

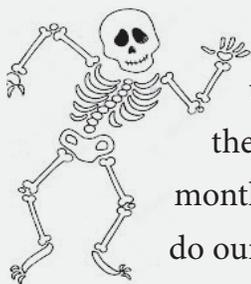
SHININGWORLD

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2016

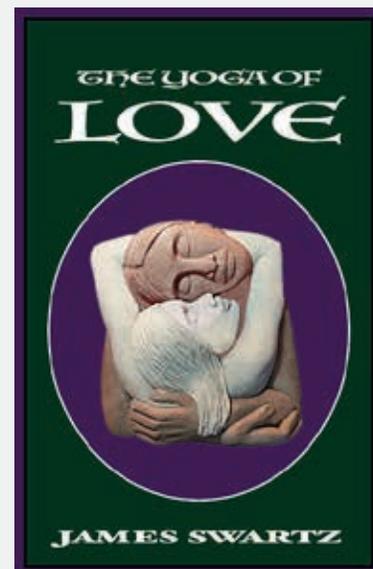
HELLO, EVERYONE

from Sundari



WE HOPE THIS finds you all well and that self-knowledge is effortlessly unfolding in your lives. A number of people have expressed disappointment at the tardiness of our ShiningWorld newsletters in recent months, so we have decided to get back on track and do our best to send them out every other month. Before I begin, you will find *The Yoga of Death* essay that we promised at the end of this newsletter. It is absolutely brilliant!

Our last newsletter found us in snowy Bend, enjoying a very cold, white winter keeping us indoors and providing a productive time during which we worked on publications. I finished the first draft of *Enlightened Lifestyles*, my book on the *gunas* (see below), which Ramji is editing as time permits. He finished the *The Yoga of Love*, which is an amazing read. It is selling like hotcakes! And now, thanks to your generous donations, it is available as a paperback! For the paperback, here is the [link](#). The eBook version is available [here](#).



The Yoga of Love is now available at the ShiningWorld website.

By February we had cabin fever and flew the coop, to mix



metaphors. I went off to Dubai to visit my daughter and granddaughter, then met up with James in Amsterdam.

First, James taught a big crowd in Connecticut at a Hindu temple before starting a busy European schedule in Amsterdam followed by Köln,

James teaching at a Hindu temple in Connecticut.



Satsang in Bad Meinberg, Germany.



Matthias, Sundari and James.



The Essence of Enlightenment has been translated into German by Matthias, and published by Kamphausen as a hardcover.

Berlin and Bad Meinberg. He was his usual powerhouse self, his words soaked in love. It was a wonderful, but tiring, two months of teaching and travel. We had a nice break, however, in Berlin, where we were royally looked after by our dear friend,

Matthias. We took walks in the lovely lake district at Potsdam and visited an amazing museum in the heart of Berlin. Matthias brilliantly translated *The Essence of Enlightenment: Vedanta, the Science of Consciousness* into German, and it has been published by Kamphausen, the number-one publisher of spiritual books in Germany, who made an absolutely classy hardcover edition!



Sundari and James at the Egyptian exhibit in a museum in the heart of Berlin, Germany.

Here is a testimonial from Georg, a German reader: “The translation is *wunderbar!* I must say that Matthias did a wonderful job!! I honestly did not anticipate

how much I enjoy reading Vedanta in my mother tongue!! It is so much clearer to read in German!! Beautiful! A gift from *Ishvara* indeed!” Here is the [link](#).

After Bad Meinberg, we flew to Portugal to meet up with our friends Alex and Gilda Deacon from



James, Sundari and Georg in Germany.

the UK, who have recently purchased a farm on the beautiful river Dao in the wine country of North-Central Portugal, a part of the world that has seen a steady decline in population over the last few decades, with many empty villages, abandoned farms and boarded-up houses. They have exciting plans to bring life back to the area by developing their piece of paradise into a self-sustaining, off-the-grid home and venue for events. They have invited us to teach and live on the farm when we are in Europe, which will make it possible to hold

longer affordable seminars for bigger groups. These are long-term plans, and we will keep everyone informed as to the state of play. Watch this space! 🌍

WHAT'S NEW

TEACHING SCHEDULE

WE HAVE THE usual busy schedule ahead of us this year. We are back in Bend, Oregon, for a much-needed rest, and then Ramji flies off to teach in Brazil in May, after which we have Berkeley, Bend and Trout Lake.

For U.S. East Coasters, Ted Schmidt is doing a seminar in Connecticut in May. Details are in the events section of the website. The Bend seminar is filling up and there is limited space, so make sure to let me know if you wish to attend. In the fall, we have three European seminars: Belgium, Amsterdam, the UK and Norway. Check the [events page](#) at the website for details.

The Big News is – we are back in India in January 2017! After much deliberation and encouragement by so many Indiophiles and Ramji addicts who missed us this year, *Isvara* made it much easier to travel there than previously.

We will teach the usual time slot, from January 5 to 28, 2017 at the usual location, Sunshine Guest House, Tiruvannamalai. The teaching is by donation, as usual, but a \$100 registration fee is required to pay for our transportation and accommodations. Sign up now, as this is a very popular



James and Sundari in India.

event and the teaching will be unique, a synthesis of three texts: *The Bhagavad Gita*, *Panchadasi* and *The Yoga of Love [Narada Bhakti Sutras]*. You can register [here](#). ☸

NEW VIDEOS

THE VIDEOS FROM Ramji's recent European tour are now available in the shop. Because you all have been generously donating, we are able to continue to offer the videos at very reasonable prices, approximately two dollars an hour. All the teachings were exceptional; Ramji's energy and enthusiasm knows no bounds these days! And he is getting more and more creative with the teachings. In Berlin, for instance, he combined the *Bhakti Sutras* with the *Bhagavad Gita* teachings on *bhakti* to great effect. For *Panchadasi* aficionados, there were two teachings. The Amsterdam videos cover the first two chapters, the second teaching in Bad Meinberg covers selected verses from all chapters. It is thirty-two hours of hours of pure Vedantic bliss! It seems like every time Ramji teaches it, it gets better and better.

[Here](#) is the link. ☸



New videos from Amsterdam, Berlin and Bad Meinberg are available at the ShiningWorld website shop.

KUDOS

SHININGWORLD IS A lot more than just Ramji and me. Its phenomenal

growth is due to *Ishvara* in the form of an ever-expanding group of



UK Stan

dedicated inquirers. First and foremost is Dan McCann from Ventura, California, who has selflessly donated his time to make our beautiful and eminently functional website the most important non-dual voice on the Web. Thank you so much, Dan!!! We also want to honour UK Stan, who has tirelessly developed the forum, and an enthusiastic new addition to the ShiningWorld community,



Dan McCann



Georg



Katherine

Georg, our Facebook guy. Our Facebook page, which has been in the doldrums owing to a number of factors, now has new life thanks to Georg. Check it out. We also want to thank Katherine for organising the Connecticut seminar. Gratitude also to Vedamurti,



Vedamurti



Robert

who manages Yoga Vidya's Cologne centre and teaches Vedanta classes in German. Lastly,

thanks to Robert from Canada, our resident graphic designer. ☸



SATSANGS



Satsang is a compound Sanskrit word: "keeping the company of the self."

IN SPITE OF everything we have both managed to keep up with the questions that you write in. Ramji just posted 57 of them! When you read them you can't help but wonder at the power of Vedanta to transform lives and set people free. Speaking of freedom, *The Suffering Stopped* is a letter from a seeker of 25 years who dedicated himself to Vedanta and was set free. It is a great read, one that warms the cockles of Ramji's heart. *Clinging to the I-Sense* clarifies some of the doubts created by the "I-sense" teachings of Ramana and Nisargadatta. It is a great read. *Taking a Stand in a Glimpse* addresses the ever-present problem of knowledge and experience with reference to the practice of taking a stand in awareness as awareness. *The Gravity of the Dance* is an eloquent testimonial to the power of *karma yoga* to transform one's state of mind, by an American Indian ceremonial leader. *A Steady Current of Bliss, Is Isvara One Sick Bastard?, Is Vedanta Gay or Straight?* and *One but Two* are also very interesting *satsangs*. I have also posted my *satsangs* at the website and, as always, we have great contributions from Ted Schmidt, Christian Leeby, Shams from Mexico, Daniel from South Africa, and Arlindo from Brazil. 🌍

PUBLICATIONS

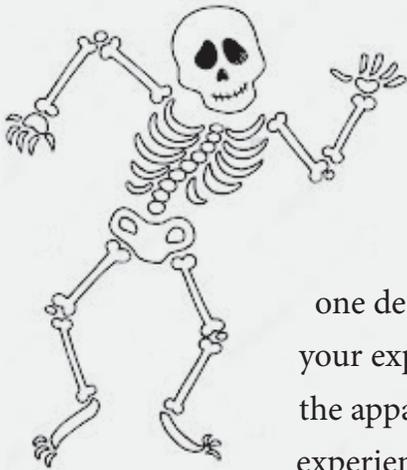
ENLIGHTENED LIFESTYLES, my book on the *gunas* and lifestyle, is in the works. I have completed the main body of writing and Ramji is busy editing it, after which I will go over it again before it goes off to Robert, our editor and graphic designer. With luck it should be available in the fall. Ramji feels that for some reason this sophisticated and practical teaching has been given short shrift by the Vedanta *sampradaya* and thinks that it is time for it to receive the attention it deserves. The *guna* knowledge purveyed by the Yoga world is remarkably superficial and is not particularly useful for self-inquirers who need the tools required to purify their minds. We hope this book will become the definitive work on spiritual practice and its relationship to self-knowledge. Non-conforming lifestyles prevent receiving and assimilating self-knowledge. Ramji will teach it for the first time in the UK seminar at Reigate, Surrey, in October, and I plan to teach it in future as well. To register, click this [link](#).

SELF-KNOWLEDGE: THE KING OF SECRETS is the title of Ted Schmidt's book, which will be published by July/August. It will be available at his website, *NeverNotPresent.com*, and at *ShiningWorld.com* as well. 🌍

THE YOGA OF DEATH

LIFE IS DEATH because reality is non-dual consciousness. Most of us think that life and death are two different existential facts: “I am alive now and I will be dead one fine day.” But death is not an event. It is simply the other side of life. Life cannot exist without death and death cannot exist without life, just as day is night, up is down and desire is action. Everything here is mutually interdependent, so there is never a moment here when you are not dead.

And how does death appear to me every day? It appears as ever-changing objects. Remember, everything other than me, limitless awareness, is an object. And don't forget that, as far as the Creation is concerned, there is no object without consciousness and no consciousness without objects. Yes, I – consciousness – am free of objects, but it is



meaningless to speak of consciousness without objects or objects without consciousness from the point of view of an embodied being, the *jiva*. So death is simply change. Birth is the appearance of an object, and death is the inevitable disappearance of an object.

Why then is the inevitable disappearance of the body, which is only one decaying object among many, so important to us? If you look closely at your experience, you will find a deeply disturbing, built-in anxiety concerning the apparent non-existence of the body. Why do we rush madly from one experience to another? Why don't we just take our time and savor every moment of our death-like lives? Because we think that time is running out. But time is not running out. Time is eternal. In this life or the next, life and death dance side by side, locked in an eternal embrace.

In the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna says to Arjuna: “The wise grieve neither for the dead nor for the living.” This seemingly shocking statement simply means that the emotions we invest in getting and keeping objects are completely gratuitous. Gain implies loss, and loss implies gain. When you have an object – a particular experience, for instance – it apparently non-exists as it apparently exists. What is to gain – or lose?

The word “*yoga*” has two meanings in Sanskrit. The most popular meaning is “to acquire, to obtain.” Perhaps when you read the title of this essay you thought that I was going to reveal some special technique for dealing with change. There is no technique that will turn mortal objects into immortal objects, the body, for instance.

“Topic” is the second meaning of the word *yoga*. So the *yoga* of death means “the topic of death.” So what? Understanding this topic turns mortal objects into immortal objects and sets the *jiva* free of worry. Why? Because when we inquire into death and life, we see that there is no difference

between them: life is death and death is life. If this is true – and it is – what’s to worry? When you are alive, you are already dead. So dance, skeleton. Dance! 🌟

