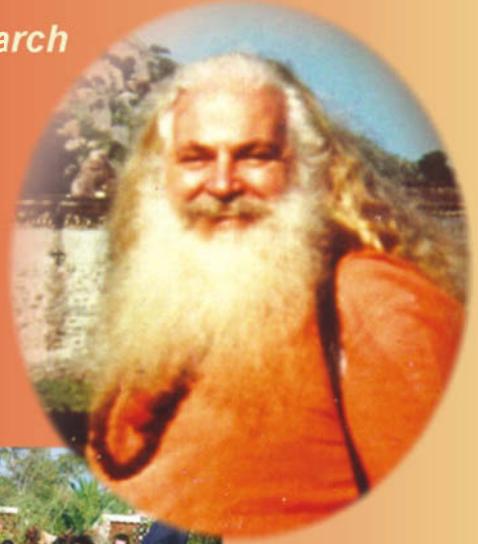


Yoga Studies in the Guru Kula

*International Centre for
Yoga Education and Research*



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YOGA STUDIES IN THE GURU KULA

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR YOGA EDUCATION AND
RESEARCH (ICYER) PONDICHERRY, INDIA.



The word "instruction" consists mostly of "structure". This implies that an important part of learning is the very "structure" in which it is imparted. This is the basic concept of the "Guru Kula" which is the traditional structure within which the classical teachings of Yoga were imparted in ancient India. "Guru Kula" literally means "the womb of the Guru". The student is nourished spiritually within the protective ambience of his Guru's presence, until he is strong enough to stand on his own two feet in the world. Life in the "Guru Kula" in India has always been disciplined, simple and natural with an austere dignity. The student, called a "Chela", was expected to possess many qualities, including discipline, sensual control, purity of body, mind and emotions

willingness to learn, humility, intelligence and respect for the teachings and the teacher. The Guru Kula was also the home of the Guru and the teachings were taught in an intimate, family relationship. In such a setting the Guru could closely observe the student and understand his weaknesses and his strengths. The International Centre for Yoga Education and Research (ICYER), located five kilometres north of Pondicherry, South India, on the shores of the Bay of Bengal, is a modern Guru Kula in which classical instructions in Rishi Culture Ashtanga oga have been imparted since aspirants on the spiritual path in Six Month Residential International Yoga Teachers Training and Sadhana Courses since 1968.

**SIX MONTH ANNUAL
INTERNATIONAL YOGA TEACHERS
TRAINING AND SADHANA
COURSES**



Every year since 1968, Six Month Residential Yoga Teachers Training and Sadhana Courses have been offered in a Guru Kula setting from October 2nd through March 25th at ICYER. These courses have been devised by Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Gurumaharaj, the codifier of Rishi Culture Ashtanga Yoga in the twentieth century. Pujya Swamiji himself conducted personally these courses from 1968 until his Mahasamadhi on December 29, The courses are now being led by his son Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani, a trained medical doctor, and Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani, the wife and chief disciple of Shri Swami Gitananda Giri. They are assisted by Smt. Yogacharini Devasena Bhavanani, Smt. Lalitha Shanmugam, Shri C. Shanmugam and other teachers. Thousands of students from all over the world have studied this elegant system, a combination of modern scientific inquiry and information with ancient wisdom, and now 120 Centres in twenty-two countries are actively propagating this Rishi Culture Ashtanga Yoga system.

GITANANDA YOGA



**RISHI CULTURE
ASHTANGA YOGA**

YOGAMAHARISHI DR. SWAMI GITANANDA GIRI was a medical doctor, who in his youth studied nine years in the Guru Kula of his Master, Sri Swami Kakananda, Sri Ram Gopal Mujumdar, a Bengali saint. The Yogamaharishi combined his scientific background with a thorough initiation into and practice of ancient techniques of classical Yoga, formulating what he later called Rishi Culture Ashtanga Yoga. The step-by-step approach of Maharishi Patanjali in the YOGA SUTRAS Yama (morality); Niyama (ethics); Asana (body posture); Pranayama (breath control); Pratyahara (sensory withdrawal); Dharana (concentration); Dhyana (meditation) and Samadhi (Cosmic Consciousness) is the basis of the system. The Yogic techniques for approaching these elevated goals were imparted to Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda by his own Guru, Shri Swami Kakananda. These Yoga studies are now imparted within the structure of the Guru Kula, where spiritual principles are imbedded in the daily reality, the daily routine. Thus, Yoga becomes a whole life style, a whole way of living, with awareness, simplicity, dignity, discipline and joy.

PROGRAMME OF STUDIES

From the first wake up bell at 4.30am. through the Hatha Yoga, Pranayama, Jnana and Raja Yoga classes in the morning, through the Mantra and



Satsangha classes in the evening, the student remains immersed in a life style designed to totally transform his nature into a Yogic personality.

More than 375 Asanas, Kriyas and Mudras are taught; forty Pranayamas, and

scores of relaxation and concentration methods are imparted. Classical cleansing practices, Yogic fasting, diet and Yoga Therapy are also an important part of the training. The scientific, medical and classical theory behind every practice is clearly explained. Bhajanas, Carnatic Music, Bharat Natyam, (Classical Indian Dance), Pujas, participation in Hindu cultural and local community festivals and exposure to the classical spiritual arts of the Hindu culture are all part of the course. Monthly examination sheets help

the student to organise and understand his knowledge. A final thesis and other written projects are also necessary for qualifying certification. Guided study of sacred scriptural texts is undertaken. Successful completion of this intensive six month course will earn



the candidate the title "Yogacharya" (for men) or "Yogacharini" (for women), which literally means, "one who is fit to guide others on the Yoga path by his own example".

An International Yoga Teachers Training Certificate is also awarded to successful candidates. The total working course time is approximately 1,400 hours in the six months, of which 700 hours are devoted to theory and 700 to actual practices.

ELIGIBILITY OF CANDIDATES

A maximum of ten candidates are selected for each year's course. Those who are chosen for this training must have completed or be presently enrolled in the 52 Lesson Correspondence Course: YOGA: STEP-BY-STEP which is also the basic syllabus for the residential course. This preparation enables the candidates to benefit much more effectively from the actual in-residence teaching, as the lessons act like a road map, or a guide as to the path to be taken during the six months. Those accepted for the



residential course must be willing to accept a vegetarian diet and live as Brahmacharis (celibates) during the six months. They must also be willing and able to live in a close community family-like structure. Students are accepted only who are willing to make a commitment of six months and not for less amounts of time.



SPECIAL ONE YEAR ADVANCED YOGA TEACHERS TRAINING DIPLOMA

A special additional six months practical Advanced Yoga Teachers Training Programme is available from May 1st to September 15th each year for those who have completed the first six months training. This can be taken immediately after the completion of one's six month course, or candidate may return at a later

date in time. This programme is more loosely structured with emphasis on "hands on" teachers training, organising practical classes, giving lectures, demonstrations etc. As well, instruction in some advanced Yoga practices are imparted. A thesis and other written project work will also be assigned.

YOGA AS A WAY OF LIFE

Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri taught that Yoga is "conscious evolution". Yoga has a technology which can help one to perfect one's body, one's mind, one's emotions, and eventually to understand one's own life purpose, which is Union with the Divine, or Cosmic Consciousness. The Maharishi also taught that "Yoga is a way of life": a way of thinking, of feeling, of speaking, of acting, of eating, of breathing. Yoga is a science of Right-Use-Ness (Righteousness), learning how to use everything in a right manner.



WORLD WIDE ORGANISATION

Yoga Jivana Satsangha (International) is the parent organisation for 120 Centres of Rishi Culture Ashtanga Yoga in twenty two countries. Yoga Jivana Satsangha was first founded by Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri in Canada in 1950. It was registered in India in 1968. Global Headquarters is in Pondicherry, a beautiful French colonial town on the Bay of Bengal 170 kms south of Chennai in South India. The global organisation has four main branches in Pondicherry. The International Centre for

ASHRAM PUBLICATIONS

The Ashram conducts a Correspondence Course : YOGA STEP-BY-STEP, which was designed by Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri. This beautiful, systematic instruction in Rishi Culture Ashtanga Yoga consists of 52 lessons and is designed to be completed within one year's time. Those who wish to participate in the Six Month Residential International Yoga Teachers Training Course must have completed or be enrolled in the Correspondence Course in order to be accepted for residential training. Many books on all aspects of Yoga and some audio tapes are also available. A monthly magazine YOGA LIFE has been published by the Ashram since 1968.



Yoga Education and Research (ICYER) is located five kilometres north of Pondicherry on the East Coast Highway on the Bay of Bengal. This two-acre site contains the hostel and is the location for the Six Month Residential International Yoga Teachers Training Course held each year from October 2nd to March 25th. The One Year Advanced Yoga Teachers Diploma Training Course is also available at ICYER. The Samadhi of the Guru of the institution,



Yogamaharishi Dr. Swamii Gitananda Giri, is located at Sri Kambliswamy Madam, an ancient Hindu holy site which is the spiritual base of the Organisation's work. The Samadhi is cored by the shrine of Sri Kambliswamigal, an ancient Master of Ashtanga Yoga who left his body in 1873. The Samadhis of eight Gurus of the lineage are also located on this five acre property. Pujas and other cultural and religious festivals are held here. The Ashram serves the community through teaching Yoga, Bharat Natyam and Camatic music at its two City Centres, Yoganjali Natyalayam in central Pondicherry and Yoganjali Natyalayam West near the big Central Government Hospital JIPMER. Students training for the One-Year Yoga Teachers Diploma

receive hands-on Teachers Training at the two City Centres, as well as at ICYER.

EXPOSURE TO INDIAN CULTURAL ARTS

Those desirous of learning Indian classical dance, the Bharat Natyam or Indian music (instrumental or vocal) have opportunity for separate studies. All students in residence get a good exposure to these classical arts through attending many performances.

SPECIAL SUMMER COURSES

Special ten-day introductory residential courses in Yoga are offered each year in the months of June, July and August.

