

Yoga Spirit Academy E-zine

Healing body, mind and spirit
with the wisdom of Yoga, meditation and Ayurveda

November/December 2017

Volume 10, Issue 4

Yoga and Your Mind By Janet W Parachin

This is the last of four parts which have included 1) The Five Koshas, 2) Yoga and Your Body, and 3) Yoga and Your Breath. Read the first three parts at <http://yogaspirtulsa.com/Newsletters>. Once we grasp the Vedic understanding of the five koshas (sheaths or bodies), as well as their relationship to each other, we see how the practice of yoga affects body, breath and mind.

Delving into the meaning of the mind is a pretty heavy topic. We've all asked the question, "why do I do the things I don't want to do, and how can I get control of my mind?" The answer is actually quite simple—understand the nature of the mind, then respect the nature of the mind. The fact is that most of us treat our mind with very little respect or care. At the same time, we give our mind way too much power so it's able to take over.

With much thanks to Dr. Vasant Lad, here is how Vedic philosophy describes the main functions of the mind:

Through the senses we take in impressions from the external world, such as colors, shapes and sounds. (check out the discussion of impressions in last month's newsletter)

Through the emotions we absorb feelings, such as love and hate, attraction and repulsion.

Through the ego we take in ideas about ourselves, such as who we are and what we're meant to do.

Through the intelligence we develop our beliefs about the nature of reality, such as a sense that the world is benevolent or dangerous, that society is good or bad.

The two main koshas, or sheaths, that make up the mind are manomaya kosha and vijnanamaya kosha. These are two levels of the mind. Manomaya kosha is the part of the mind that is sensory and emotional. This is where impressions, thoughts and emotions abide. For example, we look at an item of clothing and we begin to describe it as blue, green, pleasing, ugly, etc. Our conclusions are very subjective, so our mind begins to make decisions such as "I want that!" or "Get it out of my sight!" This is the cycle of grasping and aversion that keeps us stuck and very unhappy about our life.

The second level of the mind is vijnanamaya kosha which is made up of buddhi, or intelligence. It is the reasoning and discriminating part of the mind that is able to see beyond sense impressions. I like to call this "the mind of meditation," because it allows us to be observers and witnesses of our life. We recognize the need to discriminate and make decisions, but we do so with an attitude of surrender. "I've done the best I can and now I let go." Vijnanamaya kosha does not produce suffering because it lacks attachment.

Here are three practices to tame manomaya kosha and cultivate vijnanamaya kosha:

1) Pratyahara, or withdrawal of the senses. Think about how we are ruled by what we see, hear, feel, touch, desire. *continues on page two*

Yoga Spirit Academy
200-hour and 300-hour yoga teacher training
Tulsa, Oklahoma
Dr. Janet W Parachin, Director
918-261-9786
www.yogaspirtulsa.com

Yoga Spirit Academy E-zine

November/December 2017

Volume 10 Issue 4

Restorative Yoga Advanced Training

January 20-21, 2018; February 24-25; March 10-11; April 7 (make-up day, if needed)

This course explores the theory and practice of Yoga that restores and renews body, mind and spirit. Topics include prop-supported restorative Yoga, Yin Yoga, Yoga Nidra, and practice teaching. Every student who completes the class receives a certificate for 50 hours of advanced yoga teacher training from Yoga Spirit Academy.

For more information <http://yogaspiritulsa.com/Training-Workshops/Advanced-Training>

Yoga and Your Mind *continued*

The advertising world truly exploits this weakness in us. Cultivate detachment to sensory impulses and learn to observe the objects of the senses rather than react to them. Do this by fasting from disturbing images, such as getting rid of the television, getting off social media, not watching scary or violent movies, or just spending more time in silence.

2) Meditation, or cultivating the witness. Witnessing is observing without attachment. Try this simple meditation: Look at an object. Take in all the details of the object without judgment. Now be aware of your eyes looking at the object. See how something can happen to the object (it can be removed or destroyed) and your eyes are not affected. You are able to watch the object as it sits there or changes without changing your mind. This is the mind of the witness, the one who observes without being affected or changed.

3) Nada yoga, the yoga of sound. Healing sounds are used for psychological healing because mantra has a profound effect on the mind. Psychological and psychic disorders are a result of imbalance in the mind, so mantras of opposite energy neutralize the mind's imbalances. For example, recite the Ganesha mantra to remove obstacles, the Lakshmi mantra to connect to abundance, and the sacred syllable OM to harmonize with the Universe.

Texas Yoga Retreat

We had a wonderful time in Texas hill country this fall at the annual Texas Yoga Retreat. Radha Madhav Dham ashram is located just south of Austin. Janet and Victor, Terri Wantiez and Amy Pulliam drove down from Tulsa, while Shelly Butts drove up from Houston. Put October 26-28, 2018 on your calendar so you can join us next year!



L to R:

Terri, Janet
Amy, Shelly

Roosting
peacocks



CALENDAR

- November 15 Meditation Course for Yoga Teachers begins
- December 10 Natural Pain Relief through Yoga & Ayurveda
- December 16-17 200-hour yoga teacher training weekend
- January 20-21 Restorative Yoga training begins

For more information please visit our website

Yoga Spirit Academy
200-hour and 300-hour yoga teacher training
Tulsa, Oklahoma
Dr. Janet W Parachin, Director
918-261-9786
www.yogaspiritulsa.com