

NOA – Nature of Asanas Program

From Somatic to Mystical

Introduction

Being fully aware (mindful) of each body shape provokes the mind to shift away not just from thinking but also away from body parts affected by the shape, to focus on the whole body and then beyond, away from the names, labels, instructions, to the pure experience of the shape.

To truly experience each asana, one must remove the filters of ego-I, the perceived effects, and at some point, even the teacher's instructions. What is taking place in each one of us when we move into, hold, and release each asana is only for us to experience, affected by who we are, where we are, and how we are now, and it must be done without rushing, expectations, or wanting. The role of the teacher is crucial as a signpost during that journey, a signpost showing possible directions without suggesting one.

We change the shape of our body all the time, even during sleep. The shape invokes body and mind reactions and serves a specific purpose and might be prompted by the action we need to perform. But it can also be an expression of the state of our mind. The movements of our hands, head and eyeballs are much more than just body talk. These are also a way for our mind and spirit to search, to inquire, to explore the subconsciousness, by invoking all layers of our existence, including our physical, energy, and mind sheaths.

Most of the time we are not aware of it, that is why practicing asanas with a complete awareness during Yoga class is so vital. But for such practice to be truly vital, we need to become aware of the full spectrum of what is available to us.

To teach Yoga is to open our students minds to that full spectrum and to allow them to experience it on their own terms, with the abilities they came to our class with.

But to teach something we must experience it ourselves first.

In this program, we will mindfully break down each asana into smaller steps, while we journey from physical to spiritual and perhaps to mystical. We will explore how each asana may affect our physical, mental and spiritual health, bringing it all to a better balance. The participants will also be exposed to different experiences, some of which are not associated with how we currently practice asanas. We will open our minds to that which is unseen, to that which is possible for us to experience. We will continue approaching the boundaries that were implanted in us to realize that they do not exist.

To teach something, we must live by it, as we teach who we are.