



June 2005 Contemplation Theme

## Relationship, Desire and Detachment (part 2)

By Rama Berch, C.S.Y.T., R.Y.T.

Yoga guarantees joy. There is nothing else in the world that dares to offer such a risky guarantee, but the ancient sages of yoga are very clear — when you do yoga, you develop a steady inner state based in joy. Even in your first class, you got your first taste of this joy — though you may have described it as being simply relaxed or peaceful. Yet, how rare it is to feel truly relaxed or peaceful! Many students at the end of their first *Svaroopa*® yoga class describe their amazement at feeling both relaxed and energized at the same time — but it is not a surprise to your teacher. Your teacher knows that this is only the beginning; that this inner experience will grow and grow; that you will ultimately recognize it for what it truly is — pure joy. It arises from the inner source: your own True Self.

When you have this inner experience, all your relationships change. All your relationship problems come from the lack of this inner fullness. When you don't have this independently arising inner stream of pure joy, you feel empty and needy. Then you go looking for someone or something to fill you up. If they cooperate with your plan, you feel better; if they don't, you don't, and then you are angry or disappointed or hurt, and it is (of course) their fault.

You can test this whole process out very easily. Any time you are feeling upset with someone, simply do some yoga. You can do a few Ujjayi Pranayama breaths, or stand in Tadasana (Standing Pose, Pose of "That"), or maybe sit down and do SloMo (even just Stage 1). Give yourself a 5-minute yoga break, and then return to the situation. The change in your inner state will shift the whole encounter. It may even shift the whole relationship. Even if the other person is truly causing the problems, it will not bother you in the same way. You may even have a sudden insight about how to handle their crankiness or neediness! The trick is to take care of yourself by shifting yourself back into that inner joy or peace. How wonderful it is that you know how to do that.

You can use yoga to fill your own tank. Then it is easy to live without neediness, which yoga calls *vairaagya*. You are fully engaged in your relationships, fully present, fully participating, fully alive, but without coming from neediness. Without the sense of neediness, there is no agenda for what the outcome should be. Then you can participate in whatever happens next, even if it is a surprise to you, because you didn't have a plan, not even an unconscious one. To do this, you must have an inner sense of self that does not depend on outcomes. Yoga gives you this — yoga gives you your Self.

If you thought yoga was about your body, you were right, but only partially right. While you are remodeling your body, yoga makes a much more important change. Yoga remodels your mind and heart, and gives you access to an inner source of joy that becomes a constant steady stream. You still live in the world, and you still work and play. You still have relationships, and you laugh and cry. But something inside gives you the stamina and resilience that makes it all easier. That something is your Self, which yoga describes as "consciousness-itself." And yoga guarantees that you will know your Self; you will know the ever-arising independent flow of joy that is your own essence. For this, all you have to do is more yoga!

Namaste,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rama'. Above the signature, there is a small heart symbol containing a white 'Om' symbol.

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To reach Rama Berch or to get more information about *Svaroopa*® yoga, contact: **Master Yoga Foundation**  
Website: [www.masteryoga.org](http://www.masteryoga.org) ♦ Email: [info@masteryoga.org](mailto:info@masteryoga.org) ♦ 1-866-luv-yoga (588-9642)  
Training Facilities: 125 E Hawthorne, Fallbrook CA 92028 ♦ 56 Baltimore Ave, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971