

The Cross and The Lotus Journal



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



**Reverend Mother Yogacharya M. Hamilton
and Reverend David Hickenbottom**



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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.

*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 e'er you are.
Be filled with the peace and ecstasy of God's almighty love.
Om-Amen.*

The Reverend Yogacharya Mother Hamilton

© 2009 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 Yogacharya Mother 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.

Dear friends,

Throughout much of the world today there is an economic downturn. It is interesting to note how much the financial markets are influenced by faith and fear. In fact, faith and fear are dual motivators for so much of what we do; however, **for a truly successful life fear must be mastered.**

It is easy to understand why fear exists. When a threat is perceived, nature has designed fear to excite the body and mind into action, reacting with what behaviorists have called the *fight or flight* response. In addition to these two responses to perceived danger I have added a third reaction, a *freeze*. Seeing a predator, a deer in the woods does not move a muscle; it is passively receptive in hearing and seeing but the heart is wildly pumping and all its biology is ready for fight or flight, all the while hoping that the predator will not see it and the danger will pass by without incident.

Short term fear can pump adrenaline into the body and create a high state of readiness that will make the difference in life or death situations. We have read the account of a father lifting the backend of a truck where his child was trapped: an act that would normally be an impossible thing for one man to do. So nature was wise to design this feature into the human race.

With such powerful responses built into the factory of the human body, one can seem to be a helpless victim of biology's autonomic responses. In a *Newsweek* science article dated December 24, 2007, Sharon Begley writes,



The evolutionary primacy of the brain's fear circuitry makes it more powerful than the brain's reasoning faculties. The amygdala sprouts a profusion of connections to higher brain regions—neurons that carry one-way traffic from amygdala to neocortex. Few connections run from the cortex to the amygdala, however. That allows the amygdala to override the products of the logical, thoughtful cortex, but not vice versa...That makes fear “far, far more powerful than reason,” says neurobiologist Michael Fanselow of the University of California, Los Angeles.

Despite this one-way street of communication, however, humankind has been endowed with higher potential than purely animalistic responses of the amygdala. It is a false conclusion that the higher mind cannot control impulses of fear generated by the lower mind.

Columbia University researchers, using MRI technology, has identified a more accurate picture regarding the fear response. A Science Daily article (2006) states,

Dr. Joy Hirsch explained that this previous finding suggested that subjects were somehow able to control their conscious emotional responses, but that their unconscious responses may be more automatic. “Following the discovery of the amygdala’s [located deep in the temporal lobes] role in fear response, we decided to explore the finer points of the neurocircuitry of fear—how it is regulated and controlled in the brain...This [new] paper adds important regulatory circuit information about the fear response in the amygdala,” said Dr. Hirsch. “For example, if someone is walking on an empty street at night and hears a loud banging sound in the near distance, the amygdala would immediately light up. But instead of always running in the opposite direction from the sound, the rostral cingulate [located in the frontal lobe region] determines if action is needed or not. For example, if it was a car door slamming, the rostral cingulate would shut down the amygdala.”

The higher mind in the frontal lobe of the brain (the rostral

cingulate) determines whether there needs to be a response of fight, flight or freeze or not to react at all. This ability to turn off the messages from the amygdala is a crucial fact, for one can learn to control what can be thought of as the more elementary or lower impulses of the brain; one can become a master of fear and other sense-driven impulses.

A spiritual Master is one who has learned to direct the life-force (prana) away from body sensations and to lift it into the higher functions of the brain, even into states of realization as defined in the ancient yoga texts of India. Paramhansa Yogananda likened this ability to a telephone operator at an old fashioned switch board; the operator would pull out the plug to disconnect the call. Just so, the yogi hangs up the call from the sense stimuli—in the case of fear, from the amygdala.

Generalized fear and anxiety comes about when reports about distant events trigger a fear response, without any balancing measures from the higher brain functioning of the neo-cortex to say that all is safe. The more general the information and the more frequently it is seen or heard the greater the anxiety, as the information goes almost unnoticed by the conscious mind (or at least the cumulative effect can be unnoticed).

When you listen to many newscasters they specialize in putting a sense of urgency in their voices and presentation. Yet we know that a news item can be a *cause celebre* today, presented with flourish and tension, but then disappears a little while later, oftentimes without any clear resolution. Fear can become pervasive in the body and we find ourselves always on the run, yet where can we escape this feeling of tension?

Unfortunately, fear sells. If you want to promote a product or an idea you make it an emergency, life or death; *no time for reasoning, you must act now!* To counteract this assault of the senses and the calculated response from those who want to push you to decide, we must become masters of the brain; we must develop higher reasoning and intuition.

The reasoning mind can definitely help you progress. In behavioral psychology the idea is that you can train the mind to use

the neo-cortex to turn off the amygdala by building up tolerance. The behavioral psychologist will expose you to a stimulus that creates an irrational fear, only in a very small dose. Once tolerance in the neocortex is built up on a small dose, the intensity is increased until you respond within a normal range.

Beyond this type of training of the mind there are even more refined ways to create a feeling of safety and even profound states of peace. A gateway to this higher experience is faith. Faith, being the opposite of fear, focuses the mind on elements that transcend the senses and the immediate demands of the lower mind. Faith in a Divine Providence means that you trust in the omniscience of God, and that God is assuring you, protecting you and guiding you ultimately to a positive end.

Absolute trust and surrender to God gives you surpassing peace and a positive outlook on the events of this world and your part in it. Faith, as Jesus spoke of it, goes beyond a hope or a wish; it penetrates deeply into the mind; it leads to a knowingness that opens the tremendous potential of sacred power. This power provides the healing of body, mind and spirit; it attunes you to a guiding intelligence that leads you through life's most complex problems, giving you the assurance that you are loved completely.

There isn't a day that you don't stand at the "Y" in the road; in one direction lies fear and its relatives of lack, paranoia, jealousy, isolation, greed and an endless lust to possess and control. In the other direction is the path of faith, which brings with it openness, peace, guiding wisdom, joy, and a sure feeling of union with God. And you choose, consciously or unconsciously, every day, every hour and every moment on which road you will travel.

This world has its share of uncertainties: economic woes, threats of violence and acts of terrorism, illness and loneliness. Fear does not prepare us for these difficulties; in fact, fear exacerbates them. With financial downturns it becomes a self fulfilling prophecy; fear restricts creativity and options, contracting the flow of supply.

Faith is the antidote. Use each challenge as an opportunity to draw more deeply from the deep well of living waters always flowing to you. Pray and listen with an open heart and mind; meditate more deeply until you find a peace of Soul that lifts you past transitory difficulties and opens the flow of prosperity to you on every level. In finding this peace and prosperity from within you, are now established in a Divine Harmony that will be with you always, even when this vast universe and its ups and downs are just a memory. †

David

A letter from David to a devotee

How lovely are such revelations as you described. As God unfolds these Truths to your waiting Soul, you feel such a deep resonance on every level of your Being. There is the level of experience that cannot be reached by words, a wordless Truth that is almost beyond thought as well.

Then comes the intelligent thought that opens you to so many levels of awareness: the idea-revelation itself, and how it connects with your own personal experience, how it relates to the history of mankind and how such thought-symbols have been used and have inspired so many throughout time. And then there is the revelation to what might be called the pedestrian-mind inside us, the average Joe who thinks, *Oh my, this is very interesting!*

All of this can happen in the space of time that a light switch can be turned on and the room is filled with light. Then the switch can be turned off and we have the memory of what we saw; as we continue to purify the mind the switch can be left on for longer and longer times, until the Light is finally shining continuously. Such Truth-revelations touch the deepest parts of our soul, and are not really explainable to those who do not actively participate on such levels of Truth.



Mother Hamilton
Christian Yoga

Excerpts from a Talk Given by
The Reverend Mother, Yogacharya M. Hamilton
in New York City in April of 1960

The body is the Cross. Jesus, the Son of man, is the ego or I-am-the-body idea. When the Son of man is crucified on the Cross, the ego perishes and what survives is the Absolute Being. It is the resurrection of the glorious Self of Christ, the Son of God.

This was written by Sri Ramana Maharshi, one of the great masters of India.

Truth is One. Truth is cosmic. It is eternal. It is no respecter of race, creed, denomination. Truth is truly the heart of God beating into the life of every single one of us. We have been taught to think of Jesus the Christ as one who was crucified on the Cross and who died for our sins. But we have not remembered the mystic Christ, He who said, "Lo, I will be with you always." This we must remember because the Christ is within us. We have the complete Godhead within us.

Human Cross and Spiritual Cross

Now, this is the human cross [indicates her body], and there is a Spiritual Cross. If you have the ability to leave your body and you would stand above looking down, you would see the two-edged sword. This is the medulla, through which the Life Force enters your body. It is the mouth of God which is spoken of in the Bible. The two-edged sword is the positive and negative cosmic currents which enter your body and keep you moving, living, activated at all times. We of ourselves are nothing. When this Life Force, this electrical force within ourselves, leaves the body—you can put food and drink into the mouth of a dead man, but it will not bring him back to life. So you of yourself cannot continue to live by yourself. This cosmic battery is constantly recharging your being. So as you look down you see this long, two-edged sword going from the medulla straight through here [third eye point]. This is the long arm of the spiritual Cross. These [indicates both eyes] are the two thieves on your spiritual Cross because as you look outward you see only the reflection of the tremendous Light of God right here.

Mount of Olives, Hill of Golgotha

Now, we know that when Christ got ready to be crucified and went the way of the Cross, it is said that He went to the Mount of Olives. And these the Christ Seed passes, the place where your tonsils are, the olives within you. He has to go through this. And He is crucified on the Hill of Golgotha, and “Golgotha” means the hill of the skull. Do you see how every single thing relates to the mystic Christ within yourself, an experience you must go through?

Christ on the Cross

So the Christ was crucified. And as He was on the Cross, He said, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” [Luke 23:34] He had understanding. He had the most tremendous love that ever was. And at another time, He said, “Father, Father, why hast thou forsaken me?” [Mark 15:34] And it has been said that this is not correct, that this indicates that Jesus was lacking in faith. But this is not so. It is said that what He actually said was, “Father, Father, how Thou hath glorified me.”

But, believe me; what He said first is true. “Father, Father, why hast Thou forsaken me?” It isn’t that you don’t have faith that your Father-God exists; it is that all of a sudden you are suspended between heaven and earth, and you cannot find Him. No matter where you are, for one awesome moment you are by yourself; you are going to face this death of the ego.

Spiritual Crucifixion

So Christ died. The heavens were rent with thunder when this happened. You see, you have the microcosmic electrical force within your body which is keeping all of these centers moving, furnishing life substance through all of the various parts over which they have control. But as the Christ-Seed goes up the spine and gets to the Christ Center, the Cosmic Force enters in there and, because one is going up and the other one is going this way [from medulla to Christ center], the Spiritual Crucifixion takes place.

Resurrection

Christ’s body is taken down from the Cross. He is put in a tomb, and the tomb is sealed. And of course all of the devotees are weeping and wailing. And remember, too, that every disciple, even Peter, left Him at the last moment, denied Him. This also happens. And so the next morning when they came, they found the sepulcher empty, and they went, telling everybody about it. And Christ appeared to different ones; His astral body appeared. This happened with our Master, and I’ll tell you a story about that later.

And so the reason for taking three days to rise from the dead was because the first day He had to escape from the physical body; the second day from the astral body; and the third day from the causal or the spiritual body before He could become resurrected. Then He appeared to the disciples. He ate with them. He drank with them. He spoke with them. He gave them the power of the Holy Ghost. And He even let Thomas Didymus stick his hand in His side in order to find out that He truly had resurrected.

Ascension

And then came the Ascension. But the Ascension, you see, is

not accomplished in a moment. After you have crucified the gross ego, still you have the subtle ego of the mind with its ten qualities which must also be crucified. So until the total ego, which originates in the mind, is crucified, you have not gone through what you must go through in order to go to God, your Father.

Do you know that the world is contained in one thought in your mind? It is that. You go to sleep, and the world disappears. So where is the world, except in your own mind? That is how real it is. But this mind has created all of this substance—ourselves and everything that we know and attach so much importance to in this world, that which is perishable, which will change and be destroyed. And we accept that instead of going through what is necessary in order to attain our supreme God realization.

I have done this. Am I not standing before you in flesh and blood? I am healthy. I came back from India paralyzed, in a wheelchair, and yet here I stand before you able to move, through the grace of God.

Transfer from Physical to Subtle Body

I went through the transfer from the physical to the subtle or astral body, and when I experienced this—this is a tremendous thing—you have two hearts: a physical heart, and an astral or a psychic heart. And so when this experience comes to you, the physical or the negative part transfers to the positive part, and it also involves the transfer of blood. The place in Revelations where it tells about the number of cubits which must be gone through; the body actually is turned and twisted, sometimes on the face and sometimes on the back, sometimes from side to side. And this is to equalize and balance the whole physical system so that this transfer may take place.

Then, when it starts to take place, you actually hear the blood gurgling inside of you, just like pouring wine into a new cask. And as the blood goes down each particular vein, it ties itself at the navel, and the navel is automatically depressed until this whole transfer is made. From then on, even though to outsiders you live in a physical body, you no longer do. You are actually consciously living in your subtle body. This Ascension, as I say, takes place in gradual stages because you have gone through this

tremendous experience, and it [the crucifixion experience] is the same as anyone when they die.

So after you have gone through this crucifixion, you also have a period to go through when it seems as though you are dead to the world. You are in strange territory. You don't know how to adjust yourself to people, nor to things. And people sense something very, very different about you, very queer, and they shy away from you. They don't want anything to do with you.

But this doesn't last for long because gradually the adjustment takes place, and your consciousness rises until you have the second death and the restitution, and that is the spiritual death that I spoke of up here [touches third eye]. The first one is at the heart center, and this one is up here [the Christ center]. So gradually you ascend into Heaven, become One with God and sit at the right hand of your Father.

Son of Man Becomes Son of God

Now when this Christ or Master-Seed has made this journey within your own being, it comes to the land of milk and honey again and it is the "first born" within yourself. It has—the son of man has become the Son of God, just like Jesus, the man became the Christ. And you, as men and women, will one day become the Christ if you will follow Master's teachings in every detail. This will happen within your own consciousness when you are ready to receive it. Then you sit at the right hand of God the Father forever; you are One with Him.

Mother's Special Destiny

Now the Kriya will help you to realize this within yourself. Each one will experience only that which is in accordance with his own karma. None of you will experience what I did. I went through a particularly drastic deal (it was tremendous) because I had a special destiny in God to fulfill. This has been verified by Rajasi and Swami Ramdas, both of them. And as Swami Ramdas stood before me one day and saw the tremendous suffering I was undergoing, he said, "My God, what suffering. Nobody could suffer this much for their own sins. You are suffering for the whole world." Sometimes, you see, God takes human form and comes down to work out in his or her own body the karma for

many, and to teach them the true teachings of the Christ. I'm sure that none of you has ever heard this explained to you.

Meaning of Words "Jesus" and "Christ"

You see, everyone concentrates upon Jesus the man who became Jesus the Christ. The word "Jesus" means savior. The word "Christ" is the anointed one. So you are the man, and you become the Christ. And when you do this, then this tremendous nectar, this radiance of Light which is within each and every one of us, the petals of the lotus open up, and the nectar flows through your being, and you are filled with Light. Everyone with whom you come in contact will be changed. They will never be the same again, and make no mistake about it, because their consciousness will be lifted; it will be exalted, and they will be taken many, many steps on the upward ladder.

Bhakti and Parabhakti

I will tell you one more experience. Swami Ramdas, before he took me into this experience which was so tremendous, said to me, "When you come out of this, I want you to know that you will have four choices. You can either commit suicide," (which, believe me, you want to do at one point), "you can become a jnani or seek the wisdom and oneness of God by going to the forest or a cave and never coming out again, but just have your own God-realization (to such a one the world is an illusion, it does not exist); you can teach at the same level which you taught at before; or you can become a parabhakti."

A bhakti, of course, is one who goes to God through love and devotion. But the bhakti path includes all of the rest of them: karma, jnani, everything within this comes in your great love for God. And parabhakti means, of course, supreme. So that one wants God so badly that he will make the final and supreme effort to be crucified on his own cross so that he may become one with God-the-Absolute within himself before creation, and then he will come back to function at the state of Christ Consciousness wherein he is a light for all humanity. He will serve everyone whom he can and uplift them and take them to God. And such a one who has the courage to do that, believe me, is a mountain in God.

Christian Yoga

There is no other messiah who has ever come on earth who has in every act of his life showed exactly what happens when you go to God. This is Christian Yoga: union with God through Christ, the sons of the Christ.

It is the greatest catholic religion that ever was because it is universal, and that's what that word means: universal. It applies to every race, every creed, every denomination, every man, woman and child on the earth, whether they know it or not. Some people call their Christ *Krishna*, some *Buddha*, some *Mohammed*, some *Zoroaster*, some *Jesus*. It makes no difference. We are talking about the state of Christ Consciousness, the Christ principle. So I want you to know this. I want you to become universal in your thinking. I want you to be free, so that the time has come to release you from bondage, when you have only God alone. And those of you who are here, believe me, will have that experience.

You see, the teacher comes many times, but not all accept. But, as one devotee said, a situation sometimes like that separates the men from the boys. So those that are ready for freedom, take it. Those who still must remain in bondage, also take that. But we must realize that we are all brothers and sisters. We must never give hate. We must give only love and understanding. This must be practiced. That's what Master came to give. †

We learn through the control of breath as taught by the masters of the East, to have complete control over our body, to go and come at will, even as Christ did. He was constantly going up into the mountain of His own being. And so it is said that "breathlessness is deathlessness," and this is so. When you can learn to do without breath and yet remain in full consciousness, when you can learn to come and go from your body at will, then you have taken death into your arms.

And then when it is time for you to throw this garment off and put on a new one, you sit in the lotus posture and you go into what is called mahasamadhi, or the final state of leaving the body voluntarily. You are not choked out of the body. You do not go by accident. Your breath is not taken from you. But you go of your own volition in complete peace and comfort. [Mother Hamilton, from a talk on January 25, 1961.]

God Talks with Arjuna

A Commentary on The Bhagavad Gita

By Paramhansa Yogananda

This typifies the psychological state of the devotee whose understanding is not yet finely tuned to intuition. He is often confused by apparently contradictory advice from the scriptures or his guru.

For example, when a master once told his disciple, “You must eat and you mustn’t eat,” the disciple replied, “Master, I do not understand; your commands are contradictory!”

The master replied, “True—you do not understand! My advice is perfectly harmonious. What I mean is that you must eat when you are truly hungry, only to give proper nutrition to your body for maintaining the temple of your soul. But you must not eat when you are tempted by the deep-seated wicked appetite of greed, under the guidance of which you will overeat and destroy your health.”

Similarly, whenever Krishna advises, in essence, “Live in this world but do not live in it,” he meant that man should live and fulfill his duties in this world since God put him here, but he should not live in attachment to its wiles and ways.

Spiritual advice is often paradoxical. Far from being contradictory, it rather reflects the inadequacy of corporeal expression to convey that which is above the familiar “this or that” duality of Nature. Among Christian saints, how given to paradoxes is Saint John of the Cross in his mystical poesy: “The music without sound,” “With fire that can consume and yet do no harm,” “Eternal life you render / And change my death to life, even while killing!” Jesus said: “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.”

God is the Great Paradox: the sole Life, the only Being—yet invisible, intangible! The Formless and the Every Form!

[This Excerpt is from Chapter III, Verse 2 of *The Bhagavad Gita*, *Royal Science of God Realization*, published by Self Realization Fellowship.]

25 Years as a Minister

By Yogacharya David R. Hickenbottom



David's Ordination, 1984

When I met Mother Hamilton I immediately recognized the spiritual power she had and her ability to lift me up into higher states of consciousness. By this time in my life I knew that the only thing that really held any real attraction for me was to make spiritual progress in this life. As I deepened my spiritual practice and entered into the mystical crucifixion, my experiences only sharpened my resolve to serve Mother and her Work.

One day the opportunity seemed to present itself without any real premeditation on my part and I said, "Mother, I want to help you in your Work in any way I can." I

felt a deep soul's commitment in making this statement, nothing casual or passing; rather it was a promise from my Soul.

Mother asked me to teach Sunday School, so on Sunday mornings I met with the children who were from about six to twelve years old. At that age children are so aware, with their reasoning mind awakening, yet very open to early childhood intuition where the greatest truths may be accepted and understood in a flash.

After a few years of serving in this way Mother asked me to start greeting people when they entered the church, a new position Mother created. I bought a couple of suits as Mother asked me to wear a suit and tie. In 1982, Mother asked me to give a talk in her stead now and then. With time this became a more frequent occurrence. To stand in front of others and speak was not something I had done before. Mother said, "Have a title, some stories—everyone likes stories, and then let God speak

through you.” I cannot describe the feeling of upliftment and the power of God which flowed through me as I spoke. I was, of course, also nervous at times, but at some point early in the talk God and Guru’s Grace would flow through me; it was extraordinary.

In 1984, Mother said she was going to ordain me as a minister. Well, to tell you the truth I was not comfortable with the title. I think it harkened back to a more traditional role, one that I was not inspired to enact. Yet I trusted Mother implicitly, and if she wanted this then I would do my best to fulfill her wish. I thought about it, turning it over and over in my mind, seeking some way to *own* the title. When I looked up the meaning in the dictionary, I spied one of the definitions, minister: to serve. I thought, “Now that is something I can easily identify with; I can serve with all of my heart, mind and soul.”

From that point to this, twenty-five years later, this is exactly what I have done; I have served to the best of my ability, doing whatever God and Guru have given me to do. I have not been perfect in all that I have done; at times I have made some serious errors, yet I have learned from those errors and I have gone on to strive to do better. Mother said that when Master made her a minister that it definitely helped her in becoming realized. I can say the very same thing.

I have had the great privilege of knowing that God is the doer, I am but His instrument. The more purified my mind, the more the Purusha, Divine Intelligence, guides me and works through me. I have also had the privilege of working with truly great souls striving to grow in realization. To me, attaining lasting happiness from purely worldly endeavors alone seem painfully inadequate. It is like trying to get a beautiful sound out of banging a tin plate.

Oftentimes devotees will thank me with touching sincerity. When they do I mentally bow at the feet of my blessed Guru and pass it all on to her. I say in return, “It is my greatest joy!” And indeed it is; to be in the service of the most Blessed One, as I know Him within and as I know Him to be residing in each and every one of you. I melt in joy, swim in joy, the perfect Bliss of Him who sent His child out to serve one and all. †

Memorial for Swami Satchidananda

Swami Muktananda, Anandashram

As willed by Beloved Papa and Mataji, the consecration of the Samadhi Mandir of Pujya Swami Satchidanandaji was performed on January 26, 2009. The day coincided with the 60th year of Pujya Swamiji's dedication to Beloved Papa and Mataji's temple of seva—Anandashram.



Devotees from different parts of India and abroad had gathered well in advance to participate in the programmes. The Ashram was charged with spiritual fervour and all were overwhelmed by their love and reverence for Pujya Swamiji.

At 5:30 a.m. on the morning of January 26, Puja of the Kalash was performed and it was installed on the roof of the Mandir. A lamp and dhoop were then lit and Akhanda Ram Nam started with all love and devotion.

Before the flower offering, the urn containing the holy ashes of Pujya Swamiji was brought to the Bhajan Hall. At 9:00 a.m. it was taken in a procession around the Bhajan Hall, Homa Mandir, Sri Mandir and brought to the Samadhi Mandir of Pujya Swa-

miji. Amidst the chanting of Ram Nam, the urn was placed inside the Samadhi chamber along with Ram Nam books written by many devotees.

The marble plaques were then placed to cover the chamber. The Padukas were thereafter installed. Flowers were offered to the Paduka. Devotees then offered their salutations to Pujya Swamiji.

The Mandir looks exactly like the Mandirs of Beloved Papa and Mataji. Quite a number of friends from far and near had come for the function. The Samadhi Mantap was filled with Ram Nam notebooks and the urn containing the holy ashes of Pujya Swamiji.

Just as Beloved Papa's Samadhi Mandir was named 'Homa Mandir' and Pujya Mataji's was named 'Sri Mandir', Swamiji's has been named 'Samadhi Mandir'.

Memorials like Samadhi Mandirs of Saints are perpetual reminders to spiritual aspirants about the life and mission they embodied. May Beloved Papa, Pujya Mataji and Pujya Swamiji bless all of us with their choicest blessings to live up to the ideals they placed before us and progress swiftly on the spiritual path to attain the Supreme Goal.



Pujya Swamiji's room (Sadhu Dham) is now called Mouna Mandir. All those who would like to observe mouna can go and sit there for some time. Some quotations and books will also be kept there so that when the mind goes a little off track we can read a little and bring it back on track. †

Om Sri Ram Jai Ram

Small Glossary:

Kalash — A pitcher

Dhoop — Pure incense shaped into a log

Akhanda RamNam — A constant chanting of Ram Nam

Homa — A religious practice in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, involving making offerings into a consecrated fire

Paduka — Guru's feet (cast of Swamiji's feet)

Mantap — Commemorative Structure

Mouna — Silence

Inside View of Samadhi
Mandir of Pujya Swamiji



Till I came to the Ashram, I was identifying myself with a small family, say, I was moving in a narrow circle. But after coming here, I started feeling that I belonged to the entire world, of which the old family was a part. So it was not renunciation of a family but acceptance of all families—the whole world—as mine.

—Swami Satchidananda

My Memories with Swami Satchidanandaji

By Jnaneswari Mataji

It is very difficult to write about saints. Only a saintly person can say anything about another saint. I am a very small person, I cannot write anything on his spiritual attainments, but my memories of interacting with Swami Satchidananda, I will try to recount.

I had Swamiji's darshan for the first time in 1954. At that time Swami Omkar was observing a 6 year long vow of silence and he was spending his time in meditation and writing at his Ashram at Kalaish Giri, a Shanti Ashram branch on the sea shore at Waltair. He had undergone bone grafting surgery in order to donate his leg bone to a needy child of 5 years, named Nirmala. The surgery was performed at K G Hospital, Vizag.

Papa Ramdas came to know about this bone graft surgery and came to see Swami Omkar, accompanied by Mother Krishnabai and Swami Satchidananda. They spent 3 days in the Waltair



Nalini of Anandashram with Jnaneswari Mataji

Ashram. Our readers must know that in those days, the Ashram did not have even minimal comforts. There were no buildings even, only a few thatched roof huts, in which the three of them stayed. Even now, I can recall the scene of the three of them staying in that small hut, quite joyfully. Yes, Papa was always humorous and joyful. One day they went to Kailash Giri Ashram and spent one night with Swami Omkar. In that place, also, there was no water and electricity. Even in such an austere setting, Swami Satchidananda served Papa without any anxiety for lack of comforts.

Next, I had an opportunity to visit Anandashram. It was my first visit to Anandashram and also the first time of my going anywhere beyond our own Ashram gate. I was accompanied by our Ashram's oldest devotee, Mrs. Kamala Tombat. We travelled to Mangalore and from there to Anandashram. I had the darshan of Papa and Mother. I remember very well, Papa sitting in the Bhajan Hall and reading out *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* to devotees sitting around him.

After that, a group of us from our Ashram, comprising of Swami Omkar, some devotees, Ashram children and myself, went to Anandashram, from Kotagiri Peace Centre. By that time, Papa had shed his mortal frame and Mother Krishnabai was there and she attended upon Swami Omkar very affectionately and devoutly. On this occasion, Mother requested him to permit her to perform Padapuja to him. Our readers might know that Swami Omkar would never accept Padapuja from anyone. But Mother made repeated requests and the Swami finally yielded, subject to one condition—that there should be no onlookers while Padapuja was performed, except Swami Satchidananda. And at that time I had darshan of Swami Satchidananda, the second time.

The third time I had Swami Satchidananda's darshan was when myself and Sister Shanti went to Anandashram. Mother made a lot of enquiries about our Ashram, its activities and Kailashgiri Ashram even though she was ill at that time. She spoke only in Hindi and I was unable to follow well. Swami Satchidananda kindly acted as interpreter for me.

From then onwards, at least once in two years, I was going to Anandashram for Swamiji's darshan. While Papa and Mother were alive, Swamiji would never go out leaving them. He was like Hanuman, serving them day and night, not going anywhere. After Mother's Mahasamadhi, a few years back, our Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj brought Swami Satchidananda to Shanti Ashram. They first came to Waltair and then to Thotapalli. At Waltair, Swami Chidananda inaugurated Omkar Mandir and Swami Satchidananda inaugurated Sushila Mandir. Swami Satchidananda spent three days at Thotapalli and we enjoyed his divine presence. He sanctified the Ashram premises with his presence and gave blessings to children and Ashramites.

And, lastly I went to Anandashram on 28th October 2008, to have Swamiji's last darshan at the time of his Shodasi Ceremony. Though I could not have his physical darshan, we experienced the perfume of his Divine Presence in the very air of Anandashram. Even now, I see his calm, serene and peaceful countenance. His divine gaze is enough to elevate us to sublime spiritual heights. That is in itself a blessing and boon. We can't offer anything to him except practising in our lives what he taught us through his life of dedicated service. Then only we would be paying him our real homage!

May all Glory to Him! †

[Jnaneswari Mataji of Shanti Ashram is the spiritual successor to Swami Omkar (1895–1982). We met this sweet saint the last time we were in Anandashram, in December 2007—Ed.]

In The World But Not Of It

I am in the world but not **from** the world. Rather, the world actually proceeds from me, from each of us. By knowing this, we cannot fall prey to feeling alienated from this world. This world is a shimmering extension of our will and it is constructed from ideas in no other mind than our own. We must own this world. If it is not possible to feel this ownership, then love this world because God loves it. Love what God loves.

—Larry Koler

A BASKET OF FRESH BREAD

By Rumi

The Prophet Muhammad said,

“There is no better companion on this way than what you do. Your actions will be your best friend, or if you’re cruel and selfish, your actions will be a poisonous snake that lives in your grave.”

But tell me,
can you do the good work without a teacher?
Can you even know what it is without the presence of a Master? Notice how the lowest livelihood requires some instruction.

First comes knowledge,
then the doing of the job. And much later,
perhaps after you’re dead, something grows
from what you’ve done.

Look for help and guidance
in whatever craft you’re learning. Look for a generous
teacher, one who has absorbed the tradition he’s in.

Look for pearls in oyster shells.
Learn technical skill from a craftsman.

Whenever you meet genuine spiritual teachers,
be gentle and polite and fair with them.
Ask them questions, and be eager
for answers. Never condescend.

If a master tanner wears an old, threadbare smock,
that doesn't diminish his mastery.

If a fine blacksmith works at the bellows
in a patched apron, it doesn't affect
how he bends the iron.

Strip away your pride,
and put on your humble clothes.

If you want to learn theory,
talk with theoreticians. That way is oral.

When you learn a craft, practice it,
That learning comes through the *hands*.

If you want dervishhood, spiritual poverty,
and emptiness, you must be friends with a sheikh.

Talking about it, reading books, and doing practices
don't help. Soul receives from soul that knowing.

The mystery of spiritual emptiness
may be living in a pilgrim's heart, and yet
the knowing of it may not yet be his.

Wait for the illuminating openness
as though your chest were filling with light,
as when God said,

Did We not expand you?

(Qur'an 94:I)

Don't look for it outside yourself.

You are the source of the milk. Don't milk others!

There is a milk fountain inside you.

Don't walk around with an empty bucket.

You have a channel into the ocean, and yet
you ask for water from a little pool.

Beg for that love expansion. Meditate only
on THAT. The Qur'an says,

And He is with you. (57:4).

There is a basket of fresh bread on you head,
and yet you go door to door asking for crusts.

Knock on your inner door. No other.

Sloshing knee-deep in fresh riverwater, yet
you keep wanting a drink from other people's waterbags.

Water is everywhere around you, but you see only
barriers that keep you from water.

The horse is beneath the rider's thighs, and still
he asks, "Where's my horse?"

Right there, under you!

"Yes, this is a horse, but where's the horse?"

Can't you see!

"Yes, I can see, but whoever saw such a horse?"

Mad with thirst, he can't drink from the stream

running so close by his face. He's like a pearl
on the deep bottom, wondering, inside his shell,
Where's the ocean?

His mental questionings
form the barrier. His physical eyesight
bandages his knowing. Self-consciousness
plugs his ears.

Stay bewildered in God,
and only that.

Those of you who are scattered,
simplify your worrying lives. There is *one*
righteousness: Water the fruit trees,
and don't water the thorns. Be generous
to what nurtures the spirit and God's luminous
reason-light. Don't honor what causes
dysentery and knotted-up tumors.

Don't feed both sides of yourself equally.
The spirit and the body carry different loads
and require different attentions.

Too often
we put saddlebags on Jesus and let the donkey
run loose in the pasture.

Don't make the body do
what the spirit does best, and don't put a big load
on the spirit that the body could carry easily.

From *The Essential Rumi*, translation by Coleman Barks. Rumi was a Sufi mystic, born in Afghanistan, who lived from September 30, 1207 to December 17, 1273. He spent most of his life in present day Turkey.

Memories of Mother

Mother's Arrival in Anandashram in 1957

[From an Interview with Swami Satchidananda in 1996 at Anandashram conducted by Rev. Larry Koler.]

Larry: Swamiji, I have been reading *The Gospel* [of Swami Ramdas] and I'd like to start with the question regarding Mother when she first came here. You told me the other day that Papa was very excited when the Hamiltons were coming and that of course they were coming from a long distance. And when they got here Mother was in an almost—you said in a state of ecstasy. Can you explain that at all? Just traditional ways of showing that or did she seem to be in an altered state?

Swamiji: When Papa and Mataji got the news from Mother Hamilton about coming here he was very much excited and he was looking forward to their visit. He had made separate arrangements for their staying—two rooms were allotted for them—and they had even planned how much time he would be able to spend with them and so on and so forth.

Larry: Oh, I wondered, because in the book [you say]: at 8:00, then he goes to see the Hamiltons and then...

Swamiji: Yes. When they actually arrived, she embraced him and it was a very grand welcome; both of them were taken to their room...of course, all this I have mentioned in the *Gospel* itself. And the very day they started talking on spiritual matters. She was so anxious that she should not return home without realizing God—that [the] only aim in coming to India was to realize God: she wanted to have it at any cost. She was hammering on this point every now and then and Papa was assuring her that she would get the experience. And discussion went on for some days.

They used to meet in the mornings in their rooms and in the afternoon they would come to Papa's room for one hour, one and a half hours. They would discuss various matters and then Papa would read from some book and explain the highest state of

Realization. She would say she had passed through various experiences but had not reached the highest and wanted Papa's help to reach the highest. She wanted, in due course, an assurance of Papa that she had reached the goal but Papa was avoiding a direct answer to that. He was telling her again and again, "You are the universal Mother. What is there for you to realize? You are everything; you are beyond everything." That of course made her very happy but at the same time Father [Hamilton] used to taunt her, "That is the way Papa looks at every woman—nothing special for you. So that doesn't show any great attainment for you." So she would again ask Papa, "Papa is this the way you address all women; I am not any [one] special for you?" "Yes, you are special, no doubt." [laughter] That way the discussion used to go on. She wanted assurance of Papa, and Papa was avoiding it for a long time.

Larry: She said that Papa would give her no quarter. He gave no quarter—Ramdas. It now makes sense to me why she said that.

Swamiji: That's right. †

[To be continued next issue]



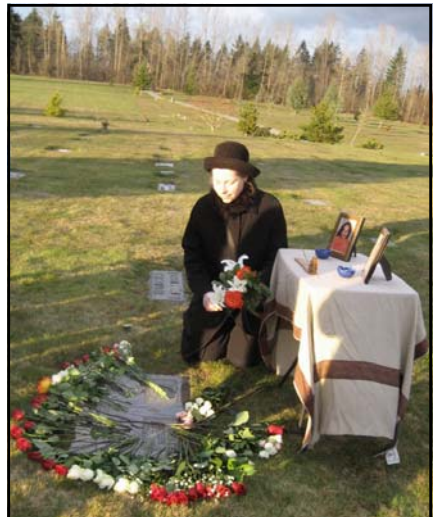
By Swati Haliday, Anandashram Devotee

Mother's Mahasamadhi Day



On Saturday, January 31 at 4:00 p.m., we gathered in front of Mother's grave to commemorate the 18th anniversary of her Mahasamadhi. Mother blessed us once again with a sunny, pleasant winter's day. Devotees each placed flowers on her gravestone. Yogacharya David began the program with a prayer and a short discourse. He read from the funeral service that Mother had designed and we listened to a few minutes of a talk Mother had given. Chants and personal testimonies completed the service.

The sun went down. Yet on we lingered, basking in the blissful memories of Mother; the love burning in our hearts kept us warm even as the air began to get cold. We left just before the cemetery closed but gathered at a nearby eatery to share a meal and celebrate



Jill Hough offering Flowers



Mother by enjoying hot fudge sundaes, one of Mother’s favorite.

The next day, our Sunday Service again commemorated Mother’s Mahasamadhi with a special altar displaying photos, some of her belongings and handwritten notes. We shared prasad and our love for this great God-woman. Jai Guru! –Cate Koler †

Calendar of Events

Mar.	7	Paramhansa Yogananda’s Mahasamadhi (1952)
	9	Swami Sri Yukteswar’s Mahasamadhi (1936)
	20	Spring Equinox (3:43 a.m. PST)
Apr.	9	Swami Ramdas’ Birthday (Hindu Calendar) (1884) Hanuman’s Birthday
	12	Easter
May	10	Swami Sri Yukteswar’s Birthday (1855)
	10	Mother’s Day
	25	Memorial Day
June	21	Father’s Day
	20	Summer Solstice (10:43 p.m. PDT)

Your spiritual life is not a compartment of your day or week you sometimes visit. Your spiritual life is essentially who you are. The measure of your attainment is to what depths and heights you plumb your Self. Certain markers will make you know your progress: ever expanding compassion, love, desire to serve, wisdom, light and joy are notable. Strive continuously for the Light, and be free!

Yogacharya David Hickenbottom

Fearlessness (abhayam) is mentioned first because it is the impregnable rock on which the house of spiritual life must be erected.

Fearlessness means faith in God: faith in His protection, His justice, His wisdom, His mercy, His love, His omnipresence.

Paramhansa Yogananda

The only precious thing in this world, by possession of which we could attain an exalted state of pure peace and joy, is the Name of the Lord. Its melodious sound, coupled with the pure consciousness of the one Reality which it signifies, frees the mind from all its passions, permitting the outflow of the eternal joy inherent in the human soul.

Swami Ramdas



By Lorraine Bourcier