



September 1994 Contemplation Theme

Svaroopa® Yoga #4

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

Do you have any problem spots in your body? Have you any familiar aches and pains that flare up intermittently, or that you carry with you all the time? These are actually the tip of the iceberg. Unfortunately, if you continue to ignore them, they continue to evolve. The end result hopefully will not be chronic pain or partial/complete disability, but may simply be called aging. It is uncomfortable — and completely unnecessary.

One yoga student frequently describes her stiff neck to me. She is continually reminded of it because she cannot turn her head when she drives. More than this, she can barely reach her feet to tie her shoes, standing or seated. Her neck problem will not actually improve until her whole body improves. Her neck is the tip of the iceberg. The rest of the iceberg (the stiffness in her whole body) is submerged beneath the surface of her awareness. She is completely oblivious to the need for her whole body to improve. She just wants her neck to be better. Fortunately, she continues to attend regular yoga classes and her whole body is improving. So her neck will improve, too.

A problem spot in your body is an indicator that your whole body needs attention. It may even motivate you to get to your first yoga class. Then you will discover the rest of the iceberg, the frozen (non-moving) areas of your body that you had blocked from your awareness.

It is good to get your body moving again. It is important to be free from pain. It feels wonderful to have your body becoming younger and more alive. Yoga offers you all this. Yet yoga considers these things to be side-benefits, like the ocean views you see on the drive north to Orange County. Few people make the drive north just to see the views. Most of us merely enjoy them on the way to the destination.

The destination or goal of yoga is the experience of your own true form, svaroopā. This is the inner knowing of the essence of your own existence. It is the Conscious Source from which you originate and into which you will merge again. The goal of yoga is the ecstatic knowing of your own consciousness. The ways in which your body is frozen are ways that your experience of your own true form is blocked. When you get your body moving again, you reopen these gateways inside.

Your body is made of energy. Modern physicists describe the conscious energy that makes up all of existence including the energy template which becomes your body. You can work with your body to change your mind, and you can use your mind to change your body, but it is ultimately the template that must be changed. Yoga poses and breathing start the process of making these changes. The most effective way to make changes in the template is through meditation. In deep meditation, you dip into the pure consciousness that is your own Self. Each time you merge into this Inner Reality, your template changes at the most rapid rate possible.

In Svaroopa Yoga, we work with all these levels simultaneously. Do more yoga!.

Namaste,

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