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Mandala Yoga Ashram

NEWSLETTER



Please visit us online at MandalaYogaAshram.co.uk for more content and details



About the Ashram



Mandala Yoga Ashram is an internationally renowned centre of yogic knowledge, founded by Swami Nishchalananda. It is dedicated to presenting yogic science, including advaita and meditation, to all who are sincerely looking to awaken joy and deeper meaning in their lives. It is an independent institution which is not affiliated to any religious beliefs; it is only concerned with awakening the intelligence and potential which exists innate in each human being. It is one of the few authentic ashrams outside of India.



To find out more about the Ashram experience and book a course please visit our website:

www.MandalaYogaAshram.co.uk

ASHRAM OFFICE

+44(0)1558 685358

(Office hours are from

9:30 - 12:00)

EMAIL

info@mandalayoga.net

ADDRESS

Pantypistyll

Llansadwrn

Llanwrda

SA19 8NR,

Wales, U.K.



A Message from Swamiji



Dear Friends in Yoga,

It looks as though the lockdown-pandemic could be coming to an end – for the moment, at least. It has been a challenge for many and an opportunity for others. But it has clearly indicated that we humans must change our way of living and relating to others, including other creatures. We cannot continue to mistreat the environment but need to show more respect for Gaia and the sacred ground on which we tread.

Each of us may feel insignificant. How can 'I' as an individual make any difference? But remember that human society is made up of individuals and if sufficient numbers start to change in our attitudes and behaviour – and it is not as many as we think – then we can change the direction of human and world affairs. Change starts with ourselves, which is why yoga and meditation are so important now and into the future; yoga and similar 'inner sciences' can have an enormous impact on the direction of the planet. As more and more people start to get in touch with the inner and realise that everything is sacred, so this will bring positive change.

Outside there is confusion; this has become evident to many of us over the last year. Only in the inner Conscious Presence is there no confusion and abundant meaning. We are bombarded with constant information, some of which are valid and much of which is useless. We will never find deep abiding meaning by spending endless hours surfing the internet. We just fill our mind with 'stuff' that doesn't generally edify or bring us inner peace, harmony, fulfilment and meaning. I would suggest to all serious yoga practitioners that they spend at least one hour in the morning disconnected from the internet, media, etc. Just be with yourself, practise yoga and reflect on fundamental issues and questions. This doesn't sound very much, but it can and does have an enormous impact on the quality of our life.

Life is short. Let's use this opportunity to reflect on basic questions. What are



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we doing here? Who or what are we? What is the 'I'? Is it just the body-mind? We will not find conclusive answers and meaning by following the latest news, nor by desperately searching the media, but rather by emptying the mind of preconceived ideas through yoga and meditation. Then we will discover 'something' so simple and yet profound that it defies all expectations and definitions. We will realise that we are not a personality that is conscious, but rather Consciousness, or Conscious Presence that expresses Itself through the personality. This applies to you, me, and every other human and creature on planet earth, as well as every human and creature that has ever lived and which will ever live.

So let us optimise on this valuable gift of life. Let us deepen our understanding and bring quality into our lives. And, since so many are suffering the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, let us reach out to others with a kind word, a supportive email, or in a hands-on practical way. Thinking of others and, where appropriate, helping others is an important aspect of the yogic path. In giving, we receive.

*Life and existence are far more extraordinary than we think,
and even more than we can think.*

— Swami Nishchalananda



Photo credit: Swami SatyaDaya

The Evolution of the Ashram

I recently saw a quote¹ from a spiritual teacher who I hold in very high regard which went something along the lines of:

'The yoga of today is not concerned with God realization, it is about giving people the tools they need to cope with the changes happening in the world around them.'

Most respectfully I have to disagree. It's *both*.

No one can be in doubt as to the pace of change that we are experiencing in these times. And that is without the tremendous upheaval and suffering that has resulted from the Coronavirus pandemic over the last 18 months or so.

To paraphrase the blessing/curse, the origins of which are not certain, we certainly do 'live in interesting times.' The turmoil experienced as a result of the pandemic may be the beginnings of a period of great change and transformation to our societal structures and the very fabric of how we live. Depending on your viewpoint this could be argued as either good or bad. I'll leave those arguments to others. What we can't deny is the change we're all living through.

Since the early days of the pandemic Swami Nishchalananda has been offering regular online satsangs to those within the Ashram community. Many times I've remembered him stating that we would be wise not to look to the outside world for our peace, especially now.

Because we're unlikely to find it. He's encouraging us to look within in. To realize, and at least in part identify with, the more essential levels of our Being. The realization, the direct experience, of the Changeless which lies at the very heart of our being allows us to face and the meet the waves of life from a place of greater vision, from a standpoint of at least some wisdom.

If the feeling of 'I' is so completely defined by those things, experiences that are subject to the winds of change then when a storm blows up we will no doubt be buffeted and even overwhelmed.

The fundamental purpose of the mystical science of Yoga is to realize that which is Essential, or God which is another word to describe that. We can go even further and

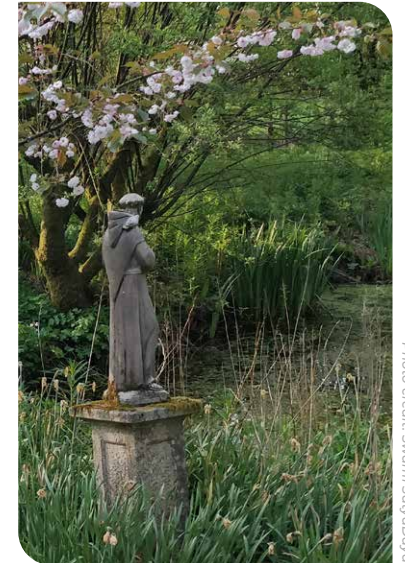


Photo credit: Swami SatyaDaya



Photo credit: Swami SatyaDaya

say the process is to realize the Sacredness of all life². And even as we move through these times of great change Mandala Yoga Ashram will remain true to this aspiration. The Ashram will aspire to continue to be seen as beacon for all those who seek deeper understanding and meaning in their lives. Personally I hope that one day the Ashram will even be known to those outside of the Yoga community as a place for those who yearn to realize what they are truly are in essence.

In harmony with the unashamed purpose of supporting those who seek the Ashram will also continue to offer the vast ranges of tools and techniques that Yoga embodies to help people improve the quality of their day to day lives. It was a truly humbling experience for all of us in the Ashram to hear some of the feedback offered with regard to the online courses we began to offer as the first lockdown began to bite. It's no exaggeration to say that for some it was literally a lifeline in the most difficult of times. We will continue to be a place where people can come, or join in online, to replenish and recharge their batteries, a place where people can connect with others of a like mind so that they may find support and solace in difficult times.

Yet I also feel it's important that Yoga does not become a method to allow people to put up with ways of living that no longer serve them at the level of body, mind or heart. I can think of little worse than Yoga, especially that taught at Mandala Yoga

Ashram, becoming a form of 'spiritual Prozac' where we use the science of Yoga to avoid feeling the pain and suffering of the world around us. This doesn't mean we start feeling like we are in a position to start telling the rest of the world how it should behave because it would suit our view of how things should be. Far from it. Our task as practitioners is to undergo the process of transformation within our own being. This transformation of our understanding of who and what we are fundamentally cannot but help change how we interact with life.

The Bible sums this up quite emphatically in Matthew 7:5 (*New Living Translation*):

"Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye."

To conclude I believe that the need for a deeper vision of who we truly are, is as prevalent, if not more so, than it has ever been.

Mandala Yoga Ashram, as it continues in its evolution, will continue to be a place that offers to meet that need. We will continue to offer the teachings of Yoga, free from dogma and sectarianism, so that all who wish to search for deeper meaning and depth, regardless of their beliefs or lack of them, regardless of their political or ideological standpoints, regardless of their gender, race or sexuality are welcome to search, through practice and aspiration, to the very heart of their, and all, Being. ॐ

— Swami SatyaDaya



Photo credit: Swami SatyaDaya

¹ The quote was in a Facebook post so was no doubt out of the context of the original article of which it would have been a part

² For me this realization of the sacredness of all of life will be crucial in how we as a species meet some of the challenges we face. I strongly believe that more shame, guilt and the berating of people for the situations we find ourselves in will not help. Over the many years I've been at the Ashram I've seen the effect on the ability to enjoy, to love life caused by the burden of guilt, shame and unworthiness. It can take a long time to release these shackles and I do not believe for one moment that those energies will help in the reigniting of reverence for the whole of Life.

2021-2022 Ashram Calendar

All dates are available to book unless seen in green.
 Online Courses are shown in blue.

AUGUST	12-22	Facing Death, Embracing Life
AUGUST	15	Pathways to the Goddess (day 3 of 4)*
AUGUST	27-30	A Celebration of Being
SEPTEMBER	1-14	Ashram Team Break
SEPTEMBER	18	Pathways to the Goddess (day 4 of 4)*
SEPTEMBER	19	Yoga Nidra training course (day 4 of 6)
SEPT/OCT	30-3	Meditation: Gateway to the Unknown
OCTOBER	3	An Exploration of the Bandhas (day 1 of 4)*
OCTOBER	7-10	Tattwa Shuddhi: Awakening to our Essential Nature
OCTOBER	9	The Yoga of Relationships
OCTOBER	10	Yoga Nidra training course (day 5 of 6)
OCTOBER	23-30	The Chakras: Discovering our Fullest Potential (1)
OCTOBER	23-24	Yoga and the Menopause
NOVEMBER	4-7	From Sound into Silence
NOVEMBER	6	Establishing a Meditation Practice
NOVEMBER	13	An Exploration of the Bandhas (day 2 of 4)*
NOVEMBER	14	Yoga Nidra training course (day 6 of 6)
NOV/DEC	27-4	Private Yoga Therapy Group Training
DECEMBER	5	An Exploration of the Bandhas (day 3 of 4)*
DECEMBER	12	The Feminine Wisdom: Cycles and Circles
2022 _____		
DEC/JAN	31-2	New Year's Retreat
JANUARY	16	An Exploration of the Bandhas (day 4 of 4)*
FEB/MAR	26-6	The Chakras: Discovering our Fullest Potential (2)
MARCH	11-13	Private Yoga Group Visit

APRIL 13-18 **Easter Course: Integrating Head and Heart, a Synthesis of Gyana and Bhakti yogas**

* These online days are interwoven yet independent of each other, and need to be booked separately. Please see our website: www.mandalayoga.co.uk/courses for full course descriptions and details. Further online courses will be added into the winter months and further residential courses for 2022 are currently on, or will soon be added to, the Ashram website.

Current Yoga Teacher Training Course Dates:

SEPT 19-26, OCT 13-20, NOV 18-21, FEB 17-20, and completing on MAR-APR 26-9.

New Ashram Self-Study Courses

These new kinds of courses are part of the continuing evolution of the Ashram and its teachings. They are designed to provide systematic video and audio content that can be taken at your own pace, in the comfort of your own home, as many times as you wish, and for an affordable price - while retaining the Ashram's commitment to high-quality, authentic teachings on yoga, advaita and meditation.

At the time of printing two such self-study courses are currently available:

Introduction to Meditation – with Swamis Krishnaprem and SatyaDaya

- Offering a systematic foundation for beginning the practice of meditation. Sharing accessible techniques from the classical yogic tradition, along with insights from their own direct experience, they offer gentle and grounded instruction for the initial stages of meditation practice.

Befriending the Mind – with Swami SatyaDaya

- Shares five important meditation practices which can help us to become more intimate with and accepting of our inner state as we encounter it. Through these practices we will learn to work with our thoughts and emotions, developing a kinder, more loving relationship with our own mind and the minds of others. Befriending the mind in this way is a gentle yet powerful way to open up to the arising of insight and the realisation of our most fundamental identity.

These self-study courses will continue to grow in number and variety, and they will all be available via Ashram website and <https://www.mandalayogaashram.com/self-study-courses>.



Forthcoming In-Depth Training Courses

• Kriya Yoga Training Course

This course only runs every few years (last delivered in 2018-19) and gives you a unique opportunity to learn the 20 practices of Kriya Yoga under skilled guidance over four residential periods at the Ashram. *July 2022 – February 2023.*

• Yoga Nidra Online Training Course

Following the current course, we plan to repeat this systematic online training course in how to teach Yoga Nidra. *Either in 2022 or 2023.*

• Yoga Teacher Training Course

The current course will conclude in April 2022, and a new course, which will include both residential and online teaching input, is scheduled to start in the *early Autumn of 2023 and conclude in the summer of 2025.* ॐ

Supporting the Ashram

If you feel touched to support the Ashram financially, you can do so via:

- * *Friends of the Ashram* - giving an affordable monthly donation to support the Ashram and its ongoing growth and development
 - * **One-off donation** - which is always received with gratitude
 - * **Your Will** - Including the Ashram in your will means that the Ashram can continue to be sustained into the future

This newsletter is now available to read and/or download via the Ashram website.
To subscribe to future biannual Ashram newsletters, kindly visit:
mandalayogaashram.com/newsletter and enter your name and email address.

Mandala Yoga Ashram Course Teachers



Swami
SatyaDaya



Tulsi



Swami
Krishnapremananda



Reva



Swami
CyanDharma



Zoe



Monica

It is not easy to go deeper into spiritual life in the overly materialistic culture in which we all live. It tends to deify the egoic self. Whilst there is nothing inherently wrong with this, we come to see through our life experience that the need to indulge the ego often simply makes us run and run in circles, like a dog chasing its own tail. Ashram life, by contrast, is founded on timeless spiritual principles. These encourage us to integrate all parts of the egoic self with the purpose of offering it in service to our deeper Source. The ego is then seen as it is – *simply an instrument through which Life itself expresses through us for the service of All.*

Life in Mandala Yoga Ashram offers us a foundation of daily practices, compassionate and non-judgemental support, and a routine that supports deeper spiritual inquiry. Furthermore, the Ashram catalyses a vibrant energy field at its core, which helps to transform us so that we awaken to what we truly are.

*Quotes are from Swami Krishnapremananda with editing/improvements from Swami Nishchalananda

Please note: This newsletter is now available to read and/or download via the Ashram website. To subscribe to future biannual Ashram newsletters, kindly visit: mandalayogaashram.co.uk/newsletter and enter your name and email address.



Mandala Yoga Ashram

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