

The Centered Place

Newsletter

November 2019



Namaste

Thanksgiving is a reminder to be grateful for what you have been given. It's a wake-up call that opens your eyes to appreciate the blessings of everything that you have harvested in your life: your loved ones as well as the food that comes to your table.

Giving thanks also opens your heart. Just when the hours of daylight are diminishing, thanksgiving opens your heart to let more light in and to allow more light out.

To celebrate this and the following holidays in the most enriching way, cultivate gratitude. In so doing, you are sowing seeds of happiness. You will have plenty to reap all winter long.

Let's grow more gratitude this month!

Topics in this newsletter (linked to the location of each topic):

- [Contemplation](#): The Inner Sky
- [Charity of the Month](#): Sharing Cupboard Food Pantry
- [Class Schedule and November Calendar](#)
- [Birthdays This Month](#)
- [Upcoming Events and Special Announcements](#)
 - [Next Meditation 101 Series](#)
 - [Shaktipat Retreat with Swami Nirmalananda in Boston](#) November 8 – 10
 - [Next Free Newcomers' Class](#) Saturday November 16, 2 to 4pm
 - [Monthly Discussion Group](#) Sunday November 17, 11 am to noon
 - [Monthly Satsang Here](#) Friday November 22, 7:00 to 8:30 pm
 - [We Have Blankets for Sale](#) \$22 each
 - [No classes November 27 – 29](#): Happy Thanksgiving
- [Extras](#)
 - [Free online audio recordings of Sadguru Nirmalananda](#)
 - [EnLighten up!](#)
 - [More to Ponder](#)

Contemplation of the Month: Contemplate on the Inner Sky



Have you ever looked up at the big blue sky to find yourself enthralled with its vastness? Actually, let me cut that sentence short: Have you ever looked up at the big blue sky to find your Self?

This is the subject of the November contemplation article. Swami Nirmalananda recounts her experiences as a kid peering into the blue sky. The sky enticed her upward. She says she realizes now that her experience then “was like a promise” that she could one day elevate her

own state.

When I (Phil) was a kid, I was often captivated by the immensity of the sky. I would climb a tree and find a resting place where I could look up into the heavens above.

I also especially liked the night sky. I lived in California, so I had many opportunities to camp out under the sky in my backyard. Seeing the countless stars and trying to imagine how far away they were, and trying to imagine what lies beyond them: that **blew** my mind. That was a good thing! It was a way for me to get outside the confines of my head, beyond the rambles and brambles of my mind. I realized there is so much more than my mind. I didn't get at that time that **who I really am** is so much more than my mind. I needed a teacher and yoga/meditation to show me that.



In this month's contemplation article, Swami Nirmalananda shares how you can experience who you really are:

“Sit with your spine comfortably upright and imagine the sky filling the inside of your head. Let your breath be easy. Use a wide vast cloudless sky, like you would see from the desert, out on a boat or from the top of a mountain or building. Perhaps it's like you see the sky inside, or more like you feel it... Stay with it a bit... Then let the sky expand to fill your mind...”

This practice induces what Swami calls “a mystical surrender into your inherent vastness and beingness... This is a way to discover your inherent Divinity...”

Even when you are busy with your daily activities, you can practice this exercise. It will elevate your state. She advises that you then take a deep breath and go about your business again. “But remember, you're always under that vast sky. Beyond the clouds, it's still there. So are you.”

Enjoy the vastness of the sky and the vastness of your own being. Enjoy your Self. Read [this month's contemplation essay](#) for your Self.

Charity of the Month: Sharing Cupboard Food Pantry



This month, let's pool our resources to help make someone else find reason to be thankful. We are dedicating this month to the Sharing Cupboard Food Pantry in West Brookfield. Your donations will help the pantry provide supplemental food for the holiday season (such as turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce) and gift cards for families in need (cards are for purchase of food only). You can also leave a check made out to Sharing Cupboard, or mail one yourself to the pantry at PO Box 371, West Brookfield MA 01585. Thank you!

Class Schedule and November Calendar

For the class schedule see <http://thecenteredplace.com/classes/>.

For the November calendar, see <http://thecenteredplace.com/calendar/>

Birthdays This Month

We wish the following a very happy birthday. We offer you a free class this month. Names in **bold** indicate students who are currently active. If your name was admitted from this list, it's because it's been a long time seeing you. We urge you to return again soon. **Note:** The number after each name is not the age; it's the day of the month!



Nicole Durand (5), Heather Dietrich-Cook (6), **Bob Joyce** (7), **Yvonne Smith** (7), **Ellen Spencer** (7), Kathi Szczepanek (7), **Pam Devlin** (10), Tara Liljestrand (10), **Ursula Couture** (11), Ronald Lemanski (13), Mark Booth (22), Debbie Lagrant (25), **Melody Treadwell** (25), **Marlaine Burbank** (26), Michele Connor (26), Tish Tuttle (28), **Lucy DiLeo** (29).

Upcoming Events and Special Announcements

- **Next Meditation 101 Series**

The next 3-session Meditation 101 series is Tuesday, November 5th, 12th and 19th from 7 to 9 pm. \$85 (\$75 for repeaters). Learn how to meditate. If you already meditate, give your meditation a jumpstart. Learn how to develop a regular, daily practice that is successful.

"If you have any interest in or curiosity about meditation, I can't imagine a better way to be introduced to it." ~ Phil S., Chelmsford MA

"It's helped me look at the practice of meditation differently and realize I can do it. I've slept better and am more present." ~ Carla W., Ware MA

- **Shaktipat Retreat with Swami Nirmalananda in Boston** November 8 – 10

Take the next step: a big one! Receiving shaktipat from a teacher such as Swami Nirmalananda is an initiation that awakens the energy of transformation within you. It aligns you with the highest purpose in life: the knowing of your own Divine Essence, your Self. For more information: click <https://svaroopa.org/shaktipat-ma-1911> or email programs@svaroopayoga.org.



- **Next Free Newcomers' Class** Saturday, November 16: 2 to 4 pm
- **Monthly Discussion Group** Sunday November 17, 11 am to noon (free)

In this monthly Discussion Group, you discuss the month's contemplation article. This gives you a chance to deepen and share your understanding of the yoga wisdom teachings and how they apply to your life, and to hear from fellow students for their perspective.

- **Satsang** Friday November 22, 7:00 to 8:30 pm (Free with donation)

In the monthly Satsang, you gather with other seekers like yourself to steep in the wisdom teachings of yoga. We will then chant and meditate. The event is free. Optionally, you can make a donation which goes to our teacher and her Ashram, which provides yoga and meditation programs and services, and teacher training.

- **We Have Blankets for Sale, \$22 each**

A new order of blankets has arrived. Purchase them at the low rate of \$22 each and take them home with you for your home practice.

- **No Classes Wednesday November 27 – Friday November 29: Happy Thanksgiving!**



Free Audio Recordings of Sadguru Nirmalananda Free audio recordings of Swami Nirmalananda discourses online. Listen from home or during your travels. Listen from your cell phone or PC.

<https://svaroopa.org/audio-recording>

Enlighten Up!

Secret of Life

A woman walking down a residential street noticed a little old man rocking in a chair on his porch. She called out to him as she passed.

“Hello there! I couldn’t help but notice how happy you look. What’s your secret for a happy life?”

“I smoke three packs of cigarettes a day,” he replied. “I also drink a case of whiskey a week, eat nothing but fast food, and never exercise.”

“Wow!” The woman was amazed. “May I ask how old you are?”



"Twenty-six," he replied.

Advice from the Ocean:

- Be Shore of Yourself.
- Come Out of Your Shell.
- Take Time to Coast.
- Avoid Pier Pressure
- Sea Life's Beauty
- Don't Get Tide Down
- Make Waves!



More to Ponder

"If the only prayer you said was thank you, that would be enough." ~ Meister Eckhart

"You pray in your distress and in your need; would that you might pray also in the fullness of your joy and in your days of abundance." ~Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*



Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

Giving thanks to you, for giving us the opportunity to teach and support you! Love from us.



The Centered Place
286 Bridge St Warren, MA 01083
413 436 7374 www.thecenteredplace.com