

YOGA RASA COMMUNITY NEWS

January 12, 2007 • Issue 31

Yoga Rasa exists to actively participate in creating peace on our planet by joining with others to grow an all-inclusive yoga study community, promoting total physical, mental, spiritual health and well being.

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☸ A "PEACE" OF MY MIND...

Tracie's message

It is with great joy and enthusiasm that we bring this newsletter on contentment to you. I thought the timing is appropriate since, for most, at this time of year, we seek change, evolution and overall improvement of self and circumstances and this process can lead to feelings of frustration and self criticisms when we feel as though we failed. Pantanjali, the venerated yogic sage taught that true happiness is borne from contentment. Many of us will think that contentment means to become a couch potato and let things slide but is actually quite the contrary. Contentment has to do with the "content" of your consciousness and affects your desires by way of your intention. By setting our visions, goals and dreams from a "content" consciousness we in fact do take action however from a place of gratitude for what we currently are/have. It is from this place of contentment that the qualities of acceptance, mercy, humility, allowing, peace, balance and gratitude are expressed. Think of a baby with the desire to

learn to walk, the precious being will try to walk no matter how many times he may fall and at the same time enjoy, explore, and fully live his life while crawling. We acknowledge the desires for change in our lives and then bring our minds to a place of inner stillness. Contentment is the quintessential action/in-action principle and the foundation for the "Law of Attraction". To create and magnetize the situations we desire, through contentment we fall in love with or lives and see our desires as "amenities" of life. Contentment is a frame of mind and yoga is an awesome path to become aware of the content of our thinking and seek to shift to the qualities of contentment and then focus our minds on our desires and create the magnificent and beautiful life we all aspire to live. Have a beautifully content weekend.

Love, T.



Yoga Teacher Training & Yoga Studies

• Open House & Tea •



Registered Yoga School

**Join Tracie
For An Informational Gathering
January 17, 2007 • 7-8:30 pm • Please RSVP**



Learn about the in-depth study of yoga for your personal development and the process of becoming a yoga teacher.

Contentment

*There is no end of craving. Hence contentment alone is the best way to happiness.
Therefore, acquire contentment.
~ Swami Sivananda*

Contentment...what a great topic, also frequently misunderstood. This feeling frequently eludes me; in fact, it is something I focus on cultivating often because I would like contentment to be more of a natural state of being for me. I am happy to be writing about it because writing these newsletters allows me to understand more as well. I tend to approach and explain things logically (I am a recovering engineer), but always keep logic in perspective. Real understanding – wisdom – is experiential. While hearing the explanation in words helps your mind wrap around the concept, seek to work with it until it becomes an understanding through experience.



, Liz



Independent of Circumstances

How do you define contentment? Before I understood yoga philosophy, I had a couple different experiences with what I thought contentment was. Sometimes, it was the feeling that all was perfect in my life. That was very fleeting because it meant I was in denial about something that I was unhappy with that I would soon remember and ruin the feeling of contentment! Other times I was having a moment of total enjoyment, like sitting by an ocean, or eating an amazing piece of chocolate,

or watching an inspiring movie. Again, this was fleeting, as soon as the feeling of satisfaction left, contentment was gone too.

I have since learned (from Tracie!) that this is not what contentment is at all. Contentment does not depend on external circumstances; it does not even depend on emotions. For example, I used to think I had to be happy to be content, but I have since discovered that contentment can be present no matter what. Contentment is accepting whatever is happening, maintaining a stillness of mind through all situations.

Relaxation for the Mind

Contentment is to the mind what relaxation is to the body – an absence of resistance (allowing). In asana class, you learn to move without tension. As you hold Warrior II or any of the strong poses, the muscles are contracting without gripping or tensing – the body is accepting the fact that it is working. As you rest in Savasana, the body is accepting that it is resting. The tendency is to associate Savasana with relaxation, but truly you are looking to experience all poses in a state of relaxation.

This is the approach to take in the mind as well. Whether you are feeling happy or sad or frustrated or anxious or grateful, if you accept it you will find contentment. In this case we usually believe contentment is associated with happiness and gratitude, but truly you are looking to experience all situations with contentment. Contentment is the viewpoint that you can be OK with whatever is going on. This means you still respond as needed in any situation,



but it is not from a place of trying to change whatever is already happening. Contentment is knowing that whatever is going on now is a result of past ways of thinking and choices made – so there is no benefit in fighting it in the present moment.

Contentment vs. Evolution?

There is another tricky part to understanding contentment. It does not mean giving up. I had a *VERY* difficult time understanding this. I am always looking to evolve more as a human being, and where I would get my motivation from was dissatisfaction with my current situation. If I wanted to lose weight, it was because I was not satisfied with my current weight. If I was doing speed work running on the track, it was because I was not a fast enough runner...I think you get the point. Not surprisingly, there was not a lot of contentment in my life.

When I first heard about contentment, I thought it was a crazy idea. I thought that if I really embraced the idea of contentment I would never evolve as a person. But what I now realize is that if I find my motivation to evolve from a desire to fulfill my highest purpose (instead of from dissatisfaction) I actually have faster results and a more enjoyable experience along the way.

Know Your Value

A big part of contentment is embracing the belief that we are already complete just the way we are. While it is fine to evolve, there is really no *need* to add anything to who we already are in an attempt to increase our value. We are equally valuable and worthy and adding more does not increase our value as human beings. In a world defined frequently by achievements and possessions and bank accounts, we are led to externalize our worth. Through the practice of cultivating contentment, we become internally directed. No matter how it seems, there is no award, degree, medal, or certificate that brings contentment.

The purpose of yoga is for you to discover your own power, and learning contentment plays a big role in that process. Each time you attend class, you are taking steps in this direction. Begin to notice

the areas in your life where you feel you are striving and ask yourself how you can bring contentment into those areas. Start to embrace where you are by paying attention to your breath and using the mantra “I am alright, right now.” And come to your yoga classes!



Meditation Intensive Part II

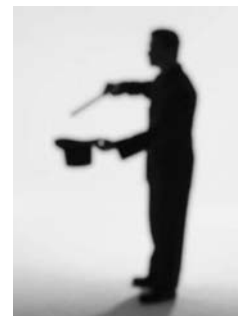
~ Harness the awesome power of your mind ~

**Start the New Year with a strong focus
and change your life in 2007!**

January 13 and 14, 2007

Saturday 12:30-4:30 pm

Sunday 12:30-4:30 pm



NEW CLASSES!!

KidFit



Fridays 5:30-6:30 pm

Starts January 19

Kids will: improve strength and focus,
build self-confidence
and learn healthy self-expression

Yoga Fundamentals



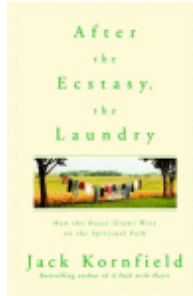
Tuesdays 7:45-8:45 pm

Already Started!

Great for beginners
and those desiring a deeper
understanding of healthy
alignment and breathing

CHECK IT OUT!

Available at the Yoga Rasa bookshop today!



After the Ecstasy, the Laundry **Jack Kornfield**

“Enlightenment does exist,” internationally renowned author and meditation master Jack Kornfield assures us. “Unbounded freedom and joy, oneness with the divine ... these experiences are more common than you know, and not far away.”

Through moving personal stories and traditional tales, we learn how the enlightened heart navigates the real world of family relationships, emotional pain, earning a living, sickness, loss, and death.



Posture & Breath Clinic



You Will Learn:
Ujjayi Breathing
Kapalambhati
Alternate Nostril Breathing
Foundation Alignment Techniques



**The Posture and Breath Clinic is
recommended for everyone
new to Yoga
(practicing for one year or less)**

This informative in-depth study of postural alignment points, breathing, and pranayama is an excellent adjunct to all Yoga Students' practice to better understand the purpose, benefits, indications, and contraindications of asana and breath practice.

You will also gain a more in-depth understanding of the history and meaning of Yoga, along with the language of Yoga.

Live Happy ॐ Live Healthy ॐ Life Long ॐ Do Yoga

OFFICE ASANA...your yoga practice 9 to 5



STRETCH YOUR LEGS

If you have a desk job, your body stays in the same general position for hours on end. It's a good idea to take a break every hour to stretch your legs and increase circulation in your hips. This pose, Parsvottanasana, will do just that – and you don't need much space!

Start in standing with feet hip width apart. Exhale to step your right foot back. Lift your toes, drawing the legs toward each other as you scoop the tailbone. Bring your arms behind your back and hold wherever it is comfortable (wrists, forearms, or elbows). Draw your shoulderblades back toward your spine.

Inhale and lengthen your spine, exhale as you bend forward, leading from the lower belly. Keep the front knee at least slightly bent to avoid locking the knee, bend it more for tight hamstrings. With each inhale extend the spine and with each exhale continue to lift the lower belly and cascade it over the front thigh. Breathe deeply as you hold, and keep lifting the shoulders away from the floor.

Hold here for 10-15 breaths. To come out of the pose, keep the legs active, inhale and, moving from the lower belly, lift the torso. Exhale and step the right foot up. Repeat on the other side.



COMING ATTRACTIONS

- Jan 13** **Meditation Intensive Part II (January 13-14)**
- Jan 17** **Teacher Training Open House & Tea**
- Jan 17** Early Bird balance due for Weekend Intensive 250 (February 24-25)
- Jan 17** Early Bird deposit due for Anatomy of Yoga (March 17-18 & April 14-15)
- Jan 20** **Posture & Breath Clinic**
- Jan 27** **CPR course**

Note the early bird deadlines for great savings on great workshops!

THIS WEEK AT YOGA RASA...schedule/changes for the coming week

Saturday 1/13

- 7 am – Being Yoga Teacher Training
- 9 am – Yoga Foundation
- 12:30 pm – Meditation Intensive Part II

Sunday 1/14

- 10 am – Yoga Stability
- 12:30 pm – Meditation Intensive Part II

Monday 1/15

- 9 am – Yoga Foundation
- 4:15 pm – EnerPilates
- 5:30 pm – Yoga Foundation
- 7:15 pm – Being Yoga Teacher Training

Tuesday 1/16

- 9 am – Sringeri Rasa Flow
- 5:30 pm – Vinyasa Power Flow
- 7:15 pm – Meditation
- 7:45 pm – Yoga Fundamentals

Wednesday 1/17

- 11:30 am – EnerPilates
- 12:15 pm – Meditation
- 6:00 pm – Sringeri Rasa Flow
- 7:00 pm – Teacher Training Program
Open House & Tea

Thursday 1/18

- 9:30 am – EnerPilates
- 7 pm – Yoga Foundation

Friday 1/19

- 9 am – Yoga Foundation
- 4:15 pm – Vinyasa Foundation
- 5:30 pm – KidFit Yoga

OM SHANTI

Please submit newsletter ideas! Email Liz at tararasa@houston.rr.com.

If you wish to unsubscribe from this, or any Yoga Rasa email communication, please let us know!