

The Yoga Lodge on Whidbey Island Newsletter
February, 2010

HOME PRACTICE – SADHANA

Meditation Practice

It's helpful to treat the time you've set aside for your meditation practice as sacred, entering that space and time slowly and respectfully. This will affect the tone of your meditation, reducing agitation restlessness.

Engaging in some aspect of ritual will induce respect and invoke the meditation. Your ritual might involve washing your hands, showering, or wearing particular clothing reserved for meditation. Light a candle, incense, and bow to each of the four cardinal directions including your own seat before sitting. This is so powerful, as your gestures acknowledge the divine source everywhere. You are bowing to the universe itself, the power of meditation, and honoring yourself.

Sit in an upright posture. Relax your body and turn inwardly toward your breath at the beginning of your meditation. Check in with your state of mind at the moment, accept that state, and release any judgment, demands or expectations. Open to the feeling sensation in your body, noticing where your muscles are holding tension. Breathe into these places of holding and breathe out the tension found there. Notice what you might be holding in the mind. Breathe into this thought contraction and allow the thoughts to flow out with the exhalation. Remain attentive but in a relaxed way. Rather than attempting to get rid of the thoughts, understand that the thoughts are all Supreme Consciousness.

The following exercise offers the possibility to tune into the soft, sweet, nourishing, abundant energy that is available to us at any time. It is a profound mediation technique. By naming the vast abstract energy of the universe 'Goddess', it allows us to be more personal with this energy and enhances the possibility of forming a deeper relationship with this loving presence. Picture this loving energy as the beauty of the pastel colors in the rising or setting sun and drink the essence of Laksmi.

Exercise – Seeing the Mind as the Goddess

From [The Heart of Meditation](#) by Sally Kempton

“Sit in a comfortable posture and close your eyes. Allow your attention to center itself on the breath. As you do, say to yourself, ‘My breath is a manifestation of the Goddess, the divine energy of creation’. Each time a thought arises, say to yourself, ‘I honor this thought as an aspect of the Goddess, Consciousness. I honor this thought as Shakti: divine conscious energy.’

Continue this for ten minutes and notice how it affects the flow of thoughts in the mind.”

Asana Practice

Salutation to the sun (surya namaskara) , bow pose (dhanurasana), locust (salabhasana), camel (ustrasana), bridge pose (setu bandha sarvangasana) fish (ardha matsyendrasana), headstand (sirsasana), and shoulder stand (sarvangasana) are helpful poses for this transition time between winter and spring. Visit www.yogajournal.com for more information about these poses.