



SHAFTS OF LIGHT

Selected Teachings of Swami Ashokananda for Spiritual Practice

Edited by SISTER GARGI AND SHELLEY BROWN



This is a valuable new guide to the practice of Vedanta and inner yoga: a priceless collection of spiritual instructions from Swami Ashokananda (1893–1969) to his close American disciples. Vedanta's eternal truths come alive in Swami Ashokananda's down-to-earth words of encouragement and advice. More than eight hundred passages shed light on the spiritual path, with a well-written introduction that informs readers about Vedanta and eases them into the disciplines described in the text.

Early chapters, such as those on conflicts and criticism, show how to cope with negative attitudes by strengthening inner resources; later chapters such as "Be Calm" and "Meditate" guide readers toward a higher state of consciousness. Whatever the topic for contemplation, the Swami's lessons hit their mark in ways both witty and wise—"God doesn't care a fig whether you meditate on Him or not," he told his students, freeing them to practice from the depths of their own needs.

Shafts of Light illumines the heart of spiritual practice—these authentic teachings can help readers of all faiths enjoy a deeper spiritual life.

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"Swami Ashokananda was a brilliant and accomplished spiritual teacher in the West."

—HUSTON SMITH, internationally renowned author of
The World's Religions and *Why Religion Matters*



ABOUT THE EDITORS



SISTER GARGI (1912–2004) was a respected monastic of the Ramakrishna Order and a legendary literary figure in Vedanta circles worldwide. She was the award-winning author (as Marie Louise Burke) of the six-volume classic *Swami Vivekananda in the West: New Discoveries*. The *New Discoveries* books, through the knowledge they have given of Swami Vivekananda's personality, have become indispensable sourcebooks and have changed many lives. Recent works—including *A Heart Poured Out*, her biography of Swami Ashokananda, and *A Disciple's Journal*, her spiritual memoir—have won high praise. ("Sister Gargi has inspired thousands with her writings."—*Light of Consciousness*)



DR. SHELLEY BROWN was a prominent physician (hematologist) in New York City before she retired to research and write her two-volume work *Centred in Truth: The Story of Swami Nitya-swarup-ananda*, which was nominated for the prestigious Grawemeyer Award in Religion. She now writes, edits, and publishes works on Vedanta full-time. Well-known as a Vedantist, Dr. Brown also lectures, is a regular guest on radio and television, and has been widely interviewed in print. Dr. Brown was Sister Gargi's editor and publisher for three years, culminating in their collaboration on *Shafts of Light*.