

Yoga Designed for You

What if your own personal challenges, imperfect as they may appear, are the most perfect and powerfully direct path towards awakening freedom that authentic Yoga points toward? What if our unique body-mind sufferings are falsely and reactively judged as imperfect and the powerful opportunity for self-discovery, self-mastery and self-transformation are too often missed?

Instead of avoiding, repressing, hiding, or the infinite ways we have to compensate around these imbalances, we boldly and courageously explore this uncharted territory and experience the awakening adventure promised by Yoga of old. In the past the realized instructor would accurately assess and direct the new student to specific practices based on whole mind/body imbalance. Not where they exhibited strength and competency.

So, for example, an energetic young physically fit aspirant that wanted to immediately practice asana (physical posture), would be often directed toward the Yoga techniques of stillness and or the study of philosophy if that's where the lacking existed.

Or the body that was lethargic, in pain or in a disease state that preferred study and stillness, would be encouraged towards the more energizing body/breath practices.

B.K.S. Iyengar and Mahatma Gandhi are two of many great examples of this tradition in real practice. Iyengar was very physically limited, weak, sickly and diseased and so the largest focus of his early practice was directed at his weak suits. In doing so he not only healed his body but became known for his extraordinary health and abilities. Similarly, Gandhi testified to his ego and self-centered mind as suffering and used a specific yoga practice for this area as the primary practice and transitioned from being a servant to this smaller self-serving mind to the master of his mind and expanded selfless service.

More and more, contemporary yoga practices do little in encouraging this ancient fundamental, instead of exposing weakness and particular need/s, it tends to be a forum for

furthering existing strength and avoiding Yoga's real power. This of course goes hand in hand with our culture that very much prizes and in many cases rewards this idea. From the perspective of a Yogi this is dangerous and is simply building a narrow house of cards as opposed to a very broad stable foundation built on these balancing of the human techniques.

The real multi-dimensional power of both a more full spectrum and balanced Yogic approach proves the profound growth potential of Real Yoga. Many things come into play in using and eventually gaining mastery over the individual's unique shortcomings. Because of its difficulty it requires so much discipline, singular/centering focus, self-patience and employment of body breath and mind approaches, and so puts the student in an immersion of a wide range of Yoga and themselves. This automatically makes the practice expediently more potent not only for the individual healing/balancing benefits but for the greater overall liberations that Yoga can bring.

To get the most out of Yoga's rich and potentially transformative practice requires stepping back from the more physically singular and isolated way yoga is primarily used today. A Yogi of yesterday would use the practice (and the teacher/Guru) as a mirror to first expose weakness and imbalance in the mind/body. Next the instructor put together the perfect and balancing blend of body, mind and life techniques custom designed for the unique individual.

Today's popular use of yoga barely resembles this way it was used in the past, instead it, in a large way, removes one small practice (the physical) from the rest of the whole body, mind, and life approach. Little time is devoted to what used to be more fundamental and often time these practices have taken on a more ritualized expression. This deemphasizing devalues what in the past made up the bulk of authentic Yoga. More importantly it dilutes this potentially amazing practice and its ability to deeply transform the human being.

Realize the power and potency of actually using your

challenges in body mind and life to first see yourself in a new way and then liberate from the chains that hold one back walking freely in your unique purpose. Regardless if you are a beginner or seasoned student, these approaches have thousands of years behind them.

Chris Acosta ERYT-500 & Omega Institute faculty will conduct a 5 day retreat August 28-September 2 in Rhinebeck NY (Omega Institute). Open to all interested in expanding their Yoga and refining a personally designed practice. The week will be used to design the most individual and potent recipe of yoga's mind and body techniques to only meet you exactly where you are and also to most effectively appropriately to take you where you want to go.