

# Dharma Yoga

new york center

## What Yoga Really Is ~ Also Remains in 2010 A letter to you from Sri Dharma Mittra

Dear Students, Teachers and Friends,

*“Yoga” doesn't mean all these fancy poses and breathing exercises; these are just preparatory techniques that will settle the mind into silence.*

It is my highest desire to help all aspirants make spiritual progress in this lifetime. Yoga teachings are so necessary in this period of time, when un-truths can be spread quickly to the public thru all mass media forums. I continue to teach daily as I always have, helping practitioners from all walks of life, householders, office workers, dancers and gymnasts achieve physical prowess in asana practice. But my heart felt life mission is to give all the tools and understanding to know that Yoga is a divinely efficient set of techniques devoted to Self-Realization that requires nothing, no mats, no props, no expensive clothes or costumes, just the body itself. Realized by Celestial Beings (enlightened ones), *Yoga is a shortcut to Immortality*. It is not a religion, but a science that if practiced correctly, will bring to the Sadhaka (practitioner) radiant health, and mental and psychic powers within a short-time. These may then be used to achieve Self-realization, the goal of all life.

To succeed in all aspects of life, much concentration is required. Increased ability to concentrate is a direct result of regular Sadhana (spiritual practice), in the Eight Limbs of Yoga, which may be applied to discover answers to essential questions such as, “Who am I?, What is beyond the mind?, What is the cause of all pain and suffering?, What is the greatest of all impurities?” and “How can I be free from pain and suffering?”

The Classical Limbs of Yoga System, known as Astanga Yoga, is divided into eight steps or stages through which the body and mind are prepared, purified, and then surmounted. They are as follows:

**Yama** (The Ethical Rules)

**Niyama** (The Observances)

**Asana** (Postures; the Exercises)

**Pranayama** (Control of the Vital Life-Force)

**Pratyahara** (Control of the Senses)

**Dharana** (Concentration)

**Dhyana** (Concentration without Interruption; Meditation)

**Samadhi** (Absorption with the Object or Subject of Contemplation; Bliss-Absolute)



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**Yama** and **Niyama** are the foundation, and without them, there can be no success in meditation. Constant application of **Yama** and **Niyama** develops in the Sadhaka a strong desire for liberation. **Asana** (posture) practice, combined with Bandhas (locks), Mudras (seals) and Kriyas (cleansing-techniques), brings radiant health and long life. A healthy body leads to a healthy mind, and only a mind which is calm and steady can achieve unbroken concentration (meditation). **Pranayama** (breath control practices) will purify the nerves, calm the mind and, consequently, allow the Sadhaka to take control of Prana (vital life-force) and the mind. With passion and emotions under control, success in meditation is surely in sight. **Pratyahara** is the ability to control the senses. **Dharana** is one of the results of Pranayama practice as concentration is heightened when the senses are controlled. With the practice of the previous steps, **Dhyana** (meditation) is easy to attain. Last is **Samadhi**, when the practitioner becomes completely absorbed in the object or subject of contemplation as the self rests and is completely absorbed in divine perception.

One of the purposes of meditation is to “realize” the things that we believe. But belief alone is simply not enough, as we must then experience “it”; or see “it”, only so we (the mind or personal self) may become content and happy. Many believe that we are immortal souls, but still, everyone is full of doubts and miserable. The mind must enter into silence in order to realize the “Self” or what many call “God” and enter a state of constant bliss. This is when absolute truth is realized; when belief becomes accepted fact.

The final stage of permanent absorption, Nirvana-Samadhi, is known as “enlightenment”. Scholars and spiritual teachers may tie themselves up in knots trying to explain this state. It is Turya (the fourth state) beyond waking consciousness, sleep with dreams, and deep dreamless sleep, when one recognizes the Self in every shining atom of existence. Then one moves like a dry leaf, the winds of life carrying them where they will. This highest state of Samadhi is beyond pain, suffering, happiness or joy. One is supremely established in that which is beyond this. Of this my friends, I call Yoga.

Please make sure to begin, or continue in the above mentioned understandings as we all open the book to a new decade of 2010. Let me remind you of the importance of becoming vegetarians this year! Make sure to LOVE your inferior brothers, and the world will become a saner and better place. Follow Paul McCartney’s plea for a Meat Free Monday, go beyond to every day. You will feel better, become healthier and live longer.

*"With constant practice, one can improve his physical body and mental attitude rapidly, thereby igniting the higher motives of making oneself useful to him and all mankind." DM*

Much love to all,  
Om Shanti, Shanti, Shantih  
Dharma Mittra

