



September 2002 Contemplation Theme

## A Perfect World

In a perfect world, September 11 would not have any special meaning to us. In a perfect world, there would be no terrorism. Maybe there would be no more poverty, global warming, cancer and sudden infant death syndrome. In a perfect world, you would always feel good; you would always have enough time.

You already do so many things every day for the purpose of creating the perfect world, both for yourself and for those you care about. You work hard to set things up so they will go well and to fix things when they don't. Consider what it would be like if you really could get everything done so that it was all working perfectly. What would the perfect world be like?

You would get up in the morning, well rested and cheery. The kitchen would be clean and the cupboard well stocked for your morning meal. The car would always start, and traffic would flow smoothly. You could make a meaningful contribution in your work, and leave at a reasonable time, feeling a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. The rest of your day would flow smoothly and beautifully, filled with the people and activities that you love the most. At night you would easily fall asleep and the next morning would begin another perfect day.

On your next perfect day, you would get up, well rested and cheery. The kitchen would be clean and the cupboard well stocked for your morning meal. The car would always start, and traffic would flow smoothly. You could make a meaningful contribution in your work, and leave at a reasonable time, feeling a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. The rest of your day would flow smoothly and beautifully, filled with...

Every day would be the same. Perfectly the same. There would be slight variations of course, variations on perfection. But it would be reliable, smooth, consistent. You could count on it. And everyone around you would also have the same reliable perfect life, regardless of which direction you looked. In the beginning, you would think, "This is nice." As it continued, you might think, "This is really easy!" How long would it be before you began to think, "Is this it? Is this all there is? Isn't there something more?"

Then you would get interested in yoga, because yoga is about the something more. You would have perfected the outer workings of your life, but it would soon feel truly incomplete. This is because it is only when you have an inner experience that you feel full satisfaction. Yoga specializes in your own inner discovery of the true reality that is already perfect. You are already perfection itself.

This inner perfection is why you want to have things be perfect on the outside. If your innermost nature of being were chaos, you would want chaos on the outside, because it would be a perfect expression of the true nature of your being. The reason you strive to make the outside perfect is because perfection is your true and essential nature. No matter how hard you try, getting the outside set up perfectly is not the path to your own inner perfection. It is like you are trying to drive to Hawaii. You simply cannot get there that way. You have to take a different approach. In life, you have to look for the innermost essence of your being, waiting to be discovered inside.

*Svaroopa*® yoga specializes in the inner opening. The yoga poses release the deepest tensions in your body — the layers of muscles wrapped around your spine. As soon as you experience this physical opening, you notice that something has opened all the way through your whole being. More yoga practice develops this inner experience, even while your body continues the process of becoming younger, stronger and healthier. The physical changes are reliable, but become less significant because the yoga now provides an inner transformation that gives you new eyes to see the world with.

The world begins to look perfect, even though it is the same world you used to deride. The most profound shift is the inner one. Yoga guarantees it!

But terrorism will still exist. There will still be pain in the world, and maybe a few problems or challenges in your life. Yoga doesn't change these outer things. Your ability to deal with them changes, while your capacity for love and joy grows. However, the world will still be imperfect. September 11 is still a day that makes us pause. Ultimately, you have to ask why people do terrible things. Perfection is already there inside every person, just waiting to be discovered. Yet people do things to hurt others — maybe even you do, too (sometimes).

When you have been to a yoga class, you feel more open — not just open to the outside, but more open on the inside. This makes you able to respond to whatever happens with a deep understanding and compassion, or to find your answers from an inner place of pure inspiration. When that inner opening is not there, that love and inspiration is not there, either. People never hurt other people when they feel open, loving and inspired from within. They only inflict pain when they feel hurt or angry themselves. These feelings are agonizing, and burst out in words you cannot ever erase, or actions that affect others. These words and actions arise out of an inner darkness that is the not-knowing of the radiance of your own being.

We live in a world full of un-enlightened people. I believe that it is worth working on. I feel that I am doing my part by teaching yoga. Each person who walks out of a yoga class, drawing from the inner source of being, spreads a little light into the world. You become an agent of change every time you do yoga. I know it won't stop the threat of terrorism we are living under today. But in the long run, I do believe we can change the world, by changing ourselves.

Namaste,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rama". Above the name, there is a small heart symbol containing the number "31".

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

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