



*strength \* spirit \* solace*

## *Newsletter*

December 2004

Dear friend...

This winter, you might consider taking a spiritual retreat of some kind. Unlike vacations or outdoor adventures that are designed for fun and physical exploration, spiritual retreats actively engage your heart, mind and soul. A spiritual retreat invites you to depart from your normal routine in favor of a simpler, unhurried existence. Many offer the peace of solitude, even if you choose to go with a friend or family member. By taking time away from habitual actions and responsibilities, you can more fully be with your thoughts and feelings – the emphasis is on inner exploration, not external chatter.

Although there are numerous styles of spiritual retreats, they all address the human desire to live a more engaged existence, in which there's room – and respect – for the soul. Once you've found a retreat, relax and stay open to the possibilities, which are often simple and from the heart – returning you to a spiritual, peaceful place you may have lost touch with long ago.

Keep up the great work and let your light shine on!

Namasté,

*Sara*

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### **My Denver Studio Schedule**

- **Tuesdays, 6:30 – 8:00 pm:** Vinyasa Yoga at Bikram's Highland Yoga (44<sup>th</sup> and Tennyson in the Highlands neighborhood)

- **Wednesdays, 7:30 – 9:00 pm:** Power Yoga at Denver Ashtanga Yoga Center (32<sup>nd</sup> and Julian in the Highlands neighborhood)
- Private lessons are available! Email [yoga@saradelaney.com](mailto:yoga@saradelaney.com) for more information!

### **Healthy Products I Love!**

**Hooray for MISO!** Move over chicken soup. Many people believe that eating miso is the cure for what ails them. This icon of Japanese cooking is a combination of soybeans, cultured grain, and sea salt. A source of concentrated nutrition – containing protein, all of the essential amino acids, minerals, vitamins and fiber – miso is also low in calories and fat. Considered an important medicinal food, its daily use is credited with health benefits such as lowering cholesterol, alkalizing the blood and neutralizing the effects of smoking and environmental pollution. Unpasteurized miso is a living food containing natural digestive enzymes, Lactobacillus, and other microorganisms that aid in the digestion and assimilation of food and have been shown to ward off and destroy harmful microorganisms, promoting a healthier digestive system. In order to preserve its nutrients and digestive enzymes, miso should never be boiled.

Two tablespoons of miso provide:

- Calories 71
- Protein (gm) 4.00
- Fat (gm) 2.00
- Carbohydrate (gm) 9.00
- Calcium (mg) 23.00
- Iron (mg) 1.00
- Zinc (mg) 1.25

### **Honey Miso Dijon Alaska Salmon**

The sweetness of the honey combines well with pungent miso and mustard for a glaze that seals the salmon and helps retain all the natural juices while baking. The glaze may also be used for any of your favorite seafood.

- 1 lb Alaska salmon filet
- 2 TB organic Dijon mustard
- 1 TB stone ground mustard
- 1 TB honey
- 1 TB white miso
- juice of one lemon

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Combine the glaze ingredients together in a small bowl with a wire whip until smooth. Place the salmon filet in a baking dish and pour over the glaze. Spread the coating evenly with a spoon or brush. Bake the salmon for 15–18 min. uncovered until cooked through and golden brown on top. Serve cooked

salmon with organic brown rice and an Asian-inspired green salad, using fresh ginger, carrots and sesame dressing.

## **Meditation**

*We must let go of people, places, memories and move on to new experiences. The doors of the past must be closed before we can enter those that are opening to us today. However, no experience is gone forever. All of our experiences are threaded together, each one contributing to the events that claim our attention now. With each day, each experience, each new understanding, we are advancing along the path of personal growth. Let us remember that each of us has a particular path, like no other. Thus, our experiences are ours alone. We need not envy what comes to someone else. Life is unfolding for us. The pain of the present may be necessary for the pleasure of tomorrow. We can accept the unfolding. Our inner selves have a goal; experiences of the past must be left in the past; experiences at hand will lead us to our destination today.*

## **Poses You Can Do at Home**

### **Ardha Chandrasana (Half Moon Pose)**

This pose is a highly effective strengthener for the legs and ankles.



### **Benefits**

- Strengthens the abdomen, ankles, thighs, buttocks, and spine
- Stretches the groins, hamstrings and calves, shoulders, chest, and spine
- Improves coordination and sense of balance
- Helps relieve stress
- Improves digestion

### **Contraindications/Cautions**

If you have any neck problems, don't turn your head to look upward; continue looking straight ahead and keep both sides of the neck evenly long.

- Headache or migraine

- Low blood pressure
- Diarrhea
- Insomnia

### Step by Step

1. Place your left hand on the left hip. Inhale, bend your right knee, and kick your left foot up about 3 feet off the floor. At the same time, reach your right hand forward, beyond the little-toe side of the right foot, stacking the shoulder over the wrist.
2. Exhale, press your right hand and right heel firmly into the floor, and straighten your right leg, simultaneously lifting the left leg parallel (or a little above parallel) to the floor. Extend actively through the left heel to keep the raised leg strong. Be careful not to lock (or hyperextend) the standing knee: make sure the kneecap is aligned straight forward and isn't turned inward.
3. Rotate your upper torso to the left, but keep the left hip moving slightly forward. Most beginners should keep the left hand on the left hip and the head in a neutral position, gazing forward.
4. Bear the body's weight mostly on the standing leg. Press the lower hand lightly to the floor, using it to intelligently regulate your balance. Lift the inner ankle of the standing foot strongly upward, as if drawing energy from the floor into the standing groin. Press the sacrum and scapulas firmly against the back torso, and lengthen the coccyx toward the raised heel.
5. Stay in this position for 30 seconds to 1 minute. Then lower the raised leg to the floor with an exhalation. Then perform the pose to the left for the same length of time.

### Therapeutic Applications

- Anxiety
- Backache
- Osteoporosis
- Sciatica
- Fatigue
- Constipation
- Gastritis
- Indigestion
- Menstrual pain

### Modifications & Props

Balance is always tricky in this pose for beginners. A wall is a useful prop, which you can use in one of two ways. Stand with your back to the wall, one leg's length away from the wall. Exhale and bend forward into a standing forward bend, then inhale and raise your left leg parallel to the floor and press the left sole against the wall. Start with your toes turned toward the floor. Exhale again and rotate your torso to the left; at the same time, turn the left leg and foot until the inner foot is parallel to the floor. Rest your left hand on the left hip. The pressure of the raised heel against the wall will help you maintain your balance. You can also perform the pose with your back to, and leaning against, the wall.

### Variations

To increase the challenge of this pose, raise the lower hand away from the floor and rest it on the standing thigh. Balance solely on the standing leg for 15 to 30 seconds.

### Beginners Tip

Many beginning students have difficulty touching the floor with their lower hand, even when resting it on the fingertips. These students should support their hand on a block. Start with the block at its highest height and, if your balance is steady and comfortable, lower it down first to its middle height, then finally if possible to its lowest height.

*\* Poses You Can Do at Home are from Yoga Journal.*

### **Nutrition – Fuel Intelligently**

Food is a huge factor in the energy equation. Your digestion is primed for input every 90 to 120 minutes. So as long as you are fueling intelligently, you can let go of your guilt about “snacking between meals.” By eating when your body is ready for food, you’ll absorb nutrients more readily and maintain a steadier supply of energy.

Here’s how to make certain the food you eat results in energy you can use:

- Start with breakfast — ideally at the same time every day. When you eat breakfast, you kick-start your metabolism. With breakfast, the body says, “Now I can start revving up.”
- Eat often. The traditional recommendation of three square meals a day is actually out of sync with our underlying needs. Multiple smaller meals coincide with your body’s innate readiness for nourishment every 90 minutes. By providing quality food when your body is ready for it, you will feel more satisfied. You never get so hungry as to overeat, and you lessen your chances of reaching the breaking point where all you want is salt, sweets and fat.
- Eat the right combination. The ideal foods will create a slow, steady stream of healthy sugars and nutrients into your blood. The worst foods: Refined carbohydrates that create a sudden spike of blood sugar. Your body counters blasts of blood sugar with high amounts of insulin, which swiftly removes and stores excess blood sugar, leaving you once again low on the fuel you need to think and move. Instead, try eating complex carbohydrates and high-protein foods because they break down into amino acids, which support the production of neurotransmitters, the chemical communicators between your cells. Many of these, such as dopamine, heighten alertness and energy.
- Eat high quality. Consider the quality of what you put in your body. Unhealthy fats, especially, can impair brain function, which reduces your available energy. Your brain is 60 to 80 percent fat, with each cell membrane made of fatty acids. Trans fats from sources like deep-fried foods contribute to membranes that are harder, more brittle and susceptible to leaks and holes. Messages pass with

difficulty, ultimately leading to cell death. Some researchers believe this to be a significant cause of chronic fatigue.

## **Your Questions Answered!**

Do you have a question? Email it to me at [sara@saradelaney.com](mailto:sara@saradelaney.com).

**Q:** *My doctor told me I might have an overgrowth of yeast in my body. What does this mean?*

**A:**

Yeasts are a part of our everyday lives. More than 300 types exist on the surface of healthy human skin. Inside our bodies, as many as 500 varieties of viral, bacterial and fungal microorganisms, including Candida, exist. Candida lives primarily in the mucous membranes of the mouth, intestinal tract, digestive tract and vagina. While vaginal Candidiasis, oral thrush and yeast overgrowths such as diaper rash and jock itch are common medical conditions that all physicians agree should be treated, the notion that Candida yeasts can also proliferate within the intestines and elsewhere in the body remains more controversial in conventional medical circles. Many Candida specialists depend on questionnaires such as the one below to help patients identify symptoms that are potentially yeast-related. The following questionnaire is excerpted from *The Yeast Connection* by William G. Crook, MD. A more detailed questionnaire can be found at [www.yeastconnection.com](http://www.yeastconnection.com).

- Have you taken repeated “rounds” of antibiotic drugs?
- Have you been troubled by premenstrual tension, abdominal pain, menstrual problems, vaginitis, prostatitis, or loss of sexual interest?
- Does exposure to tobacco, perfume and other chemical odors provoke moderate to severe symptoms?
- Do you crave sugar, breads or alcoholic beverages?
- Are you bothered by recurrent digestive symptoms?
- Are you bothered by fatigue, depression, poor memory or “nerves”?
- Are you bothered by hives, psoriasis, or other chronic skin rashes?
- Have you ever taken birth control pills?
- Are you bothered by headaches, muscle and joint pains or in-coordination?
- Do you feel bad all over, yet the cause hasn’t been found?

Scoring: If you have three or four “yes” answers, yeasts possibly play a role in causing your symptoms. If you have five or six “yes” answers, yeasts probably play a role in causing your symptoms. If you have seven or more “yes” answers, your symptoms are almost certainly yeast-connected.

There are some supplements used by naturopathic physicians to inhibit or treat Candida and other fungus-related symptoms, most often in conjunction with dietary changes and/or prescription medications. As with all supplements and medications, check with

your physician or healthcare provider to avoid undesirable sensitivities or drug interactions.

**Candida Supplements:**

*Black walnut*

*Coconut oil*

*Echinacea*

*Digestive enzyme supplements*

*Garlic*

*Glucosamine*

*Grapefruit seed extract*

*Olive oil*

*Probiotic supplements*

*Psyllium husk and seed powder*

**Contemplate...**

Thinking about a spiritual retreat? Shoshoni Yoga Retreat in Rollinsville, Colorado, teaches yoga in the Hindu and Buddhist traditions in a serene and peaceful Rocky Mountains atmosphere. Prices range from \$55 to \$155 per night, depending on accommodations (tent, dormitory or cabin), and include all meals and classes. Call 303-642-0116 or visit their website at [www.shoshoni.org](http://www.shoshoni.org) for more information.



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*"When you come to the edge of all that you know, you must believe one of two things:  
There will be earth upon which to stand, or you will be given wings to fly."*