

Dharma Yoga

new york center

December 16, 1973

This was my 1st Hatha Yoga class with Yogi Dharma Mitra. It was in our Guru's Ashram, located at East 56th Street, New York City, New York. I thought I was a pretty adept Hatha Yogi, however, I found out that day why Dharma Mitra taught the advanced class offered by the Ashram. The fluid and subtle energy was truly amazing, yet never was he pushy, overbearing, or over correcting. He let you improve at your own speed. As I began doing more Karma Yoga at the Ashram, and became more integrated there, I found Dharma was the lead of the building maintenance and my experience in construction led me to working under him for a while. In those days Dharma's English wasn't very strong. Since we couldn't communicate by words, sometimes I found he had this way of communicating psychically. Of all the other Sadhu's, there he was the easiest to communicate with. I realized this was so because he had less ego which didn't obstruct the message he was trying to convey. Later, I was assigned to a different area of Karma Yoga. I still got to take classes with him since at that time I could do advanced postures. However I remember our Guru's Saturday nights lectures and Dharma and another disciple would do a Hatha Yoga demonstration for the Guru for the crowd attending. Dharma did some pretty incredible postures in adoration of our Lord and Guru. I also began realizing that one reason Dharma was so good at Hatha Yoga was because of his level of devotion, not because of his athleticism. He was a very good example for a new disciple like me to follow. He also was very strict in his diet and helped run the juice bar in the Ashram and made some good treats which proved it wasn't so bad eating healthy foods and juices. Time rolled on, and I went back to Florida to run a center for my guru there and family life. Dharma went on to establishing our Guru's work in his own center and moved on to family life as well. Some twenty five years later, I returned more regularly to NYC for advanced classes with our Guru. Over thirty years of construction work had taken its toll on my Hatha Yoga practice. After becoming friendly with my fellow disciple Ismrittee Devi, I ended up in Dharma's class again. Though a bit older looking, he was still the same Hatha Yogi Supreme, and even better as the level of devotion had only gotten much deeper. I told my Guru that I was taking Hatha Yoga with Dharma again to try and get in shape and he said "Very Good!! Dharma Mitra is the greatest Hatha Yogi in the western hemisphere!!" Dharma's steadiness and devotion is a tribute to our Guru who is the longest lived and greatest Yogi in America, and who brought Hatha Yoga in totem to America and via Dharma has spread it in all sincerity throughout the world. So aptly phrased, that Dharma has become the teacher's teacher and the rock of New York Yoga! As our Guru, Dharma embodies the truth of the Veda's in his classes. He may never be so popular as some of the Hollywood and Broadway Yogi's, however, those who have had the life good Karma and study with him, will help them for life times to come. Great blessings and thanks to Dharma and family, especially his consort IsmritteeDevi for their perpetuation of the Vedic teachings and truth.

Aum Shanti,
Shiva Prasad, Minister of Yoga
June 23, 2006

