

Jai Shri Mataji

Sahaja Marriages

Information for National & Local Co-ordinators / Signatories



International Marriage Committee

23rd March 2019

GENERAL INFORMATION

Sahaja Marriages are a sacred ceremony based on Divine principles taught by Our Divine Mother, which has a deep impact on people's lives and should be always considered with utmost attention and care.

The present document is meant only for country, local or marriage coordinators and includes:

- Information for coordinators (mostly about marriage process)
- Principles and Protocol of Sahaja Marriages

Coordinators, council members, local representatives who have the task of counselling the applicant & signing application forms should be aware of both the process and the Principles and Protocols of Sahaja Marriages, contained in the attached document. Such document provides details about Background and Principles, What is Sahaja Marriage, The Marriage Committee (with list of members), How to Apply, Matching and Marriage Protocol, Marriage Vows.

The form for applicants, for remarriages and the leader's feedback form are provided separately in pdf format.

The updated documents are circulated by the Marriage Committee to all coordinators, along with blank application forms, whenever the IMC announces the event of such a ceremony.

For any further information or clarification on the content of this document please contact the IMC through the official email: marriages@sahajaworldfoundation.org.

DISTRIBUTION OF FORMS

Application forms are circulated at least once a year to all coordinators. The coordinators are requested to promptly make the necessary announcements in all the centres for all the interested applicants to fill the latest circulated application forms and ensure that every interested person receives it. As the number of marriage ceremonies arranged by the International Marriage Committee increases, the same application forms collected for one ceremony, might be kept available and used for a following ceremony within the following year, upon confirmation from the applicant.

DISCUSSION WITH APPLICANTS

The local/national coordinator or local marriage coordinator/representative or local IMC member, as defined in the country, has the responsibility to personally interact with each candidate and provide advice and guidelines to ensure that there is a heartfelt understanding of the deep spiritual and life commitment, recognition of Shri Mataji, acceptance of the Sahaja Marriage Maryadas & readiness for a Sahaja marriage.

The coordinator should ensure the applicant has been practicing Sahaja Yoga for **at least 2 years**, regularly attending Centre and is actively participating in Sahaja Yoga programmes/activities in and around the Centre/City and has attained the Sahaja maturity & dedication.

The coordinator should ensure the applicant **has read the Protocol document and understands the commitment** they are going to take.

It has been found that some applicants after getting the matching announcement decide to refuse the match due to worldly reasons e.g. horoscope, food preference etc. The Coordinator while counselling shall ensure that the applicant's top-most priority and focus shall be rooted in Mother's teachings & guidance, not mundane things.

CHECKING THE APPLICANT'S FORM

The national/local co-ordinator has to check thoroughly the data/information filled in by the candidate, as he/she will have to validate and also have responsibility of the contents of the application. The coordinator shall ensure the information filled in by the applicant is clear especially where a clear yes/no answer is required & contact details, applicant's colour photograph are also correct and clear. IMC will revert to candidate and coordinator in case the information provided is not clear.

Forms only partially filled or not signed by the applicant and the coordinator will not be considered for matching and the applicant will be asked to complete the forms if time permits.

Some important fields to verify on the applicant forms are the following:

- Date of birth/age, height, weight, education, annual income (primarily for boys but also girls), previous relationships: these are information for which Shri Mataji

provided specific inputs to the marriage team for the purpose of matching and they should be correct

- Center/City collective where applicant is doing Sahaja Yoga: Shri Mataji suggested to avoid matching people from the same centre/city, as they would feel more to be part of a Sahaja family where purity should be maintained
- Contact details: should be written clearly, as they are used for communications about matches (especially email)
- Illnesses: these should be clearly stated as we might need to further investigate with doctors about seriousness of the illness and inform matched applicants in case
- N. of previous forms & n. of matches: we keep in our attention yoginis who apply several times with no match
- Legally free to marry: yogis/nis who aren't legally free to marry will not be considered in the matching process
- Presence in Cabella: yogis/nis coming to Cabella will be matched in the first phase with yogis/nis coming to Cabella in order to allow the marriages to proceed. If no match is found, the remaining yogis, that is generally a higher number, will be matched with the remaining yoginis (no difference if coming or not) for engagement and further marriage. Some people write that they are coming even if they aren't, believing that they have better chances which is not necessarily true. They might be matched e.g. with a coming boy who wishes to marry and as such will refuse as the girl is not coming or viceversa.
- Additional commitments/requirements to be specified (we receive several refusals for these reasons without prior information provided on such aspects) e.g.:
 - o If the yogi/ni has been participating to the Sahaja activities of a different centre in the past where he feels to be part of the family and wishes to avoid matching they should say so
 - o If the yogi/ni has some specific motivated conditions/requirements for the marriage they should say so clearly

If it is found that applicants has filled purposely some wrong/false information or hidden important information in order to mislead the IMC in the process, the coordinator will be informed and the applicant might not be considered in the next ceremony.

LEADER'S FEEDBACK FORM

The leader form should be filled by the coordinator only, not by the applicant, after the interview with the applicant.

The co-ordinator will finally provide a true and unbiased recommendation about the applicant including an overall rating and sign both the forms. The contents and the information given by the coordinator shall be kept confidential by all including the coordinator themselves and the IMC.

The co-ordinator should highlight situations where individuals are not established in Sahaja Yoga or have undisclosed health issues or income/economic issue or there are specific personal issues such as divorce etc. In cases where the yogi/yogini is new to the collective, the co-ordinator needs to collect information from co-ordinator of other centres where the yogi/ni was attending.

Some important fields to fill properly on the leader forms are the following:

- Financial sustainability: the same income in different country might indicate very different financial situations. It is advisable that boys that apply for marriage should be ready to start a family and support it economically. We need a local evaluation of the income in order to understand the situation in each case.
- Readiness for Sahaja Marriage: coordinator should evaluate readiness for a Sahaja Marriage, which has a specific meaning, purpose and implications (see protocol document & read the vows), compared to non-Sahaja marriages.
- Family conditionings: please evaluate if there will be family involvement on the decision and specific conditions the applicant or the family puts on marriage due to local/cultural conditions which are not strictly Sahaja guidelines
- Overall grading: it is not linked to readiness for marriage, it is an evaluation overall of the Sahaja aspects of the person. An 'A' should be given to devoted, dedicated, deep, active, earnest, collective yogis. A 'D' is instead a sign of a person who is not really doing Sahaja Yoga with full understanding, commitment and as such will not entirely understand the meaning of Sahaja marriage. There could be 'A' yogis who are not ready to marry or vice-versa. The IMC will try and avoid matching half-baked yogis who are just interested in finding a partner without understanding and following the guidelines and Teachings of Shri Mataji. Where evaluations show unclear or difficult situations, the IMC will take vibrations before considering the applicant for marriage

If the interview and signature has been done by a local coordinator, the form will need to be counter-signed by the country coordinator or country delegate for marriages. The filled application form and leader form for each applicant should be sent by the chosen coordinator only and not by the applicant, as described in the respective chapter of this document. For remarriages there is no need of leader's feedback form.

APPROVED SIGNATORIES

The country coordinators should inform IMC in case of approved national signatories i.e. country delegates for marriages who can sign and forward applications to IMC. In case the IMC will receive forms from unknown signatories, it will revert to national signatories to validate.

In cases where the national collectives are split into different groups with no mutual co-operation, the IMC is not in the position to take a stand of acknowledging the authority or lack of authority of conflicting groups. The IMC invites dissenting group to unite in the process of evaluation of applicants in the spirit of brotherly love. Where this is not possible, and such situation has been previously communicated to the IMC through the country coordinators council or Central Committee, the IMC strives to find signatories and coordinators, possibly yogis/nis recognised by the elders, who can represent objectively the applicants from both sides.

Any decision taken by the Marriage Committee in such respect does not have any whatsoever implication for the acceptance/non acceptance of dissenting groups by the global Sahaja family.

If such situations have not been previously acknowledged by the country coordinators council or central committee and communicated to the IMC, only the forms signed by the country coordinator / council members will be accepted. In all these cases, the IMC will of course exert due vigilance to make sure that all information are correct and the applicant is suited for a Sahaja marriage so that the unsuspecting partner is not at risks.

SENDING TO THE COMMITTEE

The Co-ordinator shall ensure the forms are emailed/sent on or before the timeline defined by the IMC, to the address provided by the IMC. The forms should be collected and sent by country coordinators, country delegate for marriages or local IMC members, and not by individual applicants.

The Co-ordinator shall avoid sending the application forms of unmarried self-matched couples for re-marriage.

In case the applicant or coordinator needs to communicate changes to the information provided, they can contact the same addresses provided (e.g. applicant declared he/she could come but cannot come any more to the ceremony due to impediments).

Matched couples from previous years, who are willing to marry, have to arrange for timely visas (if required) to reach the marriage venue on time. They should inform the IMC about their intention to marry so that the host country can arrange the required inventories.

IMC will maintain complete confidentiality about all the information provided by applicants and co-ordinators and invites all local and national coordinators to take every step so that such information is managed confidentially throughout the local data collection process in their own countries.

AFTER THE CEREMONY

The married couples are requested to adhere to the legal requirements like registration of marriage (within the specified time limit) of the resident country where they would continue to live. They should adhere to the Sahaja protocols as per the Teachings of our Divine Mother.

Engaged couples should confirm within two months whether they wish to proceed with marriage or not to the marriages email address.

Divorce in Sahaja Yoga is to be avoided by all means by both husband & wife, as Shri Mataji has indicated. Divorce situation is often not good, unhealthy, unhappy and can become ugly. However in extreme unavoidable cases, married couples can divorce and in that case they (or their coordinators) should send a message to the IMC. In case there are specific information that should be known to the marriage committee, this should be written without hesitation, so that IMC may be aware about them for potential future matching of the divorcees.

Cases of misbehaviour on the part of husband and wife reported to the IMC will be forwarded to national/local signatories for any local action to be decided.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The Marriage Ceremony is extremely important for the growth our Sahaja collectivity, and it is worth giving due attention and understanding to the duties and commitment of applicants & the importance and responsibility of the signing leader. The success of marriages lies strongly in the good will and true dedication and surrender of individual yogis and yoginis, and this needs to be ascertained properly throughout the process.

After marriages, the local collectives should be invited by the coordinator to discreetly look after and support the newly married couples so that they can feel welcome and integrated into the collective, especially when one spouse is changing countries and cultures. It can always help to reach out and let them know the Sahaja family is there for them.

As we write in the Principles and Protocol document, which follows, and which we strongly invite you to read or re-read, spiritual growth of the individuals, the family and the collective is triggered by a successful Sahaja marriage which spreads happiness and auspiciousness. A marriage expressing subtle qualities such as innocence, benevolence, love, joy, sweetness, generosity and fondness for others will support the establishment of Mother's vision, for our world.

May we all be pure instruments of Shri Mataji's Divine will.

Jai Shri Mataji

International Marriage Committee

Jai Shri Mataji

Sahaja Marriages

Principles and Protocol

23rd March 2019



“Marriage is an auspicious occasion, is the most auspicious occasion in the life of human beings. It is auspicious, that’s why it’s joy giving and the vibrations flow with that auspiciousness all over the world. [...] Marriage is meant to give joy, is meant to give cheerfulness, happiness and all the blissful things that you can think of achieving through our combinations with two human beings. [...] You have to bring glory to the system of marriages because it is the system established by God Almighty. Not by human beings, it’s a wrong idea. It is established by God Almighty to have an auspicious occasion, where such an auspicious thing is taken. The sacredness of this is to be maintained...”

H.H. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, 1981 “Marriage is meant to give Joy”, UK

BACKGROUND

Sahaja Marriages were established by Shri Mataji in the early days of Sahaja Yoga and are a sacred ceremony based on Divine principles, which elicit spiritual and material blessings. In Sahaja Yoga, couples have the unique opportunity to be blessed by the attention of our Divine Mother, Adi Shakti and Guru for this process. Sahaja marriages facilitate individuals' spiritual growth and the growth of the world Sahaja collective, and have a rippling effect through families, communities and between countries. Shri Mataji generously blessed Her children through this institution, granting them the opportunity to have a happy family life and allowing born realised souls to come on this Earth. The following document contains information about Sahaja Marriages that **need to be known and understood by applicants**. Please read it thoroughly before applying. It contains also information about how matches are performed, announced and marriages are performed. By signing the marriage application form you are expected to know and accept all the conditions and methods hereby explained. If there is any specific personal issue regarding such conditions and methods that requires the attention of the Marriage Committee please specify it on the form itself.

THE PRINCIPLES OF SAHAJA MARRIAGES

The principles of Sahaja marriages are based on Shri Mataji's teachings collected in writing and provided orally to the yogis and yoginis who have worked with Mother in this most auspicious process. Some excerpts and references to Shri Mataji's talks are included at the end of this document.

One of the main principles governing the Sahaja collective is that of pure relationships within the collective. Purity of relationships means that we should **consider each and every yogi and yogini of the Sahaja collective as our brother or sister**. As purity is the quality of our mooladhara which is the chakra sustaining our Kundalini in Her ascent, for the ascent of the collective, purity is one of the basis, without which any collective cannot grow.

Shri Mataji has as such always warned yogis and yoginis not to search for a life partner within the Sahaja collective, whether local or international, as this is against the principles of Sahaja Yoga. In several cases when this has happened, the couple has been asked to step back from the Sahaja collective for some period of time. **The International marriage committee will not**

sanction a marriage before the world collective of self-engagement performed by yogis/yoginis within the Sahaja family.

In case of **engagements initiated outside the Sahaja collective** (e.g. engaged couples coming to Sahaja Yoga together), **the process to be followed is that of re-marriage** (see further down).

Yogis and yoginis who in the past chose to pursue a Sahaja marriage have been willing to surrender the process of finding a spiritual partner to Shri Mataji. With infinite motherly love, She has matched thousands of yogis and yoginis throughout the years, looking for the best match from all points of view, spiritual, emotional, and material. Yogis and yoginis who wish to have a Sahaja marriage need to be willing to **surrender to Shri Mataji, Sakshat Shri Adi Shakti, the All doer. While the process is now performed by a collective group of yogis and yoginis that, as Her instruments, perform activities and take vibrations as advised by Mother, it should be clear that they themselves do this in full surrender to the Divine Will of Shri Mataji.**

Shri Mataji also wished to break and discontinue practices based on conditionings which were harmful for individuals as well as society, i.e. caste system, dowry, race. **The decision to move ahead with the marriage or not, should never be based on such conditionings as they are against the teaching of Shri Mataji.**

She also had the noble vision of combining different cultures & countries together to overcome the global elements of hatred, quarrels, greed and to make such marriages an ideal example for society. That is why there is no consideration about the different cultures or religions followed before Sahaja Yoga, when performing Sahaja marriages. Whatever was followed before Self Realisation is the past only. **Yogis and yoginis should be ready to be married with yogis/nis coming even from very different traditions and not be discriminating against different cultures** as again this is against the teaching of Shri Mataji.

WHAT IS SAHAJA MARRIAGE

Sahaja marriage is a kind of arranged marriage which follows a traditional pattern, whereby the matching of couples is performed through vibratory awareness. Generally, in traditional arranged marriages, the parents and elders decide on the life partner for their sons and daughters. In Sahaja Yoga, instead, **an international group of yogis and yoginis (International**

Marriage Committee), nominated by Country Coordinators & Councils, performs the matching of applicants through the use of vibrations and following Mother's directives.

The couples matched through this vibrational process are announced before the world collective and they have some time to meet and know each other. They are completely free and the final decision to marry is theirs, and nobody in any way is forced to accept such a match if they do not feel sure about it. It is recommended that after the match is declared, the boy and girl should not only discuss about their Sahaja life but also about background, upbringing, personal likes and dislikes, health, ties, commitments, and any information which could be relevant for their future life together, before finally deciding whether or not to go ahead with the match.

Please note, that after going through the Sahaja marriage ceremony, your marriage may not be considered legal in your country, but remember that it is sanctified before the highest divine court and held in the name of God – Shri Adi Shakti. In reality it should be considered by spouses above the worldly legalities of any countries and above all societies. It is a spiritual marriage that should be approached after a deep inner preparation and with utmost respect.

In those cases where a matched couple cannot marry in the current Sahaja ceremony (e.g. when applicants cannot be physically present at the ceremony) the applicants will need to apply in person as a couple at a later marriage ceremony, at their earliest convenience. This is a commitment to marry, and it's a situation to be managed within Sahaj maryadas, being only a practical solution to individual situations. Some people might refer to it as a formal engagement as the society calls it, it should certainly not be considered as opportunity for 'trying out' the relationship. Shri Mataji in some very specific cases in the past had in fact arranged engagements for younger yogis and yoginis, with the warning that the relationship should still be maintained as pure as brother/sister until the marriage. For the moment the International Marriage Committee is not considering engagements in its scope of activities.

In order to allow already married couples to receive Her blessings, in the past years Shri Mataji allowed couples legally married outside of Sahaja Yoga to apply for a re-marriage.

At present, these are the only two acceptable ways for couples to be able to apply for a Sahaja Marriage, as advised and directed by Shri Mataji's.

The disparity in numbers of applicants between ladies' and men's applications is to be noted. Yoginis significantly outnumber the yogis, so every year there are many yoginis for whom the matches are not available. Due to this reason and vibratory selection, it is not guaranteed that any applicant might get a match. It can also happen that men who have applied may not be matched, as no suitable match is found for them.

In this context, finding a partner and marrying outside of Sahaja Yoga can also carry God's blessings. Such a couple can be re-married in a Sahaja ceremony later on.

Those yogis and yoginis who seek the privilege to have a marriage that is blessed by H.H. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi in Her Nirakar form should put forward their names, but only when they feel ready to make this commitment for life. In the case of a multicultural union, the yogi/ni should be open and surrendered and ready for an unpredictable change in lifestyle.

All applicants are required to read carefully and understand the Marriage vows, that are read during the Marriage ceremony as resolutions towards the respective spouses and towards Sahaja Yoga. If they do not feel ready or wish to accept and sustain such vows they should not make the choice of entering into a Sahaja Marriage.

With such resolution and sincerity in their hearts, they should realize that marriage in Sahaja Yoga is not something to be taken lightly or with superficiality. It blesses society with an auspicious family, it blesses the family with the comfort and strength of love, it blesses the couple with the opportunity to reach balance and fulfil their spiritual potential to achieve the ascent.

THE MARRIAGE COMMITTEE

Shri Mataji, when in physical form, always had a direct role in matching couples or validating matches done by yogis and yoginis assisting Her in this auspicious activity. Over the years, She has given indications on some specific details to take into account when selecting possible matches, before taking vibrations. Vibrations then are the final instrument through which we seek the guidance of the Divine for decision making in Sahaja marriages.

Now as we pray that marriages will be blessed by Shri Mataji in Her Nirakar form, **a group of yogis and yoginis, nominated by country coordinators and councils** will perform this auspicious activity as International Marriage Committee (IMC).

The IMC includes members from **all over the world** (the current IMC members are listed in Appendix 4). The yogis/yoginis thus nominated are all committed, of long standing, with a range of experiences, and were proposed due to their maturity, sensitivity and Sahaja understanding. Some of the members include yogis who were specifically selected by Shri Mataji to assist Her when She personally directed the matching.

The committee works according to Her principles and teachings only, and relies on sound judgement, wisdom and on a collective vibrational decision process. The Marriage Committee is endowed with the responsibility of managing a defining moment in the life of people and a critical aspect of sahaja culture. Hence due care and observance of Mother's instructions, without any deviation, is essential. Only the high and profound **Sahaja protocols and maryadas** are followed in this most important expression of our culture.

The marriage committee strives to provide transparent information on protocols and practices to the collective, while keeping **full confidentiality** on personal information of the applicants. No information and confidential data, provided either by the applicants or by the leader, will be disclosed to anyone outside the committee, except for the respective **contact details of the matched couples**.

The members of the marriage committee will perform their duties with no personal involvement on the matters. In case any member or close relation of any member of the committee has submitted a marriage application, the member can provide support & guidance but will abstain from performing duties in relation to such a matching process. In case there is a personal involvement in any matter which might cloud any member's judgement in a matching process, the member will abstain from duties as well.

Some of the activities performed by the marriage committee are as follows:

- Proposing shared protocols and guidelines for the activities of the Committee to be adopted by the collective in the appropriate form (this document itself) based on Mother's guidance and indications
- Providing information about marriage ceremonies held by the committee

- Providing updated marriage application forms and instructions on submission in advance of the ceremony
- Managing queries from applicants
- Collecting and filing application forms from all over the world
- Verifying completeness and correctness of information provided
- Performing the matching process **through vibrations** as described
- Informing applicants, leader and matched couples about the outcomes of the process
- Coordinating the logistics and managing the Marriage ceremony
- Working along with the respective National Councils in order to resolve queries from engaged or married yogis and yoginis in case of issues, doubts, perceived misbehaviours by partner, etc.

IMC has also formed and trained a group of ceremony specialists who will undertake the execution of marriage ceremony at different part of the world/country as and when decided by IMC. This group consist of yogis and yoginis from various countries. The names are being finalised. Training to this group has been started for the execution of Sahaja marriage ceremony in accordance to the procedures and protocols advised by HH Shri Mataji.

HOW TO APPLY FOR SAHAJA MARRIAGES

Some time before any Marriage ceremony, an announcement is sent to country coordinators and to the world collective about the dates and the process for marriages including last date of submission of application. A full information package including updated application forms is provided to country leaders who in turn provide those to local coordinators. It is the responsibility of the leaders and coordinators to provide timely information to the local collectives.

All applicants should request updated application forms from their National Co-ordinator, or delegated National marriage committee/local coordinator in order to allow a proper flow of information and documentation through the appropriate channels and awareness of applicants local requests. If local coordinators are not fully aware of the process they should refer to Country Leaders/committees.

Applicants can exceptionally request applications, and seek afterwards approval signature and recommendation, from foreign leaders who are relevant in terms of their recent domicile and

activities. If e.g. a candidate very recently switched domicile it is required to request the signature and recommendation from the previous leader.

Applications forms for marriage need to be filled by the applicants in full and with truthfulness, with all relevant details about one's life and condition. Application forms from previous ceremonies should not be used for that purpose. Any additional material in relation to specific relevant conditions of the applicants should be attached to the forms. They can be filled digitally or by hand, they need to be signed and sent to the local country or marriage coordinator so that they can validate the application and forward to the Committee. Applications will be accepted only if provided by country coordinators or marriage representatives.

Please note that applications will be offered at the Lotus Feet of our Mother and should be filled with such awareness.

All information in the application forms will be maintained confidential by the members of the Committee. Only members of the Marriage team have access to the forms due to the personal nature of the information. Every effort is made to respect the concerned individuals' privacy, respect, and dignity.

The candidates must answer the questions asked in the form honestly and including the necessary information. If it is found at any stage that the information or data provided is purposely wrong, the candidate might not be allowed to apply in Sahaja Marriage for some period.

All applicants should respect the sanctity of such process and apply with full sincerity and desire to achieve their spiritual growth and the growth of the collective through Sahaja marriage.

Specifically some important fields to fill with attention are the following:

- Date of birth/age, height, weight, education, annual income, previous relationships: these are information for which Shri Mataji provided specific inputs to the marriage team for the purpose of matching and they should be correctly and completely filled out
- Center/City collective where applicant is doing Sahaja Yoga: Shri Mataji suggested to avoid matching people from the same centre, as they would feel more to be part of a sahaj family where purity should be maintained

- Contact details: should be written clearly, as it's used for communications about matches
- Illnesses: these should be clearly stated as we might need to further investigate before matching
- N. of previous forms & n. of matches: we keep in our attention yogis and especially yoginis who apply several times with no match
- Legally free to marry: yogis/nis who aren't legally free to marry will not be considered in the matching process
- Presence in Cabella: yogis/nis coming to Cabella will be matched in the first phase with yogis/nis coming to Cabella in order to allow the marriages to proceed. If no match is found, the remaining yogis, that is generally a higher number, will be matched with the remaining yoginis (no difference if coming or not) for engagement and further marriage. Applicants should not write that they are coming if they *know they are not*, as this can create situations where a boy or girl who has travelled to Cabella cannot marry due to the fact that they have been matched with someone who was supposed to be, but isn't, there. Applicants should also inform the committee on any change of this condition before the ceremony so that they are properly matched.
- Additional commitments/requirements to be specified e.g.:
 - o If the yogi/ni has been participating to the sahaj activities of a different centre in the past where he feels to be part of the family and wishes to avoid matching they should say so
 - o If the yogi/ni has some specific motivated conditions/requirements for the marriage they should say so clearly
 - o ... any other binding or conditional requirements

While there is a spirit of communications and co-operation between IMC and Indian Marriage Committees, for further clarity, **all received forms and details are not automatically forwarded to the Indian marriage committees** for subsequent ceremonies as they follow a different local application process, so applicants will need to get specific information and details from their coordinators about applying for ceremonies held in India.

REMARRIAGES AND MATCHES FROM FORMER CEREMONIES

Application forms for re-marriage can only be filled by couples already married outside Sahaja Yoga.

Couples matched at previous marriage ceremonies, which could not proceed for any valid reason can also just provide a print-out/copy of the email sent by the Marriage Committee.
The match will be verified through the records of the committee.

MATCHING AND MARRIAGE PROTOCOL

The arrangement commences when members of the Marriage committee assemble prior to the occasion of the Puja where the weddings are scheduled, typically from 10-15 days before.

The Marriage team will then conduct the registration of all acceptable forms and the preliminary protocols for the application forms which have been received. The protocols which are followed are those taught to the members of the team and directed by Shri Mataji when they personally assisted Her.

These guidelines were practical and Sahaja in nature, yoginis are generally matched with yogis of greater height and who are older than them. Suitability and common interests are checked, educational background and a sense of their complementarity will be taken into account. Willingness to change countries and dedication to Sahaja Yoga are also factors to be considered. Yogis from the same city or the same centre are not matched.

The Marriage team is committed to handle every application in the spirit of benevolence and love that Shri Mataji inspired.

After the preliminary protocols have been followed to match potential couples from the point of view of suitability, the match proposals are validated by checking vibrations as to whether they will be auspicious and in line with Mother's will. Vibrations are taken for couples and not for single yogis and yoginis. There is generally no vibrational screening at individual level for applicants before entering the process.

The majority of the Marriage Team who are checking the vibrations do so in the light of their own spiritual ability, sensitivity, experience and wisdom. There might be several reviews. If no match is found in the preliminary set of matches, new potential matches will be looked for. Sometimes no match is found.

When there is clear indication of cool vibrations unanimously or from the vast majority of the marriage team the couple is then considered suitable for a proposal, and the proposed match is then offered to the Lotus Feet of Shri Mataji.

Public announcements of matches are done collectively to the global Sahaja family without verifying preliminary acceptance from the candidates, as was traditionally done in Shri Mataji's presence. In case discretion is required due to personal matters, applicants should specify this as a comment on the form.

After match announcements, the couple is expected to meet and talk to each other within the time period available and convey their decision to the Marriage Committee. **No matched couple is in any way forced to proceed with a Sahaja marriage.**

All applicants should be aware that the Sahaja Marriage can represent a very strong subtle work on the part of the spouses and show understanding and maturity throughout the process.

In case for any valid reason one or both the applicants do not want to proceed with Sahaja Marriage, they should come together and inform the IMC members at the marriage desk and explain the reason. The reason for refusal will be asked either on-site at the IMC counter as specifically announced, if both applicants are present or by email if the applicants are not present. The reason for refusal will be asked to applicants by the Committee or by the signing leader/coordinator as a sign of respect for the ceremony and for the refused spouse. Third party refusals (i.e. friend or relative saying that 'My brother/sister/friend so and so said No to his/her match') will not be considered a formal refusal.

In case of matches where one or both spouses are not present at the ceremony, the couple should promptly communicate and interact, and always communicate the decision to accept or refuse the match to the Marriage Committee jointly during the two months following the match announcement. Also in this case, if there is a refusal, the reason for refusal will be asked to applicants by the Committee.

If the couple decides to go ahead with marriage they can register at the Puja site and receive a full set of materials for bride and groom, including sari, kurta, decorations, crowns, ornaments. They will also need to sign an additional declaration form to indicate that free and open consent is given. The costs of the marriage are generally defined the week before the ceremony and

are communicated at the Puja site as they are mostly dependent on the cost of the items provided.

FINAL COMMENTS

Sahaja Marriages take place in the name of the supreme Goddess. This marriage is to be sustained and made happy throughout the entire life span and spouses should maintain all the vows taken during the marriage ceremony in front of Shri Mataji, in Sakar or Nirakar form.

Spiritual growth of the individuals, the family and the collective is stimulated by a successful Sahaja marriage which spreads happiness and auspiciousness. A marriage expressing subtle qualities such as innocence, benevolence, love, joy, sweetness, generosity and fondness for others will support the establishment of Mother's vision, for our world.

These Sahaja marriages can be auspicious channels in allowing the flow of the Love of the Divine through the hearts of all those involved, opening a common spiritual path of joy and growth. Both spouses should be ready to embark on a lifelong path of change, love, growth, sharing, understanding, support, challenges, blessings and fulfilment, in line with our Divine Mother's teachings.

May we all be pure instruments of Shri Mataji's Divine will.

Jai Shri Mataji

The International Marriage Committee

APPENDIX 1 - EXCERPTS FROM TALKS BY H.H. SHRI MATAJI

For a comprehensive collection of extracts from Shri Mataji's talks on marriage we advise to read the book "Marriage in Sahaja Yoga" published by the SMNDSY World Foundation.

Some specific talks on marriage and related subjects:

- 1980 The value of marriage, UK
- 1980 Marriage and collectivity, UK
- 1981 Marriage is meant to give joy, UK
- 1984 Raksha Bandhan, UK

"...Today is a day we celebrate in India, where relationships between brothers and sisters have to be established, they're very pure. Brothers and sisters' relationships is without any lust or greed. It is pure relationship where the sister prays for the protection of the brother, and brother prays for the self-sufficiency of the Kshema, well-being of the sister. So this time you have to think of your other Sahaja yoginis and yogis who are like your brothers and sisters. You have to think like that. Purify your hearts. It's something funny in these countries you know that, there no such relationship exists. Purify your mind today on that point, that everybody else is my brother or sister. If you are married it's alright, but look at everyone, try to look at everyone as a brother and sister. ..."

- 1983 Diwali Puja, London, UK

"...One of the things I discovered here, in the West, that though we have understood the importance of Mooladhara, which is a very important thing, that unless and until we establish our Mooladhara fully we are not going to have speediest ascent. Despite all that, there are lingering things you see around. Like, people start choosing their life-partners in Sahaja Yoga. That is not allowed. That is not allowed. You are not to spoil your Ashrams, your centres-using them for a marriage- searching society. You must respect this point, you must respect. If you have to marry, then you can find your life partners 'outside' Sahaja Yoga-to begin with. But if you want to marry 'in' Sahaja Yoga, then you should not go on searching people in Sahaja Yoga. It is very dangerous thing for Sahaja Yoga itself, and for you people. That is one thing one should never try to do with Sahaja Yoga. For all practical purposes you are brothers and sisters. And that's why I always encouraged marriage between people who belong to another country or another centre. As we are now having a big marriage programme, I would say that most of the marriages which were done like that are very successful than the marriages that were

selected and were done. It's very wrong to do such a thing as to arrange your marriage with a Sahaja Yogi by yourself. It will be dangerous. I don't want to say anything; but it wouldn't turn out to be good because it is anti-God activity. Absolutely anti-God. ..."

- 1984 Raksha Bandhan, London, UK

"...So in Sahaja Yoga the purpose of these marriages is to have you connected internationally so you all transcend all the barriers of your nationality, barriers of racialism, barriers of caste, barriers of so much of materialism..."

- 1993 Talk to brides, Ganapatipule, India

"...When it comes to love, how do we express our love ? By sharing all our joys, all our pains, all our problems..... But in Sahaja Yoga it is a little more, I think quite a lot more, much more. Here you have to share the community, the marriage is not for individuals in Sahaja Yoga, not at all. If anybody has a feeling a marriage in Sahaja yoga is between two people, is a wrong thing; it is two communities, it can be two nations, it can be completely two universes. So it is not to be enjoyed between yourself. If you are good husband wife to each other, it is not sufficient in Sahaja Yoga. That love should be enjoyed by every one else in the society, in the community. If you cannot do that then you have not achieved Sahaja-Yoga marriage, it is just an ordinary marriage as people have, it's just that. There's nothing special about it. Such marriages should be able to give chances for very great souls to come on this earth. A person who is married in Sahaja Yoga, who are Sahaja Yogis, who are sharing their love equally with the Sahaja Yogis and the society that is Sahaja Yoga, then only great people will be born..."

- 1980 The value of marriage, Dollis Hills, UK

APPENDIX 2 - MARRIAGE VOWS

The marriage vows below will be read at the ceremony and represent the vows that each applicant is willing to accept and sustain by entering into a Sahaja Marriage.

The bride-groom says thus, to the bride:

I remember Shri Adi Shakti Mataji in my heart, and tell you that you must keep the chastity necessary for a good Muladhar. Benevolence and auspiciousness lies in completely accepting innocence and forsaking cunningness.

I remember Shri Adi Shakti Mataji in my heart and tell you that the divine aesthetics of married life should be seen in our life, our home should be aesthetically decorated. We should do all our work within, and abiding by the Dharma. I shall extend hospitality to Sahaja Yogis and associate with you in performing the duties toward Dharma. May we achieve the blessings of enjoying the joy of collectivity.

I remember Shri Adi Shakti Mataji in my heart and tell you that I will hand over to you all the money that I earn, as it has come as the reward of your Punya. You should spend the money carefully and after consulting me, keeping in mind that all the wealth belongs to God. We should spend our wealth feeling that we are receiving God's blessings. There should be no hankering for material objects; and, completely detached, we should nourish our Mahalakshmi principle.

I remember Shri Adi Shakti Mataji in my heart and tell you that I will never hurt your feelings and shall forget all the mistakes made in our lives in the past. My love for you would be limitless and so should be yours. Do not suppress your feelings, tell me if your mind is at anguish or someone troubles you. I will always stand by you, protect you, and never listen to any false complaints against you.

The bride tells thus, to the bride-groom:

I remember Shri Adi Shakti Mataji in my heart and tell you that I shall bring the divine sweetness into your life. I will cook delicious food that can be enjoyed by you. We should eat only the food cooked by Sahaja Yogis. Do not force me to meet or be in the company of those who are not

good Sahaja Yogis. We should never use bad language and should never shout at each other. You should quietly listen to me and I shall quietly listen to you.

I remember Shri Adi Shakti Mataji in my heart and tell you that we both should regularly meditate, and teach our children and our friends how to meditate. Our life should be of penance but we should not complain or tell others about it and should be always happy. Your eyes should be pure and free from lust for women and without greed for anything.

I remember Shri Adi Shakti Mataji in my heart and tell you that we should understand that Her Holiness Mataji Shri Nirmala Devi has conferred Her blessings on us, and we should completely surrender and dedicate our hearts to Her. This dedication should be through integration of body, mind and intellect. We should be aware how tremendous and unprecedented a work is Self Realization, and everything else in our life is unimportant. We should unceasingly enjoy Her ever-flowing grace, devote and regularly offer puja to Her, and be extremely humble in Her presence. Please correct me if you find me failing in this.

Brides and Bride-Grooms say together:

I shall open the path of Moksha which I have got with the blessings and grace of Her Holiness Shri Mataji also to others, and shall achieve in the company of such a great and realised person, the well-being of the whole universe.

APPENDIX 3 - WAIVER

The waiver below will need to be signed by the couple who wish to proceed with Sahaja Marriage.

In consideration for being able to participate in the ceremony being conducted on the occasion of XXX Puja in XXX, (the "Ceremony") by Vishwa Nirmala Dharma ("VND"), the undersigned hereby acknowledge and agree as follows:

- 1. The Ceremony constitutes a spiritual ceremony only and does not constitute a marriage ceremony that will result in a marriage under the law. If a marriage ceremony is desired, the undersigned recognize that they will have to take further action on their own in order to have such a ceremony performed under and in accordance with the laws of their desired country.*
- 2. Although a marriage between the undersigned may have been proposed (the "Proposal") by a Member, Officer, Director or agent of VND, the undersigned are entering into the Ceremony of their own free will and are under no obligation to participate in the Ceremony or to enter into a marriage.*
- 3. The undersigned hereby waive, release, and forever discharge any and all claims and causes of action of every kind and nature that they may otherwise have against VND and/or its Member, Officers, Directors and/or agents (whether acting in such corporate capacity or individually), arising out of or resulting from, directly or indirectly, the Ceremony or the Proposal.*

APPENDIX 4 – MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARRIAGE COMMITTEE

Role	Name	Country
Secretary	Marco Arciglio	Italy
Advisor	Vijay Nalgirkar	India
Advisor	Duilio Cartocci	Italy
Member	Petra Schmidt	Austria
Member	Ekaterina Bernik	Brazil
Member	Theresa Gulati	Canada
Member	Mary Kuhn	Canada
Member	He Jai Bin	China
Member	Han Lu	China
Member	Gaelle Sattarshetty	France
Member	Lucia Hoelscher	Germany
Member	Meera Szegvary	Hungary
Member	Lakshminarayanan Ramalingam	India
Member	Manish Badhwar	India
Member	Govinda Rao Kalapatapu	Spain
Member	Vijaya Mathys	Switzerland
Member	Isin Unek Volchenkov	Turkey
Member	Danya Martoglio	UK
Member	Rahul Nalgirkar	USA
Member	Victoria Zbylut	USA

The e-mail for requesting information about marriage ceremonies, matches etc is:
marriages@sahajaworldfoundation.org