

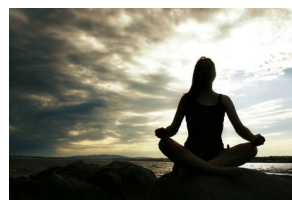
Yoga Spirit Academy

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Yoga Plus Meditation



Victor Parachin will instruct the next advanced yoga teacher training course, Yoga Plus Meditation. He has a masters degree in religion, is a certified yoga teacher, has been studying and teaching meditation for many years, and is the author of a dozen books including *Eastern Wisdom for*

Western Minds (Orbis Books, 2007). Topics include meditation in Hinduism, Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, Christianity and Judaism, breath and meditation, sound (chanting/ mantra) and meditation, scientific support for meditation, and practice in teaching meditation. The course is open to

anyone who has 100 hours of yoga teacher training from any school or 300 hours of documented yoga teaching. Those who complete this 50-hour course will receive a certificate. The class meets for 13 Tuesday evenings beginning August 17. An application is available on our website or from the Director.

Worth Thinking About

In yoga, instead of taking a pilgrimage to a particular mountain or temple, we take pilgrimage inside our own bodies. For most people, this is a more difficult pilgrimage. To walk through the landscape of the body open to whatever feelings arise puts us in touch with the core of the body.



However, there are many psychological, emotional and physical holding patterns in the center of the body that make this pilgrimage difficult. That difficulty is also our potential for liberation.

-Michael Stone

The Inner Tradition of Yoga

Congratulations Cindy Henson

Cindy Henson completed the requirements for the yoga teacher training program this month and was awarded her Certified Yoga Teacher certificate! Cindy was in the first class of yoga students who started in July 2007. She came to Yoga Spirit Academy with a background in physical fitness, a personal train-

ing certification and a BS degree in Recreation Administration and Management. Cindy and her family live on a farm in Sand Springs where they raise dairy goats and chickens. They live in a self-sustaining home they built by themselves. Cindy has had a long-time meditation practice which defines her

calm, loving spirit. During her yoga training she mentored with Kripalu teacher Lucy Weberling and wrote projects on *The Miracle of Mindfulness*, *Yoga for Kyphosis*, *Yoga for Seniors*, and a study of Gary Kraftsow and the Viniyoga style of yoga. We are proud of you, Cindy, and know that you are sharing joy wherever you go!

Ayurveda in Tulsa

Janet and Jaylene are looking into bringing an Ayurvedic teacher to Tulsa for those who wish to be certified. Please let us know if you are interested in attending a week-long intensive course.

Negative Responses to Yoga

By Victor M. Parachin



People who begin and continue a yoga practice invariably cite the many and diverse positives about yoga. However, there are some negative experiences which all of us who teach and love yoga ought to be aware of. Nancy Atkinson, PhD, and Rachel Permuth-Levine, PhD, are two researchers in the School of Public Health at the University of Maryland (College Park). They recently completed and published their research in *The American Journal of Health Behavior* in a study titled "Benefits, Barriers and Cues to Action of Yoga Practice." Working with Thrive Yoga Studio of Rockville, Maryland, who helped them recruit yoga participants of all ages and yoga levels, they tracked perceived benefits and barriers in yoga. By far the majority response about yoga was highly positive.

Yet, there were two negative and disappointing experiences. First was cost. Several felt the price of yoga clothing was very high and

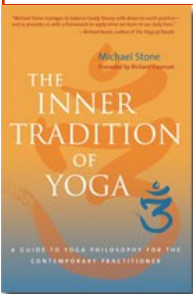
the cost of yoga classes at a studio was definitely a barrier. The second yoga "barrier" was some yoga teachers. Here's how Dr. Atkinson and Permuth-Levine describe that disappointment in teachers:

"Yoga teachers were also cited as a reason people stop yoga. Students did not return if they perceived teachers as judgmental or unfriendly. Negative teacher traits that dissuaded them from attending particular classes included talking too much, not being able to demonstrate poses correctly, or monitoring students inadequately to prevent injuries. One participant had an instructor she thought pushed people beyond their physical limits, and she feared most instructors would be like this one. 'I had a teacher once who pushed many of us to go beyond what we were ready to do. I ended up hurting myself, and I didn't return to yoga for a long time. I thought yoga was supposed to be noncompetitive,

and I just got injured because of this teacher. [Female, Beginner, Age 31]"

I have two thoughts on these negative experiences. First, as teachers we can educate participants where to find modestly priced clothing and yoga accessories. These can be found online and in discount clothing stores. My second thought revolves around the statement that some yoga teachers were "not able to demonstrate poses correctly." This can easily be corrected by a) the teacher using and recommending yoga props – blocks, blankets and straps, b) the teacher carefully instructing how to prepare and get into a more complex pose rather than just commanding the students "let's do crow (Bakasana)" or "let's do shoulder stand (Sarvangasana)," and c) most importantly, teachers should have their own regular practice of yoga so that they are aware of the challenges their students face and can empathize with them.

The Inner Tradition of Yoga by Michael Stone



Shambhala Publications, 2008

For those of us who enjoy the philosophical side of yoga, I am happy to recommend *The Inner Tradition of Yoga* by Michael Stone. Stone is a yoga teacher and psychotherapist in Canada who is a long-time yoga and meditation practitioner. He understands the deep is-

sues that define human life and explains well how yoga philosophy offers guidance for daily living. For instance, so many people suffer in relationships and in their struggles to accept themselves. At the core of this suffering is an endless loop of story-telling, a constant process of defining

"I, me, mine." Yoga as a practice interrupts this story-telling process by helping the practitioner see that *these are just stories*. And this simple realization can bring an end to a cycle of discontent which creates conflict in many lives. Read Stone's thoughts and then reflect on their implications for your life!