

Satya

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CONTINUING EDUCATION

A Teaching Review - Who Knew?



By Matrika Gast

I've taught Svaroopa® yoga for a decade, and take teacher training programs at least twice yearly. Last spring, however, I decided to sign up for a Teaching Review.

Over the years, for every course or yogimmersion I've taken, my response has always been the

same: this program was the best ever; yes, it changed my life. I meant that I was transformed — more open physically and mentally, less “emotional,” clearer in my knowing of Self within. Such changes translated to better relationships within my family and with friends and a greater sense of ease in being in the world. I returned home renewed, with more to share with my students.

Will last spring's Teaching Review also change my life? Perhaps. More importantly, what I know is that the feedback and guidance I received has improved my teaching of Svaroopa® yoga. Most important, it is fulfilling yoga's promise for my students. At the end of a class, it's clear that *they* have experienced transformation inside and outside.

In my previous trainings, I have received and applied feedback on alignments and adjustments that needed refinement. I've always learned new poses and variations on familiar poses. Of course, the immersion itself has always taken me into a deep place beyond the mind, and for a time I KNOW the truth of Self.

But who knew I could still have so much drift? Well, Vidyadevi knew. She reviewed the video of my class, so she heard and saw the drift. Fortunately, she also let me know about the many ways in which I was teaching effectively.

Yet it is her laser-specific feedback on problems that has sent me to the updated Foundations pose handouts for careful review. For several of our primary spinal openers, I need to refine my instructions. I found that I was not properly applying some important adjustments such as the Two-Stage Rib Press in JP. And for a few poses my timing needed precision and balance. Twenty times in the

class I used the words “good,” “great,” “nice,” “very nice” and “perfect.” I wonder if that's a record!

I was grateful to hear that I also used language about softening, settling moving slowly, which was effective in helping students move inward. But I also I learned I was using some too-colorful adjectives and adverbs for alignments, for instance the Belly Move in Lunge. That verbiage was agitating my students' minds rather than providing effective instruction. “Keep it simple Shiva!” is advice from Vidyadevi that I am now carrying into my classroom every day. The Foundations handouts give clear, straightforward language for pose instructions, free of unnecessary detail. What a relief to just re-learn them.

Feedback from my Teaching Review has been pivotal in supporting me in what I really want to do: to serve others, as I have been served, to transform their bodies, minds and more — to support the flow of this Grace into the wider world. A Teaching Review is so effective because it is so thorough, and what you learn is exactly what you need to know as an teacher, individually and personally.

A Teaching Review is your least expensive option for staying in or returning to Current Standing. To arrange for one, email rukmini@varoopayoga.org. You pay for the review as you would for any course or program, but the fee is less than for than for an onsite teacher training course. Plus you have no travel costs, and you can probably enlist a friend or family member to film you, perhaps simply using a smart phone.

Once enrolled, you plan and teach a 90-minute class that includes the particular poses and adjustments required for a Teaching Review. Then you email the file of the digitized video and sound to your Teacher Trainer who was assigned to review it. You can look forward to laser-like attention to the details of your actual teaching. You will receive clarification on where you are now as a teacher along with compassionate guidance. You will be able to move from drift and into the most effective teaching ever!