

# The Cross and The Lotus Journal



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*Dedicated to the Realization of God and Service to Him in All Forms*



The Reverend Mother, Yogacharya M. Hamilton



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The cross and lotus symbolizes the unity between East and West. The lotus is the sign of illumined consciousness, the thousand petal lotus of the crown chakra. The cross is the symbol of the body surrendered to the will of God. Following the way of the cross results in the resurrection of illumined consciousness.

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*The Cross and the Lotus, symbol of man.  
East and West blended, join hand in hand.  
Marching toward the infinite light and life divine.  
Lift up your eyes and see the star,  
descending from heaven where'er you are.  
Be filled with the peace and ecstasy of God's almighty love.  
Aum-Amen.  
(Hymn by Mother Hamilton)*

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© 2004 The Cross and The Lotus Publishing is dedicated to the publication of materials that promote God realization. Our spiritual lineage begins with Jesus Christ and Babaji and flows down to us through Lahiri Mahasaya, Swami Sri Yukteswar, Paramhansa Yogananda and The Reverend Mother Yogacharya M. Hamilton.

The Reverend Yogacharya David Hickenbottom continues this lineage with the help and support of many sincere devotees. We are dedicated to realizing God and serving devotees of every race, color, creed and religion.

Mother Hamilton often said she was the product of two fully illumined Masters, her own Guru, Paramhansa Yogananda, and Swami Ramdas. We therefore feature articles about Swami Ramdas and Anandashram. We bow to the feet of Saints and realized Masters of all religions.

## The Unfolding Life

Dear Friends,

It has been my habit, and a very positive one, to take stock of my life on a periodic basis to evaluate where my thoughts, words and actions are indicating as to where my heart is. As my life unfolds the treasures of the heart will certainly be reflected through these instruments of action.

I cannot separate my everyday life from my spiritual life, for they are one and the same. In an uplifted state I saw clearly that the mind is a creator, and it creates all the time! How many thoughts flow through the mind; many of those

thoughts are flowing from the subconscious mind. In the subconscious mind it is clear that what I sow is what I reap. For the subconscious mind reproduces exactly what the conscious mind and the senses feed into it. Like a tape recorder the subconscious mind imprints upon itself what it perceives, and it perceives all that the conscious mind knows and more, and then feeds it back to the conscious mind. This subconscious feedback loop produces habits.

Good habits are extremely important to us for operating in the world. I would be severely handicapped if I had to relearn how to start and drive an automobile every time I got in one to go! Because the nature of habit is neutral to good and bad, it is so very important that I think good thoughts, surround myself with good people and environments, and watch continually to not reinforce bad habits.

In contrast to a mind dominated by habits the realized soul lives upon the stream of Consciousness that flows from the Superconscious Mind. These illumined thoughts of Spirit from the Superconscious Mind make for a living source of inspiration, knowledge and wisdom. It is not that habits do not play any role in the life of a realized Master. However, the realized Master has learned that whatever is not in concert with the Superconscious Mind must be immediately and mercilessly cut out of the conscious stream. As Jesus said with such dramatic emphasis, *Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into*



*life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. (Mat. 18:8)*

Master told the story of when he first came to America and was served coffee on social occasions. Once he found himself eating alone and ordering coffee. He immediately said, *No! No more coffee!* Being a Master meant he trained his mind to recognize what was not in balance for his body, mind and spirit, and then he cut those imbalances out of his life.

If you practice using the sword of your mind to cut out the little imbalances in your life, you will then gain the strength to conquer those stronger habits that have taken over your will. A *jivanmukta*, a freed soul while living, is not dictated to by the mind and senses. Rather he or she uses the mind and the senses as the instruments of Divine Will.

Your words are so important, so important. Each word that leaves your mouth sends out a vibration to the world. Just like every tongue has a unique *tongue print*, so does every word have a unique vibration. Equally important, the mind that emits those words is the first listener to those words. So whatever you say to another makes an impression first on your own mind. If you have bitter words, you are also taking that bitterness right back into your subconscious mind. So, the words you speak should be sweet, so that when you have to eat them they will taste good!

To walk your talk means that your thoughts, words and actions are synchronized with Spirit. What a wonderful gift to give yourself and the world to make this so!

There is so much in the world that is difficult: wars and rumors of wars, strife, deceit and theft. You have control of precious little in this world. But, what you do have control over, your thoughts, words and actions, is your responsibility in this world. This world is the sum total of all its individuals, and when individuals change, so goes the world. There are some who believe that a conspiratorial few control everything in the world. I think much of this is actually distorted wishful thinking: it makes one feel that at least someone is in control!

The truth is you have been given the controls of your life, you have free will. But all too often you are like the erratic driver who complains about all those other crazy drivers. You must learn to operate the controls you are given with the greatest integrity. When you are busy learning self-control you will be much less focused on what others are doing, except to learn from them.

Through learning self control in daily life and self surrender in meditation you become a spiritual Master. The pure Self, the *Atman*, is then revealed as the inmost Presence.

Anchoring your life in the Self means that you will feel spontaneous joy in life; real, lasting joy! It also means you have a built-in tutor through your intuitive wisdom that will guide you through all the pitfalls of life and will make you realize worthwhile goals.

At each level of creation in the sacred scriptures God acknowledges that creation itself is good (Genesis 1). Life *is* good, and it is meant to be lived well. You do not need to look far to see examples of how life is not being lived well, perhaps you can find some of those examples right in your own backyard. To make life on earth as God meant it to be requires that more and more you and others live your lives in complete harmony with Divine Spirit.

By taking up the yoke of sadhana (spiritual practice) right now and bringing your thoughts, words and actions into harmony with the true Self you will find that your life is filled with joy and intuitive wisdom. Make yourself a conduit for the greatest experience a soul may know; to be an instrument of Divine Will. The Light, beauty and love you may manifest in your unfolding life are far beyond the reaches of words to describe. Realizing God satisfies your yearning soul and ushers you into the kingdom of heaven: its vast realm of Light and everlasting Bliss.

In Divine Love and Blessings,  
David



## Guru Nanak

Upon the tray of the sky blaze bright  
The lamps of sun and moon;  
Like diamonds shine the glittering stars  
To deck Thy wondrous form.  
The sweet Malaya breeze blows soft,  
For fragrant incense smoke;  
The moving air sways to and fro  
The fan before Thy holy face;  
Like gleaming votive lights  
The fresh and flowery groves appear.

How wonderful Thy worship is,  
O Slayer of birth and death!  
The sacred Om, from space arisen,  
Is the resounding drum.  
My mind craves nectar day and night  
At Hari's Lotus Feet;  
Oh, shower the waters of Thy grace  
On thirsty Nanak, blessed Lord;  
And may Thy hallowed name  
Become his everlasting home!



Mother in 1977

## **Do You Really Want Realization?**

**Excerpt from above talk  
Given by Mother Hamilton  
in Seattle, Washington  
on March 26, 1975**

I'd like to ask all of you a question tonight. How many of you in this room truly want God-Realization? Raise your hands. Make sure now what you say. Are you all willing to go all the way? Are you willing to do everything that is necessary in order to have that final realization of your Oneness with God?

It is quite a path you know. There are many methods, many paths that are being given, many techniques that are being given today that are said to be a short and an easy way to God. And certainly our own Gurudev [Paramhansa Yogananda] showed us the way when he gave us this blessed initiation of Kriya, which is the airplane route to God. But in spite of the fact that he has given us something which we can use to hasten our journey to God, nevertheless the price still has to be paid.

How many of you think that you can attain God-Realization and still do those things which are not good? Anybody here? Do you think that you first have to turn your face from what is so-called "evil" or that which goes against the law of God and start on the path and do the things that you should before you can attain that goal? Do all of you think that?

## Paul, The Little One

Well believe me it is true. Because this change has to come and it was brought out so graphically in the Christian scriptures when it speaks about Saul, that one who is going away from God, who is preaching against God, who is destroying everything of the Christ's teachings within his command. And all of a sudden, when it was time, Christ appeared to him on the road to Damascus. He came in a great light, and he said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And a tremendous change happened. And then we are told that Saul became Paul, the little one, the new one on the path. That instead of preaching against the Christ teachings, that he preached for him and he went the length and the breadth of the land giving lectures—pardon me—sermons and speaking for the Lord, because he had personally witnessed him.

But still he had not attained his full God-Realization. He had to go the way, this new one on the path; he had to go through all of the various planes of consciousness. He had to gradually purify himself—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually—even as the Christ did before that great moment would come to Him. And he became one of the greatest advocates of the Christ, one of the greatest disciples of the Christ that this world has ever known.

He had many experiences on the way up; there were many planes of consciousness. These are sometimes very difficult to go through as we pick up our cross in order that we might follow the Christ and become his disciples. It is not an easy path. Nobody ever said it was and anyone who thinks that they can get it for a song or through some easy method is badly mistaken.

A couple of weeks ago, I read you a chapter out of the Bible and I told you in connection with that, that there is a place in the Bible where it says that this is the straight and the narrow way. It is the razor's edge and that anyone who tries to go any other way is a thief and a robber. They have not paid the full price for the pearl and they must be willing to pay that price. Now this price is not so great when it is done for love. Because love softens everything. And when the heart center opens and the tears pour forth in longing and yearning for God, then at that time any price that is asked of the devotee seems small by comparison of that love and that yearning: to become one with the Father, to attain that state of Christhood.

I look at the people in this group and I see great spiritual love and longing in most of the faces. I see a people who are dedicated—as all of you raised your hands tonight—to finding your oneness with God. It isn't demanded of you that you do it today. You cannot go any faster than your consciousness and your desire and also your karmic pattern will allow you to do so.

### Kriya Burns Karma

Now Kriya hastens this because it burns up the effects of karma and perhaps this is the greatest service that has ever been done to humanity—it actually burns up this karma—so that when this time does come that you will not go through everything that you would have to go through if you had not had this sacred initiation. It gives you a feeling—if you do it correctly—of peace; it takes the consciousness away from the things of the senses and fixes the whole being, the whole consciousness on God. Gradually the purification takes place as you do this.

Now many say that they don't get results in the beginning. Many times this is because no matter how many times they have been instructed in the proper way to do it, they do not listen; they do not concentrate. And therefore they are not doing exactly as they are told. But those who are doing as they were told, and who still feel that they are not getting results, still those results are coming because they have not yet come to the point where they have burned up all that they would have taken incarnations to go through in order to have this final experience, this revolving of the current around the spine and through the brain. And so they should not be discouraged.

### A Strong Desire to Succeed

I happened to remember to write something down tonight. It was taken from that story that I told you about a few weeks ago from the book, *The Greatest Salesman in the World*. “**Failure will never overtake me if my desire to succeed is strong enough.**” “Failure will **never** overtake me if my desire to succeed is strong enough.” Now that is an absolute truth. You must have an intense desire to realize your Oneness with God, to overcome this world of duality and the power which the five senses have attained over your whole being. These senses have made you their slaves; you are not a free individual. You are not your **real** Self and anything that is required of you in the way of payment should certainly be given willingly in order that you may become your **Real Self**, have freedom in God, attain that Christ Consciousness which was in Jesus the Christ so that you have dominion over all of the kingdoms of heaven and of earth.

In order to do this you have to live the good life; you have to watch the company you keep; you must keep yourself clean inwardly and outwardly. Your thoughts must be purified. Your whole being gradually changes and becomes a great light of God. But it is not accomplished in a day and so we should never get discouraged. But we should keep on and on and on and on.

### Free Will

There are some whose minds are constantly busy, asking this question, that question. “Shall I do this? Can I do this? May I do this? Which would be

the best for me?" I do not put myself in the position of a fortune teller. If I were to answer everyone's questions as they come to me—either by telephone, by letter or in person—that individual would not be paying any price at all, because they want everything made easy for them in the human sense. The human ego doesn't want to be crucified; it doesn't want to go through any suffering; it doesn't want to make any mistakes. And it is not my place to tell that individual what decision they should make or how they should live their lives. Occasionally I make a suggestion and certainly there are certain things about which suggestions should be made. But the final decision lies with the individual and it must come from within themselves—from what they can figure out from their reason, their judgment, the logic that God has given them, or it must be done through the feeling of the heart.

### **Inner Communion**

Now if you will go into deep meditation and commune with God and put your problem before Him, having sought Him first just don't go into meditation and say, "God I have a problem, you've got to give me the answer right now." First you have to establish this communion, this inner communion, so that you can speak to Him. And He can speak to you. And you can listen to Him. He is constantly listening to you. Constantly. You don't really need to speak to Him because He already knows everything that is in your mind, in your heart, in every part of you because He is the indwelling Presence—the real Self that is in this form, which you call your body. You carry Him around with you wherever you go; you cannot escape Him and therefore He already knows your problem because you have made Him live with it. You have done this to Him. This is true; this is absolutely true.

### **How God Suffers**

I many times think about this and think what a terrible time He must have as He sits in this temple of each and every one of us and He watches some of the thoughts and the words and the actions that come forth from this delusive self which we call the human ego. What pain He must suffer! How drastically He longs for us to turn our face toward Him and to do those things which are necessary to become one with Him so that we, as the brides, may become one and have marriage and communion with that eternal bridegroom who is our only true beloved.

### **Pearl of Great Price**

There are many temptations that come on the path—many of them and they are not always easy to resist. There are some people who indulge in certain things and because they don't indulge all the way in them they think that they are saved from sin, this sin of separation from God. This is not

true. You will remember all of you who have read the *Autobiography* about the story which Master told about the fact that the mosquitoes were biting him and bothering him and buzzing around him and all of a sudden, because they were annoying him so terrifically that he raised his hand to swat them and his hand was stayed because he wondered whether or not this was the right thing to do. Well the mosquitoes' lives were saved, but he didn't get away with what he was thinking about because his guru said to him that *in as much as you had this in your consciousness and you lifted your hand, the act was already done*. You indulged in it—you may not have indulged in it outwardly but you indulged in it inwardly. And therefore this is just as harmful as if you had followed it through all the way. This thing of purification, you know, you cannot compromise with. It must be all the way—your purification from God, within God. You cannot compromise because God will take nothing less than every bit of the price that has to be paid for the pearl of God Realization.

I would be doing any individual a very terrible service if I were to make their decisions for them; if I were to tell them all of the things which God shows me about their lives. Where would be the price that they should pay? Where is their right to use their own free will? Now nobody can hope to escape certain things in the human sense and these experiences are necessary for your growth. If you say you want God Realization then you've got to be willing to go through the experiences which are necessary to go through in order to get that goal, in order that the consciousness may expand and finally the petals of your flower of God Realization may open and this tremendous light of God will flood your whole being.

### **Methods for Realizing God**

The bliss of God will permeate you and you will see Him everywhere—as the one and as the many. This is a tremendous experience, this universal vision of God, of the Christ. And this path we are on is one of the greatest, if not **the** greatest that man could possibly imagine because it deals as no other path does with the vital centers of the body and the techniques that are given. First we are given the technique of the spiritual eye. That is the Light of the body; that is this place where the vision of God comes in—it is the gate to Heaven within yourself. We are also taught to concentrate on the Heart Center. Because there is this vital nerve behind this heart center that when the devotee's devotion and love and longing and yearning for God becomes great enough that that nerve goes into action and the heart expands. And the love floods the whole being, the love of God, the love for God in everyone. And there's no place, no individual form that is not included in that love. Then we have that which is another vital center—not the center itself but rather the

control of the breath, the exercise to control the breath. Now breathlessness is deathlessness. So when you are taught this Hong Sau method of watching the breath come and go, which is a natural function of your body; there is not one thing that is given to you which is harmful in any of these teachings because everything that is given to you is natural, to the natural function of your body if you will only do it correctly. So gradually you learn to have control over this breath itself so that you are fully conscious and yet you find yourself in a state of suspended animation with full control and full ability to start breathing at any time you want to. Isn't this a tremendous thing? A tremendous thing.

Then you are given the *Aum* sound which is the Word<sup>1</sup> of God and that Word is within you and this, if you will concentrate on that one word *Aum*, it will take you all the way back to God because that Word that is surrounded by this body of flesh, is God Himself which took form in your body. And so going inward, and concentrating on this one universal Word, from which all words, all mantras, everything comes from. It is the most powerful mantra that you can possibly say in this world and it will produce tremendous results. I know because I have been getting letters lately from people who have used this technique alone and the results they are getting are so tremendous and so rapid in some cases that then they call on God, Christ and Guru to calm it down. To calm it down. This is true. And it's a tremendous thing. Now if you were to replace this word *Aum* with the word *love* and concentrate on the heart center and think of love—not human love, not the love of the senses, not the love of your children, of your family, of your friends, of your business, of your desires, any of these things but love for God—the divine love—and just concentrate on that one word and see this love expand in your heart, feel it in the depths of your heart—how tremendous it would be. How tremendous it would be! I know because I have done this! I have practiced it. Just concentrating on this one word *love* and my whole being was uplifted, my whole face as I looked at myself afterward was filled with light and I had such a feeling inside of me, as I can't begin to tell you. It was absolutely tremendous!

### **Following the Christ**

So these things, which you are given by the masters of this line, are all things which are the vital parts of your body and they help you to control the mind; they help you to control the emotions. And gradually the physical body itself is changed and re-generated and you come to that final moment when you are ready to pick up your cross and follow the Christ. Now it speaks in the Bible of Jesus picking up his cross on the way to Golgotha and it tells

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<sup>1</sup> The Logos, the only begotten son of God

about his falling three different times. He fell. Jesus fell, it says. And this, you will remember, applies to Jesus who is the son of man, and that applies to each and every one of us—the savior, the son of man in each and every one of us. Because as we strive to go along this path toward God Realization we fall flat on our faces sometimes, even as it indicates in this that it says in this scriptures, that he did also. But it means something else; it has a deeper meaning, because the consciousness must be released from each one of the three bodily jars. And as this consciousness, as the disciple goes through whatever is necessary to loosen this atomic structure—through the things which God makes the soul do in the body that is having this experience—this atomic structure is loosened. They go through these various experiences and then the son of man falls because the Christ in him is starting to be made manifest.

So the son of man falls in order that the Christ may pick himself up and get going. So this happens three times as the consciousness is released from the physical or the gross body, from the astral or the electrical body and from the idea or the causal body. Jesus fell three times; the son of man fell. And when it tells about the fact that Peter said to Jesus, that he would never deny him, never, that he would be with him always, that he could depend on him and Jesus told him that by the time the cock would crow three times that he would have betrayed him. Now again this is pure truth, because you see Peter represents truth, and he cannot... I didn't mean the word *betray*, I meant *deny* before—he would deny him and his knowledge of him. Because Jesus, the son of man is the purely delusive force governed and controlled by the ego sense, the five senses. And Peter, representing the rock or the truth of God must deny that son of man because he does not exist. He is the delusive force—that one which keeps us from realizing our oneness with God. So this was an absolute necessity for Peter, but it is deeply symbolic don't you see. It is the same as when Judas betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver—and we think immediately of coins because we, particularly in the west, are so money conscious—but it doesn't mean that at all, it means that he betrayed him for thirty pieces of knowledge. Because again we come to these six spinal centers, you see, that we must go through and the three bodily jars, and the ten qualities of the mind, and it is the mind's desire to know, to know the truth, to know the way of the cross and the Christ; to really get down to the basis of things that betrays the savior within. And so the savior is sold out for these thirty pieces of silver, or the knowledge that the mind wants to have as a result of the things that it must go through in being released from these three bodily jars.

Now there are ten subtle qualities of the mind, three sheaths or three bodily jars which makes thirty all together. And I can remember so well

when I was in India going through this experience when this happened to me. And I sat on a low bench in the room which was provided for us in the guest house and when I first went there I said to Papa, “What would you like us to do?”, thinking he would want us to meditate, to do asanas, to do this or that or the other thing. And he looked me straight in the eye and said, “Ramdas wishes you to do nothing.” And this didn’t seem like it amounted to very much; I couldn’t understand it, so I sat down and I meditated about it and all of a sudden the realization came to me that I, the human self, was to do absolutely nothing, this was the human ego; he wanted that out of the way—totally, so that God could come in and do the work.

And still this human ego wouldn’t go. It wanted to know; it wanted to know what everything meant, all of these scriptures that I had read or had heard sermons and lectures about. I wanted to know the inner meaning of it, and I can remember pounding on that low board that I sat on there, that stool and with my eyes closed, I was all alone and I said, “God, I’ve got to know, I’ve got to know, I’ve got to know; you must show me.” Well my prayer was strong enough so that He heard me and He showed me and I didn’t like the showing very well. I didn’t like that betrayal of this desire for knowledge when I had to go through it. I went through every bit of it and yet today I do not regret that I went through it because I can sit here and tell you the truth of the inner meaning of the scriptures. I can tell you what it means to drink the blood of Christ and to eat the bread of Christ because I have experienced this baptism of blood within myself, where the human within us must be drained out—that venous blood—and be replaced by that which is pure.

Not too long ago, and I wish I had brought it tonight, one of the newer disciples here who is a tremendous soul and a very fine artist drew a picture of the Christ and instead of the nails in the hands and feet and the crown of thorns, there was a chalice underneath and the blood coming into that chalice. It was a beautiful thing because it was so symbolic of what actually happens that as the son of man is crucified on his own cross, that this exchanging of the blood within the body has to be gone through and it drains out and you have gradually a new body in Christ. It is a beautiful thing. This thing of being nailed to your cross is absolutely true, but not the way it’s pictured with actual nails in the hands and blood coming out of them and the crown of thorns on the head and the nails in the feet. You are nailed to your cross by the two forces of good and evil when you are going through this experience. And you are absolutely helpless in it. You are literally nailed there. And the crown of thorns is this tremendous Kundalini force, which has risen in the spine and goes to the brain and you feel this expansion and a tremendous prickling and electrical charges of the brain. It is truly like a crown of

thorns all the way through. This deeper symbolic meaning can only be known when you have actually gone through it.

### **Mother's Destiny**

Now you, each of you, as I have told you many, many times will not have to go through what I went through. I had a special destiny to fulfill as was revealed to me and has been verified by the greatest saints in India, also by Master's successor, Rajasi when I first came back from India. And frankly, when God revealed what I was to do and what my destiny was, I couldn't accept it at all, I shied away from it. Believe me. Because I couldn't think that what He had told me was true about myself and I certainly couldn't think I was worthy of such a destiny.

It is more than human consciousness can face. And so the only thing I could do was to return to my humanness and put the whole thing in God's hands, turn my life, my whole being over to Him and let Him do with me as He will. As He will. I surrendered myself in full measure. I gave up everything in the worldly sense. I threw everything in the ocean of God in order that I might go through whatever His will was for me. And it is because I had that courage and that tremendous and complete desire to know what the story was, to know the truth and to become one with Him that I am able to sit here before you and tell you, not something that someone else has told me, not something that I read out of a book, not exactly what the scriptures say in the historical sense, but the inner meaning, the truth of it. The truth of it.

Now I can't take any credit for this. The only credit I can take, and even that was given to me by God, was my deep love and devotion and loyalty. But there's one thing I never did, and that was to give up. What this says here I did: "Failure will never overtake me if my desire to succeed is strong enough." And that desire to succeed was so strong that nothing would sway me. Nothing. I was told when I came out of all of this and had gone through the state of death and was still in the state of rigor mortis, or paralysis that if I didn't return to the United States, if I didn't leave the ashram that they would take me up on the hill and burn my body because I would be dead. And I said, "I don't care. Let them! Let them. I am not leaving until I get the inner direction that this is God's will for me." And I didn't.

And finally that direction came and I had to be carried out, and one of our devotees in this group<sup>1</sup> was there during the last ten days of my sojourn at that ashram and can verify the condition I was in and took over and really took care of me like a saint himself. And as long as I live I shall love that one. Believe me.

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<sup>1</sup> Herlwyn Lutz (1958)—he traveled to Anandashram after leaving the army.

## Secure in His Arms

One of the delightful things God has arranged lately is that when I sit down to do Kriya early in the morning about 6:00am, and get all settled in after doing stretching; I get the blanket all wrapped around and cozy in my big chair. Just as I start to do a few calming Kriya breaths—Cody comes out of his bedroom all bleary eyed looking for the security of a big Mom or Dad to hold him. He knows he can find me early in the morning in that big chair so he comes into the living room, all forlorn, with big longing eyes, wanting so much to be held. I pull back part of the blanket, pick him up and settle him onto my lap. I wrap the blanket around his little body, cozy and nestled in the hollow of my lap.

He rests his head against my chest and I go on to meditate, thanking God all the while for this little joy of a soul that has come to be with us. Cody, feeling secure all wrapped in the warmth of my body and the pervasive calm of the quiet early morning, soon falls asleep. Then as I meditate, I think, “God, there is not one soul



presented before you, but two. Take us both. Lift us up in you. Come into me; come into this soul you have given us for safekeeping; come into my little boy.” As I sit there with arms on either side of Cody, hands resting palms up, it feels as if I am presenting him to God and presenting myself as well. The greatest gifts we can give Him: ourselves.

[This is an excerpt from a letter that Peter Schultz sent to David recently.]

# The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna

By

M. (Mahendranath Gupta)

Translated by Swami Nikhilananda

DEVOTEE : Then what is the way, sir?

MASTER : Prayer and the company of holy men. You cannot get rid of an ailment without the help of a physician. But it is not enough to be in the company of religious people only for a day. You should constantly seek it, for the disease has become chronic. Again, you can't understand the pulse rightly unless you live with a physician. Moving with him constantly, you learn to distinguish between the pulse of phlegm and the pulse of bile.

DEVOTEE : What is the good of holy company?

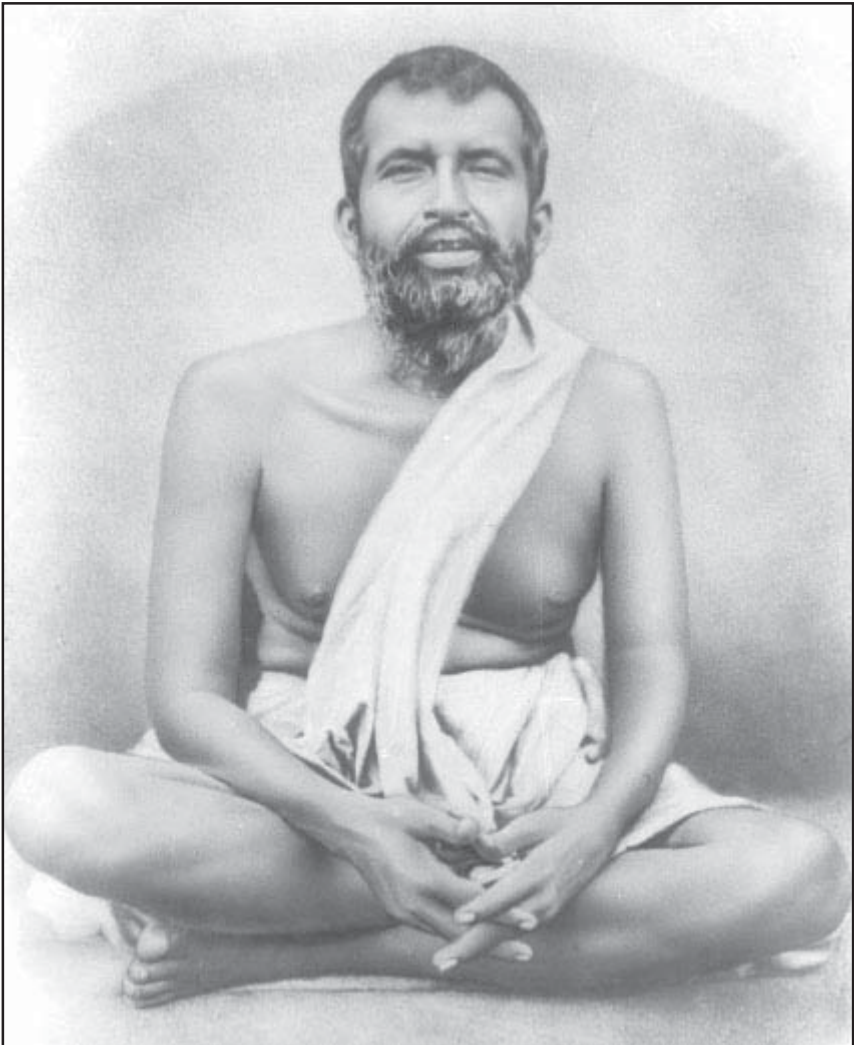
MASTER: It begets yearning for God. It begets love of God. Nothing whatsoever is achieved in spiritual life without yearning. By constantly living in the company of holy men, the soul becomes restless for God. This yearning is like the state of mind of a man who has someone ill in the family. His mind is in a state of perpetual restlessness, thinking how the sick person may be cured. Or again, one should feel a yearning for God like the yearning of a man who has lost his job and is wandering from one office to another in search of work. If he is rejected at a certain place which has no vacancy, he goes there again the next day and inquires, 'Is there any vacancy today?'

There is another way: earnestly praying to God. God is our very own. We should say to Him: "O God, what is Thy nature? Reveal Thyself to me. Thou must show Thyself to me; for why else hast Thou created me?"

Some Sikh devotees once said to me, "God is full of compassion." I said: 'But why should we call Him compassionate? He is our Creator. What is there to be wondered at if He is kind to us? Parents bring up their children. Do you call that an act of kindness? They must act that way.' Therefore we should force our demands on God. He is our Father and Mother, isn't He? If the son demands his patrimony and gives up food and drink in order to enforce his demand, then the parents hand his share over to him three years before the legal time. Or when the child demands some pice from his mother, and says over and over again: "Mother, give me a couple of pice. I beg you on my knees!"—then the mother, seeing his earnestness, and unable to bear it any more, tosses the money to him.

There is another benefit from holy company. It helps one cultivate discrimination between the Real and the unreal. God alone is the Real, that is to say, the Eternal Substance, and the world is unreal, that is to say, transitory. As soon as a man finds his mind wandering away to the unreal, he should apply discrimination. The moment an elephant stretches out its trunk to eat a plaintain-tree in a neighbor's garden, it gets a blow from the iron goad of the driver.

[From Chapter 2, "In the Company of Devotees," pp. 96-97, 1942]



# The Life and Teachings of The Reverend Mother Yogacharya M. Hamilton

by Rev. Larry Koler

**Swami Ramdas (Continued from previous issue)**

K. Lingappa, (pronounced Ling/-uppa) an inmate at the ashram, had a daily routine during Mother's confinement to her room. He would go in the morning to help Papa with shaving, bath, etc. and then Papa would tell him to go and help Mother. According to Lingappa<sup>1</sup>, Mother could be heard yelling his name, "Lingappa, Lingappa, come here!" She seemed to trust only him during this time. She also doted on him, he said. She would stroke him and express her love and gratitude to him.

Great masters like Swami Ramdas bring with them great souls to aid and support their work. Mother was protected and supported throughout this difficult process that God, through Papa, was putting her through.

During the last months at the ashram Father Hamilton was often urging Mother to return home so that she could recover. He was clearly worried that she would not live through the experience. But, Mother knew that she was going through this experience at God's direction. She refused to go until she had that inner command from God. Mother expressed it this way:

I was told when I came out of all of this and had gone through the state of death and was still in the state of rigor mortis, or paralysis that if I didn't return to the United States, if I didn't leave the ashram that they would take me up on the hill and burn my body because I would be dead. And I said, "I don't care. Let them! Let them. I am not leaving until I get the inner direction that this is God's will for me." And I didn't. And finally that direction came and I had to be carried out... [from Talk 750326]

## **Return to America**

Finally, Mother and Father Hamilton returned to Seattle in June of 1958. Through the long and intense experiences at Anandashram, Mother completed the most difficult phase of the Physical Crucifixion. After her return Mother was unable to take up her duties with the small spiritual center that she had started for Master. She continued to go through more difficult experiences for many more years. By 1960 Mother's doubting of Papa ended. She had had a harrowing experience that had lasted for two full years. All in all, Mother told us, she went through 16 years of these expe-

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<sup>1</sup> Feb. 2002 Interview (DRH)

Today, Lingappa still has a picture of Mother and Father Hamilton from that time. He keeps it displayed in his house, near the ashram. He works in the canteen and can be seen each day, serving all the inmates and guests of the ashram. In 1996, he walked away from the ashram and spent a year of wandering, according to the dictates of the inner guru. Later, he returned and now he continues as before, working and meditating daily at the ashram, eyes shining with inner peace and bliss.



riences. Although she knew that Papa had put her through these most difficult experiences at Anandashram, Mother knew the whole process had begun with her great guru, Paramhansa Yogananda. In a talk given in 1960 Mother explains:

Six o'clock this morning I was up crying my eyes out because I was being drawn again. It's just as though all of the blood, the energy, is receding from my head, from my brain, and I just feel myself slowly going out, and I fight to get back. I fight to keep on my feet.

So I went out, and I stood before Master's picture and I talked to him. I looked him straight in the eye, and I said, "What are you going to do about this? I'm in a sad state."

So I said to him, "This whole thing, as it stands today, started in Washington, D.C., when I was so concerned over what had happened to all of the work that you had done for thirty-two years, and the devastation that I had seen in all of the centers, where in two short years everything that you had worked to build up had been

destroyed, that I sat there and cried for over two solid hours over your picture, all by myself, because of my great love for you.

And I made the vow then<sup>2</sup> that if there was anything I could do to help to restore this that God had only to call on me, that I was His servant—and from that time on, things started to happen. [From Talk 600830]

At this point Mother had yet to complete the first stage of the three part Mystical Crucifixion. The next two stages were completed over the next ten years and she had pretty much come out of the final experience sometime in the early 1970's. She told us that she had then attained her complete God Realization, culminating in Sahaja Samadhi<sup>3</sup>, that continuous state of God absorption. She “went over the top,” to use her own expression.

Both Master and Papa played their unique and crucial roles in this extraordinary sequence of experiences that are the core of Mother's revelations and the cornerstone of her teachings.



1957: Mother and Father Hamilton with Papa and Swami Satchidananda and others.

<sup>2</sup> 1954 trip to Master's centers in the U.S.A—done at Rajasi's request.

<sup>3</sup> Sahaja means 'natural.' It is also referred to as being established in Nirvikalpa.

## Celina Cihelka - In Memoriam

Our dear Celina left the body on Thursday, April 15, 2004. Not only did Celina deal with cancerous growths in her body, but she also battled with a dark night of the soul. At the end of her earthly sojourn Celina broke through the dark night, left her body in peace and entered into the realm of Light. We will miss Celina, but the love we have for her will live on. We know that the peace and joy she sought so long is hers at last.

David

Celina Cihelka was a Kriyaban and a member of the Maple Ridge Center.



Top: David and Celina (December 2003), Lower Left: Celina and Family (Husband Paul, Pavel, Jennifer, Jason on lap), Lower Right: Celina at 16

## Letter by Richard Wright

*About his and Master's visit to Giri Bala quoted from a letter sent to Edgar Cayce by a disciple of Master's.*

*Mr. Richard Wright, who accompanied the Swami on his recent trip<sup>1</sup> to India, gives the following account in a letter to friends of their meeting with this saint, Giri Bala, who resides in Bankura, Balsura, India:*



We finally stood before her open doors, awaiting her appearance—the climax to a long, eventful journey. And how curious the simple village folk were, young and old...

Suddenly, from the darkness within, there appeared at the simple open doors a short figure hidden behind a cloth of dull goldish silk of indigenous manufacture, typical of Indian women. She drew forward hesitantly and modestly, peering slightly from beneath the headfold of her “Swadeshi” cloth. Her eyes glistened like glowing coals in the shadows of her headpiece and we were enamored by a most benevolent and kindly face—a face of realization and understanding.

Meekly she approached and graciously assented to our snapping a few pictures in the “still” and “movie.” Patiently and shyly she endured our photo techniques and adjustments, etc. Most motherly was her expression as she stood before us, clad in the simple loose-flowing cloth of plain yellowish silk, with only her downcast face and her tiny feet showing, a face of rare peace and innocent poise.

Humbly she took her seat on the verandah, cross-legged, hands in pronam gesture, and with silent patience she answered our questions and comments. Very briefly, in one or two words, often just “yes” or “no” and very quietly, she answered only those questions which did not refer to the teachings; on those questions which delved into her secret reservoir, she remained mute and distant, several questions caused her to lapse into deep silence and she paused as if in deep reflection before answering our questions. Her voice was low and reserved, her spirit deep and serene.

But scientific reasons led us to ask:

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<sup>1</sup> Trip was taken in 1935–36, so this must be soon after that.

1. Question: Is it true that you have fasted for more than fifty years? After a minute of reflection she said, “Yes, since I was 12 years, 4 months old, and I am now 68.”

2. Question: How is it explained? Answer: “I had a contact with a Sadhu, who gave me a Kriya.”

3. Question: Do you not even drink water? Answer: “I have no necessity of drinking water. If drinking water were a necessity, it could not be resisted.”

4. Question: What is this Kriya method? Answer: “I am forbidden by the Sadhus to teach this Kriya to others.”

5. Question: Have you made up your mind never to teach it to others? Her only answer was a blank silence.

In answer to the many other questions asked she gave the following:

“The Sadhu is my Sanyasini Guru. I also have a domestic Guru. My fasting is not due to medicines, but to the power of the mind. My practice consists of chanting a mantra and practicing a certain breath control (very difficult for ordinary persons). I had this power from my previous birth. I haven’t taught anybody—have no willingness to do so. I have no disease nor experience any.”

Question: Do you know how long you will live? No answer.

Thrice the Maharaja of Burdwan took her to his palace for visits of 2 months, 20 days, and 15 days in order to test her. She has no hunger or thirst. Feels only slight pain when injured. Can control her heart and breathing. Has no excretions. The sunlight and air are somewhat necessary. Meditates at night. Attends to domestic duties daily. Slightly feels the change of climate from season to season. Often sees her Guru in visions, as well as when at a bathing ghat on the Ganges at Nawab, as he materialized before her and gave her the teachings. On that day her domestic Guru initiated her. She sleeps very little, for sleeping and waking are the same to her.

By this time dusk had closed around us like an immense veil. Many shadows, cast by a small kerosene lantern, danced in the trees above us, reflections of some thirty natives, all eagerly and curiously watching the proceeding.

As we paid our homage to the enlightened one, others crowded about and pronounced at Swamiji’s feet: Giri Bala also followed suit, showing her humbleness, the sign of a Realized one.

So touching was the scene that it is even now emblazoned on the memory.

When great ones meet the humbleness is a joy to behold. Regretfully we parted, but joyous for the experience.

## Indian Journal

*[The following are excerpts from emails sent out to friends and family by Larry and Cate Koler's daughter, Nicole (age 23), during her trip to India from November 8, 2003 through March 15, 2004.]*

### November 13, 2003

Greetings from India, Wow. That's all there really is to say. Sure, you can prepare yourself all you want, but then it happens and there you are... Nothing I could have done could really have prepared myself for this. Sure it's dirty, it's crowded, people stare constantly, the trains aren't on time, but that's not even half of it.

I flew into Cochin (aka Kochi City) in the southwest of India on Saturday and the first thing I noticed was: green. It's steamy here, hot and lush and jungles of palm and banana trees. The Cochin airport is some strange wooden colonial affair although I was later informed that it was only built

a couple of years ago, so it wasn't the British, maybe just their ghosts... A man riding an elephant was part of the morning traffic heading into Cochin, the elephant carrying palm fronds in his trunk. I've seen it all now. Had the Indian experience the tourists come for, I can go home



with a smile on my face. And the elephant was HUGE. Very cool...

[later on:] I took the train up to Kanhangad, to the ashram [Anandashram] where my mom is staying, on Tuesday. The head religious figure here, Swami Satchidinanda, had his birthday yesterday, so there were huge celebrations all day. Devotees from all over India, wandering sadhus (holy men), villagers, random westerners with Indian names, all came in for the festivities. In the morning they decorated all of the dairy cows, they had a

flag-raising ceremony, they have round the clock chanting going on all week, a huge candle ceremony put on by children, the initiation of the new hospital...etc.

Religion here is all-pervasive, and not just at the ashram (although it is more so there). It is the mark of ash on the forehead from the morning worship, the blessed food (prasada) taken several times a day, it is people wandering around chanting the name of God, it is the statue of Ganesh, the elephant god, on the taxi driver's dash, it is the gesture you do to greet someone, it is in the greeting itself (Namaste, Hari Om). It's everywhere... And at the ashram, I've been thrown right into it, bossed around by all the old ladies (Go get prasada, one Indian lady tells me yesterday evening, as I wander down to the dinner hall. How she knew I hadn't taken it yet, I don't know, but she knew).

I've taken part in some of the stuff, and hang back at others, haven't quite decided what I feel comfortable doing and what I haven't. Everyone who knows my mom (and dad) assume that I'm also here for religious purposes, and I've found it hard saying otherwise. I don't think they'd quite understand, and I think it would bother them somewhat. Mrs. Thulasidas<sup>1</sup> got me into the Hindu temple (I wasn't supposed to go in) by telling the priest that I was one of them because "why else would she have spent all this money coming to India?" I didn't bother to argue.

Either way, it's somewhat strange, though infinitely interesting and entirely different from what I saw growing up with my parents. Yes, we all know my parents' Indian religion, but they're still not Hindus as such. However, I feel like a bit of a poser, and try to avoid some of the religious ceremonies that seem more profound. But, I have now had a darsan (sighting of the god, Krishna), had ash from Sai Baba put on my forehead, performed Artry [Arati] (don't know how to explain that) and said "Hari om" to all I greet at the ashram, because that's just what you do.

### **November 22, 2003**

I've left the ashram after spending about a week and a half there and am heading south to the infamous<sup>2</sup> yoga course that starts on the 1st of December. The ashram was great, very interesting, and I found myself enjoying things there the longer I stayed. The festivities for Swami Satchidananda's birthday ended on Saturday and things quieted down after

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<sup>1</sup> Ed. Note: Nicole was met at the airport by the Thulasidas's, longtime devotees of the ashram and hosts, too, for Cate when she landed in Cochin a few days earlier

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Note: An inside joke for Nicole and her friends who think going to India for Yoga classes is too cliché.



Nicole and Swami Satchidananda

that, which was actually rather nice, and made it easier to befriend those that were staying there. I could write a book about the Westerners I met at the ashram, and though the Indians were also interesting, they weren't quite the bizarre anomaly that I found with the foreign "devotees." The majority of them have Indian names, given to them by their respective gurus (you should not have more than one), and many of them are lifers here in India.

I have been talked into visiting another ashram by this eccentric English woman named "Tapasiya" (meaning "austerities", or so I was told), who is a devotee of "Amma" as she is called, which really means mother. The ashram is on my way down, and Tapasiya is a bit of a proselytizer, and wants everyone to meet Amma. So, it's a possible stop on a backwater cruise, and I told her I'd meet her there. She also was trying to get me to come on Amma's "India tour" that should be sometime in December. Once again, how could I pass that up—a swami's tour around India with all of her followers, by bus. I may go. Tapasiya is a sari-wearing, harmonium-playing, shaved-head woman who has spent her last many years in spiritual communities around the world—last one in Scotland. When asked how long she is staying in India, she replied "indefinitely" in her thick London

accent and at one point in our conversation kissed the face of Amma that she had plastered on her waterbottle. I could go on...

**December 6, 2003** [At Sivananda Ashram—Hatha Yoga School]

Hello, Hari Om, Namah Sivaya,

Ah, yoga. It really is everything everyone always says about it. This course has been amazing, and I'm starting to feel better and better everyday (after feeling unbelievably sore for the first few days). The things you realize that your body couldn't do, like sitting crossed legged for hours at a time. This ashram is mainly devoted to the teaching and training for yoga, so it's a very different focus and set up than the other ashrams I've been to (and I've realized that I've spent alot of time in ashrams now and not enough time in the real world—I feel the need to get out into it after this course) .

[later on:] The focus of this ashram (and institution, they have centers all over the world) is in yoga as a spiritual practice, rather than as merely a form of exercise. Our mornings start out with meditation and chanting, we have two two-hour postures and breathing classes, one hour of coaching, and hour and a half lecture each day. Plus whatever cleaning that has been assigned (karma yoga is the name). The meditation and chanting was a little strange at first and has scared off some people from the course, but I don't mind it, especially as time goes on. And I think this is a really nice way to have learned yoga, having never taken it before, in a more complete way. The idea behind yoga is that all of the breathing, postures, etc. are techniques used to focus your energy and mind, and as preparation for meditation. So, while it's considered good exercise, etc., it's intentions are to put you into the spiritual path.

Obviously this is an area of contention for many, myself included, and I've grappled with the question of conversion/instruction since I've been here. (Although I certainly don't feel that anybody here is trying to "convert" me, in the true sense of the word.) However, I do realize that so many of us come over to the East wishing to pick and choose elements that we like with little understanding of the deeper meanings behind them, and even slightly turned off from the "stranger" elements (like chanting, yes). We'll see what I think by the end. Either way, everything we do feels great and all of the postures are amazing, as are the instructors (they're amazing, not that they feel great).

**December 12, 2003**

I arrive at this tiny ashram in a lovely neighborhood outside Trivandrum, run by a female swami and six other women residents. They take me right in, of course, and before I know it, I'm mopping the floor ("clean the floor



Children enjoying Swami Satchidananda's Birthday

and you clean your mind”, said Suma) and singing at the bhajan (the nightly devotional singing). I sang *Let It Be*, by the Beatles, desperately trying to think of a song with a religious tone—the guys playing the harmonium, drums, and tambourine couldn't follow along, so it was just me, a cappella. To top it off, I sang into a mic, which goes blaring out over the roof of the ashram and all throughout the neighborhood... just when you thought celebrity status might fade... I really couldn't tell if anyone actually enjoyed it. So, what can I do?

When Raghu (the man showing me around) came, I mentioned to him and Suma (the woman that has taken me under her wing) that I could just go and get a hotel in Trivandrum (which is really what I would prefer to do), they both say, no, no of course not. So, I'm stuck. Which I don't mind. The thing India has taught me above all else is just to accept, sit back, and enjoy. Or you'd go crazy with control withdrawal. At night I was put on my yoga mat (thank God I salvaged it and dragged it along) on the temple floor along with a wandering sadhu and two other women. I probably slept about one hour amidst the snoring, the dog fights, the mosquitoes, and the priest coming in at 3am and turning on the fluorescent lights. I moved into this other lady's bed and was woken up every fifteen minutes after that. When I finally got up (at 7:30), I was informed by a disgruntled Suma that

I had missed the morning puja (worship) and “Did I pray to Shiva?” Um, no, I hadn’t. So, all entirely humorous after the fact, of course. And what kind of story would I have if I had merely booked myself into a hotel...

[later on:] Ah, India... You’d have to love it, or else I think you’d hate it, and that’s not the way to go at all. And I’m starting to love it more and more...

I love perfect strangers coming up to me on the street and asking “good name please?”, I love going barefoot inside, I love all the family-run businesses, I love that husband, wife, and child will pack onto a motorcycle, no helmets, of course, I love the milky, sugary chai, I love the south Indian food (no kidding, it’s fantastic), I love that when I entered this Internet place I was given a piece of birthday cake that the man made for his son’s birthday (and, no, you can’t refuse), I love the white birds that live on the cows, I love that things are open late and that there are always people on the streets, I love Indian pop music, I love the fact that people put make up on their children (boys and girls), I love the frilly party dresses that all little girls wear, I love that people do all of their bathing, washing, and [expl. del.] (yes, even that, but not at all the norm, I’m just using it here) in public, and I love (or not love, I really haven’t decided this one) that music blares from every temple at 5 AM, and it doesn’t seem to be an issue for anyone except us sleeping foreigners.



At ashram near Trivandrum, preparing for the day’s puja (worship)



Swami Satchidananda has very much been in our prayers lately as the health of his body has not been good. On May 24, Swamiji had an angiogram, due to blocks in his arteries. The angiogram resulted in a stroke, which has delayed heart bypass surgery. Swamiji is a blessing to us all and is carrying a large load for this world. We pray that all hearts and minds of devotees everywhere will be focused on this great God-man so that the highest good of all will be fulfilled.

Yogacharya David Hickenbottom

I asked, 'What is Islam?' The Prophet [Mohammed] replied, 'Purity of speech and hospitality.'

[From *Thus Spoke Prophet Muhammad*, a Ramakrishna Math book]



Drawing by Jenri Hough (Age 11)

**PLEASE HELP US** to find **pictures of Mother Hamilton**. We are running out of original images of Mother for use in this journal and in other publications. If you have an old picture of Mother in your collection, please scan it in and email it to us or send us the picture in the mail so we can scan it and get it back to you. (larry@crossandlotus.com)

### Calendar of Events

June	20	Father's Day
	20	Summer Solstice (17:56 a.m. PDT)
July	1	Canada Day
	2	Guru Purnima
	4	Independence Day
	25	Babaji's Remembrance Day
August	20	Mahasamadhi day of Swami Ramdas
	20-22	Loon Lake Retreat (in BC)
Sept.	6	Labor Day
	16	Rosh Hashanah
	22	Fall Equinox (9:29 a.m. PDT)
	25	Yom Kippur
	26	Lahiri Mahasaya's Birthday
	30	Mahasamadhi day of Lahiri Mahasaya
Oct.	13	Mother Krishnabai's Birthday (Hindu Calendar)

So many people are looking for an outside agent to make the changes required to bring harmony to this troubled world. Some look for a great spiritual Being to conquer this world, some think of a political leader or movement to set things right, others see natural disasters as the means for changing the hearts of humankind. The truth is that these outer events are the result of what is in the heart of man, not the cause. This world is the sum total of all its individuals. For this world to change requires a change from within first; then the outer institutions of man will work according to truth. With this change all will follow great spiritual leaders, and nature will unfold in a harmonious rhythm. There is no substitute for the hard work of changing one's own life in order for this world to change! However, do not despair; man is not alone in this effort to change. Divine forces of great might stand in the ready, always in the ready for any individual who makes the effort to perfect himself.

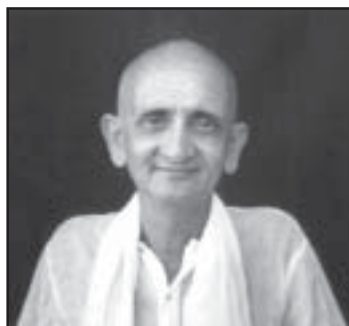
Yogacharya David Hickenbottom

Patanjali says you must understand the purpose of life and you must not get mixed up. All the people who lived and died thought the world was their own. But where are they now? So why be attached to something that doesn't belong to you? Does your body belong to you? No, then why be attached to anything? Patanjali says: *Be a free man. Control feeling [Chittwa]. Your likes and dislikes are the cause of your misery. To rise above likes and dislikes is the way to eternal happiness.*

*Paramhansa  
Yogananda*

When the sun's light falls on the lotus bud, it blossoms and gives out its fragrance and beauty. So when our heart is ready to receive grace and we come in contact with saints, our life-bud blossoms and gives out its fragrance in the form of overflowing love and joy. Our life becomes utterly transformed and illumined. That is how saints come into being.

Swami Ramdas



Beloved Papa (Swami Ramdas)