

## *A Simple Reflection*

With life's uncertainties and waves of highs and lows, it is wonderful to return to a place of inviting warmth, unchanging peace, and unconditional love. The second I entered the studio again after 3 and 1/2 months, I was engulfed by all these feelings, and immediately transported back to when I breathed, ate and a little embarrassed to admit, slept at the Dharma Mittra Yoga Center. It was a time of clarity, purification, and humbling surrender through discipline, "angry determination", and letting go of the ego. I mean what an amazing gift it was to be in a room full of people who reflected God's love so intensely, who were all there with a uniting purpose.

After the June TT, I eventually journeyed back to Miami, a little lighter, with happiness and contentment in my heart, and an incredible desire to share this feeling, this practice with others. Although, I always planned to attend the graduation, I never really thought it possible to finish my hours in such little time, with everything else I would have to do in the months that followed. To my surprise, I found that time opened up to me, became readily available, as also the people with a yearning to take yoga classes, and all of a sudden I noticed my schedule was teaching at least 4 days a week. How could this be? I only signed on to the TT to deepen my practice, to be closer to a Guru, and absorb as much of that light as possible, not to teach. But I listened, deep inside, I knew that at that moment this is what I am suppose to be doing; the rest will work itself out. And the experience of teaching was priceless.

When arranging the graduation trip, I managed to work out a few extra days there, to go back to the studio, take classes, and as Kim said in the graduation "recharge". I know that at some levels the training seems really short, it all comes to an end quite fast, but the feeling of community, the smiling faces you see and cherish throughout the days are quite missed and often sweetly remembered. Its one of the things I miss the most, the company and support of the wonderful people who lightly walk, work and/or teach at the Center.

I arrived at the bottom of the stairs that I swept for 10 days, and my first thought was, I should get the broom. I can honestly say I've never enjoyed sweeping so much! But the greatest perk in my Karma Yoga assignment was greeting everyone as they arrived, and exchanging a kind smile. I couldn't imagine a better way to start the day at 6:45 am. But as I stood there, I was taken back to my most cherished memory of those stairs. The last day of the training, where I was just about to finish, concentrating hard on sweeping away all the dirt and dust, when I felt a presence behind me quietly waiting. So I turned around and was startled by Dharma Mitra, waving his hands in the air in what seemed to be a playful morning dance, still wearing his helmet, alerting me that he was ready to come up. As I laughed, he smiled as he always does, so gently, and walked up those stairs for our last morning meditation together, and in my laughter I tasted some salty tears.

But October 11th quickly arrived and the Maha Sadhana before the graduation was blissful. Dharma took us through a classical yoga class with postures repeated around 3 times and then Savasana. The entire practice was one long meditation, an offering to the Supreme Self, and Dharma always guided us within. Ending the practice with Kirtan, my heart felt as it was expanding endlessly.

And then came the graduation...

Lots of people came from the four different trainings throughout the past year, and we all gathered around the flowers and the chair, so beautifully set out for Dharma. We commenced the ceremony with a lovely "OM" that resonated throughout what appeared to me to be time and space. And then, he began to speak and share with us the Truth, wisdom and love that he so freely gives. And just being in his presence, placed a heavenly smile on my face. And truly listening with my heart to all that he said, it was like a bit of that clarity was transmitted to the very core of my being.

Then came the opportunity to express our thoughts, experiences, and feelings towards Dharma and the training. And for a while the room was filled with silence; and then some shared; but my heart was having its own

conversation of gratitude so immense, that no words could grasp a miniature portion of this wordless conversation. And in quite a few mental attempts, to sum up something, to say something, I surrendered to the feeling, and knew that somehow my gratitude and love could be received without words.

Sometime later, came the moment of handing out the certifications. I knew going into this ceremony that this specific exchange would be an incredibly meaningful experience, but anything I could have possibly imagined did not come close to interpreting those 10 seconds of infinity. That prayer, that moment, is as real today as it was there, in front of Dharma. Opening my eyes to the friendliest smile I have ever witnessed and the comforting sound of “OM NAMA H SHIVAYA”, my heart exploded with joy.

As the festivities continued we sang kirtan and ate together. There was so much delicious food to go around, and the company all around the space was as it always is, warm and inviting. By far it was the most amazing graduation I have ever seen. Not just acquiring a skill but gaining a deeper insight on life's purpose and given the tools to be a light that shines bright in this world, a reflection of God's grace.

With all my heart, I thank everyone that made this experience possible!

Peace to you all

Namaste

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