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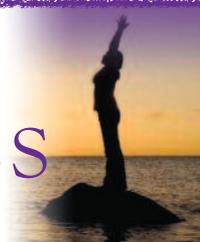


**September 29, 2012**  
**MAIN FESTIVAL: 10 am - 6 pm**  
**SPECIAL EVENING EVENT:**

Return to Balance:  
*A Celebration of the Divine Feminine*  
 Dr. Trish • 6:30-8:30 pm

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## THE PRACTICES

The first part of the pose focus is to help the practitioner to propriocept into the muscles of the body that help to support them in a balancing practice. The second half will focus on applying the proprioceptive memories in the body to balancing poses.



### Bridge Lifts into Bridge Hold:

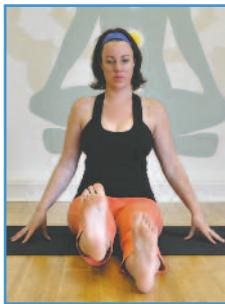
From a reclined position, bend the knees and bring the feet to the mat hip distance apart. Walk the feet back towards the buttocks. Bring the arms by the sides. On an inhalation,

firmly press the feet into the ground and lift the pelvis skyward. On the exhalation slowly lower the spine and pelvis back to the ground. Repeat the lifting and lowering motion 5-10x with a special focus in using muscular effort in the glutes.

On the final Bridge lift, place a block or small exercise ball in between the thighs and squeeze onto it tightly, hugging the inner thighs in towards the midline of the body. Draw the shoulder blades together and interlace the fingers underneath the body if the shoulders allow. Hold for 5-10 breaths with a special focus on turning on the inner leg muscles.

### Seated Leg Lifts:

From seated, with the legs long in front of the body. Point the toes skyward and send energy out through the heel of the foot. On an inhalation lift the leg a couple of inches off the ground and hover for 3 breaths. On the 4th breath slowly lower the leg back to the ground. Repeat on each side for 5-10 breaths with a special focus on engaging the thigh muscles.



### Wall Forward Fold into Warrior 3 (with Hip Rotations):

From standing, find a piece of wall that is clear of clutter/debris. Bring open palms

onto the wall and extend the arms long. Fold forward from the hips and walk the arms down the wall to shoulder height. Walk the legs underneath of the hips and create an L-shape with the body. Energetically extend the buttocks away from the body as the neck and the crown of the head extend towards the wall. Press into the fleshy part of the palm under the thumb and activate the inner arm muscles, drawing the shoulders back and down the body and activating the upper back muscles. Hold the stretch for 5-10 breaths with a special focus on finding length in the spine and back of the legs. When complete, walk the hands up the wall and pause for a few breaths.

After the break, return to the wall forward fold L-shape position. On an inhalation, lift the right leg up to hip height. Pause and breathe. On an exhalation, point the right toes and the right hipbone towards the earth bringing

the inner thighs towards meeting. On an inhalation open the right hipbone up towards the sky and work towards stacking the hips on top of each other. Repeat 5-10x with a special focus on feeling the muscles of the left outer standing leg working, along with perceiving where the pelvis is in space. After repetitions, hold the pose with the pelvis and sacrum at center in a flat position and practice turning on the back and core muscles along with the muscles of the standing leg. Repeat on the other side.

### Tennis Ball Footwork:

From a standing position, place a slightly used tennis ball where the front of the bare left foot meets the toes. Lift the toes and spread them over the ball with the ball slightly over towards the footpad under the big toe. Step the right foot back and bend the left knee



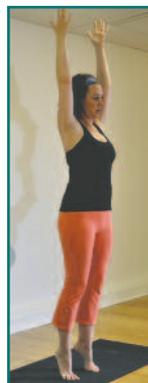
into a Warrior 2 stance. Gently bring the body weight forward into the left foot and pulse the ball under the foot. After a couple of pulses start to work the ball across the ball of the foot towards the small toe. Once the ball of the foot is complete, move the tennis ball down a 1/2 inch to where the ball of the foot meets the upper arch, again, gently bring the body weight forward and pulses. After a couple of pulses, move the tennis ball across the foot towards the pinky toe. Repeat this pulsing action across the foot, moving methodically down the foot in 1/2 inch increments so that by the time the exercise is finished, every part of the foot is stimulated and massaged. Pay special attention to hot spots (tender places in the foot) and how they relate to other parts of the body.

After the left foot massage is complete, balance on that foot by picking the right foot up off the floor. Pay special attention to noticing the connection of the foot to the ground. Think of the foot as a triangle of support – the point of the triangle in the middle of the ball of the foot and the base of the triangle distributed through the heel of the foot. Now try balancing on the right (unmassaged) foot and notice the difference in the feeling of the foot against the floor and the quality of the balance. Once the balance experiment is complete, massage the right foot in the same method as the left before moving on to the balancing poses portion of practice.

## BALANCING POSES

### Palm Tree:

Start in Mountain pose, with the feet hips distance apart. On an inhalation, lift the arms by the ears and relax the shoulder blades back and down the body. When ready, lift the heels up off the ground. Balance on the balls of the feet with a special emphasis on strength coming through the arch of the foot, inner leg and pelvic floor muscles. See if the body remembers the sensation of hugging onto the block in bridge pose to activate the inner leg muscles. Hold for 5 breaths and lower the arms and heels back to the earth on an exhalation. Repeat 3-5x.



continued on page 20

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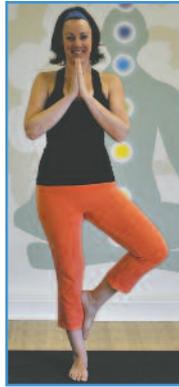
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**Tree Pose:**

From Mountain pose, spread the triangle of the left foot firmly into the floor. Draw up on the kneecap with the thigh muscle and engage the left glute. Bring the opposite foot to the calf or thigh, making sure that it is above or below the knee joint. Firmly press leg into foot and the foot back into the leg to create stability, remembering the sensation of turning on the inner leg muscle. Bring the hands to heart center or challenge the balance by extending the arms overhead. Hold for 5-10 breaths and repeat on the other side.



**Balancing Knee to Chest:**

From Mountain pose, bring the triangle of the left foot into contact with the earth. Bend the right knee and draw it up towards the chest, holding onto the shin or back of the thigh. Notice the instability of the left ankle wobbling. Notice where the body is asking for muscular effort and use the muscles of the inner or outer leg, thigh or glute to create stability in the standing leg. Personalize the muscular effort and when the



standing leg feels strong, hold and breathe. Stay in this position, or approach the next level of challenge, with a slight lean into a backbend. Hold either position and for 5-10 breaths and repeat on the other side.

**Balancing Twist:**

From Mountain pose, spread the left foot into the earth and utilize the proprioceptive information that the body has gathered thus far through practice to find stability in the standing leg. Bend the right knee and bring it up to hip height. Rotate the center of the torso to the right and reach the left hand for the outer edge of the right thigh. Extend the right arm behind at shoulder height and take the gaze down the fingers of the right hand. Hold for 5-10 breaths and repeat on the other side.



**Standing Hand to Foot:**

From Mountain pose, bring the left foot in firm connection with the floor. Bend the right knee and hook a strap where arch meets the heel of the foot. Extend the knee, split the strap between both hands and use it to support the leg as it lengthens and comes up to hip height. To lessen dependence on the strap, see if the body remembers the sensation of turning on the thigh muscles in the seated leg lifts. Relax the shoulders, stabilize



the core and focus the eyes on something that is not moving (i.e. the floor just beyond the foot). Hold for 5-10 breaths and repeat on the other side.

*Note: If you don't own a yoga strap, try using an old men's tie, an elastic exercise band or a jump rope. To practice without a strap, place the lifted extended leg foot against the wall.*

**Half Moon:**

From a high lunge position with the left foot forward, inhale and lift the right leg to hip height. Bring a block underneath the left shoulder and hold on with both hands while stabilizing into the left leg, with a special emphasis of turning on the outer leg muscles. Open the right hip towards the sky and stack it over the left. Notice if the body remembers the sensation of the pelvis in space from the wall Warrior 3 exercise.



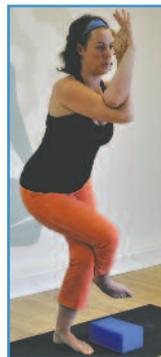
Flex the right foot and send energy out through the heel. Once stable, keep left arm/hand directly under the left shoulder and use the block for support underneath. Inhale the right arm up and rotate the torso to bring it in line with the hip. Focus on one easy point with the eyes to help with balance. Over time, experiment with taking the gaze skyward towards the extended arm. Hold for 5-10 breaths. Release on an exhalation by bringing the extended arm back to the block, rotating the right hip back towards the earth and stepping back into a lunge or forward into a forward fold. Repeat on the other side.

*Note: Practice with the back of the body against a wall to get a sense of the pose before trying it freestanding. A folding chair can replace the use of a block as a transitional support tool.*

**Eagle Pose:**

From Mountain pose, bring a block lengthwise to the outer edge of the left foot, so that the toes line up about the midpoint of the block. Cross the right leg on top of the left, bend the left knee and sit down into a partial squat. Place the ball of the right foot onto the block for support. Bend the left elbow and bring it to the centerline of the chest. Bend the right elbow and crook in on top of the left. If the body allows, reach the left hand around for the right thumb. Lift the arm complex slightly skyward. Sit back into an imaginary chair and squeeze the inner thighs together. See if the body remembers the inner leg engagement from the other poses. Stay upright with the spine and the right foot on the block for a couple of breaths. If the body feels steady, lift the foot off the block and try balancing without the support. For more challenge take a slight lean forward from the hips with the torso, keeping mountain pose in the spine. Hold either position for 5-10 breaths and repeat on the other side. ▲

*Note: If the range of motion in the shoulder is prohibitive for this pose, try crossing the arms on top of each other and placing the palms on the shoulders instead*



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# Moving Beyond the Mat: Extending Yoga into Expressive Dance

As liberating as sun salutations and a deep savasana can be, sometimes confining your yoga practice to a 24-by-68-inch mat can feel a bit restricting, especially when the music is groovy, the prana is flowing, and your cells are vibrating. Ever wonder what it's like to push aside the rubber rectangles, feel the floor under your soles, and *dance* your yoga?

Human beings are *born* dancers. We wiggle, kick and bop along to the TV, moving without inhibition. So what happened? Wouldn't it be great to reconnect with that innate desire to move, in a safe space, our limbs and heart free, perhaps attaining a sense of euphoria that even a round of vigorous kapalabhati breathing cannot provide?

Luckily, many yoga studios today offer some form of expressive dance, opportunities to move beyond the mat while still incorporating the basic tenets of yoga: breath, awareness, mindfulness, and self-regulation. Below are descriptions of some of the most popular forms of expressive dance, along with guidance about what to expect in terms of movement and structure:

**Nia**® teachers strive to help you follow "the body's way" via choreographed routines based on the modalities of dance, martial arts, yoga, and the healing arts. A 1-hour class packs a lot of punch: In that time, you may sweep across the floor like a modern dancer, kick like a tae kwon do master, and lift your arms to the sky like a yogi, motivated by inspiring music and the incorporation of body, mind, and spirit. In Nia, movement is guided by sensation; if something doesn't feel right, adjustments are welcome, such as tapping your foot on the floor instead of kicking. I've even attended class with a student in a motorized wheelchair! *Awareness* is a core concept in Nia, so you're not just stepping forward or moving your hand; you're *feeling* the ball and heel of your foot press into the ground, *witnessing* the palm of your hand cut through space.

Nia is a perfect starting point for students who crave structure; although there are opportunities for free-form movement and the invitation to pepper the routines with your own personality, there is always someone at the front to watch in case you have trouble finding your own dancer's "voice."

**Let Your Yoga Dance**® (LYYD) is a meditative movement program that spawned from the popular noontime DansKinetics classes offered at Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health. A typical LYYD class guides you through the body's seven energy centers using fun and appropriate music, say, "Seasons of Love" to work the heart chakra and a soothing Sanskrit chant to tune into the crown chakra. Playlists are diverse, sweet, and silly; you should come to class with a willingness to smile, make eye contact, and shake your booty (even if just a little). It's a time to have fun and

be wild with the group but also an outlet for private reflection and personal movement.

LYYD is structured enough so that people who have never danced before will have an idea of where to begin but loose enough that experienced dancers won't feel restricted. Several LYYD teachers have additional training in teaching this modality to special populations, including those with Parkinson's disease,

Multiple Sclerosis, and older adults with physical limitations.

**JourneyDance**™ is a rich and sensual movement-based exploration of the body and mind, one part funky and one part divine. Class may begin by slithering across the floor like a snake, climax with a gyrating, purifying shaman's dance, and conclude with an eyes-closed dance prayer. Nature imagery is used heavily throughout class, with movement matching the elements of air, earth, fire, and

water; vocal affirmations will encourage you to find your inner goddess or warrior.

Appropriately so, JourneyDance recognizes that everyone is in a different stage of his or her life journey; therefore, movements are suggested but open to interpretation. Be ready to sweat, tune into yourself and those around you, and emerge feeling cleansed and ready to tackle any challenge.

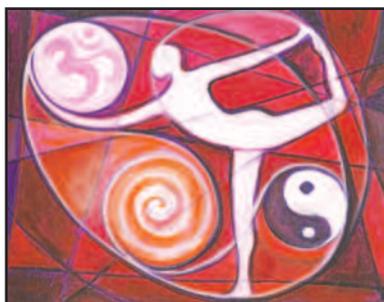
**5Rhythms**® is a practice that breaks down life's patterns into five distinct movements: Flowing, Staccato, Chaos, Lyrical, and Stillness, collectively called a "Wave." Music, which can range from classical to contemporary and country to techno, is carefully selected to guide you through each segment. Instruction is very loose, and most of the class is self-led, an invitation to explore your own movement and emotions. People used to very regimented classes may feel awkward not having direct instructions to follow; however, there are no "wrong" movements. Some people's Chaos is lying on the floor, rocking; for others, it's thrashing around the room, hair flying.

Those who do 5Rhythms on a regular basis may begin to notice its parallels to real life. For example, are you a "Flowing" personality, moving around job to job? Perhaps you need to be a little more forthright (Staccato) about declaring your intentions and ambitions. The connections between 5Rhythms and life are endless.

The word "dance" may be scary for some, but the key is to remember that it's all just semantics. Your authentic movement is your dance, and all that matters is that it comes from the inside—and you have fun! ▲

To learn more about expressive dance styles:

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# The Yoga of Speech

“A word is a bird and the teeth are the cage;  
if we let the bird fly, we can never get it back.” – Swami Sivanandaji

## HOW CAN WE APPLY OUR YOGA PRACTICE TO THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE?

Applying yogic principles to the way we communicate can bring about some of the most profound changes in our lives and relationships— and can also be the most challenging aspect of a yoga practice. Sure, you can do a handstand – but can you speak compassionately to a family member? You can touch your toes, but can you apply this flexibility and openness to the way that you speak and listen to your partner? Luckily, yoga has much to offer on how we can communicate better, which can lead to deeper connections and reciprocity. Furthermore, the skills we develop on the mat can have great benefits when applied to our daily life communications.

We can look to The Bhagavad Gita for a passage that directly refers to speech, specifically the *tapas* (discipline) of speech: “To offer service to the gods, to the good, to the wise, and to your spiritual teacher; purity, honesty, continence, and nonviolence: these are the disciplines of the body. To offer soothing words, to speak truly, kindly, and helpfully, and to study the scriptures: these are the disciplines of speech. Calmness, gentleness, silence, self-restraint, and purity: these are disciplines of the mind.” (Chapter 17, v. 14-16, translation by Easwaran).

The principles of *ahimsa* (kindness, nonviolence) and *satya* (truth), found in Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras are the first two *yamas* (restraints). These principles are perhaps the two quintessential guides to communication. However, what do we do when the truth and kindness are in tension? What if the truth doesn’t seem kind at all? In the words of Swami Vivekananda, “If in doubt whether to observe *ahimsa* or *satya*, always go with *ahimsa*.”

Soothing words, speaking truly, kindly, helpfully, studying scriptures, might sound easy enough. But we all, from time to time, say things that might not be very helpful, kind or true. Was it really *helpful* to tell your mother that you didn’t like the sweater she was wearing last week? When your partner misplaced your keys, was there a *kinder* way you could have spoken to them about it, rather than yelling? We often might think that we are speaking more kindly or helpfully than we really are, and this is where the yogic practices of discipline (*tapas*) and self-study (*swadhyaya*) comes in, which are two of the *niyamas* (observances) offered in the Yoga Sutras.

The word discipline here is also worth noting. *Tapas*, which translates as discipline or fire, is also one of the *niyamas*. Good communication requires a certain amount of self-discipline to not say everything that comes to our mind, and to be restrained and observant in our speech. Ultimately, the practice of meditation can help us to purify our thoughts so that our thoughts themselves are only true, kind, and peaceful. The disciplines of the mind are a necessary support for the disciplines of speech. Attaining purity of mind, however, can take many years, if not lifetimes, of practice. Until we reach that point of purity (*saucha*, also one of the *niyamas*), we need to exercise *tapas*.

Moreover, in order to cultivate purity of our mind *and* speech, we must practice *tapas*.

One way we can apply discipline to our speech is by passing it through the Four Gates, which have been linked back to Sufi and Buddhist traditions. These tools are very useful yardsticks you can use to decide whether something really *needs* to be said. Before you let that bird fly, see if your words can pass through the Four Gates of Speech.

1. Is it true?
2. Is it kind?
3. Is it necessary?
4. Is it the right time?

The Four Gates essentially apply the principles outlined in the Gita and add an additional component of appropriate timing. Once we evaluate whether what we want to say is kind and true, we need to ask “Do I really need to say it? Will it be helpful, beneficial to say this?” Do I need to tell my friend she has a pimple on her face? In all likelihood, she probably knows. It may be true, but it’s not necessarily kind or helpful.

Timing is really important too, and can make a big difference in whether the person is ready to receive what you have to tell them, and thus can ultimately impact the outcome of your conversation. Probably all of us can think of a time that we got really upset about something that “wasn’t such a big deal,” but because of everything else that was going on – work stress, family crisis, tough economic times, illness – a little thing got to us. If you need to have a heart-to-heart with someone, make sure they are ready to receive and give, and that their heart is also open to the conversation too.

As it regards self-study (*swadhyaya*), there is much we can do to be aware of the way we speak. In *The Secret Power of Yoga*, Nischala Joy Devi proposes the exercise of recording yourself having a conversation, and then listening to it afterwards. Many of us cringe at the sound of our own voices, but if you can get past that, it can be a profound practice for noticing communication patterns.

Another yogic practice that can deepen our self-awareness, and which requires a fair amount of discipline, is the practice of *mauna*, or silence. Yogis have practiced *mauna* for millennia, and some have remained silent for decades. This practice helps to refine our ability to think before we speak. Through the intentional practice of silence, we may realize all of the times we want to speak, and lengthen the time between when thoughts form and are actually expressed.

To get an experience of *mauna*, one can try going on a silent retreat, and then try applying it occasionally at home when you return. For most of us, our work and family lives might make the practice of *mauna* challenging or nearly impossible, but even setting aside a few hours to turn the phone off and intentionally dwell in silence can be a profound experience. ▲

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# Keeping The Company of Sound

**WE LIVE IN THE UNIVERSE OF CONTINUOUS VIBRATION,** yet how many of us are aware of our own underlying energy or even the value of understanding it? With the rise of the global energy crisis, societies are slowly turning their attention to an awareness of the following questions: What is energy? What is the value of energy? How do I relate with it?

The rise of continuous natural disasters all over the globe, as well as global warming, makes it clear that our world demands a more conscious conversation with the subject of energy. Since times immemorial, the yogis studied energy (*prana*) and followed it to its subtlest wave. Coming in contact with the essence of energy they come to experience what is supporting that energy, i.e. the true Self beyond form and thought.

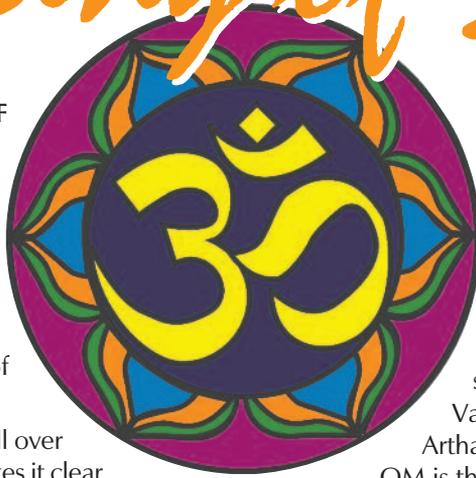
## Vibration Quiets The Mind

The Sanskrit language connects us to energy. By nature, mantras themselves are highly resonant. The Sanskrit alphabet is predominantly formed from sounds that are produced by rubbing the vocal chords together. This sound friction from the rubbing of the vocal chords together eventually turns into a kind of sound heat, and this friction and heat produce a lasting echo that follows these sounds. It is precisely this outer continuance or echo, after the sound is expressed, which lends Sanskrit the moniker of being called the language of vibration. What that means is that Sanskrit makes us aware of vibration. And if we sit with pulsation, we gain access to what underlies that, which is silence and the eternal.

## The Company You Keep

So how does it work? Well, you say a sound and then sit and feel how much energy gets conjured. With mantras the effect is your skin pulsates, there is a deeper connection with what you hear, your mind becomes clearer and quieter and you feel tranquil and refreshed at the same time.

Since Sanskrit mantras emanate from Source, they can link us with Source. In effect, they model the process for us, all that we have to do is pay attention and follow along for the ride. When we hang out with the lasting continuance of energy found in the mantras, we get to feel ourselves as lasting and eternal. Moreover, all mantras evolve and



dissolve from or into the OM sound. So immersion in resonant sounds creates a link between our every day self, our mind, and the sound of OM, *nadam* (vibration) and God.

Patanjali recognizes the importance of chanting OM and connecting with *nadam* in the Yoga Sutras, when he says in Chapter 1, verses 27 & 28: Tasya Vacakah Pranavah (1.27), and Taj Japas Tad Artha-Bhavanam (1.28). These sutras say that OM is the name of God as well as *nadam*.

These sutras suggest the aspirant first focus attention on the outer expression of OM, as this will eventually lead them to the inner vibrational OM. The inner OM is the inner experience of God. If all mantras emanate from OM then they have the potential, through the chanting of them, to resolve us back to the divine. What happens is that by chanting the manifest sound, the student organically and naturally connects with eternal energy and the divine.

## What Is Beyond Thought?

Yogis advise that you go beyond thought to feel what you are. Many students try this practice and eventually find themselves asking, "What is beyond thought?" Shri Brahmananda Sarasvati, would reply, "You, real You, is beyond thought." He was referring to the limitless Self. We all want access to the real us. But how do we get there?

Through Sanskrit chanting we have the opportunity to cultivate connection with pure vibration and that takes us beyond the level of the thinking mind. It works like this, we focus on the mantra, that sound merges into pulsation, pulsation draws us inward and once we are in eventually we feel inner stillness where the mind is silent. The experience of inner silence is a primary focus for the yogi. In such silent connection, the practitioner realizes him/her Self. Therefore, Sanskrit chanting is an intentional yogic practice that develops freedom from thoughts. This doesn't mean we won't ever go to work, see our family and friends, use language in a common every day sense or think again. No, of course we will. It does however mean that through Sanskrit and the awakening of inner *nadam*, we have the opportunity to explore what we are beyond thought. And beyond thought is where we are. ▲

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# YOGA AS SCIENCE; SCIENCE AS TRUTH; TRUTH AS RELIGION

**O**NE OF THE MOST FAMOUS EXAMPLES OF THE HISTORICAL BATTLE FOR TRUTH between Science and Religion occurred in the 1600's. The Catholic Church, in power, locked Galileo away for the second half of his life for his discovery and insistence that the Earth revolved around the Sun. (He was not formally exonerated until the 1900's). Darwin's theory of man evolving from ape in the late 1800's led to the famous Scopes trial of 1925 in Tennessee.

These historical facts tell us about human nature--for some, a belief (a thought) is more powerful than the truth of that thought. Certain aspects of Truth are agreed by all (such as "death and taxes"), while others change continuously, like when we look back on life, seeing past events with new perspective.

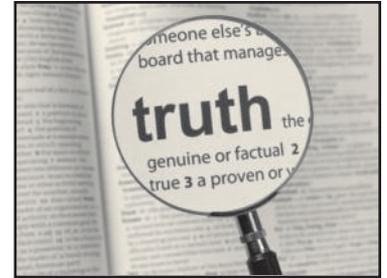
Science is as guilty as Religion of manipulating Truth. The pharmaceutical, food, media and insurance industries regularly promote mis-information and hide other information to get us to consume, or not consume various products and services. Formula rather than breast milk (1950's), hormone replacement for women (1990's), and current osteoporosis<sup>2</sup> and cholesterol<sup>3</sup> medications for the elderly and vaccines for newborns<sup>4</sup> are just a few examples.

Government, supposed to be the purveyor of greater good, has become a vehicle of these industries and human nature; and therefore has become less trustworthy over time. How else could we have been so blind to the Truths of global warming, childhood obesity, expensive and ineffective "health care" and pending crises for our bees and children's nervous, hormone and immune systems due to wanton chemical and electromagnetic pollution?

Fortunately the Internet has evolved seemingly as a counter-force, dramatically expanding access to different voices and truths. While some Governments actively block access to Truth on the Internet or from other sources, even if impeded, Truth does ultimately prevail. Yoga is another important tool in the pursuit and discovery of truth.

## YOGA AS SCIENCE

If we define Science as method of searching for Truth, Yoga can be viewed as a scientific method. This is because classical Yoga inherently recognizes the limitations of the human mind: our sensations, thoughts, emotions, memories and concepts are NOT true; though they may seem so. Our minds must CONSTRUCT reality and in that process create distortion or illusion (*maya*). Like newer films enhanced with computer graphics, our perceptual systems cause us to SEE things that we know are NOT there. Just 'cause the world looks flat doesn't mean that it is. On the other hand, senses also DON'T show us what IS there—such as bacteria<sup>3</sup>, radiation, genocide and destruction of the rain forests. Our cognitive and sensory systems do a damn good job of designing our cars and keeping us from crashing, but do they represent Truth? Yoga teaches us that there are truths beyond our senses and thoughts, more "objective" than what our minds tell us, and that we can access these Truths directly with simple but apparently elusive and difficult techniques.



## "OW, MY HERNIATED DISC IS HURTING ME"

A common illustration of this issue is the patient who walks into the doctor's office, limping, holding his back, stating the above, but doesn't want surgery. In such a case, the patient has been convinced that his pain is being caused by the herniated disc. However, the MRI might not show a disc, or it might be on the other side or a different location, not correlating with the pain. In fact, less than 5% of back pain these days can be helped by surgery or removal of a disc. More importantly, the patient's direct experience of pain has been superseded by the thought of "herniated disc"; and therefore the *disc in his mind* had become more difficult to heal than the *pain in his back*. Another example is when a doctor tells an elderly patient, who looks and feels fine, that he needs cholesterol medication<sup>3</sup>, or that she needs osteoporosis medication<sup>2</sup>.

Mainstream medicine defines a "symptom" as a "subjective" experience reported by a patient; while a "sign" is an "objective" observation by the physician. When the symptoms and signs match, we strike gold: a wound on the arm hurts more and more, the physician sees and samples the wound, the test shows bacteria and its sensitivity, an antibiotic is prescribed, and voila-la, a cure! Unfortunately, more than 80% of visits to primary care doctors are for "non-organic" causes, and that means that the doctor will not be able to objectively validate the patient's symptoms. Hence the doctor concludes that his Objective truth is more valid than the patient's Subjective truth, and hands out a free sample of anti-anxiety, anti-depressant, sleep or pain medication.

continued on page 30

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Furthermore, 80% of dis-ease these days is “chronic”, which essentially means that there is no “cure”, and the best the doctor and patient can hope for is “managing” (i.e. hiding) symptoms. However, this treatment leads to side effects, more medications and cost, dissatisfaction for the patient and doctor, and gradually worsening of the original problem = a huge amount of wasted time, energy, money, spirit and life. The “only” entities who benefit from this model, and who are resisting the current attempts to change, are the pharmaceutical, food, media, insurance and “health care” industries!

This model of ill-ness, the inherent conflict between subjective and objective, between patient and doctor, is non-science at its worst. Yoga may be one of the most important solutions to this modern problem, which is in part why it is growing in popularity (though when it is reduced to being just another form of physical exercise it might not really be doing this job<sup>1</sup>). By using yoga to flip the model 180 degrees, we begin to discover root-cause solutions to these symptoms and other modern problems, as has been done by yoga-patients over thousands of years. Yoga is Science at its best, because it gives us the tools to follow the Truth.

#### YOGA AS METHOD

We begin by assuming that the subjective is objective, and the objective is subjective. This means that we assume that the symptoms, what the patient’s body is telling them, are always objective and true. The body’s mechanisms that produce symptoms and deliver messages to awareness are millions of years old and work successfully in most non-human species (including our pets) to preserve life. Those symptoms are not there to make us suffer, but to give us information about something is beginning to go wrong. Like the red light on the dashboard of the car, we don’t want to cover the bulb with black tape; we want to get the car to the shop before the problem gets seriously wrong while traveling at 70 mph.

Symptoms are like text messages; however, they’re written in a foreign language or not a language at all. We need to develop the skills to receive and respond to these messages. For most of us, by the time our symptoms have become intense or persistent enough to seek help, they have been present for months to years. Symptoms usually begin subtly; so if we haven’t been taught how to pay attention, we’re too busy, or the “pain killers” work, symptoms will often come and go, blink on and off, before turning into a steady red color.

Just like symptoms, insights, inspirations, and other impressions are subtle fleeting waves (*vrittis*) of non-sensory, non-cognitive consciousness that can easily be missed. However, when followed, (like the hair in the corner of CSI scene) they often can lead us to deep solutions, and have been the source of the greatest achievements of humankind. Unfortunately, we are socialized from very young to ignore and suppress these impressions; they are

pejoratively called daydreams, intuitions, visions, etc. Some cultures believe that dreams, both the nighttime and the daytime ones, are the True reality, and that the everyday sensations and thoughts are the illusions.

#### THE PROCESSES OF YOGA, SCIENCE AND RELIGION

Religion and Science are ways that we structure Truth. However, the mental structures that we impose on our mysterious and confusing lives are limited. Truth might rest in Process not Result.

History shows us that innovators, seeking Truth through honest observation and listening (“sitting with”), discover “data points” (or as one author coined, “factoids”) that don’t fit into the current Model of life—they serve as whistle blowers. Dishonest Science, Religion and Government alters, erases, silences, locks up or kills such outliers. Honest Science, Religion and Government seek out such innovators as essential purveyors of the next better Model. The phases of Scientific, Religious and Cultural revolutions are well documented in history—starting with “oh-no” but ending with “tah-dah.” Unfortunately, history shows us that there is a lot of pain and sometimes centuries of delay involved in that process.

So, in the Process of seeking Truth (and Health) by applying the Scientific method called Yoga, that nagging back pain or anxiety may suggest or demand a pause or change that leads to a new diet, a new hobby, a new profession, a new observation or discovery, a new relationship to self or other, or a life-transforming sequence of dominos falling on a personal and global level; the butterfly effect in multiple dimensions.

We know this is true, because over human history, the greatest scientists became more religious and the greatest theologians became more scientific<sup>6</sup>. As we age, we get wiser because of our ability to incorporate more information into our Models of life, refining them, making them more True. Truth engenders awe; the mysteries only become more magnificent. The pursuit of Truth is an entitlement, a freedom, and for many a Happiness that can never be taken away, even if locked in a cell or a body. However, it is also a Responsibility that we need to come back to as often as possible. ▲

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *This general information should not be used to make decisions about medical care without the involvement of a knowledgeable practitioner.*

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>See Article in Spring 2012 Issue of Yoga Living titled Yoga Practices & Styles: A Comparative Study.

<sup>2</sup>Sanson, Gillian: *The Myth of Osteoporosis*, 2011.

<sup>3</sup>Ravnskov, Uffe: *Ignore the Awkward: How the Cholesterol Myths are Kept Alive*, 2010.

<sup>4</sup>The current practice of giving intramuscular vaccines to newborns within the first day of life is a horrendous distortion of science by the current politics and economics of health care.

<sup>5</sup>In the mid 1800’s Ignaz Semmelweis discovered unseen bacteria as a cause of mothers’ death after delivery (child bed fever) but was ridiculed, persecuted, and ultimately died in a mad house.

<sup>6</sup>Examples are Einstein and Giovanni Battista Riccioli.

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# New Concepts in Economics

**H**ow many open and generous instincts are mitigated by the amount of time or money we think we can spare? How many dreams of practicing a certain profession has been dashed by the cautionary sentence, "I can't afford to do that"?

Economics itself is defined as a measure of scarcity<sup>1</sup>. This, along with the 'survival of the fittest' mentality is so ingrained in us that we automatically filter out other perspectives. We hoard, cling, and worry that there isn't 'enough.' What if the story we tell ourselves about money isn't true? What if instead of living in a world where we sacrifice beauty and life-force for machine-like efficiency, we had the right to a rich and full existence *just because we were born on this planet?*

According to Charles Eisenstein in his inspiring work *Sacred Economics*, money's "...original purpose is simply to connect human gifts with human needs<sup>2</sup>." He points out that our very lives are dependent on the gifts of caring others, beginning with our parents. Our home, the Earth, powered by the Sun, was not provided by human manufacture. Earthly abundance is a gift for which all of us must feel a natural gratitude. For millennia, there is evidence that a gift economy, rather than the popularly conceived barter system, was the main way of exchanging goods and services<sup>3</sup>.

Today, we live in a world of abstractions where everything, including you and me, are commodities. Like any addictive substance, more and more money is necessary to feed our cravings with a decreasing level of satisfaction. Without unlimited raw materials, clearly this is an unsustainable pyramid scheme with the future of our beautiful planet in the balance.

As we collect more and more 'stuff', the things that are actually precious are lost. A 2010 study shows that while a certain level of income is required to feel secure, more than that provides little to no increase in measured happiness<sup>4</sup>. So, why do we struggle so?

We are bound in what Eisenstein terms the Age of Separation. In our quest for individuality, we have split ourselves from the very sources of life; Spirit, food, water, and each other. Denying the reality that we are all co-dependent leaves us with a hole we cannot fill no matter how many efficiently produced goods and services we produce or purchase. We operate on the premise that "less for you is more for me<sup>5</sup>" and it's destroying our souls.

Eisenstein posits that a fundamental shift is required to realize that "more for you" is in fact "more for me too" as many spiritual traditions imply. I remember Ammachi saying once that when you give flowers, you are the first one to enjoy their fragrance. Even our beloved scientific method is proving that we survive best when sharing with each other. Spending money on someone else is the one instance

where money does bring increased happiness<sup>6</sup>. Evidence is building in the world of Game Theory to show that cooperation, not 'survival of the fittest,' is the most evolutionarily advantageous<sup>7</sup>. We have trouble taking this in as truth as we are so ingrained in the 'dog eat dog' worldview. It is time to rewrite our story.

For years, many of us have been opting for Conscious Consumerism to make our voices heard. The increased availability of organics, farmers markets, fair trade and socially conscious investment funds are a result of these efforts. A gift economy builds on these ideals, but is based on a paradigm that is outside of the existing system. Examples of that shift are happening all around us.

In the technology sector, freeware such as the Linux Operating System has been successfully operating on the premise of an intellectual commons for decades. In 2007, the band Radiohead rocked the music industry (pun intended) by releasing *In Rainbows* as a 'pay what you want' internet download. Karma Kitchens have sprung up across the country where diners pay for the next customer's meal, and even established, 'for profit' businesses such as Panera are implementing a 'pay it forward' scheme for some of their restaurants.

Yes, these are experiments, albeit thoughtful ones. And, there is a learning curve both for both business and consumer. But the passion for real change is there. What would it look like if our economy could run on cooperation and gratitude? What if we were all able to pursue work that was creative and pleasurable? Instead of 'what if' maybe we should all be asking ourselves, 'why not?' and 'how can we?' ▲

<sup>1</sup>In 1932, Lionel Robbins, head of the economics department at the London School of Economics, defined his subject as "...a science which studies human behavior as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses. Retrieved from <http://www.ask.com/wiki/Economics> on 4/26/2012.

<sup>2</sup>Eisenstein, Charles, p. xviii. *Sacred Economics*. Evolver Editions, Berkely, California, 2011.

<sup>3</sup>Contrary to popular conception, there is no evidence of a society or economy that relied primarily on barter. Instead, non-monetary societies operated largely along the principles of gift economics and debt" Retrieved from: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_money](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_money) on 5/2/2012.

<sup>4</sup>According to a 2010 study from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School, and Income over 75K does not yield a higher return on measures of happiness. Retrieved from [www.time.com](http://www.time.com)

<sup>5</sup>Eisenstein, Charles, p. 139. *Sacred Economics*. Evolver Editions, Berkely, California, 2011.

<sup>6</sup>Recent studies by social science researcher Michael Norton have shown that altruism does indeed increase happiness.

<sup>7</sup>McTaggart, Lynne, 2011. *The Bond*. The chapter entitled "Taking Turns" describes in detail the experiments conducted by Robert Axelrod, the game theorist who wrote the *Evolution of Cooperation*.