

Yoga Spirit Academy

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Yoga Plus Restorative

For three weekends this spring, eight yoginis laughed, studied and practiced together some specialized styles of yoga known as "restorative." Restorative styles of yoga focus on healing, relaxation, and rejuvenation. They are especially useful complements to the overwork and stress that seem to be part of everyone's life these days.

We practiced prop-supported yoga where bolsters, blankets, walls, chairs and other props are used to support the body so that the body-mind can sink into deep relaxation. Then we moved on to yin yoga, a slow-moving gentle stretching of connective tissues which unwinds the body from fast-paced

yang styles of yoga (such as power and Ashtanga). Then we explored the therapeutic uses of yoga for such issues as headaches, hypertension, multiple sclerosis and chronic fatigue.

Throughout we learned the techniques of yoga nidra, a meditative practice that resolves stress in the mind and leads to abiding peace. So if you see some new moves in these yoga teachers' classes, they may be sharing with you what they learned in class.

Yoga Plus Restorative was the first of the 50-hour advanced courses now offered by Yoga Spirit Academy. The next course will be Yoga Plus



Cerrise Sarver, Molly Kurtz, Janet Parachin, Mary Hendricks, Jenny Earle, Sabrina Wellendorf (Susan Ducato and Cathy Kemendo not pictured)

Meditation, a 13-week course where yoga teachers will explore and experience meditation more deeply. They will grow in their own personal practice of meditation and learn how to incorporate different forms of meditation into their yoga teaching. Application forms are available on the school website.

Anatomy for Yoga

July 10 and 11

Texas Yoga Retreat



This summer experience yoga in the beautiful hill country of Texas, June 25-27 just south of Austin at a Hindu ashram known as Barsana

Dham. Classes in Tibetan Heart Yoga, Tri Yoga, Anusara Yoga, Kundalini Yoga, Meditation, Qigong. Register before May 25 for the

discount rate of \$385 for over 20 hours of classes, vegetarian meals included. The fall retreat will be October 22-24.

www.texasyoga.com

Worth Thinking About

Even while living in the world of waves, we touch the water, knowing that the wave is nothing but water. When you see only waves, you might miss the water.



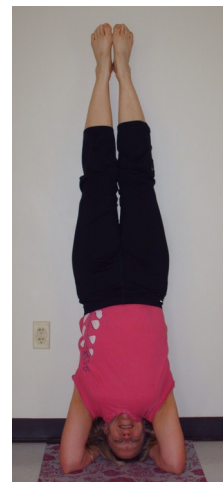
But if you are mindful, you will be able to touch the water within the waves as well.

-Thich Nhat Hahn, *Living Buddha, Living Christ*

Congratulations to Cathy Kemendo

Join us in congratulating our most recent graduate, Cathy Kemendo. Cathy began the program in January 2009 and completed all of the requirements in May 2010. She developed directed studies in Momentary Meditation, Emotional Healing through Yoga, The Magic of Anusara Yoga, and Using Yoga in Psychotherapy. She mentored with Janet Parachin and did her student teaching at the Parent Child Center in Tulsa. Cathy took the course Yoga Plus Restorative that was offered this spring

and enjoys adding prop-supported postures to her classes. She has also developed a workshop especially for psychotherapists that was recently approved for 3 CEUs (continuing education units). We look forward to hearing how these professionals respond to Cathy's instruction in posture, breathing and meditation. Cathy, we know that you will represent Yoga Spirit Academy well wherever your teaching takes you!



Joyless Striving in Yoga by Victor M. Parachin

Centuries ago Pantajali wrote: "A yoga posture is to be steady and comfortable." (Yoga Sutra 2:46) Great idea, sir, but there are many of us yogis whose experiences in a posture are anything but "steady and comfortable."

Consider this experience related by Timothy McCall, MD, in his book, *Yoga as Medicine*. He tells of studying in Pune, India at the Iyengar Institute where he took a class with Prashant Iyengar, son of the famed B.K.S. Iyengar. Prashat told the students if they looked around at the hundreds of pictures of his father which lined the studio, they would see "many poses, but one face." No matter which pose Mr. Iyengar did, his facial expression remained the same revealing an inner calm and relaxation even in the most advanced and difficult asanas.



However, in scanning the faces of the students in his class that day, Prashat said that too often he saw "one pose, but many faces" as students grimaced, got red in the face, and had their eyes bulging out as they strained to get into a pose and then maintain it. The main reason for "one pose, many faces" is this: too often we yogis try to look like our teacher or we are imitating a photo from one of the yoga magazines. In so doing,

we fail to practice *ahimsa* or non-violence with ourselves. We are trying to impose something from the outside upon our body. The result is joyless striving in yoga.

From time to time it can help to remind ourselves that every person is anatomically different and the "classical" pictures we see of yogis are not realistic for all people. Trying too hard and pushing ourselves to do what the body is not ready for or not anatomically equipped to do, is a set up for frustration and, more seriously, injury. We need to make a distinction between challenging ourselves versus straining ourselves. Perhaps we yogis need a new phrase, something like this: *When the mind and body are ready, the asana appears.*