

JOY: The Journal of Yoga

Summer 2004, Volume 3, Number 5

Yoga Consists of Ministering to Others

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In an essay written some time back, this writer suggested that instead of promoting Yoga through pictures and videos that show people doing difficult and advanced postures and practices, we instead should and can promote it through those aspects of our life that may be more realistic and part of our day to day activities, actions and experiences.

Instead of showing someone doing the scorpion, it might be better to see a mother listening to her children.

Instead of showing someone doing the lotus posture, it might be better to see a father carrying his sleeping son or daughter to bed in his arms.

Instead of showing the headstand, it might be better to see a picture of an individual man or woman, or a family, or child working to clean up the environment in which they live, be it their home or neighborhood.

We sometimes are so caught up in postures and techniques that we forget the big picture of what we are trying to cultivate through our practice.

If we were to try to simplify it, we could say that we want to be a person who is always understanding and compassionate to all, and is able to practice loving kindness to all people.

That may sound unrealistic, or impractical, or even foolish, but it is not so. It is just a way of being so that any time we interact with another, we are mindful about and naturally interact with them based on the ways of being that I just mentioned.

One of the major aspects of the practice of Yoga is being able to minister to others and should be one of the fruits of our practice of and discipline and effort in Yoga.

One of the things that interferes with our ability to minister to others is our state of consciousness.

We are burdened by fear, anger, impatience and the workings of our ego.

We may use what could be an opportunity to minister as an opportunity to put down or look down on another.

We may use what could be an opportunity to minister to think that we are better, wiser and more important than another and voice our thoughts and feelings based on those states of consciousness.

We may use what could be an opportunity to minister as a way to put forth our own selfish, manipulative or exploitive agenda.

But if our understanding and practice of Yoga has been a skillful and consistent one, this will not be the case.

We will understand and see that each time we interact with others there may be an opportunity or need to minister.

We may be able to minister just by saying "please" and "thank you".

We may be able to minister by just giving a smile and saying "good morning".

We may be able to minister when we understand that it is better to listen and offer only a few words in response at the moment.

We may be able to minister by asking a question that does not imply anger, judgment or ridicule, but instead directs the person who is sharing with us to the wisdom within that they may have lost sight of.

We may be able to minister by sharing our own experiences which may have been similar in some respect.

We may be able to minister by letting another person know what options there are available to him or her to assist them in their quest for greater peace and understanding, and wiser and more skillful actions.

Yoga, like Buddhism, Christianity, Catholicism and Islam says that our actions show the fruit of our knowledge, understanding and practice.

The ability to be able to minister to others is one of the pre-eminent states of living that we accomplish through any religious and spiritual path and practice.

If we have not cultivated that ability, we need to look at the quality of our practice and where we are going with it.

We may need to make more of an effort to understand the other teachings of Yoga or our particular religious or spiritual path and practice and make more of an effort to bring them into our life experiences with others.

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