

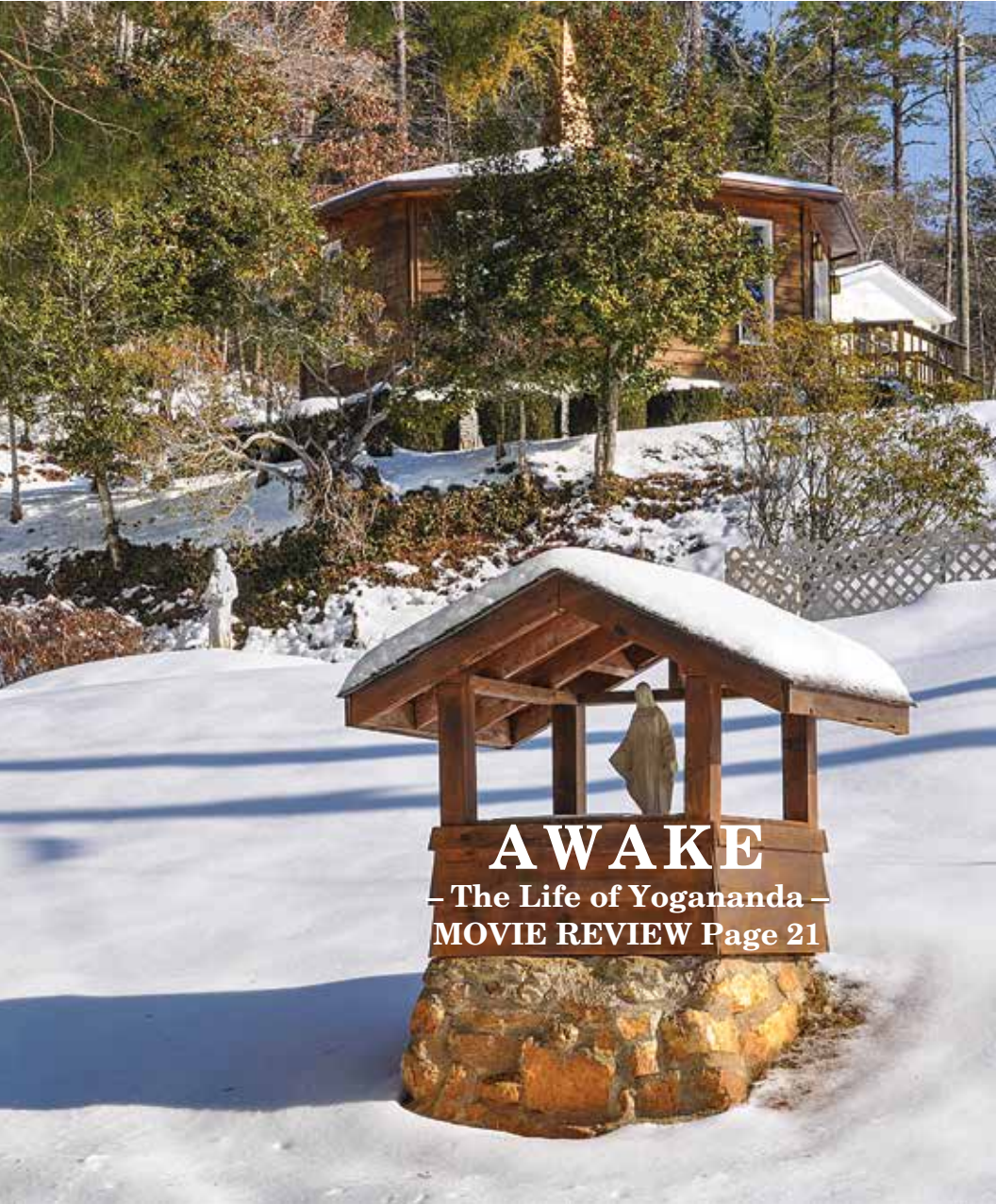
February – March 2016

49 Years of Continuous Publication

# TRUTH JOURNAL

A Center for Spiritual Awareness Publication

*For Individual and Global Spiritual Enlightenment*



**AWAKE**

– The Life of Yogananda –  
MOVIE REVIEW Page 21

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*Front Cover: View of CSA Headquarters property.*

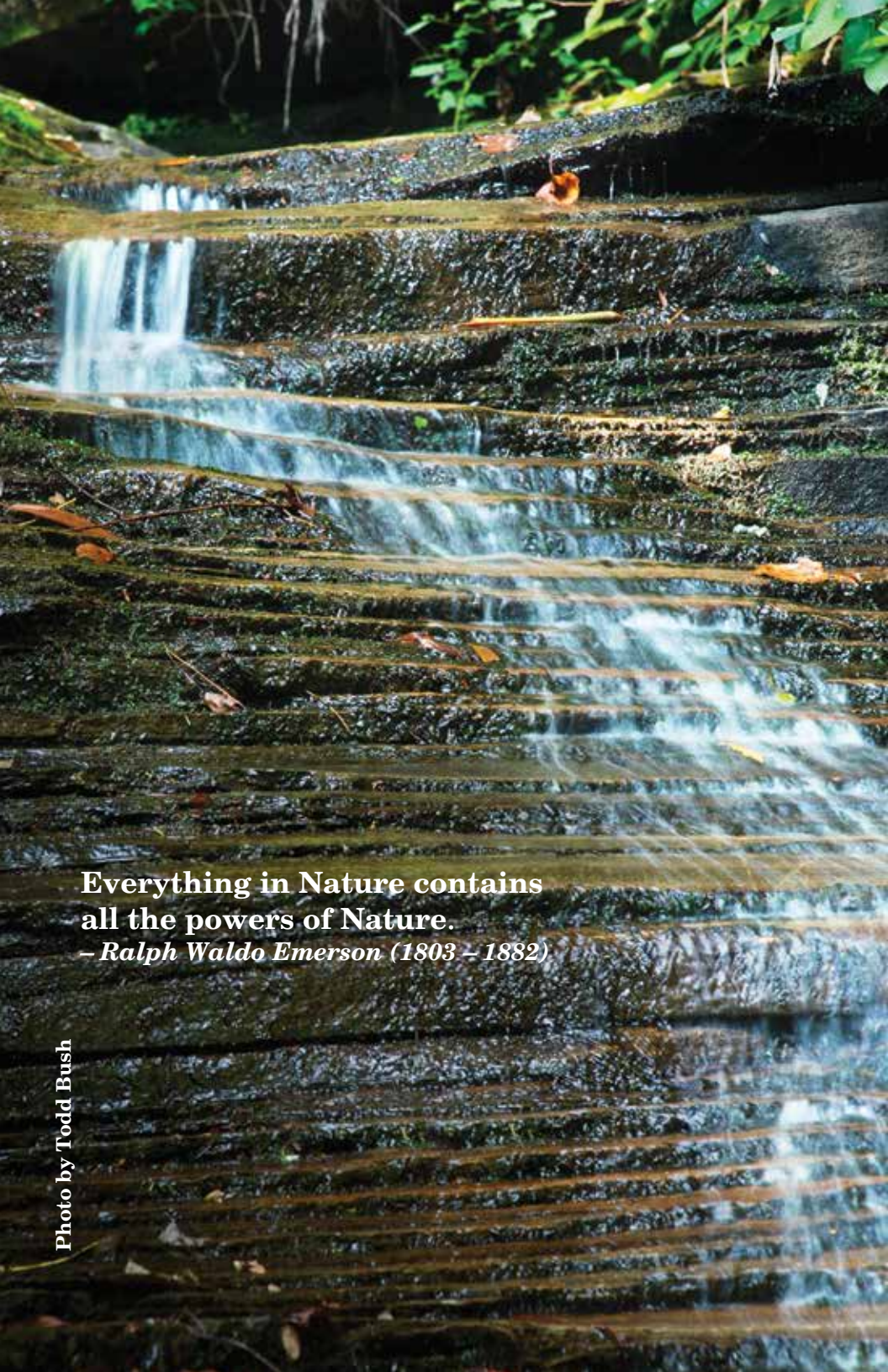
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P. O. Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552-0001  
Phone 706-782-4723 Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
e-mail [info@csa-davis.org](mailto:info@csa-davis.org) Web Site [www.csa-davis.org](http://www.csa-davis.org)  
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**Everything in Nature contains  
all the powers of Nature.**  
– *Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882)*

**ROY EUGENE DAVIS**

## **What We Can Do to Awaken to Self- and God-Realization**

We are units of the absolute, pure essence of ultimate Reality commonly referred to as God. *Self-realization* is direct experience and knowledge of our true nature. *God-realization* is direct experience and knowledge of ultimate Reality.

When relationships between souls and their intellect, mind, and body are at least partially understood, we might think that everyone would immediately want to awaken from ordinary human conditions to Self- and God-realization, and that their awakening would be fast and easy. An interesting fact is that very few people are sincerely interested in being Self- and God-realized, and many who say they are interested don't do what is necessary to have their mind and awareness illumined.

On a spiritual path, although it can be helpful to have the wise guidance of a spiritually awake teacher, it is not always possible. With, or without, an ideal relationship with a spiritual teacher, we should remember that the *real teacher* is our own pure essence which has complete knowledge of relative life (Nature) and transcendent realities within it.

Not all spiritual teachers who inspire others with positive words, a calm personal presence, and perhaps some unusual abilities, are enlightened. Having been with spiritual teachers and yogis for more than sixty years, at small, secluded places and large public gatherings, I know that behind some appearances of holiness are delusions and illusions (flawed beliefs and perceptions) that nurture confusion, apathy, and even despair.

Truth seekers should learn to discern what is true, rather than naively believe what they are told by others who may be sincere but not yet knowledgeable. Until accurate knowledge of the facts of life emerge from within us, we should use our intelligence and common sense to endeavor to comprehend it.

## **How to Evaluate the Authenticity of What Seem (or are Said) to Be Spiritual Perceptions**

Real spiritual perceptions are transformative. Pleasant or unusual perceptions that are the result of temporary, changed or altered states of mind or consciousness that are different from what is usually experienced but are eventually replaced with ordinary perceptions and behaviors don't contribute to spiritual awakening. To be preoccupied with them is of no real value. Several years ago, in south India, truth seekers from far and near frequently visited an ashram to be in the presence of a saintly man who lived there. They would assemble in a large room and quietly meditate. On one occasion the saint noticed a visitor with a satisfied smile sleeping instead of meditating. After the session, he told the ashram staff workers: "Don't let that man be here again; he is wasting his time."

Perceptions and feelings that result from using meditation techniques should also be carefully examined. A calm, almost thought-free experience that spontaneously occurs or is elicited by prayer or use of a mantra, affirmation, or pranayama, may not be a superconscious state, evidence of Self-knowing, or an experience of higher realities. Calm, thought-free states of consciousness can reduce stress, improve concentration, and prepare us to be superconscious and Self-realized.

Authentic spiritual awakening makes us live wisely, brings forth our divine qualities, and reveals our innate knowledge of higher realities. We cannot be Self-realized and provincial or small-minded and egocentric at the same time.

Many truth seekers endeavor to learn "higher" meditation methods when they haven't yet effectively used the techniques they already know. A form of meditation that is very easy and effective is to simply observe and experience natural breathing until it is slow and refined, then detach awareness from it and rest in the deep stillness. If it is not easy to be aware of inhalation and exhalation without being distracted, a mantra or affirmation can be included until the mind is calm.

Until Self-realization is complete and permanent, the mind

is not pure or fully illumined and false ideas and illusions may influence thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. We may feel very “spiritual” yet be inclined to impulsively think, act, or react. Or we may wonder why occasional or frequent serene meditative states have not removed our psychological conflicts or brought forth our innate functional abilities, allowed us to be cosmic conscious, or empowered us to easily solve personal problems that interfere with our aspirations to be mentally peaceful and live more freely and enjoyably.

Effective use of meditation techniques that quiet the brain centers associated with our ability to relate to time, events, and things in space can result in a temporary perception of oneness, wholeness, or “emptiness” during which there is no perception of anything else. After such an experience, when our attention and awareness are again normal, the experience is but a memory. Temporary transcendent perceptions are not always immediately transformative. Knowing this, perhaps we can understand why some people who seem to be spiritually advanced may have flawed or strange opinions, inappropriate behaviors, or personal circumstances that reflect their inability to see or imagine ideal conditions.

In many religious and spiritual enlightenment traditions exceptional powers of perception and functional abilities of spiritually aware individuals are described. Although it is usually recommended that they be used to complete one’s spiritual awakening, they can also be used to live effectively if egocentric mental attitudes and behaviors are avoided.

Some exceptional abilities are:

- Enhanced powers of perception, discriminative intelligence, and intuition.
- Can imagine what is wanted or needed and easily have it.
- Is not disturbed or harmed by external influences.
- Can know the stages and processes of cosmic manifestation.
- Mastery of mental states, states of consciousness, emotions, and behaviors.

The Sanskrit word for an exceptional ability is *siddhi*, “a sign or

indication of attainment or accomplishment.” A person who can express them is a *siddha*, “one who is uniquely accomplished.”

It is not necessary to attempt to levitate, be invisible, know what others are thinking, or materialize physical things by imagination and will power. It is more soul-satisfying to live skillfully and awaken to Self- and God-realization.

We can use our exceptional abilities to live effectively and quicken our spiritual awakening, just as we use ordinary skills for these purposes. Doing anything for egocentric purposes will interfere with spiritual awakening and may cause problems for us and others.

I knew a yogi who could control his blood circulation, brain wave patterns, and body temperature who was psychologically conflicted and immoral. Others, who could explain meditation practices and philosophical concepts, were emotionally immature and not well-informed about practical matters. And one who could materialize physical objects to inspire devotees and organized charitable services that benefited thousands of people, who died of heart and lung failure. There have been “holy” people whose death was due to cancer, diabetes, and heart failure, often because they were not inclined to take care of their body’s needs. Some of them were so strongly mission-oriented that they worked too hard rather than have competent helpers or schedule regular interludes of rest and regeneration.

A few months before my guru passed, I visited him at his private retreat house in Twentynine Palms, California. After I sat down beside him, Virginia Wright, a disciple, came into the room and handed him a small glass of pineapple juice. After he drank it he said to me, “See!, for many years I didn’t take care of my body. Now they make me do it.” He had asked disciples who worked closely with him to remind him to regularly eat, exercise, and rest. He was becoming more inward and inclined to want to be aware of absolute or transcendent realities.

Perceptions that seem to be “mystical” or “religious” that are caused by chemical substances taken into the body, or produced by the brain or a neurological disorder, may provide temporary emotional arousal or changes in mental states and states of con-



sciousness but don't result in Self-knowledge that purifies the mind and clarifies awareness.

Meditative perceptions of inner light, subtle sounds, or ecstatic sensations produced by devotional ardor or energy flows are also temporary experiences and can distract attention from the real purpose of spiritual practice. We should aspire to awaken from ordinary states of mind and consciousness and have clear, conscious, direct, permanent experience of our true nature and flawless knowledge of higher realities. Only when all delusions (erroneous ideas) and illusions (mistaken perceptions) are renounced or transcended will we be truly free.

False ideas about God, souls, salvation theories, reincarnation, spiritual teachers, and spiritual practices are as limiting as false ideas about secular matters. Many people who think they know what God is and are on a meaningful spiritual path are misguided—which they will eventually discover.

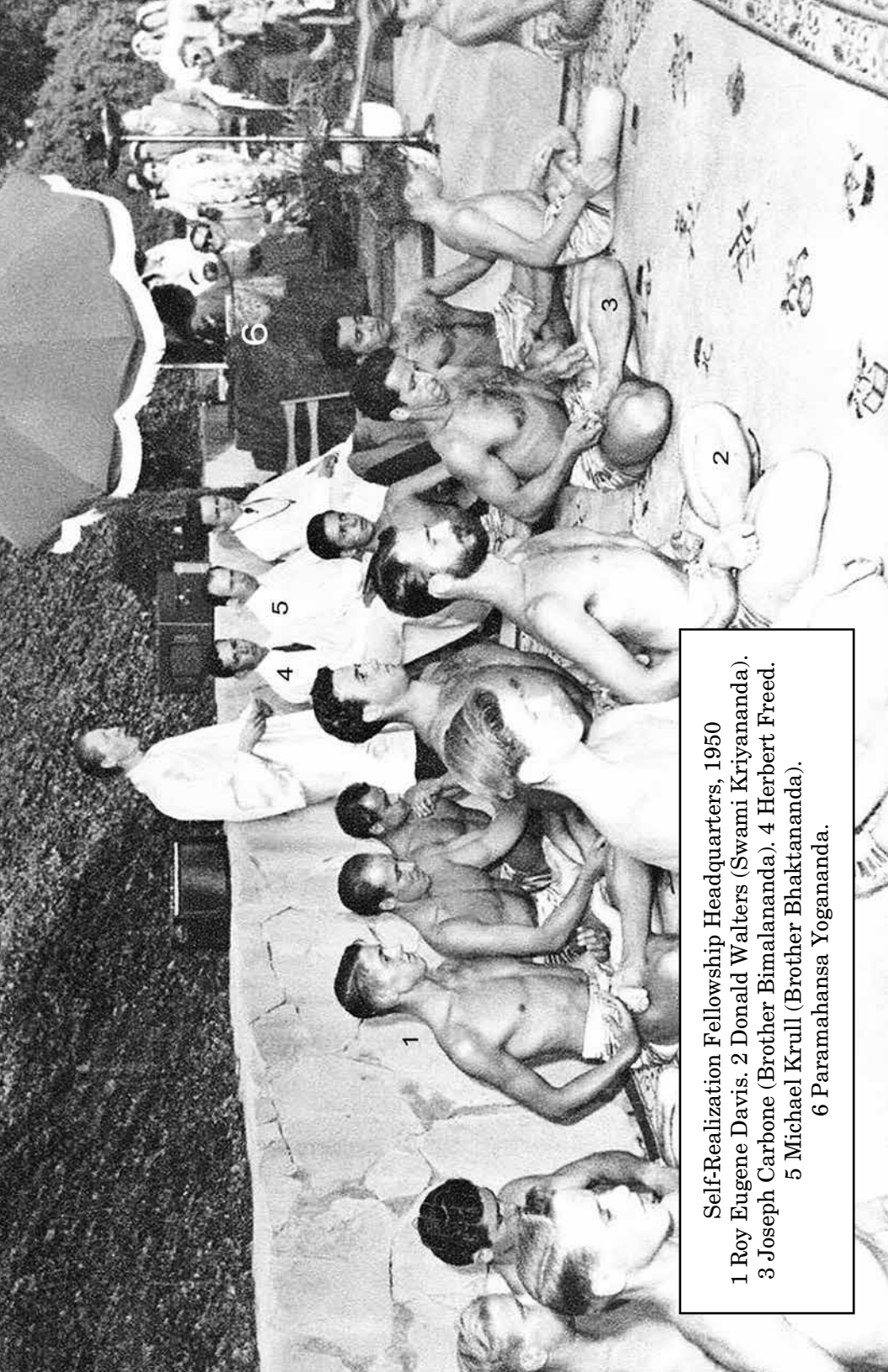
When preparing to meditate, and at other times when we are inclined to contemplate higher realities, it can be useful to empty the mind of all concepts about what we aspire to know and experience. We should avoid trying to experience our true nature to be as we imagine it to be or know ultimate Reality as we would like for it to be or how others said it is. By letting all of our preferences and opinions fall away, can we allow our awareness to be receptive to discovering the truth.

It may not be easy to surrender personal desires and inclinations, yet at the deepest level of our being we know we must do it. We want to have our awareness restored to its original, pure wholeness, as it was before we forgot our Source and true nature and began to aimlessly wander in space and time.

To be spiritually enlightened, we don't have to depart from the physical world. We only have to awaken from conditions that blur and confine our awareness and incline us to prefer to be limited and incompetent.

### *Affirm With Confidence*

I do all that I can to awaken to Self- and God-Realization.



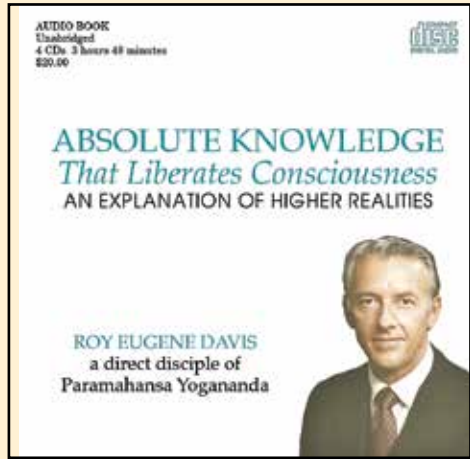
Self-Realization Fellowship Headquarters, 1950  
1 Roy Eugene Davis. 2 Donald Walters (Swami Kriyananda).  
3 Joseph Carbone (Brother Bimalananda). 4 Herbert Freed.  
5 Michael Krull (Brother Bhaktananda).  
6 Paramahansa Yogananda.

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Sequential Categories, Specialized Capacities,  
and Orderly Processes of Cosmic Manifestation

The Psychological and Physiological Basis  
of Spiritual Enlightenment

Superconscious Meditation Practice That Clarifies  
Awareness and Facilitates Authentic Spiritual Growth

Guidelines to Dedicated Discipleship

Three Transformative Practices to Effectively Use  
Infinite Life

*Addendum: The Evolution of Religious Beliefs  
and Practices*

*Glossary of Basic Words and Philosophical Concepts*

**See a complete list of CDs and DVDs on page 30.**

**How Can We Really Know We are  
Spiritual Beings and That Our Sense of  
Individual Self-Identity is Not Merely  
a Brain-Produced Illusion?**

We are obviously not brain-produced illusions because we can think; examine our brain and our relationship to it; somewhat regulate brain functions with mental attitudes, nutrition, and lifestyle regimens; and intuitively apprehend our true nature and higher realities. We can detach awareness from objective and subjective conditions to experience transcendence. While we are incarnated, changes in brain chemistry, conditions, and activities can influence our consciousness, mind, perceptions, moods, and behaviors. Aspire to experience your true nature as other than your intellect, mind, emotions, or ego (limited sense of Self-identity). Acknowledge and affirm that you are a unit of the pure essence of ultimate Reality even before you actually realize it. Firmly resolve to be fully conscious of your immortal, spiritual nature during your current incarnation.

*When I meditate, it is difficult to look within for a long time. I tend to be involved with thoughts, memories, and emotions, or sit with a passive, inattentive mental state. How can I meditate more enjoyably and productively?*

Remember that alert meditation practice can result in clear Self-awareness that is supremely satisfying because it enables you to know your true nature independent of mental states or other supporting personality characteristics. If you cannot stay focused with your eyes closed, open them for a while and just be aware in the moment, attentive and observant. Your true nature, which is always what it is, can be experienced. Don't think that you have to experience ecstatic states or inwardly focused trancelike conditions to be spiritually awake. Relax into meditation, observing improvements in Self-awareness as mental and emotional influences become less troublesome.



*I discovered some advanced meditation techniques in books and on the Internet, but they haven't improved my meditative experiences or perceptions. What should I do?*

Review your meditation routines. Stay with simple forms of practice that relax the body, calm the mind, and clarify awareness. There is no need to use a lot of time and energy chanting mantras to enliven chakras and/or attempting to direct flows of prana (life force) to specific regions of the brain. Alternate nostril breathing, the basic pranayama practiced by kriya initiates (and others who know it), and observing breathing rhythms are most useful.

*Note:* Several helpful meditation techniques are described in the books *Seven Lessons in Conscious Living* and *In the Sanctuary of Silence*. See page 30 in this issue of *Truth Journal*.

*I am thinking that I should travel to southeast Asia or India to try to find a guru. I don't know if I should do it or if I am just indulging in wishful thinking. How can I know what to do?*

Guru-shopping isn't a practical thing to do. It will be more useful to improve your understanding of your true nature, live effectively, and regularly meditate to be superconsciousness. If you really need the guidance and assistance of a wise spiritual teacher, that relationship will happen. The intelligence in the universe can provide what is needed for your highest good.

*The town in which I live has two New Thought centers where the teachings do not satisfy me and a Yoga center where only the physical postures are emphasized. I occasionally go to those places to have some interaction with like-minded people. What else can I do?*

Stay home. Study profoundly. Meditate deeply. Live effectively. If you have the knowledge and skills to present talks and/or conduct meditation sessions at the centers, offer to do it. At all times, be Self-aware, serene, and confident, rather than personality-oriented, restless, or insecure.

*During the past ten years, I studied with several organizations and learned meditation practices from a few teachers. I think I am now ready to settle down and concentrate on the most useful teachings and practices. How can I decide what to do?*

With the knowledge you have, select a holistic lifestyle that enables you to be comfortable and secure. *Holistic* means harmonious blending of the spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, social, and environmental aspects of everyday life. Profoundly examine higher realities and meditate superconsciously. Aspire to experience the highest and best of what is possible for you.

*Can I be dedicated to a spiritual path and also have wholesome relationships with friends and family members, be interested in what is occurring in the world, and want to do things that are worthwhile? Some people who say they are on a spiritual path seem to be reluctant to have a natural life, don't easily relate to others, or have little interest in accomplishing purposes of value to themselves and to others.*

Live wisely, freely, enjoyably, and successfully while you are quickly awakening to Self- and God-realization. Be aware of your spiritual nature and the omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience of ultimate Reality. Be kind, honest, generous, optimistic, confident, aware of how your mental states, moods, and actions influence events, conditions, relationships and circumstances. Don't allow mundane interests and involvements to disturb your mind or interfere with your spiritual awareness. Spiritualize relationships and activities by acknowledging your true nature, the true nature of others, and what you are doing and experiencing to be in divine order (right or proper, for your highest good and the highest good of others).

Daily superconscious meditation will enable you to be Self- and God-aware while engaged in everyday activities. As you physically age, you will be inclined to be more inward-directed and to contemplate your relationship with the Infinite. Among the various forms of meditation you may use, include listening to the Om vibration and merging your awareness in it while aspiring to be aware of its source and to transcend it. This form of

meditation was described at least two thousand years ago by a sage in India:

Ultimate Reality unlimited by relative conditions is the teacher (truth-revealer) of ancient spiritual teachers. Its expressive indicator is the Om vibration. Meditating in Om elicits Self-revelations and obstacles to [experience of] samadhi [pure consciousness] disappear.

– *Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras 1:26–29*

A favorable occasion to contemplate Om, its significance, and source is when the mind is calm and attention and awareness can more easily be surrendered to the process.

Some “obstacles” that can interfere with meditation practice are debilitating psychological or physical conditions; mental dullness and blurred awareness; doubts; negligence; laziness; dissipation (depletion, wasting) of vital and mental powers because of excessive sense stimulation and cravings; delusions (false beliefs); inability to concentrate effectively enough to be Self-knowing; and mental and emotional instability. These obstacles can be overcome in the following ways:

- Have disabilities healed when possible.
- Replace mental dullness and awareness with alertness.
- Replace doubts with accurate knowledge.
- Replace negligence with skillful performance of duties.
- Replace laziness with responsible behaviors.
- Choose thoughts, moods, behaviors, relationships, and actions that enhance vital forces and mental powers rather than weaken them.
- Improve powers of concentration by attentive observation of what you perceive or think about.
- Replace emotional instability with knowledge of spiritual realities, soul-contentment, and self-confidence.

Most troublesome conditions and behaviors can be avoided by living with inspired, purposeful intention so that what you do is interesting and of value to you and/or others.

## ***Guidelines to Inspired Living***

Speak the Affirmations With Conviction

January 31 – February 6

### **Let Your Divine Qualities Be Freely Expressed**

Allow your innate inclinations to live effectively, express compassion, and radiate good will to everyone and all life to be actualized.

*I allow my divine qualities to be freely expressed.*

February 7 – 13

### **Creatively Use Your Intellectual Powers**

Know the truth of what you observe. Especially discern and understand your true nature as a unit of the pure essence of ultimate Reality.

*I creatively use my intellectual powers by using them to know the truth of what I observe.*

February 14 – 20

### **Improve Your Powers of Perception**

Avoid illusions and confusion by accurately perceiving what you see, hear, examine, and experience.

*I improve my powers of perception by choosing to be fully aware of and to comprehend what I see, hear, examine, and experience.*

February 21 – 27

### **Control Your Thoughts**

Control your thoughts by being established in Self-awareness that enables you to be superior to them.

*I easily control my thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.*



February 28 – March 5

**Cultivate Emotional Stability**

Cultivate emotional stability by nurturing Self-contentment at all times and in all circumstances.

*I am always inwardly peaceful and insightful.*

March 6 – 12

**Choose Your States of Consciousness**

By maintaining a positive mental attitude and wisely choosing your states of consciousness you will always behave constructively and enjoy ideal circumstances.

*I am constantly Self- and God-aware.*

March 13 – 19

**Wisely Choose and Control Your Desires and Actions**

Discern the difference between what you need and what you want. Have what you need; allow only occasional superficial desires to be satisfied.

*I wisely choose and control my desires and actions.*

March 20 – 26

**Master Emotional and Sensory Urges**

Avoid impulsive behaviors and neutralize demanding sensory urges. Wisely control your moods, feelings, and behaviors.

*I easily control my emotions and senses.*

March 27 – April 2

**Meditate Superconsciously Every Day**

Daily superconscious meditation will purify your mind, clarify your awareness, strengthen your immune system, reduce stress, and weaken and neutralize troublesome subconscious influences.

*I enjoy daily practice of superconscious meditation that illumines my mind and consciousness.*

## CONSCIOUS FOOD PREPARATION

### Roasted Vegetables With Pasta

Use pasta made with ordinary flour if you don't have a problem with gluten (wheat protein). If using gluten-free pasta, experiment to discover the best product and the best way to cook it for results that please you.

Servings 5 to 6

five medium size carrots, cut in 1 to 2 inch lengths  
4 medium size beets, peeled and sliced 1/2 inch thick  
handful of asparagus spears, tough bottoms removed

1. Put carrots and beets in a roasting pan and drizzle with olive oil. Put in 410F (210C) oven on middle rack. Roast for at least one hour until tender. Add asparagus during the final ten minutes. Remove vegetables from oven, cover to keep warm.

2. Cook 1 pound (453 grams) of pasta and drain.

3. Add roasted vegetables, at least 1/4 cup (59ml) olive oil, two tablespoons (30ml) lemon juice, and black pepper to taste. If you like garlic, add 3 smashed garlic cloves. Toss pasta with vegetables, and serve. Optional: add chopped black olives, feta cheese or parmesan cheese, and chopped parsley.





Discovering the Sacred  
in Everyday Life

## Practices That Enable Us to Live Divinely Now

*Ellen Grace O'Brian*

In the midst of activities it can be tempting to think that tomorrow will be more convenient for our spiritual practices, healthy lifestyle routines, meditation, or metaphysical study. The mind may suggest “tomorrow” for the implementation of spiritual discipline: *I will meditate long and deep tomorrow; I will read that special article or study that unique commentary on the Yoga Sutra tomorrow.* If frequent delaying of what we know is best is allowed to weaken our will, we may soon notice that we haven’t scheduled time for what is really important. Fortunately, we are innately inclined to live in the highest way and will want to return to it when we wander from it. When we notice that we are too outwardly focused, too involved in mundane tasks without allowing enough time to reflect and be aware, that is when to make necessary changes. Today is for spiritual practice and self-care. Not tomorrow.

Paramahansa Yogananda advised people to “make a daily appointment with God and to keep it by sitting to meditate.” The contemporary sage, Baba Hari Dass, wrote: “There are no holidays in yoga. For those who choose to live an awakened life, the disciplines that support it are viewed as a natural, desirable way to live every day.”

Yoga is the returning of attention and awareness to the Self. This is why it is attractive to live a yogic life. Having useful routines helps us overcome the tendencies to be distracted, discouraged, or lazy from time to time.

In the *Yoga Sutra*, Patanjali mentions several obstacles to superconscious meditation. One of them is inconsistent practice. If we allow emotions, moods, or passing inspirations to determine when, how often, and how long or deeply we meditate, we

quickly become familiar with that obstacle. Getting out of bed at four a.m. feeling that enlightenment is just a pranayama away, then staying in bed the next day thinking we shouldn't try to meditate when we're so tired, is a sure way to quickly weaken our resolve. Meditating for an hour or more one day and not at all the next, or meditating only when we feel like it, should cause us to confront our erratic behavior and decide to engage in right actions.

Paramahansa Yogananda recommended that we live with conscious awareness of God. To do this read spiritual teachings every day. Such reading elevates our thoughts, helps us focus on life's higher purpose, encourages right action, and provides insight into the transformation of consciousness that occurs with spiritual realization. Meditate more than you read. This instruction is consistent with Patanjali's observation that there is a distinction between realization and information.

The truth-bearing wisdom that results from samadhi is distinct from and beyond the knowledge obtained from books, testimony, or inference. – *Sutra 1:49*

Reading is meant to inspire and elicit revelations of inner knowledge, it is not intended to fortify the intellect with information.

Meditation is a way to know our true Self. Without Self-awareness, what we study are only words. Words, while perhaps encouraging, cannot satisfy the heart's desire for awakening.

Constant thinking about or endeavoring to be aware of the reality of God enables us to avoid the habit of Self- and God-forgetfulness as we gracefully and steadily grow to emotional and spiritual maturity.

Ellen Grace O'Brian is senior minister and spiritual director of  
Center for Spiritual Enlightenment

1146 University Avenue, San Jose, California 95126

Tel: 408-283-0221 info@csecenter.org www.csecenter.org



MOVIE REVIEW Roy Eugene Davis  
1 to 10 Rating: 7-1/2

# AWAKE

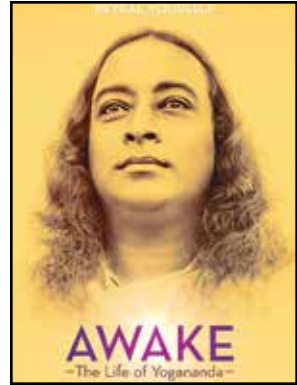
– The Life of Yogananda –

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Three years ago, in northern California, I briefly talked with one of the producers of the film when it was in the early stages of production. I then hoped that it would be a comprehensive story about my guru's life and his mission to share knowledge and his spiritual energy with truth seekers in all walks of life.

When I first viewed the film, in a small theater in Atlanta, Georgia, more than one year ago, I was a mildly disappointed. It doesn't provide comprehensive information about what Yogananda was and represented. I confide here that I have some "inside" experience and insights as a disciple who met him in 1949, was ordained by him in 1951, and chosen by him to be the minister of the Self-Realization Fellowship Center in Phoenix, Arizona, for 2 years after he passed on March 7, 1952.

A common complaint of many viewers is that the film shows events which are not relevant—Hitler's soldiers in Germany, bombing of Japan, sensational newspaper headlines, Sri Yukteswar's body being prepared for burial, and the departure from Yogananda's organization, 85 years ago, of a swami he brought from India to help him with his work in America. What Yogananda taught and the increasing influence of his life and teachings since his passing is not clearly explained.

Actors portray scenes of Yogananda in his early years being blessed as an infant by Lahiri Mahasaya and meeting his guru, Sri Yukteswar. An opportunity to dramatize a unique event was overlooked when, after Sri Yukteswar's passing in 1936, instead of featuring Yogananda's meditative experience of seeing and

talking with his guru, a hand, Sri Yukteswar's we have to presume, touches his shoulder to comfort or reassure him in a hotel room in Mumbai (then Bombay), India.

Some viewers who, for the first time, saw photographs and a few film clips of Yogananda's travels in America and India, and public meetings in the 1920s and 30s when he lectured to large audiences, were emotionally responsive and appreciative.

Several celebrities and other people who didn't personally know Paramahansa Yogananda and don't represent his Kriya Yoga tradition appear in brief segments to say how unique he was. They sometimes distract attention from the story, confuse viewers, or add nothing of significance to the overall presentation. As the movie concludes, one of them makes what is supposed to be a profound comment that is simplistic and disrespectful in relationship to scenes that immediately precede it.

Although small SRF groups in several countries are shown, it would have been informative to have also shown some of the beautiful temples and retreat centers in America and India and large gatherings of people who attend lectures and classes.

The background voice of the person who occasionally speaks as Yogananda is weak and not always clearly audible.

Following screenings in more than 150 theaters in America, the movie was widely distributed in Germany (in more than 30 theaters), Italy, Switzerland, France, South America, and India.

Although I have not recently talked with a member of the Board of Directors of Self-Realization Fellowship, I cannot believe that they are completely pleased with it. If our guru saw it, I know he would recommend some changes.

About *AWAKE*, one person said, "It's better than nothing, but not as good as it could, and should, have been!" After five years of travel and endeavor by the producers, there must be hundreds of hours of unused film and video, and much archival material, with which to produce another, more satisfying movie, perhaps for devotees rather than for a general audience.

If you have not seen the movie, see it for what is of value in it. Use your discrimination to overlook or disregard scenes and comments which are not significant.



Sri Yukteswar and Paramahansa Yogananda, India 1935

An AWAKE DVD from Self-Realization Fellowship  
can be ordered with subtitles in Spanish, French,  
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From [www.srfbooks.org](http://www.srfbooks.org)

*Postscript to the Movie Review*

It would have been better with more elevating and  
consciousness-expanding (*sattvic*) characteristics,  
absence of unnecessary, excessive (*rajasic*) comments  
by some guest presenters, no gross or dark (*tamasic*)  
themes, and improved coordination of events.

*Note: Sattwa* (luminosity), *rajas* (movement, activity),  
and *tamas* (heaviness, inertia) are three influential  
energetic attributes in the expressive aspect of ultimate  
Reality and pervading the universe.

Read a little.  
Meditate more.  
Think of God all the time.  
– Paramahansa Yogananda  
1893 – 1952

## Mystical Reflections

**mystical** Of or relating to spiritual or ultimate Reality beyond the range of the mind and senses, which may be directly known by intuition, experience, or revelation.

When righteousness decreases and unrighteousness increases, I manifest for the protection of virtue, to remove nonvirtue, and to restore righteousness.

– *Bhagavad Gita 4:7,8*,

*INNER MEANING*

When uplifting influences decrease and inertia and confusion increase, the expressive aspect of ultimate Reality emanates supportive influences to nurture and enliven processes of evolution.

Mastery of pranayama removes darkness that veils the light of the pure Self. By pranayama practice, mental processes are ordered and clarified, freeing attention to focus on ultimate Reality. Meditative internalization of attention is done by withdrawing attention, awareness, and vital forces from externals and directing them inward. Supreme mastery of the senses is then acquired.

– *Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras 2:52–55*

Meditation results in divine revelation. Out of the reality of our being arises the realization of the pure Self—our true nature—by the illumination of our consciousness.

– *Lahiri Mahasaya (1828 – 1895)*

Perform duties with your hands; let your heart [essence] be with God.

– *Kabir (1440 – 1518)*

## HOW TO KNOW WHAT TO BELIEVE ...

### About Our True Nature and Ultimate Reality

Until our true nature and ultimate Reality are known by direct experience, we can:

- Obtain information from people whose mental attitudes and personal behaviors reflect their clear state of consciousness and emotional maturity.
- Use discriminative intelligence and intuition to contemplate (examine with expectation of discovery) our true nature and ultimate Reality.
- Be proficient in superconscious meditation that unveils our innate qualities, enlarges our capacities to comprehend the truth, and brings forth innate knowledge of our pure essence and higher realities.

While belief alone cannot completely satisfy our desire to know the truth, it can provide emotional support and motivate us to profoundly investigate the facts of life as we endeavor to be more spiritually conscious.

Believing that we can and will be spiritually enlightened awakens our dormant spiritual forces, improves concentration, clarifies our consciousness, helps us to be optimistic about our near and distant future well-being, and inspires us to rise above the influence of inertia that tends to blur our awareness and keep it confined to a small sense of self-identity.

Our spiritual path\* is more satisfying and productive when we are Self-confident and have faith that we will be spiritually enlightened in our current incarnation.

\* A *spiritual path* includes actions that can remove conditions that interfere with spiritual awakening and support endeavors to be Self-realized. *Self-confidence* is conviction supported by knowledge of our true Self or essence. *Faith* is firm belief or trust without evidence of the existence of what we want to know or experience. Faith based on misinformation or flawed perceptions is self-defeating. Faith based on knowledge or awareness of possibilities can be transformative.

Center for Spiritual Awareness  
**NEWS and HIGHLIGHTS**

We look forward to the many opportunities to provide ministry services during this new year.

The 5th International Kriya Yoga Congress March 10 – 12 in San Jose, California, will have more than 500 participants. Reservations should be made now.

Several of Mr. Davis' books were recently published in Turkey. Arrangements for translation and publishing were made by our representative Sabiha Betul. The books are in stores and can be ordered online in that country. The Internet contact for the publisher in Turkey is on our Web site **csa-davis.org**

The inside back cover of *Truth Journal* has contacts for Mr. Davis' books in the UK, India, Italy, and Germany. Most of his books in India are English editions. *Paramahansa Yogananda As I Knew Him* is also in Hindi and Tamil.

Our Web site has books in Spanish and booklets in English, German, French, Russian, and other languages which can be read or downloaded free. We appreciate our CSA members and friends who translate our literature. Video and audio talks are provided on our Web site—also ministry news. Frequently view our Web site and send a link to your spiritual friends.  
**csa-davis.org**

Some of our e-books were widely distributed during the past four years. *An Easy Guide to Meditation* 48-page booklet, free on Amazon and Apple Web sites, was downloaded more than 150,000 times. Frequent regular printings during the past few years brings the number of copies distributed to more than 350,000.

If you are planning to be at one of our meditation retreats this year, to have the most benefits, read the information on page 28.



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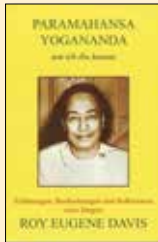
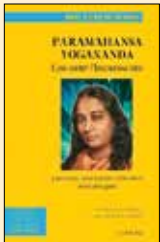
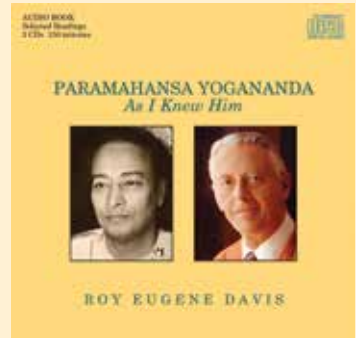
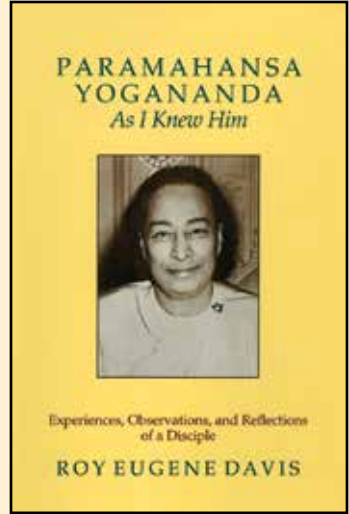
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## How to Have Optimum Benefits At a CSA Meditation Retreat

The purpose of a retreat is to withdraw from ordinary activities and detach attention from them so that the body can be rested and renewed, the mind can be calmed, and spiritual awareness can be enhanced. CSA headquarters in the low mountains of northeast Georgia provides an ideal supportive environment for experiencing the benefits of a quiet meditation retreat. It is an ashram: a secluded place for inner refreshment.

Reserve attendance when travel plans are definite so you will not have to cancel your visit a few days before the retreat and inconvenience others who would like to be here.

Sheets, blankets, and towels are provided in guest houses, which have a kitchen where vegetarian meals can be prepared during private retreats. (See below.)

Forget your secular concerns when you are here. Rest or sleep more than usual. Exercise moderately; strenuous activity may cause your attention to be too outgoing. Walk on the CSA grounds, not in the woods which are on private property or on Lake Rabun Road. Lake Rabun Beach is four miles from CSA.

Avoid much socializing and unnecessary talking. Be inward directed and allow others to be more inward. Use free time for reflection and meditation.

Dress informally but modestly. No shorts or garments with illustrations or slogans. Be here with inward purpose and firm resolve to be spiritually conscious; not here to attract attention or impress others.

During private retreats in May and September, a morning and afternoon meditation is scheduled. At summer retreats Mr. Davis speaks each morning at 10 a.m. and conducts Kriya Yoga initiation Thursdays at 1 p.m.; afternoon and evening workshops with CSA ministers; hatha yoga sessions optional. At autumn retreats Mr. Davis speaks at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.; meditation and an educational video in the evening. Vegetarian meals are served at the summer and late autumn retreats.

## Meditation Retreats At CSA Headquarters



Travel map on our web site: [www.csa-davis.org](http://www.csa-davis.org)  
Click on Retreats page

Meditation and lifestyle routines taught by Roy Eugene Davis and CSA ministers. Kriya Yoga initiation Thursdays 1 p.m. during week long retreats. Guest houses. Vegetarian meals. Donation basis.

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Weeks: June 13 – 17    July 11 – 15    August 8 – 12

Weekends: October 22 – 23    November 19 – 20

Holy Season Meditation December 3 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

### 2016 Private Retreats

May 9 – 13    16 – 20    23 – 27

September 12 – 15    19 – 23    26 – 30

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### Retreat Reservations

Mail this form, phone, or e-mail, [info@csa-davis.org](mailto:info@csa-davis.org)

Dates \_\_\_\_\_ Time of arrival \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Travel directions, see web site or mark here [ ] for mailed copy.

Prefer a CSA guest house [ ] Will stay at a motel [ ]

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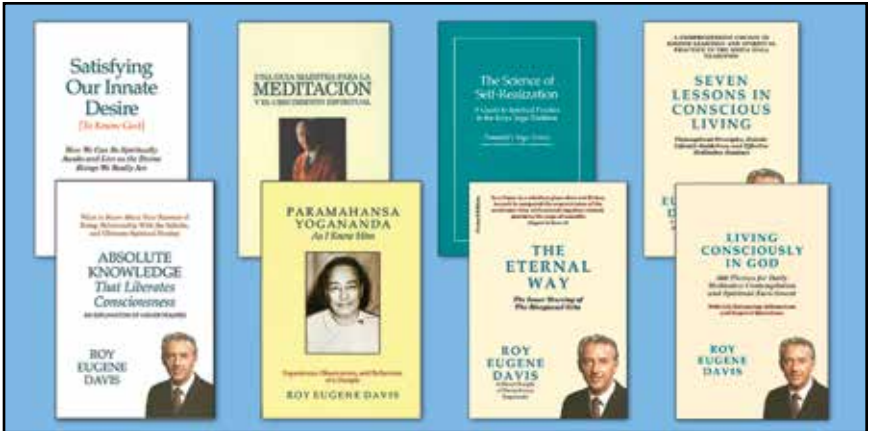
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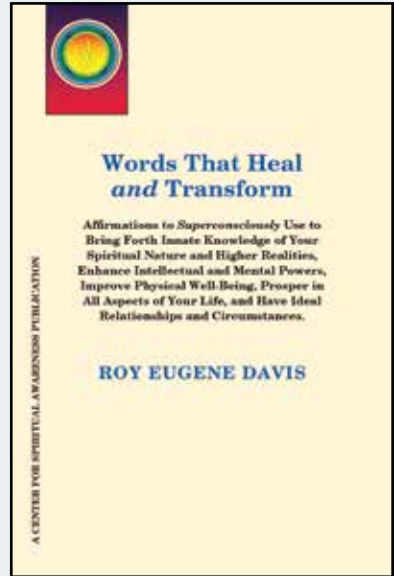
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