



Blue Star
Canada

Total Well-Being

WWW.BLUESTARCANADA.ORG

ISSUE 3. FEBRUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER

Happy New Year! 2021 promises to be a pivotal year as we forge ahead with a common quest for optimum health, a prayer for planetary well-being and an aspiration for global unity. In his New Year Message Sri Vasudeva said, ***“Life is about growing, learning and lifting in consciousness. Life is evolutionary. It does not matter what you are going through, you are destined to rise above it!”***

We begin our Total Well-Being newsletter for 2021 with a wide spectrum of topics ranging from life purpose and a healthy body to respiratory resilience, nutrition, rest, healing, and balance. We aim to keep an integrated wellness approach, touching on aspects of body, mind, emotions, and vitality.

In response to the need to provide more programs, we are delighted to broaden our online offerings. Two new programs began in January. Every Thursday at 5:15 p.m. join Jahnvi online for *Meditations for Total Well-being*; and on Fridays at 7:00 p.m. Daya Mata leads an online weekly Satsang on the *Power of Love*. We continue our weekly Sacred Conversations with Madhavi on Monday evenings and monthly wellness workshops and healing circles. All are welcome to join any of these virtual programs.

It is a joy to support your healing and wellness journey in every possible way.

Stay well, stay wise, stay warm!

In loving service,
Editors
Blue Star Canada



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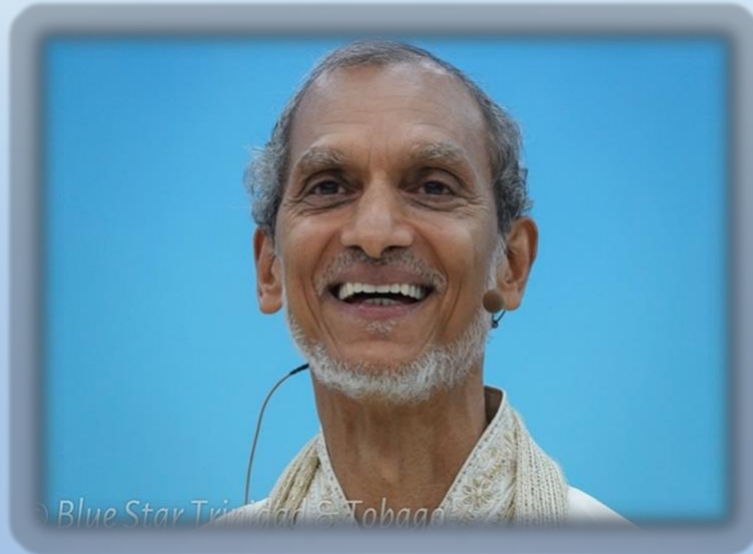
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Life Purpose and a Healthy Body

By Sri Vasudeva



“You didn’t come into the world just to exist in a body and just to serve the body. You came for more than that. You came to manifest your full potential as a human being.

For me, to manifest radiance and youthfulness in and through the body is a passion.”

Sri Vasudeva

SEEKER: *What is the relationship between the purpose for life and the body’s health development?*

SRI VASUDEVA: To complete the purpose for life, whatever it is, you need a healthy body. It is the vehicle to come into the world and to be in a relationship with everything. What do you think your life purpose is now?

One is that we need to continue to grow in consciousness—that is the ultimate life purpose. We need to continue to expand the consciousness, so every time we take a body, we should try to expand the consciousness as much as we can.

Next is that we have come with some “relationship” kinds of purposes—so you look for those who will challenge you in relationships and those whom you have issues with, and those who

are friends or your supporters, but look for where there are issues in relationships. And even with friends you may want to deepen the relationship, so that could be a shared purpose as well. So you look in your relationships for purpose.

Or sometimes you want to bring out a certain talent, you may want to be a great musician, a great sports person, or a leader—and so from life to life you continue looking for the opportunities to manifest those traits.

All these are life purposes, so you have to look in your own life to see which of these are featuring.

SEEKER: *And does this make a difference? I need a healthy body anyway?*

SRI VASUDEVA: No, you do not need body health to just exist. You need to exist for a reason. You did not come into the world just to exist in a body and



just to serve the body. You came for more than that. You came to manifest your full potential as a human being. You came to work through certain relationships. You came to fulfill certain dreams. Ultimately, you came to achieve the full purpose of freedom. So you did not come just to have a body.

I would hope that everyone would want to have a healthy body because no one would want to be sick in the body. I do not think we would want to choose to have a sickly or a weak body.

SEEKER: *True, I accept both. But I wonder if I need to have a new look at the health of my body and choosing the tools for a healthy body.*

SRI VASUDEVA: For some of us it is a passion. For me, to manifest radiance and youthfulness in and through the body is a passion. I love doing that. I love fitness routines, I love meditation routines, and I love energy work that involves the body. I love having a body that is fit and healthy.

[Adapted from 40 Days 2020—Sacred Conversations]

Meditation on Ultimate Well-Being

Guided Meditation with Sri Vasudeva



click on the image above for the video recording

We invite you to listen to Sri Vasudeva as he first explains that there is so much more to well-being than taking care of the physical. Then he follows with a profound guided meditation leading you to experience your subtle energy body, using breathing techniques and energy awareness.

Ultimate wellness lies in pure consciousness. The science of well-being is deeper than we know; it is not based on physicality. Taking the right medicines, the right herbs, the right foods; those are important, but it is more than that. Within the physical body, there is a subtle energy being that is driving the physical.

Your subtle energy body can only have disease if your mind identifies with disease. If your mind thinks that it is sick, you identify with sickness, then psychologically you are making yourself sick.

When you realize your true nature as pure consciousness you will be ultimately well of all disease.



Building Respiratory Resilience

Virtual Wellness Workshop with Kathleen Aubry

by Marlene Stallabrass

The presenter of our wellness workshop, Kathleen Aubry is a registered clinical kinesiologist, a registered yoga teacher currently completing her studies in yoga therapy and the owner operator of an aquatic rehabilitation business.



We learned from Kathleen that there are many types of respiratory disease which can be in the upper respiratory tract or lower respiratory tract, but all of them have to do with an excess production of mucous. Ten percent of respiratory infections are bacterial and

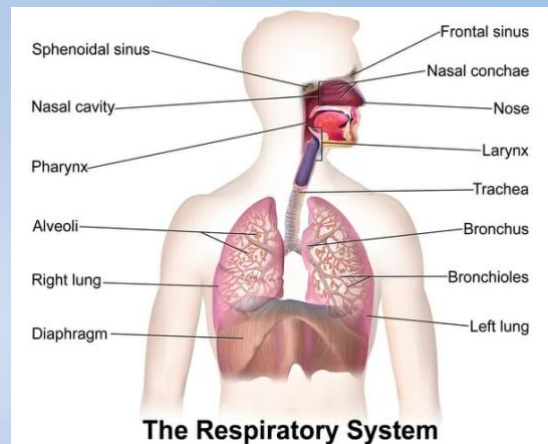
ninety percent of them are viral. As a virus is not a living thing, it needs a host to survive and typically does not respond to antibiotics, so our best defense is a healthy immune system. A virus enters the body through our nose. It starts to stimulate the H-1 (Histamine1) receptor that is in our brain, and once that gets stimulated our body produces mucous to try to clear the virus from our system.

We all want to feel as healthy as possible and prevent illness. The good news is, as we have learned from Sri Vasudeva, we have the power to energetically boost our immune system. Kathleen explained that yoga therapy uses all the energy systems to guide a person in their healing. She listed pranayama, asana, meditation, mantra, bandha, mudra, lifestyle, Ayurveda, and the energy in our homes as tools that can support our healing and well-being.

Kathleen stressed the importance of looking for the root cause of a health issue. For example, in the case of a respiratory illness, the prana is blocked, and the energy is no longer flowing

upwards, so we want to find ways to unblock the prana.

A virus that enters through our nose into the sinus cavities impacts the mucous membranes. Kathleen recommended we consider a morning routine that includes nasal cleansing (jala neti), brushing our teeth, tongue scraping and washing the face. She also suggested drinking hot water with lemon before eating any food to cleanse the system.



She recommended we eat the freshest and purest food we can find, preferably local, in order to get the most energy from our food, and to incorporate fresh vegetables, fruits, and green tea into our diet.

Kathleen shared her **recipe for a respiratory tea using the following five ingredients: ginger powder, cinnamon powder, clove powder, licorice root powder and black pepper, in equal amounts.** Mix them well and store in a jar.



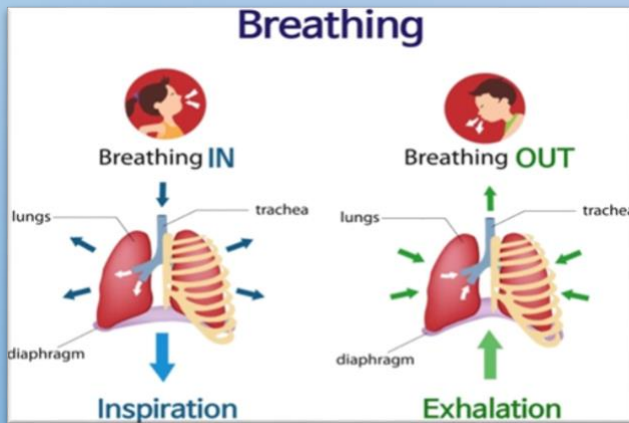
Use 1/4 tsp. of this mixture in a cup of boiling water and add lemon.

Hot liquids increase our digestive fire, so if we have any type of congestion, we should drink them to melt the mucous and reduce congestion. As with



all our presenters, Kathleen reminded us that there is no “one size fits all” remedy or solution and each of us needs to listen to our bodies and practice conscious awareness of its needs and how it responds to what we are putting into it and how we are treating it.

To help with respiratory congestion Kathleen recommended yoga postures that are chest openers (bronchodilators), using inversion postures while linking the breath to the movement and asanas that encourage contraction and relaxation of the organs to eliminate toxins from the ones we are focusing on and to increase energy in those areas.



Pranayama is good for our overall health, so we can practice it as a preventive measure. Kathleen suggested using retention techniques.

For example, with alternate nostril breathing, holding the inhale is an inner retention of the breath and pausing at the end of the exhalation

is an outer retention of the breath. We should strive to find the level where the body gets slightly stressed, without experiencing extreme discomfort, and as a result gets stronger. So we need to gradually increase the length of the breath through practice, which will enable our body to better utilize oxygen.

She recommended heat producing pranayama for the respiratory system, such as *kapalbhati* and *bhastrika*, because forcefully exhaling through the nostrils will expel toxins from the body.

With pranayama, we are looking to increase heat and calm the central nervous system. Also, repeating “Om” creates vibrations through the system that can loosen the mucous. It also vibrates the brain and stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system to relax.

Lastly, she spoke briefly about the practice of *vastu shastra* (similar to feng shui). The goal of *vastu shastra* is to create the perfect energy balance in the home. Ensure your home has the purest, freshest air. In addition, de-clutter your home and clean out corners, because clutter blocks energy. Keeping rooms well lit, and using candles and lamps, creates positive energy. Burning sage can help clear negative energy.

See what works for you!

I found Kathleen to be a wealth of knowledge and the workshop to be very informative. In these times of Covid19, it is more important than ever to ensure we keep our respiration tract healthy and resilient!



Healthy Lunches from Soups to Salads & more

Virtual Wellness Workshop with Meerabai Devi

by Chantal Giddings

I'm really excited to share an update with you of our second Nutrition Workshop given by our one and only dedicated master chef, Meerabai! She was joined by her able assistants, Raj and Krishnabai and our talented video experts, Ajaya and Sridevi.

We were blessed to begin our morning with the presence of our beloved Guruji. He began by expressing how pleased he was to be able to showcase the new Blue Star kitchen during this event and more importantly he expressed his joy to have Meerabai back in Trinidad. He was grateful for her final touches to the kitchen, for the support she provided to people in healthy nutrition, for the nice meals they produced, and for using this kitchen for nutrition education. Both Guruji and Meerabai thanked us for the contributions Blue Star Canada made towards equipping this kitchen.

This was followed by a virtual tour of the dining area and this awesome kitchen designed for high-capacity function (500 meals in half a day) with half of it for bakery function and the other half for catering function. It even has a shower and a room for volunteers to use before programs and much more.

Guruji expressed his amazement at how alive and how the energy field of their newly acquired Annapurna Devi deity from India (Goddess of Food) engulfed the whole new area. We were then taken into a most relevant meditation that focused on opening ourselves to learning, practicing what we will learn, and keeping a healthy body.



Meerabai then guided us into creating three delicious recipes:

- Carrot Ginger Soup
- Quinoa Salad
- Chickpea Burgers.

A cooking class with Meerabai is more than simply following recipes. At any point she stopped to share her acquired wisdom with us on any topic.



Here are just a few of the things she shared with us:

- **Food value:** the potency of ginger depends on where you buy it. Ginger is an anti-inflammatory digestive aid and warming spice, orange foods such as carrots, sweet potatoes and pumpkin are cancer fighters, roasted pumpkin seeds are good for the immune system and contain zinc.
- **Holistic nutrition:** eating rainbow colours of food to maintain good health.
- **Ayurveda:** three roots of life (essential daily) – ginger, turmeric, and garlic.
- Which oils are better to use and why. If using olive oil to sauté, start with ginger first then add olive oil because olive oil has a low smoke point. Don't use high heat with olive oil. If oil smokes in your pot it starts to lose its beneficial value and becomes toxic, ghee has highest smoke point.



- If using coconut milk, fresh is best and powder is next, before canned coconut milk. There are preservatives in the lining of cans.
- Eat your biggest meal between 11:00am – 2:00pm and make lunch the most important as the digestive fire is at its highest. Eat your last meal three hours before sleep.
- Know your body (some people can't tolerate ginger), and so much more.

Her knowledge seems endless!

Being the only vegetarian in my household, I enjoy having all these pre-made meals. The quinoa salad lasted me a few days. I froze most of the burgers and still have one left. I still make the buckwheat pancakes from the first nutrition workshop regularly and freeze them.

I have my daily (weekdays) smoothie made from veggies, banana, vegan protein powder and almond milk, and my daily morning steel cut oats. The workshops have rekindled my desire for healthy eating and for taking out and using other of my favourite vegetarian recipes that have been accumulating dust.

I would like to share part of the experience with all of you by sharing Meerabai's Carrot Ginger Soup recipe. Perfect for this time of year! There is nothing more comforting than a warm soup in winter.

Enjoy!

Meerabai's Carrot Ginger Soup *like no other*

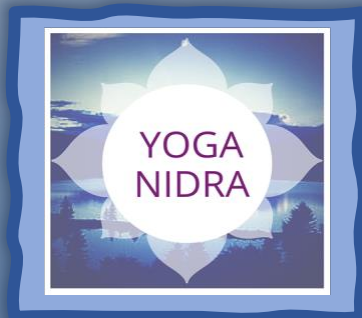
Ingredients—WHAT YOU NEED	Instructions—WHAT YOU DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 tbsp oil (coconut, vegetable, olive) or ghee • 1-2 tbsp grated ginger • 2 cups grated carrots • 2 cups vegetable broth • ¼ cup cream (18%) or coconut milk (from can or powder) • Salt and pepper to taste • Optional toppings are roasted pumpkin seeds, fresh cilantro, croutons 	<p>With all your ingredients prepared ahead of time, sauté ginger with oil or ghee for a couple of minutes. Start with 1 tbsp of ginger and add more if you like once you taste the soup.</p> <p>Add the carrots and stir and sauté for 2 minutes. Add salt at this point, it helps the vegetables to sweat.</p> <p>Add the vegetable broth and bring to boil, then cover and simmer for 5 minutes.</p> <p>Take the soup off the stove and add the cream or milk.</p> <p>Blend together in a blender until smooth. Add pepper to taste. Add more ginger at this point if you wish.</p> <p>Serve in a bowl and top with roasted pumpkin seeds, fresh cilantro, or croutons. Find a comfy place to sit with a blanket and ENJOY your soup!!!</p> 

FOOD VALUE (Carrots) → Beta-carotene (converts to Vitamin A), Fiber, Vitamins A & K, Potassium, Antioxidants, Promotes bone health and good vision (high levels of Vitamin A), Ginger is excellent for gut health!



Rest the Ego, Restore the Body with Yoga Nidra

by Sandhya Alison



“Yoga Nidra is a state of no activity. Ego becomes completely still, as if you are deep sleeping. When you get into that meditative state of Yoga Nidra, it gives such a deep rest; total rest of the “I.” The “I” does not want to move. It is not interested in thinking, just in being totally still.”

Sri Vasudeva 40 Days 2020, Day 6

Yoga Nidra is a powerful meditation and conscious relaxation technique. During Yoga Nidra, you move into the state of conscious deep sleep. You are no longer in the waking state of consciousness and you also move past the dreaming state of consciousness.

As your mind is actually awake, it is often referred to as the state between being asleep and awake. This is why it is said that Yoga Nidra is so restorative for the body. In both meditation and Yoga Nidra practices, the mind is conscious; in Yoga Nidra, the body is in a more restful state.



Benefits

In addition to being relaxing, restorative and restful, studies have shown that Yoga Nidra can also:

- ease insomnia,
- decrease anxiety,
- alleviate stress,
- reduce PTSD, chronic pain, and chemical dependency,
- heighten awareness and focus,
- transform negative habits, behaviours, and ways of thinking,
- foster feelings of peace, calm, and clarity.

How does Yoga Nidra work?

While there are many different ways of teaching and practicing Yoga Nidra, most practices include several stages to relax the body, mind, and emotions. These steps may include (but are not limited to):

- conscious intention
- body awareness
- breath awareness
- emotional awareness
- visualization
- “waking up” or re-integration

Each step is intended to take you deeper into the state between asleep and awake, where you are fully conscious, but your body and mind are fully at rest and ease.

When you set a conscious intention at the beginning of your Yoga Nidra practice and then let go and allow for deep relaxation of the body, mind and emotions, your unconscious opens up to new ways of thinking, healing, and fulfilling your conscious intentions.

As *Yoga Nidra* is a guided meditation experience, you can only learn so much by reading about it. Real wisdom comes from practice. Many examples can be found on YouTube. Take a look, try a few out to see what resonates best with you.



Environmental Awareness:

Wash your face with Honey

Honey also acts as a natural skin protectant and seals moisture in the skin. Therefore, washing your face with honey can lead to clearer skin that is less red and more moisturized. You can either use honey straight from the bottle or find a skincare product that has honey mixed in.

How to Use It:

- ♥ Remove any makeup using a natural oil (I like sweet almond or jojoba oil) applied to a cotton ball or cotton pad.
- ♥ Wet your face with warm water.
- ♥ Open the jar of honey and scoop out about 1/2 teaspoon of honey.
- ♥ Massage the honey all over your face, in the same way you would use a soap-based cleanser.



[Source: <https://kaleandcaramel.com/body-beauty/how-to-wash-your-face-with-honey/>]

Strive for Balance

by Brahmi Nandy



"I have this passion for integration, for balance, for unity, and you see it in everything that I do. I want to use every resource available to me and I want to create the best!"

Sri Vasudeva

Balance in life may mean different things to different people. What does it mean to me? Am I making the best use of my time? If I were to draw a pie chart and put percentages to each aspect of my life, what would it look like? What is my predominant activity? Am I giving equal importance to my physical activity, my relationships, and my spiritual discipline?

Yoga for a Mind-Body-Breath Balance

My daily practice of Hatha Yoga calls for equal coordination of my body, breath, and mind. Here I give attention to proper body alignment in the



posture, engage the yogic breath with equal inhale and exhale at all three levels and give my full awareness and focus to each movement. In doing these yoga postures or asanas I am able to get a perfect mind-body balance and by combining it with pranayama stimulate an energy flow and inner harmony. If you don't already have a yoga routine, it is a very beneficial daily practice for your well-being.

Qigong Enhances Energy Flow

Sometimes, I like to do the Eight Brocades exercises of Qigong. These slow, graceful body movements combined with focused breathing help to strengthen the lower legs and feet and enhance the flow of energy or Qi (Chi) throughout the body. Each one of the eight postures massages the organs, stretches the meridians, and unblocks energy boosting my well-being and balancing my energies. Try this gentle sequence of energy work to improve balance and awareness.

Ayurveda—A Way of Living in Balance and Harmony

In my recent Ayurveda studies, I learned that body, mind, and consciousness work together to maintain balance. Both internal and external factors affect our balance, such as work and family relationships, diet and food choices, weather, and other stresses. Ayurveda recognizes that the individual makeup of each person is different. So we need to understand our unique constitution of the three doshas: vata, pitta, and kapha, because when out of balance they may cause loss of energy and radiance. It calls for us to look at the diet and lifestyle choices we make that are suitable for our body type. Our influence over our digestion determines our state of wellness. Also, strive to be in harmony with nature as much as you can.

Meditation for Equanimity and Well-Being

The most powerful tool that may be used to naturally restore balance and well-being at every level, is meditation. By delving deep within, clearing emotional blocks, and activating the prana flow, we tap into the Source of all peace, love, wisdom, and vitality. We practice coming into a space of balance of heart and mind, that

space of peace and loving being. We can also create a vision of a healthy template and hold it strongly within us. Meditation is now a mainstream practice for relieving mental disorders, healing relationships, recharging, rejuvenation, rest, and relaxation.

An integrated Self - Use Every Energy Level Powerfully

Sri Vasudeva teaches integration of energy centres or chakras within us, and the art and science of Self-Mastery, taking balance to its ultimate.

He shared that *“Every chakra within us represents a certain Self. If you have a stringed instrument and you do not tune all the strings, what is going to happen? What kind of music is it going to make? Or are you just going to work the string that you tune? It becomes a one-stringed or two-stringed instrument, and you lose the beauty of all the strings! How much more marvellous is the music when the entire instrument is tuned? Sometimes you are playing with one instrument and it is nice, but when you add several instruments you say, “Wow.”*

Give attention to the integrated Self. Tune your instrument that you may have the best journey. Make the best music you can in the human experience, using every energy level powerfully and in harmony.

Sri Vasudeva 40 Days 2013 Day 39

Balance is the natural order; imbalance is disorder. Health is order; disease is disorder. Within the body there is a constant interaction between order and disorder. When one understands the nature and structure of disorder, one can re-establish order.

[Source: Ayurveda Institute on Your Constitution and Its Inner Balance]



My Wellness Practice

Alternate Nostril Breathing



Anuloma Viloma

Many of you may already know of this yoga breathing exercise that stimulates both left brain and right brain. There has been research done to show that it does impact the way we think and feel, and the brain is stimulated. In its simple form it is called *Nadi Shodhana*, which means the purification of the *nadis*. When we add breath retention to it, it is called *Anuloma Viloma*, alternate breathing.

As a rule of thumb, always begin with the out breath, emptying first before filling up.

As well, this should be done when the stomach is comfortable, so do not do it after a meal.

Characteristics of Left and Right Nostril Breathing

“When we breathe through the left nostril it has a cooling effect on our being, and it is said to be lunar breathing. When we breathe through the right nostril it has a warming or heating effect. It is called solar breathing. The body feels much more dynamic and active with right nostril breathing and much more quiet, cool, and passive with left nostril breathing. That is why when we need to do active work, when the right nostril is active it supports the activity. However, when we want to do creative or mental work, the left nostril supports that activity.”

Sri Vasudeva

The Practice:

- ♥ Sit in a comfortable position with spine straight and shoulders relaxed.
- ♥ Prepare by taking a few deep full yogic breaths in and out through the nose.
- ♥ Begin with the left: using the thumb of your right hand, closing right nostril breathe out left, then breathe in through the left nostril for the count of 4.
- ♥ Hold the in breath: closing both nostrils, maintain steady pressure on the nostrils, retain the breath for 16 counts.
- ♥ Exhale through the right: release the thumb, slowly to the count of 8.
- ♥ Inhale through the right: keeping same hand position, breathe in through the right nostril for the count of 4, filling up your lungs.
- ♥ Hold your breath for 16 and that makes one cycle.
- ♥ Repeat steps: breathing out left for 8, then in left for 4 and out right for 8.
- ♥ Alternating from left to right in a smooth and effortless manner.



There is the option to repeat to the sound of *Om* one, *Om* two, *Om* three.

Make this a daily practice; the benefits are so vital during this time of Covid-19.

Ensure that your doctor says it is safe to do breath retention.

This practice brings more prana into the system and the blood is able to take oxygen throughout the body.

Blue Star Canada ONLINE Programs:

If interested in any of these weekly programs, email us for the Zoom Links

Monday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:00 pm	2:00 pm	5:15 pm	7:00 pm	10:00 am WW 7:00 pm HC	5:00 am
Sacred Conversations with Madhavi	<i>Healing Circle With Sri Vasudeva (Streamed Live from Trinidad)</i>	Meditation for Total Well-Being with Jahnvi	Satsangs With Daya Mata	BSC monthly Wellness Workshops or Healing Circles	<i>Sri Guru Gita, Guided Meditation & Message with Sri Vasudeva (Streamed Live from Trinidad)</i>

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Transform Self. Transform World.