

SECRETS OF MEDITATION AND INNER PEACE

SWAMI KRIYANANDA

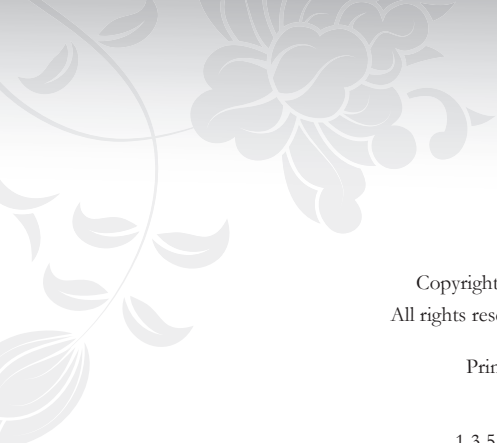
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“Meditate more and more deeply,
until calmness and joy
become second nature to you.”
—Paramhansa Yogananda





Suggestions for Using This Book

The contents of this book consist of three sections.

The first two sections—*Secrets of Meditation*, and *Secrets of Inner Peace*—are seed thoughts for meditation. They are listed as daily readings, and it may be useful to follow along with one reading from each section for each listed day of the month. Alternatively, you may prefer to pick a reading at random. Either approach can be effective.

We recommend absorbing a selection from *Secrets of Meditation* just *before* meditation—these seed thoughts are ideal for deepening meditation—and a selection from *Secrets of Inner Peace* *at the end of* your meditation—these affirmations are geared toward extending the peaceful aftereffects of meditation into your daily life.

In addition, the following pages offer guidelines for the optimum use of the readings for both of these sections.

The last section of this book, “Be Still and Know,” is an article by Swami Kriyananda on the importance of meditation and the best attitude for success in going within. It ends with brief meditation instructions.

We hope that this book will bring you ever-deeper insights and inspiration. And we wish you profound success in your meditations.

—Crystal Clarity Publishers

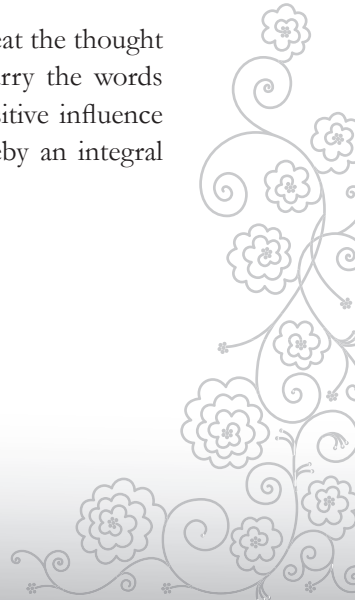
A seed thought

is offered for every day of the month. Begin a day at the appropriate date. Repeat the saying several times: first out loud, then softly, then in a whisper, and then only mentally. With each repetition, allow the words to become absorbed ever more deeply into your subconscious.

Thus, gradually, you will acquire a complete understanding of each day's thought. At this point, indeed, the truths set forth here will have become your own.

Keep the book open at the pertinent page throughout the day. Refer to it occasionally during moments of leisure. Relate the saying as often as possible to real situations in your life.

Then at night, before you go to bed, repeat the thought several times more. While falling asleep, carry the words into your subconscious, absorbing their positive influence into your whole being. Let it become thereby an integral part of your normal consciousness.



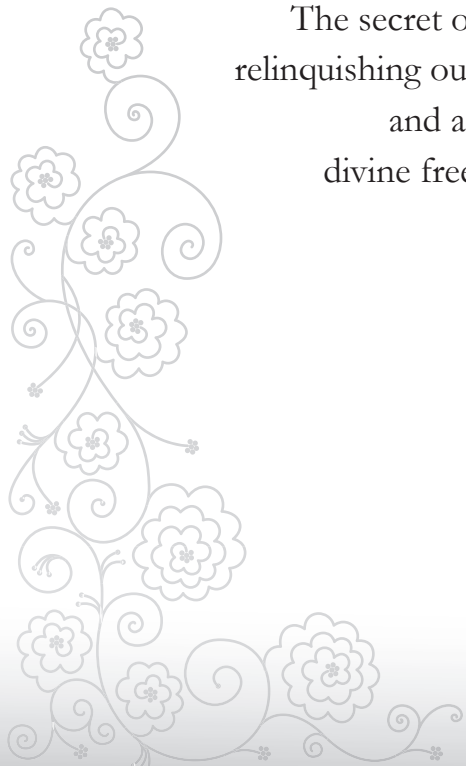
The background features decorative floral patterns in the corners. In the top-left corner, there is a large, stylized flower with many petals and a stem with several leaves. In the bottom-right corner, there is a similar floral design, including a large flower and a stem with leaves. The overall aesthetic is elegant and classic.

SECRETS *of*
MEDITATION



Day One

The secret of meditation is
relinquishing outward attachments,
and affirming
divine freedom within.





Day Two

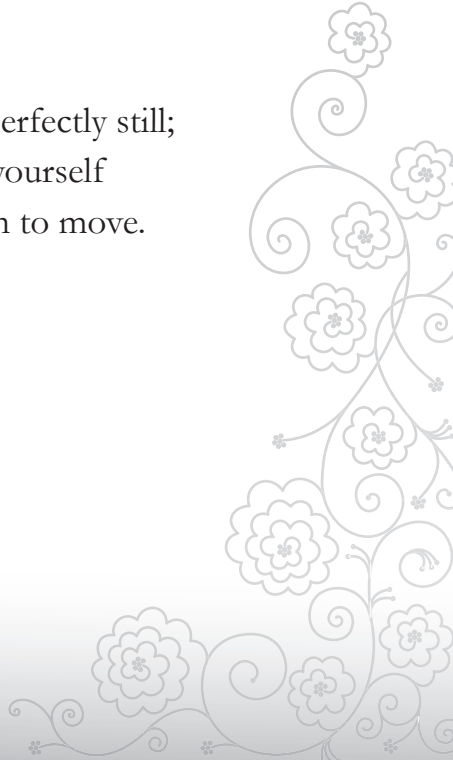
The SECRET of
MEDITATION

is sitting upright with a straight spine;
feeling that your strength emanates
from your spine rather than
from the muscles of your body.

Day Three

The SECRET *of*
MEDITATION

is holding your body perfectly still;
gradually freeing yourself
from the compulsion to move.





Day Four

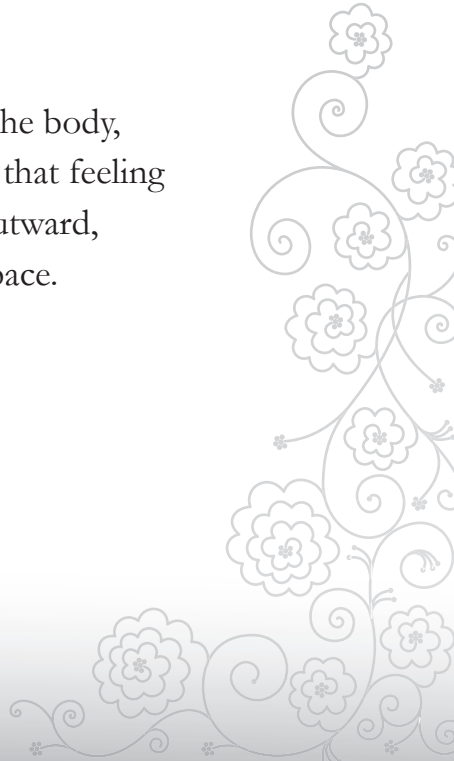
The SECRET of
MEDITATION

is deep relaxation: Inhale, tense the body;
throw the breath out and relax.
Release into the surrounding atmosphere,
like wisps of vapor, any lingering
eddies of tension that you feel.

Day Five

The SECRET *of*
MEDITATION

is to feel space in the body,
and gradually expand that feeling
from the body outward,
into infinite space.





Day Six

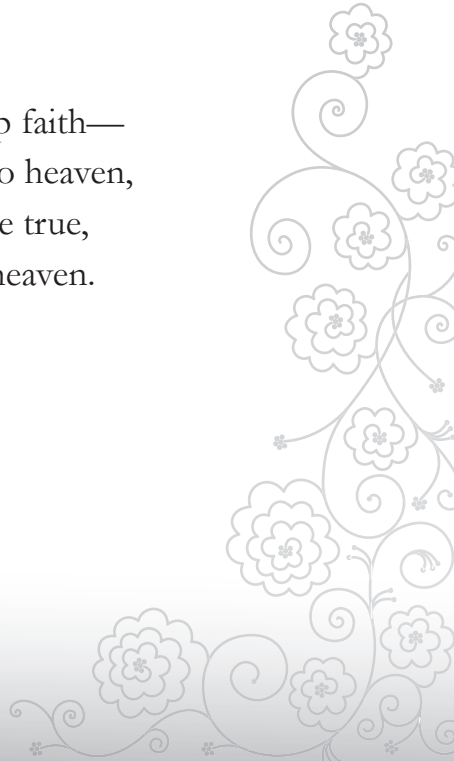
The SECRET *of*
MEDITATION

is to focus your gaze and attention at the
Christ center between the eyebrows—
the seat of ecstasy in the body.

Day Seven

The SECRET of
MEDITATION

is to pray with deep faith—
not as an outsider to heaven,
but as one whose true,
eternal home is heaven.



The page features decorative floral motifs in the corners. In the top-left, there is a large, stylized flower with many petals and a curved stem with several leaves. In the bottom-right, there is a similar floral design, including a flower bud and a stem with leaves.

✦ *S*ECRETS *of*
INNER PEACE

Day One

The secret of inner peace
is self-control; not
scattering your energies, but
holding them in check
and directing them usefully.





Day Two

The SECRET of
*
INNER PEACE

is giving full, interested attention
to everything you do.

Day Three

The SECRET of
*
INNER PEACE

is to live fully in the moment,
releasing past and future
into the cycles of eternity.





Day Four

The SECRET *of*
*
INNER PEACE

is inner relaxation—
physically, emotionally, mentally,
then spiritually.

Day Five

The SECRET of
*
INNER PEACE

is non-attachment;
being ever conscious
that nothing and no one
truly belongs to you.





Day Six

The SECRET *of*
*
INNER PEACE

is contentment;
consciously holding happy thoughts.

Day Seven

The SECRET of
*
INNER PEACE

is desirelessness;
realizing that happiness
is within you,
not in outward things
or circumstances.





“BE STILL AND KNOW”

The Importance of Meditation

In his famous book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, Dale Carnegie stated that the best way to be thought a fascinating conversationalist is to listen attentively, and with interest. This principle applies also, though of course not in quite the same way, to the practice of prayer.

Most people when they pray talk *to* God rather than *with* Him. They don't take the time to listen, in deep inner silence, for His answer. Prayer, however, to be most deeply meaningful, needs to be a two-way communication, a giving and receiving—like conversation. And while it would be absurd to think in terms of “fascinating” God with our part of the conversation, there *are* proven ways of making our prayers more effective. Listening is one of them.

How many people ever think of prayer in this way? Usually, they think of it as begging for special favors, as though prayer were a petition submitted before the awe-full majesty of an imperial throne. Many, no doubt, question whether the Lord will even single them out for special attention from among the multitudes appealing to Him

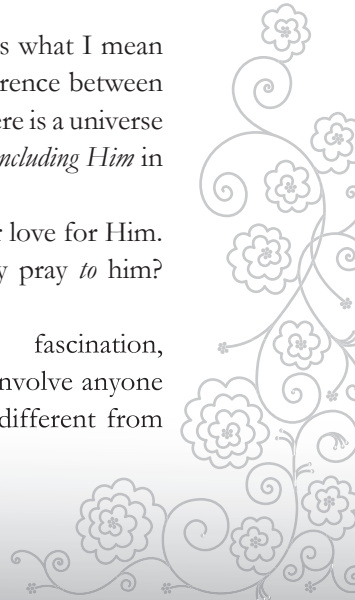
daily. Perhaps they fear they might be judged presumptuous if they tried to interest Him beyond the actual subject of their petition. Whatever the case, most people talk a lot, like inadequate conversationalists, but seldom think of listening in return.

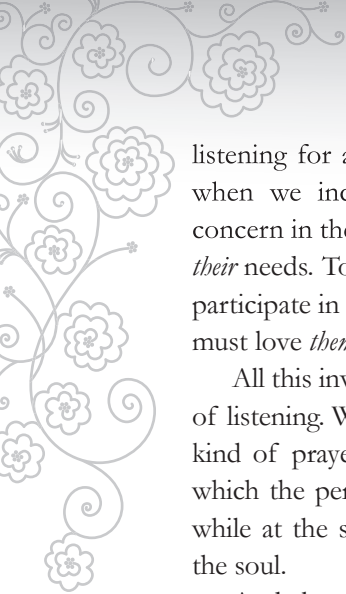
The difference between the one-way street of normal prayer and actually conversing with God is simply the degree of involvement—on both sides. Of course, there can be no question of trying to “fascinate” Him with our conversation. The Lord has all creation to engage His attention, besides the perfection of love and bliss in which He eternally dwells. One life in the great scheme of things cannot particularize His interest to the point of making Him fascinated with it! When we approach Him, however, with deep love, dedication, and trust, we appeal to that cosmic, but at the same time deeply personal, love which He feels for every one of his human children.

Prayer must come from the heart. That is what I mean by conversation. As there is a world of difference between talking *at* someone and talking *with* him, so there is a universe of difference between petitioning God and *including Him* in the needs we feel.

We need to *involve* Him in our lives, in our love for Him. How can we hope to do that, if we merely pray *to* him? That’s like talking *at* somebody.

Leaving aside the question of fascination, conversationally, how are we most likely to involve anyone in anything that interests us? It isn’t much different from





listening for answers to a question. We involve them best when we include their reality in our own. To awaken concern in them for our needs, we must show an interest in *their* needs. To get them to participate in our lives, we must participate in *their* lives. To get them to show love for us, we must love *them*, first.

All this involvement on our part is, in its own way, a kind of listening. We need, in the same way, to listen to God. The kind of prayer that most often wins a response is one in which the person praying *converses* with God: calls to Him, while at the same time listening for His silent response in the soul.

And that is, essentially, what is meant by the practice of meditation. Meditation is the act of *listening* for, and hopefully, in time, listening *to*, God's whispered response in the soul.

Why not try that, the next time you pray to God? Instead of merely offering up a petition for His consideration, try *involving Him* in your needs.

Meditation is more than a practice conducted at specific times of the day. It is a habit of mind, a way of life. Try sharing your thoughts and feelings with God all day long. Listen for His guidance, His approval—yes, even His silent laughter within! When you share your life with Him, your meditations also will be much deeper.

When people exclude the practice of meditation from daily prayer, it usually means they aren't really convinced there is anyone "up there," listening to them. All too

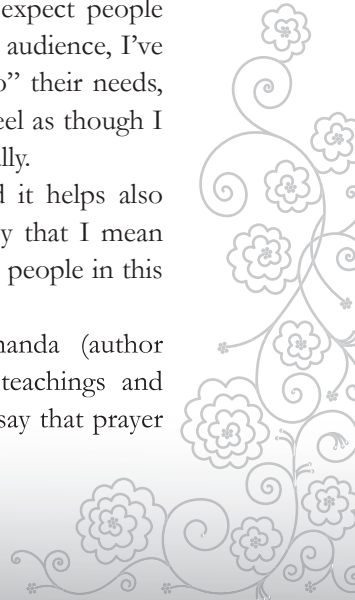
easily, their prayers become a process of simply talking to themselves.

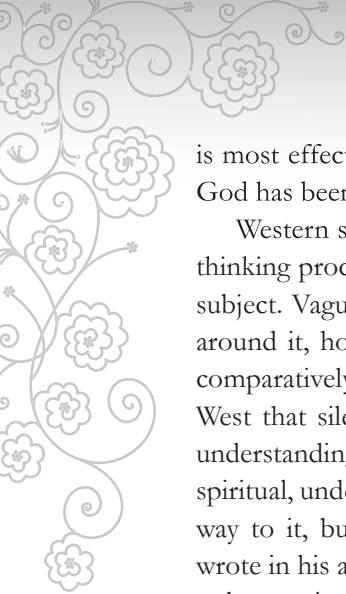
Well, one may ask, does God really listen anyway? You'll never know, if you don't give Him a chance to reply! Just as in any conversation, the degree of listening, and the response it awakens, is in direct proportion to the degree of one's own *involvement* in what he is saying. Why else is it that the prayers of saints have been, often, so much more effective than those of worldly people? God is no respecter of persons. His response is according to the depth of sincerity in the person praying.

In conversation, people tend to think of listening as something one does *after* he has said his piece. Personally, however, I've found that there is much better communication if one "listens"—that is to say, is sensitive to the other person's reactions—even during the act of speaking to him. When lecturing, also, even though I don't expect people to start up a conversation with me from the audience, I've found it helps, while lecturing, to "tune into" their needs, to respond to their unspoken reactions, to feel as though I were speaking to each one of them individually.

On the subject of lecturing, I've found it helps also to "listen" even before I begin speaking. By that I mean that I meditate and try to tune into what the people in this particular audience need to hear from me.

In the same way, Paramhansa Yogananda (author of *Autobiography of a Yogi*), who brought teachings and techniques from India to the West, used to say that prayer





is most effective when it is offered *after* some contact with God has been achieved in deep meditation.

Western society generally identifies meditation with the thinking process. We are told to meditate “on” a particular subject. Vaguely, we suppose this means to think in circles around it, hoping for a deeper understanding of it. Only comparatively recently has the teaching come to the West that silence itself is the wellspring from which true understanding arises. In other words, true, and especially spiritual, understanding is not the product of thinking one’s way to it, but of direct inner perception. As Yogananda wrote in his autobiography, “A truth cannot be created, but only perceived.”

Meditation, in this deeper sense, begins with the practice of stilling one’s thoughts and emotions.

Yogananda told the story of a man who was told, as a means of developing spiritual power, to be very careful *not* to think of monkeys. Of course, the next time he sat to meditate, the first thing he thought about was monkeys! The more he tried not to think of them, the more he probed his memory for every variety of monkey he’d ever read or heard about. Monkeys gradually became an obsession. At last, he returned to his teacher and cried, “Take back this teaching of yours! All it has done is give me monkey-consciousness, not God-consciousness!”

At this, the teacher laughed genially and explained, “I only wanted to help you realize how difficult it is to develop spiritual powers, without first learning to control your

own mind.” He then went on to explain to his student the positive aspects of meditation.

So then, the first lesson is: Don’t live in “monkey consciousness”! Instead of trying *not* to let thoughts and emotions enter your mind, dwell on positive opposite practices that will exert a calming influence on your mind.

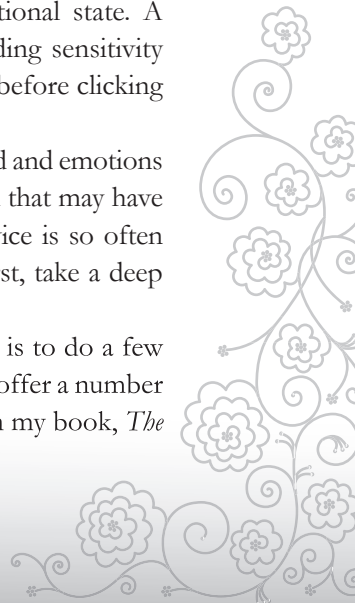
The breath is one such influence, when it is used rightly. Not only does the breath reflect one’s mental states: It also greatly affects them.

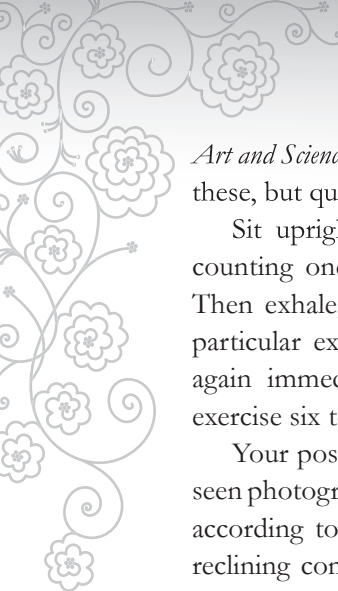
Take the breath as a reflection of thought and feeling. When a person is agitated, his breathing automatically speeds up. When he falls asleep, his breathing rhythm changes: two counts of exhalation, to one of inhalation. When he is deeply concentrated, he tends to hold his breath. When he is calm, his breathing becomes calm also.

The reverse also is true. By breathing agitatedly, one tends to create an agitated mental or emotional state. A photographer, when taking a photo demanding sensitivity and concentration, learns to hold his breath before clicking the camera shutter.

By calm, deep breathing, similarly, the mind and emotions grow calm also, releasing us from any turmoil that may have been seething within us. This is why the advice is so often given to people who are angry or upset, “First, take a deep breath, and count to ten.”

A good practice when sitting to meditate is to do a few deep breathing exercises. The yoga teachings offer a number of such exercises, some of which I explain in my book, *The*





Art and Science of Raja Yoga. Less sophisticated than many of these, but quite effective, is this:

Sit upright, and breathe deeply through the nostrils counting one to twelve. Hold the breath one to twelve. Then exhale, again to a count of one to twelve. In this particular exercise, don't hold the breath out, but begin again immediately with another inhalation. Repeat this exercise six to twelve times.

Your posture during meditation is important. We've all seen photographs in advertisements of people "meditating" according to the Western notion of relaxation: a person reclining comfortably on a "Lazy Boy" chair, his feet up, his head tilted back on the headrest, his entire posture suggestive of a mood of abandonment. The yogis of India would smile at this passive attempt at relaxation. The fact is, while relaxation is essential to deep meditation, passivity is one of the pitfalls to true relaxation.

There are two directions the mind can take once it relaxes its grip on conscious thought processes. One is to sink toward subconsciousness. This is the direction taken when one's relaxation is passive. The other direction is to rise toward superconsciousness. Deep meditation is possible only in the intensely positive state of superconsciousness, or soul-awareness.

To attain this state of consciousness, it is important to sit upright with a straight spine. Traditionally, one does so sitting on the floor with the legs crossed, preferably in one of the yoga positions such as the half or full lotus pose, or *siddhasana* (the "perfect pose"), but Yogananda said that it is

quite all right to sit on a straight-backed chair, with the feet flat on the floor.

Sit away from the back of the chair. Place your hands palms upward at the junction of the thighs and abdomen. Hold the shoulders back to help keep the spine straight. Hold the chin parallel to the ground.

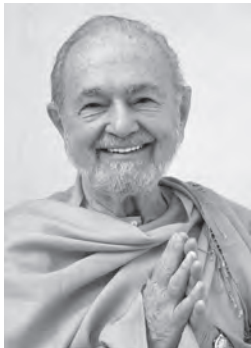
Before the deep breathing exercise, relax the body. First, inhale; tense the whole body till it vibrates; then throw the breath out, and with it all tension. Repeat this process two or three times.

After the deep breathing, concentrate on relaxing more and more deeply—not physically only, but mentally and emotionally. Feel space in the body.

Look upward, concentrating your attention at the central point between the two eyebrows, the seat of spiritual vision. Offer up all thoughts and feelings in deep concentration at this point. Call mentally to God, “Reveal Thyself! Reveal Thyself!”

Gradually, you will feel His peace stealing over you, like a weightless waterfall.





“Swami Kriyananda is a man of wisdom and compassion in action, truly one of the leading lights in the spiritual world today.”

—Lama Surya Das, Dzogchen Center, author of
Awakening the Buddha Within

Swami Kriyananda (1926–2013) was a direct disciple of Paramhansa Yogananda (author of the classic, *Autobiography of a Yogi*). Kriyananda was trained by the great Indian yoga master to spread the life-transforming teachings of Kriya Yoga around the globe.

He is widely considered one of the foremost experts on meditation, yoga, and spiritual practice, having authored more than 140 books on these subjects.

Kriyananda was the founder of Ananda, an international organization committed to the dissemination of Yogananda’s teachings. In 1968 he founded Ananda Cooperative Village in Nevada City, California, the first spiritual community based on Yogananda’s vision of “world brotherhood colonies.” Today Ananda includes eight communities in the U.S., Europe, and India, and more than 140 meditation centers and groups worldwide.



Dear Reader,

Ananda is a worldwide work based on the same teachings expressed in this book—those of the great spiritual teacher, Paramhansa Yogananda. If you enjoyed this title, Crystal Clarity Publishers invites you to continue to deepen your spiritual life through the many avenues of Ananda Worldwide—including meditation communities, centers, and groups; online virtual community and webinars; retreat centers offering classes and teacher training in yoga and meditation; and more.

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Joy to you,

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Ananda, a worldwide organization founded by Swami Kriyananda, offers spiritual support and resources based on the teachings of Paramhansa Yogananda. There are Ananda spiritual communities in Nevada City, Sacramento, and Palo Alto, California; Seattle, Washington; Portland, Oregon; as well as a retreat center and European community in Assisi, Italy, and a community near New Delhi, India. Ananda supports more than 140 meditation groups worldwide.

For more information about Ananda's work, our communities, or meditation groups near you, please call 530.478.7560 or visit ananda.org.



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THE ORIGINAL 1946 UNEDITED EDITION OF YOGANANDA'S SPIRITUAL MASTERPIECE



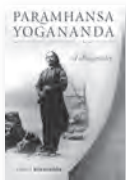
AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI

Paramhansa Yogananda

Autobiography of a Yogi is one of the best-selling Eastern philosophy titles of all time, with millions of copies sold, named one of the best and most influential books of the twentieth century. This highly prized reprinting of the original 1946 edition is the only one available free from textual changes made after Yogananda's death. Yogananda was the first yoga master of India whose mission was to live and teach in the West.

In this updated edition are bonus materials, including a last chapter that Yogananda wrote in 1951, without posthumous changes. This new edition also includes the eulogy that Yogananda wrote for Gandhi, and a new foreword and afterword by Swami Kriyananda, one of Yogananda's close, direct disciples.

**Also available in unabridged audiobook (MP3)
format, read by Swami Kriyananda.**



PARAMHANSA YOGANANDA

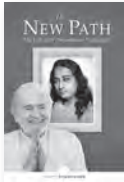
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My Life with Paramhansa Yogananda

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When Swami Kriyananda discovered *Autobiography of a Yogi* in 1948, he was totally new to Eastern teachings. This is a great advantage to the Western reader, since Kriyananda walks us along the yogic path as he discovers it from the moment of his initiation as a disciple of Yogananda. With winning honesty, humor, and deep insight, he shares his journey on the spiritual path through personal stories and experiences.

Through more than four hundred stories of life with Yogananda, we tune in more deeply to this great master and to the teachings he brought to the West. This book is an ideal complement to *Autobiography of a Yogi*.

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Secrets of Meditation and Inner Peace

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It has been said that we are what we eat. It would be truer to say, “We are what we think.” For our minds express, and also influence, the reality of what we are far more than our bodies do. *Secrets of Meditation and Inner Peace* is a potent guide to meditation, and points the way to the deeper levels of inner peace we so earnestly seek. An excellent book for your bedside table or to keep on hand beside your meditation seat.



Swami Kriyananda (1926–2013) was a direct disciple of the great master of yoga and world teacher, Paramhansa Yogananda (author of the classic *Autobiography of a Yogi*). He was also one of the most highly respected modern experts on meditation and spiritual practice. Kriyananda authored nearly 150 books, including *Meditation for Starters* and *Awaken to Superconsciousness*, and founded The Expanding Light

Meditation Retreat in Northern California and the Il Rifugio meditation retreat near Assisi, Italy.

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US \$12.95

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