

Sacred Space



Yoga Sanctuary

**Sacred Space Yoga Sanctuary:
Kundalini Yoga Lecture Series by Swami
Rudrananda**

Through June of 1972



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“You have to transcend yourself to complete any situation.”

July 30, 1972

One of the constants in life--and there are very few positive constants--is the weather. Weather is really an expression of nature, and that certainly is an expression of God. It's very important to see the energy flow between yourself and nature, and whether you can tune in to nature. Like today, I really connected with rain. I've never had a great spiritual breakthrough where there wasn't a great deal of rain. I don't look for it and it always comes as a surprise afterwards. We begin to understand that there is a definite attunement between man and nature.

You have to begin to look at all of these things as very positive signs; it's the way of the elements, the way of energy expressing itself in very positive terms if you can tune in. A lot of people are sensitive to a full moon; some people are sensitive to it a few days before, some people one day afterwards. You really have to begin to see how your energy relates to natural forces. It's a very important thing because these are the things that don't vary -- we vary in relation to it, but it is constant. Nature is a very consistent thing, which changes every second of the day. You have to see the effect that nature has on you, the effect of storms, the effect of heat, the effect of any kind of traumatic change. It really is a way of tuning in. It's a way of having another kind of barometer.

I've noticed that if it's very hot in the summertime, it doesn't affect people, but if it turns very cool, you actually have a complete change of attitude for at least three days. It takes several days for people to relate to any kind of change. If it's very cool and it gets very hot, it really stops things. Any dramatic change affects people. It affects their breathing and it affects their energy intake. We have never really developed in ourselves the consciousness of this kind of sensitivity. Really try to open if you find your energy is dropping. Try to look and see if there's been a dramatic change in the atmosphere as far as if it's raining, snowing, or the weather has become very still, etc. Notice any kind of an energy condition or change in nature, and then try to reach for that change. Really try to transcend this block between you and nature. It means your system hasn't acclimated to the change taking place, and because of that, the energy assimilation in your body is off. It's very pronounced in people. We are so much more sensitive and so much more unconscious of these factors, but it's a very valid factor. So you find you have a certain lull--and you can even mark the calendar if you want to---it isn't just women who have periods, men have periods, too. You have a certain cyclical thing, and nature is one of the things that affects your cycle. Nature comes in cycles too, and you have to feel that in you, you have to begin to understand the different capacities to retain energy and different capacities to express energy based on the element of nature in our culture.

The winter is a time of holding. People go really crazy towards the end of the winter; they can't draw the winter out. It happens with people who don't have a proper diet or people who don't prepare, but winter really goes on interminably for a lot of people. The winter is a test --



it's a test of holding energy. What you can survive with in the winter is really what comes up in the spring. We all have a spiritual resurgence in the spring, and usually the end of the winter will grind away a tremendous amount of that which came up through the summer and through the fall. It's like a spiritual harvest that takes place, and you have to live off the winter with consciousness, you have to learn to pace yourselves, to be quieter, to get used to the darkness, to get used to the shortness of the day -- all of these things are symbolic on one level and they're actual on a spiritual level.

So what do you do when the nights are short? You have to bring in more life, and in this way you also bring more light inside. You have to go inside in these moments of darkness and you really have to find light inside yourself. It's your own thing to do. If you're not going through it one way, you're going through it another way. It's a time of tension, and I used to call that a tunnel. It's a time of building tunnels. You're digging under a mountain, it looks as black as anything could be, and you're digging and digging and digging. You stop halfway through a tunnel and you say "well, I'm exhausted." What do you do? Lay down, and you're halfway through a tunnel. You have wasted your labor unless you persevere. You sit down and say I am tunneling, the reason I see the darkness, the reason I feel this is that I am in the process of digging through a situation. What you feel is an expression of work. You haven't the expression of satisfaction, you haven't the expression of accomplishment, it's a time to sit down and be aware that you really have put in an effort, and that if you really can be more conscious, you will dig through and the light will come, and then you have this hole under a mountain. You will never have to climb that mountain again.

It's the inability of a person to endure, to sustain, and to persevere that becomes the great limiting factor.

That's why we repeat patterns; we don't stay long enough in certain situations to really understand them because every instinct in us wants to run away instead of sitting and living and digging and digging and digging, and being aware that this darkness, this blackness, this cyclical thing is a real test of our spirituality and of our consciousness.

If you don't know why you hit this dark part, why you hit this thing under the ground, then you're stupid, you are working for nothing. You have to realize when you are in a tunnel it means you're hitting something very real that you can tunnel through, and you have to really work for that energy by surrendering, by reaching for something light in yourself. What is the light in you? It's your ability to open and surrender and be grateful for being in that tunnel. It's the only way you turn it around. Instead of being halfway in [the tunnel] you're halfway out. You have in a sense turned around the situation with your consciousness. There is no affliction, there is no problem, there is no pressure ever that doesn't represent the highest aspect of spirituality, that is not punishment. When God gives you that feeling, he is giving you his blessing because what he's saying is, here, I will sustain you halfway through. You sustain yourself the other way through. You're going through with His grace, and then you have to find your consciousness, because you're being given the gift of the energy to go through halfway.

We always can take half of a situation graciously, lightly, understand it, laugh about it, kid about it and everything else, and the reason is we're being put in the situation through God's grace. He's saying, "I'm giving you a situation." It's like a slow week in business, you can laugh about it from Monday until Thursday, but you want to see something in the cash



register on Friday and Saturday. Every unconscious person can take the first four days, but it takes a conscious human being, somebody working with spirituality, to go through the last three days. You have to realize that these things are always the test. And you can always tell a test because of the lack of consistency. When do you fail inside, because it goes on a little more? You can always take it the first day, the second day, the third day, the fourth day, and that's really when you are no longer being given, when you have to open to receive.

It is the difference between someone being nurtured as a parasite and someone taking what is there to take. You're being given it through grace, and the next time you receive it through consciousness. We always resent having to make the effort to be conscious; we always want to be given something. Why don't you give it to me, why don't you give it to me, why don't you give me the answer? The answer has to do with the simple thing of sustaining what is in process. There is no other answer needed. This thing is halfway through and all you have to do is have the common sense to realize that a half-built tunnel doesn't connect anything to anything. It goes from someplace to nothing, so to go to someplace which will really give you an answer, you have to sustain the other fifty percent of the work. We always get the first half easy, and then we stop and we want the miracle to take place. The miracle is your conscious effort. Can you really then sit down and take a breath and go beyond the situation? The minute you go beyond it, you have transcended it, you get your answer, and the tunnel will complete itself very fast.

The whole test of changing patterns and transcending them is to realize at the moment when this pressure builds up and the resistance builds up that you have to change your connection.

You can't go through halfway and finish the other half with the same connections that you had. And this is where people fail tremendously. They keep asking the same way, and even if you have a contact and you have something that feeds you, you have to raise the level of that contact. It's no different than an elevator that doesn't always get beyond the fifth floor; it means you need more juice. And to raise more juice you have to put more behind it.

It's the simplest thing in the world. It's not that the effort should make you closed, the effort should make you open because anybody who's working and digging a well, and they suddenly hit rock, they don't use a shovel anymore, you get out a stick of dynamite, you put it in the ground, and you blow that piece away. And it just takes that kind of an effort. The consciousness that you're struggling against, the nature of the material that you're working against, has changed, and the strata has changed. A different kind of material is needed; a different level of consciousness is needed.

We always want the situation to dissolve with the same effort that we went from 1 to 2; we want 2 to 3 to be the same. Why should 2 to 3 be the same as 1 to 2? We always complain, but we never have the sense to go out with a pick and shovel to go from 1 to 2 and have a stick of dynamite ready at 2 to blast through to 3. And that stick of dynamite is really your conscious effort. You always come against the same thing and you push it and you cry and you scream and you get mad and you abuse it and you curse and everything else, because you stay on the same level trying to finish a piece of work.



Nothing that is ever accomplished spiritually is finished on the level that it begins. You always have to go higher and you always have to reach. It's the moment of faith and it's the moment of conscious effort.

You have to transcend yourself to complete any situation. It doesn't matter whom you study with or what you study. You have to make the effort of transcending and that effort of transcending is changing your connection, if you're using 110 here, you have to go to 220. It will never finish, it will never be complete for you, and no effort you ever make in your life will be complete unless you transcend yourself. It doesn't matter how prepared you are, because all your preparation is on one level trying to go to another, but you always have to have this outside quantity, this resistance between levels, which you can't be prepared for because your consciousness and your energy hasn't been expressed there because it never entered that atmosphere before.

It's the same way, people are always prepared for getting married but they are never prepared for their wedding night. Never. Because the chemical changes are there, and they are extraordinary. There the changing over from one level to another, whether it's having a baby, whether it's going from high school to college, whether it's doing any kind of change-over in relationships, the change-over changes the chemistry. The whole mystery of spirituality is involved in that the chemistry changes as you go from one level to the other. So all of your work preparing, and then as you go halfway through, the thing you're working with becomes obsolete because the whole chemical change about is taking place.

So you're one person going into the situation and working, and before you come halfway through, you become another person. This is the miracle of rebirth, because rebirth does not take place on a physical level, it takes place on a spiritual level. We as people always want things to be consistent. We always deeply resent anybody who changes their attitude with us, and yet if we have grown, the only thing we should expect is a change. That is what's necessary; the same thing is going to happen when you have your baby. How can your relationship with John be the same? You always hear this with couples that get married. "Why my wife doesn't love me the same?" It is physically impossible for two people when a child is born, to love each other the same. It's immature, it's inconceivable, it's against nature and it's against chemistry. Every major change brings about a change of chemistry. We accept the change consciously because we know a change is going to take place, but when this chemistry changes, we reject that. It doesn't hold together for that reason.

We don't feel the chemical change at the beginning of a situation, we feel it almost at the end of the situation. It's a kind of resistance and it is saying, "stupid, it is not on this level, you can't have this thing take place on this level." We take this resistance as an inability to complete. The resistance is just this force trying to show you to change your patterns, to change your connection.

There is nothing consistent about growing. The only thing consistent about it is that changes take place. You have to become aware of those changes. So a simple way of seeing those changes is seeing them in nature. For instance, you can use your sense of smell. When I'm going through a big change, coffee tastes very good to me, and that becomes a clue, it becomes a clue to me that my chemistry is not accepting something it usually accepts, something is changing, So you have to look for clues, you have to look at the way you breathe, and you're not breathing the same, you're breathing with the same methods, but you're not getting the same depth inside, so why aren't you getting the same depth? Because



something is changing over, and you have to breathe differently, deeper, longer to really make this connection. Your breathing is one of the great factors that can warn you about a change-taking place in you. Your taste of food, in a relationship, what you require from somebody else, and usually when you are rejecting somebody you ordinarily love, that's also an indication of a change-taking place. Because they're offering some kind of nourishment to you, there's something you don't want from them, why don't you want it? Because you're rejecting the nourishment, which is vital for your change, and you begin to reject people, you begin to reject situations, which are normal for you to be open to, because you are changing. Because you are trying to not be attached to the present when you draw nourishment. Not wanting to be attached is your unconscious trying to strangle you from the nourishment that can effect the change.

We continually do this in our relationships. I've seen endlessly students who came to reach a certain point, if they stayed an extra two months it would work, they always choose that time to go away, they know inside what they're doing. It's the inability to be consistent in your nourishment. Consistency in your nourishment, consistency in what you take in your meditation, in your exercise, is your guarantee to your growth.

So when in you things begin to close, they're not closing, they're calling for more effort, because suddenly you've hit a different kind of strata and you have to connect on a higher level. You have to make more effort to get the same amount of energy to keep this process going. When we hit these things we think it is not a good time to work, so we lie down. What happens? You abort the process going on. You've gone halfway through the mountain, and you come out of the mountain and you say, oh, I'm back in the sunshine. You're not back in the sunshine; you have blown your energy on a great effort and gotten absolutely no reward for it whatsoever. Because you've always backed off from the moment of conscious additional effort. Spirituality is based always on the consistent energy flowing in you from a higher place. Your not breaking down, not finding how to make your connection to keep this consistency going has to do with the lack of conscious effort in you.

Spiritually you have to make an effort, so when you find the pressure on, then you really sit down and you work your guts out. You're going to be exhausted at the end of the day anyway, with what's on you, right? It's better to be exhausted working consciously to rip out of this tension, to rip out of this insane period, like a man stealing gold out of a mountain. You're really taking a treasure out of a situation that began with nothing but garbage. You've taken this thing that will render you, and a certain part of you knows it doesn't matter what you do, you're going to be absolutely rendered, that is a day when absolutely nothing is going to go right, and you fight like a jackass to take out what you need for your exercise.

It's that kind of an effort that really will consistently give you a spiritual life, and only that kind of an effort. When a reason becomes a reason not to find a nourishment, to not dig for it, then you are not a spiritual person; you are an ordinary person being affected on this level.

A spiritual person takes it up and digs out and takes it up. Nothing and no reason in the world could stop you from finding that nourishment which you need to feed yourself inside. It's hard for you but that doesn't matter, you need thirty minutes a day of conscious effort to feed yourself. It's harder to work when you work five minutes an hour, and you tear yourself apart. You can certainly get five minutes an hour for six hours, there's no excuse for



it. And the harder it is for you to find that energy, the harder it is for you to surrender, the closer you are to the end of a tunnel.

Dramatic things always take place then, because it's attracting it. It's like putting out seeds in the garden; every crow is going to come. What you have is an investment of energy, and a greater investment of energy and a greater investment of energy lying out, like birdseed on a balcony. It doesn't really become yours until you break through and blast through that tunnel, and then it comes back in you. Nature will never let you have that until you fight your guts out and finish it. You have to realize that you only get this energy inside you through your own effort. That's why when you talk about spirituality, talk about a man climbing a mountain, going through a forest and all of it, it means that somebody has the guts to not accept a wall. They'll crawl, they'll drag, they'll do anything else, and they will not accept a no. And they get their day's energy.

You have to learn that; you have to fight for this energy inside, for this nourishment inside. It doesn't matter what the situation is, it doesn't matter whether you're getting married or being buried -- if you forget that day to work, you can forget about your life. You have lost your link between yourself and God. That's the whole reason in the Catholic Church that a man may be a good Catholic his whole life, when he dies he must have a priest there -- the priest represents the conscious link between the physical and the spiritual. They never give a man credit for keeping his consciousness between himself and God, and the priest represents the trained conscious link, so you can be a good anything your whole life, unless you have that priest in you, working for you for that half hour a day, you can lose at that moment your complete chance for growing. No situation, ever, takes you away from this contact. And that's what all situations represent, they all are nothing in themselves, they're just so much drama that you get involved in, or that you use to transcend. It either makes you stronger or it crushes you.

There's nothing and nobody in this world worth paying that kind of attention to. You keep the connection there, and you see the illusion of this, always. The more you keep the connection there, the easier it is to get above it, because your muscle system is open, your connection is there, you don't have to fight that hard -- you fight that hard when you haven't fought day by day, day by day. You don't build up spiritual muscles overnight, it is a cumulative thing. You work a little more strong every day, and then one day when you really need it you can open up inside. And that's the reason to work every day and be sure you're open, so that when you come to a period like this, you really have a little extra pressure on you but you haven't become arthritic, you haven't become crippled, because this thing is used to working. This thing of getting tight doesn't make spirituality, it squeezes it out of you. The earth has to be gently opened to receive the rain. If it's tight, it rejects it. So you work deeply to open. Tension is a rejection, when you're open it is a rejection that drama. Spirituality has to do with simply being open and receiving. Drama has to do with stupidities, you get tight, you see, suddenly you open very much and a great saint floats down and you absorb him. How can you absorb him if you're tight? All you've got is a picture that's gone past you, but you breathe and you can suck him right through with your breathing, and have him, bones and all. All of him will come inside you and be absorbed, but when you get tight it means you're rejecting him.

Tension is rejection, being open is absorption, and you can open and in one breath have him in you, he'll be in you forever, but being tight and dramatic is no way of allowing



anything to come in you. And who would you want to come into you under those conditions realistically? This tension, this drama, the “oh my God, there she is! I've been waiting 50 years to see St. Bernadette,” and then she goes away and you don't even get a post card out of it. But if you sit there and you open and you are grateful and you love and you're light, you have in you that which can attract. You have in you that which is necessary to attract. It's great when you see a movie star; it's not great when you see a spiritual force. The spirituality will disappear when you get tight.

Believe me, the first time I saw Nityananda appear to me, I was scared to hell, but I had the discipline of being open, this is the way you take in and you have a contact. Drama rejects, surrender attracts and takes in. Drama has to do with stupidity, it has to do with ignorance, it has to do with a lack of breeding.

I can always see this when a collector comes and you open a fantastic painting or a great piece of sculpture and they say, “oh my God!” Who says oh my God? Nobody expresses themselves that way -- development has to do with capacity to be gracious, and it exists spiritually as well as anything else, you breathe, you look at it and say it's very beautiful. Inside you're filled with the beauty of it, but when you say “oh my God,” how can you be taking in anything? That's a common, rough, crude expression of love. I never want anyone to come at me like that, like this. You start running away when somebody is chasing you like this saying, “I love you,” you start running, I've had people come and I go in the bathroom and sit on the pot. Who wants to be chased like that, you want to be held and gently loved, but you don't want to be rendered. Who wants to be rendered? Well, if you don't want to be rendered on a physical level, do you think anything on a spiritual level wants to be rendered? It wants to be received and made welcome and appreciated. This saying of “on earth as it is in heaven” is very true.

So if you don't go crazy on a physical level when you see somebody, you certainly shouldn't go crazy on a spiritual level. You should be prepared for it, because that's what you're working for; to begin to live in a world of miracles. What's remarkable about it is that's exactly what you're there for. It's like walking into F.A.O. Schwartz and fainting when you see a toy. A toy store is to see toys; a spiritual world is to see spirits, what's remarkable about it? That's exactly where they exist.

When you don't surrender, you get up there and you start squeezing the spirits and then you stop seeing them for years because you don't belong there, you don't have the manners for that level or for that situation. That's why it's wonderful to have manners on one level before you go up to try to live in another atmosphere.

You have to get rid of neurotic tendencies on an earth level to be able to go into a spiritual level.

These things are always tender, they're always light. You open with love, you open with good vibrations, you try to be open to let these things come in. They come to you, you don't go to them, you open to them, you're light, you're buoyant, and you receive them. You don't go hooking them. If you make a great deal of hullabaloo about them, then they won't come. They'll run away. You're not chasing butterflies with a net; you are receiving something of a higher nature. These things are gentle and they're quiet, and people who make drama are people who are chasing them away.



My grandmother had a wonderful expression, she said, “if you want an angel to land, don't dust the house.” She said clean early in the morning because you can't be cleaning all the time a house where angels live. She said you clean in the morning, and then you leave the house clean and they'll land. You can't go around making nervous gestures all the time, you chase away anything finer.

It's quiet, it's dignity, it's love, and it's being open. Nobody in life and nothing in life wants to be chased. Only a fool, only a person who doesn't have anything to give, has to grab and pull. In every level, in every situation, dignity and quality don't want to be mulched. Nobody wants that rendering.

You have something to give, you open and you give it gently, you give it quietly, you give it with dignity. It's very important to learn because until you learn manners on one level, you absolutely don't qualify on a higher level.

