(p 33-34)

www.timeless.org



In this 1985 talk, Swami Radha speaks about commitment in spiritual life. She encourages us to determine the kind of person we want to be and to apply our learning to life-bringing quality into all that we do and practicing *ahimsa* (non-injury).

[View the video](#)

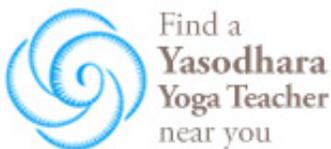


[Spring Vegetable Omelette](#)

Choices Anna Di Pede



A former senior marketing executive, Anna Di Pede is the hidden force behind Yasodhara Ashram's newsletter, events, publicity and communication. In 2011, ten months out of chemotherapy for her third cancer recurrence, Anna came to the Ashram for the 10 Days of Yoga looking for answers, meaning and healing. She





[Make this photo my desktop image](#)



signed on for the YDC 2012 and has been here ever since.

My doctor recently said to me, "Look how well you are doing, Anna! It's the choices you are making." One of my choices is seeing from the Light instead of the darkness, which allows me to leave behind old negative stories. With growing awareness, I'm learning to accept and integrate everything I've experienced. And when I can relax, everything around me cooperates.

I am also learning to trust my intuitive feelings and how I've been guided. My ideas come from that intuitive place. My communication work is to create awareness of the Ashram, and I look for ways to make it happen. I am always listening, distilling ideas and asking how we can share them beyond the Ashram. I weave ideas together and make connections and it becomes a story. I really like stories - creating them, reading them, listening to other people's stories. I love what I do and am committed to it. If it helps people find their way here to this place of Light, I feel real satisfaction, a sense that "All is well, all is good."

I see that the teachings are communication. I respect the power of words. I know that words can bind, create, heal. I'm changing my own story and healing. The last line in *The Devi of Speech*, "Life is not to be rejected, but to be transformed" somehow captures the essence for me.

Yasodhara Outreach in Williams Lake Swami Jyotihananda



Swami Jyotihananda recently traveled to Williams Lake, British Columbia, to participate in a Women & Spiritual Life conference. Nearly 150 women came

from all traditions: Babá'í, Anglican, Messianic Judais, Budhbism, native spirituality, shamanism, Islam, and Sikhism.

The Women and Spiritual Life conference was an important reminder that, "Woman can fulfill herself through none other." (Swami Radha, *Kundalini Yoga for the West*, p. 47) It was a touching experience for me to see so many women gathered together seeking something higher in life. I realized, too, how much the presence of the feminine pervades the Ashram and our teachings. I am pleased that as women on this path, we can go as far as we can reach.

During the [two-day conference](#), I participated in a panel discussion, offered the Divine Mother dance, and led a Divine Light Invocation workshop. The participants appreciated the practices as tools to help them relax, find peace and quiet the mind.

After the conference I offered a short workshop for the local Yasodhara Yoga community, which was followed by a potluck and Satsang. Family members joined us and everyone shared the gifts of their experience. It was a privilege to be part of this event and to be welcomed by a group committed to keeping the Yasodhara Yoga teachings alive.

[Learn more](#) about upcoming Yasodhara Yoga Outreach workshops. Swamis Matananda and Samayananda, Rebecca Dale and Joanne Bellanger will be on tour soon. Stay connected!

Learning Through Letting Go **Caroline Noga**



Caroline Noga is the Executive Director of a not-for-profit childcare organization caring for infant-to-12 year olds in multiple locations. She first visited the

Ashram in 2010 and recently returned for a two-week Professional Retreat.

I've always been driven to build and create at a pace that is often non-stop. But being at the Ashram, I have this sense of letting go, accepting and breathing into every cell in my being. I can pause and rest, and that allows ideas to emerge.

In the Life Seals workshop I did in 2010, my drawings opened the door to a significant insight. Doing Karma Yoga in the garden, I saw how this insight could manifest in my work. The outcome was the creation of the Clubhouse Farm- a four-acre "backyard" for children to experience the benefits of connecting with nature. The children have blossomed and their sense of self expands as they care for the land and animals. When I returned home I realized that I didn't have to do everything myself, and I hired a bookkeeper and secretary!

This spring, during my professional retreat, I developed a proposal for a new child care centre. My learning is to step back and make space by delegating responsibility and allowing others to manifest the vision. It's time for me now to bring balance into my own life and turn my life "right side up."

I leave with a deeper experience of spiritual life - a kinder and more peaceful vision.

Are you interested in an [Artist or Professional Retreat](#)? Learn more about [Retreats at Yasodhara Ashram](#).

The Renewable Energy Hub: Resiliency Readiness



The Ashram is in a remote area vulnerable to frequent power outages

and at the far end of a single line power grid. The Renewable Energy Hub recently purchased a Generac Propane Generator - one of several that the Ashram needs to be ready in the event of power outages. The generator will automatically kick-in and provide power to the water pumps located in the lake. This ensures continuous water supply during power outages and frees up the Emergency Response Team to focus on other priorities.

The Renewable Hub plans to continually update and activate solutions that contribute to our practice of environmentally responsible living. Next on the project list are photovoltaic energy for Parvati, upgrading the telephone system for emergency service needs, and installing wood stoves in select locations to sustainably use waste wood.

Building on our [environmental commitment](#), we are researching more renewable energy sources in response to the challenges of global warming. Learn more about alternative energy solutions in the recently published "[Guide to Eastshore Energy Sources](#)", authored by Eva Snyder, a YDC graduate and former karma yogi.

Help the Ashram realize its innovative energy solutions. Please [contribute](#) to the Ashram's Renewable Energy projects.

The 2014 Yoga Development Course (YDC) Wraps Up!



The 2014 YDC concluded three intense months of self-inquiry with a celebratory evening marked with light-hearted humor. This was followed by a Rose Ceremony - a beautiful ritual developed by Swami Radha as a commitment to personal ideals.

As an expression of gratitude for the teachings and for being held in this sacred space, the group offered a donation toward decorating and beautifying Parvati cabin, which is reaching its final stages of renovation. The participants' radiance spoke clearly of their personal victories.

Much Light on your paths!

[Learn more](#) the Yoga Development Course and view the [Rose Ceremony photo album](#) on Facebook.

NEWS AT A GLANCE

Earth Hour - On Saturday, March 29, a candle-lit satsang was dedicated to honouring Mother Earth and focused on bringing Light to the World, giving the earth a chance to rest, to breathe, to create balance. View the photo album [here](#). On Tuesday, April 22nd, the Ashram will focus on Earth Day with recycling activities to educate and engage everyone at the Ashram!

The Mishras - Join us on Saturday, May 31st, for a return of the Mishras to the Temple of Divine Light. Three generations of master musicians from Benares, an ancient spiritual centre of traditional music and Indian culture, will be offering classical North Indian ragas and meditative music in a sitar and tabla concert. Learn more [here](#).

Winter 2014 Bhajan Blast - Thank you to everyone who joined us for the first Bhajan Blast of 2014, view the [Facebook photo album](#) here. We're looking forward to our next Bhajan Blast in July - from the beach! Stay tuned.

Yasodhara Yoga Teachers & Centres (YYTC) Update - YYTC launch celebrations have taken place in Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Kelowna, Vancouver, Victoria and Spokane. Currently 20 teachers and 12 centres have live pages or sites. The YYTC website (yasodharayoga.org) unites our teachers and centres around the world, supporting their efforts to offer Yasodhara Yoga in their local communities. Please visit yasodharayoga.org and discover a Yasodhara Yoga class or workshop in your community!

The Ashram Garden is Activating! - Over the last few weeks, karma yogis have been busy preparing the [garden](#) for the new growing season. Carrots and beets have been planted outside in the garden, Asian cooking and salad greens are now growing in the mobile hoop house along with kale, chard, cabbage and kohlrabi. We hope you'll join us for nutritious meals from very local produce!

Easter at Yasodhara Ashram - Happy Easter! At the Ashram, retreat guests, residents and karma yogis will participate in special activities, quiet reflection, the Garden Blessing and our traditional Easter egg hunt to Easter Rock. May this renewing time inspire you to ever grow into Light.

PERSONAL PRACTICE GUIDE



"Activate"

Reflection Questions

The theme for April is "Activate!" With the rush of new life that is spring, how do we want to direct the life force that is so available now? This month's theme is presented by the Yasodhara Yoga team in Nanaimo.

Video

Swami Radhananda describes how knowledge is attained by using the will to take action.

Spiritual knowledge grows into awareness of the subtle aspects of life. In this satsang talk given during the YDC in 2004, she refers to the three month course as a "radical step along the spiritual path."

 **Watch the video**

Audio

Entering the spring season draws the mind to thoughts of gardening, blossoms, warm light. Find a comfortable position, close your eyes and allow Swami Radha to lead you through your own inner Body Garden.

 **Listen to the audio**

1. As gardening season begins, what kind of seeds/intentions do you want to plant? How will you nurture them over the month?
2. How do you activate your devotion? Is there a different devotional practice you can do or a different time, focus or perspective that will refresh your practice? Choose from the eight limbs of [Yasodhara Yoga](#) - Hidden Language, Dreams, Reflection, Dance, Divine Light Invocation, Kundalini, Karma Yoga, and Mantra.
3. Easter is in April this year. Swami Radha explored the topic of Resurrection in a [video](#) from Easter 1994. She asks us to resurrect our memory of the Divine by asking questions such as the following: Where did I come from? Why was I born? What is the purpose of my life? How was I born of the Light? Why am I gifted with Consciousness?

For more Teaching and Reflection ideas, [click here](#).



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NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE





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