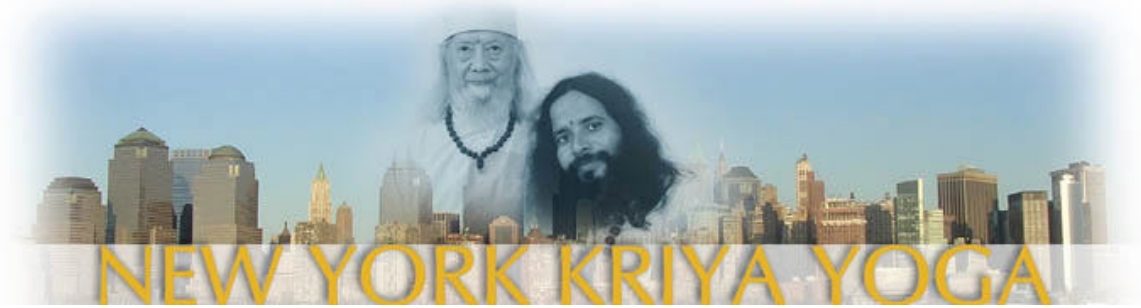


WE MET A MAN. HE CHANGED OUR LIVES.



Volume 1 number 5

THIS ENDS THE CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF REVERED GURUDEV PARAMAHAMSA HARIHARANANDA .

One of the primary purposes of celebrating Baba's centenary in so many places was to give every center the opportunity to honor Baba and his teachings and to let others know about Baba. It was a time for all of us to come together and to remember Baba and to live how he taught us to live. All the planning and work kriyavans did for their centers' centenary program resulted in them being constantly absorbed in Baba in a way that they had never experienced before. It deepened their meditation practice, their love for Baba, and understanding of his teachings. They felt blessed to be constantly reminded about Baba and to share him and his teachings with others. The centenary theme, "**A Celebration of Love and Peace**," expounded on Baba's life of love and service. This year's events gave the New York center the opportunity to be completely focused on Baba as well as our spiritual path.



"The real worship of God is to watch Him constantly."

-Paramahamsa Hariharananda

New York Kriya Yoga Center extends our sincerest thanks to all of you for your continued support, for coming to Sunday meditations, as well as for your donations. We would also like to express our deepest gratitude to all our out of town visitors. We are always happy to have you meditate with us. Welcome to all the new Kriyavans! You are now a part of our New York Kriya family as well as the larger international family! Please know that the New York Center is here to assist you in every way possible.



November 4th - 6th yogacharya Elizabeth Tackenberg visited the New York center for a program with yogacharya John Williams.



*“Who will bless whom?
The One who is within you will bless you.”*
-Paramahansa Hariharananda



“Gurudev’s life is a burning lamp that burns continuously with a flame of love and divinity. We should be like the burning candle or the incense. A burning candle gives light to itself as well as to others. It provides light and warmth. A burning candle has immense potential to light other candles.

Let us live in the light of knowledge.

Let us live in the warmth of love

Let us live a life of fulfillment.

Let us give light to others as encouragement, hope, strength, and fearlessness. Let us live to serve.”

-Paramahansa Prajnanananda



“At this junction of time, there is a great need for religious harmony and for bringing more peace to the world. Most of the centenary programs have an interfaith panel, reminding us of Gurudev’s message that all religions lead to the same goal and that God is One. Please come out and join together and hear more about Gurudev’s rare and beautiful teachings. This centenary celebration is a once in a lifetime opportunity, so please do not miss this opportunity.”

-Paramahansa Prajnanananda

NEW YORK Kriyavans' STORIES CONTINUE IN LOVE AND DEDICATION TO OUR BELOVED GURUDEV

WHEN I FIRST MET MY GURU

(From the May 2005 program)

I want to share the experience of my meeting with Baba for the first time and how I got initiated into Kriya Yoga. I went to Orlando, Florida with my wife to attend a seminar for Hindu University where she was teaching an online course. At that time, I did not know anything about Kriya. I didn't even know that my wife Nidhi was practicing Kriya for sometime now. Although I had met Swami Prajnananandaji when he came to New York in 1996/1997, I went there to give company to Nidhi, and not to learn Kriya.

When we were in Florida, Nidhi told me that she wanted to meet Baba who lived in Homestead. So we drove to Homestead. When I reached there, I had no information, no knowledge, and no intention of getting into Kriya. As I went there and entered the Ashram, I saw this divine figure walking around the garden in his wheel chair being followed by a big crowd. I followed with the crowd for some time and then I got a chance to see him clearly. I just can't explain what happened. The next thing I remember was bowing to touch his feet. He looked at me but did not speak.

That was the first day. On the second day, I was walking on the ground as Baba went for his garden tour. He asked me out of blue, "Which Kriya are you doing?" I didn't understand what he was talking about and didn't know whether he was talking to me at all. Then I realized he was talking to me as he repeated the questions. I said I was not doing anything. He asked, "Why not?" "Do it now", he said. The very next day, I took the initiation and that was



September 8, 2001. Had it not been for the Ashram visit, we would have been back home in New Jersey and I would have been going to work to downtown, New York City.

As it was customary to learn Kriya for three days after initiation, I was practicing my Kriya. On the third day, I was meditating and someone came to me and told me about the 9/11 incident in New York City. The World Trade Center was a part of my daily commute and I used to pass through around the time of the accident. It was no more. I am not sure whether that was my destiny or grace of the Great Soul that I was in Miami instead of in New York. But I was thankful that I was with such a great soul in those trying moments. Thank you.

-Dileep Dwivedi

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

(From the May 2005 program)

In summer of 1998, there was an initiation here in New York City. I found out about it a few days after it was over. So I called up Don and took initiation privately with Don in Rafi's apartment. Then I went to Florida to meet Baba. When I went there, I was terrified. I was terrified because I had heard so much about him and he asked me if I would come to his room. I

went to his room and as I was half way through the room, I didn't know what to do. He said, "Come closer." So I pulled the chair in a bit closer and sat on it. He said, "Come closer." So he pulled me so close that my knees were touching his bed. He was looking into my face and he started asking me questions like who initiated me and what was my achievement in meditation.

We talked for a few minutes and then he went through the whole initiation ceremony again. I was in his room for three hours. And then, he started talking about something in my life that I was shocked that he knew about. I really felt scared and I thought, "Well, if he knows about that then he knows about other stuff that you think no one other than you knew."

He stared in my eyes, held my hand and said, "NO MATTER." I could tell that it was unconditional love. I thought, "Well, he loves me more than I love myself." And I felt I had to get

out of there. I left the Ashram to come back to New York because it was too frightening, even though he was giving unconditional love. I had booked the hotel for five days, and so, I said, "Okay, I am here," and I stayed on. And by the end, I didn't want to leave his side. Because after I got used to the love he was giving, I never wanted to be away from him.

-Amy Kern

THE DAY MY LIFE CHANGED

(From the 2005 program)

I met Baba in 1995. I was going through a very difficult time. I was extremely depressed. I always believed in God. I always prayed and I thought I had come to the end of my road. I was in my room praying all night and I never thought I would hear myself say this. But I said, "God! It is not fair. What is happening with me? If I don't get help soon, I will not believe in you". The next day I met AnnaLise She came to the house for dinner. I had seen Baba's photo around town. I was interested in going to his Yoga. And I was curious about him. But I did not know. It was a very nice experience meeting with AnnaLise. She was very spiritual and divine person. Within a day, I was initiated by Annalise.

I was curious about Baba and was nervous about meeting him. I did not know what he would be like. I was sitting in the meditation hall at the Gallery and we were already meditating as I remember when Baba arrived. I believe my eyes were closed. I heard his voice as he moved around the room. I already had a feeling that I had already known him. I felt like very familiar like I had seen him before or something. He was sitting down a bit near me and he said, "Hello Sir, Please look at me." And

"Tie a very tight bow with me and I will take you through this worldly ocean towards everlasting peace, joy, happiness, and bliss."-Paramahansa Hariharananda

then he asked, "Do you remember Pondichery?" I knew what he was talking about. He was joking about me.

I just remember Baba's love and his affection. I remember the sweetness. I remember the feeling that he knew everything about me. I remember feeling that some times, we would

pass and say something to me. I would feel guilty and he would never say anything to me. Sometimes he would catch me by the back of my neck or hair and say, "You are a naughty child". That is about the most chiding you will ever get from Baba. And it was very sweet and calm. He was always there to help me. That is what I remember. Thank you.

-Michael Malone



"Even while a bulb is switched off, there is electricity going to the bulb. Similarly, even while our body-bulb is in darkness and one cannot perceive divine light, the divine current, the soul, is always there."

-Paramahansa Hariharananda

A SPECIAL EASTER

It was Easter time of 1999. I was on my way to meet Baba Hariharananda for the first time. What I wasn't aware of yet, was that this would be a meeting that would impact my life in profound ways that are still with me, today, eight and a half years later. I wish that I had committed to memory all of the details leading up to that moment, but I didn't. What I do know is that the opportunity to meet Baba remains as auspicious now as it was then.

I arrived in Ft. Lauderdale late the night before with 50 dollars in my pocket and the only place for me to stay was at my friend Sally's

brother's girlfriend's place. This was the first of many ways in which complete strangers helped me get to where I was going. The next morning after sharing breakfast with this couple they pointed me to the Miami metro. I took the train, then a bus, then walked about a mile, and waited at a gas station for an hour before someone was able to pick me up. As the car rolled along approaching the Mother center, I sensed a vibrant energy that illuminated the area. This was a rural area with fields and farming land, yet it resonated an elusive quality.

Once there, I was joyfully greeted by so many strangers. All seeking spiritual guidance. I met people from all over the world gathering there to listen and see Baba, our beloved Gurudev. I heard stories from people who were led to Kriya by seemingly serendipitous events. I found that there are so many people searching for self-realization. I listened to the enthusiasm in their accounts of their experiences.

When at last Baba emerged from his room to guide us in meditation, I was completely mesmerized in his presence. I don't think anything had prepared me for this encounter. To meet Baba face to face has been a grand blessing. His radiance and infinite wisdom were more than I could have expected. His complete presence and luminescent love captivated me.

I remember many beautiful moments in the presence of Baba, and I especially remember the words he so kindly directed to me. And I'm certain that all who met him have their own treasured recollections. What I cannot articulate as well is that, even as a writer, I have a difficult time putting it all in words. It's an experience that has illuminated me over the years as I continue on my quest for self-realization. I am not a religious or highly spiritual person, but I am devoted to Baba as my guru. His capacity for love held such power to impel so many of us to work hard to attain what he knew we could. When I spend time to dwell in his teachings, Baba is present, not because I am well deserving, but because that was his commitment to us as our guru.

During that Easter program I heard many wonderful teachings by Baba's disciples, and I shared many kind words with the others present. And although I spent a considerable amount photographing the grounds, the pond,

and the people, it is Baba who remains imbedded in my heart.

After that first program I went home with the joy of having had the foresight to make that trip.

I was to return to Baba's home in Miami a few more times before Baba's passing. And each time I was guided further and now I wish I would have made an effort to visit him more often.

Sometimes late at night, for no apparent reason, I wake up with the awareness that Baba has left his physical body, and that I no longer have the fortune to see his smile and hear his divine words. I miss him. And in that longing I strive to meditate deeper with the sole intent of attaining at least a small portion of Gurudev's enlightenment.

Thank you Pranjandaji for continuing with Baba's great commitment.

-S. Valdiviezo

“God is so Kind”

All my life I have sought after God-realization, even early on when I had no idea what God-realization was. Even as a child, I knew there was something I wanted and was born to fulfill. It was like a longing within me to complete my inner mission.

As I grew up, I took part in many religious and spiritual traditions, searching for the heart of all of them.

For years I read everything I could find on religion and spirituality. In my studies I kept coming across information about KriyaYoga. At one point I was receiving the home correspondence course from Yogananda's Self-Realization Fellowship. Still, I

was feeling unsatisfied. I was learning a lot, but inside I had not found “it.”

In 1992 my reading led me to an advertisement for a book about the authentic Kriya Yoga. Eagerly, I ordered the book. A few weeks later in a conversation with my karate teacher, who was also a close friend in Spirit, I asked what I could do to attain God-realization. He suggested initiation in Kriya Yoga. He had taken Kriya initiation himself some years before. I explained that I knew of no one representing Kriya Yoga in New York City where I was living, and that I did not know where to look for



“He lights the way and showers love on us with his subtle presence.”

-Paramahansa Prajnanananda

a connection. He quietly assured me that I would certainly be able to find someone to initiate me.

The next day the book I had ordered arrived -- as I opened it with excitement -- a small piece of paper fell from between its pages. On the paper was a handwritten note which read, "If you wish to take Kriya initiation, call this number." Immediately I made the call, and learned that Baba Hariharananda Giri, the God-realized Kriya master, was in New York City and that he would be giving initiations *the next morning at 8:00 A.M.* God is so kind!

Thus, July 1992 Baba initiated me. He took personal interest in me. He was very compassionate. He discerned medical problems I was suffering with, took pity on me, and recommended certain remedies which cured my maladies. He made suggestions which led me to people I was destined to meet. He gave me invaluable advice. He told me stories about his visitations from Babaji. He named me "Om." He brought much grace into my life, and created a stream of blessings which have never ceased.

Baba used to say to me, "God is so kind." He said it with the conviction of one who speaks from experience. In his presence I could feel Divine Love as a palpable substance emanating from him and filling his radiant aura. He generated so much love that I would spontaneously cry when I got near him. His beatific Light was an overwhelming force which simply dissipated whatever negativity might be anywhere near him.

My initiation into Kriya Yoga gave me the experience I had been seeking so long. I felt the deepest Divine Love I had ever known. I found a state of consciousness which transcended all religions and spiritual teachings I had practiced or studied. Through Baba, I accessed what seemed like the Heart of God.

When Baba Hariharananda left his physical body, I was very sad, even grief-stricken. But then, suddenly, I was surrounded by an immense and powerful Light. It was Baba. Then I understood that in "death" he was free from the restrictions of the physical level. Now it is possible for him to do even more and greater spiritual work for so many of us who he loved and served while he was "alive". I know that he is very active in the Spirit, and I know that he is still with me in all things. For this, I am eternally grateful.

God is so kind!

-Maher Benham

Beloved Gurudev

**You are the Sun around which we revolve,
Your divine fire is our liberation;**

We are your little sparks;

**Thank you for allowing us to live in your
divine radiance;**

**Thank you for teaching us how to cultivate
our field and transform our character.**

**It is because of you that we encounter our
original nature of Being.
Our gratitude is eternal.**

**Please accept our humble offering;
Please continue to bless us.**

We bow to you infinite times.

New York Kriya Yoga Center