

My weekly ponderings...

Good morning everybody!

Well finally (although you wouldn't realise it!) we find ourselves in the month of June, approaching that home straight towards Summer. Strawberries and cream, Wimbledon, days out at the beach, fish and chips (followed by a Mr Whippy if you're lucky!) and long days accompanied by light evenings. How we all look forward to this period of the year when we can get outside and experience the multitude of assaults on our senses (obviously tasting is one of my favourites looking at the list above!).

Isn't it interesting how our senses are a vital component of how we interpret and experience the world around us, but also the untapped universe within us? Our five senses allow us to enjoy and understand what is happening in that very moment and can either evoke feelings of happiness, contentment, sadness or fear, depending on the circumstance. Our senses are miracles of wonder how, they can trigger memories either from a subtle fragrance or even a certain food and how it tastes. Perhaps reminding us of something we've enjoyed, or maybe remembering how we once ate honey at a teddy's picnic and threw up repeatedly only to eat honey again in your twenties! (Guilty as charged I blame the teddy!). The point is, our senses are an important part of how we function and exist in our day to day lives, allowing us to recognise pain and discomfort, designed to protect this human organism that we seem to be on the surface. However, beyond this place of sensation, this place of physical experience, we do have palpable deeper layers to our being. This is experienced in all meditative traditions shown by what occurs when we begin to sit and locate the subtle stillness inside of us. Yoga talks of 'Koshas' or sheaths/coverings, that veil deeper and more intimate aspects of our soul. Anamaya (physical), Pranayama (life force/energy), Manomaya (mind/mental), Vijnanamaya (wisdom/intuition) and Anandamaya (bliss). Fascinatingly enough the 'maya' part of these words translate from Sanskrit to English as illusion. This guides us towards the understanding that each



layer that collapses and dissolves brings us ever closer to our true nature, leaving nothing to remain but that pure absolute wholeness.

Our senses do also have the tendency to occasionally draw us from one thing to the next without any consideration to what effect it is having on our system. I am not at all saying: 'do not enjoy experience and sensation', as mentioned above, it is a crucial part of our existence. But what I am saying is to encourage awareness to your senses when they are activated and observe their behaviour whilst enjoying or inquiring about the nature of their origin. You will see perhaps how our identification climbs down the ladder of the Koshas, becoming ever more profound and dare I say 'real'. 'Pratyahara' is the fifth limb of the eight limbs of Yoga and fundamentally means to withdraw the senses. If you have meditated, practiced yoga or any tradition, you will have hopefully experienced glimpses of this in yourself, where the body slowly begins to fade away leaving a mysterious sense of existence, without the body, and in time the mind. This is a subject that cannot be objectified by the limitations of language, so I invite you to practice yourself and maybe leave your senses aside for a few moments.

You may be really glad that you did.....

Once it was said; 'Do not lose the treasure of your Self for the pleasure of the senses'. - Swami PARTHASARATHY.

Once it was also said; 'Our reality is beyond the five senses'. - DEEPAK CHOPRA.

Happy sensing! Namaste, Vincent and Kate.

NEW and current classes...

Location; The Studio, Earlham House Clinic, Unit15, Earlham House, Norwich, NR2 3PD.

MONDAYS & TUESDAYS - weekly mixed ability yoga class - 6pm.

Hatha / Vinyasa Flow Yoga A step up from the complete beginners' class at an intermediate level.

We will be working through some of the more challenging poses at a reasonable pace to really feel like you are working the body and achieving a good workout. We will put into practice; posture, breathing exercises, relaxation and meditation.

THURSDAYS - 6 week beginners yoga course - 6pm - NEW COURSE BEGINNING ON 7th JULY.

Suitable for complete beginners, or those who are wishing to refresh themselves on some of the fundamental postures of yoga before joining or re-joining a mixed ability yoga class. The class will be kept to a small size and paced to allow the participants to learn each pose in a safe, friendly, supportive and unrushed environment. We will cover; posture, breathing exercises, philosophy, relaxation and meditation.

SATURDAYS - Outdoor weekly guided meditation sessions, The Plantation Gardens - 9am.

Starting from 21st May... They are back... A one hour outdoor guided meditation session in the relaxed & beautiful setting of 'The Plantation Gardens'. Reflecting on philosophy, whilst enjoying some peace and tranquillity.