

CENTER DONATIONS DEPT. SANGHAM UPDATE
12 June 12
[Presenter: Ron Andruff]

Good evening,

[Center Donations opening - Slide 1]

The purpose of tonight's Sangham Update is to tell you about the Center Donations Department and the facts around the sustainability of our Center, in an effort to put us on a stable path toward the future.

[CD Dept. members – Slide 2]

Before I go any further, I'd like to introduce you to the other members of the Department, whom I would ask to stand as I call your name... Munish, Dept. Head; Ramiz; Hanora; Walker; Anne-Marie; Ravi Shankar and Lydia. Thank you all.

[What does the Center mean to me - Slide 3]

Back in 1992, I well recall Gurumayi asking us to contemplate "What is an Ashram?" That contemplation shaped my appreciation for all that I have received from following the Siddha Yoga path and gave me a new appreciation for it.

To assist us in focusing on this discussion we are having tonight, I'd like us all to take a moment to reflect on: "What does the Center mean to me?"

Please take a comfortable posture, close your eyes, take in a long inhalation and exhale long... Take another deep breath, exhale, and ask yourself "What does the Center mean to me?"

Please bring your awareness back to the room...

My reflections on the value of the Siddha Yoga path, the importance of our Center, and our sangham – in pursuing my sadhana – confirmed just how important this discussion that we are having tonight is.

It became clear to me that in the strength of many – each of us doing a little – we can have a bright future ahead of us; a future that serves and nourishes the Siddha Yoga path for each and every one of us, as well as all of those who come after us.

This is the primary message that I want you to leave with tonight.

[Mission – Slide 4]

Over the last year, as the Center Donations Dept. has met and discussed the financial circumstances that underpin our weekly Satsangs and other events, both at the Center and Ashram as well as the Tarauna Poshana Program, which are the family satsangs that you just heard about from Julia Pearing; Study groups; 'live' and recorded Guru Gitas; as well as Arati.

From this, we developed a mission statement to focus our work. [Read slide...]

[Hall Offerings – Slide 5]

In this discussion of donations, it is the important to understand which offerings go where...

At the end of weekly programs here at the Center, just before the call for Darshan, our satsang host explains the difference between Center generated donations and SYDA's Global Mission offerings. The host explains that offerings left in any of the baskets in hall, including at the pujas go toward the global mission. So, too, all of the fees for intensives, "audio" programs, etc. go to the SYDA Foundation.

It is also important to note that all of the expenses we incur for putting on these events, for example renting this hall for the Intensives, flowers for pujas, etc. are paid for by our sangham, our community.

[Center Donations – Slide 6]

Center Donations, made at the Center Donations table in the outer lobby of the Hall, all monthly pledges and one time donations, are the only fees that go toward financing all of the Center activities.

We hope that this explanation provides you with a clearer distinction between the Hall Offerings and Center Donations, however if you have any further questions please see any one of the members of our department after this Update.

[Fact 1: Donations do not cover expenses – Slide 7]

Let me show you exactly what our Center Donations team found when we looked into our current situation...

As already noted, Center Donations consist of one time offerings and monthly pledges.

Let me explain a little about these....

One time donations are the cash, check or credit card offerings that are put into the donations collection box that sits on top of the Center Donations table in the outer lobby.

Monthly pledges are made by check or credit card deductions each month. They can be made by filling out the blue cards that are available on the Center Donations table. [\[show blue Pledge card\]](#)

As you see from this slide, we currently have a shortfall of almost 25%, which means that we are running at a deficit each month and need other departments – amrit and bookstore - to make up the shortfall.

To continue in this way is not good stewardship of our Center because it is simply not a sustainable model.

[Fact 2: Monthly Pledgers only One Quarter of Sangham – Slide 8]

The second fact we uncovered is even more astounding!

In doing our research, we found out that we have a very committed group at the core of our community, but that many in the sangham – the majority of the sangham, by a vast margin – are not participating financially at all. Virtually three of every four of us do not pledge today.

Put another way, only one seeker in four of us financially supports all of this that you see around you – week in and week out!

We soon realized that if everyone in our sangham could contribute a small amount – \$2 or \$5 or \$10 per month – to our Center by simply taking a few minutes to join the monthly pledge program irrespective of how much one pledges – the cumulative amount would offset our deficit.

And in doing so, it would allow each of us, in our own way, to contribute to putting our Center on that firm foundation of sustainability to enable this sangham to enjoy satsang together, thriving long into the future.

[Goal: Center Donations must cover Expenses – Slide 9]

So we have set a goal to remedy the problem that I would like to share with you tonight.

The goal is pretty simple, i.e. to engage the entire community to work toward ensuring that donations cover all expenses; to move our Center from the uncertain path that we are currently on to a more predictable model. To enable our managers to plan for our Center's future on a much more financially sound basis.

[Means: 100% of Sangham pledging every month – Slide 10]

And the means to this end?

Tonight, the Center Donations Department is asking you, along with everyone in our community, to form an intention that – together – we meet the goal of 100% of the sangham making a monthly donation.

We are inviting those who have not yet done so, to consider filling in a pledge form between now and the end of 2012. It doesn't have to be much; \$2 or \$5 per month will put our sangham on the road to financial stability – if everyone commits.

In looking at the small pie chart on the left in relation to the larger one, you can clearly see the dramatic difference between today's circumstances and our goal.

We want to encourage the 74% of the sangham that currently do not pledge a monthly financial contribution to consider joining the 26% that do.

When it comes to the fixed costs that satsangs demand, if we can change the ratio of 1 in 4 of us, carrying all of us, to as close to 4 out of 4 as possible, we can all rest assured that our Center will be here for our sangham and new devotees to celebrate our Highest Selves for many years to come.

[Achieving Our Goals – Slide 11]

So how can we accomplish our goal?

We believe it is a short list... And we have already begun to action it!

1. Establish semi-annual community updates to keep everyone informed, beginning with tonight's.
2. Have a direct and clear communication with the sangham so that everyone understands our shared benefit, which is the intent of this presentation.
3. Create an explanatory slide show, which, as of tonight, we welcome you to have view at the Center Donations table.

[Screen shot of payment page – Slide 12]

4. Establish an online payment system that facilitates both a painless and frictionless experience when setting up monthly pledges or making one time donations online.

[Screen shot of website – Slide 13]

As of tonight we are announcing that we have a new web-site that will go 'live' on June 16th. There you will find the payment page to enable us

make our pledges or one time donations online, if that is more preferable. The website address remains the same: www.siddhayoganyc.org.

5. Also on the new web site – and on a list located at the Center Donations table – you will find a list of things that community members can provide to the Center in lieu of a financial donation: The Departments Items Needs List.

This is a list of things that members of the sangham may be able to provide, for example, new cushions for the Hall Department, which would forgo our Center managers having to source funds to purchase such items.

[Achieving Our Goals – Slide 14]

And, last, but most important, we want to:

- 6. Invite those of you who have not committed to a monthly pledge to consider pledging.**

[Close / List of CD Dept team – Slide 15]

Tonight, my friends, we kick off our Center Donations awareness campaign!

We hope that as a result of this Community Update you are now better informed as to what “self-sustaining” actually means to our sangham, to our Center and to our future.

This was my intention.

I truly hope that you will reflect on what we have shown you tonight recognizing that the Center Donations Department is inviting everyone to come and join in this shared action for our shared benefit!

If you have questions about anything that has been presented tonight, any one of us from the Center Donations Department will be pleased to speak with you.

Thank you all for your kind attention, particularly after our beautiful program this evening!

END