

Saraswati River Yoga Newsletter

Editor: Judith Lockard

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Theme of the Month



YOGA NIDRA

Yoga Nidra is a Tantric practice designed to balance or integrate the two hemispheres of the brain. This sets the body up to achieve maximum skillful action based in wisdom energy. It takes the mind *beyond* the limits of conscious conceptual structure. While including the conceptual dimension, it roots the body/mind/emotions in intuitive wisdom. It allows the conscious mind to tap the wisdom energy available in deep dreamless sleep while being in the waking state. All the parts are one whole, **integrated** beingness. Integrity equals uprightness.

Uprightness is a word that I might once have found to be kind of prim and self-righteous.

But when I think of it as the seated upright position and how that creates a conduit between my body and the space

around me, rooted in the ground and reaching to the sky, it seems to take the moralistic tone out of it. And after years of hearing those words I am beginning to get a sense for their power and significance. As a young woman I often felt fragmented and as if I was a collection of roles and persona that changed and shifted almost unrecognizably with my surroundings whether it was the people or the places that I focused on.

One day I was sitting in a very contentious Board meeting for a parent co-op community based school. A fellow parent and the husband of a friend, was making a presentation to the Board. I agreed with his proposal, had helped to formulate it, but knew it would be very controversial. As I watched him give the presentation I knew something intuitively about him that made me pause and reevaluate many things in my life. I sensed that he was *one, whole* person. I knew that he was the same person regardless of where he was, rooted in an inner sense of himself that was completely alien to me but that somehow I recognized and knew instantly; that I yearned to emulate. And I understood that he was more interested in being that authentic person than in what others thought of him. Not that he was uncaring but he was not swayed by the winds of opinion or popularity. He had his attention on something bigger. I

have come to understand that this is a never ending process of growth and movement *toward* something, not a goal or static state, so I imagine he too was on a journey that was not completed. But he was on a path in a direction that I had not even known that I was searching for. Today I would use the words authentic and integrated to describe that but it was many years before I had that vocabulary.



I want to point out that I did not say that I *saw* or *realized* something about him. It was not a new idea but a recognition of a deep knowing that had been covered over by my youthful (and age appropriate) attempts to construct a personality. I needed this personality, a construction of characteristics, skills and concepts to help me to function in the world. But, like most people I think, I had confused it with *Who I Am*. As animals have instincts, we have intuition and it was that intuitive knowing that recognized integrity and authenticity when it was present. It was not until I came to SRY that I began to have a language for that path.

Yoga Nidra is a powerful way to both experience that authentic, integrated state and increase our capacity for it.

When we practice Yoga Nidra we are engaged in a deep Tantric practice that facilitates the integration of the physical, mental, and emotional body into one authentic whole. This is what I

intuitively sensed about my parent co-op friend , his comfort with himself that freed him for noticing more of what was really so, creating the space for him to be aware of the way he fit into the whole of the universe. As anyone who was in class this month knows Yoga Nidra starts by letting go.

We often hear in class about letting go; letting go of control, of expectations, of concepts about the way it is supposed to be. I have spoken in other issues about how that letting go involves a grief process, chiefly mourning the death of my image of myself. Certainly my attempts to control outcomes for my children, and the dismal failure of those attempts, was the most wrenching letting go experience so far. But I could not access *Who I Am* as long as my plans were going my way. It wasn't until I had **despaired** of being who I *thought* I was and was confronted with how powerless I really am that I had a glimpse of that authenticity I'd witnessed in my friend at the Board meeting.

When you can be Still in the despair it is transformed. If you have the stamina to sit in it without getting up for a cup of coffee (one of my favorite distractions) or revisiting an old dilemma, grudge, even a shiny new plan for perfection, it transmutes into



Emptiness Emptiness is like deep,



dreamless sleep, a state in which you are without personality, identity even gender. Emptiness then becomes Space and Space is the set up for transformation.

When that has occurred it is possible to notice things in a fresh way, freer of the *I Me Mine* reference point. That is the yogic state of integration.

Asana of the Month:

Sleeping Yogini (levels 2-4)
Supta Baddhakonasana (levels 1-2)

How to practice:

First, make sure as always with more advanced poses, especially those that go deep into the core of the body as all hip openers do, to be warmed up thoroughly.

Supta Baddhakonasana (reclined cobbler's pose or reclined bound angle pose). As well as being a great hip opener this asana is a great alternate to doing inversions at the end of the class. Give it a try some time, especially if we are practicing a hip opener as the pose of the month. If you missed the hip openers workshop this summer, and there is still space, you may wish to sign up for Kirin's first time ever hip openers for beginners.

Sit in Dandasana legs straight out in front.

Bend both knees and bring the soles of the feet together, allowing the knees to drop open to both sides. This is baddhakonasana.

Be sure to press the under-sides of the heels together, opening the soles away from each other.

Bring the hands to the ground on either side of you and slowly move them back adjusting the width of the hands as needed. Remember to keep pressing the under-sides of the heels together as if at 100 miles an hour.

Recline back to the ground. Make sure not to hyper arch the back while reclined.

Place hands along side body at about a 45 degree angle, palms face up.

Alternately you could place the hands on the tops of the thighs hands face up or down.

Keep pressing the heels together.

When you are finished it is important not to use the strength of the leg muscles to close the legs up. Take the hands under the thighs and pull the thighs towards you slightly and then using the hands close the thighs together.

Supta baddhakonasana can also be practiced with a block under the sacrum and feet.



Sleeping yogini;

Now here is an asana that requires open hips. There are many asanas that can help prepare you for this particular asana, supta baddhakonasana is a great preparation.

Start in a seated position.
 Bend your right knee while you bring your leg up towards your torso.
 Reach your right knee past your right shoulder and place the back of your right knee over the back of your right shoulder.
 Repeat with the left leg.
 When both legs are over the shoulders cross the ankles.
 By now you will probably be on your back.
 Feet crossed behind the head, bring the hands under the small of the back.
 Now just float.



CHAI CHAT

Hello all. How is the summer treating you? More precisely, how are you treating the summer? My wonderful spies tracked me down General Delivery in Mumbai, while researching a new chai blend. My trek has taken me to exotic lands and if you promise to keep this to yourselves, I have found the most creative idea for a coffee table book with photos of rural and international postal delivery houses. One doesn't need to look further than Mechanicsville, Pa, to glimpse what I mean. Well, if that doesn't thrill you, perhaps reading about our pals below will do the trick!

Christine Haas and husband Gordon spent a week in Belmar. They are two lucky beach bunnies to win a silent auction for a free week in a beach house.

Gordon must have gotten inspired to paint new sunsets but how does he keep the sand out of the brushes?



Months ago I sung the praises of Elizabeth Jones' son. Now daughter Anna impresses everyone at the Velodrome this summer with her competitive, go get ém attitude. This peewee pedaler can ride!!!! (In case you have no idea what the Velodrome is, it's a bike-racing track in Trexlertown, PA). It's a well-known fact that if you're into biking, this is the place to be on Friday nights during the summer!!! Elizabeth, please confirm a rumor that you are taking weekly coaching sessions on becoming an Olympic mom.

I am always singing the praises of Denyse Corelli. Well, she's the singer not me, but you get my drift or should I say riff? Denyse can teach us all a thing or two about enjoying family and has recently returned from a glorious week sailing with her family off the coast of Washington State. (Speaking of teaching, Denyse will be teaching a Women and Yoga workshop at SRY in the near future, check the website for details).

Talking of families, Bonnie Pariser, husband Andy Wander and their children Zachary and Dominique recently returned from a week at Omega Institute where Bonnie was honing her already magnificent skills in therapeutic yoga, Andy was perfecting the art of Being Here Now and the kids had fun doing what kids do.

Speaking of kids, I can almost hear them shouting Yippeeaiiyoga! in learning that Maleese Schick will be back to teach kids yoga in September. She has just completed her first semester of Graduate School where she is studying sculpture. You are carving out a wonderful future, Maleese!

Ah, at last my inner Jewish mother can relax from worry. Sandy Constable has finally moved into her apartment in Doylestown. So, when can I bring over the non-chicken soup, schmootchkela?

I hear there are lots of new faces this month at SRY. One source for it that I hear is Vivien Cosner, who has been showering her friends, family and acquaintances with gift certificates. I guess she wants to make sure her world is brimming with yogis-a good idea I think and a great way to pay it forward.

Cynthia Oberkofler's son Steven, just returned from a month in the Santo De Cristo Mountains of Colorado with Outward Bound. When you see her, be sure to ask how he (and SHE) survived his harrowing and transformative trek through the high peaks.



Naomi Drew recently gave a workshop at Rutgers organized by the Juvenile Justice System for incarcerated youth. Naomi, inspire us with how you are bringing the philosophy of yoga into this often-unaccessed corner of our world.

Rumor has it that, thanks to Ashley Glidden, we will have our own chapter of Amnesty International in New Hope soon. I know for me, I await more details about how I can join!

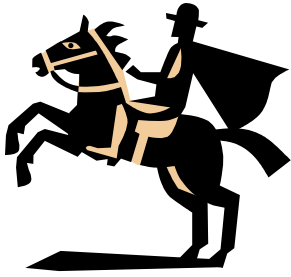
Speaking of joining and activism, Reel Justice's final movie in the summer series will be the award-winning foreign film No Man's Land, (a funny tragic commentary on the Balkan tragedy) recommended by Gabby Yates, an SRY student who has worked in Kosovo with the survivors of that devastating war. She will lead the discussion afterwards as well as sharing some of her slides of that experience. 7pm Saturday, September 17thSTILL FREE!

Thinking of media, Is it true that Oprah is quitting? Now that is the BIGGEST and saddest news since I heard about my mentor Merle quitting Chit Chat in the Princeton Packet.

Well folks, I return soon and look forward to getting up close and personal. Meanwhile, let's all pay it forward and share the benefits of Saraswati yoga and of course, our chai.

Chai Chat Lady

Conscious Cooking



By Tiffany Stadlers' boyfriend Erick

Back in '82, I had the pleasure of summering in Argentina. I hired on as a gaucho at the Reyes-Morena Rancho del Martillo nestled in the lusciously green, fertile San Martillo valley. A gaucho is basically a cowboy. Although I was a boy, the ranch raised horses, not cows. But, in English there is really no word, such as "horseboy."

One day at Del Martillo, Clavo, the old leathered cook for the ranchos, as we were collectively called, was struck square in the jaw by the dairy cow. Unable to continue cooking for the rest of the week, Clavo, entrusted some basic recipes to me. I have forgotten them all...except for the Gazpacho.

Gazpacho is a wonderfully refreshing tomato dish, which must be served cold, Guaranteed to change the demeanor of the gruffest of gauchos on the swelteringest of summer days.

How to Make

Tomatoes- The best tasting you can get, grape tomatoes are good, very sweet.

Olive oil- Extra virgin

Cilantro- Two words here: FRESH and MORE than you think

Garlic- Fresh

Cucumber- Fresh

Sea salt

Peppercorns- Ground fresh

Sour cream

Grab a blender, or food processor. Throw in your tomatoes, approximately 2 pints per gaucho, and grind away. Add liberal amounts of olive oil to the blended mix, roughly two tablespoons per gaucho. Finely chop a handful of cilantro for each old leathered gaucho (leave a pinch on the side for garnish), throw the rest in the blender. Mince one half to one clove per Argentine horseboy and place in blender. One half cucumber, no seeds, in the blender. Sea salt and fresh ground peppercorns to taste. Grind it up to a good uniform consistency. Place in refrigerator. Go exercise and get hot. Come back and enjoy a bowl of Gazpacho Gaucho, with a dollop of sour cream and a pinch of chopped cilantro as garnish.

Please note: My girlfriend is beautiful and the recipe is real, however the rest is imaginary. Imagination is the most important ingredient for any recipe.

September 17, 2005

reel justice

Presents

No Man's Land

A powerful recapitulation of everything about the Balkan Wars that we've been desperately trying to forget. It serves up a sharp commentary on the absurd ineffectuality of UN Peace keepers and the self-serving intrusiveness of the press. This award winning film is shockingly entertaining as it deftly mixes macabre humor, pathos and horror.

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Admission is free and so is the chai!



Movies and conversation to determine what we can DO to make a difference

Upcoming Events/Announcements

Gentle Yoga with Sandy Constable
NEW TIME: Tuesdays, 5:00-6:15 pm
In the large asana room –
No pre-registration required!!!

New Class! Level 1 with RaeAnne
Thursdays, 6:45 pm

Kirtan with David Newman
Friday, September 9, 7:00 pm

Mat-Less Yoga with David Pittenger
Sunday, September 11, 6:00-8:00 pm

Yoga Sutras with Kirin Mishra
Mondays Sept. 12-Oct. 17.
6-week session, 6:45-9:00 pm
CEUs: 14.5 hours towards SRYS and
Yoga Alliance Certification.

**Kids Yoga starting week of Sep. 19th
3 Sessions!**
Ages 10-15: Mondays 5:00-6:00 pm
Ages 3-5: Thursdays 4:00-4:45 pm
Ages 6-9: Thursdays 5:00-5:45 pm

**Hip Openers for Beginners with
Kirin Mishra**
Saturday, September 24, 12:30-4:00

Chi Gong with Laura DuPont
Friday, Sep. 23 1:00 pm *No Charge!*

Kirtan with Michelle Clancey
4th Thursday of every month
8:15-9:15 pm (no charge!)

**I Need My Space – Feng Shue/Yoga
workshop with Jade Dressler**
For parents and teens.
Sat. Oct. 1, 11:00-5:00 pm.

**Saraswati River Yoga Teacher
Training Intensive with Kirin Mishra**
October 22- November 5, 2005
Pick up your application today!

March on Washington
Saturday, September 24
Yogi Charter Bus leaving SRYS
If interested in reserving a seat please
call Barbara at 609-397-4490

Jai Uttal
Tuesday, October 11, 7:30 pm
Get your tickets now!!!

**Be Sure To Check our New Web Site
For Recent Class Schedule Changes
and Upcoming Events!!!!**

SARASWATI RIVER YOGA

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