



August 2002 Contemplation Theme

Yoga Changes Everything

You've been there — the last time you got into it with this person, you churned about it for quite a while afterward. Now it's a sore spot, one that you revisit frequently. The other person makes a comment, clearly ready to start in on the whole thing again. To your amazement, this time you just don't react. Your old familiar lines don't fit you any more, because you have been doing yoga. Maybe you say something different, or maybe you simply take a long slow breath.

When you let yoga change you, it changes everything around you, too. You don't toss back the old familiar response, or even use any of the choice lines you have been scripting for yourself since the last "discussion." Now, this person cannot react to you, because you didn't add fuel to the fire. The whole conversation changes. Ultimately even the relationship can change. How and why? It is because you have changed.

The most amazing thing is how this change creeps up on you. It is not at all like when you try to control yourself. When you try to bite back the words or stifle your reaction, the other person still knows. They see the slight narrowing of your eyes, the color change of your skin tone. They know you are holding your breath. Your whole body stiffens so you can hold it all in. While doing this might be an improvement over your other options, what yoga gives you is much better. What happens when you do yoga is completely different. Your internal reaction is changed — it is a real feeling of inner freedom! No more knee-jerk reflex.

The change yoga provides is not limited to your relationships, as important as they are. It even affects your driving. You might even be chuckling to yourself right now, because you know that you drive differently on the way home from yoga class. After a few weeks of classes, it makes you a safer driver all the time. More than that, traffic jams don't make you fume or rev your engine (either your car engine or your own internal engine). You may actually enjoy the drive, while you are also driving more safely. This change has a domino effect. Studies have shown that when a driver cuts you off, you will cut off someone else, or several others. Similarly, when a driver allows you into the line of traffic, you will treat the next few drivers more kindly.

Yoga's changes in you begin to include many other things, maybe an improvement in the quality of your work or new choices of what to do with your free time. Each one of these has repercussions that reach out into the world. You may actually enjoy your job more, or even get a promotion or a raise. Your different choices for your leisure activities (multiplied by the 26,000,000 Americans doing yoga) shift the economy in some very significant ways, and so on.

This means that we really can change the world! I guess I never stopped being the '60s radical; changing the world is my personal goal. I am committed to the global paradigm shift, one body at a time — beginning with your body, too. Yoga does start with something as simple as changing your body, and then extends into changing your relationships, your work, your driving, and the whole world. Best of all, it is all because of an inner change. It is an

organic natural, progressive opening into the multi-dimensionality of your own being. It is a blossoming from the inside out.

Consider the blossoming of a rose. Consider one dozen long-stemmed roses. They are beautiful, but there is no fragrance. The buds begin opening, but then stop part way open. They do not blossom fully. If you decide to help one along, you carefully take hold of one of the outer petals and begin slowly pulling it open. It will break off in your fingers. You cannot make a rose blossom in this way. You cannot force it open. Blossoming is a process of something on the inside expressing itself outward. The bloom and the fragrance arise from inside — but from where? Something is happening inside the rose that makes it bloom.

That same thing is happening in you, though it is hidden under the layers of tensions and fears. Yoga melts the tensions and dissolves the fears so that the inner source can arise inside to fill you and to bloom into the world. Yoga doesn't make you yogic — it makes you become more "you." Your inner essence begins to shine, progressively more apparent. You radiate just like the beauty and the fragrance of a rose. This radiating into the world is not like an aerosol spray can of rose air freshener; it is like a rose blossoming on the bush, out of the pure joy of being alive. How do you get there? Do more yoga. You and I together — we can change the world.

Namaste,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rama". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a heart shape drawn above the letter 'a'.

To reach Rama Berch or to get more information about *Svaroopa*[®] yoga, contact:

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