



STEADFAST FREEDOM YOGA

June 12, 2003: 24 Years Old – Teacher Training, Sivananda Yoga Ashram: Catskill Mountains, New York

Namaste Family and Friends,

Life is Joy! Let's Give thanks and praises everyday.

I am writing to wish you all peace. In addition, I wanted to share some reflections with you based on my recent experiences on my spiritual journey. **I continue to take more yoga teacher trainings, and just completed an Anusara Yoga training with John Friend in New York, and am now at a Sivananda teacher training in upstate NY!**

This June 13, 2003 will be my first truly Sattvic birthday. Sattvic is a Sanskrit word that means having a quality of intentional purity. I am currently studying and living a yogic lifestyle at the extremely traditional Sivananda Yoga Ashram in the Catskill Mountains, New York. While I realize there is no magic formula for freedom, I am learning discipline and asking questions that expand my understanding of life.

The practice of living, working, and studying with my teachers, similar to the system used in India in ancient times, is both intensely challenging and rewarding. The daily schedule (4:30am – 11:00pm) is packed with hours of meditation and experiential education. Our days and nights consist of intriguing philosophy lectures and physical Asana yoga classes. Also integrated throughout the day is hours of chanting Sanskrit mantras from the Bhagavad-Gita, the celestial song, as well as the practice of Karma Yoga or selfless action to maintain the fullest functioning potential of the ashram while building concentration and will power. The interactive lectures with the Swamis delve into such issues as The Mind of the Aspirant, Types of Students and Teachers, The Stages of Knowledge, The Four Paths of Yoga (Action, Devotion, Mind Control, and Knowledge), Mysteries of the Mind, Karma, Dharma, and human Anatomy to name a few.

There are many challenges and obstacles to overcome throughout this concentrated study, which will take an entire lifetime. The seasons change as do our bodies/minds so I am trying my best to accept where I am now at the beginning of the journey and surrender and grow into that space. Again, I give thanks everyday for this enriching gift and opportunity.

Please find below a stream of consciousness highlighting what I have been contemplating and will continue to work towards for the rest of my life(s).

With much love,
Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti
Om Peace, Peace, Peace

Jordan

Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realize

Stepping onto my yoga mat I acknowledge that I am stepping into the inner divine and thousands of years of tradition

External self examinations of the thoughts in the mind help slow the being into meditation

Svadyaya: Looking inside oneself to study

Examining the deep desire and longing in the heart to experience the highest

Flowing with grace and examining life enhancing activities

Awareness, Expression, Attitude, Spiritual Intention

Compassion, Intuition, Aspiration

Connecting to the spirit

Celebrating effort and surrender

Freedom coming from a place of stability

Teaching and learning from the heart to awaken the heart

Serving Nature, Life, God

What does life mean to you?

What does your deep spirit say to you?

What does it mean to be sacred?

We think we are limited therefore we are! Liberation is removing that thought!

Who am I? Existence, Knowledge, Bliss!

Find the beauty and goodness in all

Love all people, even our enemies

Devoted practice is connected to meaning

Dance of Yes and No: Say no to that which blocks the heart and does not honor thyself

Transformation takes courage and comprehensive work

Open up to grace and being able to receive it

Go with the flow of divine love

OM Namah Shivaya Gurave: I offer myself to the light, the auspicious lord, who is the true teacher within and without

Meditation is the royal road

Prana: Breath, Radiant Energy

Tantra: Glorification of the good

Karma Yoga, selfless action

Contemplation of the absolute Brahman and Atman, the essence

Attitude, Alignment, Action

Inspired to move from the inside out

Forgetting so we have the ability to remember

High Consciousness Vibrations

Honor the divinity in all beings

Sacrifice our own illusions for knowledge

Let go of the ego – The illusions we have about ourselves and the world

Illusions are comfortable, removing them is painful

Learning discipline is the key to a spiritual life

Flexibility of the mind is necessary to fully experience the world and the reality of different cultures

Consuming is a way to self medicate our suffering

Face fear, open the mind

Pain helps discipline and growth

All obstacles come from within

Enjoy all the challenges, obstacles, and gifts life has to offer

Om Namah Shivaya: Our divine nature is bliss

Bliss is our birthright

Om: The base vibration that unifies all people

Om: An affirmation of the interconnectedness of all life

Om: We are all one, part of the web of life

Om: From the heart enhances all religion

Om: Vibration existing in stillness

Om: Sound massage for the body

This world has come out of love- To live is to love to love is to live- No virtue, treasure, knowledge, or religion higher than love

“All studies are intended for the enlightenment of the mind and illumination of the soul”

– Swami Sivananda