



strength * spirit * solace

Newsletter

October 2004

Dear friend...

Detachment is not about external things. In fact, as is so often the case with big issues in our spiritual life, detachment involves a deeper paradox. It's true that without a lot of clutter in our lives we have more time for inner practice. But in the long run, disengaging ourselves from family, possessions, political activism, friendships, and career pursuits can actually *impoverish* our inner lives. Engagement with people and places, skills and ideas, money and possessions is what grounds inner practice in reality. Without these external relationships, and the pressure they create, it's hard to learn compassion.

So we can't use detachment as an excuse not to deal with fundamental issues such as our livelihood and relationships with other people. Nor can we make detachment a synonym for indifference. Instead, we can practice detachment as a skill – perhaps *the* essential skill for infusing our lives with integrity and grace.

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

Namasté,

Sara

Denver Ashtanga Yoga Center

I am teaching once again at the Denver Ashtanga Yoga Center in the Highlands neighborhood! Please come to my Power Yoga class on Wednesday nights from 7:30 to 9:00 pm. First-timers to the studio can practice for one week of unlimited classes for

only \$22.00. Other great packages are also available. Please check out their website for more information and directions at www.denverashtanga.com.

HYE Yoga Studio

I am also teaching two yoga classes every Wednesday evening at the HYE Studio in LODO. These unique classes are just 30 minutes each – 5:15 pm is “Breathe” where we slow down and link breath to movement and discover the meditative quality of a focused yoga practice. 6:15 pm is “Strengthen” where we build endurance and concentration by holding postures for longer periods of time and focus on building upper body and core strength. Please check out their website for more information and directions at www.hyestudio.com.

Healthy Products I Love!

Bragg Liquid Aminos are made from health-giving soybeans and purified water. They are an excellent, healthy, gourmet replacement for Tamari and Soy Sauce. Bragg Liquid Aminos are not fermented or heated. You can purchase Bragg Liquid Aminos in most conventional grocery stores and all health food stores. To learn more about Bragg Live Foods please visit www.bragg.com.

Salmon Stir-fry

4 oz. salmon cut into bite-sized pieces
2 green onions sliced thin
1 cup fresh spinach
1 cup broccoli florets
1 t. Bragg liquid aminos
1 t. olive oil
1 t. sesame seeds

Stir-fry salmon in ½ t. olive oil until cooked through, approximately six minutes, remove from heat. Stir-fry vegetables in olive oil and Bragg liquid aminos for two minutes or until crisp-tender. Add salmon back to vegetable mixture and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Serve with ½ cup cooked brown rice.

Meditation

The Wise Woman

I am the wise woman. I spin straw into gold and find meaning in suffering. I am aware that life is short. I feel death at my shoulder each day so that I can better appreciate this thing called life. I stand back. I see with my heart and open to its superior understanding. I know that life is ceaseless change, that is too shall pass. I accept both my darkness and my light knowing that denying one or the other will render me half-blind and wholly false. This day is enough. I witness the lessons, the joys and the pains, that it contains without judgment or a wish to control. I witness life passing with a quiet

kind of meaning, unfolding with a pattern of its own. I am the wise woman. I seek strength within me and comfort and support from those who have it to give. I do not demand more from life than it can offer, and life's gifts are not wasted on me. I am grateful for what I have and willing to work to earn it. I recognize that my real battles are fought within the privacy of my own soul. I choose life.

Poses You Can Do at Home

Halasana (Plow Pose)

Plow Pose reduces backache and can help you get to sleep.



Benefits

- Calms the brain
- Stimulates the abdominal organs and the thyroid gland
- Stretches the shoulders and spine
- Helps relieve the symptoms of menopause
- Reduces stress and fatigue
- Therapeutic for backache, headache, infertility, insomnia, sinusitis

Contraindications/Cautions

- Diarrhea
- Menstruation
- Neck injury
- Asthma & high blood pressure: Practice Halasana with the legs supported on props.
- Pregnancy: If you are experienced with this pose, you can continue to practice it late into pregnancy. However, don't take up the practice of Halasana after you become pregnant.

Step by Step

1. Exhale and bend from the hip joints to slowly lower your toes to the floor above and beyond your head. As much as possible, keep your torso perpendicular to the floor and your legs fully extended.
2. With your toes on the floor, lift your top thighs and tailbone toward the ceiling and draw your inner groins deep into the pelvis. Imagine that your torso is hanging from the height of your groins. Continue to draw your chin away from your sternum and soften your throat.

3. You can continue to press your hands against the back torso, pushing the back up toward the ceiling as you press the backs of the upper arms down, onto your support. Or you can release your hands away from your back and stretch the arms out behind you on the floor, opposite the legs. Clasp the hands and press the arms actively down on the support as you lift the thighs toward the ceiling.
4. To exit the pose bring your hands onto your back again, lift back into Sarvangasana (Shoulder Stand) with an exhalation, then roll down onto your back, or simply roll out of the pose on an exhalation.

Beginners Tip

In this pose there's a tendency to overstretch the neck by pulling the shoulders too far away from the ears. While the tops of the shoulders should push down into the support, they should be lifted slightly toward the ears to keep the back of the neck and throat soft. Open the sternum by firming the shoulder blades against the back.

Deepen the Pose

When coming into this pose, you can squeeze the shoulder blades together to help yourself lift up onto the tops of the shoulders. But once situated in the position, broaden the shoulder blades across the back, into the resistance of the outer upper arms.

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

Nutrition – Negative Effects of Too Few Calories

To lose weight, calories burned must exceed calories ingested. However, often many fad diets restrict caloric intake to a level that not only makes you incredibly hungry, it can also be harmful to your body. A very low-calorie diet is defined as the daily caloric intake of between 800 and 1,200 calories. Here's why it's not good to eat less than 1,200 calories per day, even if you are trying to lose weight.

- Side effects of a very low calorie diet may include fatigue, constipation, nausea, and diarrhea.
- Your body won't store any calories you take in as fat because you are not taking in enough of them to support your basal metabolic rate. As a matter of fact, your body will burn more energy if you take in more calories.
- We cannot manipulate how our bodies utilize food and energy. Since fat is a concentrated source of energy, our bodies tend to preserve it and burn it slowly.
- Carbohydrates are the preferred source of energy – our bodies will use carbs first.
- We can also utilize protein for energy. So, even if you are eating enough protein, your body will burn the protein if you take in too few calories, and then there won't be any protein available for the growth, maintenance, and repair of body tissues. This means that you will not be able to repair muscle tissue and manufacture hormones, enzymes, and antibodies. As a result, you may feel fatigued and may find yourself getting sick often.
- Another result of low calorie intake is a loss of lean body tissue. This occurs when our bodies break down muscle tissue for energy.

- A loss of lean body tissue SLOWS your metabolism. The only way to replace muscle tissue is to eat enough calories to sustain your weight and perform resistance training.
- There have been cases where thyroid hormones are decreased, and so metabolism is slowed, as a result of chronic low calorie intake. This occurs naturally as a protective measure – it's the body's way of conserving energy. This, too, may be reversed through proper balanced nutrition.

What about Low Fat? An *extremely low fat* diet may be detrimental to your body in ways you never imagined. Fat is essential in our diets for absorption of vitamins A, D, E, and K. Without these vitamins, one cannot properly absorb calcium (which leads to brittle bones); blood may not form or clot properly; and, hormone production may be negatively affected, just to name a few of the multiple problems that can arise from an extremely low fat diet.

Questions about nutrition? Email me at sara@saradelaney.com.

Your Questions Answered!

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

Q: *Why do I sometimes feel overly emotional when I practice yoga?*

A:

Many of us can relate to the “endorphin high” feeling associated with intense exercise. Certainly there’s plenty of research showing how exercise can improve mood, relieve depression and reduce anxiety. In fact, the uplifting effects of physical activity are so powerful that many progressive therapists often include it in their treatment for clients. But emotional release can also free feelings of frustration, confusion, fear, anger, pain, sadness or loss that seem to come from deep inside the psyche.

I believe that when an accident or emotional trauma occurs, the energy from that event enters the body. This external, disorganized energy — the energy of injury — can be forced into the body through either physical or emotional trauma. If your body is unable to dissipate this energy, it isolates and compresses it into a small, localized energy cyst, effectively storing it for later processing.

While resolving issues that have long weighed you down is ultimately a mind-expanding, life-enhancing experience, the initial flood of feelings can be a little unnerving. All the more reason to look closer at what causes this emotional energy release, what it may be saying about your life, and how you might embrace this experience, using it to attain insights and to work through deep-seated challenges.

Questions about yoga or nutrition? Email me at sara@saradelaney.com.

Contemplate...

Be honest: How much time do you spend daily worrying about the way something is, or was, or might be in the future? Now add in the time you spend being annoyed with other people, muttering in your mind about how they “should be.” Next, include the time devoted to replaying in your mind the injuries done to you by others. What’s your final tally? Several minutes? Or more like a few hours? And while you’re fretting over those issues, how do you feel? Anxious, angry, fearful? Perhaps there’s even a jittery stomach, tense muscles and pounding temples to boot. As your mood darkens, it becomes harder and harder to push away those upsetting thoughts. Yet no matter how often you replay those negative thoughts in your head, they don’t do anything to improve your reality. Instead they mostly cause you pain, intensifying conflict and robbing you of moments in which you could have been happy and productive. So, stop fretting and start smiling – you will feel the difference in your life almost immediately!



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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."*