



June & July 1997 Contemplation Theme

Discipline

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

You uncover the greatness within by doing something every day to bring it forth. It is what you do every day that matters. If you watch the television news every day, you will be very well informed, but you will not uncover the greatness within. If you do some yoga every day, that greatness brightens daily. It is incredible. It is reliable. You can prove it to yourself very easily. Just do ten to twenty minutes of yoga every day for three days, and then skip a day. For three days you will become increasingly more cheerful, friendlier to others, less stressed, more clear headed, and your body will feel better. Watch what happens on the day you skip, as you backslide to what everyone calls "normal."

Yoga gives you the ability to choose how you want to feel. You can redefine normal. Normal actually means you fit in with the norm. Unfortunately, the norm is stressed and unhappy, with a high level of frustration in daily life. Many people start yoga classes because of this, hoping that yoga will make them feel better. It does! And it does much more. It is immediately obvious that your body gets better, but so does everything else. You will keep your same family, and the same house, job and car, while you become happier and more effective in all of them. Because when you do yoga, you see them all differently. You even see yourself differently. Your old normal changes into something quite wonderful. For this you must have discipline.

Yoga only works when you do it. It is like your television, which only works when you turn it on. You have to do yoga in order to get the benefits. However, if you merely think about yoga, it is actually still beneficial. Just remembering the feeling after that final relaxation in yoga class will give you a taste of the same feeling again. But it will fade quickly unless you do something more.

You get nothing in your life without discipline. You can't buy a home or get a college degree without discipline. You cannot even hold a job without discipline. Everything of value comes from applying yourself again and again, and the results improve over time. Yoga is the same. If you find a time to integrate some yoga poses into your daily schedule, like ten minutes in the morning or fifteen minutes before you go to bed, you will get immediate and lasting benefit.

Discipline means that you do it regularly. The full discipline of yoga is to do it every day. But you can consider yourself to be disciplined if you do it every other day, or twice a week, or even only once a week. It is the regularity that makes the difference. And next year, when you have been doing your daily discipline for a year, you will actually get more benefit from the same amount of time invested.

It is a law of increasing returns. If you could do this with your bank account or the gas tank of your car, you would not hesitate. You would sign up immediately. How about if you get these increasing returns for your body, for your mind, and for your life? Do more yoga.

Namaste,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rama'. Above the 'a' in 'Rama', there is a small heart symbol containing the number '30'.