

GLOSSARY OF SANSKRT TERMS

A

abhinivesa—fear of death or the life-instinct
abhyantara vrttis—introspective thoughts
acala—steady or inactive
acara—conduct
adhibhautika—relating to matter
adhidaivika—relating to celestial objects
adhikara—fitness
adhyatma-prasada—purity of the spirit
adhyatmika—relating to the spirit
agni—fire
agni tattva—fiery element
ahamkara—ego
ahimsa—non-violence
ajapa gayatri—the *gayatri mantra*; a type of *mantra* meditation
ajapajapa—spontaneous mental chanting
ajna cakra—nerve center between the eyebrows
akarma—inaction
akarta—actionless; non-doer
akasa—crown *cakra*
akasa tattva—the ether element
amaratva—immortality
amrta-pana—sipping the nectar
anahata cakra—cardial plexus
anahata nada—the subtle inner sound
anima—a siddhi enabling one to reduce oneself to microscopic size
anugraha—grace
anuloma viloma—a type of *pranayama* done through alternate nostrils
apana vayu—one of the five vital airs located in the lower *cakras* and operating the reproductive and excretory systems
apara—lower
aparabhakti—devotion through which one realizes the universal form of God's all-pervading existence
aparavairagya—lower stage of non-attachment
aparigraha—non-possession
arcana—applying sandalwood paste to the forehead
ardha matsyendrasana—half-twist pose
ardhanarisvara—half-male, half-female God
arjava—straight-forwardness; simplicity; humility
artha—acquisition of wealth
asanas—*yogic* postures or poses
asang—God-minded

asmita—sense of ego
astanga yoga—*yoga* of the eight-fold steps
asteya—non-stealing
astikya—faith
atimanasa—super-mind
atmajeta—conqueror of self
atman—soul
atmanivedana—surrender of self to God
aum—the sacred syllable
avarana—the veil of illusion
avidya—delusion or ignorance

B

baddha padmasana—bound lotus pose
bali—sacrificial offering
bandhas—locks
basti—one of the six cleansing processes which purges the lower intestines
Bhagavad Gita—a holy Indian scripture in the form of the sermon given by Lord *Krsna* to Arjuna
Bhagavata dharma—religion outlined in the holy Indian scripture *Srimad Bhagavata*
bhajana—devotional song; hymn
bhakti yoga—*yoga* devotion
bhastrika—bellow-blowing breaths; one of the eight major *pranayamas*
bhautika siddhis—material powers
bhoga—pleasure-seeking
bhogi—man of worldly pursuits
bhramari—one of the eight major *pranayamas* performed with a humming sound like that of a bee
bhru—between the eyebrows
bhrucakra—a nerve center between the eyebrows
bhrumadhya—the region between the eyebrows
bhujangasana—cobra pose
bhunamanasana—a *yogic* posture
bija—seed
bindu—sexual fluid
Brahma—God the creator
brahmacaris—those practicing celibacy
brahmacarya—celibacy
brahmagranthi—a tangle of nerves centered in the abdominal region
Brahman—absolute cosmic reality; the unmanifested absolute
brahmarandha—crown *cakra*
brahmarsi—yogi who has completed the practice of *yoga* and identifies himself with *Brahma*

Brahmasutras—*yogic* scripture
buddhi—intellect; discriminative faculty

C

cakras—nerve centers or plexuses
cala—dynamic or active
calana—moving
citta—mind-stuff

D

dama—self-restraint
dana—charity
darsana—visual perception or sight of God or *guru*
darsi—seer
dasya—servantship to God; a stage of *bhakti yoga*
desa—region
daya—compassion
devadatta—sub-*prana* which induces yawning and separates the body from its subtle form
dhairya—patience
dhananjaya—sub-*prana* which breaks up food for producing energy
dharana—focusing the mind on a single subject
dharma—practice of religion
dhauti—one of the six cleansing processes which rids the body of phlegm and fat
dhirasana—a *yogic* posture
dhrti—steadfastness
dhyana—meditation; concentration of the mind
diksa—initiation
dirgha pranayama—taking slow, deep breaths
divya caksu—divine eye or divine vision
divyadesasevana—worship of the divine land
divya sarira—divine body
divya sparsa—divine touch
dohana—milking
drsta—seer
dvaita—duality
dvesa—aversions

E

ekagravastha—state of concentration

ekendriya vairagya—non-attachment resulting from firm control over any one sense

G

Ganapati—the elephant God
gandha—smell
gauna dhyana—ordinary meditation
gayatri mantra—sacred incantation
ghadi—24 minutes
Gheranda Samhita—*yogic* scripture written by Sage Gheranda
ghi—clarified butter
gnana—see jnana
Goraksa Paddhati—*yogic* scripture written by Yogi Goraksanatha
grahana—the process of comprehension
grahitr—one who comprehends
grahya—that which is comprehended
granthi—a tangle of nerves in the body
guna—quality of nature
guru—spiritual master

H

halasana—plough pose
ham—subtle sound associated with the ether region
hamsa mantra japa—a type of *mantra* meditation
hatha yoga—the external disciplines of *yoga* concerned with the purification of the body
Hatha Yoga-Pradipika—a *yogic* scripture written by Yogi Svātmaṛama
havana—sacred fire
hri—shame

I

ida—one of the three main air passages in the body
indriya nigraha—control of the sense organs
isitva—a *siddhi* enabling one to create, sustain, and destroy matter at will
Isvara—God
isvaranugraha—the grace of God
isvarapranidhana—to dedicate to God all one does in body, mind and speech
isvarapujana—worship of God

J

jada samadhi—static *samadhi*, in which the body does not move and the mind remains unconscious
jagad guru—universal *guru*
jala tattva—water element
japa—recitation of *mantra*
jiva—being
jivana mukti—liberation in one's lifetime
jivatman—personal soul
jnana—knowledge
jnana yoga—yoga of knowledge
Jnanesvari Gita—commentaries on the *Bhagavad Gita* written by Saint Jnanesvara
jyoti—inner light
jyoti darsana—seeing the light of the *atman*
jyotirdhyana—meditation on the divine light
jyotirmaya-luminous

K

kama—desires; sensuality
kama sena—a large group of cupids
kapalabhati—quick successive breaths; one of the six cleansing processes which cleanses the breathing passages
karma—action
karma sanyasa—renunciation of action
khanjanasana—a *yogic* posture
khecari—a type of *mudra* in which the tongue is locked in a cavity in the skull
kirtana—devotional singing
krama mukti—liberation by stages
kriya—activity; physical movement; subtle inner process
Krsna—a name of God; a *mantra*
krukala—sub-*prana* which activates hunger and thirst
ksama—forgiveness
ksiptavastha—mental state of distraction or perturbation
kumbhaka—withholding of the breath
kundalini—supreme spiritual energy usually lying dormant at the base of the spine
kurma—sub-*prana* which opens and closes the eyes
kurmasana—a *yogic* posture

L

laghima—a *siddhi* enabling one to be very light and fly
lam—subtle sound associated with the earthy region
laya—dissolution; absorption
laya samadhi—state of dissolution or sublimation of mind
lila—divine activity of God

M

maha—great
Mahabharata—holy Indian scripture
mahabhutas—major elements composing the human body
mahavrata—a great vow
Mahesa—God the destroyer
mahima—a *siddhi* enabling one to be very large
mala—impurities
manasa—mind
manipura cakra—solar plexus or nerve centered
manisi—wise among men
manonigraha—control of the mind
mantra—sacred incantation
mantri diksa—initiation through *mantra*
Manu—a demi-god; first super-human
mati—will or intelligence
mitahara—temperance in eating
moksa—liberation
mrtyu—the passage of death
mudhavastha—mental state of stupefaction
mudra—a special type of posture or pose with developed *pranic* activity
mukti—liberation
mulabandha—a kind of *mudra*, basal-lock
mulabandhasana—a *yogic* posture
muladhara cakra—the basal plexus or subtle nerve center
mumuksuta—earnest desire for liberation
murcha—*yogic* swoon; one of the eight major *pranayamas*

N

nada—subtle spontaneous sound
nadanusandhana—tuning the mind with subtle inner sound
nadis—tubular channels in the body, such as veins, arteries, etc.
naga—sub-*prana* which opens and closes the wind-pipe
naiskarmya—inaction
nama-sankirtana—changing God's name
Narayana—a name of God

nauli—one of the six cleansing processes which cleanses the abdominal region
neti—one of the six cleansing processes which cleanses the nostrils and air passages
nididhayasana—practice of meditation
nidra—yogic sleep
nirbija samadhi—the higher state of *samadhi* in which the mind dissolves and becomes non-mind; *samadhi* without the seed of desire; *samadhi* without subject-object distinction
nirguna—formless
nirguna dhyana—meditation on the formless or divine light
nirodhavastha—state of restraint
nirvicara—without thoughts
nirvikalpa samadhi—see *nirbija samadhi*
nirvitarkanugata samapatti—stage of meditation with gross direct experience of the supporting object without deliberation
niskama—without motivation
niskamabhakti—profound devotion
niskam karma yoga—*yoga* of desireless action
niyamas—moral observances

O

om—see 'aum'

P

padangusthasana—a *yogic* posture
padasevana—worshipping of the *guru's* or God's feet
padmasana—lotus pose
panca mahabhuta—the five basic or major elements
pancanga sevana—worship with five limbs
pap—sin
para bhakti—devotion through which one becomes one with Brahman; profound devotion
paramapada—*samadhi*
paramatma—God
paratantra dhyana—dependent meditation
para vairagya—complete detachment
parigraha—to possess
parsvasana—a *yogic* scripture
pascimottanasana—posterior stretch
pascima madhyama—rear median path
pasyati—sees
pingala—one of the three main air passages in the body

plavini—one of the eight major *pranayamas*
Prajapatis—the progenitors of mankind
prakamya—a *siddhi* enabling one to materialize anything at will
prakrti—nature
prakrtilaya—a type of *murcha* in which there is no physical or astral awareness but only identification with the causal body
pramana—thoughts based on experience which are devoid of doubt
prana—vital air; the vital force; *prana* residing in the heart and which operates the breathing mechanism
pranakriya—activation of *prana* energy
pranapana—two of the five vital airs, *prana* and *apana*
prana samyama—control and mastery over *prana*
pranavamantra—the *mantra* 'aum'
pranayama—breath control
pranopasana—spiritual practice involving *prana*
pranotthana—the release of *prana* or vital air
prapatti yoga—a type of *bhakti yoga*
prapti—a *siddhi* enabling one to touch anything, however far away
prasada—purity of the spirit
prasantavahita—concentration of the mind; state of pacified mind
pratyahara—withdrawal of the mind from sense objects
prayanakala—time of forthgoing
prthvitattva—earthly element
punya—good deeds
Puranas—Indian scriptures, numbering eighteen
purnakarmakrta yogi—one performing complete actions
purna yoga—complete path of *yoga*
purusottama—the supreme being
purva madhyama—front median path

R

raga—attachments; attractions
ragatmikabhakti—devotion involving total identification of the self with the deity
raja-yoga—the internal disciplines of *yoga*, concerned with the purification of the mind
rajarsi—one who is fit for entry into *Raja Yoga*
rajas—activity
rajasic—of or pertaining to *rajas*
rajoguna—qualities or forces of the active or passionate state of mind
ram—subtle sound associated with the fiery region
Rama—a name of God; a *mantra*
ramadhuna—repetition of *Rama mantra*
rasa—taste; nectar
rasanand samadhi—*samadhi* experienced through the sipping of nectar

rtambhara prajna—the highest wisdom based on the ultimate Truth or Reality
rudraganthi—a tangle of nerves centered between the eyebrows
rupa—sight of form or beauty

S

sabda—hearing
sabija samadhi—*samadhi* with mind or with the seed of desire; samadhi having subject-object or knower-known distinction
Sadasiva—a name of God
sadhaka-guru—a *guru* who is himself practicing yoga
sadhana—spiritual practice
sadyo-mukti—immediate liberation
saguna—having form
saguna dhyana—meditating on forms
sahjavastha—natural state; state of *sahaja samadhi*
sahaja yoga—a type of *karma yoga*
sahasradalpadma—thousand-petalled lotus at the crown of the head
sahasrara cakra—crown *cakra*
sakama—with desires or motivation
sakhya—friendship of God; a stage in *Bhakti*
sakti—energy
sakticalana—a type of *mudra*
saktipata—the transmission of spiritual energy from guru to disciple
sama—conciliatory conduct
samadhana—dissolution of all doubts
samadhi—state of super-consciousness and perfect bliss
saman—*prana* residing in the navel and operating the digestive system
samapatti—stage of meditation
sambhavi diksa—a type of initiation
sambhavi mudra—a type of *mudra*
samkhya—the *yoga* of knowledge; *jnana yoga*
samkhya darsana—the philosophy of *samkhya*
samprajnata samadhi—*samadhi* in which the clear and doubtless form of the goal is attained
samyama—restraint; trio of *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*
sananda samapatti—joyful stage of meditation
sanatana-eternal
sankalpa—volition
Sankarabhasya—*yogic* scripture by Sankaracarya
sanketa—secret sign or indication
sansari—one who lives a worldly life
santosa—contentment
sanyasi—renunciate of worldly life
saranagati—surrender to God

sarvangasana—shoulder stand
sasmita samapatti—self-realized stage of meditation
Satcidanand Iswara—God in the form of existence-consciousness-bliss
satkarma—six cleansing processes or acts of purification
satsampatti—the six divine qualities
sattva—purity
sattvaguna—the quality of purity of mind
sattvic—of or pertaining to *sattva*
sattviki buddhi—pure intellect
satya—truth
sauca—cleanliness; purification
savicara—with thought
savicara samapatti—reflective stage of meditation
savicaranugata samapatti—stage of meditation where experience is supported by the reflection of the mind
savitarka samapatti—deliberative stage of meditation
savitarkanugata samapatti—stage of meditation with gross direct experience of the supporting object along with deliberation of the mind
savikalpa samadhi—see *sabija samadhi*
sevaka—servant
siddha—a *guru* who has realized all the steps of *yoga*
siddha yoga—a type of *karma yoga*; *yoga* of the adepts who have accomplished the eight-fold miraculous powers of *yoga*
siddhantasravana—listening to the doctrines
siddhasana—adept pose
siddhi-miraculous power developed through *yogic* practice
sirsasana—head stand
sitali—one of the eight major *pranayamas*
sitkari—one of the eight major *pranayamas*
Siva—a name of God; a *mantra*
Sivapurana—holy Indian scripture depicting the life stories of *Siva*
Siva-Sakti—the universal male-female powers
Siva Samhita—*yogic* scripture
Siva-svarodaya—*yogic* scripture
smarana—remembering God's name
smrti—knowledge impressing previous experiences on the mind and senses; memory
soham—a *mantra*
sparsa—touch or feeling
sraddha—faith
sravana—listening
Srimad-Bhagavata—holy Indian scripture depicting the lives of 24 incarnations of Lord *Visnu*
sthirasana—steady pose
sthula—gross or physical
suddhi—physical and mental cleanliness

sukhasana—easy pose
suksma—subtle
sunyasunya—*samadhi*
surya bhedana—one of the eight major *pranayamas*
susumna—subtle median passage; one of the three main air passages in the body
svadhisthana cakra—sacral plexus or nerve center
svadhyaya—study of truth or scripture
svatantra—independent
swastikasana—a *yogic* posture

T

talu—palate
tamas—inertia
tamasic—of or pertaining to *tamas*
tamoguna—the qualities or forces of darkness or inertia of the mind
tandra—drowsiness
tantra—system of mystical rites
tapas—penance, mortification, austerity
tapasvi—one who performs penance
tarka yoga—a type of *karma yoga*
tarpana—oblation
tattva—element
tattvacintana—philosophical contemplation
tattva darsana—realization of the essence
tattva jnana—knowledge of the essence; philosophy
tejothyana—luminous meditation
titiksa—endurance or forbearance
trataka—one of the six cleansing processes which strengthens the eyes
turiya—another name for *samadhi*
turyavastha—*samadhi*
tyaga—withdrawal from possessions and social activities

U

udana—*prana* located in the throat which helps the digestive system and governs swallowing
uddiyana bandha—stomach lock
ujjayi—one of the eight major *pranayamas*
unmada—the delirious state
unmani—*samadhi*
Upanisadas—Indian scriptures comprising 108 books
uparati—indifference to carnal pleasures

upasana—worship
urdhvamukhi—upward-facing
urdhvareta—a perfect celibate whose sexual fluid is sublimated
utsaha—enthusiasm

V

vacaka guru—a *guru* who knows only scripture
vaidhi bhakti—devotion involving ceremonial worship
vairagya—non-attachment or renunciation
vajrasana—adamant pose
vam—subtle sound associated with the water region
vandana—bowing down
vasana—desires
vasikara vairagya—non-attachment resulting from mastery over all senses
vasitva—a *siddhi* enabling one to cause inanimate objects to move or animate objects to obey one's will
vayu –vital air
vayu tattva—airy element
Vedanta—Indian system of philosophy
Vedas—Indian scripture comprising four books
vedha diksa—a type of initiation
videhalaya—a type of *murcha* in which there is no physical awareness but only identification with the astral body
vikalpa—illusory thoughts due to doubt; a *vrtti*
viksepa—distractions
viksiptavastha—mental state of serenity
viparyaya—illusory thoughts due to lack of experience; a *vrtti*
virasana—brave pose
Visnu—God the maintainer
visnugranthi—tangle of nerves situated in the palate region
visuddha buddhi—pure intellect or wisdom
visuddhakhya cakra—the pharyngeal plexus or nerve center
viveka—discrimination
vrksasana—tree pose
vrsasana—bull pose
vrttis—waves of thoughts
vyana—*prana* which pervades the whole body and operates the circulatory system
vyatireka vairagya—non-attachment resulting from subdued senses

Y

yajna—ceremonial sacrifice

yam—subtle sound associated with the airy region
yama—restraints for moral training
yatamana vairagya—non-attachment resulting from self-restraint
yatrakamavasayitva—a *siddhi* enabling one to change the qualities of matter at will
yoga—union with God
yoga bhrasta—one fallen from *yoga*
Yoga Darsana—commentary on the *yoga* aphorisms of Patanjali
yogagni—*yogic* fire
yoga sastra—*yogic* scripture
yogavasistha—*yogic* scripture by Sage Vasistha
yoni mudra—a type of *mudra*