



18.09.2011

Dear Friends,

Some days ago one of you sent me the following quote from Vyasa's Commentary on Sutra I.28 of the Yoga Sutras:

“Let yoga be based on study (svādhyāya), and let study base itself on yoga. By yoga and study the higher self shines.”

And in Sanskrit for those of you who are studying

***Svādhyāyād-yogam-āsita yogāt-svādhyāyam-āsate
Svādhyāya-yoga-ṣampatyā param-ātmā prakāśate iti”***

When I received this e-mail I was literally working on the 4th chapter of Patanjali with Vyasa's Commentary, preparing it for this New Year's study.

I was just reading a wonderful comment by Vyasa that Brahman (the Absolute) is not hidden in a mountain cave, nor in darkness nor in the sub-marine depth. Rather – the wise say that 'It' resides in the mental process of the purified mind (vritti of buddhi) which is undistinguished from 'It'. I find this quite inspiring.

As it's the beginning of a new work/study year for most of us, and the Jewish New Year will be celebrated soon, I thought that it's a good opportunity to send you a small update.

This year we concluded a three year teacher training in Wingate, Israel and also the International Teacher Training that took place in Europe (the first year in Switzerland and the last two years in Immenshtad, Germany).

It was the first International Training course, and I think I can say that practicing and studying in the beautiful setting of the Reider Alp Seminar Center, and spending 20 consecutive days there in retreat conditions was a positive experience. We had for most days the usual retreat schedule of practice and study (9 hours a day). The effect of practicing in this way for 20 consecutive days was uplifting. Many of the students experienced an enhanced practice and succeeded in overcoming blocks and performing asanas that had till then eluded them. The most surprising of all was going down into bridge. Out of 28 people, 7 people dropped down to bridge for the first time and repeated the pose again and again. I think the reason for this sudden bridging of gaps was the mind that was more open and plastic, and this is what allowed the changes to occur.

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This wholesome uplifting that we experienced has inspired me to continue teaching in Seminar Center, Immenshtaad in July 2012. We will have a 16 day Retreat, so that those of you who want to experience this kind of longer ongoing intense practice will have the opportunity.

Other than that I will continue the regular schedule of retreats, workshops and classes as announced on my website www.vijnanayoga.org and will be happy to see you.

Touching on the website, I need to remind you that for those of you who want to continue enhancing your presentation on the website this is the time to renew your upgrading.

I'm also happy and relieved to say that the new book about Practice is in its finishing phases. I hope that soon the book will be published in Hebrew and English. (If you have any ideas about possible publishers, please let me know.) The book is divided into 6 chapters. The first five are Practice, Meditation, Breathing, Poses and Teaching. The sixth and last chapter describes practice during the dying process, and there I tell a more personal tale – my accompanying of my father and a student of mine while they were dying.

Personally, the upcoming year is one of change for myself and my family. My youngest daughter Mira has decided to study in the Environmental High School of Sde Boker, in the Negev Desert. Dori is beginning her University studies and is living on her own, so after more than two decades of family life, I find myself on my own and this has been so far an interesting experience. I find that I am practicing and studying more and this is exciting even if I miss the girls.

While I am optimistic by nature, these are unsettling times. Reading and watching the news I realize that we don't know what lies ahead. Financially, Europe and the United States are unstable and the Middle East is still reeling from the Arab Spring. In the Far East there are tensions between Pakistan and India, and Afghanistan, after so many years, is as unresolved as ever.

I was reflecting that in such times it's more important than ever to be clear in our priorities and to exercise caution. Vyasa says that to attain clarity and presence of mind the best method is practice and study. The more we practice, the more quiet and centered we become and then we know from inside the right course of action. In any case let's pray together for peace.

Happy New Year and many best Wishes,
Orit

