



Blue Star
Canada

Total Well-Being

NEWSLETTER

bluestarcanada.org

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Would you like to discover the secret to true well-being?

We are excited to share some clues with you in our new bi-monthly wellness newsletter entitled "Total Well-Being."

This pandemic situation is not without some benefits. We now have the opportunity to pause and reflect, to show love by keeping our distance, to connect with loved ones from deep within, and to appreciate all of life. It has been a challenging time for all, and we are so grateful to have the teachings of Blue Star. We have heard from many that these teachings give us the tools to cope, and also to be able to share our light with those in need, over these months.

We encourage you to develop daily practices that bring awareness of the subtle energy body, to strengthen the nervous system, to make it possible to drive the physical masterfully and to channel energies in and through it.

In this introductory issue, we offer tips on how to prepare for your day through meditation, yoga, conscious eating, dental hygiene, and other wellness practices. May you continue to live in harmony with nature, to nurture all levels of your multi-dimensional being and to let your lifestyle be one that supports healthy choices.

We thank you, our members for the opportunity to share this with you; to all members who contributed, and to Sri Vasudeva for his inspiration and loving guidance.

Stay safe, and stay in Grace!
In loving service,
Editors



[Starting Your Day Masterfully — Sri Vasudeva](#)

[Guided Meditation: From Panic to Possibilities](#)

["I always wanted to ask ..."](#)

[Easy to Make Champion Breakfasts — Wellness Workshop](#)

[Oral Health Tips from our Dentist](#)

[Kitchari — A delicious wholesome Ayurvedic dish you would want to try!](#)

[Light behind the Darkness](#)

[Surya Namaskar for Radiant Self](#)

[My Wellness Practice](#)



Starting Your Day Masterfully

By Sri Vasudeva

“ What is magnificent on this earth plane is having a soul identity, finding your soul power, and using that to drive the body masterfully, full of light. It does not matter how the body is, where it is; you bring the best out of it. That is the joy of this plane; becoming more soul conscious, and learning how to drive the body. But transform it first, and keep it optimally healthy.



Recharge your nervous system

When you sit all day, you are abusing the body because the body is meant to move. When you do not breathe enough, you starve the body of oxygen. When you use the brain, sitting in a chair and looking at the computer all day, every so often, you need to surface and breathe deeply, being conscious that your brain cells need oxygen. You are abusing your body when you do not keep your nervous system revitalized and recharged through *pranayama*.

When you become older and you begin to feel it, remember that to deeply dive into the journey of spiritual transformation, you need a strong nervous system. If you abuse it through all the stimulants you take and continuous pleasuring of the nervous system, it will burn it out. What will happen to your spirituality then?

The nervous system and brain are extremely important in the rise of energies along your body, so you need to keep your nervous system recharged. You need to keep your brain intact.

Eat, Sleep, Hydrate

When you eat more than necessary, what do you think happens?

You abuse the body when you eat just for taste, not for quality, and are not conscious of what the food is doing to your body. The body becomes toxic, liver becomes toxic, blood becomes toxic, the systems within the body begin to labour. We are intelligent enough to know when the food is not right, when the exercise is not enough, when the sleep is not enough, when we do not hydrate enough, and when we do not relax enough; we know what happens.

The next thing is some of you laze on your bed; you think that just lying down and sleeping on the bed will revitalize you, but it does not; you are wasting your time. Sleep, when it is very deep, will restore the body; the body detoxes in the deep sleep. But when you wake up, you need to use your soul power to do the rest.



Prepare the body for activity

Get up from the bed when you know the body wakes up and does not want to go into deep sleep anymore. Jump out from the bed, hydrate, do your pranayama, get moving and prepare the body for activity. Detox it through breathing, hydration and gentle exercise; your body will immediately feel better. Then sit down for meditation so you can recharge your nervous system, so you can prepare your mind, your body, your

senses, for a new day. That is the way of the enlightened, the way of the wise.

That is my advice to you; I hope that you can cherish it. I did not talk down to you, I never would. I share with you what I do.

So be your body's best friend and not its enemy!

[Excerpt adapted from Sunday Morning Talk – September 7th 2020]

From Panic to Possibilities in COVID-19 Pandemic

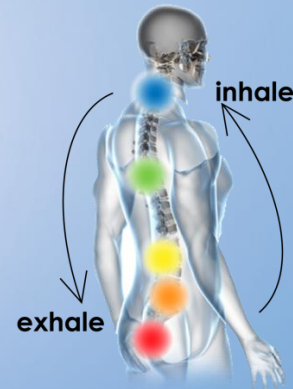
Guided Meditation with Sri Vasudeva



click on the image above for the video recording

In this meditation, Sri Vasudeva guides us through the practice of the Microcosmic Orbit, also known as an energy circuit, where we can create an inner orbit following the spinal column similar to how the planets orbit around the sun.

A fantastic practice for finding inner balance and stability, in spite of what may be happening around you.



All the major planets are associated with the chakras:

- the throat with Mercury
- the heart with Venus
- the navel with Mars
- the sacral with Jupiter
- the root with Saturn

We are actually making an orbit along the planetary energies.



“I always wanted to ask...”

Q: What does “centre of being” mean?

A: Sri Vasudeva, Guruji explains:

Centre of being has to be experienced. It is the God Centre.

It is the centre of peace, so if you follow peacefulness you will find it; if you follow love you will find it; if you follow prana you will find it. It is the very centre from where prana comes, from where thought comes, from where love comes, where knowledge flows. It is the centre of being. So if you follow anything – if you follow the mind you will find it; if you follow the heart you will find it; if you follow action you will find it.

Easy to Make Champion Breakfasts

Virtual Wellness Workshops

By Ramaa Devi

Saturday, August 22nd marked the kick-off of our monthly virtual wellness workshops with an informative and interactive session on health filled and delicious breakfast choices.



Meerabai Devi, shared her knowledge as a Certified Health Coach along with years of closely following Guru's teachings, her wisdom gained from

personal exploration and a sheer passion for cooking.

It was fun to see everyone in their kitchens and to remember that all activities can be part of our spiritual practice, even cooking. We can practice present moment awareness, focusing our attention on sending love from the heart through the hands to imbue the food with good energy, watching our thoughts, perhaps repeating a mantra. Seeing the activity as an opportunity instead of an interruption.

This was an experiential workshop where participants had the choice of cooking in their own kitchens as the recipes were prepared live during the workshop. As Meera's voice guided our activities we had the added benefit of watching Devaki's experienced hands as she prepared the food along with us. Thanks to our AV duo whose creative technical



support added the advantage of being able to see the presenter speaking and the items being mixed, blended, cooked and served during the session.



Participants were sent a list of all ingredients upon registration allowing them to prepare in advance for the recipes they wanted to make.

A number of healthy breakfast choices were offered:

- steel cut oats with nuts, seeds and fresh berries
- an easy but packed breakfast smoothie with fruits, veggies, choice of nut butter or protein powder
- vegan friendly scrambled eggs
- buckwheat pancakes topped with roasted pecans, fresh berries and drizzle of Canadian maple syrup
- Trinidad ashram-style cheese paste



Participants were also treated to a surprise visit from the Guru who spoke with each participant, inquiring about their eating habits, offering personal and helpful guidance to each.

Guru reiterated the message shared by Meera, that each person must be aware of their body's relationship with food and the effect that food has on their body. What is good for one body is not necessarily good for another. It is important to witness the effect of the food we are eating on how we are feeling.

He shared that what we eat effects the quality of our meditations. Toxicity in the body makes it feel uneasy and difficult to control, thereby impacting our ability to sit comfortably in meditation. Even the Guru's meditations are improved by the care he takes in consciously fueling his body.

Guruji reminded us that there are simple basic things that can improve our state of health and wellness.

- eating natural foods,
- avoiding processed foods,
- observing the rainbow diet concept which involves including generous helpings of fruits and vegetables of all colors to your diet,
- avoiding white sugar, white flour,
- vegan could be the best,
- vegetarian with the addition of dairy also good,
- as the body ages it is important to monitor blood sugar and blood pressure,
- considering intermittent fasting (14-16) hours of not eating in the day.



He also shared with us some of his personal choices for foods.

Grains: sprouted brown rice, buckwheat, quinoa and millet.

Beans: lentils, black and mung beans

Oils: Coconut oil or ghee

And an abundance of fresh organic locally grown greens.

It was a most enjoyable session and based on positive feedback Meera has agreed to come back, show us lunch, dinner and snack foods and share food wisdom including information on digestion and toxicity.

Oral Health Tips from our Dentist



Dr. Lafkovic

We know our oral health is important. When we take care of our oral health, we take care of our overall health. It is very important to maintain good mouth hygiene to support healthy

eating, because all that we consume enters the body through our oral cavity.

Clean teeth means fewer bacteria in the mouth. The food we chew mixes with saliva and enters the stomach. If the saliva and oral cavity are healthy, the food will remain hygienic.

There are certain foods that get into our system and provide extra vitamins to the enamel of our teeth so that they get stronger and healthier. Stronger teeth mean we will be able to chew better and digest better.

Good healthy eating habits are important. Here are few all-natural tips to a sparkling smile.

1

The apple is a natural toothbrush, in fact, all crisp fruits and raw

vegetables help clean plaque and tartar from the teeth.

2

Strawberries contain the whitening enzyme, malic acid, and can do wonders for our smile.

3

Cranberries prevent oral bacteria from forming a layer onto the teeth.

4

Sweet potatoes help to protect the enamel.

Good and healthy eating habits are important. Here are few all-natural tips to a sparkling smile.

Here are other good practices for maintaining our oral health, especially during these times of self-isolation:

- brush your teeth twice a day for two minutes with a fluoride toothpaste
- clean between your teeth daily (floss, proxa brush, soft picks)
- use an antibacterial mouthwash daily
- use xylitol gum or mints to neutralize the acid produced after eating
- rinse your mouth with water after eating



An Ayurvedic Recipe You Would Want To Try!

Kitchari

By Daya Mata



Kitchari is basic to the Ayurvedic way of life. A one-pot dish, kitchari originates on the Asian sub-continent and dates back thousands of years.

Kitchari means mixture, usually of two grains. This is one kitchari recipe that is particularly nourishing and easy to digest.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup basmati rice
- 1 cup mung dal
- 2 tsp ghee or coconut oil
- ½ inch of grated ginger root
- ½ tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp cumin powder

- ½ tsp whole cumin seeds
- ½ tsp mustard seeds
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- 1 pinch asafoetida (hing)
- 6 cups water
- Salt to taste
- Handful of fresh cilantro
- 1-1½ cups of assorted vegetables

DIRECTIONS:

Carefully wash the rice and dal to separately in at least 2 changes of water.

Add the 6 cups of water to the rice and dal and cook covered until it becomes soft, about 20 minutes.

While that is cooking, prepare any vegetables that suit your constitution. Cut them into bite sized pieces. Add the vegetables to the cooked rice and dal mixture and cook 10 minutes longer.

In a separate saucepan, sauté the seeds in the ghee until they pop. Then add the other spices. Stir together to release the flavors.

Stir the sautéed spices into the cooked dal, rice, and vegetable mixture.

Add the salt to taste and top with chopped fresh cilantro. Serve and enjoy.

SOURCE: <https://www.ayurveda.com/recipes/kitchari>



Light Behind the Darkness

By: A Devoted Blue Star Member

The Coronavirus pandemic has been a world-wide phenomenon and has caused unprecedented disruptions and changes to most of our daily lives. In one way or another, we were all forced to adapt to a new normal in our lives in order to survive and to seek new ways to thrive. Here is my story of how I am managing with this disruption.

On the evening of March 10, 2020, I sat by my 82-year-old mom's bed, in her Long-Term Care Home, holding her hand and softly singing to her. As I had done almost every night for the last seven years, I had gotten her ready for bed and positioned her body in the most comfortable way. When I saw that she was asleep, I whispered, "Sleep well my heart. I love you, and I will see you tomorrow." I gently kissed her cheek and left fully expecting to return the next day.

Instead, the following morning all the families were notified that the Long-Term Care Home, where my mom lived, would be closed to all visitors in order to protect the residents and staff from the spread of Covid-19. With that, life the way I had been living it for years, came to a halt. I began to worry about the suffering and loneliness that my mom would experience without my help and support.

Throughout the last seven years, I had been a caregiver for my mom, who has dementia. At first, I took care of her at home for two years, and then I continued to do so for five years in the Long-Term Care Home where she has had to live. I was going daily to help the very overworked staff feed, clean and change my mom. I was devoted to advocating for her and lovingly taking

care of her physical needs as much as possible, since she could not do it for herself.

Fortunately, I am blessed with having been a student of Sri Vasudeva for many years. So, when I was prevented from going in to assist my mom, I used Guruji's teachings and meditations to help me with managing my worries about her and to support my spiritual journey. Since I could no longer be with my mom physically, I committed to striving to unite and communicate more with her in the Divine space.

Following is information about some of the blessings in my life and some of the practices that have been of immense help to me during these last 6 months.

I was grateful for the sublime energy of the Forty Days, which started soon after I had to stop helping my mom. Even before and after the Forty Days, the morning talks, meditations, healing circles and sacred conversations have continued to be a tremendous source of guidance, uplift and instruction. With the help of Guruji, Divine Grace and Mother Kundalini, I aspired to expand in consciousness more and more, and to not allow myself to be hijacked by emotions. From that expansive space, I sought to position myself in non-judgmental witness, as instrument of the Divine, to stay even-minded and to regularly take a remote view. I endeavoured not to identify with the physical body as who "I" am, but rather I aimed to identify as the witness or energy being. With strong intention, I also concentrated on being the observer of my patterns.



I have often gone over and over Guruji's talks and meditations in order to capture the deeper essences and possibilities of his words and to apply new understandings in my life. I regularly explored the notions of non-attachment, surrender and trust in relation to taking care of my mom and attempted to put these into practice. I aimed to regularly stay connected to the Divine and to deepen my relationship with the Divine. I frequently held my mom in my heart, permeating her with unconditional love and light in the Divine space. I also often joyfully visualized embracing her tightly in my arms and kissing her.

After one week of not seeing my mom at all in March, I started going to her window every evening to see her, and I have been doing this for the last six months. Although she can't see me, I shout and sing to her through the window, hoping that she can hear me and as a result feel a little less lonely. But more importantly, standing at that window, I use every level of my being to be fully present to her, to unite with her and to project unconditional love and light from the centre of my being to the centre of her being. When I do this, it feels as if I am truly touching her, who she

really is, and I feel sublime glowing light and love reflecting back to me.

Thanks to Guruji, Mother Kundalini, Divine Grace and to the beautiful co-created energy of the Blue Star family, (when we are in meditation) going through this physical separation from my mom has allowed me to experience gradual growth in spirit. Endeavouring to unite and communicate with my mom in that Divine space has provided me with some blissful experiences of love and light. In conclusion, I have come to have a greater appreciation that "there is light behind the darkness" as Guruji has told us. I am truly grateful for the blessing and gift of Sri Vasudeva in my life.





Surya Namaskar for a Radiant Self

By Brahmi Nandy



Source: *Illuminating Lives with Yoga* by Geeta Iyer

The Surya Namaskar or Sun Salutation practice is my one of my favourite yoga asana because it revitalizes the entire physical body, and works at deeper, subtle levels. Whenever I am late in the mornings and not have time to do my full yoga routine, I would do only the Surya Namaskar because it is such a complete practice.

It is also great to start my day with this because as it is a prostration to the sun as it rises. While it is easy for us to worship the external sun as the cosmic light, it is a representation of the internal sun, a source of energy, light and radiance that is within all of us, that we bow to. It is to that inner sun that we pray to in the Gayatri mantra, "May this divine light illumine our intellect."

It is a unique combination of yogic sequence of asanas, pranayama, and mantras, which activates this "sun" energy across all levels of our being, if we do this practice with the energy awareness. If done with breath awareness, associated mantras and chakra activation it becomes a mindful, dynamic meditation as well as physical exercise. So, it is also a catalyst for spiritual transformation.

This sequence of twelve postures are designed to keep the spine supple and flexible. It includes forward and backward bends, that stretch and tones numerous muscles, improve circulation, respiration and elimination functions, tune up the nerves, and generally keep us healthier and younger!

Sometimes I do this with a gentle, slow-paced rhythm and other times at a stronger, more vibrant pace depending. Either way, it is a satisfying workout and I usually add a twist to complete.

Since my early years of meeting Gururji, I was inspired to do this every morning since it was part of his exercise routine that he shared with us.

I encourage everyone to include Surya Namaskar as a daily practice and explore its benefits.

Let your inner Light radiate your entire being!

"Om Suryaya Namah!"

I bow to the Radiant Sun!"



My Wellness Practice

Create harmony in relationships

This month's practice is an invitation for us all to look at our relationships and how they impact our well-being.

Do they create stress?

Do they create harmony?

Do they promote a higher consciousness within and around us?

Our relationships are really a mirror of our well-being. They tell us how well we are centred within or where we are, and how harmoniously we are relating. Our goal, of course, will be to create harmony in all relationships and to see the meaning and purpose of them.

It is the evolution of consciousness.

So, look at all your relationships and see how they can help enhance your growth.



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Transform Self. Transform World.