



Yasodhara Ashram
YOGA RETREAT & STUDY CENTRE

CELEBRATING
50
YEARS
1963-2013

SELFLESS SERVICE - OCTOBER NEWSLETTER



Harvest invokes gratitude. In Canada we celebrate Thanksgiving in October to appreciate all that the garden has given. Can we expand that feeling to everything that life has given? How do we express our gratitude? Selfless service can be the action of giving back to life, an expression of our deepest thanks. Take time to appreciate your life and ask, In what ways can I give back? Then put an idea into action!

UPCOMING ASHRAM COURSES



- [Yoga of Healing Retreat](#): In the healing process you have the space to reflect on your life. The retreat is for those seeking physical, mental or spiritual healing. Spacious and nurturing, this is a time to go inward, accessing your compassion and inner Light.
October 25 - 29
- [Relaxation Retreat](#): In this retreat, you will focus on going inward, stilling the mind and body, connecting to your inner source of peace, harmony and joy. Re-enter your life with sustaining practices to keep the relaxation, with all of its benefits, alive.
December 6 - 10
- [Festival of Light](#): Step out from the pressure of the holidays and honour the Light in the tranquil and beautiful setting of Yasodhara Ashram. Join us at any

point from the Winter Solstice to the New Year, as we celebrate the gifts of the year and enjoy the peace of the season.

December 21 - January 1

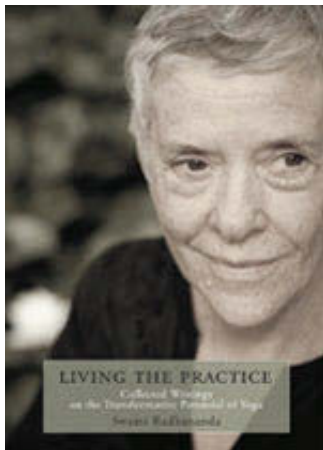
- [Yoga Development Course \(YDC\) 2014](#): The YDC is an intensive three-month program designed to give students an in-depth introduction to the major branches of yoga and a foundation in personal and spiritual development. The course is of lasting value not only to potential yoga teachers but also to all those who wish to deepen their yoga practice and make permanent changes in their approach to life.

January 8 - April 8

- [Personal Retreats](#) and [Artist and Professional Renewal Retreats](#) are available year round at the Ashram - take time to renew spiritually and creatively.

Visit our [2013](#) and [2014](#) program calendars

Featured Book



*Living the Practice:
Collected Writings on the
Transformative Potential of Yoga*

by Swami Radhananda

www.timeless.org

Yoga and Selfless Service *Swami Sivananda Radha*



In this 1985 talk, Swami Radha describes the power of selfless service as spiritual practice. Features historical and current photographs of karma yogis through the past 50 years.

[Watch the video](#)



Welcoming A New Sanyasin



October Recipe:
[Sweet Squash Custard Pie](#)

"When I came to the Ashram, I just had this feeling of 'there's something more.' And I think everybody feels that. When people come here, they say it: 'There is something more.' And they mean in themselves, and in life." (p 207)

Swami Radhananda
Living the Practice



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On Sunday, October 20th, Jayne Boys took an important step in her spiritual journey as she was initiated into the sacred order of sanyas by Swami Radhananda to become Swami Sukhananda. 'Sukha' means happiness and joy, the ease of entry into the ocean of the heart; 'ananda' means bliss.

Swami Sukhananda, a senior teacher at the Ashram, is originally from England and first learned about the Ashram at the Radha Centre in Ottawa. She met Swami Radha during the Yoga Development Course in 1988 and has been teaching and living yoga ever since - at the Ashram and in Europe.

Many blessings and much Light to Swami Sukhananda Saraswati!



**Desktop Photo
of the Month**

[Make this photo my
desktop image](#)

**An Original Karma Yogi
Swami Saradananda**



Swami Saradananda first came to the Ashram in 1969 as a young man of twenty-two, drawn by the counter-culture of the sixties and an underlying search for meaning.

I first heard of the Ashram and Swami Radha from two war resisters. Their experience of Karma Yoga and Swami Radha had influenced how they thought about life. This attracted me because at the time I was searching for a foundation that was different from the rock and roll life I had been living. So in 1969 my band mate and I pulled into the Ashram in our VW bus. I knew something important was happening here and was drawn by Swami Radha's magnetic and compelling being. There was a powerful focus on work in the community - the commitment to building the Ashram and a way for the builders to pay off much karmic debt.

The structure of daily work, satsang, reflection, and the experience of community helped me to think more clearly. Swami Radha's guidance over the years held me as I made my way through life. I eventually moved to the Ashram in 1991.

Karma Yoga continues to play an important role in helping me to clear the way. The more I act from a less selfish place, the more I can contribute to harmony within the community and myself.

Getting to Know Our Neighbors



The Food Flow team - Bryn Bamber, Rachelle Premac and Paris Marshall Smith - recently went on a three-day Farm Tour of local organic suppliers. Here they report their findings.

We experienced a great sense of gratitude to be associated with the group of committed farmers we met. Our tour stops included:

- [Wild Flight Farm](#) on the Shuswap River where we learned about mobile hoopouses
- Roots & Greens Farm also on the Shuswap River
- [Against the Wind Nursery & Garden](#) in the Slocan Valley where we buy squash, garlic and potatoes
- Moon Gravity in Rossland, an urban farm with creative systems for tending goats, chickens and rabbits
- Ashram friend Clo Burton's subsistence farm and apple orchard in Queens Bay

The success of these farms was the result of hard work, courage and a highly personalized response to each situation. The farmers are clearly experts in their operations, investing time in developing systems. We appreciated how generously they shared their knowledge. It was especially helpful to learn about small, mobile electric fences, different approaches to weed barriers, and efficient ideas for packing and storage.

Farmer-supplier tours will become an important part of our year - linking the field with our meals; the Ashram's gardeners with local farmers, and helping us recognize our own unique system. The Food Flow team plans to build on our learning, leveraging shared experience and being generous in return.

www.yasodhara.org/farm-garden

Powerful Perspectives at Work

Alicia Pace



Alicia recently returned from offering "The Straight Walk Workshop: Powerful Perspectives at Work" in Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto on behalf of [Yasodhara Institute](#). The mission of Yasodhara Institute is to foster the discovery of deeper meaning in life and work.

During the month of September a total of thirty-two participants - ranging from midwives to lawyers to directors of organizations - came together in three different cities to gain new perspectives on their choices around work-life issues.

The workshop was presented as a tool for participants to access both their rational and intuitive intelligence in order to gather facts and gain greater perspective on specific work concerns. The focus created an oasis for discovering the clarity and power within. Some participants experienced confirmation of next steps; others found the courage to embrace significant decisions.

This pilot project of Yasodhara Institute confirmed my understanding that incorporating meditative and reflective practices into people's work strategies can open them to truly sustainable change.

In 2014 [Yasodhara Institute](#) is poised to expand to different locations and to offer a range of workshops integrating the principles of yoga with life and work - both to the general public and within workplaces.

Alicia Pace holds a Masters in Human Systems Intervention, is a professional coach and a certified Yasodhara Yoga teacher. She has over 15 years experience as a consultant in Organizational Development and is currently developing curriculum for the Yasodhara Institute. Contact Alicia at alicia@yasodhara.org.

Take Action - Join the NEW Yasodhara 108!



[Yasodhara 108](#) is a fundraiser in support of Yasodhara Ashram's Young Adult Program (18-30). [Join in and help raise funds](#) for this important program.

New this year is that everyone is invited to join. Instead of being limited to hardy yogis who can perform 108 consecutive Sun Salutations, you can offer 108 of any practice that helps you connect spiritually. And you have until Sunday, November 24th to do it!

Your Yasodhara 108 may consist of 108 minutes of mantra, Hatha Yoga, meditation or pranayama. Or it may be an intense 108 minutes of dance or photography. Perhaps you want to bake 108 cupcakes to share with friends or knit 108 hats for the homeless or... do 108 Sun Salutations! The choice is yours.

Choose a meaningful activity then invite friends and family to sponsor you. We have a wonderful [new website](#), simple to use and dedicated to the cause. [Contact](#) the Yasodhara 108 team if you have questions.

[Raising](#) funds for this [program](#) means supporting young people in gaining access to the Ashram to create a strong foundation for their lives. One Young Adult Program participant said, "I feel my life is full of quality because of the courage I gained while at the Ashram."

Yasodhara Teachers Network (YTN) Has Launched!



At the end of September all active Yasodhara Yoga teachers were invited to join the [Yasodhara Teachers Network \(YTN\)](#) - a resource centre for teachers to connect with each other, with the Ashram, and with the teachings.

Since the launch of YTN, there have been 243 posts, 77 topics and 100 active teachers registered from across Canada, US, Germany, Portugal, Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago and the UK. Conversations have ranged from "Bringing the Teachings to Brazil" to sharing reflections on mask making, to reports and photos from Swami Samayananda on her outreach tour in Eastern Canada.

The YTN is bringing teachers together and creating a communication network to share insights, experience, resources and updates. If you are an active Yasodhara Yoga teacher and would like to register or have questions, please contact YTN manager Amy Allcock at ytn@yasodhara.org.

We invite you to join the conversation - you are the network!

Mantra at School
Ali Morham, Whitehorse, Yukon



Ali Morham is a [Yoga Development Course](#) (2010) graduate who has been an elementary school teacher in the Yukon Territory for the past twenty-two years. Ali recently spent a week offering [Karma Yoga](#) at the Ashram.

A few years ago when my father passed away, I found that the mantra gave me a great sense of peace. I wondered whether it would have the same effect on my students, many who have behavioral issues. I tried playing Om Tara softly in the background and noticed a distinct calming influence. A month and a half passed before one student asked if the music could be changed since they now knew the words! I experimented with Bach and classical Baroque but it didn't have the same impact; within ten minutes, I was asked to change the music.

After spending a week at the Ashram, I recognized that as well as mantra I can also bring my experience of Karma Yoga into teaching. How do I give selfless service to my students? From a place of Light I am able to deal more intelligently with difficult situations as they arise. Bringing the teachings right into my life touches these children in a visible, tangible way and unites us. We are all learning together, travelling parallel paths.

The 2014 Program Calendar



We are delighted to preview the [2014 Yasodhara Ashram program calendar](#), which includes Signature courses, core programs and retreats; and introduces new courses that address contemporary issues.

Highlights:

- 10 Days of Yoga, a foundational program, offered spring/summer/fall
- Signature Courses - 5-day combinations of Swami Radha's original workshops
- Family Week, July 9 - 13 - building on last year's success!
- Living the Practice with Swami Radhananda - study with the Ashram's Spiritual Director

New this year:

- Cycles of Light Series - retreats scheduled during the equinoxes and solstices
- Relationships: Challenge and Choice - bringing out the best in yourself and partner
- Conscious Aging - exploring how you want to live the rest of your life
- Unplug Retreat: A tech-free weekend - quiet the digital distractions and go inward
- Ethics in Yoga: the Yamas & Niyamas (for yoga teachers) - articulate your ethics and study the Sutras
- Discover Yasodhara: Introduction to Spiritual Community - one week balanced between Karma Yoga and classroom experience
- Light & Vibration led by Swami Lalitananda - explore Swami Radha's most subtle teachings

[Download](#) the complete 2014 Program Calendar

News at a Glance

- **Bhajan Blast** - The live stream of our eleventh Bhajan Blast of the year is scheduled for Sunday, November 14th, from 7-8 pm Mountain. Help us generate positive vibrations by joining us in lively song and devotional dance. Wherever you are, [let's connect!](#)
- Thanksgiving at the Ashram was a beautiful, Light-filled time with much sharing of gratitude for the blessings of life. Almost 80 guests, residents, and karma yogis harvested squash, made apple juice, blessed the garden, and enjoyed a bountiful Thanksgiving dinner. Marlene Roza and Swami Matananda led a workshop for the entire Ashram community where we took time to relax and reflect on what we've harvested in our lives. View the [Facebook photo album](#).
- ***Living The Practice* with Swami Radhananda** - Thirty-two participants gathered at the Ashram from October 6-11 for this special workshop. Each day had a focus such as reflection, mind, breath, Divine Mother and Light. Inspired by questions from Swami Radhananda, participants followed their own line of self-inquiry and used the practices to expand their understanding. Listening to each other was essential to the learning. Sandra Hindson from Calgary wrote about her follow-up. "Suffused with inspiration and Light, the practice continued into the week with the students I work with. It was a seamless transition from the Ashram to my professional life in Calgary. I returned with a heart overflowing with gratitude."
- **Dan Seguin Joins the Riondel Volunteer Fire Department:** Dan heads up the Communications and Marketing hub at the Ashram and as of October 10th, he is also the [newest member](#) of the Riondel Volunteer Fire Department which is responsible for fire protection from Riondel to Boswell. Dan says, "For me, this role is yoga in action and an important way to serve the community at large."
- Looking ahead to 2014, November is planning month. For this reason there are no courses scheduled in November. We have a variety of projects in the works and look forward to sharing details with you in the next few months.
- ***Yasodhara Outreach* Update:** Swami Samayananda's initiative in the East will conclude with two workshops in [Ottawa at the end of October](#), and a gathering of Eastern Ontario Yasodhara Yoga Teachers the first weekend in November. It's been a full and rich time! Look for a report from Swami Samayananda on this initiative in the November newsletter. Yasodhara Yoga teachers check the [YTN - Outreach forum!](#)
- **Yoga Development Course (YDC) 2014** - Is this your year to take 3 months to be with a group of like-minded people - exploring questions of meaning, identification, ideals, and learning powerful tools for transformation to become the kind of person you want to be? Join us for the 2014 YDC. Contact [Swami Jyotihananda](#) or [Swami Samayananda](#).

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

October's theme is
Selfless Service

Historical Moment -



Swami Radha's Selfless Service

When Swami Radha left Sivananda Ashram in 1956, Gurudev Sivananda said to her, "Selfless service will make you Divine. Don't worry about the Ultimate, the Absolute. Go out and serve!"

Swami Radha came back to Canada with no money, was told to start an Ashram and update the teachings. She did that. We see the results now, but how? It was through her dedication, through the spirit of devotion in action that it came about. She had no money but she was tireless in giving back to her guru. She searched for North American publishers for his books. She gave people what Gurudev had given to her - whether this was to one or two people attending a lecture or an overcrowded stadium. Karma Yoga is the Yoga of Action, but devotion is an essential part of it.

If you have ever watched your mind, you know how it can go off on tangents and the emotions join in. So how do we purify the mind? Do work and keep bringing the mind back. Swami Radha gave us the tools of Mantra, Divine Light Invocation, and the Divine Mother Prayer to ask that everything we do be taken as Her worship. This is the legacy of Karma Yoga she passed on to us.



Teaching Guide - Selfless Service

The focus for the month of October has been the theme of "Selfless Service." Whether you are at the Ashram or in our extended community, we invite you to taste the joys of Karma Yoga.

"Selfless Service" is the theme for October 2013.

At the Ashram we will be exploring Selfless Service through our daily work and reflections, as well as through special Karma Yoga classes and community-based projects. [Click here](#) for reflections and practices.

In this month's video, Swami Radhananda questions the meaning of service, work and offering. In the context of the Divine Mother Prayer, she also explores the immense power of speech and how we use it. [Click here](#) to watch the video.

In this month's audio archive, Swami Radha talks about selfless service. What is selfless service? What is pure work? Swami Radha offers her understanding of Karma Yoga as the

opportunity to be a handmaiden of Divine Mother. [Click here](#) to listen to the audio.

Selfless Service - YTN Online Discussion

As part of this month's theme, we invite active teachers to log into the Yasodhara Teachers Network (YTN), navigate to the Teaching & Learning forum, and join the October - Selfless Service discussion. Share your ideas, your experience, and read about how other teachers are exploring Selfless Service in their daily lives and classes.



October Art Project - 'The "Autumn Rose"'

Roses are an ancient symbol of love and are often used in the worship of Divine Mother. Offer to rake leaves for a neighbour or collect some brilliant maple leaves on your next walk and create an Autumn Rose for your altar or as an offering to someone special.

Magda Bereza, a Karma Yogi in the Young Adult Program, demonstrates step-by-step instructions for rolling, folding and layering the leaves together one by one. [Click here](#) to view.





NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE

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Yasodhara Ashram | 527 Walkers Landing Road | PO Box 9 | Kootenay Bay | British Columbia | V0B 1X0 | Canada