

**IX Yoga Darsana,  
Transpersonal Union**

**Verse Four**

By the modulation of consciousness which is unbroken as in the streak of oil, what incessant rejoicing is in the Self. Such is yoga—this is the recognition of yogis.

11/6/7

The most common meditation of human beings, because it is so effortless and natural, is on the flame of a fire. In ancient times, as religion became codified, the fires were brought into the temples in the form of candles or oil lamps, where they helped bring consciousness to a state of attention. Although the flame's constituents of oil, air and wick are never the same from moment to moment, they produce a seemingly stable result, and one that radiates light and warmth. In a way this is like complex life forms such as human beings: we are made up of agglomerations of cells that work harmoniously to produce a sum of parts of a far greater order of magnitude that is vastly different than any individual element. All of us wobble and gutter at times, especially when the winds of fate blow us, but we eternally seek to regain the peaceful condition of the steady flame as soon as we can.

In a flame the movement is upward, symbolizing the hierophantic urge in humans to reach up toward a state of divinity. To preserve yogic or dialectical equipoise, there must be a descending flow in compensation. Thus we should also meditate on the symbol of oil being carefully poured into a receptacle. The divine symbolizes the source and we the receptacle. The hypostatic

descent of grace exactly equals the upsurging impetus of striving to produce the unlimited joy of the Self. If the oil is poured out too fast it may overwhelm and extinguish the flame, while if it is overly meager the flame will starve for lack of fuel. You must have seen how the flow breaks up into tiny droplets when it is too thin, which then can blow all over the place. But when it is done just right there is a continuous stream that appears as steady and solid as the candle flame, like a honey-colored ribbon. Where the flame is the factor that gives off the light and heat, the oil is the Source that will eventually be transformed into those results.

Precisely in the manner of oil lamps, some of us give off more light and some of us smolder and fume away as through a glass, darkly. It depends as much on the influence of horizontal winds as on the proper relation of the integrated parts. Charles talked about Alfred Adler's theories of damaged egos, which produce what he called the inferiority complex and its resultant compensations, such as aggressiveness, defensiveness, self-pity, the urge to prove oneself by conquest, and so on. It seems that the thwarting of the ego—which always wants to win or dominate, but is rarely allowed to—produces the driving energy that most humans live by. Unfortunately, because the impetus comes directly from the damage inflicted on the ego, it tends to be warped into serious tangents. It is the task of the yogi or other healthy individual to act instead from a revised and reexamined state of mind, based on intelligent appraisals, in place of being driven by sublimated misery and resentment.

Nitya teaches us that we can take the little bit of Self-realization we experience in our best moments, and try to extend those into all the occasions of our life. Not that we tune out from problems, but that we can tune in all the better. The more we become familiar with our steady ground, the more it remains under our feet in all circumstances.

I'll give one practical example of how this works. Youngsters, boys especially, are vulnerable to a surge of anger when they are insulted. Someone sneers at you and you hit them. Generally you will get punished and the sneerer goes free, to sneer again another day. So injustice is piled on insult. Then in kindergarten you learn the mantra "Sticks and stones will break my bones, but names will never hurt me!" Now when someone insults you, you chant the mantra instead of hitting back with a rejoinder or a fist. Eventually you achieve a degree of detachment, and you realize that other guy has the problem, not you. You might even feel compassionate. You aren't upset. You might wonder what made him act that way, whether it was jealousy or unhappiness or what. The disasters of adulthood and our reactions to them are not always so different from this simple situation as we might like to believe.

Each of us has known tragedies in our lives. Our initial damaged feelings may be that we are hapless victims. We might want to cry and feel sorry for ourselves. The yogi is like any healthy adult, who then brings another level of intelligence to bear. There are other people involved in the accident or whatever it is, who need help, counsel, first aid, or just plain friendship. In place of wallowing in self-pity, you rise to the occasion. You do what you can to alleviate the situation. And as they say every time you fly in a plane: "Be sure to put your own oxygen mask on first, before helping other customers."

Charles related that according to Adler, the ego is an organ, like any other part of the body. It is invisible, but it can be damaged just like a foot can be broken. If a broken foot heals improperly, the person will be lame for life. Likewise with a damaged ego, call it a broken heart or what have you, the soul may be permanently thwarted. A healthy philosophy "sets" the broken ego in a proper alignment, so it can become whole again. Unfortunately our unexamined beliefs are likely to be inimical if

not downright destructive, which is why Socrates insisted that an unexamined life was not worth living.

The commentary on this and the next verse is possibly the most practical part of the entire magnum opus of Darsanamala. We want to make the occasional droplets of happiness in our lives become a steady flow of unending bliss, and the yogi must bring his or her best efforts to bear to accomplish this. Nitya instructs us that a healthy ego is essential to yogic evolution:

The Self, for its alignment with the non-Self, has to do its interlinking through the good offices of the ego. The ego is therefore to be equipped with the right orientation to the goal; a favorable mood by which it can amicably exercise its empathy even in the most unforeseen situations; a philosophically enriched disposition of positively wanting to perpetuate love, compassion, fellowship, and cheerfulness; and a vivid comprehension of the total meaning of every passing moment. This comes through an act of *samyama*, which can be somewhat approximated to a creative form of contemplation by which a possibly miserable autonomous presentation of the ever-fleeting phenomena is substituted by a consciously generate theme of a favorable psychodrama, which gives ample opportunities for the ego, in perfect harmony with the Self, to induce a high degree of the numinous in all details of the phenomenal. (409-10)

It is right at this point that a healthy psychodrama, as Nitya humorously calls it, can be substituted for an unhealthy one. For most people, the psychodrama—the narrative streaming along inside the head—is that God or Muhammad or Jesus or Nature or The Government or whatever, is in charge, and the individual is helpless. This is especially exacerbated in self-styled “Christian” societies, where the instruction is particularly intense to give over

the guidance of your life to an external divine parent. Forget that Jesus taught that we ourselves are to seek the kingdom of God, the true message nowadays is that you are a sinner and fatally flawed, so you must appeal to divine intervention for your salvation. A very great amount of the endemic depression of Christian countries is lodged exactly here. Where people should be diligently striving to heal their damaged egos, they instead wait helplessly for the cure to happen to them from somewhere “out there.” When it doesn’t, there is disappointment, even rage, that must be bitterly swallowed and stifled, lest other pretenders see how great a failure they are. It may be masked as piety. Yet as we know, the suppressed rage eventually surfaces in an overwhelming flood of violence, directed either internally against the supposedly sinful self, or externally against purported “enemies” who are equally imagined to be the cause of the misery.

Our healthy psychodrama of the Gurukula includes that we are working to open our hearts to the beneficence of the Absolute ground of all existence, that we are all one within the multiplicity of the multiverse, and that disasters and inconveniences that happen are part of an educational inherence in the structure of life itself. Perhaps we will agree with Henri Bergson that the universe is a machine for making gods, and we are one of the raw materials. If we are healers of ourselves and others around us, we can see we have an endless wealth of opportunities to ply our craft. We are spectacularly rich in both potential and means of expression, and there is no shortage of need. If any god wants to save us they are welcome to, but meanwhile we have a lot of growing up to do, and we are eager to get on with it. We aren’t going to wait around for any imagined events to become actual.

These are just a few samples of positive psychodramas that many of us share. You are free to make your own list, not based on wishful thinking but on what you really believe in and know in your heart. Then you bring them to bear when the chips are down.

As Narayana Guru assures us, this will gradually bring us to yoga,  
which is incessant rejoicing in the Self.

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2/6/18

Yoga Darsana verse 4

By the modulation of consciousness  
Which is unbroken as in the streak of oil,  
What incessant rejoicing is in the Self.  
Such is yoga – this is the recognition of yogis.

Nataraja Guru's translation:

*That unbroken functioning of reason  
Which in the Self, like a streak of oil  
Finds incessant joy, such as Yoga  
Is by yogis recognised.*

My friends reminded me that I have several favorites in Nitya's Darsanamala commentary, but this is the one I would recommend if you were going to read only one, as it gives a very practical summation of the subject, and is beautifully laid out. Nitya first distinguishes between autonomous and voluntary functions. He treats the unconscious processes as autonomous because they are not under conscious control, but this does not mean they are only oppressive conditionings. There is quite obviously a tremendous amount of intelligent processing that is being presented to our wakeful awareness in an autonomous fashion. It's just that it's complete on arrival.

After recapitulating some of the basics of modulating consciousness, Nitya reminds us that there is nothing haphazard or tepid in yogic *tapasya*:

The yogic discipline is goal oriented. The yogi sets *kaivalya*, the primeval, unadulterated state of pure 'be-ness', as the final goal. As every step is to be directed to progress towards the attainment of it, all acts of cognition, volition, and states of affection are to be aligned with this basic goal. Thus the goal has to be both ontologic and teleologic. It is teleologic because it refers to a future possibility, and ontologic because there is an approximation of the goal to a certain degree, however negligibly, in the here and now. Such a discipline enjoins upon the aspirant the conscious monitoring of every modulation in the stream of consciousness.

Jan is one of our more practically-minded class members, and she appreciated the emphasis on specific advice here, along with the unqualified assertion that yoga is goal oriented. That a positive goal orientation is widely viewed as unspiritual even in the Gurukula is an abiding mystery in my view. Just because material goals are more obvious and more draining of our energy doesn't mean that spiritual goals should be downplayed.

Jan mused how this philosophy goes against many popular cultural ideals of how to live life. When she was a freshman in college she took a political philosophy class where she read Karl Marx for the first time. What struck her most were some messages about how the individual should not be just a cog in a machine. That got her thinking of freedom in a new way, and she now realizes her attention even back then was moving toward yogic values, such as how important each individual life is. One thing she was sure of was that she didn't want to be just a cog in someone else's moneymaking machine.

Intentionality has a central role in attaining any goal, yogic or otherwise. Plenty of religions counsel passivity and acceptance of the course of fate—Hinduism abounds with it—but yoga does not. One of the things that makes yoga most interesting is the continual challenge of acting with expertise in favor of liberation of all beings, including yourself. While accepting of some aspects of fate, it is prepared to work and play with enthusiasm where the limitations of existence permit.

For instance, in uncomfortable life situations we naturally react defensively and protectively. Bringing love to bear is an act of philosophic purpose, at least until it becomes well established as a habit. It is far from automatic. It requires intent. Volition.

This got Susan thinking about how she was brought up. Her mother told her not to ever act sad or mad but to always be happy and positive. Yet there was no acknowledgment and acceptance of any negative feelings, so it was a kind of charade. My (Scott's) family also was dedicated to ignoring problems. If you pretended everything was fine, it was. Turning your back and pretending contentment extended from minor irritations all the way to death itself. It's a not uncommon attitude, but it isn't yoga, either. A yogi's approach is more in keeping with modern psychology and neuroscience, where you can only make positive changes by first facing the problem squarely. There is also some truth that pretending to be happy works better than pretending to be unhappy, but abiding happiness is a spiritual accomplishment that doesn't depend on hiding out or any kind of pretense.

This reminded Paul of his church-based upbringing, where anger simply wasn't allowed. Instead of a natural angry response to an insult, you had to pretend to be holy. As the contrarian of the family, doing it made him even madder. He prefers the Native American way of walking barefoot on the earth—which can also be taken symbolically—where you can feel both the warmth and



softness of the sand, as well as the sharp stones and prickly cactus, which remind you to get back on the path of happiness.

Bill put it nicely: we have to always come back to the essential goodness, and a yogi is continually aware of the present moment. Continual awareness is a theme of the commentary, repeated several times.

The very act of bringing awareness to bear on every aspect of life causes an expansion of consciousness, so long as it's done with that intent. We are very familiar with the myriad ways that awareness can be consciously shrunk by such techniques as dogmatic repetition, but so long as the intent is to increase awareness, that is what will gradually come about. Rewiring our consciousness in this way is acknowledged even by neuroscientists to be a long, hard road, but that's precisely what yoga aims for. Nitya describes it as annexing the territory of the autonomous and introducing a measure of independent cognition:

Autonomous modulation takes place as a conditioned reflex. The instinctive behavior of a person has behind it the inbuilt accumulation of the information of their genetic past, and hence the power of the autonomous to produce modulation is enormous, instantaneous, and mostly of an undetectable nature with regards to the implied unconscious motivation. This is a biologic 'black box' zealously guarded by the unconscious, and the challenge it offers to the yogi is the transmutation of the autonomous into the voluntary.

Bill felt this showed that the ego really does have an important role to play in harmonizing the Self with the non-Self. The ego gets demonized as public enemy number one (an old-fashioned FBI cliché from our childhood) or better, as *private* enemy number one, but it's actually an essential tool for the job of attaining the goal of

transmuting the autonomous into the voluntary. Hey, the ego *is* the voluntary. It just usually volunteers to conform to the autonomous.

Bill added that the biological black box of the unconscious contains our vasanas, our deepest motivations. The yogi needs to take them from the realm of the unconscious and lay a voluntary touch on them. Those underlying reactions that come from some vasanas cause us to react in certain predetermined ways, and this may not be in anyone's best interest.

I added that this is precisely the place for the intellect to weigh in. Nitya is asking us to be vitally aware, which means to bring a dynamic and non-dogmatic heightened awareness to bear. When people decry the intellect, they really mean what we in the Gurukula call the mind and its attendant rationally determined limits. It is good to remember Nitya's chart in verse 68 of *That Alone*, depicting a continuum. In the center is the I (self-awareness of the ego). At one extreme is the body and at the other the Absolute. Mind connects the ego with the body, while the intellect connects the ego with the Absolute. This should be solidly known by all students of Gurukula Vedanta. Our intellect is the guiding principle that leads us from mediocrity to the ideal goal of the Absolute, however that mystery may be conceived or visualized, while the ego is limited to how to operate the body. Both mind and intellect can be used well or poorly, and that truly is the issue. We need all of our powers, and we need them to be optimized. In the ultimate analysis the ego and the body are also the Absolute.

Deb echoed that buddhi or intellect is what gave the Buddha his name. It is the light of clarity, perception and understanding. Let's give it the respect it deserves.

The brighter the light of awareness we can bring to bear on this process of transmuting the autonomous into the voluntary, the more rapid will be the transformation. Nitya reminds us our default setting of ego is, by contrast, a dim bulb:

Our psychosomatic organism is like a mass of psycho-electrical installations kept in complete darkness, with the exception of a little light around the cognizing agent, identified with the ego. This feeble light is experienced by the ego in the form of a desire, a fear, an apprehension, a challenge, a call for reciprocation, the passing parade of impressions, and the vague, broken awareness of incoherent reflexes that fill up the gap between one definitive interest and another. The yogi, for the purpose of remaining alert and continuing an attention that is vivid, has to fight with this mechanistic automation generated by the past.

Here is where detachment comes in: we have to shake off the impositions of such petty demands on our time and pay attention to more meaningful pursuits. Becoming absorbed in an intense study like this one is a simple and effective way to do just that. The bonus is that instead of veering hither and yon with “the passing parade of impressions,” yoga practice brings about a steady state of harmonized focus. Narayana Guru calls it incessant rejoicing—an ideal description. Nitya once again downplays the popular belief in a simple solution, which I suspect comes from drug-assisted states that touch on the divine. Totally simple—nothing to it! Yet that is why psychedelic voyagers generally come back to more or less where they started even after seeing God, because they still have to do the transformative work to make the condition permanent. Nitya succinctly describes what is actually required:

Realizing the enormity of this task the yogi decides to keep the attention as far as possible filled with evenly harmonized modulations consciously monitored, which can become afterwards a sequential movement of consciousness through a series of habitual choices. This is not an easy thing to accomplish, because life is not static and our environments

vary continuously with kaleidoscopic fickleness. To achieve this, a number of skills are required.

Jan dug the phrase “evenly harmonized modulations.” She loves being aware of those times when she’s trying to do this work and she can feel the harmonization begin to happen, with her wiser self coming forward. For her this means the releasing of the grip of her samsaras, when the light is shed on the Self we are instructed to identify with. It’s something she can actually feel, and she relishes its presence in her life.

Paul, our admitted contrarian, said that any note by itself is automatically harmonious. It’s when other notes are added that we get disharmonies and discords. One element of human progress, however, is that our sense of harmony has grown to include many sounds that were once considered discordant. There is beauty in complexity as well as simplicity.

Susan wondered at the difference between projections and modulations, which ignited a fascinating conversation. In summary, modulations are the all-inclusive term for mental functioning, and projections are one large subgroup, where our preconceived notions are overlaid on the present, on both external and internal factors. Or course, Darsanamala opens with the Lord projecting everything, including modulations, but that is a different kind of projection. The first two verses of the first darsana are:

1. It was in the beginning as if non-existence—  
this world, like a dream; thereafter,  
everything was projected  
by the will alone of the Supreme Lord.
2. As incipient memory form alone, in the beginning,  
this remained; thereafter, the Lord  
projected with his *maya*,

like a magician, the entire world.

Nothing wrong with that kind of projection! And nothing we can do about it, either. Remember, here vertical modulations (those directed to the highest goal) are not only permitted but encouraged, while horizontal ones are to be curbed or else gathered in service to the vertical goal. Projections in the psychological sense mean the projection of partial awareness. I used our dog as an example. People meeting us on a trail either love him or hate him, but he's just a dog. He's neutral, sort of, and they are already carrying their projections of what that means to them. We aren't supposed to blame the dog for what people project on him, though we can and should take it into account for everyone's peace of mind, including the dog's.

Jan quoted Nitya that a "modulation assumes the specific characteristics of a thing or an idea." It takes the actual shape—in fact, it *is* the shape. So our perceptions are fine, except when we (all too frequently) modify them with our projections. The projection part is something we can come to recognize with due diligence, while the modulations are more like the air we breathe: invisible and taken for granted. Recall how Nitya described them: "enormous, instantaneous, and mostly of an undetectable nature." In meditation we put them on hold for as long as feasible, like holding our breath, but rest assured they'll be right back, as soon as we start breathing again.

Thankfully Nitya provides a list of the most important skills we can be working on full time, to give the dim light of the ego a boost in wattage. The third sentence is worth the whole price of admission to yoga study:

The main counterparts involved in the experiencing of consciousness are the Self and the non-Self. The Self, for its alignment with the non-Self, has to do its interlinking through

the good offices of the ego. The ego is therefore to be equipped with the right orientation to the goal; a favorable mood by which it can amicably exercise its empathy even in the most unforeseen situations; a philosophically enriched disposition of positively wanting to perpetuate love, compassion, fellowship, and cheerfulness; and a vivid comprehension of the total meaning of every passing moment.

This is an earthshaking variety of yoga. We may vaguely grasp it intuitively, but it is very helpful to have it spelled out. Nitya still leaves it for us to interpret, since in the ultimate analysis it's up to us to know what we're up to.

First, our ego needs a meaningful direction and a proper orientation to support it. "Expanded consciousness" is a fine goal, but what does that actually mean? We could adopt Bergson's "the universe is a machine for the making of gods," and think of our goal as becoming divine. We might have a psychedelic vision we want to actualize, or a wise person we'd like to emulate. Our goal needs to be inspiring enough to us that we direct all our nonobligatory energies to it in the course of our daily life, not just when we sit down to meditate.

Next on the list is a favorable mood that can be applied in every situation, including the most discomfiting. That by itself can take a lifetime of practice. Once it gains a foothold, we have to bring our psyche back to it whenever it is knocked aside by the shocks we encounter, those "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." Nitya suggests *samyama* as an ideal favorable mood:

This comes through an act of *samyama*, which can be somewhat approximated to a creative form of contemplation by which a possibly miserable autonomous presentation of the ever-fleeting phenomena is substituted by a consciously generated theme of a favorable psychodrama, which gives

ample opportunities for the ego, in perfect harmony with the Self, to induce a high degree of the numinous in all details of the phenomenal.

And then there's that "philosophically enriched disposition" to spread loving kindness to all. A yogi knows you can't just wish for something and it magically happens, you set out with certain parameters and then fit each unique instance into the framework in the way that is most fitting. In complex interactions you may have to go far afield to try to bring about a beneficent outcome. A simplistic approach may lead to tragic consequences. Sometimes leaving something alone is the best way to show love. In any case, getting it right is a tremendous challenge that can never be fully codified:

The yogi continuously promotes the capacity to both reconnoiter the situation and to direct all energies involved to continue the unbroken attention given to a chosen set of values, such as seeing only love where there is a lot of hatred concentrated. This is more easily said than achieved. A unilateral posture of love in a situation of aggression and hatred can turn comical and ridiculous, and can even worsen the situation into an absurdity. So the yogi, out of love for the actualization of a noble ideology, should not lose touch with the facts that are present.

In yoga, a unilateral posture is always inadequate: both sides must be taken into account. Therefore a true yogi will always modify their tactics to meet the existing circumstances.

What leapt to my mind as an absurdity when reading this was the religious cleric in H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*, who goes out open-armed to meet the invading Martians with utter trust in their

goodness, and is instantly incinerated. As Ramakrishna put it, don't kiss the hissing cobra.

Jan talked about how even the posture of love needs to be monitored, how you have to bring that forth intelligently. Even such a good intention as loving your own child can turn into an absurdity. She remembered being counseled on "tough love" by a doctor when she was trying to help her young son cope with a serious illness. He fought against taking his needed medicine because it tasted bad and made him feel awful, so Jan had to be forceful. She would have much rather not had to be mean, but she had no real choice. Sometimes it's not in the child's best interest to give them what they want. The parent has to have a long-range vision of what will be good for them, and you have to work for that bigger picture. Tough love is often taken far beyond where it's beneficial, but Jan's example was quite appropriate.

The modern world has gravitated more and more to an indulgent, hyper-protective style of child rearing and other pedagogic situations, where once it was more ferocious. A guru sometimes has to use pressure and shock to get a point across, because the ego is very complacent as long as it doesn't feel threatened. Nitya could really roast his disciples, but he made sure to only do it if it had been requested, as not everyone is capable of handling it. But he knew that intensity was one way to teach higher values when they were being held at bay by egotistical smugness, and he hints at the process here:

In such a complex situation many backward and forward and left and right maneuverings are to be made to arrive at a correct homeostasis of behavior. This explains some of the curt and seemingly drastic measures which a yogi adopts when a person of shallow understanding expects them to conform to ritualistic adherence to conventional ideologies. This hard but most fulfilling discipline increases the yogi's inner tranquility, and



that in turn enables them to have a more clear and correct perspective of all their involvements with persons and events.

I wondered if anyone was brought up short by Nitya's mentioning of an assigned niche for even a yogi in this world. I feel that a yogi is always working to stay out of niches, and yet as Deb pointed out we can't help but be in one anyway. She maintained that a niche isn't like a role or a place on a shelf, it's the very situation you are living in at every moment. We fantasize about being in a different place, but our niche is merely the actuality of wherever we are. We have to accept it and fill it beautifully. Deb has learned that the two things which will pull you out of being grounded are nostalgia or regret for the past, or apprehension about the future. You fill your niche well only if you accept the given situation, and this is the meaning of "the yogi has to attune the self with the Self."

As with all yogic propositions, a niche can be both binding and liberating. Nitya loved his life as a wandering mendicant with no obligations to anyone, yet when he finally settled into the niche of being the head Guru of the Narayana Gurukula, the limitations provided him an avenue to spread his wisdom much more widely, and take his teaching of individuals to a much higher level of actualization. Despite this, Nitya always had a strong independent streak, and the urge to run away from entanglements was never far off. After his death I sat for a few minutes at his desk in Fernhill, and several typical visitors came and talked to me, basically relating their life stories and asking for favors and blessings. It was the most ghastly, tedious job I could imagine! A half hour seemed like a lifetime! My respect for Nitya soared even higher, suffering through the kind of sacrifice he made every day of his life as a guru. He did of course have those hearing aids he would subtly turn off when the conversations grew too one-sided, but still....

Anyway, even the most liberated Nitya had his assigned niche, and from it he expertly ministered to all and sundry who came to him for both what he had to offer and what they wished he had to offer. His dedication and sacrifice exemplifies the continuous attunement and hard work he brings together in the closing paragraph:

The yogi also has an assigned niche in a given situation in the phenomenal world, and cannot run away from it. When thus placed for a lifetime, the individual is exposed to both the dark and benign forces of nature. Although it is easy to be in a state of joy when conditions are favorable, the same joy is to be taken across several thorny issues which can be of gruesome pain to the body, the social self, and the moral conscience. To tide over such disasters, the yogi has to attune continuously with the Self, which is perennially of the nature of existence, subsistence, and bliss. This identification is of course hindered by the ego's longstanding intimate and intrinsic relationship with the body and mind, which are equipped with a highly sensitive neural system. However hard this game is, it can be achieved. The mark of it is the incessant inward joy reflected in the smile of a meditative Buddha. It is this state of unbroken beatitude that is recognized by the yogis as yoga.

We closed with a longer meditation than usual, on consciousness as a streak of oil and yoga as incessant rejoicing. Our psyches are so complex and capable, if we give them interesting challenges to deal with, they love the opportunity. I have often quoted Nitya's line that depression comes when we aren't plugged in to meaningful interests. When we are so engaged, the satisfaction we feel in every fiber of our being could easily be called incessant rejoicing. And after all, incessant flow and a steady stream are not so different, are they? Let's go for a swim.

## Part II

Swami Vidyananda's commentary:

The kind of Yoga practised under conditions where no definite rules are observed, and where the mind still remains distracted, does not yield the results of the high state of *samàdhi* (peace.) It is not conducive to Self-realization, because of the many hindrances. Like the incessant flow of the streak of oil when poured from one vessel into another, there must be an unbroken continuity of the relation of a stilled mind, which whole-heartedly has to be turned towards its proper object of meditation with continuity and without any interruption, before Self-realization can be accomplished. In this way the practice must be continued until the goal is attained. Occasional meditation will not produce the desired result. It has been pointed out that the attainment of the goal of Yoga is accomplished only after many lifetimes of practice. Thus, there is the need for *incessant practice*. It is only when such a high state of attainment is reached that one can say that such a state as found in the text is firmly established and one is not perturbed even by disasters.