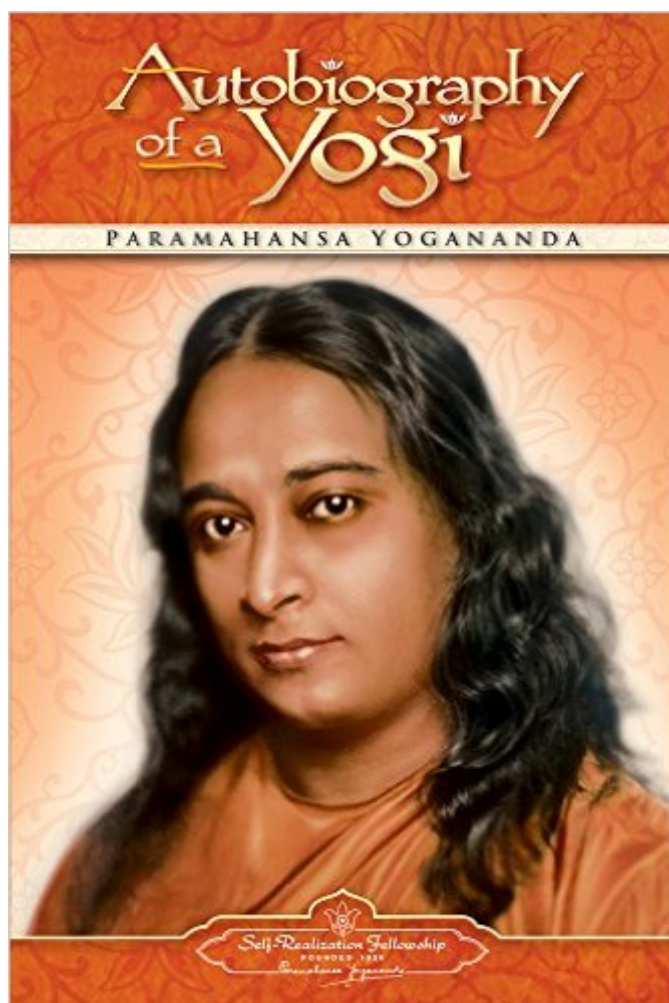


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Autobiography Of A Yogi (Self-Realization Fellowship)



Synopsis

Autobiography of a Yogi is at once a beautifully written account of an exceptional life and a profound introduction to the ancient science of Yoga and its time-honored tradition of meditation. Profoundly inspiring, it is at the same time vastly entertaining, warmly humorous and filled with extraordinary personages. Self-Realization Fellowship's editions, and none others, include extensive material added by the author after the first edition was published, including a final chapter on the closing years of his life. Selected as "One of the 100 Best Spiritual Books of the Twentieth Century", Autobiography of a Yogi has been translated into more than 30 languages, and is regarded worldwide as a classic of religious literature. Several million copies have been sold, and it continues to appear on best-seller lists after more than sixty consecutive years in print. With engaging candor, eloquence, and wit, Paramahansa Yogananda tells the inspiring chronicle of his life: the experiences of his remarkable childhood, encounters with many saints and sages during his youthful search throughout India for an illumined teacher, ten years of training in the hermitage of a revered yoga master, and the thirty years that he lived and taught in America. Also recorded here are his meetings with Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Luther Burbank, the Catholic stigmatist Therese Neumann, and other celebrated spiritual personalities of East and West. The author clearly explains the subtle but definite laws behind both the ordinary events of everyday life and the extraordinary events commonly termed miracles. His absorbing life story becomes the background for a penetrating and unforgettable look at the ultimate mysteries of human existence.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Like Gandhi, Yogananda writes humbly and includes his foibles and the pratfalls he takes as he journeys through life's lessons. In fact, unless you read elsewhere about his life you won't realize how much he understates his own accomplishments while he honors other spiritual seekers and teachers he encounters. His stories of encounters with amazing saints of all regions and religions are spell-binding, and you may find yourself (like me) devouring the whole book on your first read -- just reveling in the wonders of these true spiritual seekers. On successive readings I delved deeper into the equally fascinating footnotes, learning about the exotic realms of Indian spirituality and its unexpected parallels with the original Christian teachings of Christ, St. John, and St. Paul. In fact, the countless strata of insights and implications that surface with repeated readings of Autobiography of a Yogi argue for spending a few more dollars on the trade paperback rather than the mass market paperback edition, since you'll want to return numerous times over the years. The Self-Realization Fellowship editions are to be preferred over others. Yogananda himself started that organization (SRF), and the award-winning quality of SRF editing and printing shines through them - in contrast to bootlegged editions printed up by renegade outfits. In all my reading in spirituality, yoga, and comparative religion, I have discovered no work that so completely fulfills Carl Jung's prophecy that yoga science (the whole science, not just the athletic postures) will offer you "undreamed-of possibilities" as Yogananda's autobiography.

Twenty-five years after my first discovery of this transformative volume, I would like to supplement my original review with a few additional considerations for prospective readers. Always averse to things religious (as being arbitrarily authoritarian) and spiritual (as being delusional), I was at an initial loss to explain why this book riveted my attention. Yoga was way too 'airy-fairy' for my hard-headed mind. Somehow I was won over within a few sentences, spellbound by a spiritual author who wrote humbly, declined to adopt the self-righteousness of many a preacher, and yet related astounding spiritual events and principles - dating back to his infancy. I was impressed to hear deep respect for the paths of all truth-seekers: of Hindus, Buddhists, Moslems, Christians, Jews; of humanists and scientists, transcendentalists and missionaries. His accounts were so personable and reasonable, his interdisciplinary insights so compelling, that I found myself questioning all materialist prejudices and weighing seriously his other-worldly claims. During the first few chapters, in the background of my mind, I was quietly weighing explanations for this book, this mind, this spirit: was he a liar? a lunatic? or can the world really hold such miracles of life and Spirit as he depicts here? With liars and lunatics I'd had way too much acquaintance and knew: this was written by neither of these. I confronted myself: must I not overthrow my narrow, long-entrenched

scientist's view of world and life, origin and death, reality and truth? Through college and graduate school I'd always craved to meet a real leader - one who embodied Truth, exuded wisdom, lived a Gandhi-like life - that might transform this modern world.

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