

Youth Forum

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Be A Yoga Ambassador

The global boost yoga got recently should spur Indians to practise it without fail.

In an earlier article I had written about the inspiring example of Yoga Guru Dr. B.K. S Iyengar. I had suggested that you start with a few simple *asanas*. I had mentioned one *asana* as an example. Do you remember which one? Have you been doing it? If not, start now!

Recently, Yoga got a big global boost. Do you know what it is? One day in the year has been declared as the “International Day of Yoga.” Do you know which date? June 21. Why this date? It is the day of the summer solstice. The longest day. You may have seen photos of many people doing mass yoga, at the famous Times Square, New York

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City, on that day. Do you know how many countries have supported this initiative? 175. Did you see the full page advertisement of this news in all Indian newspapers on December 12? What *asana* does it show? The *Surya Namaskar*.

A Big Challenge

This creates a big opportunity and challenge for all of us Indians, especially for the youth of India. Be a lifelong ambassador of Yoga. How can you become an effective ambassador? What are the steps you need to know? First, learn a bit about yoga. Particularly about *asanas*. There are many books and articles. Also, useful information on the internet.

Second, start practising. There are many simple *asanas*, with little risk of injury that you can do. Begin with these.

Third, if there is a *yoga* institute or teacher nearby, consider learning there, formally. Even just two or

and friends to join you in this learning and practice.

Fifth, in your school or college, request the head of the institution through your teachers to offer *yoga* training for two or three days a week, so that all your fellow



three days a week. On other days practise at home.

This regular practice is very important. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Bhagavan Krishna puts this beautifully.

Yad tat agrevishamiva, parinameamritopamam--‘That (discipline, effort, rigour) which, at the beginning, feels (almost) like poison, but towards the end is like nectar’.

Fourth, enthuse your relatives

students can learn. If any of the teachers or staff in the school knows *yoga*, request them to teach all of you. They may not take money. But, keep giving them periodic nice presents.

Sixth, make big plans for a grand celebration of the First International *Yoga* Day on June 21, 2015, which is just a few months away. The Ministry of Human Resource Development, through the University Grants Commission,

the Kendriya Vidyalaya and other organisations, will most probably organise a national celebration. Participate in them also.

Seventh, create interest among the people of your town or village to learn and practise *yoga*.

Eighth, some of you may, later, take formal *Yoga Teacher Training* and become a certified *yoga teacher*. The *Sivananda Yoga Institute*, for example, organises such courses in India and worldwide. In India, they are held in their *ashrams* in Neyyar Dam, Kerala, as well as in Netala, Uttarakhand.

Have you read an article on or

biography of Swami Sivananda? Do you know where he hails from? He is from the village, Pattamadai, in Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu. I was fortunate to be born and brought up in that village, till my school final, way back in 1957. He left a lucrative medical practice in Malaysia and set up his *ashram* in Rishikesh in the Himalayas. I hope at least one of you will become a similar great Swamiji. That is my blessing and prayer.

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Youth Questions



Acharyavani

We reproduce here the answers and clarifications given by His Holiness Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji to questions posed by Dr. T. S. Narayana Swami as former editor of *Bharati Kripa*, Chennai.

Q. How does God bestow his grace on man?

This is a clever question. The *Sastras* say that God now and then revives man's *viveka* and, through that, makes him perform righteous and correct actions. The good

thoughts and skills that we now and then display are because of his grace. I will give you an example.

Once a dispute arose between the Goddess of Wealth, Mahalak-