



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRADLEY

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

'People's longing to know keeps me going'

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He sits quietly, dressed in flowing cotton robes that seem incongruously ancient amid the modern-day trappings of a Farmington Hills apartment.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev's dark eyes soften as he talks about his life's journey and the mission that has driven him to travel the world six months out of the

year. "People's longing to know keeps me going," he says in a soft but resonant voice. "Modern education and science have given us all the comforts and conveniences. In a way, humanity is more comfortable than ever. Internally, they are more uncomfortable."

It is the internal landscape Vasudev helps people master, through yoga techniques. Over the past week, students

have each paid \$200 for seven sessions at the Finnish Center on 9 Mile Road in Farmington, with a man who explains the quality of their lives has more to do with what's inside than what's outside.

"Wherever I go, when people are not well-to-do, their concern is how to be successful," he says. "When they are successful, their only concern is how to be

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joyful."

Vasudev has experienced the good life. A devotee of yoga since his childhood in India, he spent his early adult years building a prosperous life.

"I was more successful than I had ever dreamed, and when you are successful, you believe you're in control of everything. You feel you spin the earth."

At the age of 25, he had a profound experience while sitting at the base of a mountain near his home in south India. For a peri-

od of what he thought was just a few moments, he had the inexplicable sensation of not knowing where he began and the world ended, of feeling everything ... the rocks, the mountain, everything ... was him.

"I thought this experience lasted five or ten minutes, but when I came back to my normal consciousness, it was four and a half hours," Vasudev says with a small note of wonder in his voice, even though many years have passed. "I am left drenched in a

different kind of ecstasy I cannot explain. This repeated itself again and again. All I knew is it was too beautiful and every human being could experience it."

He thought of using yoga as a means to that end and has devoted his life to teaching these techniques to students like Dr. Kalpana Rajdev of Farmington Hills, a physician and medical director of several nursing care facilities.

"This yoga is different," she

says. "It doesn't require flexibility. It is suitable for all ages."

Rajdev had been trying to learn yoga for years before she met Vasudev.

"You only can learn from a true master," she says. "We enrolled when he was in Flint. In seven days, you see what it can do. Instantly, I was a volunteer."

As a physician, Rajdev realizes physical benefits. She feels more energetic and sleeps more soundly since spending 15 minutes in breathing and meditation twice daily. She, her husband and three children, ages 22, 19 and 17, have all experienced the

classes.

"This is like an explosion," she says. "My whole family changed. It just rubs off on everyone. You feel much more inspired, not worried so much."

Even more dramatic effects have been felt in India, where hundreds of thousands serve as volunteers with Vasudev's movement, "The Silent Revolution of Self-Realization." In one prison, for instance, life-term inmates have been dramatically changed by practicing the techniques Vasudev and his followers teach, becoming more calm and cooperative, less prone to settle differences with physical fights.

His life's work is not a philosophy, a teaching or a belief system, Vasudev stresses, but a science.

"All revolutions have been about changing somebody," he says. "This revolution is about 'I'm willing to change myself.' It is a method of taking you into the experiential reality. Even if for one moment of you experience everything as part of yourself, it will change your life forever."

• For more information about Vasudev, go to www.ishafoundation.org