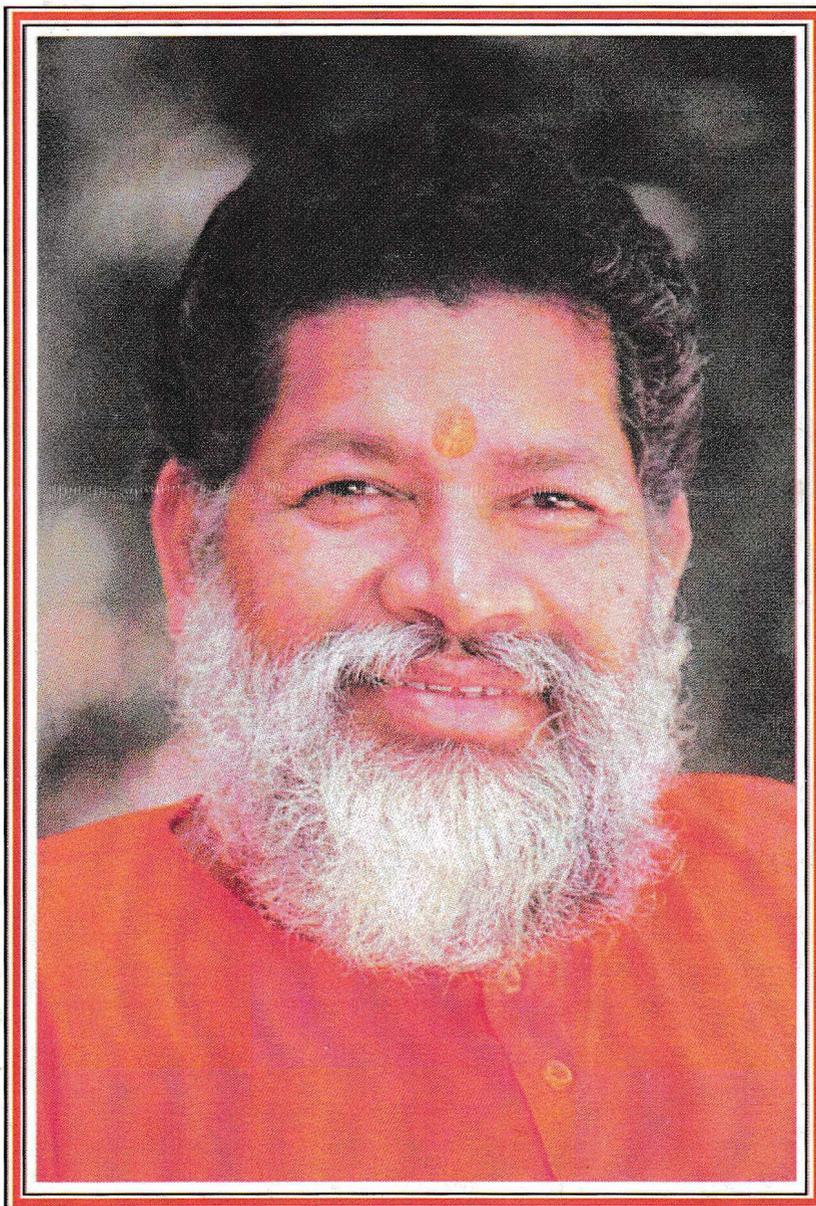




Sambodh Center for Human Excellence

SAMBODH SOCIETY



2007 SCHE Inaugural Event

Commemorative Book

A Prayer for Spiritual Growth

*Oh God give me strength and wisdom
to appreciate and understand Vedanta*

Let me not despise my teacher or neighbors

Let my family, friends and people be happy

*Oh God! Give me the metaphysical insight
and existential wisdom*

*Take away jealousy, hatred, vanity and
passions of the flesh from me*

*Make me a fit instrument of thy love,
thy will and thy works*

*Bless me to see thee everywhere
and to serve thee in everybody*

SWAMI BODHANANDA SARASWATI



ॐ एकदन्ताय विद्महे।

वक्रतुण्डाय धीमहि ॥

तन्नो दन्ती प्रचोदयात् ॥

ॐ गं गणपतये नमः ॥

**I VISUALIZE AND MEDITATE UPON THE SINGLE-TUSKED GANESHA,
THE LORD WITH THE CURVED TRUNK.
MAY LORD GANESHA INSPIRE AND MOTIVATE ME
IN ALL MY EFFORTS.**

Sambodh Vision

We walked long distances on foot, we prayed long hours on our knees, we worked hard into the wee hours of the early morning and finally the Sambodh Center for Human Excellence has come into existence in flesh and blood. All our people who shared our dream and helped us financially and otherwise are rightfully proud about this achievement. We have 32 acres of wooded land and a nearly 6000 sq. foot building area to play out our dreams—our dreams for humanity and for every individual involved.

No task can be accomplished without dedicated, self-giving team work. Such a mindset in work unleashes the vast hidden human potential. The experience of self actualization in interactive enterprises is called *moksha* or total freedom. There is no freedom in isolation and idleness.

When you dream with your eyes open it becomes a vision. It is an ability to look into the future and mould it according to our aspirations and ideals. Left to itself, Nature is a wasteful, repetitive playing out of contradictory streams of energies. It is the gaze of consciousness that makes the dance of Nature meaningful and an experience of exquisite beauty. Shakti gets her cue from the appreciative glances of Shiva. A vision is Shiva's dance with Shakti.

Sambodh Aranya, where the Sambodh Center for Human Excellence is situated, is a holy land. The purest of thoughts the noblest of feelings, the grandest of ideals and the most sublime of actions will be cultivated in this pure land. This land is not only to preserve the best from the past, but also to create the best for the future. This land is not for any sectarian pursuit but for the pursuit of the best from all traditions and belief systems. This land will be a common place for deliberation and dialogue—for the uninhibited flowering of Divinity in humanity.

That does not mean that we have no focus. But our focus is not blind. Our focus is not exclusive. Our focus is all that is best in the Indian Wisdom tradition. That is our specialization and passion. The spirit of Indian wisdom tradition is inclusive. The most appropriate metaphor for this spirit is a salad bowl, not a melting pot. Individuals retain their identities while being a part of an appetizing and colorful salad, not a crushed, boiled and watered-down dark broth. Sambodh believes that the Indian wisdom tradition has to be interpreted and applied in the context of advances in methodologies of knowing and experiencing. Spirituality has to be practiced in a globally interactive world, through the medium of pro-action and interaction. This is how we understand the meaning of the highest Indian ideal: non-violent, dialogical pursuit of Excellence and Truth.

The human condition is inseparable from the flora and fauna of the planet. Purity of water and air and the fertility of soil are critical to human survival. Hence, protection of the environment is the highest spiritual value. The Hindus look upon Mother Earth as Goddess.

We also believe that unless and until we see a smile on the face of the last and least, no single individual can realize the full flourishing of his or her spirit. Equality or equal opportunity is an essential condition of humanity and freedom. Hence, we believe in voluntary simplicity, austerity and the just sharing of limited natural resources—keeping our hapless brethren, children and grandchildren in mind. At the same time it is imperative that talent is recognized and encouraged and hard work is rewarded. It is the heartfelt compassion of the powerful for the powerless—a restlessness with the suffering of others—that can save humankind. As Mahatma Gandhi put it, "A spiritual person doesn't rest till the last person finds his or her peace." Spirituality is eternal vigilance.

These are the thoughts that inspire me as I contemplate on the future work of the Sambodh Society in America and the Sambodh Center for Human Excellence in Kalamazoo. I wish the Sambodh team all success in realizing these noble ideals. I also seek Lord Ganesha's and guru's abundant blessings upon us all.

Jai Jai Gananayaka!

Love,

Swami Bodhananda

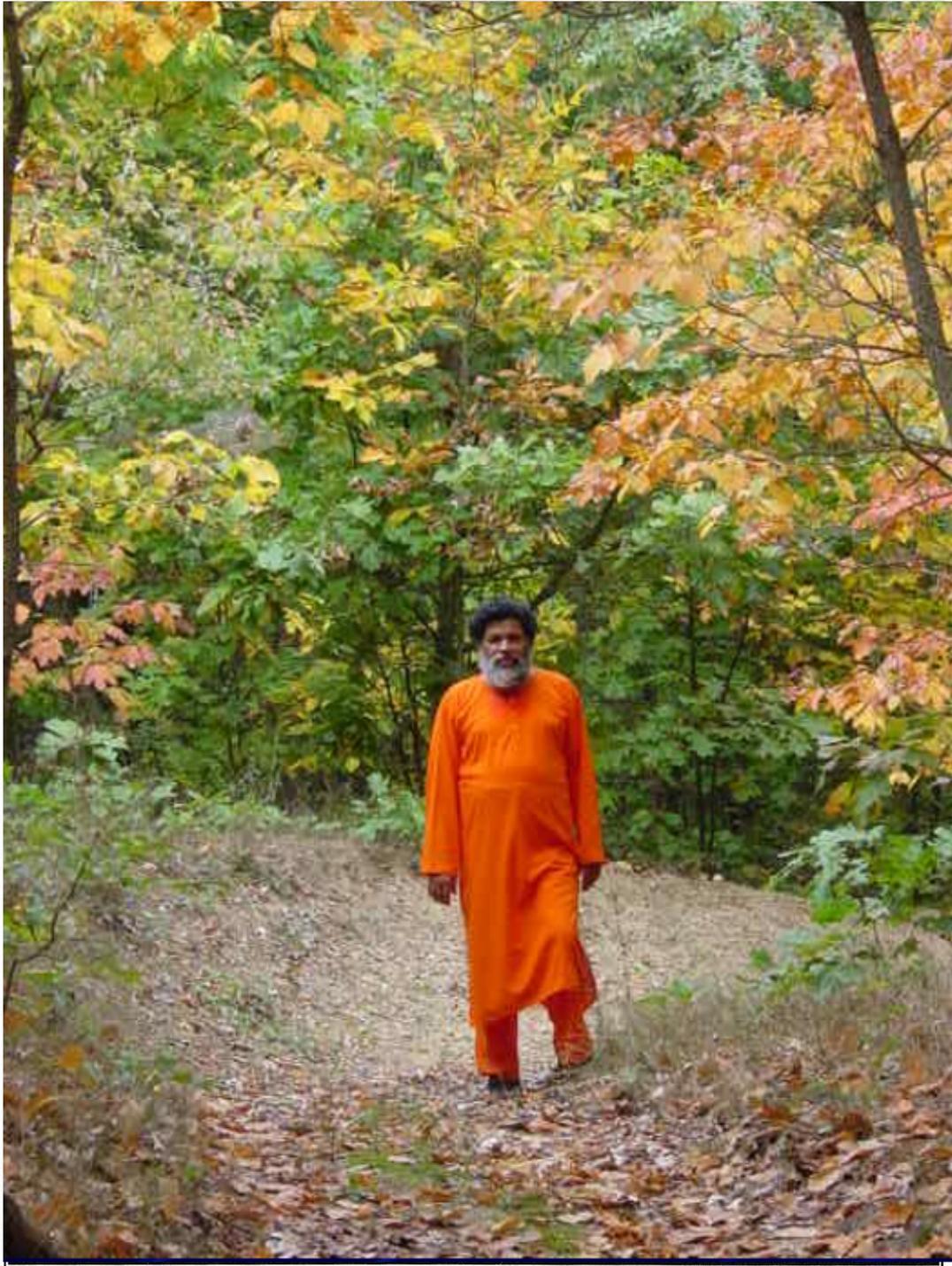


Photo Credit for all US photos: Dr. Ruth Harring

CHITTA SHODAKHAM MUKTI SADHANAM

To purify the mind there is only one method. Merely chanting a mantra you will not purify the mind. Merely doing puja (ritual) you will not purify the mind. The only way to purify your mind is to do your work and offer it to the Lord, and whenever the result comes, take it happily with no complaints.

SWAMI BODHANANDA

Mission and Objectives of the Sambodh Center for Human Excellence

a project of
The Sambodh Society, Inc.

The Center is about two and a half miles west of the Kalamazoo River in rural Cooper Township near Kalamazoo, Michigan. This beautiful 32 acre wooded land rests atop a series of slopes in an area formed by glacial deposits 10,000 years ago. The forested beach-like sand, with occasional bands of rocks and boulders, rolls towards the west, overlooking the Kalamazoo River Valley that cradles the Kalamazoo River. Oak, maple, tulip, dogwood, cedar, and the rare elm tree, along with many other varieties of hardwoods, cover the grounds. Trails formerly used by hunters, hikers and off-road vehicles crisscross the land, inviting those who enjoy solitude to traverse the property on foot, in sneakers or snowshoes! Fox, deer, the white owl and box turtles have all been sighted. Fragrant wild roses bloom in June. And, Michigan's state flower, the trillium—a protected flower—has been sighted in the low land.

Our Objectives

- To maintain a non-denominational facility for spiritual study, dialogue, practice and dissemination of such experience knowledge in the community at large, free of discrimination in the name of religion, race, language or gender, as all are the children of God.
- To teach the unity of religious teachings and wisdom traditions of the world, and to create a culture of mutual respect and understanding through dialogue, common prayer, meditation and shared experiences.
- To work for the synergy of science and religion grounded in the ecological awareness of 'celebrating diversity' and the 'spirit of co-existence.'
- To teach, especially, the wisdom of Vedanta as expounded by Sri Sankaracharya (788-820 A.D.) and exemplified in the lives of Sri Ramakrishna (1839-89), Sri Ramana Maharshi (1879-1950) and Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)
- To teach the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Upanishads*, the *Brahmasutras*, the *Yoga Sutras* and Vedantic works of Sankaracharya.
- To study the great religious texts of the world—e.g. the *Bible*, the *Koran*, the *Dhammapada* of the Buddha, etc.—and to identify their common teachings.
- To offer retreats of various durations, courses of study for the serious student and programs for youth, families, adults, professionals, managers and the public.
- To maintain a Vedantic teacher training facility.
- To support the ongoing spiritual work of Swami Bodhananda by propagating Swamiji's uniquely modern spiritual vision and message grounded in the wisdom of Vedanta, and by disseminating his lectures and publications in various formats.
- To inspire an order of *sannyasins* dedicated to the service of humanity.

About Swami Bodhananda Saraswati

Swami Bodhananda Saraswati is an engaging speaker with a lively humor and a keen sense of observation. He has the unique gift of being able to translate Vedanta—the ancient wisdom tradition of India—for the needs and interests of the modern individual and global society. Swamiji is a living example of renunciation and fullness, remaining outwardly active in the world while inwardly detached. Spiritually awakened, Swamiji inspires others to their fullest capacity through his love for life and humanity, his wit and capacity to enjoy, his deeply rooted values and integrity, and his vast spiritual vision, having attained that spiritual capstone—the capacity to see everything and everyone as an expression of that One integral joyful whole.

Activities

1. Annual Earth Day Puja & Clean Up
2. Trail Walks & Hiking
3. Study Group
4. Classes in Vedanta, Meditation, Sanskrit and Yoga
5. Satsangs and Pujas in Homes
6. Public Talks & Cultural Programs
7. Gita & Management Talks and Seminars
8. Annual Retreats with Swami Bodhananda
9. Sambodh Day

Volunteerism Invited

We would like your help—in whatever way *you* would like to volunteer. Please contact us and let us know how *you* can help out—with an activity, with a service, with a talent or skill, with your time, with *your* professional expertise, or with materials or equipment—and we happily receive your service.

Visit Our Website

We maintain a website at www.sambodh.com providing information and background about:

Swami Bodhananda, Swamiji's US Tour & Programs, Directions to Programs, Publications, as well as Inspirational Material, and Contact Information.



ॐ ब्रह्मानन्दं परम-सुखदं केवलं ज्ञान-मूर्तिम्
द्वन्द्वातीतं गगन-सदृशं तत्त्वमस्यादि--लक्ष्यम्।
एकं नित्यं विमलमचलं सर्वधीसाक्षिभूतं
भावातीतं त्रिगुणरहितं सद्गुरुं तं नमामि ॥

I SALUTE THE NOBLE TEACHER WHOSE NATURE IS THE BLISS OF BRAHMAN, WHO GRANTS SUPREME JOY, WHO IS THE ABSOLUTE ONE, AND THE EMBODIMENT OF KNOWLEDGE; BEYOND THE PAIRS OF OPPOSITES, LIKE HEAT AND COLD, HAPPINESS AND MISERY; COMPARABLE TO SPACE AND INDICATED BY STATEMENTS LIKE THAT THOU ART; THE ONE, THE ETERNAL, THE PURE, THE UNMOVING AND THE WITNESS OF ALL THOUGHTS; THE ONE BEYOND EXPRESSION AND DEVOID OF THE THREE ATTRIBUTES, SATTVA, RAJAS AND TAMAS.