

# GARDEN LEAD INFORMATION SHEET & APPLICATION FORM

The intent of this information sheet is to provide applicants with a clear idea of Ashram life.

## Please read it thoroughly before completing your application.

Our programs are unique in that they combine spiritual development with hands on experience.

Applications must include:

* completed application form
* letter of intent (please see page 5 of this application)
* completed health form (page 6 of this application)
* resume
* two work/character written reference letters

## What is Yasodhara Ashram?

The Ashram is a spiritual community based on 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 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," is only one 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 website.

We have an organic mixed market garden, growing a variety of fruits and vegetables on 2.2 acres of land that has been in production for over 30 years. Currently we produce 25% of the food served to residents, karma yogis and retreat guests, over 55,000 meals annually.

## 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 (cleaning rooms, preparing meals, maintaining the buildings and grounds, growing and preserving food and much more), but is also used as a tool to help us understand who we are in the world, our life purpose, and what we have to offer.

Participants in the Garden Lead program are required to participate in 6-8 hours/day of Karma Yoga.

## What is the Garden Lead Program?

This program provides an opportunity for personal exploration and skill development in a 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 situations, both within and outside of the Ashram. You will be immersed in the Ashram's garden, gaining valuable hands on experience, which will be transferable to other work contexts.

This program is designed to give participants the tools needed to build a solid foundation in life, both personally and professionally.

Hatha Yoga, evening Satsang, and weekly classes will help strengthen your understanding of the Ashram teachings. Half-day workshops enhance your understanding of the yogic tools used at the Ashram, complementing your leadership role in the Garden.

An important aspect of this program is learning to work within a spiritual community based on the teachings of Swami Radha. Participating in all aspects of the Ashram also helps us support the atmosphere that has been built up over many years of spiritual practice.

## Daily Schedule:

6:50 – 7:50 Hatha Yoga class, or occasional chanting 8 - 8:30 Breakfast

8:30 -12:30 Karma Yoga (work as spiritual practice) 12:30 -1:30 Lunch

1:30 - 4:00 Karma Yoga (with reflection 3:30-4pm) 6 - 6:30 Dinner

7:30-8:30 Satsang - Satsang is a Sanskrit word meaning “in the company of the wise”. The community gathers together for devotional singing and talks about experiences on the spiritual path.

## Specific to this community

Meals are eaten in silence to support personal reflection.

In support of the quiet reflective space at the Ashram, we have designated areas as "technology free" zones. We ask that you respect this guideline in the dining room, atrium and front entrance sitting area of Mandala House. In all areas of the Ashram we ask that you be considerate of others in your phone use, as well as thoughtful about your own reasons for being here in a retreat centre. We ask that you do not use your phone recreationally during Karma Yoga time. There are spaces provided for skype or facetime and other internet use in the Library, social space and private skype room.

## Drugs and alcohol

Drugs and alcohol are not permitted in this program. 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. There is a designated smoking area in the parking lot at the south end of the Ashram for people who smoke tobacco.

## 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. You are asked to dress modestly, and not to enter other people’s private living spaces for the purpose of socializing.

## The Garden Lead Program is a Closed Retreat

Participants in the Yasodhara Garden Lead Program are asked to remain on the Ashram property for the duration of their time in the program. The intensive focus is an important aspect of the learning in this program. If it becomes necessary to leave at any time due to unforeseen or extenuating circumstances, you are asked to notify the office in writing. It is vital for us to know who is on site, in case of fire or emergencies.

# YASODHARA ASHRAM GARDEN LEAD APPLICATION

## Applicant Information

Name Gender

Birth Date / / (m/d/y) Age Today’s Date / /

Phone ( )

E-Mail Address

Permanent Home Address City

Province/State Post/Zip

Country

## Emergency Contact

Name Relationship to you Phone

Email

## Garden Lead Intake Date 2020

The ideal intake date for this position is March 1st 2020.

*As the opening of the garden is somewhat weather dependent there is some flexibility with this date.*

**Application Date:** Ongoing until filled**.**

**Length of stay:** this program is **eight months long**, with an **option to extend upon completion.**

While your work will be focused in the garden, you will also help out in other areas depending on the needs of the Ashram.

Please indicate preferred arrival date departure date

## Financial Considerations

The Yasodhara Garden Lead Program is an opportunity for people to contribute to and support a thriving spiritual community while gaining valuable experience in small scale organic agriculture. This 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.

This program provides free room and board, which includes shared accommodation and meals (valued at $1400 per month).

Most people find they need at least $70/month for phone, laundry and other sundries. A modest stipend or living allowance is available to Canadian citizens

## APPLICATION REVIEW

**Please attach**

1. Updated resume addressing your relevant experience and qualifications
2. Letter of intent including:
   1. ability and experience
   2. desire for learning /living within this particular community
   3. a brief description of your previous experience with yoga here or elsewhere
3. Completed Health Form (provided below)
4. At least two work/character written reference letters are also required in your proposal to participate in the Yasodhara Garden Lead Program.
5. Completed copy of this application form your application can be submitted by mail or email.

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Feel free to contact us by phone or email with any questions, or for more information.

# Yasodhara Ashram

PO Box 9 • Kootenay Bay BC • V0B 1X0 • Canada [molly@yasodhara.org](mailto:molly@yasodhara.org) • [www.yasodhara.org](http://www.yasodhara.org/) 250.227.9224 or 1.800.661.8711

## Health Information Form

We are located quite a distance (1.5 hours) 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 for the trip alone.

If you are from outside the country, we require a copy of your health insurance policy, valid for your time in Canada.

If from Canada, you will need a valid health care card. Otherwise, you will need to purchase emergency travel insurance for your time here. **Your acceptance into the program is dependent on this documentation.**

What is the status of your health insurance coverage? Briefly describe the name of your plan, and what coverage it provides.

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.

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? (ie. 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?