



January 1997 Contemplation Theme

The Power of Habit

By Rama Berch, C.S.Y.T., E-RYT 500

It is that time of year again. You make plans to establish better habits. New Year's Resolutions are one of our most important rituals. From yoga's point of view, making resolutions is a form of self-knowledge as well as a commitment to becoming something greater. You have to know yourself well enough to acknowledge that it is time to make a change. And you are able to create (at least in your mind) a different view of yourself. Thus, you see some of the places where you are stuck, and you know what you need to do. You make a "Resolution." Making the resolution "stick" is the problem.

It is actually very easy to establish new habits. You need only do your "new thing" for three days in a row. This is easy to understand if you consider how this works with an indulgence. Let us say that you go out for a hot fudge sundae at 2 p.m. every day for three days in a row. The fourth day at 2 p.m., you would have an irresistible craving for a hot fudge sundae. Good habits are actually just as easy to establish.

One of the keys to keeping your resolutions is to set them up in a way that you actually enjoy following through. Every January, we welcome many students to yoga classes. Some of you are new to yoga and some are returning. You are more likely to keep attending if you like yoga, or if you like the way you feel at the end of your yoga classes. Fortunately, that is one of the most reliable things about Svaroopa Yoga. In fact, we wish that every day you would feel like you feel after a yoga class. The important thing is to remember that you can get it back again when you lose it.

Put yoga in your New Year's Resolutions. Or you can consider it as making a promise to yourself, if the word "resolution" is too scary. Take advantage of the New Year energy to make those changes you know you need (and that you really want). You could even come to a class three days in a row and see how good you could feel.

Namaste,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Rama'. Above the signature is a small heart symbol containing the Sanskrit character 'Om'.