



January 2003 Contemplation Theme

## **Svaroopo<sup>®</sup> yoga: The Process & Purpose**

Your body is made of atoms. Atoms are contracted energy. The entire life process is one of contraction. The sweet face of the toddler turns into a teenager in due time, with the requisite negativity and cynicism. You contract until you die. Except for a few moments here and there, you become more and more contracted until you see the silhouette of your mother or father reflected in the store window you are passing by. Then you realize you have contracted to be just like those you rebelled against.

Your body shrinks as you age, the adage says. You see it in your elders and you may have even lost some height yourself. But it is not “shrinking,” it is just contracting. Shiva, consciousness that is the One Reality, has chosen to contract for the purpose of manifesting as an individual — you. Shiva is being many individuals simultaneously, about four billion of them right now. The purpose is so that Shiva can have the experience of being you, without your knowing the truth that you are individualized consciousness. This is all just a great masquerade ball.

Process and purpose: Shiva uses the process of contraction for the purpose of experiencing being an individual.

There are so many different ways of working with your body. They are not all compatible. The physical conditioning that produces an Olympic gymnast does not produce a good football player. The physical changes that you get when you begin snowboarding, perform as a dancer or do Pilates don't help with sciatica or with childbirth. A furniture mover is not conditioned for playing tennis. Similarly, different systems of *hatha yoga* (physical yoga practices) are not all compatible. One system emphasizes

strength and stamina, another emphasizes constant movement, and yet another emphasizes attaining a photo-perfect pose. All of these activities are based on contraction. You contract certain muscles to accomplish certain types of movements, and along the way (knowingly or unknowingly) you compress your spine. *Svaroopo*<sup>®</sup> yoga decompresses your spine. It is a completely different process, for a different purpose.

Process and purpose: exercise uses the process of contraction for the purpose of accomplishing a specific type of activity.

In *Svaroopo*<sup>®</sup> yoga, in contrast to exercise or other styles of yoga, we release contraction. Every class is carefully choreographed to release tensions in the muscles connected to your spine, from your tailbone progressively all the way to the top. The reasons for this are multi-layered and exquisitely complex, the most important of which is that your body is made of atoms. Atoms are contracted energy, which contracts by descending from the expansive All-ness and Is-ness, to a single point just below the tip of your tailbone. This point is smaller than a dot, even smaller than an atom, and it is waiting the opportunity to expand. *Svaroopo*<sup>®</sup> yoga is finding it and expanding it.

The problem is that you are not fully present, not fully enlivened and not fully embodied. Your body needs you to be present in it. A vacated body is called a corpse. The parts of your body where you have pain or problems are the places where you have not been present — they are dying on the vine. *Svaroopo*<sup>®</sup> yoga works expressly to “interweave” you into your body, which creates a powerful healing on all levels of your being.

Probably without realizing it, you spend a lot of time out of your body. You live in the future or in the past. Even worse, you spend much of your time in constant frustration because you're always comparing things with your idea of the way they should be. The purpose of *Svaroopa*<sup>®</sup> yoga is to make you actually arrive in your life and in your body, which is the "interweaving." In Sanskrit, the word for interweaving is *tantra*. *Svaroopa*<sup>®</sup> yoga is a tantra.

Badly misrepresented in the USA, tantra actually means "loom," the vertical and horizontal threads weaving together to make a whole piece of cloth. It refers to the physical and the spiritual dimensions of your own being, weaving together to make your life whole. As a tantra, *Svaroopa*<sup>®</sup> yoga shows you how to live your whole life as yoga, how to embrace your life more fully, wholly and completely.

Process and purpose: *Svaroopa*<sup>®</sup> yoga uses the process of systematic and progressive internal release for the purpose of making you more fully alive.

We begin with bringing you into your body. It is so easy to open up the tensions in your body. In a few minutes you are genuinely more alive. You feel and look younger, healthier, and have more strength and stamina, even though you didn't exercise. When you release the tensions in your body, you also calm your mind. You are less stressed, more joyful, kinder, more loving and more understanding.

Most importantly, this opens up inner experiences beyond your mind. When you

land fully in your own body, the energy of the universe will boomerang from that point at the tip of your tailbone and go back up your spine — from contraction into expansion. As your practice develops, you will have more and more experiences of the vast reality inside, until you realize you are embodied consciousness.

In La Jolla, we are changing the process by which we make our weekly classes available from a drop-in basis to a series (see inside). This change is for many reasons, the most important of which is because of the process and purpose of *Svaroopa*<sup>®</sup> yoga. When you come on a semi-regular-but-still-erratic basis, you get benefits, but with really minimal results. Your yoga practice is just a way of recovering from life, instead of a way of enlivening yourself fully. We want to move you in a new and more effective way — to powerfully enhance your experience of the purpose of *Svaroopa*<sup>®</sup> yoga, to help you become more fully embodied and more fully alive.

Process and purpose: the process of committed practice provides more powerful progress toward the purpose of becoming more fully enlivened and knowing yourself as embodied consciousness.

You can use yoga to improve your body, and you can even use your body to deprogram your mind. More than that, you can open your body as the beginning step on the pathway to the more profound dimensions of your being, to discover that you are embodied consciousness. Do more committed yoga!

Namaste,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rama". Above the name, there is a small heart symbol containing the Sanskrit characters "ॐ" (Om) and "ॐ" (Om).

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

Master Yoga Foundation

1-800-luv-yoga (588-9642)

[www.masteryoga.org](http://www.masteryoga.org) email: [info@masteryoga.org](mailto:info@masteryoga.org) 450 Pearl Street, La Jolla, CA 92037