



*strength * spirit * solace*

Newsletter

November 2004

Dear friend...

As this year comes to its end, I'd like to ask: How are your 2004 New Year's Resolutions coming along? Were you able to stick to them? Are you still putting in the same kind of committed energy that you started with back in January? Or did you get off to a running start and then find yourself giving up a couple months, weeks or even days later?

If you're not where you wanted to be by this time this year, you may be wondering why. There are lots of reasons why we run off course of our intentions. But often, the forward movement comes to a screeching halt because we simply don't keep our word to ourselves. We make promises and then break them – often for reasons we don't even understand. Which brings me to my next question: How good are you to your word?

Words are powerful forces of creation. They take our dreams and goals and put them out there for the entire world to witness. Every time we speak, we create a road of some sort. The quality of that road, and how far it goes, will be directly related to the integrity of our word.

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

Namasté,

Sara

My Denver Studio Schedule

- **Tuesdays, 6:30 – 8:00 pm:** Vinyasa Yoga at Bikram's Highland Yoga (44th and Tennyson in the Highlands neighborhood)
- **Wednesdays, 7:30 – 9:00 pm:** Power Yoga at Denver Ashtanga Yoga Center (32nd and Julian in the Highlands neighborhood)
- Private lessons are available! Email yoga@saradelaney.com for more information!

Healthy Products I Love!

Many of my yoga students have asked me about the yummy "RAW" brand of massage and aromatherapy products I use in the classroom. These products come from a line of natural yoga and body products made right here in Denver. I love RAW yoga and body products because they follow a simply philosophy: use only what is found in nature. RAW is synonymous with living in harmony with the earth, utilizing ingredients in its purest form with no synthetics or preservatives. RAW yoga and body essentials include balms, dosha kits, foot care, essentials oils, scrubs, soaks, spritz's and yoga related products. Send me an email at sara@saradelaney.com for more information or to place an order.

Meditation

Hanging on to any moment, once it's gone, deadens us to the joys and lessons of the present. When must learn to let go, to let go of persons, painful situations, even meaningful experiences. Life goes on, and the most fruitful lesson before us is to move with the vibrations, to be in tune with them. Being open to the present is our only chance for growth. These experiences today in our lives beckon us forward long the path meant for us. We are not guaranteed only joy today. But we are promised security. We may not be free of twinges of fear or confusion, but we can learn to trust even in the midst of adversity. We can remember that power greater than ourselves whenever and wherever our steps are uncertain. Dwelling, as we are wont to do, on our rebuffs, our rejections, invites further criticism. But neither should we dwell on past joys. Attention to now and to the persons here, now, is the only rightful response to life. Not being here, now, invites others to turn away, just as we have turned away.

Poses You Can Do at Home

Utkatasana (Chair Pose)

Chair Pose clearly works the muscles of the arms and legs, but it also stimulates the diaphragm and heart.



Benefits

- Strengthens the ankles, thighs, calves, and spine
- Stretches shoulders and chest
- Stimulates the abdominal organs, diaphragm, and heart
- Reduces flat feet

Contraindications/Cautions

- Headache
- Insomnia
- Low blood pressure

Step by Step

1. From standing pose, inhale and raise your arms perpendicular to the floor. Keep the arms parallel, palms facing inward, or join the palms.
2. Exhale and bend your knees, trying to take the thighs as nearly parallel to the floor as possible. The knees will project out over the feet, and the torso will lean slightly forward over the thighs until the front torso forms approximately a right angle with the tops of the thighs. Keep the inner thighs parallel to each other and press the heads of the thigh bones down toward the heels.
3. Firm your shoulder blades against the back. Take your tailbone down toward the floor and in toward your pubis to keep the lower back long.
4. Stay for 30 seconds to a minute. To come out of this pose straighten your knees with an inhalation, lifting strongly through the arms. Exhale and release your arms to your sides.

Variation

As you bend your knees, lift up onto the balls of your feet and sit your buttocks down on your raised heels. Extend your arms forward, parallel to each other and the floor, palms down or facing inward.

Beginners Tip

To help you stay in this pose, perform it near a wall. Stand with your back to the wall, a few inches away from the wall. Adjust your position relative to the wall so that when you bend into the position, your tailbone just touches and is supported by the wall.

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

Nutrition – Bust the Holiday Weight Gain Cycle!

The holidays are here! And, so are the pies, cookies, candies and massive sit-down meals with friends and family! How can we prevent ourselves from over-indulging on sweets and treats this holiday season? Here are some fool-proof bust-the-cycle solutions:

- **Move!** Invite your aunt Edna on a post-turkey walk around the block, park a little further away at the mall when gift shopping, take the pooch out for a game of ball at the park on a sunny afternoon...exercise will also help to relieve holiday stress – another source of weight gain!
- **Ride it out.** Most holiday weight is gained when we mindlessly nosh on the dozens of holiday treats in our homes and offices. Try to ignore the extra “munchies” and save your indulging for a slice of your grandma’s famous hot apple pie!
- **Create a distraction.** Call a friend, go holiday shopping, volunteer at a local soup kitchen, or just put on some fun holiday tunes and dance around your living room!
- **Eat something healthy.** Make an attempt to cook one healthy meal each week during the holiday season. Enjoy the quiet time at home, preparing a loving and healthy meal for your family – use seasonal ingredients and count your blessings this holiday season.
- **Treat yourself.** Wouldn’t you rather look really great in those black pants you bought to wear on New Year’s eve, instead of having that second serving of mashed potatoes? YES!

Your Questions Answered!

Do you have a question? Email it to me at sara@saradelaney.com.

Q: *I always have trouble sleeping when I am stressed out. What can I do to have a more restful holiday season this year?*

A:

Most Americans have trouble with insomnia at one point in their life – and most cases are usually related to stress. If you are eager to get more and better Zs this holiday season, begin with these simple strategies.

Prioritize. Set a strict bedtime and stick to it. Just like being perpetually late for work, you have no excuse for missing your bedtime five out of seven nights a week. If you need help putting yourself in sleep mode, set an alarm for 30 minutes before your scheduled departure to snoozeville. When it goes off, drop what you're doing and begin to wind down. Take that extra half hour to walk the dog, brush your teeth, take a bath, do a little reading, etc.

Ritualize. Whatever your bedtime routine, the key is to be consistent. Having a ritual — even if it's just washing your face and brushing your teeth — helps condition your body to know it's time to go to sleep. Above all else, make a point of waking up at the same time each morning. Ideally, you'd wake up at the same time even on weekends and days off.

Climatize. You probably know your bedroom should be dark and quiet, but temperature is equally important. The ideal sleeping temperature is slightly cooler than room temperature: between 60 and 65 degrees. The reason is that a sharp drop in body temperature often induces sleep, which is why lying in a cool bed after a hot bath is so relaxing. Lower the thermostat before bedtime. If you're forgetful, install an automatic thermostat and program it to drop 30 minutes before bedtime and rise again in the morning.

Choose good bedding. Think of it this way: You spend way more time in bed than in your car, but which gets a higher priority? Invest in a good mattress and comfortable bedding. Cotton, down, silk, wool and other natural fibers breathe best and often wear better over time. But be certain you aren't allergic to any materials on or near your bed. Keep bedding clean and inviting. Consider an air purifier (and possibly a humidifier) if you have problems breathing well at night.

Don't blur bedroom boundaries. More and more people are heading into the bedroom at 6 p.m. to eat dinner and watch television. The bedroom shouldn't become a dining room or a living room. It's just not conducive to a good night's sleep. Banish televisions, computers, phones and other distractions. Reserve the bedroom for sleeping and intimacy only.

Watch what you eat. Ideally, to give your body enough time to fully digest, you shouldn't eat a regular meal within two hours of bedtime. If you must eat near bedtime, eat lightly. For several hours before bedtime, you should limit or eliminate your intake of alcohol and caffeine, as well as foods high in sugar or salt, all of which can have sleep-disrupting effects.

Sleep less. This advice may seem counterintuitive, but experts say it's one of the best ways to tame insomnia. People with insomnia often try to compensate by spending more time in bed. The result is fragmented sleep. The solution? Spending less time in bed consolidates sleep time. Begin with the goal of sleeping five or six hours a night — say from midnight to 6 a.m. Go to bed and get up at the same time every day until you can sleep through the night. Then gradually begin to lengthen the time you spend in bed until you find a routine that works well. In 2001, Duke University researchers used this

method to treat 25 people with insomnia. In the end, they reduced their nighttime wakefulness by more than one-half. SWEET DREAMS! ☺

Contemplate...

EAT YOUR PUMPKIN PIE! *Pumpkin* is extremely high in beta carotene, the antioxidant reputed to help ward off numerous health problems, including heart attacks, cancer and cataracts. Other “good for you” holiday foods include: *Sweet Potatoes/Yams* are another source of beta carotene; *Cranberries* have strong antibiotic properties with unusual abilities to prevent infectious bacteria from sticking to the cells lining the bladder and urinary tract, thus, it helps prevent recurring urinary tract (bladder) infections; *Figs* may help to prevent cancer and also have laxative, anti-ulcer, antibacterial and antiparasitic powers.



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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."*