Usenet Yogi

Selected Posts from alt.yoga (2003–2011)

An Archive. A Life Unfolding. . .

Compiled, curated, and presented by
Jared

2026

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The material contained herein is presented as part of a historical record of discussions that occurred in the alt.yoga Usenet newsgroup between 2003 and 2011.

About this book

This edition contains editorial front and back matter intended to clarify the historical context of the postings, explain the structure of the compilation, and assist readers in navigating the material as presented.

Background

The postings presented in this volume appeared between 2003 and 2011 in the alt.yoga discussion group on Usenet.

Usenet itself began in 1979 as a distributed message-exchange system created by Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis at Duke University, with early collaboration from Steve Bellovin at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Usenet formed part of an early internet discussion environment that allowed participants from around the world to exchange ideas in topic-based forums known as newsgroups. Alt.yoga served as one such meeting place for individuals interested in yoga. While Usenet was never widely used by the general public, it played an important role in early internet communication and remains active.

The postings reproduced here reflect the voice of Omjaroo/Omjaram (Jared), one participant and the compiler of this volume, together with contributions of others who appeared in the course of those discussions. Some exchanges are conversational. Others consist primarily of extended reflections (poems, stories, rants, slice of life) written within the context of a shared environment.

How to read

This volume need not be read from beginning to end. Each exchange presents a self-contained treatment of a particular subject. The order of the posts is chronological. The table of contents provides access by subject and under each subject (in parentheses) are the original post titles which can be searched in surviving Usenet archives. Quotations from other participants appear in italicized paragraph form. Longer quoted material, including poems, stories, excerpts, etc. appear in verse formatting. The glossary includes words drawn from the language of yoga and early internet culture.

Named Participants

People in Usenet discussions often use “nics,” or nicknames, a common convention in Usenet exchanges. These names appear here as they were used in the original postings.

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All postings remain the works of their respective contributors. They are presented here as part of a historical record of discussions that took place in alt.yoga.

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Here are the posts...

Enjoy, take what you want, leave the rest.

—The Editors

2003

March

God or war

(God or War)

When I fill my present moment with thoughts of war, then it is my war and I am just as responsible for its consequences as those who fight.

When I support or oppose others as they act out their fears, then their fate is mine and I must suffer each cry, each wound and each death.

When I let go of the desires that fuel my fear; when my mind is still; when there is no war in my heart or soul; when my present moment is Love, then I live in awareness of the Truth; there is no misery, death or war:

There is only God.

The myth of myself, separated from, distinct from, different than, God must be "given up" or "released". This is my purpose in the study and practice of yoga.
Some years ago, while in a period of great suffering, I gave up all hope (let go) and reached out to God. In that moment of quiet surrender, I was willing to hear God's answer and at that moment knew (accepted) the truth.
Since then my purpose in life has been to align my vehicle and all my worldly affairs and relationships with the truth. I use the phrase "letting go and letting God". It has not been easy, nor has it been pleasant but it has been and continues to be real. What used to take years for me to accept and let go of now may take only days, hours, or minutes. Eventually I will even let go of the idea that there is something to let go of. Day by day and degree by degree I am letting go of the fear I create and opening up to a sense of grounding and well being.
I do not view Maya as something put upon me or even as something real, but rather as something I create, a choice I make moment to moment. After all, I am whatever God is and could be nothing else; always have been and always will be. There is nowhere to go, nothing to attain, no change to make. A "letting go" an "acceptance", signals that the message has been received and accepted and that there is no longer any need for the suffering and painful feedback.
Yoga skills, meditation, philosophy, shidhis and such things are very interesting and helpful, but I do not need them to "realize" God. I can and do "realize" God anytime I choose to "let go" of my fear and "accept" what is true. All the while I am still whatever God is (Love, Intelligence, Life, Truth, Spirit, Principle, Soul, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence) and the degree to which I express this truth in my earthly life is my responsibility and my choice alone.

April

Pranayama

(beginning pranayama - conflicting opinions)

So, um....I guess I'm asking for advice here.

Concerning pranayama for a person just starting out in yoga (or anyone else for that matter), I would suggest three things. 1. Pick an author, teacher or guru (if you prefer) and follow their recommendations

with a substantial and thorough effort until you can determine if it works for you. If not, explore a different program. Any responsible teacher will highly discourage you from "mixing and matching" teachings. This is a recipe for sustained ignorance and failure (not to mention the possibly of the dangerous consequences you read about). 2. From my personal experience I would recommend without reservation (for both clarity, effectiveness and safety) anything by Paramahansa Yogananda, Richard Hittleman or Swami Vishnudevananda (a disciple of Sivananda). 3. Follow your heart. This is how God speaks to us. Believe it.

Celibacy
(Celibacy)

I have imagined what my life might look like without sex in the equation and this is a state that I attain to. Let's say for the sake of discussion that there are 3 levels of celibacy. Level 1: No sex with others Level 2: No sex with self. Level 3: No sexual expression, desire or attachment of any kind.
Does anyone have any experience moving from Level 0 to 1 or (especially) from Level 1 to 2?

> *For what purpose do you wish to change your life? If you have a purpose and a reason then it is relatively easy (there is something you will put before the thing you are giving up). So, what is so important that you are willing to forgo reproduction?*

The short answer to your question is God.
The detailed answer to your question could (and should) comprise a book. But it never will as long as I am expressing, life force at the lower levels. (I love the language of Yoga. Its such great way to discuss otherwise difficult and/or embarrassing personal situations.)
The fact is I express so often and with such intensity (and have for 40 years now) that it's a wonder I even have enough life force left to breath. To get up, go to work (and otherwise function for the survival of my vehicle, as well as two of the three others I have already reproduced), is arduous and painful. I am still compelled to consume alcohol and other massively rajas foods which add to the energy drain. Meditation is nearly impossible and like work is akin to torture. Neither of the two marital relationships I have entered into have been functional or sustainable. I have had to go to jail over this expression and the karmic consequences (play-out) were immediate, severe, sustained and have been just plain amazing (and relentless) for over 15 years now. Not that any of this learning/training has been a bad thing. On the contrary I consider it a wonderful gift from God, Who revealed himself to me through it (and who I think has a great sense of humor and irony)!
I have no moral or religious problems regarding any form of expression. To me its all God, so it's all good. My concerns are more practical; I simply can't express freely or effectively at the higher levels when my vehicle is caught in this expressive loop on the lower ones. I find food and sex getting in my way and substantially interfering with the creative (karma, bhakti) endeavors I have been assigned by God. In addition I personally have come to the conclusion that the desire/fulfillment pattern is not only painful but just plain pointless.
I have 6+ plus years of Level 1 celibacy. Not altogether voluntary but I haven't gone out of my way to end it and karma has not provided any serious temptation. I still feel vulnerable even though I have refused temptation on several occasions in my dreams. I am developing fair control of my mouth and have had several short periods of spontaneous Level 2 celibacy (while fasting or visiting an ashram etc.) However I am still frustrated. Sex, food and talking (emotional dependency) still elude my control and expression in writing, public speaking, music and other arts remain intermittent and stunted, owing in part to weak financial expression but mostly to fear and lack of self discipline.

> *And when are you going to start loving yourself? With all your fears, foibles, humanity and apparent lack of control. The mind and body follow along when they are loved, hugged, adored, tended to, cared for and nurtured. When you can be easy with yourself and the world, being able to laugh and being able to be simple, then you will "progress". Its not about control, its about skill, its about being able to dance with life, God and the Universe.*

In the bible God did not say make joyous music unto the Lord, but, make a joyous noise unto the Lord. Think about it.

Lighten Up.

I do love myself and if I love God I could do no other. It is for Love that I seek freedom. I don't see this as a giving up of something valuable or something I want. I see it as freedom from torment and something that perpetually chokes off my real "voice" and therefore my joy.

I find the whole concept of celibacy bewildering and perhaps even offensive...

I remember a time I felt as you do, that celibacy was ridiculous and an affront to life and the system God put in place. While I still dismiss the idea of celibacy for "religious" reasons as being just such an affront, I have come to conclusion for personal and practical reasons that for me, eventually sex has got to go.

God wants you to stop having sex? Weird.

No I don't think God wants me to stop having sex; I am the one who wants to stop having sex so that I can express my divine nature in other ways. Ernest Hemingway, Picaso, Rajneesh, Clinton and others may have been able to express themselves in writing, politics and art, while f**king, drinking, empire building and the like but I can not (I've given an honest 40+ year run at it; with no success). And while I have yet to reach any significant level of expression in the arts, I have learned by experience that I will not be able to do so in a meaningful way until expression at the lower energy centers diminish.

Me old "guru," Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, once said that celibacy is the fastest way to attain enlightenment -for those who find it easy.

For those that don't, the strain of doing something unnatural for them actually slows down the process

I always appreciate hearing the wisdom of Marharishi Mahest Yogi. I know there is God, so I think it is my body that is interfering with my expression of that knowledge. My frustration is I don't strain to control what comes naturally. What comes naturally is how I create Maya. The ability to see beyond the veil of Maya is an exercise of my "dominion" or "control" over the illusion. To know and exercise the truth is my goal in attaining celibacy. Not to be hard on my self. In fact the way I am attempting to "(en)lighten up" is to let go of this compelling expression of animal (frightened) energy.

Curious have u tried any 12 step programs for ur addictions?

Yes I have. Problem is I couldn't identify or connect with anyone with more then a week "sober". While twelve step programs are for those who "want" it, God bless them. It is also for those willing to find out how to do what we "want".
I have spoken to swamis of significant attainment, read numerous books, spoken to hundreds of "recovering" persons. No body seems to have anything remotely like an easy answer to this issue. I understand the Buddha said, "If there were another desire as strong as sex, I would have never made it". This is clearly a serious hook! I have come to believe, like Mike said, that the answer is in meditation. If you have followed the thread you'll know that meditation is also a problem.
I was involved in AA for 5 years or so during an 7-8 year run on "abstinence" from alcohol. In that time food became a problem. Sex has always been a problem. It seems the three are inextricably tied together. The twelve steps and the twelve traditions have taught me how to act like a person, how to have a life. How to be a decent and grateful human being. How to live by a set of principles. It was in AA that I heard about and actually "came to believe" that there may be such a thing as God. It was there God revealed himself to me and set me on the path I now follow.
My purpose in yoga is to exercise dominion over my "vehicle". However will power has never been of any use to me as I've never had any. And still don't. Will in the sense of "willing" a thing to be, serves me. That is knowing a thing can be and just staying resolutely focused on attaining that until I have it or until I die. Whether I have any will power or not. If nothing I am persistent.

Concerning balance, I understand and believe what you say. God on the other hand is absolute and has no opposite. So to me, nothing short of perfection means anything. And of course God is everywhere, so everything, everywhere is perfect, right now. Always has been and always will be. So really there is nothing to change. Acceptance is the only choice I have.

Have you looked into tantric yoga? In Qi-Gong, there are tantric practices which enhance sexual self-control.Celibacy is pointless if it is too hard. Your problem seems to be that you see sex as something negative due to your past experiences.

I don't see sex as negative. I just don't want it for me. I think is interfering with my ability to express elsewhere in my life.
I do have some experience with gi gong and I have read some interesting approaches from that perspective. Perhaps they were very esoteric, but the idea of hanging weights from my testicles at prescribed intervals, etc. holds no attraction for me and I doubt I could marshal the necessary resolve to pursue that path.
I have awareness of some of the Tantric traditions from my study of the Bhagwan Shree Rasjneesh. I see Tantric as an utter and absolute acceptance and celebration of my existence, whatever it may be. This idea agrees with me but it's application and expression in contemporary United States is a tantamount to a death sentence.
I agree that diet is fundamental to this endeavor. I have experienced the most profound shifts in desire with manipulating the diet (fasting/vegetarian). The will (or lack of) to exercise the diet, asana and meditation is as you say is key. I know this. Chicken/egg quandary. What comes first the energy needed to do the yoga or the yoga so I can have the energy.

But anyone attempting celibacy is a serious person attempting yoga because it requires great will. I am sure this is why it was emphasized so much historically. The bodies reverberations become refined and speech mellow. Eyes gain luster like from pranayama. You acquire a profound peace and power that can be sensed by others.

But mind control is what it is about. Watching ALL thoughts in a detached way and uncovering their underlying desire takes great skill and will. It is much like remembering your dreams. Some things are suppressed because they are unpleasant to the ego. Our faults others can see but not ourselves is the expression or something like it. But for a yogi with ruthless detachment from all things, all thoughts have equal weight and the so-called unpleasant hidden things loom up.

I have a very strong feeling it is "time". I have studied yoga for a number of years. I have practiced hatha, ala Richard Hittleman and Vishnudevanada, for a short time some years ago to very good effect. In fact I get great physical and emotional relief from the practice of hatha, but I have little drive to practice it. I have read Rajneesh quite a bit, The yoga sutras, the Gita, and Yogananda, extensively. I have finished the first year of the SRF lessons and am very pleased with the study and will continue. I do not however attend SRF functions and I am not especially attracted to Kriya at this time. I am stalled on the practice of energy exercises and the Aum and Hong Sau techniques and my meditation is inconsistent and light and most uncomfortable.
I am not drawn to the learning or practice of psychic techniques. In fact, the opposite, it all scares the sh*t out of me. My youth was filled with psychic horrors of all sorts, which I hope some day to understand, but when I feel I am going to be lost or dissolved into the void it just plain scares me. I still harbor many fears of people, places and things on the physical plane, I can't imagine what bringing those fears into the others would buy me. I think if I can learn to be here now and let go of all my anticipation (fear) in my present moment, I won't then bring any anticipation into my practice of yoga or into my moment in any other plane. None the less I have been feeling energy spontaneously move up the spine and have been drifting into trance like states (especially when driving and thinking intently about the nature of God and yes I hear the Aum sound in my 69 Chevy's motor).
Besides in my way of thinking, it is all God, right now. Always has been and always will be. I don't (can't) do anything to get closer, be happier, know more, etc. It's all here, right now and my awareness

and acceptance are the only thing I have dominion over. The psychic powers, vision, physical and mental health, bliss, etc., these things can come or go, they make no difference in my relationship to God and so are not requirements for me to realize who I am.
God has touched me, I know who I am, it's my vehicle (body/soul) which is out of control, frightened, depressed, out in left field etc. I want to bring my body's awareness and reactions in line with my awareness of who I am. This is why I am pursuing the study of yoga.
But as I said I am having very strong feelings like its time to let the vehicle go but as I get even a hint of being up on that cliff and preparing to jump, I clam up and fall back into the default coping mechanisms (alcohol, sex, food, sleep, fear, fantasy, intellectualism, etc.) I know at a very deep level that meditation is what I need to do and hatha will help that.

Yoga
(Yoga)

I know there is God. Bhakti yoga is what I do to acknowledge this.

I know there is God Jhana yoga is what I do to remind myself of this.

I know there is God Karma yoga is what I do because of this.

I know there is God Meditation is what I do when I know this.

I am oh so new to yoga, but i am wondering if anyone can give me a few hints on yoga and if it can help lower back pain?

I suffered chronic and severe lower back pain for over 8 years. After several weeks of learning and practicing basic hatha yoga my back problems evaporated and after 10 years have not returned, even after I stopped the practice of hatha. The purpose of hatha yoga is to heal, purify and strengthen the body to make it an effective vessel for the realization and expression of God.
I used the book, "Be Young With Yoga", by Richard Hittleman with great effect and suggest it highly.

Suicide
(Suicide)

Since how I face my inevitable death is, in the end a personal matter, I offer my present take on death, dying, suicide and nature.
I know there is God. I know God is everywhere. I know that God is first cause and is beyond life and death. I know that everything, everywhere exists in the nature, substance and character of God I know there is no death.
I personally believe it is pointless to end my life (destroy my vehicle) to avoid pain or suffering. Pain is the feedback I need to learn and make the appropriate adjustments to my thinking (awareness). If I try to stop or suppress this feedback (and believe me I have tried) with alcohol, drugs, sex or suicide then the volume and intensity of the feedback will continue to increase until the pain of not accepting my lessons exceeds the fear (pain) of accepting them. I can never avoid paying the price (learning the lessons) of karma, I can only choose to pay (learn) it more or less quickly and therefore increase or decrease the duration and intensity of my suffering (feedback). Nor will dying or killing myself give me so much as a minute of relief from the suffering as I will simply take up my lessons in the next plane (heaven, hell, purgatory, limbo, etheric, astral, whatever.) In my life I am slowly learning to use pain and suffering to raise my consciousness above the apparent circumstance and align my awareness and acceptance with what I know is true; All is Natural; All is Good; All is God.
I think of my body like a vehicle, in the same way as on the physical plane I have a car. If I deliberately (or accidentally) torch, smash or otherwise disable my car, obviously I will have more to contend with (suffer)

when I dispose of it and obtain another. I will have to pay for towing, perhaps a fine, junk it, get a low price for it and do it all now. On the other hand there are far fewer headaches and many more advantages in ridding myself of my car if I have taken good care of it. I can sell if for a good price or trade up for a better one on my terms and on my timetable etc. or it may take me all the way to the point where I no longer need one. It's my choice.

Not always for a positive lesson, though. Consider the "adjustments" in one's thinking that one is "supposed" to learn by being tortured by one's government. Or in quite a few other circumstances. Don't confuse the pain of your ordinary, comfortable life with the pains experienced by those not living so. Not all pain is the Rod & Staff of the Shepherd. Some of it is the rocks and wind of nature, or the fangs and talons of the predator.

I once held a similar view of the world, thankfully I now know different. I am much more comfortable and less frightened then I once was.
Regardless if the "feedback" I need is in the form of accident, natural disaster, famine, plague, government sponsored torture, rod, staff, fang or talon; if I know there is God then I can only have it one way; it's all God, so it's All Good. Which isn't to say that it's pleasant and I like it.
I find it very helpful in maintaining my awareness of the truth that I don't conveniently and erroneously think about the universe in man made terms such as "positive/negative", "good/bad, "me/you, "love/hate, etc. to justify or excuse the pain (feedback) I have called into my experience.

I'm still trying to figure out how people like you think the billions who live in poverty and oppression "called" that pain into their experience. You're not Lutheran, are you? You remind me of an old boss who said, after the front end of my car had been clipped by a semi making an illegal turn (and this is an exact quote): "There must be something terribly wrong with you as a human being, because things like that only happen to people who deserve it." (said without daring to look me in the face) I quit a few weeks later, never having spoken to him again. And no, I am not "frightened" by life, afraid of the blowing wind or the howl of the wolf. I do not live my life in fear like the sheep.

As I said I once held a view very similar to yours. Right down to the part about "people like them who think". The knowledge I have was not quick in coming and not without a great cost but I have persevered, stoutly refusing to believe that what I saw in the world was anything, any intelligent god could create.
Perhaps in some small way I can give you an idea of how I came to understand the laws of the universe the way I do and why I speak the way I do. I can't speak to anyone else's experience or motivation.
Currently I am studying the Self Realization Lessons of Paramahansa Yogananda. I have studied Religious Science extensively. I was raised Catholic, but have spent the majority of my life as an agnostic. I have read everything I can find by Emmet Fox, the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, and have studied many different religious traditions. I attended AA meetings for over five years. I have studied marshal arts for years but stopped it to take up the study of yoga. I have been trained by the US government to kill other humans in many different ways. I am not a terrorist but I belong to another feared and hated class of humans and am a modern pariah. Torture and death for someone like me are sanctioned by nearly every society and government on the planet and its getting worse every day. I have was almost killed in an industrial accident, nearly starved by natural disaster, I have been persecuted, lied about, jailed, beaten, alcohol and drug addicted, abused and abusive. By US standards me an my children are seriously impoverished. I have spent nearly 40 years of my life so severely terrified; emotionally, physically and psychically that I (as yet) don't have to ability to convey it.
One day 15 years ago, in all of this, God touched me. At that moment I knew there was God. It was not some happy, joyous, blissful event. It meant that everything I had ever believed or acted on was inaccurate. That now I needed to reevaluate and relearn virtually everything I had ever known. Nothing short of being born again could ever work.
It has not been a happy or easy journey. It has s*cked and in many ways it still s*ucks. But I know who I am and where I am going and I know that everything that has ever happened to me was and is my responsibility. I know for a fact that I have dominion not only of my world but of the entire universe. I am

made of whatever God is and could be nothing other. Knowing I am responsible for my environment (happiness or unhappiness) not only is not a bummer but this is the greatest freedom possible. If I create my pain then I can create bliss and no one can (or ever has been able to) stop me.
I believe it was Will Rogers who said it most plainly, I believe we are all just about as happy as we make up our minds to be. Even the billions of us (and I mean me) who still choose to suffer.

May

Etiquette

(Name Calling, Resentment, H&D Incoherent Babble and Other Off Topic Posts)

I have noticed a significant amount of personal attacks and name calling going on in this group. I have also seen new people make on topic comments and be responded to with so much negativity that they simply leave the group. I have also seen many on topic posts, hijacked by those who want to make personal attacks or argue arcane yoga trivia or exercise their various rivalries. I know when this happens to me I feel put upon and I am certain others do to. This is unfortunate but in Usenet, anymore, it is not unusual. When I described this phenomena to a friend of mine he laughed out loud and commented, On alt.yoga? You would think this was the last place you would see any of that? I had to agree with him, I thought it was pretty amazing. But then I thought, that in a way it makes sense. After all the only motivation for attacking or name calling is fear. Since anyone who is estranged from themselves in God is necessarily going to be very fearful, it makes sense that they would be drawn to yoga in an attempt to quell the fear. Ergo, you will find a number of frightened people at alt.yoga, alt.religion, alt.majic, etc. People with unanswered questions, who will vigorously defend their understanding as if they can confirm themselves right by hurting or negating others.
I like to answer any response to what I post. Negative or positive, it all God, so it's all good. However in order to be helpful and in all fairness to the folks who ask legitimate questions, from here on out, I will take any off topic or change of topic responses and open a new thread. If you wish, you may find my response there.
Posts that contain incomprehensible (to me) ramblings or references and do not indicate their purpose or function I will acknowledge and thank but I how could I otherwise respond?

> *Politics of the cave. How emeshed in Maya you are at the time. I don't live up to NG standards. Shadows on Plato's wall. People in alt.yoga are at least as confused as any other NG you can think of. They all think they are their egos/minds. Lazy too. Ever notice how little is said here? Not much of any real substance.*

The reason for my post is that I realized that I was continuing off topic posts when I responded to people's personal comments to me. This is not fair to the original poster and has the tendency to discourage others from continuing the on topic part of the thread. So I thought that I would announce how I would respond to off topic posts.
It has occurred to me that many of the people participating in Usenet are relatively new to it and may not understand the protocol (social not technical) that is based on. So in the interest of encouraging some of the more sensitive types to participate and to introduce some of the structure that is required to carry on civil and effective discourse I posted my notice. I can do nothing about others but I can identify and modify my own ineffective behaviors and strive to improve; Progress not perfection. As you know many years ago (10-15) Usenet was populated primarily by academic, technical and spook types. Generally speaking these people had a purpose in communicating via Usenet and were professional, intelligent or just plain geeky enough to follow the fairly well defined Usenet rules of conduct. With the event of cheap and easy to use computer hardware/software and lots of people with more time then sense on their hands, Usenet has been nearly choked to death with flaming and spam. But it survives and is still a great vehicle for research and sharing information.
Participating as I have for the last few weeks in alt.yoga has brought many good things to me. It gives me a context for expressing what I know about God. This is something I have been struggling with for a

number or years now. How to live with and express what I know. Seems as if the moment you say God people start lining up to attack you. It gives me an opportunity to practice my writing and work hard at making my words clear and myself understood. Fellowship is always nice and appreciated but somewhat more rare here.
Attacks from others are excellent practice for developing real life responses consistent with what Jesus, Gandhi and others have suggested. Having time to formulate a response lets me practice elevating my initial hard wired response to something more consistent with what I know about God. Attacks also help me practice making I statements in response. The temptation is to respond with "you" statements. It is much more difficult to stay focused on what I think, want, experience or feel. There is much greater perceived vulnerability in making "I" statements so there is a much greater tendency for me to move my awareness from my present moment and create a fictional anticipation, there by creating fear in myself. In addition it is important for me stand up to frightened and ignorant bullies and speak my peace without trying to hurt or best them. After all they know not what they do. It is a form of yoga practice for me.

So, you are going to appoint yourself the standard of behaviour on alt.yoga.

The standards for behavior on Usenet have been established for many years. I endeavor to follow them myself, best I can. As far as the standard of behavior on alt.yoga. I prefer mine to some of what I have seen, so I will endeavor to advocate it. I would encourage all to follow their own inner wisdom in this regard.

You're ego is even bigger than I thought.

I am whatever God is. Whatever God is not, I am not. If God has an ego and however large that is, then I have one and it is as large.

Your sense of justice is causing that anger you have,

In my world there is no need for justice. Everything is perfect right now. Always has been and always will be. In this case I have no anger because I have no fear.

coming out in being hurt easily (put upon).

Put upon is not the same as being hurt. Put upon rather, is what external circumstances come upon me. These can be pleasant, or unpleasant but they cannot hurt me. I may or may not like them. I may or may not try to avoid or mitigate them. I am the only one who can hurt me. If I feel hurt, this is an internal decision and cannot be caused by any external circumstance.

Challenge

(Yogic challenge: Love me more then I Love you!)

Love me more than I Love you. Shove Love down my throat. Force me to believe you Love me. Push Love on me. Argue Love like it meant your life. Bash me with Love. Flame me with Love. Prove that I am wrong with Love. Be more clever then me with Love. Spew Love everywhere and over everyone. Insist that I believe in love. Laugh Love at me. When you are afraid react with abject Love, striking out indiscriminately in every direction with Love. Read, study and elucidate love. Prove I what a prissy I am with love. Kill me; destroy me; end all of your fears, with Love.
Anyone want to play?
I didn't think so... Where's Babaji when you need him?

Sanity

(Once again I renounce everything I say)

I too have been insane. I know now that it was because I was afraid to ask for what I needed. If I was insane enough, surely someone would reach out and give me what I needed. Surely someone would rescue me. And someone did; God. It hasn't been fun and games. Be careful what you ask for, but be sure of one thing; ask (if you have the courage) and you shall receive (if you listen).

June

Fasting

(Fasting question)

I'm considering a 3-day water fast in the very near future.

I have been fasting for many years. I started by reading and following the directions in Paavo Airola's book "How To Keep Slim, Healthy, and Young With Juice Fasting". The same material can be found in his book "Are You Confused". He would maintain that juice fasting is far superior, safer and more health promoting then straight water fasting. Based on my experience I would agree with him. I have fasted many times and can comfortably fast two weeks. In fact I always feel better after two weeks of fasting then I do when I don't. Because I have to work, drive and generally function at full capacity, juice fasting is the only option for me that works. When I try to water fast I get head aches and my blood sugar goes so low I can't think or function responsibly. I have always used enemas and find I become very uncomfortable if I don't. Hatha yoga adepts will use techniques for drawing water up into the bowels and then expelling it as a way of cleansing. It is much easier to use enemas then spending years learning these exercises. Besides in our "civilized" society it is difficult to find sufficient water to wade into in which it would be appropriate to perform this cleansing. I have never heard of "friendly bacteria" being an issue while fasting. I would say that fasting is the single most beneficial health promoting activity that I do at this time and I recommend it highly. It literally changed my life both physically and spiritually. When I first started to fast I was surprised and frightened when my "sex drive" went to zero. I now understand and appreciate the break. Good luck.

Evil

(Quote about Evil)

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

How about this one:

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for men to think of themselves as good"

Evil...? We don't need no stinkin evil! :-)
But seriously ladies and gentlemen, there is no such thing. There is God. God is everywhere. Everything, everywhere is of God; as God and is, in fact, God. One might follow this line right to the blasphemous part (hint: God is evil?)
No, I don't think so... Evil is a man made notion designed to explain and justify our fear. As long as there is "evil" we don't have to take control of, or responsibility for, our feelings, thoughts and actions. It's the "other" guys fault; he's evil". Using the "evil" card, is ready justification for hurting, controlling or stealing from others and did I mention, it's a fabulous sales tool?
Can you imagine a cosmic body such as the sun, burning out and killing billions of beings, having any malevolence or evil? No the universe functions just fine without any mechanism for evil (or good, for that matter).

I will have to argue with you.

No argument. You are absolutely correct. There are endless examples of man hurting man which support the idea of "evil". I just think you missed my point.
If God is everywhere that means that everything everywhere must be whatever God is. God first, everything else came later. So in my thinking to believe there is evil you must believe that God is evil, because God is everywhere and everything. I don't believe God is evil so I can not justify believing there is evil. In addition I can not justify being afraid of evil (or anything else for that matter) because it doesn't exist. So if I make any decision or take any action of the basis of there being such a thing as evil then I am contributing to the illusion that there is evil. If there was such a thing I think this would be indeed be evil.

But what about all the God out there that involves suffering, death, destruction, lies etc. Well all of the actions taken by humans against other humans and the environment are actions precipitated by fear. Fear that something bad could possibly happen to us. Fear of evil. If we have no such fear then we would never have any need or desire to hurt anyone or anything.
Evil is not to be feared it, doesn't exist. Nothing should be feared because we are whatever God is and no harm could possible befall us. The only thing that exists is God. You have to deny God to believe in fear or act in fear. Unfortunately most of us do most of the time and it is the role of karma to teach us this truth. The role of suffering which drives us toward knowing and accepting the truth. We will kill and be killed, hurt and be hurt, many times in many life's before we get it. When we know there is only God then, the fear stops, when the fear is gone the karma stops and the illusion of separation or evil stops, because after all these things don't exist in the first place.

No, Omjaroo, I can't imagine the sun being evil. But here's what I can indeed imagine - I can imagine some sociopath creeping into a house and stealing a child...

Perhaps we are not so far apart, you and I. Did you see my response in a post on, Yoga and Tai Chi? As far as understanding what I said about evil, it seems you are right there with 100% of the others that commented, having totally missed my point. Oh well, it is after all why the victims of the world will continue to be hurt, because we all need proof of the existence of evil. Sure beats the hell out of taking personal responsibility (which is a lot more work). Find a post I made called God or War and replace the word evil for war in the poem and you may understand what I am saying.

Eye Exercises

(Eye Exercises)

Does anyone know of any yoga eye exercises?

I have adapted these instructions from, BE YOUNG WITH YOGA, by Richard L. Hittleman. They differ slightly from the book because the book refers to illustrations that are not here.
When I have done these exercises consistently I have found that I rely less on my reading glasses and I find them quite relaxing. Surprisingly, this simple exercise requires a significant amount of discipline to do as instructed (because the hold time is so short) and is excellent practice for yoga in general.
Youth for the eyes:
What the eye exercises do for you. 1. Have a positive effect upon the optic nerves and muscles. 2. Aid in relieving tension and fatigue of the eyes often responsible for headaches.
How to do the eye exercises.
1. Imagine that you are facing the center or a giant clock. In order to see twelve o'clock, while keeping your head straight and still you would have to move your eyes to the extreme upward position.
2. In order to see one o'clock you would have to move your eyes slightly to the upper right-hand corner; to see two o'clock you would mover you eyes a little farther to the right and so forth around the clock. On each number you must rest your eyes for a fraction of a second. Perform this clockwise movement 10 times, resting for a moment on each of the 12 numbers.
3. When 10 clockwise movements are completed, close your eyes and rest for several seconds. Then open your eyes and do the identical movements in a counter-clock-wise fashion 10 times. In this movement you begin at twelve o'clock as before, but move the eyes to your left so that you see eleven o'clock, then ten o'clock, etc. When 10 counter-clock-wise movements are completed, close your eyes and rest for several moments.
4. This exercise should be done in the PM. Hold the extreme position for a fraction of a second. 10 clock-wise movements, 10 counter-clock-wise movements.
Important things to know about the eye exercises.
The optic nerves and muscles are usually neglected in ordinary exercising. Since with our Yoga techniques, we are reconditioning every part of the body, we should certainly make some conscious effort to exercise the eye muscles a few time each week. Moving the eyes to the extreme areas of the socket as described will provide this exercise. You will also find that fatigue of the eyes is often relieved through these movements.

Jesus
(Jesus's Teachings)

Can anyone recommend a book that interprets the truth behind Jesus's teaching. Some say Jesus was a yogi, and I find that easy to believe.

Power Through Constructive Thinking, Emmet Fox.

Emmett Fox's understanding of God and how the laws of God and the Universe are expressed in the Bible and through the teachings of Jesus has given me real appreciation and inspiration for both. Until reading Fox, I had felt the bible was just so much incomprehensible and meaningless bull sh*t.

Emmet Fox was an enormously popular lecturer during the new thought movement of the 30's in the US. Emersom, Therou, Christian Science, Science of Mind, AA; all sorts of interesting expressions coming into and out of this period. Many, (if not all) were influenced by the Bhagavad-Gita and other Yogic writings, etc. I am not certain of the timing but Paramahansa Yogananda had come to the United States about that time. I have never read a comprehensive treatment of the interaction between Hindu, Christian, Yogic and the New Thought Movement. These have been treated as separate and distinct lines of thought. But it is clear to me that they were all influenced by each other.

A quick internet search on Emmet Fox will bring lots of info and inspiration. I recommend him to anyone of any denomination/persuasion who is interested in knowing themselves in God.

Sun Salutation
(Modified Sun Salutation)

Right now I need to modify some of the poses due to my low flexibility.

I suggest that you do not modify the asana. Instead follow the proper movements and breath sequences precisely but minimize the extreme position to whatever level you can comfortably obtain. Even if the extreme position is nearly standing straight. What's important is not how far you move into the positions but that you do them precisely, carefully, in the correct sequence and with your whole attention devoted to the movement.

Tai Chi
(Yoga and Tai Chi)

Is it a good idea or a bad idea to do yoga and tai chi, both on a daily basis?

I would suggest that it depends on why you are studying them.
I once studied both marshal arts and ki kung and I stopped them both to study yoga. I found it like somewhat like studying French and Spanish at the same time. I didn't feel I could give my full attention, practice and commitment to both, so I picked the one that I felt most drawn to.
If you are studying for exercise and health I see no problem, the more the merrier. You could even throw in Mike's favorite power yoga and perhaps some square dancing or jazzercise. If you are searching for a spiritual vehicle, then I would suggest you pick one or the other.
Something to consider. While often not taught as such, Tai Chi is a marshal art, whose function is to fight and if need be, hurt or destroy people. If you hope to study Tai Chi as a spiritual vehicle and learn its deepest power, wisdom and meaning you will have to be a warrior. While I have heard of warrior systems in yoga, by and large most yoga systems extol ahimsa (non violence) and if studied in depth as a spiritual system would be antagonistic to a warrior.
I believe as Gandhi when he said that, one must be willing and able to fight, to truly choose non-violence. That if you could not fight, were afraid to fight and you choose not to fight, that it was not ahimsa but cowardice. Personally I see nothing mutually exclusive in the physical or spiritual study of yoga or marshal arts. As I said for me it came down to a more practical decision as to how much time, commitment and study I could put into one or the other. I look forward to the day when I have the energy to take up marshal

arts again and the let go of the fear of hurting or being hurt. Or the day when I know I can't be hurt and so could never have need to hurt anyone, ever. Whichever comes first.

July

Osho

(Is Osho any good?)

I'm glad you asked! I think the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (Osho) is the bomb. Definitely one of my heroes and someone who has taught me more about (the totality of) yoga then any other. Do yourself a favor and read everything you can get your hands on by him or about him. It will shave years (perhaps lifetimes) off your own study and provide a glimpse into the process of one of the greatest jnanis ever.
Hugh Milne's book, "Bhagwan, The God That Failed", I thought was great. Written by someone who loved him and was very close to him for a long time. This book will provide outstanding insight into the man and the myth. It's also a great read. If you like soap operas, you'll love this.
The cars, women, empire building, etc., clearly the Bhagwan has significant karma to play out. To me his entanglements provide an outstanding example of the consequences of seduction by the siddhis. I am certain he'll be back to sort it out. I hope I am around when he does!

Evil

(Evil, new and improved quote)

> "I am not manifest to all, being veiled by My Yoga Maya. This foolish world does not know Me, the unborn and immutable". Bhagavad-Gita (25-VII). The Lord is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. He is the one supreme that pervades the entire universe. But all cannot see the Lord as He is veiled by His power of Maya. There is a thick curtain between man and God and that is the veil of cosmic illusion or Yoga Maya which is constituted by the fabrication of Prakriti[1]s constituents i.e., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Being veiled by that power, the whole world is deluded, and no one is able to see the Lord who is present everywhere and in everything. As such the Lord ever remains unmanifest and unrevealed to the whole world. (Gita quote and commentary from the discourses of Pujya Sri Swamiji)

Notwithstanding the tons and tons (nazis, terrorists, klass et al.) of examples of man's inhumanity to man, my question is this. If God[1]s nature is veiled in Maya, is there any other way to understand evil but as a part of that veil and therefore illusionary or non-existent? And would that not apply to goodness as well?

> *Yes! Yogananda put forward an answer to this question in his little book: "Why God Permits Evil and How to Rise Above It"*
>
> *...*
>
> *Of course you're right. There is no evil, only ignorance. Theodicy is an old favorite on alt.philosophy.*

Dynamic Yoga

(Dynamic Yoga)

> *Looking for dynamic people doing yoga.No sissy yoga studios or navel gazing kriyas. Or Swami DaFunks or any sits arounds like that.Something serious that as mentally and spiritually strong people.*
>
> *...*
>
> *Sure, here is my suggestion. Cash it all in, all your possesions, even the computer you wrote your post from. Get a one way ticket to India and become a Sadhu.*
>
> *...*
>
> *Na, one need minimum possession. Question is not be attached and living extravagantly. Most sadhus are fakes. I said no sissy escapism. No namby pamby yoga studios selling prostitution and sex.*

Look within Grasshopper. The Force Luke; use the Force. Mike D says power yoga won't work. I say It's all God, so It's all Good. I'm grasping here. What was the question again?

Free

(The Good Point About America)

> *Yet gambling and religions is all thats left .....all water must be bought do to pollution and air is severely polluted.....thats all thats left thats FREE.....THATS ALL THATS LEFT THATS FREE or a chance at free.*

Nothing in Maya is free. Everyone pays... Until one realizes it's all God and therefore all ours, (nothing to pay for or to be free)
I don't think we have grown up, all that much, in the last 2000 years. There's no question in my mind that if Jesus returned today they would kill him again.

God

(God, do not forsake me)

> Pain, sadness, horror Cruelty; gruesome beyond imagination Stupidity, ignorance, vile expressions of powerlessness and fear. Hatred and fear that seethes from the very pores. Lust fueled orgasms of blood, dismemberment and death in orgies of self-protection.
>
> Tears don't help. Anger doesn't help. Sarcasm and cynicism don't help. The deadness inside doesn't help.
>
> I can't see you I am blinded by rage. Darkness fills my eyes. Terror fills my world. I can't see you. Reach for me. Please. I feel I am dying.
>
> Close my eyes that I can see your light. Touch me so I may be whole in your Grace.

> *SWEETIE. GET A LIFE. !!!!!!!!*

You didn't give me a whole lot to work with, but I appreciate that you replied, so here goes.
Thank you for responding and for your advice, although there is no need to shout.
I do in fact have a life and as you happened by I was sharing a bit of it on Usenet. Remember, Usenet in non-compulsory. Take as much or as little as you wish and likewise you can share the same.
Now had you wished to be slightly more engaging, strike up a conversation or even learn something about another human being you might have remarked something like,
"Sweetie, where does all that come from?" (Questions are a great ice breaker.)
And I would no doubt have said something like, Oh that was inspired by the early morning confluence of CNN; The Gangs of New York and Loreena McKennitt's, Night Ride Across the Caucus.
And then you might have said... Well you get the picture.
In all seriousness, as I consider the tone of your comment, I think the message for me is that I could ease up a bit and actually share some pleasant slice of my life. Keep the balance.
So did you want to share something about your life? Is there any pain in it? Poetry? Art? Joy or freedom? You retired at 35, that's interesting. Yoga perhaps. Transcendence from all this messy humanity? Perhaps some advice on how to obtain this life you suggested I get. I'm easy.

> *Your just seeing him surrender in some ego logical way and since we know you and the illusionary ego you always mention its just you the same message ego illusion fantasy you create you destroy forget them both. sweet sour victories basicly or smoke mirrors whatever.....*

Blessing
(A blessing and Subject: Your Blessing)

Early tomorrow I have something very difficult to do. Your blessing would be most helpful.

Be blessed. :) Breathe rhythmically.

My breathing remained rhythmic, I did not falter and all went well. The power flowed as freely through me as it ever has. I grew in that moment and there is no way back. Thank you.

Patanjali
(Which enterpretation/commentary on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras?)

Which are the best enterpretations of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras?

...

Vivekananda's Raja Yoga. Vishnudevananda and Satchidananda. Radhakrishnan. Georg Feuerstein. I.K. Taimni. Samkhya-yogachara Swami Hariharananda Arana. Iyengar.

...

The Sutras (threads) are not comprehensive. They are reminders - short phrases to remind students of things. Not studies by themselves.

The only one I have ever read is The Science of Yoga by I.K. Taimni. Very serious stuff. Reading this made me realize just how sophisticated the science of Yoga is. The first time I read it, I could only understand every tenth word. After 8 years I can understand about every third.

Path
(What way of life ???)

I think it's possible reconcile these two wishes (search for "externalization" and search for "internalization") in a oriental mind and body discipline...

What advice you could give to me ?

Nothing like going straight to the source. Sitting quietly and asking God directly is what works for me. That is, if I a willing to listen for the answer.
I posted the following essay by Emmett Fox a while ago and it seems appropriate to your inquiry.
Namaste

> Your Heart's Desire, Emmett Fox, 1932
>
> An old adage says: God has a plan for every man, and He has one for you, and this is absolutely correct. Your real problem, therefore, in fact the only problem that you ever have, is to find your true place in life. Find that, and everything else will follow almost automatically. You will be perfectly happy; and upon happiness, health will follow. You will be really prosperous. You will have all the supply that your require to meet your needs, and this means that you will have perfect freedom; for poverty and freedom cannot go together. Until you do find your true place in life, however, you never will be really happy, no matter how much money or distinction you may acquire: and until you are happy, you will be neither healthy nor free.

Invented Postures
(Invented Postures)

are there any negative consequences to creating different poses that I have never seen before?

I can guarantee you, that you haven't invented any new poses. I understand there are on the order of 96,000 different poses in Hatha, but that for all practical purposes 100 or so are sufficient. I suggest you do the prescribed poses of whatever system you are studying. Making up your own may just be a excuse not to discipline yourself.

didn't mean to offend you by proclaiming to have invented a pose.....i was just wondering if there were any negative poses...

It is I who wish to apologize if I gave you the impression that I was in anyway offended. I was not.
I am not aware of any pose that is bad per se. Hatha is a very old and deliberate science, the study of which should follow prescribed methods, which have been proven to be safe and appropriate to whatever level you are at. So I would say, in a sense, it is best not to experiment too much until you have attained some experience and the ability to gauge the effect of a particular pose. There are some poses that are not recommended for women and especially pregnant women. If you have a bad back or other physical troubles then obviously this should be taken into account.
I suggest reading The Complete Illustrated Book of YOGA, by Swami Vishnudevanada or anything by Richard Hittlemen. They both will address the safe practice of the asanas. Otherwise I am sure you will receive good advice here on this subject from others far more experienced and learned then I.

Pause

(What is it that gives you pause?)

What sorts of things give you pause to wonder?

Transcendence? That's an easy one. How about something really difficult to fathom like women :)
But really here's what I don't get. Maya... What in the world is the point?

You mean the point of Maya? That's the same as asking what the fall of man is.

This thing has really got me going. I may have to take some of my own advice from another post and put this one directly to God. Because none of it washes with me. Every time I try to consider it I run into a complete blank. I mean there is no logical progression to be made in any direction I take that reconciles what I know, which is there is only God, with any idea that suggests we are supposed to be anything other then whatever we are, which is whatever God is. So all of this Maya is God just a much as transcendence. There is and can be no difference. It is all God, period.

Urrrgghh! I don't get it. It makes no sense.

There must be something I don't know, because if you have sufficient information, everything makes sense. Because God is intelligence and that which is intelligent will always make sense.

Letting go

(Aparigraha and human love...)

But there is a dilemma that always gets me: reconciling aparighaha with the desire to seek after old acquaintances who meant much to me.

By all means go back and see these people if you can. In doing so you may come to understand why it is good to let go of the past and move forward. You may find the love you remember or you may start a new friendship or you may be really surprised as I was when I followed the same longing you describe. What I found was that while I was right in the same place where we left off in the relationship the other people didn't share my sentimental affection. At the very least, most had moved on and had their own lives which didn't include me at all. Some of them positively didn't like me because of some perceived wrong I had done. Years of grinding resentment had turned into hate and long replaced what I remembered as warm friendship. It was a real eye opener and I felt very sad. To this day I long to try and repair things. And some day if I can I will. But in the mean time it is important for me to let people, places and things go and see God everywhere in my present moments.
But regarding this or any other question, ask God for guidance and always follow your heart, it will always lead you to the right place (which of course is right where you are).

Kirtan

(Attention concentration meditation contemplation Samadhi)

Where did you learn about kirtan? Guru Vyasa was very big on this. They sing in Kundalini Yoga also. The Sunshine Song!

I learned about Kirtan at the Sivananda Yoga Farm in Grass Valley, California. Some years ago I went there to work for a week or so in exchange for staying and getting some feedback on how well I was progressing in my hatha practice, that I started reading Hittlemen. Turns out I was doing just fine and there was little to learn in that context that I hadn't already learned (and better) from self-study. Anyway they use Kirtan a lot. It is an amazing thing to do and hear, especially when all of a sudden everyone in the room (25-30) are in sync. Quite moving and I mean elevating. I know that SRF also uses Kirtan and I have always thought of it a an expression of Bhakti yoga but I suppose it is also part of japa and many other forms.
I remember after I arrived home I would continue to sing these chants to myself and the kids (6 & 8) would immediately imitate me and then they were constantly chanting them. They took to it all so naturally.
Music has a transcendent quality that so far in my experienced can not be matched. I can be transported so quickly and seemly without any effort to amazing places in my imagination and deep in my heart.
I have not studied the esoteric use of Kirtan as a yoga practice but I have felt its power first hand by just doing it briefly and not all that well. Some day when I have been able to shake this self consciousness and fear I will move into it, as well as expressing all kinds of music.

American Kirtan

(American Kirtan)

This celebration of God may have been heard, felt and enjoyed by more people then all of the kirtan chanted in all of history. Who says that sankrita is the perfect language or American commercialism doesn't glorify God. How about the movie, The Matrix?
If this song isn't pure and inspired Yoga, then I've never heard it (and I have.)

I WANT TO SPEND MY LIFETIME LOVING YOU from "The Mask of Zorro"

Moon so bright, night so fine Keep your heart here with mine Life's a dream we are dreaming

Race the moon, catch the wind Ride the night to the end Seize the day, stand up for the light

I want to spend my lifetime loving you If that is all in life I ever do

Heroes rise, heroes fall Rise again, win it all In your heart, can't you feel the glory?

Through our joy, through our pain We can move worlds again. Take my hand, dance the dance with me

I want to spend my lifetime loving you If that is all in life I ever do I will want nothing else to see me through If I can spend my lifetime loving you

Though we know we will never come again Where there is love, life begins Over and over again

Save the night, save the day Save the love, come what may Love is worth everything we pay

Police

(Please share a little of my life)

Hey just a flavor of the real happenings right here in River City (the United States for those who don't know the reference). You might call it real Yoga or the Yog of reality.This is a copy of a letter I sent to the City Police, The news paper, my friend Woody and I told Danny and Christian about it. Just for the record.

Probably no big deal, but just in case. Seems I did get in the face of a Federal agent of some sort. What with their new and extraordinary powers to fight terrorism, you never know.I made a 911 call about this threat at 7-21-03 Approximately 8:00 PM

I was in a friend's shop located on the corner or 2nd & Highland. I saw a black suburban type SUV parked at the car wash across the street at 2nd and Highland. It stayed there for 30 minutes or more. It was all blacked out. All the windows were pitch black. It obviously was not waiting for a car wash bay, because it was shiny black and clean as a whistle. The vehicle moved away and then returned several minutes later.

It appeared to be some kind of police stake-out vehicle. The only problem was that it had all blacked out windows, which is illegal in California.

I walked across the street and looked closely at the vehicle. I could not see in any window. It had no license plates on it. I walked around and could not even see into the front windshield. There was no plate on the back. I then went to the driver's side window and even though I couldn't see through it, I smiled and waved, assuming that the driver could see me. The window rolled down 1 inch and the driver said, get the fuck away from the car or you will get hurt! I turned and walked across the street to a phone booth and called 911 to report that my life had been threatened. I described my fear and the description of the vehicle and that it had left the car wash and headed west down 2nd St. I gave my full name to the 911 operator.

The vehicle stopped less then a half block West of Highland on 2nd and someone said they handcuffed and arrested some women. About 15 minutes later a National City Police car pulled up and had some discussion with the driver of the black SUV, took the women in custody and then everyone left.

I am writing you this for a couple of reasons.

1. My life was threatened by some anonymous person in a black SUV, whose car bore no license and whose windows were blacked out in a manner totally illegal in the state of California. I assume they were acting under color of authority and that they were Federal agents of some sort. I immediately called 911 to ask for the protection of my city police and apparently they responded to my call and allowed the black SUV and all concerned to go, while arresting some women. 20 minutes later I observed the Black SUV rounding the corner of 2nd and Highland. 2. In a democracy the police have to follow the same rules as the citizens. And in this case, clearly that wasn't the case. I thought these people might have been drug dealers, not police. In Mexico all the drug dealers and police drive around in the big black suburban type SUVs. They seemed to have no qualms about threatening me. 3. I identified myself over the phone to the 911 operator. I want you to know that I am not depressed I do not have any desire to kill myself. I am not involved in any illegal activity and should anything happen to me in the near future, it should be considered suspicious.

Maya
(Maya)

The question I asked is, What is the point of Maya? What is God's intention in creating this illusion or if not God's intention then what is my need to create this illusion? In other words what the h*ll is the point? Why don't I just let go and exist as I am, in and of and as God? Why go through this exercise when, I am whatever God is now?
My sense of logic (God) tells me there's is something wrong in all of this Maya business. I've never heard even a remotely logical explanation for existence (perception) of Maya. None of it washes with what I know, which is there is only God.

Help
(I need help and I think I need help)

> *i never tried yoga. i suffer from chronic pain caused by fibromyailgia & scoliosis. i also panic attacks & depression. help!!!*

The good news is everything thing that concerns you can be dealt with safely, effectively and with the exception of your time, attention and pride, relatively cheaply. Yoga can definitely help!
Although I will certainly try to give you inspiration and ideas, no one can tell you what you should do. Ultimately, only you can learn and know that. I can tell you what happened to me, what I did about it and what I have learned.
I have learned by experience that there is no requirement in the Universe that we suffer. This is strictly our choice. We bring suffering to ourselves and we can remove it; simple as that...
I suggest you view disease and pain as messages or lessons given by the natural feedback mechanisms built into our bodies, which tells us when we are doing something wrong. That we are making a mistake, and are hurting ourselves. When you learn what mistake you are making and change your behavior, painful feedback will no longer serve any function and will go away. When feedback is needed again it will return. Pain, disease, depression, etc are not in themselves bad (and are not the problem), they do not cause anything, they are simply effects. If we try to stop them (with drugs, alcohol, sex, anger, blaming or self destruction) without addressing the root cause or problem then the body (or if you die, the Universe) will simply turn up the volume of its feedback and you are in for more suffering.
In the interest of being helpful and responding to your request for information quickly, I off this short response:
In my fifty years I have caused myself to suffer with debilitating back pain (5+ years); excruciating irritable bowel syndrome (8+ years); chronic mild to severe depression (30+ years); hundreds of severe panic attacks and thousands of milder anxiety attacks (15+). Other effects of my thinking, beliefs, life style, family of origin, and actions include. Addiction to sex by age 10 (which continues), drugs and cigarettes by age 12. Felony arrest and subsequent hospitalization in a mental institution at age 14. Also, alcoholism from age 16 to my first run at sobriety at age 35 which lasted until age 42. My sobriety was initially forced on my by a year of imprisonment for a felony crime. As a result I am required, for the rest of my life, to register with local law enforcement, yearly or anytime I move. Then there was a recent and insanely horrible 8 month attack of scabies at age 47. I have been financially dependent all of my life (welfare once for 5 years) up until 6 years ago and to this day I am living on the edge of survival by American standards. I have three children, 21, 14 and 12 and two ex-wife's.
For all the problems I have ever had, most were not solved by paying someone to fix me. Professionals have been helpful throughout my life but when it came down to healing, it has mostly been advice and support of others who have suffered as I have. I offer the following. Take as little or as much as rings true for you and leave the rest.
I suggest if you are using drugs, alcohol or sex to deal with the pain or depression that you stop. You have little chance of ever easing your suffering as long as you are using. Besides, use long enough and the use itself will cause all kinds of problems. When you get sober eventually those problems will go away but the others which caused the using will not. But then you can deal with the root cause of the using and heal

the person inside who suffers. AA, NA, SA and other self-help groups. These are the people who know what's happening. These are the real, down in the trenches, experts. Go, talk with them.
I suffered with lower back spasms which turned my entire spine into a severe S pattern. When I looked directly down at my feet, my feet were 8 inched to the left of center. I was in pain and on my back in bed for 3 months. The one thing I did though is I never went to a medical doctor. I only saw a Chiropractor and I am very grateful that I did. To think of what irreversible thing MDs might have convinced me to do, gives me shivers to this day. After years of suffering with back pain, I started some gentle Hatha Yoga practice and from the first lesson, to this day I have been free from back pain. I personally did not take lessons from a teacher. I started with a book called INTRODUCTION TO YOGA, by Richard Hittlemen. You can do a search on Richard Hittlemen on ebay, amazon or Goggle, etc and you will be able to find a number of his books. Anything with introduction, beginning etc would be great. There are many great books on the subject of hatha yoga and many fine teachers available. Just remember to take it easy, go slow, be gentle and kind to yourself. Yoga is not about going anywhere or doing any particular thing. Yoga is about the journey and getting in touch with yourself and giving yourself what you truly deserve.
Irritable Bowel syndrome is a condition of painful cramping in the intestinal tract. There can be intermittent diarrhea or constipation. It can be mild or severe. I my case it was severe and nearly constant for years. It started just shortly before or after I joined the US Army. After 14 months of serious suffering I had to leave the military. But not with a medical discharge because this syndrome was not something they could test for, identify or treat. As far as they knew it was somehow all in my head. I took a million tests; nothing. The best suggestion the doctors could make was to take bran (fiber) with my meals. This was a helpful suggestion in most cases but because of reasons I would find out later (allergy to wheat) was really not a good thing for me to do. After years of suffering, I went a health screening by a Chiropractor at a local health food store. I paid $5 and he had me hold an electrode of some machine in one hand while felt around nerve points on my the other hand. After a few moments he tells me, young man you have a severe parasite infection. No doctor is going to know or tell you this. The tests for these are extremely expensive and of dubious results. Then he says, I suggest you go over to the vitamin section of this store and get a product call Nutribiotic or ParaX and use it. This should take care of you problem. I thought to myself, oh sure, just that easy uh? But then why not? I had tried everything else. I took the Nutribiotic home, used it as directed in juice for 3 days and had such a severe change in bowel movement it scared me so I stopped. The change that has occurred was that the problem was gone and it has not returned since.
I know you know this but let me just say just how really ugly panic attacks are. There is no way to describe the reality of this horror to someone who has not had one. I started having panic attacks when I was about 14. They seemed to be drug induced. LSD of course is famous for this, but the most severe attacks I have had while on drugs were from marijuana. After I stopped using drugs at age 15 (at which time I started drinking) the panic attacks continued. There seemed to be no particular reason why they happened. Rarely were they triggered by any emotional or psychological reason. They just happened. Alcohol seemed to help and also Valium. Cigarettes and coffee seemed to exacerbate them some way. Having been introduced to psychologists, psychiatrists and therapy from the age of 12, I had all the mental causes of panic attacks put forward, but none of them seemed to apply or helped alleviate the problem. After years of suffering with these attacks, thinking I was broken, that I was going to die any second, and feeling like there was no hope, I accidentally stumbled into a complete and utter cure for mine.
After the irritable bowel syndrome episode I started to take my health into my own hands. I started reading about alternative health, nutrition, etc. I was looking for a cure for my addictions and other problems. I had decided the answer wasn't coming from outside me and I was going to learn and know what to do. I was reading and learning about allergies so I was trying a technique of isolating and identifying food allergies by stopping the eating of my favorite foods on a systematic basis. The idea is based on the premise that if you have various problems and allergies it is probably because you are allergic to one or more of your 10 favorite foods. So in this experiment I eliminated all wheat. The panic attacks went away. I put the wheat back in my diet and they came back. I took the wheat back out and have had little or no problem ever since. Simple as that... But no one ever so much as suggested any correlation of allergy and panic attacks. Today I understand the connection very well. It has to do with low blood sugar and is can

be caused by eating of allergy foods as well at other lifestyle choices, like nicotine, alcohol, sex, caffeine, sugar, etc.

A couple of things to know about panic attacks are that they are not dangerous, in and of themselves. In other words you are not going to die, even if you feel like it. The only risk of injury is from your reaction to them. If you ever feel like you are going to hurt yourself (and I have) or anyone else as a result or panic attacks, immediately see a doctor. There are excellent drugs which can help manage these attacks until you can determine what lifestyle choices you are making which is causing them. Lots of people have these, you are not alone. When you have an attack, try to tell someone, anyone, I am having a panic attack, then describe how you feel. You might be amazed at how much power this takes out of your reaction to the attack. The attack will evaporate or subside more quickly. And you just might meet the one person who is meant to tell you how they cured theirs and this might be your cure.

I have come to recognize that I have been suffering with depression since I was a child. Depression does not always have a feeling attached to it. Sometimes you just aren't right or up to speed or whatever. It can be chronic for along time without you even being especially aware of it. When it gets serious then you might feel real down, frustrated, angry, frightened, lethargic; any number of things. It may be hard to concentrate, focus, enjoy anything, feel optimistic or positive about anything. Sometimes everything becomes dark and just getting out of bed is a major effort; drugs, sex or sleep can become the only escape. I believe my depression has been created by a combination of, low blood sugar and dietary problems, genetic predisposition, a dysfunctional family of origin, fear, alcohol and drug use (including caffeine and nicotine), negative outlook on life, karma, extra-psychic perceptions, excessive sexual expression, night terrors and sleep disorders, social ostracism, lack of proper or consistent exercise and other life-style related choices. I have little by little resolve nearly all of these issues. I still suffer from mild depression but rarely do I feel like I am depressed anymore.

In serious cases antidepressants are absolutely the way to go, especially now with all the good ones they have. It was different back in the day when all they had was lithium or thorazine etc. There is nothing wrong with managing the symptoms of depression with medications as long as you understand this is only managing the symptoms (effects) and not addressing the cause. Being depression free on meds will go along way in helping you learn and practice what you need to do to stop the cause of the depression.

For the most difficult and intractable of my problems (alcoholism, negative outlook, depression) a call to and an answer from God is what brought healing. I have posted the story here before but the short version is that in a moment of quiet anguish and surrender I asked a God, who I didn't believe existed, to help me. The answer was almost immediate (20 minutes) and unequivocal. My life was utterly changed in those moments and while it is still very difficult by American standards, I rarely make myself suffer anymore. I know who I am, where I am and what I am. And this is because I asked for and accepted God's help. Not only do I know there is God. I know there is only God and that I am in, and of, and as God. Always have been and always will be and could be not other. So are you...

> Remember, There is no difficulty that enough love will not conquer; no disease that enough love will not heal; no door that enough love will not open; no gulf that enough love will not bridge; no wall that enough love will not throw down; no sin that enough love will not redeem. It makes no difference how deeply seated may be the trouble, how hopeless the outlook, how muddled the tangle, how great the mistake; a sufficient realization of love will dissolve it all. -Emmet Fox

Mom
(Mom)

Dear Mom,

I love you.

I'm glad you lived to see I had survived my madness and that I was getting better.

I'm glad you had a opportunity to love and enjoy your grand children and to know their fate was not ours.

I'm sorry I couldn't share with you in words, that when I'd come to know and understand my own fear, loneliness and insanity that I accepted and forgave you yours.

I'm sure glad you knew anyway.

I'm sorry I didn't get to know you better and I feel bad I didn't have the power to ease your life.

But there is One with all power and I'm glad you're with him now.

I miss you very much and I look forward to seeing you on the other side.

August

Grace

(Yoga Ah-Ha)

I was sitting here considering my yoga practice.
One of the ideas is to develop a detachment of sorts to things of the world. The trick is to not care but not to be uncaring.
It's never really made sense or felt right to try to blow off the world and live in some kind of trance state. This has always seemed to me to miss the point. The point being you don't have to go anywhere or do anything. God and God's grace is here and now, everywhere and perfect, period.
Gandhi said you have to be willing and able to do violence before you can really choose non-violence. Stands to reason that one has to be willing and able to do life (succeed in life) before it means anything to let it go.
It seems a perfectly appropriate yogic project to succeed at the art of phenomenal life before letting it go and working on the divine.
On the other hand, it's all divine anyway. There's no way to separate any of it.
Wherever you go... there you are.
My ah ha had to do with how the idea of its all God, now, reconciles with the world I live in now. I have been resisting (afraid of) succeeding in life (surrendering to absolute God awareness) for a long time. What I realized is that I have in fact done well in life and have succeeded handily at everything I have ever tried to do. I have done, whatever God would do. Because I have whatever God has. Because I am whatever God is and have whatever dominion God has. I have chosen (for learning, karma, whatever, the fun of it) to suffer and that it must be just as reasonable or meaningful to choose not to. It is always about what I will or wish. My universe, my choice.
I don't understand or use the word Grace in the most usual sense. I don't view Grace as something outside of us that is given to us by God. I see it as our nature. Another way to say we are in the presence of God, now. We are whatever God is now. Nothing is needed. Its all God now. There's nothing to do, nowhere to go, no need for anything. Yoga, empire building, self control, desolation and suffering, sin, absence of sin, action, no action, nothing.
The only difference is my awareness or acceptance of what is true to begin with. My own realization. There are many paths (all lead to the Father) which are helpful or useless depending on my choices but none of which are necessary.
Oh, by the way, I misspoke in the Sai Baba thread. The name of the incense I like is Super-Hit, not Big-Hit. Has a real stoner sound about it, don't you think? I recommend it highly if you like a milder, sweeter fragrance. I find it easier to stay in the room while it is burning.

Dreams
(Satgta Sai Baba)

I don't see my existence or daily reality as a dream. Nor do I see my nightly dreams as dreams but also as reality. But clearly all of these realities are constructs of mind. Like movies projected on a screen (ref. Yogananda) they are real projections and they represent reality but they are projections (or shadows), not the reality itself. Much the same as a symbol represents a thing but it is not the thing. But then for most purposes, what's the difference? I think in actuality there is none.

Seeking
(Seeking truth)

I believe I've come to the point in my quest for an answer where I need guidence of some sort

Look within Grasshopper. The Force Luke, use the Force
No really, almost just kidding. Welcome to alt.yoga!
I would caution against making any assumptions about the caliber or quality of any advice or the person giving it on this or any other forum (ashram, meeting, group, book, etc). You are after all the best judge of what you need. Take each comment or response on its own merit.
If you would like more specific advise or feedback I would suggest you pose a more well defined question. Perhaps you could be more descriptive of what you have tried and how and why it hasn't worked. What has worked and why. Where you are now and where you would like to be, etc. Others might just as well advise you to be as unrevealing and as general as possible. If you are in a hurry or have a value for efficiency, always tell the truth and remain transparent. You will eventually find the answers you are looking for and be able to discern who knows what they are talking about from the others very quickly.
I chose the path of resistance and pain. I don't recommend it for most, but it can be a very fast way to self-realization. Prison works well also.
If I knew then what I know now, I would have quietly and earnestly asked God to reveal himself to me. Then I would have listened for the answer. An a answer will come. I personally guarantee it. Once one knows there is God, there's really nothing else you need. All the rest is just explication or expressive of the truth you already know. Life gets a whole lot easier. Not because anything becomes more easy but because you will always know what it means and where you stand and this makes life a whole lot easier.

This sounds like a possibility for me. How do I realize it?

I have already given you all the instruction you need. You know what it is you have to do... Jump. If you don't have the sand, then take the path I did and resist. When you have suffered enough and can't resist anymore then perhaps you will open yourself to God and create another chance, but then you will be faced with the same choice; jump into the abyss or hold on and continue to resist. My resistance was intense, because me fear was great. But take some advice from my friends, the Borg, you will be assimilated! Resistance is futile.

Rationally I know there is nothing for me here, yet I find myself faithless

When you know, you will have tremendous faith. Faith comes with knowing. Not hope, not believe, not wishing but real knowing, engenders faith. The kind that can move mountains. Because you know nothing can stop or prevail against you and your expression of what you know.

I'm staring into the abyss, clueless of what to do.

Jump! There is no death, no annihilation; there is only God.

September
Karma
(Understanding karma)

I haven't ever understood the law of karma.

Here's how I understand karma.
There is a tremendous sense in the law of Karma. It is after all a law or principle and it must act the same anywhere in the universe at any time. However karma is in no way related to morality or any Judeo-Christian notion of justice, retribution or punishment. Karma is very simply the effect (or movement) of our actions.
Imagine a pond. You throw a pebble into the pond and it creates a ripple. The ripple moves out from center of the impact area in all directions. Eventually it reaches the shore of the pond and rebounds back towards the center. This movement of the water displaced by the pebble continues until the energy wares off and eventually it dissipates and disappears. In the meantime imagine there are other pebbles being tossed into the water creating their own ripples and these ripples meet other ripples and then deflect changing the course, speed and duration of all the waves concerned. Each and every wave is dependent on how large a pebble or boulder is tossed into the water.
Imagine that the pond is the Universe and that the pebbles are our actions. The waves are karma and the size, strength and duration of the wave is determined by the size or strength of our actions. The collision of waves and their effect on the waves of the original actions are combined effects of our actions and the actions of others. The return of the waves to the point of origin represents the effect of our actions (good or bad) cycling throughout the universe and coming back to us.
Karma is the effect (or wave) created by our actions and it must continue to come back to us until it is played out. The more intense the action the longer and harder the movement of the karma. This playing out of karma can be in a life this time or in many but we can not avoid it. This is why we might suffer (or benefit from) in this life the effects of our actions taken in another life-time.
It is said that if one attains enlightenment or self-realization and when one lets go of any attachment to the fruits of their action that the wheel of karma stops and we no longer create karma or are attached to its consequences. Hence we could save a life or take a life and the consequence would be the same, nothing. I don't believe that the actual effect of my actions stops when I am not attached to the outcome. I believe my suffering (or elation) over the effects stops and this is what is meant, by the wheel of karma stopping.
Karma is not about good or bad it just is. Our actions are not good or bad, they just are. The degree to which we suffer, blame, judge, condemn or accept is our choice and is not a condition imposed on us by others, the universe or God. We must all take personal responsibility for our own actions period. If we resist we suffer, if we accept we stop suffering. It's as simple as that.

Well this would be just the same as saying that karma = causality

Just the opposite, Karma = Effect, not Cause. But yes, you are correct. There is no point in trying to control or manipulate karma by not being bad to others (morality), etc. anymore then trying to control the smoke from a fire would change the fire. When the fire is gone, so then, is the smoke.
God is First Cause. God is Truth. We exist in and as whatever God is. When we live our life in alignment with the truth of who we are, then all actions we take will be moral, no matter what the nature of those actions. It is never about the action itself (stealing, killing, giving, kindness) it is always about what meaning or purpose we bring to the action. This is why laws and systems of morality can never be applied universally nor will they ever work to bring about goodness or morality in others. You will always have those who appear moral and good who are in fact evil and those who appear evil but who are good. Jesus Christ provides a good example of this. He appeared to be and was judged a most heinous criminal; a law breaker; a blasphemer and he was put to death for his crimes. But in reality (truth) he was as moral as it is possible to be.
Karma is an effect and it has no relationship to morality whatsoever. It is not reward or punishment for actions taken. It is only the movement of those actions throughout the universe and it will always return to us in absolutely perfect proportion to the nature of our attachment to the fruit of those actions. This is why karma is often confused for some sort of punishment. What goes around does come around, this is universal principle. It just doesn't have anything to do with deserving it. It just does.
Ask Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi or the man who stood in front of the tanks in Tienanmen Square. These people all lived in alignment with the truth and they all died violent deaths (of course there is no

death, there is only God). Did they deserve it? I don't think so. Did it happen? Sure did. Karma? No doubt about it. Retribution? Nope, just karma. Just universal, impersonal and immutable law.
If your question about karma is really a question about how to be moral then I would make this suggestion. Live your life as if there is God. Not only will you live a moral life (no matter what anyone says or does) but you will be happy and free. This would not be an easy task and it will take a significant amount of time to even begin to understand or comprehend what it would be like to live like there was God. But anyone who makes the effort will reap as their reward their birthright; nothing less then dominion over the universe. I guarantee it and I will double your money back if its not true.

> *The effect is actually called karmaphala. Karma is the action that leads to samskara and expression of samskara or results are karmaphala*

Thanks for the heads up. I agree that I was using the word karma incorrectly and I will have to change how I use it when commenting on the principle of cause and effect. I had noticed you made this point in a post to Mike D and I thought your point was excellent. Although it really doesn't change the meaning of what I said. My believe is that your comment about good actions being spiritually uplifting was essentially a yogic/Hindu restatement of what I had said in my post regarding living life like there is God.
I often experience problems around language and its proper use, when communicating with others. Add to that a language foreign to most of us being used to explain or describe a notion or principle not clearly understood by many and you have a real potential for confusion.
My comments were less about eastern philosophy and more about universal principles which operate in all places, languages and situations. I've always lamented that principles couched in religious of philosophical terms do a real disservice to regular people who are just trying to navigate their existence as best they can. This is why I really appreciate Emmet Fox, Ken Keyes and others who work hard at demystifying the truth. They take concepts normally conveyed in Biblical, religious or philosophical terms and tell us what they really mean, how they really apply to us and how we can use them in our lives.

Depression

(Depression)

> *If I get down on myself, If I feel depressed, what is happening?*

I sense you have a good start on a wonderful and moving poem! Here is what your post inspired from me. For me it was chronic fear leading to hyper-vigilance (ala PTSS/D), imbalance and chronic self-medication all resulting in a unhealthy lifestyle and antisocial outlook.
Let go and let God is what I had to do (kicking and screaming most of the way). Progressively letting go and letting God is what has worked and continues to work for me.
Forgiving myself and others, learning about and choosing to make healthy lifestyle choices, getting out of self and serving others, these all worked and continue to work for me.
Relearning to breath, identifying and replacing habits formed from fear, taking action and trusting God to cover me. Becoming aware of and facing my fear in all its many forms (anger, depression, hopelessness, resentment, boredom, doubt, loneliness, laziness, jealousy, judgment, covetousness) and releasing all my anticipation to God, worked and continues to work for me today.
Making lots and lots of mistakes works for me.
Studying and practicing yoga (jana, bakti, karma, hatha); acceptance of my nature in God, on a progressively deeper level, works and continues to work for me.
Seeing God in all things and seeking within and in others for his grace and guidance, has and continues to work for me.
Pain, one of God's finest messengers. Very difficult for us to ignore!

> *I think in my case it was a wanting more than I was ready for ..... eyes bigger than mouth thing.*

If we had no desire there would be no reason to make ourselves unhappy. Letting go of desires and expectations and simply accepting what we have/are in this moment lets us live in our natural state, which is happiness.

Robert Allen describes a mental bank, into which you can make deposits. But you can only withdraw what you deposit. So what do you want to fill your account with, negative or positive. The Bible reminds us of the fruitlessness of planting weeds and expecting to grow corn.

> *Be watchful of the habits that are formed. Turn them around. That is the way of things and we are part of that divine way.*

Yes, watch the deposits we make into our spiritual account and what kind of seeds we plant into the ground, to nurture, tend and eventually reap the fruit of.

Sex

(Why Are)

Why are women fun to play with? And what flavor do you like?
That's the way God set it up. After all if men weren't compelled to seek out women for their pleasure then the supply of higher-end vehicles for our spirit on this planet would dwindle away and disappear. My experience has been that with the exception of their sexual attractiveness (which appeals to our gonads) and their mothering tendencies (which panders to our fear and laziness), women are not very pleasant to be around when they busy acting like women.
Yogananda would say that a mother's love provides each of us a model for God's love. I can see that in an idyllic world but I have yet to witness this personally. I consider women's motherly love (maternal possessiveness) to be right up there with man's love (sexual possessiveness) for his women... Phooey!
On the other hand perhaps my attraction to women has colored my view. Come to think of it I have once felt in the presence of God in the presence of a women. Perhaps Yogananda was right.
And by the way, if I was a women I would say the same thing about men. No question.
Fact is there is no man or women. There are males and females and these are wondrously different. But manliness and womanliness are simply presentations; fabrications; lies. These attributes do not exist and are used to deny our divine natures and strengthen the illusion of separation and duality.

Alone

(I already start to make yoga alone)

> *I already start to make alone Yoga two months ago following some books, I mean hatha yoga. But the problems is that my sexual appetite is finished. I don't need a woman anymore. Is it normal ? I mean I'm married and I have some duties to do.*

I applaud your efforts. Keep it up. Sexual appetite can be profoundly affected by yoga practice. Don't worry about it, it's normal. Enjoy the break :) Take some time and explore a new dimension in your relationship. Love without sex. Your physical desires will no doubt return when your body has balanced after the new changes. You might just find you don't want to go back to the old ways or you might go back with a new understanding and appreciation for your partner.

God

(Is there God?)

Just a little CNN style poll.
A yes or no answer is all that is required.
Is there God?

> *Yes*

> *Do you mind describing/defining a bit of your "God" ? Is there only one God or many ?? Can we become God ?? etc*

> *Yes*

> *No*

Yes

Yes

Yes!

Yes AND No

I'd be interested to participate in that thread if you post it :)

Famine

(Imagine What would you do?)

Imagine you live in a large, powerful nation which has bankrupted itself. Now imagine that all social welfare and entitlement programs, government paychecks and all state sponsored monies run dry. Imagine massive social upheaval in the urban areas, fighting in the streets, looting and disruptions of every sort. Transportation stops, food and water stops, gasoline stops, phones etc. All social order and law breaks down and it's every man for himself.
You have a supply of food, water, fuel, medicine, vitamins, batteries, silver coins, barter items and other necessities, enough to last you and your family one year.
You are hunkered down in your home or apartment and after a week or so the neighbor (whose kids you have watched grow up for years) comes to the house and asks for food to feed their starving kids.
What do you do?

Why are you asking others to imagine such an extreme unrealistic situation? What plant such fear in other minds?

I don't wish to respond directly to statements posed as questions (answering a question with a question). Feels too much like the start of an argument as opposed to a sharing. If you have some genuine question, perhaps you'll find an answer in my response to Jake or you might respond to my question and then continue by posing your own. I am interested in civilized (albeit passionate) dialog and want to avoid argument or criticism.

Mine was a genuine question. Is that why you are indulging yourself in "what if" scenarios? To avoid argument, confrontations and criticism?

I appreciate that you are one of the people who consistently reply to my posts. However I sometimes find it difficult to respond to your comments because they seem to miss the point I am trying to make. If I respond to your various comments the thread moves off topic.
To illustrate I will respond to your comments. Which of these is related to what would you do in the given circumstance?

Why plant such fear in other minds?

I can not create fear in anyone. Fear is an individual choice.

Don't you know that thoughts are contagious? You picked them up from somewhere and now you are passing them around.

Of course, there is only one Mind. Thoughts are bound to travel quickly among It's various individual points of expression (people). I'm not sure contagious is the right word. This word implies disease, lack of choice and non-responsibility. What I choose to think is always up to me whether I want to try and control my thinking or not.

You are not alone in having fearful thoughts and imaginings, your whole society seems bathed in them.

I never said I was afraid nor did I suggest or encourage anyone to be frightened.

I am not interested in finding an answer,

I didn't miss that. It was the first thing I addressed. You are confirming my initial impression; that your question was in fact a statement.

I am interested in pulling you out of the muck.

I appreciate your sentiment although I didn't ask to be pulled out of the muck, I asked what you would do in a given hypothetical situation. Answers to question like this give me insight, ideas, encouragement, models for behaviors, feedback, perspective and all kinds of good and positive things. Lectures, dissertations, other people's quotes, dogma, creed, ritual, pontification, statements about me or the comments or questions I make; these are all of little help. "I" statements from others; how they feel, what they think, what have they done or what would they do, etc; these are most beneficial.
If you want to help me out of the muck (and I can always use help) then tell me what muck you were in and how you got out. Perhaps share what muck you're in now and wish to get out of. This would be helpful. This makes you a participant in my life and not just an outsider who doesn't know me, telling me what I should do. This way I can take what is good and useful or what I want and leave the rest. Others can do the same, taking what they need, from where they are.

Is that why you are indulging yourself in "what if" scenarios? To avoid argument, confrontations and criticism?

I use what-if scenarios as an exercise in Not this, Not that (neti neti.) Using my imagination allows me to consider the Truth in circumstances I would never want to see happen to anyone, anywhere, no less be in myself.
By the way, posting my thoughts, feeling and ideas on Usenet is hardly a way to avoid anything.
See what I mean? Off topic. Good discussion? Perhaps, but off topic.

It's always difficult to know how one would act in any situation without actually being there. However, the philosophical implications of your question are what got my attention

Fact is I didn't expect many responses to this posting. And I didn't expect anyone to actually share their personal process with regard to what they might or might not do. This is very high level stuff and takes one immediately into the discomfort (unthinkable for many) zone.
I use my imagination and questions like this in my practice of jana yoga. I have made the deepest and most profound movement in my quest for God, in just this way. I have come to realize that the cause of all that exists is Mind; that God is Mind. This type of, what-if, consideration if well known in military circles. It allows one to think about and plan a reaction to a set of circumstances in advance of the real thing, when fear and instinctual reaction will be dominant. I believe at this stage of my development that this kind forethought provides the best possibility that discipline and principle will guide my course of action.
My intention is not to frighten anyone. The reason I brought it up is to suggest a meaningful and important possibility to consider. Not only for one's moral or spiritual development but for practical reasons. I had been thinking about this very possibility myself and found it quite a challenge to even consider.
I have recently finished reading the book, HOW TO PROSPER DURING THE COMING BAD YEARS (1981), by Howard Ruff. Sobering stuff and frankly; pretty scary. Fiscal irresponsibility and hyperinflation are real possibilities and have devastated Germany, Italy and more recently Russia and currently Argentina. If the United States were to fall into this dynamic the global consequences could be catastrophic.
Poverty and struggling daily to survive is all very real to me. I live very close to the edge and from time to time will ask others for food or money. Some of the people I am asking for help are as close to the edge as I. Only the constant ebb and flow of resources makes sharing from time to time possible. If we all had nothing at once, we would be in real trouble. In reality (spiritually speaking) there is only Edge (or no Edge) and having a little or a lot means exactly the same; nothing.
I agree with you that one can never know how one might react in a given situation until it is happening. I have come to believe that ultimately Faith in God can be the only real guide. I would put it to God and

listen for guidance. Whatever God says is what I would do. Would I have enough courage, resourcefulness and resolve to do as I was tasked? If I didn't then I would ask God for that also. The only reality in the universe is God. If God said feed all that ask, then that's what I would do. If God said keep and conserve your food for you and your children, then that's what I would do. If God said don't eat yourself and don't feed one of your kids, only feed the other, then that's what I would do.
With out any specific instruction to the contrary I would probably feed all I could for as long as I could. Reasoning that the quicker I got rid of the food the sooner I could let go of the life and death responsibility. To let go and let God deal with it.

Yes, I have that book too, but I don't think I read much of it. I can remember the wave of anxiety that came over me when I started reading it!

Yes I know the feeling. Twenty minutes into BEYOND SUCCESS AND FAILURE, WAYS TO SELF-RELIANCE AND MATURITY, by Willard and Marguerite Beecher, I put the book down and couldn't pick it up again for another 4 years. The prospect that I could be a big sniveling baby and responsible for all the mess in my life, was just to frightening and distasteful a proposition to contemplate. After 4 years of growing up I could then barely stand to read the book but I managed to get through it. Now I can read and benefit from the book with little of the original fear. After 14 years it still gives me reason for pause, even though I have learned many of its lessons.
I have discovered that it's never about the thing itself. It's about what meaning I bring to the thing. The lessons in Ruff's book are good and sound. This book and others should be compulsory reading for everyone in the US (world). Not to scare, but to teach honest economic principles; their relevance to our daily lives and the responsible and mature handling of personal or national resources. Knowing what I am dealing with is the surest way to minimize problems. Putting my head in the sand and denying problems is the surest way to bring them to me.

However, I came to the conclusion that such scenarios are not worth getting too anxious about.

I understand and couldn't agree with you more. But I have also discovered that what I fear most is what needs most to be examined most. Fear is always a lie (an anticipation; an imagining); God is Truth and is here now. Why, I have to ask myself, do I need or want to turn away from God and entertain a particular fear. It begs the question: God is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? God is the strength of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?

Actually, I'm so busy channelling my energies into financial survival to have the spare time or energy to worry too much.

One of the more distracting mayic structures. Right up there with sex :)

Give them food.

Hmm... Direct. To the point. I like it.

Attachment

(Attachment)

(Do you think that empathy can be attaching emotion as anything else?)

Here's my take. Emotions are not attaching per se. They are reactions (feedback) to or effects rather then cause. It is what we will ourselves to do (karma or action) in order to maintain, eliminate or otherwise manipulate our feelings that maintains attachment.
Empathy negates the delusion of separation from our fellow man and from God and it falls on the non-fear side of the equation of life. Along with love, patience, kindness, compassion, tolerance, forgiveness and forthrightness. As opposed to the fear side which reflects as hatred, condemnation, regret, jealously, intolerance, depression and the like.
Sympathy is to empathy what believing is to knowing.

Knowing (empathy) what someone is feeling or dealing with because you've been there and you can feel it, may or may not engender a feeling of sympathy. It is easier to make helpful decisions as to how to react when we are empathetic and know what is happening. Sympathy, on the other hand, is only a guess (or imagining) about what's happening (to the other person) and tends to provoke reactions of pain, coddling and/or disdain.
Sharing empathy dissolves the sense of separation, sympathy without empathy tends to maintains it.

> *Being conscious about attachments isn't enough to get rid of them. How can one cut free from attachments?*

Attachment (desire) is motivated by and a result or symptom of fear. Let go of the fear and you let go of the attachment.
If you didn't fear not having a thing then you would never have a feeling of needing or wanting it. It would just be there for you or not. Neither would you have a feeling of missing, loss or grief for not having a thing. Nor any anticipation, hunger or longing for a thing.
I work at reminding myself that God always gives me what I need and very often what I want (when it benefits me). That in the universe there is only God. Whatever God is that's what I must be made of and as. So whatever God has, I must also have and I could not possibly want for anything, ever. Any wanting or feeling of loss is strictly my own creation and the attendant suffering my responsibility. I create these feeling, I can let them go.
How to let go of attachments (desires)? I think awareness is where you must start. You can't change what you aren't aware of. Then adopt some technique for gradually letting go of attachments. There are many systems within yoga (especially karma) and in all religions.
One of the easiest to understand, practical and fastest I have found is outlined in the book, HANDBOOK TO HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS, by Ken Keyes. It is universal and compatible with any religions ideas (or none). I recommend it highly. If my house was on fire and I could only grab five books to read and learn from for the rest of my life, this would be one.

> *I don't believe in God. I want to know and understand God, but I don't. So this doesn't really help me... yet.*

A willingness to develop awareness is the beginning of all learning and change.
Any time I use the word God, try replacing it with any word you prefer; Universe, Earth Mother, Nature, the Source, Love, Intelligence, Life, etc. This is a fine way to become aware of; to describe and to begin to know and understand God (whoops, I mean the Universe).
For example I could say: I work at reminding myself that the Universe always gives me what I need and very often what I want (when it benefits me) That the Universe is made up of a substance and an intelligence and that I am part of the Universe and must be made up of the same substance and intelligence. So whatever is contained in the Universe I must contain and so I could be no better or worse then anyone or anything else and I could want for nothing.
I brought forward from my early years a childish notion of God and when I was older it didn't work or make sense. So if someone said God to me I thought; silly idea, couldn't be, look at all the bad in the world, God could never be this mean or unintelligent, etc. I lived my life for many years as if there was no God. Not fun. I had dismissed the possibility of God based on decisions I made, based on perceptions I had, when I was a child. As far as I was concerned there could be no God so I wasn't looking for God.
I have posted a longer version of the story here before but after years of living in sh*t and in a moment of quiet desperation I reached out for a God I didn't believe existed. The answer was quick, unequivocal and very, very personal and in that moment I knew there was God. Far from being a happy, joyous moment, I immediately realized that I had a world of stuff to relearn/rethink and that I had a ton of work ahead of me. That I had to change who and what I was, what I thought and how I lived my life. It's hasn't been easy but I know what I am, where I am and I rarely cause myself to suffer to much anymore. I have seen a pinhole of light in the wall of the dark box I have lived in most of my life(s). I know there is God. Now to the task

of systematically looking for that damn window so I can throw it open and the door so I can walk out and leave this box forever.
Don't take my word for it (which no one would anyway); simply sit quietly and ask God to reveal himself to you. After all if God exists why would he hide and if you are willing (listening for it) how could you not hear God's answer. Fast or slow, you will have an answer if you are sincerely asking the question and willing to hear the answer.

Rich-Poor

(Moving on - rich-poor gap)

There is no rich. There is no poor. Therefore there can be no gap.
God is first cause. Whatever exists is/was created from the only existing substance, which is/was God. Ergo, there is only God.
There is Love. There is Life. There is Spirit. There is Truth. There is intelligence. There is Soul. There is Principle. Because God is.
There is only God and there can be no gap, no separation, no distance between God and God.
Perhaps you are referring to an apparent difference in the intensity of individual expression, e.g. the size between one person's hill of beans and another person's hill of beans. But they are,after all, the same; just a hill of beans :)

> *"To the millions who have to go without two meals a day, the only acceptable form in which God dare appear is food." Mahatma Gandhi*

Knowing

(The difference between KNOWING and BELIEF)

> *The difference between KNOWING and BELIEF*

Faith expresses what we know; the only thing believe can do is engender hope

Advise

(Should one do hatha yoga when troubled, worried or depressed?)

> *Should I be making myself do the hatha yoga on these days, regardless of the troubles dominating my mind?*

Sounds like Hatha Yoga is an indulgence for you to be practiced for it's own sake when it pleases you. I suggest you make a point of practicing consistently regardless of how you feel. This will help develop self-discipline and begin to divorce the practice of Yoga, from your desires.
Might I also suggest you consider taking up some Karma Yoga?
Jump out of bed and head down to the soup kitchen or church or the graffiti clean up project. A library adult reading program, a youth advocate to the court, litter clean up. Working with ex cons and homeless is can be especially good, but whatever. Look around there are a million opportunities to be helpful. Perhaps an AA, NA, SA, OA, or any form of support group meeting you might relate to or participate in. I know when I return from a meeting, I usually feel a whole lot better about my trifling situation :) Seriously, there are some people who have real problems.
In other words, do something for someone else, without pay and when possible, anonymously. Works every time. I guarantee it.
Although remember, to do this as a way to relieve yourself of some pain or worry is still doing so with an expectation of return and so falls short of perfect Karma Yoga But don't let this stop you. We must all start from where we are and any kind of volunteer work for any reason, is many rungs up the ladder from laying in bed mentally or emotionally masturbating, err I mean ruminating ;-)

A postscript.

I was trying to explain to Wade in another post about making I statements when posting or responding to a post. As I read the post I made to you regarding Karma Yoga I see a perfect example of what I would call a YOU, post. Although not to bad, it still makes me uncomfortable. YOU posts can sound like lectures and may engender resentment and resistance. Since my goal is to communicate honestly and in a way that is most likely to be read, understood and accepted, I try to present I statements.

As a way to clarify what I mean by I statements as compared to a YOU statements, I offer this rewrite of the original.

I know exactly what you are describing. I have struggled with this same issue all of my life and not just about Hatha. One strategy I have tried is to make a point of practicing (or whatever) on a regular schedule, regardless of how I feel. I do this in an attempt to develop self discipline and free myself to perform when I need to apart from my emotional state (which can be tumultuous to say the least). Fact is I haven't had all that much success with this strategy as it is difficult to make myself follow the schedule. It's a chicken / egg quandary. I need to follow a schedule to develop self-discipline but I need self-discipline to follow the schedule. I just keep trying. I refuse to be happy with less then health, happiness and harmony, so I keep muddling through. Over the years I have had success is some areas of my life and still struggle in others. Hatha I haven't done so well with, Jnana and Karma I have done better. However I still remain reactive in several import areas such as finances and expression. A great deal of fear is gone from my life along with much of the hatred, resentment, regret and the like. I still need substantial work in the area of self-doubt, depression, paralysis and lack of discipline. Faith and trust in God is my focus in these areas.

One form of Yoga I have gradually found to be most helpful, especially to keep me from feeling down, is Karma yoga. It really helps to get out of myself and try to be of help to someone else, without pay or anonymously if I can. I have found an amazing number of volunteer activities available.

I realize that practicing Karma yoga to make myself feel better falls a little short of the ideal but it's a start and the more I practice the less reactive my practice becomes. Eventually I will be free to do it just to do it. If I do it for God then it can becomes Bhakti practice as well. That's the Jnani in me trying to be efficient and consolidating practice :) This is how I know in the end its all one Yoga. It's all God.

But if the negativity is so stron that feel there is no way any hatha yoga will cut through it

Absolutely. That is exactly why I suggested you do the hatha regardless of how you feel. This is so you can learn first hand that there is truth beyond what your body (mind, emotions) is telling you. As long as you pander to your body you can never know this.

I nearly applied for a volunteer job in a cancer hospice recently, for the very reasons you suggested.

I can't imagine starting volunteer work with any more difficult, more emotionally or spiritually intense (and challenging) endeavor. If you are like me you may be prone to setting yourself for failure. But in this case don't do it, it's much too important. I suggest you start more slowly with something easy and more manageable. An hour or two a week at an old folks home helping out with peoples computers or something.

I feel that my first duty is to myself: to devote as much time as possible to getting my own life in order befoe I give up any time to helping others.

Remember your best efforts; everything you have to bring to the situation has got you exactly where you are. If you want something different, that fact is, you are going to have to do something different. If you don't know how or can't (and most of us can't) do something different, then follow someone else's lead. A book, a teacher, a mentor, a sponsor or someone you admire and want to be like. If you do what they do you will get what they have. It's all about letting go of the bullsh*t, the false self, the lies and excuses. Throwing yourself onto the Universe and having faith that God will provide you everything you need to get you where you want to go.

I'm living on credit,

I've been (still am except its charity now instead of credit) there. If I believed there was such a thing as duty, I would say God first, family second, all others third (creditors) and yourself a distant fourth :)

except for hatha yoga (which I suppose could be called recreation)

Don't covet recreation. Obviously it's not your time. Hatha is good. Science of Mind is great; I encourage you to continue. Consider yourself lucky you can do them and especially lucky you are connected to the internet.

I went for a long jog along the local beach in the dark, and on driving home, nearly ran over a large fox

Where in the world are there any foxes left anywhere near a beach?

on the South coast of England.

Well that explains why you reply in the middle of the night :) Why my spell checker flips out when reviewing your posts and why, where you are, foxes are considered a pest. In Southern California, they are an endangered species!

Maybe we could trade some of our four-legged foxes for some of your two-legged ones.. We have a surplus of the former and a shortage of the latter here. ;-)

My ISP's news-service is not the best, so threads drop off my server quickly. I was on Google and noticed you said that you ordered BEYOND SUCCESS AND FAILIURE. I'm thinking you really are brave!

That's right. Your description definitely aroused my interest. A self-help book really has to be something special for me to bother with it these days.

Phone

(things God said to me on a fone)

Things that God said to me on the telephone:

"1. You shouldn't try too hard." ...

Is this original to you? A poem? I like it. What does it mean to you?

I have had few of these inspirations lately that I write something without really thinking about it and after that it almost seems like somebody else wrote it.

I know the feeling.
By all means keep it up. Have you read THE ARTIST'S WAY, by Julia Cameron? I recommend it highly if you have a creative bent (noun, a strong natural inclination or talent for something.)

Meditation
(The Secrets of Meditation)

Being. Here. Now

If I could practice without attachment, then I wouldn't need to practice. I would have arrived where I seek to be (which by the way is right where I am, here, now).
I see presence, realization, enlightenment or whatever you want to call it, as a profound and absolute letting go and acceptance of what is. Here. Now. God.
For me to try and be something I already am can only be a construct of my will. Reality is changeless and can not be attained because it can't be void. It is perfect. It is perfect now.
There is no time, there is no space, there is only God. Now. Nothing to seek, no distance, no movement, only perfection, only now. Any perception or idea to the contrary, I have to make up (maya).
Yes?

If you mean by god, big guy with a beard issuing commandments

Any time I use the word God, you're welcome to replace it with any word you prefer; Universe, Earth Mother, Nature, The Source, Love, Intelligence, Life, Void, No God, etc. It all works for me. God is whatever God is. My knowing or not knowing the details isn't going to change anything. For all I know he's up there barkin commands and my JW friends are right. I know because God is first cause that I must be made of whatever God is and I bark commands all the time. So anything is possible I suppose :)

What is yet to come is the only reality you will ever know.

Of course there is no future. What we conceive of as future can only be an anticipation, never an experience. The only experience we can or will ever have is now. And its all now. All the rest (past / future) is a creation expressed/envisioned in the now. The only existence is now.

Which one?

I don't know what the question, Which One? means. I suppose you are referring to God. Did you intend to make a statement that there are more then one god or no god at all?

The question is, why god talk in the first place?

The only existence is God. There's no other subject to talk about :)

All concepts are limiting attachments.

I agree. All concepts are creations built on desire. They may or may not reflect the truth of what is. But until the truth is known the best we can do is concepts.

In fact, every word, when taken to extremes will be found to be self-contradictory. Maybe, it's better to just avoid 'God talk' in the first place.

The truth is never contradictory. It is what it is, regardless of whatever degree of awareness we have of it. God is truth and so for me is the best thing to talk about.

Maybe the very act of perception changes things

There is no change. Everything is absolute and perfect right now. There is only now. No future, no past, only now. The whole concept of change is just a convenient construct we create for navigating the causal world. So we can remember where we left our keys :)

who are your "JW" friends that would give you the idea that you could call God anything you want to? Doesn't God have a name and a description?

My Jehovah Witness friends would be very quick to point out that God's name is Jehovah and they would be delighted to provide a description right from the Bible.

So, you believe in causation? Who or what then is the uncaused cause?

There's that question again. I still don't know what you mean by, Which One? And you cut my quote short so I don't know if your question refers to the quote or simply to the God part.

That still wouldn't lead anyone to experience a God.

It's not possible for me to experience anything but God. There is only God. This may account for why it is so difficult for one to perceive God. How is it a drop in the ocean could see or know the ocean? Yet that drop is whatever that ocean is and it touches and is connected to every part of that ocean.

Then, it's possible that God is just a thoughtful conception.

Of course, to many this is exactly what God is. Others don't have even this much awareness. Others know the truth. We are all at differing levels of awareness. Eventually we must all be reunited in awareness of the truth. It is what we all strive for.
Why must we be unaware? Why must we strive to become aware? I don't know, that's my question.
Come to think of it, perhaps all my questions will be answered the day I stop asking them? What do you think?

Concentration
(Concentration / Focus)

Easy Does It.

> Quoted from AROUND THE YEAR WITH EMMET FOX
>
> What you concentrate upon you bring into your life. Many people fail to concentrate successfully because they think that concentration means will power. They suppose that the harder they press the faster they get through. But that is quite wrong.
>
> Think of the photographic process. The secret of a clear picture lies in focus. You focus your camera lens steadily for the necessary length of time. Suppose I want to photograph a vase of flowers. I place them in front of the camera and keep them there. But suppose that after a few moments I snatch away the vase and hold up a chair and then put the flowers back for a few moments. You know what will happen to my photograph. It will be a crazy blur. Is that not what people do to their minds, when they cannot keep their thoughts concentrated for any length of time? They think health for a few minutes and then they think sickness or fear. They think prosperity and then they think depression. Is it any wonder that man is so apt to demonstrate the marred image?
>
> It is always good to make a practical experiment, so I advise you to take a single problem in you life-and just change your mind concerning you problem and keep it changed for a month and you will be astonished at the results. If you really do keep your thought changed you not have to wait a month for results.

I thought you would appreciate this post. Although you were right, this is not quite about meditation but about bringing what you want into your life by concentrating and staying focused on what you want and not muddying up the picture with thinking about what you don't.

*You are the creator of all you attrac*t

Although you were right, this is not quite about meditation but about bringing what you want into your life by concentrating and staying focused on what you want and not muddying up the picture with thinking about what you don't. Of course there is no way not to have exactly what I want in life. I have it all the time. Often it's not pleasant but that is of my own choosing. What I think about and what I believe will manifest itself as my outer circumstance. I can not have anything that is not mine by right of consciousness and everything I have (good or bad) is mine by that same right. When what I think changes then what I experience will change.

Consciousness

(Consciousness)

Is it a voice from our true essence or is it just some moral codes that are programmed to our minds making noise?

If the voice speaks about Love, Truth, Intelligence, Life, Spirit, Principle or Soul then it's about our true nature.
If it's about fear in any form (resentment, regret, guilt, shame, blame, discouragement, etc.) then it's noise.

Does it lead us to out true direction or does it just prevent us from following our true will?

Your direction is always true and always corresponds to your will. There is no way for it to be anything else. You will always be going in the direction your will takes you and this will always be true. There is no place other then where you are right now, this moment.

October

Higher Self

(Question for Higher Intelligence)

If I am really cosmic consciousness - or Brahman... why have I seemingly lost myself in this illusion that I am this mortal human with all its limitations?

It's the question the drives us Neo. What is the matrix? (Whoops, I mean why is the matrix?)
A perennial question. Probably the first or second ever asked. None the less, it's exactly my question. In an intelligent universe, what the h*ll is the point? Being a perfect being and then making us stupid so we can learn we are perfect again. Garden of Eden stuff. We are perfect but then we eat the apple. But if we were perfect, then why would we eat the apple, yada, yada, yada.
Although this pattern of ignorance, knowledge, ignorance, knowledge does resemble all the other patterns in the physical universe e.g. life / death, dark / light, evolve / dissolve, etc.
To sum up my perspective; beats the cr*p out of me :-) I've just decided to go with the flow. I know that waiting for the answer can only delay the answer.

Wake up

(Techniques to speed up the process of waking up fully each morning?)

I have long suffered the problem of being very slow to wake up fully and get going each morning.

From the tone of most of your posts it sounds to me like your life is way out of balance. This is when we feel pain and discomfort. God's way of getting our attention.
Reading your posts it like revisiting myself twelve years ago (or twelve days ago). Except you have a kind of courage to say what bothers you, that I never had. I went it alone and in silence. I didn't open my mouth until I got to AA (and that was only after a year in jail and 3 years of listening to others share their story).
I offer the following suggestions. Most are not strenuous, in that you are not required to do anything. But they are not easy, because you are required to not do some things. If you can't handle the difficult techniques then I suggest dissolving two amphetamine tablets in a glass of water and set it by your bed.

When the alarm goes off in the morning, drink the water and go back to sleep. You'll be wide awake in about twenty minutes. This is what I used to do after taking Nembutal to get to sleep the night before.
Otherwise if you want to be a little nicer (natural) to yourself, do the following.
Stop eating salt. Either cooked in your food or added at the table. Stop the salt. All of it.
Make a list of your ten favorite (to die for) foods and then stop eating them (allergy). All of them.
Ditch the meat. All of it.
Learn how to do a juice fast and then do it. (Paavo Airola). Start with a couple of 3-4 days and the work up to a week. You'll be up to 2 weeks in no time. Want to touch spirit? Go a couple of weeks without food, only juice and water and you will come away with a perspective you can't even imagine. Plus a much improved health. (these things all go together)
All the drugs, get off them! (who the h*ll can take sleeping pills and wake up in the morning.) If you are having trouble, go to NA.
Alcohol, marijuana, etc. You know what to do. Stop. If you can't well guess what? AA, NA, etc.
Regarding the bad dreams. Most of them will disappear when you get control of what you put in your mouth. For those that remain, make a list of your ten worst fears and then do whatever you have to face them.
Yoga is great, continue.
Can't control your eating?... Over to OA, without delay. (You'll be surprised how many of your fears you'll be faced with there.)
Mediation. Forget it. You have to learn to take baby steps before you can walk. Or in the case of mediation, fly. Learn how to focus and think about something first. Ask a question, any question and then answer it, whatever it takes and don't stop until you do or you fail. If you fail again, ask a simpler question and don't stop until you answer it and so forth.
The fact is that you are in charge of all that you are and do. Whatever results you are living with now you have created. Whatever results you want, you are the only one who can produce them. All the problems and questions you have can be answered. The knowledge and technology exists to eliminate all your problems and create all that you want. But if you don't do them then guess what?
The fact is that we all have what we want all the time. We have never had anything else. If you are not happy with who and what you are then you must change what you want. You are the way you are because this is what you want and what you have chosen for whatever reason. You may not believe me but this won't change the truth and you will continue to suffer, because it is what you want. So explore deeply. Ask hard questions. Why do you want to be the way you are? How does it serve you? (hint, try dad and mom) When you can answer these questions honestly (and how few of us can do that) then you are in a position to make another choice if that;s what you want to do.
Did you receive BEYOND SUCCESS AND FAILURE, yet?
Stay with Science of Mind until you outgrow it.
Read all the Emmet Fox (an Englishman by the way) you can get you hands on. Also I suggest contacting the Self Realization Fellowship (SRF) and request the lessons. At least one years worth. About twenty dollars. If you haven't read the Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramahansa Yoganada, by all means do.

Smell

(Are there yoga paths/techniques related to smell?)

Recently I attended a presentation for artists and scientists. The topic was magnetic resonance and other brain scanning /mapping technologies. The subject of smell came up. Someone mentioned that smell (or a memory of a smell) was the quickest way to induce trance state.
As I was discussing smell with someone today, it occurred to me that I have read very little and have seen very few references to smell in the yoga I have studied over the years.
Because smell is the most primitive of our senses (with a direct neural pathway to the brain) I would think that it could be an important consideration in yoga. Obviously smell (incense etc) plays a very important part in many religious traditions.
Is anyone aware of any path, techniques or bodies of yoga knowledge (esoteric or otherwise) related to

smell?
Thanks for the responses. As I suspected, with the exception of ayurveda, the literature seems to be mum on smell. Yet smell is such an incredibly sensitive and powerful influence. How do you spell sex? Danger? Dinner?
I am intrigued and will look into this further. Some types of information are just not suited to mass distribution or common knowledge. I know from experience with marshal arts, that the most powerful and profound information is not conveyed to a student until a very knowledgeable teacher develops a trust in the student. Such information can be dangerous in the hands of a novice. Should this information be misused there will be significant physical, psychic or karmic consequence. Tai Chi is a great example. Very deadly stuff. But one can study and practice it all ones life and never have notion of it's marshal application or power. So to it may be with the yogic application of smell.

Boredom

(I'm bored!)

Lately, I've been getting very bored with the mundane side of my life.

Lucky you... I have way to many wolves circling my door to be bored for even a second. Depressed, paralyzed, distracted, frustrated, unhappy, desperate, panicky, lethargic, hounded, obsessed, resisting, you name it, but bored; not for a second. ;-)
Boredom is great internal feedback! It is symptomatic of fear related to desire and lack of acceptance (as are all the feelings mentioned above).
BEYOND SUCCESS AND FAILURE, Ways to self-reliance and maturity, by Willard and Marguerite Beecher or The HANDBOOK FOR HIGHER COUNCIOUSNESS, By Ken Keyes or LOVE IS LETTING GO OF FEAR, by Gerald G. Jampolsky, M.D. can all help you identify your fears (anticipations). In the mean time you don't need to know what your fear is to benefit from this brief technique. You may even get in touch with what was frightening you! I have.
Next time you notice yourself feeling bored, simply stop right where you are, close your eyes, put a half smile on your face and watch your breath go in and out for a minute or so. Do not try to control your breath, let it go and just observe. Let go of the tension in your body and when thoughts come, gently dismiss them and continue to focus on watching your breath while maintaining a half smile. After a few moments or when it feels right, open your eyes and let yourself connect with all that you see. Rejoice and give thanks for who and where you are at that very moment. The more you practice this the easier and quicker it becomes.
This can be done anywhere, anytime and for any emotional state falling on the fear-motivated side of the list. E.g. loneliness, anxiety, anger, depression, resentment, negative thinking, discouragement, blame, self-pity, longing, grief, confusion, etc. If you like this technique or find it helpful and want to learn and understand more about the practice of grounding, I recommend THE MIRACLE OF MINDFULNESS, A Manual on Meditation, by Thich Nhat Hang.
Ground, connect, accept and :-)

I have scanned through them, but did not really stand out as being the key to my future happiness.

Reading them greatly enhances their efficacy ;-) But as I said about Beyond Success and Failure, a bitter pill, not for the timid, or as they say about the 12 steps, not for those who need it (everyone) only for those who want it (few).

Conservation

(hatha yoga and celibacy etc...)

hatha places lot of emphasis on preserving semen - then how should women preserve their psychic energy?

Swami Sivananda identified sex and talking as the activities which deplete the most prana, the quickest. While these are not limited to any particular sex, there is a clear tendency in one and the other :-) So it

seems logical that both celibacy and silence would do much to conserve psychic energy in women (and men).

having a bad job bad relationship disorderly home can be depleting .... lack of sleep .... poor diet ..... isolation .... lack of sunshine.

These are all effects. They are not a cause but a result of the depletion or waste of psychic energy (prana).

we have a way of balling up ourselves at times ... not answering the screaming needs of spirit.

Absolutely! We do this when we are afraid. Fear always contracts and constricts. Our psyche and body will literally come in upon its self, in an attempt to create a shell to protect us. I have personally been there over prolonged periods of time, to the point of near paralysis. Autism and severe and/or chronic depression would be internal expressions of out of control fear; hatefulness and crazy making , external expressions. Like a deer or rabbit caught in the beam of a cars headlights. In reality it's anything but safe and we end up suffering the effect s you mentioned . Ironically, safety comes with a letting go. Not trying to control or dictate the circumstances of our lives. To learn to accept and appreciate who and what we are, in our present moment. To give up the desire for everything so there is no fear of losing anything. To let go and leave the running of the Universe to God. This is when both freedom of expression and power will flow to us.

Sex can become an addiction

Without a doubt! These are the things with which we try to medicate ourselves. Not answering the message of mind, body and spirit by using them will require our True Self to turn up the volume (pain) until we can hear the message. Ignoring or resisting the message long and hard enough can eventually kill us. The very use of sex, drugs, power and greed, exacts it's own price and would eventually destroy the healthiest of people. The combination of fear and its medication is devastating.
Yoga is a far better strategy for treating fear and ill health. The use of yoga relieves the pain and builds the body, mind and character because it answers the call of the Self. Yoga is hard work. Recovery is hard work. Freedom requires hard work. Health requires hard work. All these endeavors require focus, commitment, knowledge, practice, courage and compassion. But another irony is; the more you work the more energy and power flow to you with which to work.
Like the old Zen saying; a trip of a thousand miles starts with one foot step. We all start from where we are and little by little, we will all find our way home.

Also I have seen myself gain the energy while another in my presence has lost it.

I have found it useful to look at humans as an energy system. It helps take the judgment and emotion out of a great deal of what I see and experience. Forget the right and wrong nonsense and just look at the flow (or lack of as in repression). Where does it go? How does it go? Does it work? How do I redirect it for more or less of the desired effect?

i have enjoyed so much abstaining from flour and sugar. there is no way i would give up sex and speech.

I see celibacy in three stages. Stage one: eliminate sex with others. Stage two: eliminate sex with self. Stage three: eliminate the expression of any sexual energy in any manner. Stage three would be transcendence or enlightenment, where all energies merge into the One.
Presently (and for the last six years) I am at stage one. And it is still amazing to me just how much simpler my life and relationships are absent any intention to have sex. The amount of energy I don't spend looking for sex could easily fuel a college degree or second career. Time, money, self-respect, honor, energy, you name it, I save a lot of it. A tremendous amount of fear is no longer present on a daily basis. The list goes on. If I never get past stage one I am still miles ahead of where I once was in life.
I have never been one to be very disciplined and I am nothing like a monk or saint type. Pretty much the opposite really. But just from a practical point of view I can see and have experienced first hand the

advantages of even limited celibacy. But I like sex and it would be impossible for me to let it go until I want to. Not having sex with others imparts tremendous relief and frees up lots of energy so it is relatively easy. Eliminating all sexual expression as in stage two is another challenge. Reading the likes of Gandhi, Yoganada and Sivananda and with classic examples like Buddha and Jesus it is becoming clear to me just how advantageous sublimating sexual energy altogether would be. Not suppression. I have no stomach for suppression. But for me it will likely be a matter of when my desire not to express sexual energy exceeds my desire to express it, then I will have a chance for attaining level two. I the meantime I am preparing my mind and body for this eventuality. Reading, learning, observing, etc. When I am ready then I will give it a go.

I just want sanity.... but I like exploration.

One does not have to go to extremes to enjoy the benefits of abstaining from things. In recovery it may be a sponsor saying, no relationships for 90 days or one year. This simple device can make all the difference in success or failure. Hardly a call to monastic discipline but appropriate and effective for the space and time. Likewise abstaining from speaking may be as simple as learning and practicing effective listening skills. Or perhaps choosing a few hours or as much as one day a week when one commits to not speaking. Reserving that time for internal focus. When one sees the effects of simply not speaking either by purposefully listening or simply abstaining, one can then imagine the advantages of sitting quietly in meditation and eliminating all speaking (physically or mentally).

the sleeping consciousness. i know it well.

I love to sleep. I love to dream. They say that eventually you must eliminate both, all together. I am already griefing the loss!

I have such a problem with organized religion

I share your problem with organized religion. However, Yoga is not a religion; it is a goal and also a path to the goal. Works with all religions or none.

I have found the support of a community to be helpful. Service is good. Is that Karma yoga?

Yes, exactly.

It's time for me to start my next activity. food shopping.

Eventually food has to go also :-(We start with the meat, sugar, flour and the allergy foods where we gain the most advantage. Then salt, spices, all the other tamasic foods. Like a sculptors chipping away at all that is not the beautiful form they see in the stone. In yoga we eliminate all that is not who we are so we are left only with the Self. The Autobiography of a Yogi, has great stories of saints living without sleep and eating nothing but sunshine (prana)
I also like the river analogy very much. I have spent the greater part of my life trying to swim against the current. You might think that is bad but it's not. I know first hand and in a very deep way what and where the currents are. Now my focus is on releasing my grip and going with the flow, while trying to avoid the rocks :-)

Premature Ejaculation

(Best approach on premature ejaculation?)

I don't know if this is a serious thread or not, but I am going to answer as if it were.
First of all if you were sorry for cross-posting then you wouldn't have done it in the first place. It's sufficient to simply state why you are cross posting. No apology necessary or wanted. By the way if you carry this need to apologize for who you are and what you want to do, into your sex life, I can see why you are having problems.
I think Hari is correct, you should first accept who you are. This is what God has given you. This is also the quickest and surest way to enlightenment.

I have read Chang (the Tao of Love and Sex) and if you have honestly tried the techniques then perhaps you are not being quite honest with yourself. Has it occurred to you that your path may not be the fascinating path of sacred sex/tantra/taoist sex? Sounds to me like you're having trouble even doing the normal, mundane, crappy sex the rest of us accept.
After studying the subject seriously for some time it seems to me that the path of celibacy has to be far easier then the any tantric sex path. Jesus, Budda, Ghandi, Yogananda, etc, you name the saint/sage they all went with celibacy and consider the caliber of men they were. Do you suppose for a second if sex were an easier path to enlightenment, they wouldn't have taken it?
Besides, there is no such thing as premature ejaculation. Your body will ejaculate when it needs to. Perhaps you need to get out and have more sex. Or, perhaps you need to read up on the phenomenon. I suggest anything written by Masters & Johnson as being down to earth and fairly authoritative. I also suggest you explore nutrition and fasting. These both have profound effects on sexual, control, response and function.
This will fly in the face of what Puma says but something that has always worked for me (whether I wanted it or not) is to masturbate 2-3 time before having sex with you partner. You can go for an hour or two (or not bother to ejaculate at all) after that, I guarantee it. You can even make the masturbation, part of the love making and share it all. But this is not for the timid or shy; but then neither is yoga, transcendence or Tantra.
As so often is the case with spiritual endeavors the opposite is really the way. Kind of a Zen thing. If you want to slow down your ejaculation then do more of it, quicker. If you want to have great sex then don't have any sex. If you would dare experience the sacred then accept the dreadful sinner that you are.

Good bye
(Main Idea)

> *So now after researching for many years i am leaving the cyber world of words yoga ideas concepts to just move along into the ordinary day to day life*

JD your posts have never been the easiest for me to read and consider so I stopped following your posts when you indicated you weren't interested in my responses to you. I just now saw this post and am surprised and saddened. This sounds very much like a good-bye and a most unceremonious one at that :-(If it's not good-bye then a correction would be appreciated. If it is then I bid you adios and God's Love on your journey and in your moment.

November
Higher Self
(Can someone explain the difference between Higher Self and Soul?)

Higher Self is not a technical term. I believe the term higher self refers to one's potential. What we could be. The highest good. I agree that it is a very general term which would only have meaning in the particular context that it is used. E.g. trying to convince a drug addict that there is a higher self he has a higher self. Fact is there is no higher self. The self that's here, in the now, is it.
I have read a great deal about soul and it's funny because I was just thinking about it this morning. There are hundreds of various explanations. No clear cut consensus at all. So I offer my take on the Soul.
What I call soul is the aspect of the physical presence (body) which is spirit. Like the body it is susceptible to all the same maladies. It can be sick and injured, frightened, weak, etc. Unlike the body it does not die but continues on to the next. But the soul must be nourished and cared for just like the body and it will help serve us in our quest to bring our awareness in line with the truth. That we are whatever God is. Abuse or neglect the soul and it will torment and torture us. The Soul is that aspect of our physical existence which in spiritual in nature and allows our physical vehicles to remain ever connected to the Spirit from which we all come.

Repressed emotions

(Question from someone who knows little)

My understanding (correct me if I'm wrong) is that Yoga can be useful in "unrepressing" repressed emotions.

You are correct. Yoga can be very helpful in helping you release unexpressed/repressed emotions. This has been my experience. There is no best type of yoga for everyone, only the one that is best for you. It may take some study and experimentation to determine which one that is.

I suggest starting with Hatha. Richard Hittlemen or Sivananda are sound, moderate and based on classic yoga. I would also read an AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI, by Paramahansa Yogananda. I recommend the LESSONS of his Self Realization Fellowship as an introduction to sound principles of living and the practice of other yogic forms.

I have in my life been emotionally stuck (frightened) to a point near autism. I was unable to express emotions in any manner other then self-destructive acting out in social and sexual ways. Each step out of this emotional prison was precipitated by some traumatic or cataclysmic social or therapeutic event.

If being nearly beaten to death, jailed or intense confrontational and/or sleep deprivation therapy isn't your cup of tea then I suggest a meditation technique developed by the Bhagwan Shree Rashneesh, called Dynamic Meditation. It is a cathartic form and is very physical. Repression is about holding in and this meditation form is about letting go. Marshal Arts meditations can be very effective if you like marshal practice and can find someone to teach them to you.

Meditation combined with any physical activity (exercise) is especially effective. The holding of emotions is requires energy and this translates into a deep and chronic tension in the body. Mediation in any form, yoga, marshal, religious, TM will precipitate a letting go. I have seen a deep message release a torrent of unexpressed grief and pain. Any physical activity which momentarily drains energy from the body making it difficult to continue to hold on to unexpressed feelings combined with any meditation which focuses the attention internally will help.

It's very unlikely that you will be able to reason or think your way out of an emotionally stuck or crippled condition. There are no magic pills. You will have to fight to free yourself. You will have to learn about yourself and the methods and justifications you use to deny your fears. I suggest reading books which challenge you be honest with yourself. I can recommend YOUR ERRONIOUS ZONES, Wayne Dyer (Good intro to emotional issues). HOW I BECAME FREE IN AN UNFREE WORLD, Harry Browne (a little more advanced and tougher to stomach). BEYOND SUCCESS AND FAILURE, Ways to self-reliance and maturity, By Willard and Marguerite Beecher.(Not for the timid, Advanced growing up).

The most effective technique is to sit quietly and ask God to release the expression of your emotions to you. If you have any thoughts or feelings around God share those. Getting pissed off and yelling at God for abandoning you to your pain is a particularly good exercise. Reciting all of the reasons why He does"t exist and why He can't exist is good also. Of course if this is done in conjunction with the other methods mentioned it will be even better. The purpose of yoga, meditation, life or anything else is to reunite (unveil) your awareness with its source, God. So if you have the, THERE IS NO GOD, or the I'M NOT SURE IF GOD EXISTS, thing going then I suggest you cut through the bull sh*t and go right to the source. Whatever it takes. You'll find yourself and your emotions at the end. I promise

Here are brief instructions for Dynamic Mediation from, MEDIATION: THE ART OF ECSTASY, by Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (currently known as OSHO) A great book by the way, I recommend it highly.

Dynamic Meditation:

It should be done on an empty stomach, with eyes closed or blindfolded, and with a minimum of clothing worn.

First Stage: Ten minutes of deep, fast breathing through the nose. Let the body be as relaxed as possible; then begin with deep, fast, chaotic breathing-as deep and as fast as possible. Go on breathing intensely for ten minutes. Don't stop; be total in it. If the body wants to move while you are breathing, let it; cooperate with it completely.

Second Stage: Ten minutes of catharsis, of total cooperation with any energy that breathing has created. Let the emphasis be on catharsis and total letting go. Just let whatever is happening happen. Do not suppress anything. If you feel like weeping, weep; if you feel like dancing, dance. Laugh, shout, scream, jump, shake-whatever you feel to do, do it! Just be a witness to whatever is happening within you.
Third Stage: Ten minutes of shouting hoo-hoo-hoo. Raise your arms above your head and jump up and down as you continue to shout hoo-hoo. As you jump, land hard on the souls of your feet so that the sound reaches deep into the sex center. Exhaust yourself completely.
Fourth Stage: Ten minute of stopping dead, as you are. Now freeze. In whatever position you are in, stop completely. Energy has been awakened through breathing, cleansed through a catharsis, and raised through the Sufi mantra hoo. Now allow it to work deeply within you. Energy means movement. If you are no longer throwing it out, it will begin to work within.
Fifth Stage: Ten to fifteen minutes of dancing, or celebration, of thanksgiving for the deep bliss you have experienced.

Emotions

(handling emotions)

I can somehow work with my emotions so they wouldn't effect on me so much.

I create frustration, anger and sadness when I fear that I won't get what I want or need. Their expression is a habitual hold-over from childhood. A form of the resistance, whining and crying I used as children to force the adults around me to give me what I wanted.
Ahhaa... I realized as I was working on my response to your post that a large part of my interest in self realization and enlightenment is really about an unwillingness to do the work of growing up and taking personal responsibility for myself; in this world, in the here and now. Thank you :-)
My struggle with my emotions is about growing up and taking responsibility for myself. To let go of breath holding tantrums, emotional blackmail and other childish strategies for gaining what I want. To learn, work and earn what I want and not look for others to give it to me.
Excerpt from BEYOND SUCCESS AND FAILURE, Ways to Self-reliance and Maturity, By Willard and Marguerite Beecher.\

> The feeling of deprivation.
>
> How is one to know when he is in a dangerous situation of dependency? What warning signal has nature provided us so that we know when we are leaning, expecting, envying, comparing or begging? How shall we know whey we have abdicated our own initiative and have put another head higher then our own? Is there an unmistakable sign that always accompanies dependency, so that we immediately know when we have stepped backward into the child's passive-receptive approach to life instead of maintaining an adult, active and productive role? Fortunately, such a signal exists. It is quite unmistakable, and its effect is as immediate as when a small cloud passed over the face of the sun on a summer day. A person feels expansive, confident and adequate while he is in his active self-reliant phase. But the moment he compares himself to someone, whose head he puts higher then his own, he feels a chill. He is suddenly aware that he feels deprived, empty, lonely, weak, defenseless, inadequate, put back or frightened. Just as if he had suddenly lost his power to meet life, and the situation in front of him seems dangerous or, at the best, unrewarding. The feeling of contentment has suddenly disappeared.

I think that should strive to be more consciouss of myself and of the situation but when being in a middle of a emotional storm it's really hard.

Willingness, awareness, ownership, practice
I have noticed that when I am upset, if I can ask (willingness) and honestly answer (awareness) the question, what am I afraid of, then the emotional storm evaporates. This happens because in reality anger, hurt, resentment, depression, loneliness, sorrow and pain are secondary expressions/reactions of fear, intended to obscure (not take responsibility for) the real cause. Once I have identified and taken responsibility for (ownership of) my fear I can address it as best I can without any need to, externalize, blame or hurt anyone (including myself). The first time I was able to do this I was amazed. I realized that I could be free, that it was never about anything outside of myself. I create the reactions to fear. I create the fear that creates the reactions. If I create the fear then I can let it go. If I am willing to take ownership, to learn what I need to be aware and to practice letting go, then I could free myself from my dependent need for attention and the endless possibilities for emotional torment.

Attention.

Pay attention to me, please. I can't exist unless you notice.

Pay attention to me or I'll scream, kick, cry, vomit and whine. I'll be unhappy and I'll make you unhappy too. I'll hurt my self. I really will.

Don't ask me how. You can't lie or trick me. I know what's real. The drugs, cigarettes, candy, danger and sex are real.

Don't shoot! I'll stop.

I'm all right now. I've found a friend with a firm grip, to quiet, encourage and protect me.

Expensive... I know.

My liver and heart. My mind. My money. I don't know what else there is. The price of fear is... so high.

Possibilities

I don't want to be unhappy I don't want to be sick I don't want pain I don't want to die

In the absence of heat, cold

I don't want to make a mistake, because I don't want to feel humiliation I don't want to be vulnerable because I don't want to lose

In the absence of light, darkness

I don't want to be criticized and I don't want to fail so I don't want to try but I don't want to be ignored

In the absence of God, fear

I don't want to tell the truth, because I don't want to feel shame I don't want my past haunting me and I don't want my future uncertain

So I shiver in the cold and cower in the darkness, paralyzed by fear because In the absence of what I want , all that I don't , comes to me in endless possibilities

Like anything else the more I face my fear (practice) the easier and quicker it becomes. Over time I have even trained my friends to ask me, when I get agitated, angry or depressed, Jared, what are you afraid of? They think they are being funny but they are giving me a wonderful gift. The gift of sight outside of my emotional reaction and a nudge towards the truth should I choose to take it.
By the way, thanks for sharing your poems, I enjoyed them. I wanted to respond in kind but don't have any poems which express a happier more balanced time in my life. May be it's time to write some :-)

I do write poems and too and song also to my band. But they are all in Finnish. :)

Fake it
(Yoga and Acting Classes)

Has anyone had success with this technique or any variation of it?
An acting class, hmm. Sounds like fun. I have come to think that acting can be a very useful method for effecting change. For example; a couple months ago I decided to pretend to be a vegetarian and I have been acting like one ever since. You see, I know how to act like a vegetarian. I know what to do, how and why to do it, etc. But what I have never been able to do, is be a vegetarian, because that is not what I am. I am a meat eater. So I decided to pretend to be a vegetarian. Now if I keep doing it long enough eventually I will have to pretend to be a meat eater if I want to go back. Fake it until you make it, is what they say in the twelve step programs. The implications for this acting technique are astonishing. It means with something as simple as a decision to pretend to be something I am not and with some study and practice, I could become everything I have ever wanted to be. I could pretend to be healthy, strong, flexible, kind, gentle, tolerant, nonjudgmental, fearless. I could pretend to be a writer, a celibate, a person with resources, a healer, a voice for my community, an artist, yogi, etc.

There is no need to pretend. We simply are.

Absolutely and your point is well taken. We can never really be anything other then what we are in this moment. There is, in fact, no movement or change of any kind possible. There is only what is, now. What I believe Carlos Castaneda's, Don Juan, was referring to when he said you must stop the world. But this time I wasn't trying to go to the absolute.
I find life is often like a chicken and egg situation. How can I be something that I am not? Lets say I want to be tolerant of others but I am not. How can I learn, practice and express this quality if I don't possess it? If I am pretending to be tolerant then I can suspend all the self effacing criticism and doubt (which would be true), suspend all concern for the opinions of the people around me who know me to be intolerant (which would be true) and go about practicing and making lots of the necessary mistakes, which I wouldn't care about because I am only pretending. After practicing/pretending a while I would actually begin to possess the qualities of tolerance. Quite handy, really. Allows me to do all kinds of things I couldn't honestly even try to do. I suppose that's the way we all learn to walk. We imitate, imagine and pretend we can walk and keep on trying until we can walk. It's just taken me nearly 50 years to realize I can apply the same process to endeavors of a higher order. I have a great deal of catching up to do ;-)

I was actually surprised at the obvious misunderstanding between you and some of the respondents to your original post.

I unfortunately was not, as it is often the case. Your level of understanding, careful consideration and artfully crafted reply, on the other hand, are more the exception. Hence, my *kind* words were less about kindness and more about an honest and heart felt expression of appreciation for the evoking of that elusive and wonderful feeling that someone understands :-)

Your own choice of words perchance had something to do with the nature of some of the responses that you attracted.

Goes without saying. One of the risks of opening ones mouth or expressing one's self in any manner. As far as understanding turning on a word or two, I believe we can always find what we are looking for in other's words, whether that is what they were saying or not. Dissonance or harmony, argument or understanding, preaching or sharing; whatever we come to the table with, no?

In your above response, as an example, I was amused to read your use of the word "spin"

I don't understand why you were amused. It sounds as if the word *spin* may have a negative connotation for you. In your post you used the word *take*. I use *spin* and *take* interchangeably. My thesaurus has the following entries for the word *spin*: slant, perspective, turn, take, angle, completion, viewpoint, bias. This is how I meant to use the word. Sometimes in the US the word *spin* is used to refer to the rewording or obfuscating of facts for political reasons by *spin masters*.

*One cannot necessarily "make" *it* by "faking" it.*

I agree but perhaps for a different reason. I would say that in the absolute sense, one can not *make* it anywhere. One is already there and could be no where else. One can not *fake* anything because you are what you are, a divine expression of God's love, now and always and could be nothing else fake or otherwise :-)

PS May I ask the origin of your name?

Sure, a little background. My given name is Jared. Its origin is Hebrew and means descending. One reference to the name Jared is in the bible, Genesis 5:15-18 Seems Jared lived to be 962 years old; second oldest dude in the Bible. The only other reference I have seen to the name Jared is in the Book of Mormon, concerning the tribe of Jaredites. The name enjoyed a spate of popularity in the US in the late 50's and early 60's.
Years ago when I signed up for hotmail or the like, I tried the nic omboy but it was taken. I tried jaroo and jaruda both nick names at work but they were also taken. So I combined Om (which is the cosmic sound of One) and jaroo for omjaroo and thus gave birth to a nic with which I succeeded in qualifying for my free email account. Hence my nic is a self-invented derivation of Jared.

Neti Pot

(Salt concentration in Neti Pot?)

I got a Neti Pot recently, and was wondering as to how much salt should I put in there?

My experience with flushing my nasal passages with salty water is this: If there is not enough salt, it will hurt. If there is too much salt, it will hurt. Using this as a guide you can then experiment and determine for yourself what is the proper amount for your vessel and your nasal passages ;-)
This by the way, to me this is a great example of how God's feedback mechanism works. If we are doing too little or not the right things, it hurts. If we are doing too much or the wrong things, it hurts. When we are dong it correctly, going with the flow, following universal principles, etc, it doesn't hurt and it feels right. This is all very unique and personal to who and where we are in our development so the requirements can be quite different from person to person. One size does not fit all. Concerning health maintenance, diet, morality and all things yoga, we must become a law unto ourselves. Or as some famous old guy once said, *know thyself*

I've been a mouthbreather all my life and am hoping this pot will clear up my sinus enough to where I can start breathing through my nose.

Ouch... I know. I don't like mouth breathing very much. I struggled with it for years. At a point became addicted to nasal decongestants. Nasty business. If you study pranayama, you will discover that nasal breathing is a very desirable ability and control over which passage and how long you breath out of it are all important considerations in advanced yoga. But in your case I would say your comfort and ability to sleep soundly would be the first order of importance.

The nasal flushing sounds like a good idea. Remember, anytime you start something new your body is going to have an adjustment phase. Don't assume the reactions you are getting now are what you can expect after some consistent application. I think you will find over time the open state of your nasal passages between flushes will increase.
This type of long term problem likely will not be helped by any one magic bullet. Rather numerous lifestyle issues will be adjusted and eventually the combined results will be freer breathing through your nose. Here is suggestion that helped (helps) me. The following is adapted from my own experience and the book TRACKING DOWN HIDDEN FOOD ALLERGIES, by William G. Crook, as well as numerous other books concerning nutrition and food allergies.
Make a list of the five foods you eat most. Make another list of the five *to die for* foods that you just crave, love and lust after. This can include any pseudo-foods such as alcohol, drugs, candy, sodas, coffee, etc. Now stop the ingestion of any food or substance on the list for 30 days. Note any changes to your pattern of nasal blockage or any other positive or negative effects on your body. You should notice numerous positive effects. (In my case, panic attacks I had suffered with for years went away when I stopped eating wheat. Go figure. Where is all the deep psychology in that?. My nasal passages also cleared substantially. Chronic irritable bowel syndrome was also helped.)
When you have your list of changes, reintroduce each food on the list (unless you know better and would just as soon continue to abstain) for one week without adding the others. Note any changes. If you have a negative reaction you can eliminate that food. A week later reintroduce the next food on the list and note the changes, etc. By the time you are finished with this project I guarantee you will know one heck of a lot about yourself and how the foods you east effect you. You may even breath a lot freer through your nose. In general I have found this is a good process to learn. Over the years as you study, practice and develop you will use this process over and over again with all the foods, substances and behaviors in your life. Many you will decide, do not promote health and strength in you and you may choose to eliminate them.

God
(When is/was/will God?)

I know there are those of you who suspect there is God and some who hope there is God (especially those who deny or insist there is no God) and some who believe there is God and perhaps someone who actually knows there is God. Don't give up now. Remember it's alway darkest before the dawn. The answer is near.

I am very frustrated. What if I get to the age of 60, and still nothing?

Here's what helped/s me.
I sat quietly and put my question directly to God. When I heard his reply I instantly knew everything I could possibly need to know: That there is God. All the rest follows on that Truth. While my life continues to present pain and difficulty, I am nonetheless, free and day by day, bit by bit, my fear and unhappiness give way to appreciation, compassion and serenity.
I try not to judge myself or others regarding my yoga practice or anything else. I tell myself it is all God, so It is all Good.
I keep trying to meditate. While my progress doesn't seem to be very much, it is 1000% better then when I first started. So I strive to have patience with myself and others.
I use the mantra, Let go and let God.
I read and study spiritual books, talk about and remind myself of God's presence as often as I can.
I just keep going. I have to admit it is much easier for me now because I know the Truth. I remember feeling much the same way as you describe, before I knew. But I kept blindly hitting my head against the wall, and running around like a chicken with his head chopped off, breaking every universal principal there is, and when I had suffered enough and was ready I opened my heart and my soul and I heard God's answer. Oh, and going to jail, attending five years of AA, 10 years of therapy, two failed marriages, ten failed jobs and abject poverty (in the order) has helped a lot also :-)

Crying
(The Whale Rider, Tears, Nadis and Yoga)

Mike D says the clearer your nadis are the easier it is to cry. I know there is truth in what he says. On an experiential level I am only now realizing it.
I was several weeks in an ashram (Sivananda Yoga Farm, Grass Valley, CA) during an instructors training period (I was not one of the students) when I had a conversation with a young women. Physically and psychically, she was the most beautiful human beings I have been in the presence of. I was twenty years her elder and something I said struck her and she started to cry. No tension, no pain, no anything, she just started to cry. Tears flowed unrestricted from her eyes because I had struck some cord in her being. There wasn't the slightest bit of sadness, tension or anguish. Just, pure, unadulterated tears of joy, appreciation and connection (Love).
In that moment I knew I was connected with God. And in that moment I knew the standard by which I could know that I was in contact with God. Free, unadulterated, tears. Tears that flowed without tension, with out pain, without remorse, but with pure joy...
As I watched the movie, THE WHALE RIDERS, I cried as she did. Without tension; without struggle; the tears just flowed out of my eyes, across my cheeks and into my lap. God it feels good to be this free.
I wish the freedom to cry, laugh and feel all the pain for you all.

December
Attachment
(attaching to a person)

How can it be that you can get so attached to another person?

It's taken me years go get a grip on this issue and I have substantial personal experience with this effect. It's not always easy to see or understand what's happening. I see two main points to be considered.
For the most part if I don't feel full as a person without the company or approval of others it is because I am unwilling to take responsibility for myself and my emotional store. This is immaturity. When I've had enough of the feedback (pain) the Universe provides, I can learn about it and grow out of it. Just takes a decision and then work.
If I feel as if someone is inside me or when they leave my energy leaves with them, then this can be the effect as above but with psychic component. While the root cause is the same as above, the effect is caused by my letting another's energy enter my psychic space. Either, because I so thoroughly reject my own psychic character or because through emotional desire (fear) I have emptied my space and allowed (essentially invited) another more aggressive one to fill it. This is very common and all of us do this to some degree or another. Who hasn't been brought down by some negative person, with their words and vibe? When you are completely absorbed in another person and then cut off, it can be a frightening experience if you don't know what is happening. Praying, thinking for myself, concentrating, working, reading upbeat or spiritual books, staying focused on positive thoughts, etc., these will all keep my space filled so no other energy can intrude. As I have grown and matured this problem has simply disappeared by itself. Yogananda discusses this phenomenon in his book MAN'S ETERNAL QUEST, I suggest it highly for the answer to many question in addition to this.

Path
(Who are you? What path do you follow?)

Who are you? What path do you follow, if any? Why are you in alt.yoga? What is the single most important thing you know?

Who are you?

Geesh... What a question.

The truth? I am the asker of the question, the answerer of the question and the question its self. I am whoever and whatever God is.
Each day I become more and more in tune with this truth. While the illusion described below is a cascading avalanche of extremes. Today I am very nearly 80% OK with it all, because at my center I am whole and perfect. Daily as I focus on the truth, I have an ever-increasing sense of peace, acceptance and serenity (in between mild depression, fits of irritation and paralyzing fear ;-)
But the illusion? The answer to that would be; my name is Jared. I am a white, blue eyed male, of a New England Culture with Irish, English, German descent. My father is an intellectual/scientist, quite wealthy although emotionally crippled. My mother was a nurse, wonderful, human and very sensitive, certifiably nuts, suffered from psychic influence and fears, died from alcohol related causes.
I'm pushing 50, twenty five pounds overweight, broke and steps from the street after a decades long slide, following years of addiction, a conviction and some jail time. I did loose 15 pounds in last two months :-) because I went vegetarian, they stole my vehicle so I have to ride a bike and I managed a 7 days juice fast to boot. Recovering alcoholic, sex addict, depressed, lazy, lacking sufficient discipline and industry, frightened. Two failed marriages, 3 children.
Some would say, way to serious. I might say intelligent, funny, crazy, wise beyond wise, experienced way beyond what is legal or sane, a great observer, a practicing writer, a budding photographer, entrepreneur, inventor, social activist, preacher, psychologist, yogi, good/bad father, good/bad husband, good/bad cat(s) owner, good lover (celibate though) with a intense desire to heal; myself and others. Even if it means my destruction (of the illusion), which it most certainly must.
The kids (two boys 12 & 14) would say I am way embarrassing and a killer bee (when I say no, they say, you killed it Dad) and that I am fat, lazy, broke and without a life. Making them suffer and go without because of what I did in the past. Don't kids express their love in funny ways?
My first ex-wife would say that I am a nice guy who cares a lot and tries hard but doesn't have much control. My second ex-wife would say that I am a very bad person, responsible for all her unhappiness and problems. I'm not sure what my 22 year old daughter would say, she hasn't spoken with me this year.
Others might say I am a saint with an incredible amount of patience, tolerance and empathy. That I possess vast amounts of information and experience with a perspective that could help heal lives and move humanity forward on its journey to it's center. Society at large doesn't think much of me and (to say it nicely) would probably be content to see me pass away.

What path do you follow, if any?

The path of suffering and pain, hate, discontent and fear. I have found this to be one of the quickest and easiest paths to enlightenment and freedom. Well actually it's the only one I have been able to manage. This is the default path, the one most appropriate for someone as immature and as terrified as I. The one the Universe provides free of charge and in direct proportion to my need to learn.
As a yogi I practice a self-defined form of jhana, with a smattering of karma, bhakti and hatha. Paranayama and meditation is where I need to go next but these disciplines continue to elude my practice as they are yet too painful and frightening. I enjoy comparative religious study. Searching for commonalities (God) in various writings. I have studied, Yoga, Science of Mind, Kung Fu San Soo, the lessons of Paramahansa Yogananda, various forms of mind control (NLP), hypnotism and meditation. As a child there was an extended attempt to indoctrinate me as a Catholic. I like Ken Keyes, Carlos Casteneda, Emmet Fox, Richard Hittlemen, Paramahansa Yogananda, Bob Marley and I am currently studying the Bible weekly with a couple of JW friends and enjoying it like you wouldn't believe.

Why are you in alt.yoga?

Fellowship. Expression of my didactic nature. An attempt to be helpful. To have some fun talking with people. A way to practice explaining myself (difficult ideas and concepts) and answering questions in writing. A context to express what I know about God. A religious coming out of sorts. A forum to practice expressing myself as a knower there is God. I have been struggling to find a context in which to live my life as a religious person because I have no need or desire to practice any religion. Or I could

practice any and all of them. Doesn't matter. I didn't come to Yoga or religion to find the answer. I was given the answer and came to Yoga as a way to deal with it. I came to the knowledge by direct (mystical) experience and now everything I am doing is an attempt to catch up to the truth. My body, mind, soul and psyche are not yet aligned (resisting mightily) with what I know (heart) so I still suffer and thirst for expression and peace. I came to alt.yoga because I thought I might find people who understand my frame of reference. Who I could speak to and who would understand. While there have been many pleasant connections; some genuine sharing and exchange, I often find myself feeling misunderstood, reacted to, lectured to, intellectualized to, imitated at, argued with and so forth. But then why should alt.yoga be any different then anywhere else? I find that it's OK and completely perfect and it points up what I already know; that happiness, satisfaction, acceptance are inside jobs. My responsibility. Everything I need or could possible desire are right here inside me. Now. This has been great practice and I am ever letting go of this feeling that I need to be understood. Besides I get some great feedback and some good ideas here. For my part, if I can plant a seed or make a connection or answer a question, I am delighted and it's all worth it. If I do or say one thing that helps connect one person with themselves (God), then what else in the world could I ever hope for :-)

What is the single most important thing you know?

There really is God. And if you want to know if there really is God, then you can do what I did; sit quietly and speak to God. Then listen for the answer. You will receive one, I guarantee it... Or if you are like me, you won't listen for the answer. I felt silly and thought I was crazy talking to someone who didn't exist. But fortunately for me, God answered anyway and the answer was very loud so I couldn't miss it. Then it was on me to accept or deny. I was too tired and in too much pain to resist any longer. Besides this was the answer to a question I first asked when I was 10 years old, so I quietly accepted. Then the hard work really began. 15 years later, here I am...

Slice of Life

(Things that go bump in the night.)

Thought I'd share a little slice of life with you. There's even a bit of yoga in it if that's what you're looking for :-)

But first a little background.

I live in a very old city, which happens to be the eighth-poorest urban municipality in the United States, located between San Diego and Tijuana. The ethnic mix is something on the order of 75% Hispanic and 22% Asian. Whites, blacks and about 50 others, make up the rest. Many here are immigrants; some new, some old. Everyone is poor. Naturally the crime rate is high but not for the reasons most people think. I don't think there are a great many more original crimes committed in our town, compared with others. By-in-large it's really quite civilized. No, the reason behind the high statistics is the number of arrests. Let me explain.

People who have been in trouble with the law are drawn to poorer areas with cheaper rent. They are also more likely to be rearrested as they have personal problems in the first place and are pegged by society to be trouble, so the police are watching them very closely. Many are on probation or parole, so they are also being watched closely with a mind to re-jail. People hiding-out, after committing crimes elsewhere, are drawn to low-income areas as well. This is because people who live in poorer areas, especially immigrants, are reticent to trust or call the police, even more so when the majority of police are white. The tendency for people with legal troubles to be drawn to poorer, low rent areas, makes a form of bounty paid for arrests on warrants issued by other jurisdictions, a revenue generating activity for the City.

I have watched the police here, let a drunken, knife-wielding man (who they drew their weapons on, pointing directly at my son and I, who were standing a few feet behind him) walk away, rather then arrest and jail him; even for a night to sober up. But others and myself have been stopped numerous times, for no reason other then to check for warrants. In which case if I had one I would be arrested, jailed immediately and my car or bike, seized and sold. The difference? If the City arrests, they pay for the jail, write reports, investigate, etc. If the City arrests on a warrant, they are paid and the only paperwork is related to checking

in the boxes for which warrant type. There is no investigation or justification for the arrest. No pesky civil rights, court appearances or criminal issues, nothing but mindless, routine processing. You can imagine how high the crime figures are in this town.

The area in which my City is centered comprises over 4 million people and is a microcosm of the extremes in our world. To the north, 10 miles is La Jolla, arguably one of the richest and most beautiful communities in the world. Another 10 miles North of La Jolla is Rancho Santa Fe, perhaps the wealthiest community on earth. To the South, 10 miles, Tijuana, Mexico, one of the most populated, squalid and poorest cities on this planet.

Over the years I've had occasion to sip cocktails and exchange witty banter with Nobel Prize-winning scientists, in a 10,000-square foot, multi million-dollar home, perched on the cliffs above La Jolla's famous Black's Beach. One the other hand, I've sipped warm beer and barbecued carne asada tacos oven an open fire, on the dirt floor of a squatter's shack in Camino Verde, Tijuana. The one room home of a family of 6, without electricity, water, phone or heat. Sharing food and relating as best I could with congenial people whose language I couldn't speak.

I was awed by and enjoyed both experiences. But while one was incredibly dangerous (the evening ended up with both of our families being held at gun point for several hours), I was distinctly more comfortable, more grounded and relaxed, in it, over the other. Both events had a fantastic, exciting, surreal quality about them. Yet one seemed more honest, more valuable, more real. Such have been the contradictions and extremes of my sharing of God's bounty. Now on to the story!

So last night about 8:30, I'm returning from a trip to the local Chaldean (Christian Iraqi) market to buy food and wine. Because my truck was stolen recently, I was riding my bicycle, through the poorly maintained and sparsely lit streets. As I was pedaling up 6th street after passing the entrance of a darkened alleyway, I heard someone say, "hey you". The voice didn't sound familiar or friendly so I kept pedaling. I couldn't see anyone around except three Mexican men, who were on the other side of the street, standing near an old Chevy pickup. They were still dirty from a days work and speaking in Spanish the way it is after hours of drinking beer.

As I rounded the corner to C Street, I thought I heard someone say, "Pinche guero", Spanish slang meaning something like, "crazy (f*cking) white boy" but in a more familiar or friendly way. Someone might have been talking to me, but not unless they were looking for trouble I reasoned, so I kept pedaling. Then faintly, in the distance I heard my name, "Jared."

I turned my bike in the middle of the street and headed back around the corner, up the street and toward the alley. As I approached, two teen-aged Hispanic males appeared out of the shadows and walked slowly towards me. They were dressed in dark baggy jeans, with dark blue hooded sweatshirts; hood up, gangster style. I stopped my bike on the sidewalk, just off the alley.

"What's up gentlemen?" I asked

"Nothing dad, where did you go?" Eddie, my 14 year old asked.

"Just got back from Big Bens. Bought some food." I replied, as Danny, my 12 year old, rifled through my back-pack to see what I bought and find my water bottle which he promptly drank.

"What are you guys up to? Out on the streets at 8:30 at night"

"We're earning our PE (physical education, exercise) credits," they quipped.

"Does your mom know you're out here?"

"Of course. Sure. She lets us out."

"Right! Don't BS me. You're talking to your father now." "Hey, whaaats sup Jared?" called another hooded figure emerging from the shadows. It was one of the kid's friends. No doubt he had been waiting to see if his homies were going to get in trouble before making his entrance.

"Oh, and yet appears another of your want-to-be gangster buddies, eh Eddie?"

My son shot me a sheepish grin. "Oohhh, killer bee, got you good Eddie", Danny chided. The kids know I don't approve of them adopting the mannerisms and imitating the denizens of the streets we live on, but it's only natural. And they are getting rather good at it. Besides it's just a style. The substance and values I try to model and teach them is what matters. I've learned over the years, that things and people are rarely as they appear. In reality, here I am a yogi, talking with and teaching my children and their friend. To a

policemen driving by I would no doubt be a poorly dressed, unshaven, long-haired, white adult male, on a bike, in a dark alley talking with a group of wannabe thugs. How do you spell "drug deal?"
Without much to say, the four of us stood silently for a few moments before I said, "Well, gee guys, I really enjoy standing in the middle of the street, relating to you young men but I have continue on with my non-life now. But really, this is fun. I can see why you like it. Perhaps we can get together another time and stand around in a dark alley. Hey, don't forget, it's my day tomorrow; I'll see you after school."
"Ok dad"
"Lates, Jared"
"Later gentlemen. Remember it's all God, so it's all good."
"Alrato pinche guero"

It sounds like a place I would not be strong enough to live in!!!!

Sure you would. I once thought as you. I, like many people, was once afraid to even drive through this town. Now I live here. The only difference was my fear and ignorance. Now I think it's a great place.

8:30 and trouble can be found in the streets?!!!

If that's what I am looking for (afraid of) it can come to me anytime, anywhere 24/7

With all the arrests and criminal activity involved in that town would you consider it a friendly place or a community that breeds hatred.

Take your pick. On balance I find it to be a friendly place full of color, texture, different cultures and lots of life. As a culture the Mexicans are as pleasant, friendly and congenial a people as you will ever find. In addition their women are beautiful, their food terrific, their beer is the best and their laundry soap is tops, in my book.
Reminds me of the little story of the new folks who just moved into town and were asking the local preacher about the people who lived there. One couple explained that where they came from there were many fine and friendly people and wondered if this town also had them. The preacher replied, absolutely, you're sure to find many of those folk here. Another man says the people in his town were unfriendly and mean-spirited and he wondered if the people in this town were like that. The preacher responded yes it's true and you'll find many people just like that here.

Sure sounds like the law is fuuuucccckeedd up~!!!!

Unfortunately as more individuals in our society, deny the connection to their spirit their fear increases and the actions of the law and the police reflect that fear. Extreme examples of this are found recurring throughout history. In the United States, I think the pendulum is swinging to the fear side at the moment.

Have you ever been arrested?

Yes

your kids?

No not officially but they have had a serious run in with the law and have been in a police sponsored youth/gang diversion program in response. Hopefully they learned their lesson. But the jury is out on that one, they are still very young and there is lots of time and hormones yet to get into trouble. I didn't settle down until I was 35. We'll see.

Man you have a life full of expierence!

Yes indeed. And I am sure you do to. I find it is helpful when trying to relate events that happen to me, to try to keep my eyes opened while they are happening ;-)

I can't understand how you maintain good morals?

It's simple (not easy) really, I choose to. I lived for over 30 years as if there was no God and I know just where that goes and how ugly it can get. Now I endeavor to live by the principles (rules) of the Universe, because for one thing, there is only God and in truth it's the only way I can live (resistance is futile :-). And for another it works a whole lot better then living any other way. I guarantee it.

So you have a real life too besides the yoga practises? :)

My life is my yoga practice ;-)
And it just ratcheted up a couple of notches tonight. A close friend could die, another may be imprisoned for life, a father may loose his son, and some sons could lose their father. On the other hand a father may find his son, a son may find his freedom, a man may find his center and himself and some sons may keep their father never knowing any of the possibilities mentioned, ever existed. Or any combination thereof...

Fear
(Fear of Death)

This is my body's greatest fear. The fear that there is no God, no eternal existence, no continuity, no love. Do you have the same fear? Are you afraid of dying? How do you deal with it?
Babaji where are you? Jesus, Buddha, Paramahansa Yogananda, Stalin, Hitler, Bush, God. Where the fuck are you . Why don't you stop the bull shit. Set us free or condemn us, but stop fucking with us. We are whatever you are.

Jesus
(Was Jesus' crucifiction due to his karma?)

Was Jesus Christ's crucifiction due to his karma..... or not?

At the behest of God, Jesus, like many saints and sages incarnated as a human to do a job. He came to demonstrate to us that there is no death and no apparent evil that can not be transcended. Jesus also modeled the manner of behavior (living) that would move one towards awareness of the truth. I addition he came to make a new covenant (agreement) with the people of the earth and to teach people how to abide by that covenant.
As a realized being (spirit) Jesus is not subject to the laws of karma. Clearly his suffering was not punishment but a graphic demonstration of faith (knowing) in God. Raising from the dead wasn't such a bad trick either.

To paraphrase Ramakrishna, it is the spirit that ascends, not the body.

Breathing
(Why right arm only for alternate-nostril breathing?)

My yoga teacher says I should only use my right hand for alternate-nostril breathing. When I asked why, he wasn't sure.

A quick look through the COMPLETE BOOK OF YOGA, BySwami Vishnudevandana yielded this reference in a description of an advanced form of full alternate breathing.

> When you are holding the Breath, you must close the right nostril with the right thumb and the left nostril with the right ring finger and the little finger. Do not use the index finger for closing the nostril because the magnetic current from that finger is polluted.

Richard Hittlemen, in YOGA, The Eight Steps to Health and Peace, very clearly states that one sitting in the lotus position, should place the left hand on the left knee with the indicated mundra, using the right hand and specific fingers for the breathing. He also details how this exercise is practiced with holds of the bandas. Mundras and Bandas, mean deliberate channeling of energy (current) flows. The details of which I don't readily see in either book but I am sure a little more research will reveal the esoteric reasoning behind it.

I would stick with the right hand and the indicated fingers. Nothing is left to whim in hatha yoga. It is the most deliberate and precise science in existence.

Goodbyes
(Where's Jake?)

Most of the time when someone chooses to drop out of sight, they announce their intentions; like Mike D and JD Cambell. Although I am utterly flabbergasted that after years of committed participation in alt.yoga by JD, no one but me (who he told to piss off.) ever bothered to respond to JD's good bye post. :-(My comment was in general, I wasn't referring to anyone in particular, least of all you. You have often spoken fondly of JD.
I have read (with no little effort for me) many of JDs posts and I have found them inspired (if sometimes incomprehensible). Obviously he is well read, committed to inquiry and cares. Just the work it takes to sit down at the computer and type all the words, not to mention what it requires to think out and present them, indicates substantial effort. I can't imagine spending that kind of energy unless one cares about what they are doing.
Somewhere along the line I got the impression JD didn't appreciate something about me so at what I interpreted as his request, I stopped responding to his posts. But regardless when he said good-bye (and it seemed uncharacteristically clear), I felt a profound sadness. Sadness from the loss of something of value to me personally but more deeply for JD, that no one was responding to his notice. Whatever our differences, out of respect for his participation and caring, I felt like the only thing to do was to wish him well on his journey. Imagine being in a house full of people that you've spent hours (or years) talking to and then when you announce you are leaving, no on says a word, they just ignore you and let you go on your way.
It's as if the conventions of social interaction (common courtesy), which apply while in the presence of others, don't apply here. If you were in a group of people sitting around talking and someone said something at least one person would acknowledge that person's comment. Often in usenet someone says something and no on says a word. Not to mention the level and kinds of argumentative, hostile, disparaging comments people sometimes make. I rarely see people act and say the kinds of things (not as much in alt.yoga) to each other in person. I suppose it has to do with the anonymity factor. Like road rage. When people feel protected or invulnerable while driving in their cars they may be encouraged to express anger or strike out at others.
A while back I mentioned in a post about how I sometimes felt misunderstood. As I looked back at the post, I realized I had not mentioned the circumstance for which I give myself the most discomfort; being ignored. I remember I once wrote and posted a poem called God and war, which pasted from my server without comment. I know it was being read, we were in the middle of a war with Iraq. Perhaps the nature of what I write about is just too outrageous, nonsensical, or far removed from other's frame of reference or experience. Perhaps people don't see the application or relationship to yoga. At least a few people have said they find me to be insulting, arrogant, smug, condescending , dismissive, etc. This is not the truth but at least if they say this then I can respond or try to change their perception. But if someone is not brave enough to even make YOU statements (much less I statements) and instead says nothing; then where can they or I go with that?

Siddhis
(shiddhis)

What is the difference between 'occult powers' and siddhis? Aren't they the same thing?

Whoops! I accidentally posted this response to the thread on the randi challenge. Well here it is again.
Siddhis are not spiritual but are of the phenomenal planes. They relate to what we would call physical principles on this plane. What goes up must come down; for every action there is an opposite and equal reaction, etc. So in the physical world, we can observe and learn about the principles of pressure, aerodynamics and thrust and then build an airplane. Flying then would be our siddhi or power on the

physical plane. When our awareness moves deeper into each of they planes of existence, so too does our potential to manipulate the principles in operation there. With awareness of the operative principles in the astral plane we can learn to project ourselves around the universe or manifest objects in the physical plane, etc. Virtually every yoga text I have read acknowledges the ability to learn and use these powers comes with the continued study of yoga but cautions that the siddhis are not the point and for most will represent a distraction or down right impediment to spiritual development. The same way food, money, power and sex are.

Regarding discussion of occult powers or siddhis, I think anon's comment was a reaction to the tone or character of the discussions as debated in other groups such as alt.magick, alt.theosophy, alt.paranormal, sci.skeptic. Are there powers or are there not, yada, yada, yada. Where as in yoga, these powers are recognized and accepted but one is not encouraged to discuss or seek after them. If spontaneous events related to the siddhis are causing an aspirant trouble or fear or if pursuit of the siddhis is drawing an aspirant down a dangerous path, then they should be discussed and appropriately dealt with. But this can't happen in an atmosphere which is antagonistic or skeptical. These issues would be better dealt with by study, meditation for wisdom or the guidance of a knowledgeable, skilled and responsible guru.

Morality

(trancening the opposites)

Isn't unity trancending all the opposites? Even moral discrimination of good and evil?

There is no such thing as morality. Nor opposites like good and evil. I think the following of a moral code is a good way to live in practical terms. Leading a moral life will leave me with more energy and less fear. Good things because I am trying to bring my awareness into the Truth. On the other hand I have found God leading a somewhat less then morally exemplary life. So I can't say immorality is a bad thing, it brought me home to God, so where's the bad in that? I am of the opinion (know) there is no good or bad only alignment or misalignment, with the truth and the feedback the Universe provides for us to know where we are. Where there is acceptance and alignment there appears to be good. Where there's denial or misalignment there appears to be sin, sickness and evil.

In Science of Mind circles, I am what is referred to as an Absolutist. The following may sound like gibberish, but this is what allows me to know the truth any time I choose. It goes like this.

There is God, God is everywhere. God is first cause. Therefore everything, everywhere is made up of what ever God is. Ergo, it's all God. God has no opposite, so in Truth, there can be no opposites. Any appearance of opposites must be related to the phenomenal world and therefore maya. Therefore there are no opposites to transcend only my believe in them. God is Good so it's all Good. God is Love, so it's all Love. The only way I can be afraid is if in response to my desire, I turn my awareness away from the present (and only) moment, where in Reality and Truth, there is only God and in my imagination project into a nonexistent (and therefore without God) future or the non-existing (No God here either) past to create an illusion that I don't have something I want. Of course I can't have any need for which to want anything because I have everything God has because I am made up of whatever God is. Like a drop in the Ocean. That drop is what the Ocean is. That drop touches every other part of the Ocean. It is not the Ocean but it is whatever the Ocean is. If I keep my awareness in the present then I know I have everything I need. God's Grace and Light exists here, in the now and nowhere else. When I project back or forward in my imagination it is as if I am turning from God's Light and into a dark shadow (shadows do not exist, they are only indicative of the absence of light) and this I can imagine to be a very dangerous and unhappy place. Where as if I maintain my awareness in the now where God is then what can happen to me. Can I die? Of course not God can't die so neither can I. If it's all God, could I possible be hurt in any way? Could I not have what I need? Impossible I have whatever God has. And so on.

Maintaining this awareness has not been easy task. There are millions of influences which discourage or appear to contradict the truth. Especially the body and the emotions. I remember kneeling over my 7 year old son as he lay in the middle of the street after being hit by a car. Somewhere deep inside I knew I was supposed to try and rise above the appearance of my sons injury and pain but I was so frightened I

couldn't even remember the word God. I was given the strength to do what I needed to protect and treat him. Also my wife who was hysterically blaming me, as well as the poor man (with five of his own kids) who's car my son ran in front of. Eventually everything turned out OK. In fact after six months in the hospital the doctors told me my son's leg when healed would be stronger then it was before the accident. Have you ever felt the fear generated by your DNA? I have. There was a situation where I was very much in awareness of the truth (that there is only God) but my body was not cooperating. It had it's own built in agenda for survival. So I was in the curious position of knowing the truth but unable to control my bodies fear reaction. It wasn't pleasant, but I got a real good sense of just how deeply the programmed nature of fear is. This is why I continue my practice of yoga.
Jhana to keep me in awareness of the Truth, Bhakti to celebrate my awareness of the Truth, Karma to put Truth into action. What has been and remains most difficult for me, is to adopt and practice hatha to keep the bodily temple healthy and ready for concentration , meditation and eventually non-stop awareness and expression of the Truth. These disciplines I need to help keep me in the moment and transcend the illusions of physical finality programmed into my DNA and the race mind.
I make a little ground each day. Step by step, just keep chipping away at it. Over the years I have made profound changes and perhaps some day I will let go of the fear of annihilation all together and drop into a permanent and unshakable awareness of Truth of God's presence. But I'm not banking on any transcendent moment. Just persistence. Working little by little, doing the best I can with what I have. Hoping I'm not at the train station when my ship comes in :-) Trying to remember, there's really no where to go and nothing to do but accept what's True right now this moment. It's all God.

But more fear you confront the more fear you can transcend?

If by confronting you mean developing awareness of your fear then confronting is part of the transcendent process. If by confronting you mean fighting or opposing your fear then I would say this is not required. Fear has no objective existence. Like a shadow it is only indicative of an absence of light. Likewise cold had no existence; it is only a indication or result of the absence of heat. The antidote for darkness and cold is not to fight off or resist them. This will get you nowhere because they are not cause, they are only effects. The strategy is to open a window and let the light in and turn on the heat.
Fear is always an anticipation and for this reason it is always a false (unreal) imagining. I can't fight what doesn't exist. But because I create the fear reactions by my imagining then I can stop (let go) of the imagining and the fear evaporates because it never existed in the first place. So I need to be aware of when I am afraid but I don't have to know all the things I am afraid of or why. I don't need to battle or strengthen myself against fear. I need only keep my awareness in my present moment where there is no fear, only God.
Still this is not an easy task for me. One trick I use in when I am acting like a jerk, feeling angry (aggressively expressed fear), anxious or depressed, then I ask myself what am I afraid of. If I can in that moment label my fear then the anger evaporates and I can deal with the fear in any appropriate way at hand. If I can't deal with it then I simply remind myself there is only God and it is all good and there is nothing in the universe that I have to fear.
The 27 Psalm is a great treatment for fear. If I have enough presence of mind to remind myself of it.
The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life: of whom (what) shall I be afraid?

I'd like to applaud your above response. It expresses something I've been chewing over in amorphous form, for some time. As a student of SOM and Yogic philosophy, I have been wanting to succinctly explain the cosmology as taught by SOM, to my Raja Yoga friends. It's very nice to meet someone else who has studied the SOM enterpretation of reality as well as the Yogic teachings, which, I believe lead to the same Truth.

I am very glad to hear this. Science of Mind helped me validate my experience and yoga showed me what I can do about it. I found the similarities of SOM to yoga so profound that I did some study into the history and development of SOM. I've never heard it related this way but I determined that the whole New

Thought movement in the United States and England, in the 30's was highly influenced by (if not adopted from) Hinduism and Yoga. This includes, Emmett Fox, Christian Science, Religious Science, Troward, AA, Emerson, Thoreau and Metaphysics in general. Paramahansa Yogananda was in the US doing his thing about that time also. I would love to read a scholarly treatment of the subject. If I can't find one someday then perhaps when I'm older and can do anything I like, I'll write one myself. The more I study various religious traditions, the more I realize they all point to the truth. Kinda like ice cream. Pick a flavor. It's all ice cream, so it's all good :-)

Spam

(The sickening of American soul)

For far too long in America, the soul has been under attack

Nice rant. Some good points; even a couple of I statements (personal anecdotes). I like those. On balance though, I didn't feel it was a very convincing presentation. May I suggest you might be more effective in expressing your viewpoint and angst, if you make your argument in poems, written in the first person. And remember; Spam by any other name, tastes just as salty.
Good luck with your book sales (really).

God

(What is God)

Is Yoga related to one of the mainstream Eastern religions, or something separate?

Yoga can be understood and practiced as separate from or integral to any religion but yoga most definitively is not religion. Yoga is science. The most well studied, documented and deliberate science on the planet. But as you noted it's eastern origin and flavor can make it difficult for many westerners to comprehend, much less view as science. Also much of it has been passed on from teacher to student, making it seem even more mysterious to westerners.

The history and development of yoga, as far as I know, has its origin in ancient India. Throughout history many of the practitioners of yoga have been Hindu. So much of what you hear about yoga may have a Hindu or even Buddhist flavor. But I can assure you that I practice yoga and do not practice Hinduism, Buddhism or any other religion for that matter. Even atheists can and do practice yoga successfully. Far from trying to destroy individualism, the very nature and process of yoga is to engage the individual in self-exploration which will lead to the truth and therefore to a happy and healthy life. Yoga philosophy and practice is utterly inclusive and not opposed to religion or belief system, but different from any and all religions forms because it is a science of self-awareness whose ultimate goal is the direct awareness of God.

I might suggest you find a copy of Richard Hittlemen's, YOGA, The 8 Steps to Health and Peace. It is a very comprehensive introduction to the various forms of yoga, written by a westerner and free of most of the flowery phrasing and constant Sanskrit references of many of the eastern writers. Intelligent, engaging and completely sensible, I promise you it will give thorough introduction to the theory and practice of the major yogic disciplines. The Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramahansa Yogananda is also an excellent bridge for the understanding of yoga by westerners and was written for that very purpose. It's a great read too!

At the end of yoga you will find yourself and I can't imagine any more worthwhile endeavor. My real, everyday, practical and emotional happiness increases proportionately to my practice of yoga and it has from day one.

I hope my comments have been helpful. Feel free to question them. Also I would encourage you to look into yoga using western references. It would be a shame if you were to throw the baby out with the bath water :-)

Alone
(Alone)

Gee, I guess I didn't invent anything new. Glad I'm past (come to accept) it (sort of...)

Alone

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

From childhood's hour I have not been
As others were--I have not seen
As others saw--I could not bring
My passions from a common spring.
From the same source I have not taken
My sorrow; I could not awaken
My heart to joy at the same tone;
And all I lov'd, I lov'd alone.
Then--in my childhood--in the dawn
Of a most stormy life--was drawn
From ev'ry depth of good and ill
The mystery which binds me still:
From the torrent, or the fountain,
From the red cliff of the mountain,
From the sun that 'round me roll'd
In its autumn tint of gold--
From the lightning in the sky
As it pass'd me flying by--
From the thunder and the storm
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)
Of a demon in my view.

Work
(Do what you love or love what you do?)

Sometimes you get a job that you love, other times you get a job that you don't.

I agree with you. Wherever you go, there you are!
Here's my vote.
To me it's all God. God is Love. So Love what I do, no matter what it is. If I don't, then I am out of alignment with the Truth and I have nothing but painful feedback to look forward to. Love always works. Nothing else exists, so nothing else can.

Presence/Jnana

(The Presence)

I wanted to share this wonderful treatment (prayer). When I read it, I can't possibly deny its Truth. Even at a time when I had no belief in God and couldn't even conceive of what it meant, I still couldn't deny its fundamental Truth. That's when I knew that reality must be something very different the sh*t-hole I lived in.

> Emmet Fox, Power Through Constructive Thinking, 1932
>
> The Presence
>
> God is the only Presence and the only Power. God is fully present here with me, now. God is the only real Presence-all the rest is but shadow. God is perfect Good, and God is the cause only of perfect Good. God never sends sickness, trouble, accident, temptation, nor death itself; nor does He authorize these things. We bring them upon ourselves by our own wrong thinking. God, Good, can cause only good. The same fountain cannot send forth both sweet and bitter water.
>
> I am Divine Spirit. I am the child of God. In God I live and move and have my being; so I have no fear. I am surrounded by the Peace of God and all is well. I am not afraid of people; I am not afraid of things; I am not afraid of circumstances; I am not afraid of myself; for God is with me. The Peace of God fills my soul, and I have no fear. I dwell in the Presence of God, and no fear can touch me. I am not afraid of the past; I am not afraid of the present; I am not afraid for the future; for God is with me. The Eternal God is my dwelling place and underneath are the everlasting arms. Nothing can ever touch me but the direct action of God Himself, and God is Love.
>
> God is Life; I understand that and I express it. God is Truth; I understand that and express it. God is divine Love; I understand that and I express it. I send out thoughts of love and peace and healing to the whole universe: to all trees and plants and growing things, to all beasts and birds and fishes, and to every man, woman and child on earth, without any distinction. If anyone has ever injured me or done me any kind of harm, I fully and freely forgive him and let him go. I am free and he is free. If there is any burden or resentment in me I cast it upon the Christ within, and I go free.
>
> God is Infinite Wisdom, and that Wisdom is mine. That Wisdom leads and guides me; so I shall not make mistakes. Christ in me is a lamp unto my feet. God is Infinite Life, and that Life is my supply; so I shall want for nothing. God created me and he sustains me. Divine Love has foreseen everything, and provided for everything. One Mind, One Power, One Principle. One God, One law, One Element. Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands and feet.
>
> I am Divine Spirit, the Child of God, and in the Presence of God I dwell forever. I thank God for Perfect Harmony.

I don't know what jnani yoga is.

Here are a few quotes which (for me) convey the general idea of what Jnana Yoga is. I hope they are helpful.
The words in brackets are mine.

> From Richard Hittleman's, YOGA, The Eight Steps to Health and Peace.
>
> "Jnana is the path of liberation for those in whom the qualities of the intellect--reason, dialectics, analysis--predominate. The student (jnani) has gravitated to this Yoga as the result of an intuitive grasp of the fact that he is indeed SELF [God], that he is always and forever SELF [God] and that he could not for a moment ever be anything but SELF [God]. However the ordinary mind is still in the dominant position and advances formidable intellectual doubts pertaining to his intuition; he therefore experiences himself as a battleground upon which the forces intellect and intuition oppose each other. Driven by his intuition to transcend his intellectual doubts he turns to Yoga for guidance

and is invited by Jnana to engage in that peculiar and fascinating process wherein he utilizes ordinary mind to transcend ordinary mind!"

"The primary principal that is applied by the Jnani to all things is that of discrimination."

"Through this practice of discrimination, the concealed nature of his ordinary mind and other elements that sustain the illusion of his self [] are gradually exposed, resulting in the increasing actualization of SELF [God], that is in SELF-Realization. [God-realization]"

"In the context of the Patanjali structure, Jnana Yoga can be considered as a development of the fifth Niyama: The intellectual resolve to achieve Yoga through discrimination; this is subsequently actualized in the various stages of intuitive knowledge, direct perception, gained in the sixth, seventh, and eight limbs."

"Each system of Yoga contains element of other Yogas. To be totally involved in Jnana Yoga does not require the elimination of the strong feelings and emotions of Bhakti or preclude use of the physical postures of Hatha. Theses element can certainly be included in the Jnani's practice. What is implicit in Jnana Yoga is that the practitioner, being primarily of an intellectual nature, utilizes the principle of discrimination as his major enlightening technique in the attainment of Yoga."

To me the words of Emmet Fox, (in his prayer, The Presence), are Jnana of the highest possible order. Where Jnana and Bhakti merge in the Truth and are undifferentiated (Yoga).

Yoga

(I might have not yet understood)

The term Yoga can be a bit confusing sometimes because the same word is used to denote two separate ideas related to the same thing.
Yoga means union. It is the goal, to be united in awareness of the Truth (God).
Yoga also is the path for attaining union and refers to different techniques for achieving union with God (Bhakti, Karma, Hatha, Raga, Jnana, Laya, etc.)
Yoga is the goal and yoga is also the path to the goal.

I would like to ask too what types of Yoga there is

In very simple and general terms some of the larger classifications of yoga are:
Bhakti, the yoga of devotion or love of God. (prayer, chanting, devotion.) Karma, the yoga of selfless action and service to God (serving others without reward.) Hatha, the yoga of perfecting the body as a temple of God (exercise, cleansing, strength.) Raga, the yoga of stillness and integration with God (Patanjali's eight steps concentration, meditation.) Laya, the yoga of vibration and energy, as expression of God (chakras, energy, bgh nnn.) Jnana, the yoga of intellect and knowledge of God. (Discrimination, neti-neti, study)
I recommend highly, Richard Hittleman's YOGA: The 8 Steps to Health and Peace. It is a great introduction to Yoga written for westerner's. I also recommend Paramahansa Yogananda's, The Autobiography of a Yogi. It was written specifically to introduce Yoga to the West and is a great story.

God

(When is/was/will God?)

I know there are those of you who suspect there is God and some who hope there is God (especially those who deny or insist there is no God) and some who believe there is God and perhaps someone who actually knows there is God. Don't give up now. Remember it's alway darkest before the dawn. The answer is near.

Hope I don't have to meditate 50 years before getting these answers. :)

As I... But then fifty years is a mere moment, in a life that spans eternity :-)

When will this happen?

I feel for you. I have been (still am) there. Here's what helped/s me.
I sat quietly and put my question directly to God. When I heard his reply I instantly knew everything I could possibly need to know: That there is God. All the rest follows on that Truth. While my life continues to present pain and difficulty, I am nonetheless, free and day by day, bit by bit, my fear and unhappiness give way to appreciation, compassion and serenity.
I try not to judge myself or others regarding my yoga practice or anything else. I tell myself it is all God, so It is all Good.
I keep trying to meditate. While my progress doesn't seem to be very much, it is 1000% better then when I first started. So I strive to have patience with myself and others.
I use the mantra, Let go and let God.
I read and study spiritual books, talk about and remind myself of God's presence as often as I can.
I just keep going. I have to admit it is much easier for me now because I know the Truth. I remember feeling much the same way as you describe, before I knew. But I kept blindly hitting my head against the wall, and running around like a chicken with his head chopped off, breaking every universal principal there is, and when I had suffered enough and was ready I opened my heart and my soul and I heard God's answer. Oh, and going to jail, attending five years of AA, 10 years of therapy, two failed marriages, ten failed jobs and abject poverty (in the order) has helped a lot also :-)

Enlightenment

(sudden or gradual?....)

My own experience is slow growth (though i would love a quick red pill to fix it!).

It seems like the moment I knew the Truth (that there is God) was sudden. But what led up to it was not (thirty-five years worth). Bringing body, mind and emotions (my vehicle) in alignment with the Truth is again progressing gradually (15 years now). Yoga is most helpful. The difference is, before I had no ideal who I was or where I was going and I was scared to death. Now I know who and what and I am and I am much less frightened :-)
But just like the little red pill in the movie, the knowledge was quick but then the real work started. In many ways life for those who know gets harder not easier. What's easier is doing what you have to do when you know and not while you are wondering, hoping or disbelieving.

Sleep

(Which side to sleep on?)

How do you sleep?

I sleep on the right side. I started to take notice of which side I felt most comfortable on some years ago after reading a yoga book. I believe it said that in this position the heart can pump more efficiently. I feel much more comfortable on my right.
I am fairly certain God is on both sides equally :-)

Golden Key

(Golden Key)

The Golden Key By Emmet Fox, from Power Through Constructive Thinking, 1932

[Forward to the Golden Key. I have compressed this essay into a few pages. Had it been possible I would have reduced it to as many lines. It is not intended to be an instructional treatise, but a practical recipe for getting out of trouble. Study and research are well in their own time and place, but no amount of either will get you out of a concrete difficulty. Nothing but practical work in your own consciousness will do that. The mistake made by many people, when things go wrong, is to skim through book after book, without getting anywhere.

Read the Golden Key several times. DO exactly what it says, and if you are persistent enough you will overcome any difficulty.]

The Golden Key

Scientific Prayer will enable you , sooner or later, to get yourself, or anyone else, out of any difficulty on the face of the earth. It is the Golden key to harmony and happiness. To those who have no acquaintance with the mightiest power in existence, this may appear to be a rash claim, but it needs only a fair trial to prove that, without a shadow of doubt. it is a just one. You need take no one's word for it, and you should not. Simply try it for yourself, and see.

God is omnipotent, and man is His image and likeness, and has dominion over all things. This is the inspired teaching, and it is intended to be taken literally, at its face value. Man means every man, and so the ability to draw on this power in not the special prerogative of the Mystic or the Saint, as is so often supposed, or even of the highly trained practitioner. Whoever you are, wherever you may be, the Golden Key to harmony is in you hand now. This is because in Scientific Prayer it is God who works, and not you, and so your particular limitations of weaknesses are of no account in the process. You are only the channel through which the Divine action takes place, and you treatment will really be just the getting of yourself out of the way. Beginners often get startling results at the first time of trying, for all that is absolutely essential is to have an open mind, and sufficient faith to try the experiment. Apart from that, you may hold any views on religion, or none.

As for the actual method of working, like all fundamental things, it is simplicity itself. All that you have to do is this: Stop thing about the difficulty, whatever it is, and think about God instead. This is the complete rule, and if only you will do this, the trouble, whatever it is, will presently disappear. It makes no difference what kind of trouble it is. It may be a big thing or a little thing; it may concern health, finance, a law-suit, a quarrel, an accident. or anything else conceivable; but whatever it is, just stop thinking about it, and think of God instead- that is all you have to do.

The thing could not be simpler, could it? God Himself could scarcely have made it simpler, and yet it never fails to work when given a fair trial.

Do not try to form a picture of God, which is, of course, impossible Work by rehearsing anything or everything that you know about God. God is Wisdom, Truth, inconceivable Love. God is present everywhere; has infinite power; knows everything; and so on. It matters not how well you may think you understand these things; go over them repeatedly.

But you must stop thinking of the trouble, whatever it is. The rule is to think about God, and if you are thinking about your difficultly you are not thinking about God. To be continually glancing over your shoulder, as it were, in order to see how matters are progressing, is fatal, because that is thinking of the trouble, and you must think of God, and of nothing else. Your object is to drive the thought of the difficulty right out of your consciousness, for a few moments at least, substituting for it the thought of God. This is the crux of the whole thing. If you can become so absorbed the this consideration of the spiritual world that you really forget for a while all about the trouble concerning which you began to pray, you will presently find that you are safely and comfortably out of you difficulty--that you demonstration is made.

In order to "Golden Key" a troublesome person or a difficult situation, think, "Now I am going to "Golden Key" John, or Mary, or that threatened danger"; then proceed to drive all thought of John, or Mary, or the danger right out of your mind, replacing it by the thought of God.

By working in this way about a person, you are not seeking to influence his conduct in any way, except that you prevent him from injuring or annoying you, and you do him nothing but good. Thereafter he is certain to be in some degree a better, wiser and more spiritual person, just because you have "Golden Keyed" him. A pending law-suit or other difficulty would probably fade out harmlessly without coming to a crisis, justice being done to all parties concerned.

If you find that you can do this very quickly, you may repeat the operation several time a day with intervals between. Be sure, however, each time you have done it, that you drop all thought of the matter until the next time. This is important.

We have said that the Golden Key is simple, and so it is, but, of course, it is not always easy to turn. If you are very frightened or worried it may be difficult, at first, to get your thoughts away from material things. But by constantly repeating some statement of absolute Truth that appeals to you, such as There is no power but God, or I am the child of God, filled and surrounded by the perfect peace of God, or God is Love, or God is guiding me now, or perhaps best the simplest of all, just God is with me--however mechanical or dead it may seem to first--you will soon find your mind is clearing. Do not struggle violently; be quiet but insistent. Each time that you find your attention wandering, just switch it straight back to God.

Do not try to think out in advance what the solution of your difficulty will probably turn out to be. This is technically called "outlining" and will only delay the demonstration. Leave the question of ways and means strictly to God. You want to get out of your difficulty--that is sufficient. You do you half, and God will never fail to do His.

Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Beliefs

(Beliefs processing)

I m having troubles with some important beliefs like self esteem, can you recommend me a good way to process my distorted thoughts?

I have troubles like this myself.
My thought are either true or they are not. One or zero. On or off. It is or it isn't.
When I have a thought that is inconsistent with the Truth, I simply restate it to myself as Truth. The more I do this the less fear I feel.
The Truth is there is only God...

What do you mean by "the Truth", i m not sure but are you trying to say i should try not to assume things or?

It's called many things.
In Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) it's reframing.
In Psychology it is refuting irrational thoughts/believes.
In Science of Mind it is called mental treatment.
In yoga, it is the neti-neti (not this, not this) of Jhnana.
But in good old fashion everyday terms, I call it telling myself the truth. You see no matter how good a decision I make, if it is based on anything other then the truth then it is predicated on bad information and it will be a bad decision. So naturally I will receive the painful feedback I require anytime I make a bad decision. I can't make a good decision based on bad information. The Bible would say, I can't plant weeds and expect to reap corn.
But what is the nature of Truth? The Truth is whatever is. The Truth is absolute. There are no individual truths or relative truth. The Truth is whatever it is, period. It does not matter whether I know what it is or not, this changes nothing; truth is truth. Anything else is either shadow (absence of) or an imagining.
So if whatever I do or think, is inconsistent with what is true, then I am going to hear about it in a most unpleasant way. Unpleasant, because that's how feedback works. When I put my hand on a hot stove I get a very unpleasant sensation, so I quickly pull my hand away. If I received no feeling or a good feeling I would likely leave my hand there and have it burnt off. So the Universe is very intelligently set up to provide unpleasant (painful) feedback to get my attention so I can change what I need to. It's really a wonderful and most effective system. Now if I don't want to listen to the feedback, say I don't believe it, or others convince me its not true, then the longer I ignore it, the more damage will be done and the louder

the feedback will get. Perhaps I don't want to hear the feedback because I am afraid and prideful. I can use drugs, sex, anger, self-righteous indignation or whatever I choose to mask it. But in order for me to hear the feedback over my denial, the feedback must get harder and louder. If the pain of denial exceeds the pain and fear of change then I might realize what is happening and choose to change what I am doing. In which case the feedback (pain) will simply evaporate because it no longer has a purpose. If I continue resisting the truth long and hard enough, eventually my body will give out (or if I am lucky I will go to a hospital or jail) because it can only resist the feedback so long.

Now what is the Truth? The Truth is, there is God. In fact there is only God.

So how does this Truth affect me or how I think or act or the quality or nature of my life?

Let me give you an example of my process by using your example of "self defamation, thoughts of self inferiority, worthlessness."

First of all I have to be honest with myself about what I am thinking and feeling. If I am not aware or truthful about my thoughts, feeling, actions and circumstances, then I can do nothing but suffer.

Suppose I was feeling useless, inferior or not worthwhile and I am unwilling to accept this for myself, then I might ask myself the following.

If there is God, then God must be everywhere. If God is everywhere then everything, everywhere must be made up of, or in the nature and substance of whatever God is. Because God is first cause and there is no place God is not, there can be no thing created which could be made of anything, but what God is. Therefore I must be, whatever God is. Just like a drop in the ocean must be made up of whatever that ocean is. It is not the ocean but it is of and as the ocean and is connected with every part of the ocean and is not separate from that ocean.

So if I have my existence in whatever God is, then so must everyone and everything else. So there could not be any part of the Universe which is any more or less God like. In reality there can be no inferior or superior anything or anyone. Yes that would mean that the murderous criminal is made of the same stuff I am. I am he. That, God is every bit as present in the sinner as in the saint.

By using the knowledge of Truth, that there is God, I can know the truth about anything, anytime I choose, without exception.

If I tell myself I am unworthy then I am saying God is unworthy. That must be a lie. If I tell myself someone is hurting me, then I am saying that God could/would hurt me. That is a lie. If I say that something is ugly or evil then I am saying the nature of God is ugly and evil. This is clearly a lie.

Don't think for a second that telling myself the truth is easy. It is even more difficult to tell others. Once I knew the truth (which came after a great deal of resistance and painful feedback) it became easy know the truth of any circumstance by simple reasoning but it is much more difficult to act with it. People think I am nuts. This is a lie. People say I am in denial. This is a lie. The majority of the people on this planet would be most happy to point out infinite examples of the evil, injustice and disharmony in the world. This is a lie. The Truth is; whatever I am experiencing or looking at is, whatever God is. And God is Love, so everything everywhere is Love. God is intelligence, so everything everywhere is intelligence. God is Truth, so everything everywhere is Truth. God is life, so there is no death. God is Principle, so there is no luck or coincidence. God is here, now, so there is no time; no past or future. God is everywhere, so there is no distance or any place to go. I am whatever God is so I am whole and perfect now. (And I thank God for this.)

The Truth is simple and easy. Living in alignment with it is not. This is where Yoga is very helpful. Gaining control and discipline over the body and the mind whose constant messages of death, sickness, evil, unhappiness, impermanence and vulnerability are lies. The yama and niyama are (moral systems) rules/guides for correcting the lies and practicing the truth of our existence. But without knowledge and acceptance of the truth, yoga like all other systems and endeavors is without meaning or power. It is a lie. Yoga is in God and God in yoga. Without faith, hope or God awareness, yoga practice is mere manipulation of the phenomenal world and will pass away when our body does.

I realize I have said a lot and much of it may seem incomprehensible. I think the best way to realize the Truth is to put your questions, directly to God. I say be as aggressive, demanding, insistent, unrepentant and as angry as you care. God can handle it and God will and already has answered all of your questions.

You need only listen.
I am always happy to try my best to answer any sincere question about what I know, how I live my life, what it was like and what it's like now.
Good luck. (of course there is no luck, there is only God and God is Principle, so everything everywhere is correct, perfect and conforms to perfect universal law, as it should :-)

Resentment

(where is Mike Dubbeld?)

> *Oh! Nice and gentle Mike! I miss him....*
>
> *Are we thinking of the same guy who makes disparaging remarks about anybody who has a practice different then his own? I have been more offended by his posts than illuminated. Am I missing something here?*

An opportunity to let go of a self-generated (justified) resentment? An opportunity to see God in all people and all things? An opportunity to let go? An opportunity to grow?
Perhaps Gandhi and Jesus would proof instructive. They were both attacked and they both spoke of ways to respond to attack with Love.
I think there must be something to what they had to say. After all they both paid with their lives to say it. And they both died with God on their lips.
I appreciate you responding to my post. It would have been easy not to. I also appreciate your positive and respectful tone. Something I have come to count on from you. Which is one of the reasons why I was a bit surprised at your gratuitous indictment of Mike D. Seems more in character for him then you. The fact that he wasn't party to the thread and there to defend himself also gave me pause.
I think that because you thought I was defending Mike, you missed the message in my post. I had changed the subject. Something I am apt to do when I think there is something more important to consider. In this case you. So by way of explanation I offer the following clarifications.

> *Am I missing something here?*

An opportunity to see God in all people and all things? An opportunity to let go? An opportunity to grow?
I was answering a question you posed. I was not defending or even talking about Mike D. My interest in this thread is communicating with Stu. I understand and appreciate that because your question was not really a question but a statement (an attack on) that you might interpret any answer as a statement (defense of).
Mike D has his own purpose in attacking what he sees as negative (offends him). I do not share many of his ideas. I do however like Mike D and I have benefited from a number of his contributions. In my opinion Mike is very knowledgeable and it is clear to me that he works very hard at his participation in alt.yoga. I sense that he has integrity and do not sense any malicious motive. I think the same about you, and you seem to be more positive in your outlook and responses, which agrees with me.

> *So your saying if a guy spouts hateful rhetoric on this NG and I find it offensive this is self generated resentment.*

All feelings are self-generated (and justified) and as soon as you said you were offended, I knew we were not dealing with Love but with resentment (fear). A feeling, believe or judgment which is not being let go (forgiven) but which is continuing to cause pain and discomfort (feedback). Knowing very deeply about resentment (self-inflicted torture) myself, I was moved by compassion to reach out and suggest (Socratic method) some areas you might look at to help you become aware of and therefore in a better position to let go (grow out) of your resentment.

> *I feel it is my duty to point it out.*

And I feel it's my duty and Mike has also said he feels it's his duty to point out others faults. Gee, we seem to be more alike then not in this regard :-)

Any other action would be disingenuous.

Of course and Mike has made this same point.

I see the transcendental spirit on all people and all things.

Did you mean on or in all people? One would come from somewhere on to someone. The other would come from within all things.

I also see the lack of spirit.

Some place where spirit is not? How could that be? If God is everywhere and God is Spirit, where could there not be Spirit and what god would we find there?

I will not be duped.

Yes, I am afraid you will. So will I and everyone else. No one can lie to us unless we are deceiving ourselves and this we all do most of the time. Anytime I see someone or something as distinctly separate or different from me then I am lying to myself. It's all God, it can't be different. I can appear to be different but in the spiritual sense I can't be.

I believe Jesus was quite critical of the Roman establishment and Jews who were not following the tradition. Gandhi was very critical of the British.

The question I have to ask myself when I am being critical is (like the seven-up commercials :-) what's my motivation? Am I pointing out someone's fault or error in Love (knowing I am them) or in fear (resentment, anger or jealousy, they). Same action, two different motivations. One based on the Truth (God) and one based on a lie (fear).

I am free to be critical of intolerant posters like Mike D.

Of course.

I feel strongly in my heart that his long winded posts are for the most part tamasic.

There is some truth in what you say. I also think there are things you are missing because your feelings cloud your intuitive (universal) knowing.

You can defend him all you want. But be very careful of who you are defending.

The last thing I want to do is defend Mike D. He is a big boy and he can take care of himself. After all he is the one mixing it up over power yoga and TM. Besides we all get what we need (deserve). Besides I see all paths as leading to God. So there are no mistakes or misdirection or anything wrong I my world. There is only God and God is perfect.

Do you really think somebody as arrogant and prejudice as Mike can be compared to Gandhi or Jesus?

I was not comparing Mike D with Gandhi or Jesus. I was pointing out that these two men were very experienced at being attacked by others and that they showed us another way to deal with it besides resentment, anger, hatred or malice. Yes they were very critical and they excelled at pointing out the faults of others. For this they paid with their lives. It was their purpose and motivation in doing so that sets them apart from many of us. They did what they did from a Love (God) space, not a fear (evil) space. I mentioned them as a model for you (and I) to consider when dealing with perceived (or actual) attacks on us in alt.yoga or elsewhere by Mike D, Omjaroo or anyone else ;-)

Who can know if he has self-generated (justified) resentment, is clinging or not growing?

Resentment? The Bible tells us, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." What is the result of the comments, feelings or criticisms? Togetherness, connectedness, understanding, compassion, appreciation, encouragement, support, forgiveness, reconciliation, enlightenment, healing, etc these would be the fruits of Love. Or anger, retribution, disparagement, misunderstanding, punishment, misdirection, agitation, ignorance, etc and these would be the fruit of fear (resentment). Is it helpful or is it hurtful?
And growing? We are always growing. The moment we appear not to be it's because the vehicle has expired. We (the I Am) however continues, sans vehicle until we pick up another.
I personally have only one desire left (to let go of) and that is at the moment of my passing to have the presence to see only God and to move fearlessly from one state to another knowing and speaking the Truth; there is no death, there is only God. Both Gandhi and Jesus died in communion with God. Gandhi's last words were "Rama" and Jesus said, "It has been accomplished".

What do you want to tell us with this paragraph about Jesus and Gandhi?

I was pointing out that these two men were very experienced at being attacked by others and that they showed us another way to deal with it besides resentment, anger, hatred or malice. Yes they were very critical and they excelled at pointing out the faults of others. For this they paid with their lives. It was their purpose and motivation in doing so that sets them apart from many of us. They did what they did from a Love (God) space, not a fear (evil) space.

Looks like a party of 'teachers' lacking 'students' to bother

Remember, although it may seem like it sometimes, we are not the only ones reading these posts. Governments, students, saints and sages, newbys, lurkers, trolls, masters and all manner of inquiring minds follow the pithy and wisdom imbued musings and repartee here in alt.yoga :-)
But seriously, I liken everything I say to planting a seed. If it has life (Truth) and it finds fertile ground (student) then it will grow and express God's Love. If it is barren (lies) then it will fall to the ground, to wither and die. I work hard at making myself understood and to communicate the Truth I have learned in an interesting, entertaining and accessible manner. I realize all to well, I fall far short. I also realize that everyone has their own path and their own fears and that I can not compel anyone to think or believe anything. This is why I try to stay with I statements. Anyone can pick and choose whatever they need or want from whatever I say. Take what you want and leave the rest. As long as I avoid you statements then there is less reason to defend or argue. Every day in every way I am getting better and better. In the mean time though...

There is nothing gratuitous about the post. If the bridge is out it is important to erect some type of blockade to stop unsuspecting drivers from going into the river.

I have only followed the group for a year or two and there is lot's I don't know. I used the word gratuitous because while the poster's tongue in cheek comment about Mike's sunny disposition certainly opened the door I didn't understand why you needed to say what you did. I'm sorry I didn't realize you were on a mission.

Again, I ask you to look at his posts and interpret his motivations for attacks.

To tell you the truth Mike's attack posts bore the daylights out of me. I don't see any point and I don't think they are motivated by love but by fear. So nothing but evil (of course there is no evil, only God) can come from them. I have shared my thoughts and feelings about this with Mike in the past.

These incriminations are made out of ignorance.

Recognizing (and accepting) ignorance in ourselves and others is a high level spiritual activity. But of course you have no need to defend your spiritual practice nor to condemn anyone else's. Let him rant, who cares. For someone to be mislead or discouraged by his comments, they would have to turn from the Source to listen to him and whatever they get is what they need to, in order to progress on their path. In other words they will get what they deserve. We all have to learn about listening to others instead of our own inner voice. It's a painful but necessary lesson.

dealing with greater controversy than alt.yoga you will find I like point out the broken bridges ahead more often

I try to stay off of other groups. I learned my lesson (ouch) recently by stepping into the middle of a cross-posted discussion concerning the shiddhis. I watch the headers more closely now and pay more attention to exactly what people are talking about and whether I have sufficient knowledge or experience to participate ;-(

there is no trace of fear here

If there is no fear then there is Love. One or the other. Zero or One, on or off. Either our actions are motivated by fear or they are motivated by Love. There is no middle ground.

Of course the other tactic is to ignore the ramblings and hope they will go away. That might be the fearful approach.

It's never the thing itself that has meaning, only our motivation for using it that gives it meaning. The ignore and do not empower with your energy technique could be used in a fearful manner or from Love. Seems that on usenet the ignore method is more effective (and less irritating and bandwidth sucking) then flaming or arguments.

And I am always on the lookout for ways to open up and allow more compassion in my life.

This I think is the most noble of pursuits. Try to understand what Mike is afraid of and what drives him to attack others. If you can get a sense of that it will be much easier to have compassion. My sponsor (guru in AA parlance) used to say, everyone is doing the best they can with what they have and when they can do better they will do better. So take people where they are and assume they are doing the best they can (including yourself) and take it easy.

That is a idealist approach.

I prefer to call it an absolutist approach :-) To me an idealist is one who hasn't gotten kicked in the teeth yet and turned his innocence into cynicism. I have lived both those lies in the extreme and have moved beyond them. Now there is only God and God is absolute and has no opposite.

Note that Jesus failed at this task, the Romans continued to rule the Jews, and that Jews still have not found a Kingdom of God.

The Bible tells us that Jesus's task was to fulfill a prophesy and to offer mankind an opportunity for everlasting freedom. To forfeit his life to pay for the sin of Adam and Eve. This he did. Jesus had no interest what so ever in the local politics. The Jews on the other hand killed their promised King and would probably do it again if he appeared tomorrow (that is if he wasn't going to deliver Armageddon) This is their lesson. When they learn it, they too can be free.

Gandhi's non-dualistic approach was more successful.

Where Jesus taught and practiced spiritual principles and had no use for material concerns, Gandhi brought those same principles to bear on material (political) structures. He, like Jesus demonstrated that a man could be physically free by living in alignment with his higher spiritual self. They both changed the world (for the better) moving humanity forward toward reunification (yoga) of awareness in God.

I promise I will continue to put up road blocks when I see the bridge is washed out ahead

I wouldn't want it any other way :-) I hope you don't mind me insisting that the bridge is perfectly fine. Or even better, that there is no bridge at all. Nothing to cross, nowhere to go. nothing to attain. We are all there right now. Because there is only God and whatever God is, we are. And whatever God has, we have and whatever God knows, we know. That God is Love and there is only Love.

The word, waheguru, means the existence is wonderful, the word guru means master as such but for Guru Nanak 'guru' meant a bodiless consciousness, the all pervading being, the omniscient one. Master is the one from where I get my enlightenment, so even master is called Parmatama roop. If we go to the root of word guru then it means despoiler of darkness, as 'gu' in Persian language means darkness and word 'ru' means light, thus one who wards away my ignorance my darkness is guru. Hence waheguru has double meaning one towards master and one for God.

Hari Har Singh, Thanks for the post. I found myself chuckling throughout. I think it started with the wisdom growing on my shit part! It's a treat to smile once in awhile.
I was making a joke of my own, in my reference to you using the Pearl quote. In reality I thought it was used in a perfectly appropriate context with impeccable timing. You would have made any debating professor beam with pride :-) Remember wisdom (discrimination) isn't invented, it is handed down to us from others and then practiced until we get good at it. As you say.

But you get them as direct self experience, not as what Pearls would call "mindfucking bullshit".

It is gained by a process of making mistakes and being given correction. A lot of it comes with just staying in the game long enough. It is a very natural process.

And thank you for pointing out that the opposite to fear is love.

And you have hit on the secret to all of happiness, not to mention existence (see there was a secret, so now its out. I spilled the beans. Hope I don't get thrown out of the Esoteric Conspirator's Club :-)
What you say is perfectly true on one level. Fear (in all it's forms, hate, anger, jealousy, resentment, depression, ignorance, etc) appears to be the opposite of Love. Relatively speaking this is very true. But in absolute reality, Love has no opposite. God is Love and God has no opposite. Fear, while it appears to have substance or existence is but a shadow. Fear is what we call the nothingness and terror (feedback) we experience in the absence of Love. Just like when we block the light (which has existence) we perceive darkness (which does not exist). If we remove heat (which has existence) we perceive cold (which does not exist). In the absence of our awareness of Love (which is the only thing that exists) we experience fear (an anticipation, a desire or an imagining based on a future which can and will never exist or an equally non-existent -dead- past). God (Love) is here now and only now. When our awareness is in the present moment (the only one that exists), then our awareness is with God (Love) and there can be no fear. To deny God is to deny all that exists (phew! pretty scary place. I've been there, not pleasant). Of course in reality one can not be out of the presence of God. The appearance of this state can only exist in our imagination. It would appear we live in a universe of opposites. But this is not true. We live in a binary universe. One or zero. On or Off. It exists or it doesn't. An absolute universe. Continuously alternating opposites are an expression of the relative Mayic expression of God. It is much as you said in your post.

It seems to me we are speaking / writing on somewhat different levels.

And it is OK, we can speak on different levels. The relative (Maya or symbol or illusion) and the absolute (God, existence and reality). We can also live in the relative or the absolute. The goal for me is to reconcile and converge the two. From what I have read, bringing one hundred percent of one's consciousness into the absolute makes it very difficult to keep the vehicle existing in the relative. I think it wants to go home :-)

Man, I can't beleive the conversations that sprung up around this simple question. Especially with Stu and omjaroo, I've learned quite a bit. There are some very inspirational words.

I've learned that everybody is around for a reason. Including Mike D. The proof is right here, were it not for him, this post wouldn't have caught my eye.

Isn't it great how that works?

Bad Back

(herniated disc and bikram yoga)

My question is about the safety of returning to bikram

I suffered back problems that turned my spine into a pretzel shape. I was about your age too. I was on my back for 3 months and hobbling for 9 more. This went on in some form or fashion for over 5 years. I took up traditional Hatha by myself, out of a book by Richard Hittlemen, for a short time (6 months). 10 years later the back pain has not returned.

My problem was not about a specific lifting incident (although there was one of those) but about lifestyle. This means, eating, drinking, sex, smoking, exercise (or lack of), driving, working, habits, etc. My back was an accident waiting to happen, so a relatively minor pull caused terrific problems.

For instance, eating a lot of salt can cause excessive fluid retention in and around joints causing pressure on disks, etc. Straining at the toilet from constipation and/or sneezing from allergy and colds, both cause internal pressure which can damage disks. These are factors affected by diet Habits of living like driving a car with bad seats; sitting for hours staring into a CRT or digging ditches all day; watching a lot of TV or any other activity which places the body, in an out of balance position, for long periods. Smoking, alcohol, drugs, sex, caffeine, sodas, etc. can all raise the blood pressure quickly and stress the entire body. Imbalanced blood sugar (muscle fuel) levels ; mineral deficiencies/imbalances (especially magnesium) and improper (shallow) breathing can all lead to and/or exacerbate muscle and issues. Aerobic yoga and western style exercise workouts may very well contribute if not cause you problems. After all you were doing both when you re-injured yourself, so clearly they were not protecting you. I suggest you do not take up either until you have resolved your back issue to your satisfaction.

I would suggest a thorough inventory of every aspect of your life and health. Get some books or do some internet research, for yourself. I also suggest a kinder, gentler yoga regimen at home by yourself, a juice fast as soon as you can manage it and lots of rest and reflection on what is really important in your life. In other words take responsibility for and control of your own health and well being. Forget about others and whatever they are selling and take control of your life and your back. They're yours and you are responsible for them. If you want some specific ideas about sources, let me know.

Personally I would stay away from doctors who want to treat with pain killers, cortisone and surgery. Find a good chiropractor, they are ones who know about backs. A holistic medical or Ayurveda practitioner can help with backs, lifestyle and nutrition. There is a natural healing alternative for any problem under the sun. But because they are harder to charge a lot of money for, you may have to search hard to find it. Once you have found it though they are yours for life.

Best of all, seek God's guidance and wisdom concerning your problem.

Yoga

(Yoga)

Someone quietly announces the answer. No one listens - they still need to figure out and experience the 1,256,789,201 ways to live life in the wrong way first I think.

I was wondering how many there were. Whew, only 1,256,789,183 left to go :-)

2004

January

Mantra

(Mantra for others)

Blessing others is blessing God. If the motivation is Love (not desire/fear) then it can only be helpful. The reason this works is because it's all One Mind. Awareness of God's presence by one person can be felt by and affect many others who need or long for it.
Tao
(Yoga and Taoism)

Is there any link between Taoism and Yoga?

I have noticed the same "themes", in my study of Taoism as well as many other religions. I attribute it to the fact that all humans and all knowledge springs from the same source. Somewhere in Turkey, I think they are saying now (which I understand agrees with the bible).
The similarities are utterly obvious to me but rarely do I run across someone who sees it as I do. That's one of the things that attracted me to the science of Yoga; it's inclusiveness and recognition of one source.

Enlightenment

(Enlightenment is a story!)

If not what is it?

Whatever enlightenment is, it is right now this moment or it does not exist
If God is enlightened then I am enlightened because I am in, of and as whatever God is.
Personally I think we are all enlightened. Most of us just don't realize it yet. :-)

Projection

(If the shoe fits...)

I was watching my 14 year old son launch into a what promised to be a grand and luxurious stretch, when he abruptly stopped and with a pained look on his face, declared, "I hate it when I stretch because I feel like someone is going to poke me in the ribs."
Noting an opportunity to point out a important concept in human (and cosmic) relations I explained to him that this is a perfect example of a very natural human behavior. I'm not sure what to call it, (in psychology it's called projection) but it is common to all people. That is the tendency for people to ascribe their own traits to others around them. My son felt vulnerable (quite without cause in this case) to someone poking him the ribs while he stretched. Why? Because he is the one who likes to poke (and irritate others in a million different ways) people in the ribs. So it is he who fears the very thing that he might do. Ironically, in a sense he is being punished (can't enjoy a stretch) for actions he has taken or would take. No doubt we've all seen this effect in the liar who is afraid of being cheated and the thief who is so careful to protect himself and his property from being stolen. The filter through we view our world is the one with which we are most familiar and knowledgeable. Often times we will accuse others around us of the vary qualities and actions of which we ourselves are guilty. For instance my ex-wife insists most ardently that I am a liar. I have never lied to the women and yet it was she who stood in court and lied her pretty as* off and has lied many, many times. The fact is she has a value for lying and I don't She feels to lie serves her in some good way. I on the other hand believe lying is poison of the highest order and I work at eliminating it from my life. Yet my ex-wife sees me as a liar. Her filter, not my actions.

It makes perfect sense to me that in order to lessen our fear we would try to convince ourselves of the accuracy of our perceptions, by seeing these things in others. Another example. I have been frightened much of my life and I am very quick to judge other's behaviors and motivations. Naturally, I am very sensitive to being judged and as such, am quick to see this fault in others. As I continue to let go of my fear, my propensity for quick judgment lessens correspondingly. I am also in a much better position to accurately determine whether I am being arbitrarily judged or if there is reason and cause for someone's criticism. I am developing an open mind but it can only be as open as I am willing to be vulnerable (and responsible). I must be willing and able not to protect myself.
I have found it very difficult (but not impossible) to have an open mind. In addition to vulnerability, an open mind must be an empty mind. Without preconception, interpretation or filter. This is how I use jhana yoga to work on this.
My mind and emotions don't perceive the truth of what I see and experience clearly all the time. So I constantly look at my situation and my reaction to it and I assess whether my action, feelings and what I am telling myself about the situation are aligned with a known truth. One such truth is; God is Everywhere, God is Everything, God is Love, Everything, Everywhere is Love. So I can judge any action or reaction I express which is inconsistent with one appropriate to this Truth must be generated by fear and therefore inaccurate (a lie). Any action based on fear must be inaccurate because fear always anticipates and all anticipation is a mental construct and therefore has no substance or reality. Any decision I make on the basis of fear will be a bad one because it is predicated on bad information. I can also know whether I am acting in fear or in the absence of fear by the results of my actions. Actions motivated by fear will produce results like hate, fear, anger, rage, depression, longing, desire, boredom, anxiousness, disappointment, suspicion, resentment, etc. Actions motivated without fear will produce results which are loving, intelligent, efficient, joyous, honest, freeing, responsible, appropriate, connecting, inclusive, healthy, practical, measured, etc.
If my actions, words and motivations don't align with the truth then I have corrections and or apologies to make. It is an ongoing and somewhat arduous process. Sometimes I lack sympathy for myself (and others) because of the sheer amount of falsehoods which require correcting. But then I have to ask myself if it is sympathy (poor me, poor you) I lack or compassion (God in me and God in you). One is generated by fear and the other by the absence of.

> *I read this post twice. :)*

And I have read it many more times then that and each time I do I find another couple of mistakes :-)

> *I read your post - yes, once again! - and realised why I have got time for you! :)*
>
> *You display amazing similarities to my former business partner, whom I actually liked (and he liked me in buckets) but I decided to distance myself. I am much happier for it! :)*

But you didn't mention what those qualities were or whether or not you liked them. I would infer that because you are happier at a distance you find them less then pleasant. On the other hand you are still conversing with me so perhaps while not pleasant you value them in some other manner. I'm reaching of course, as you seem to exercise a certain thrift with details and/or explanation. :-)
I find it very difficult and time consuming to communicate in writing. I'm not able to use many of the short cuts and symbols I can while speaking in person (body language, vocal nuance, eye contact, facial gestures) to make clarifications or instant adjustments to misunderstandings, etc. Besides, before committing myself to writing I like to be sure I am saying exactly what I want. This process requires thought, contemplation and decision. Then comes the work of faithfully and accurately painting my thoughts in words. All this so it can likely be misunderstood. Sounds like the life of an artist!

> [A writer writes not because he is educated but because he is driven by the need to communicate. Behind the need to communicate is the need to share. Behind the need to share is the need to be understood. The writer wants to be understood much more than he wants to be respected or praised or even loved. And that perhaps, is what makes him different from others. - Leo Rosten]

Expectations
(Expectations)

would happen naturally and w/o efforts as one would breath w/o efforts.

In this you are correct. Do whatever you want, it doesn't matter. [No matter what I do it changes nothing] You are already there. You have never been anywhere else. If you must do something then accept what is true now. [All I need to do is to accept what is true, right now, there is only God] You are whatever God is just as a drop of sea water is whatever the ocean is. You always have been and you always will be, because there is and only every has been, Now.

What you have written above is moonshine. A regurgitation of half-learnt knowledge spoken by every cult and religion known to mankind.

Its funny - I agree with you and I also agree with Omjaroo. However, it is important to understand Omjaroo's story, as a yoga student struggling with alcoholism. Omjaroo clearly has used the xtain mythology to help climb out of this addiction.

I've read your post a dozen times and I still don't quite get it. So I will respond, point for point.
I hope you'll respond. After all you felt strongly enough to say what you did to the whole world. Wouldn't it be a point of honor to allow me an exchange and perhaps some clarification? Regardless, you are not the only one reading this so, it's important that I respond.
I have studied perhaps 50-60% of all the religions (the main ones for sure) and I have never heard this idea stated as such anywhere but in Science of Mind and Yoga (which is a science, not a religion). Fact is not long ago (and today in certain parts of the world) I could be put to death for making such an assertion (they certainly took Jesus to task for it). So between your moonshine comment and your every religion comment I am going to hazard a guess that you are atheist. Please don't assume that I believe being atheist is negative, I don't. I think everyone thinking person will be one at some time in their live(s).
About the half learnt knowledge comment. Up until the time I knew there was God, I would have considered myself an atheist or at least and agnostic. I didn't start to study religion or even say the G word, until I possessed that knowledge. So half learnt is inaccurate. In fact learnt doesn't work for me either, I would say realized would be more to the point.

One who is really in possession of the "truth" of "God" (!) will not offer such trite advice.

I can't even fathom how you could term the knowing of the existence of God or any advice or claim in that regard as "trite". Britney Spears is trite, God is not. But if you are atheist, then I guess I could see it. I will give you unoriginal (trite) though. After all there is nothing new under the sun. (whoops, another trite saying)

The awesome truth will be _realised_ at a level _above_ "God"

These words don't refer to anything and so they don't mean anything to me. What awesome truth? Do you know something you would you share it with me (us)?

There is _no_ "God", (or gods), as frightening or disconcerting as it may appear.

What can I say? Simply not true. And yes you are very right, any discussion along this line would be hopelessly pointless for both you and I. I don't believe either of us needs or wants a discussion of is there God. Is that correct?
As I have said before, any comments I make are for whoever wants them and for whatever reason they want them. The last thing I am trying to do is convince anyone of anything. (I bet you don't believe that. And I wouldn't either if I was you. But I'm not you I am me; so believe it).

At that level, "God" would cease to exist to reveal a higher quality. It is experiential, ineffable, unspeakable. It should be _found_ not given away, much less in your kind of preaching.

How right you are! But you know what? I may have struggled much longer then I did, had someone(s) not planted the seeds of possibility in my mind, which would eventually awaken and allow me hear the Truth. Remember there was no God in my world (and yes it was very frightening and disconcerting, not to mention painful) but there was God in some other's world and they talked (not preached) about it. Thank God they did. All in all they were a pretty tuff bunch. I respected the ones who had been to prison the most.

I find your incessant repetition of the word "God" distasteful if not downright offensive.

Why? (Real question)

I realise that my reaction to you was harsh, and hope that I didn't hurt your feelings.

I am ever reminded that we often can't hear what others are saying unless it is what we want to hear. Unless it conforms to and can pass through our internal filters somewhat intact.
Of course you did not hurt my feelings. You don't have that power. Only I can so that and in this case I didn't feel a need to. I was however surprised (silly me, although I have to admit it is a pleasure to recognize I have some measure of vulnerability). Along with my initial emotional processing of your (Dad's - gee what did I do wrong, why am I not good enough, etc.) rebuke I was at once thrilled and gratified that an individual would honestly share their thoughts about me, with me and others. I have been criticized by others for violating their personal sensibilities but I sensed a certain honesty and forthrightness in yours. Then I did a google search and found out why I recognized your name and style.
Reactions to my words are an issue on the receiving end. I have no power to offend, hurt feeling, irritate, spark outrage or resentment (or save, make feel good, ease pain, etc). Any feelings or thoughts generated by the reading of my words are created by and belong to the person reading them. This to me is common sense. The only power I have (woefully less then I would like) is to express who I am, how I think, what I feel as honestly as I can.
A favorite quote from Emilio Zola says, the purpose of my art is to life my life out loud. And this is what I aspire to because it is what I fear most.
As an artist I am sure you realize there is no accounting for taste. I figured out (intellectually; emotionally I am just catching up) some time ago that it doesn't matter what anyone thinks. That I am the one accountable for my thoughts, actions and their consequences. To thy own self be true, said some smart guy awhile back and I believe it. After all I am the only one who knows what is true about me and what the whole story is.
I learned this lesson in the most graphic terms as I stood in front of a judge listening to all the things I supposedly did and all the reasons I did them. All inaccurate and utterly false (but they sounded plausible). To all concerned this was undoubtedly the truth, how could it not be? Fortunately after hearing my side the judge felt there were possibly two good explanations for the circumstance and this created a reasonable doubt in his mind so the traffic ticket was dropped. It was a strange (and ugly) feeling, knowing what the truth was and listening to an attack being made on me which was completely false, yet true in the perception of the professional policeman.
A similar situation would play out years later as I stood in another court (we are a very legalistic society here in the U.S.) and listened to an attack on me with lies and fabrications being made for financial motive. This time the stakes were higher and I was facing county jail time. Same story. I knew what was true and why the people accusing me were lying. In this case the State (district attorney, whose job was to put me in jail) stepped in on my behalf and resolved the matter without prejudice to me. Simply amazing!
Again six years later I would stand in another court (hey is there a pattern here?) in an attempt to protect myself and my children from an abusive spouse and listen to a litany of lies, fabrications, hatred, fear and emotional (and social) manipulation. The only way I could have defended myself was to attack my wife. I was unwilling to do that so this time around I stood nearly silent. This would continue for another 5-6 hearings. And in fact continues to this day. Same lies, same social sanctions and ignorance, same options to hurt my wife to protect myself. In my life the only real effective strategy has been to tell the truth and

stay with that because what passes for the truth in the eyes of others is all to often whatever they want it to be.

I *think you will find the answer to most of your questions above in my recent posts.*

I have the most rudimentary Usenet service and they drop threads fairly quickly. I wasn't following your thread with Wade but I did find and read it on google. I understand. What's interesting is that your views on religion seem to be remarkably similar to mine. I personally have little use for it. Stu said something about bible quotes and recently I was deemed a religious zealot in another thread. Whew. Preaching, zealot, bible thumper all because I use the word God. I don't think I have ever posted or referred to the practice of any religion. I can quote from the Gita, the upanishads, the vedas and any number or religious texts, some well known, others obscure. I just quoted from the bible because it is a well known reference and I happen to be currently taking lessons in it. I guess I should assume some sensitivity around Christianity by other religious and cultural followers. The Christians have a reputation for aggressively preaching.

But experiential knowledge is something else.

For me also and I couldn't agree more. Personal experience is far more valuable to me then books full of text and commentaries. Please don't tell me who or what you think I am, or quote me what someone else says, share with me who you are, what worked, what didn't, where you're going and where you've been. How do you think, feel and live. This is valuable and worth listening to and investing thought in the review and a response. The other is important but it is everywhere. Non-presentation, forthrightness and honesty are as rare as hen's teeth ;-)

The realm of unmanifest. The ineffable.

I agree and I think this is very true, but I've also come to believe that God can be known here and now. How do you spell paradox? I think perhaps it is the difference between trying to see the source (impossible) and the expression of the source (doable) I've spent fifteen years contemplating and trying to grasp the meaning of Everything, Is and Of and As God. I've only recently begun to share (alt.yoga) what I have learned. As you can see the words I use to communicate what my experience and knowledge are hopelessly inadequate and what others hear and see is trite, offensive and irreverent :-) I have tried posting my understanding in poems that I wrote but even these have generally been ignored or dismissed. I can see why every time Jesus opened his mouth someone wanted to stone him to death. Words spoken without a context can not communicate. This is why the words along with personal meaning and context are more valuable to me.

a quality that has kept me young, heart and body.

I might not be alive today but for the birth of my daughter 22 years ago. It was at that moment as I looked at her that I felt (small as it was) I had a reason to live. A responsibility to pull myself out of the shit hole (mentally, spiritually and physically) I was in, in order to protect and nurture this little being. While I would eventually miss a great deal of my daughter's growing up (we are still estranged) I can now occasionally feel joy in watching my son's (12 & 14) as they grow.

I would wish you good fortune in great abundance as you grow into that which your nature wants you to be.

There is no luck, no mistakes, no advantages or capriciousness in the Universe. If you could see all the equations the math would be perfect. Can't wait until the quantum physicists catch up to Einstein's unified field theory. That will be fun. I think it will be the atheists who finally proof there is God.

Expectations, cont:

(response may be offensive to reverent types)

Somewhere along the line I got the impression that you have little use for or understanding of anything I have to convey. I can't remember the last time you had anything positive or especially constructive to say

to me. I do however remember you launching into me when you thought that I was at a disadvantage in that cross posted thread on siddhis. I have the distinct impression that you have never once understood what I have posted from the very first post you ever replied to. I mean really, do a search on your nic and mine and tell me we have ever been even close to one mind. Mostly I have the impression that you are self rigorous and condescending; judge what I say and then accuse me of doing the very same thing. But having said that, as long as you respond to my posts, I will continue to respond to yours until you ask me not to or until I get the impression you are simply trolling for a response.
I have in the past been accused of being a bit goody two shoes, or Polly Anna like in my view of the world. E.g., there's only God and God is Good, so only Good exists, etc. So just for a change of pace I'll step out of my roll of saint like optimist and respond in a manner I have a bit more experience and facility with.

> *It's about the sacred and the profane, and the level of reverence.*

Wasn't there a book, poem or quote to this effect? Really, I make a point of giving others credit when I use their words.

> *The casual use of the word "God"*

Would you be suggesting that I use the word God casually? I have never used the word God casually in my life. Even when I say God Damn it, I am still aware that I am speaking God's name. You might notice I always capitalize the word God. You'll also notice anytime I refer to an attribute of God I also capitalize it. This is a form of Bhakti practice for me and not meant for your consumption but if you paid the least attention to what I write you might notice it.

> *is like a tourist going into a temple and prattling on, comparing his personal beliefs*

Would you be suggesting I prattle? Surely you've noticed some deliberateness in what I say and how I say it?

> *while the real worshippers inside are silently going about their reverential worship."God" is a very sacred area for many people. There is a reason that many religions do not utter the name of their "God", it is considered profane.*

Boy, not saying God because it's considered profane. Now that has to my definition of: completely stupid and idiotic beyond belief. Are there really such people? Then I grieve for them and offer this prayer: God, God, God, God, God, God, God, God, God, God.
You know what? Fuck God, fuck God in his ass. And Buddha, Gandhi, Jesus and Mother Theresa to boot. The Pope, the Dalai Lama, Martin Luther King, Babaji. Who else would you like on the list? Fuck them all and fuck Omjaroo too. Worship means nothing. Reverence is nothing more then ass kissing cowardice and hypocrisy. Do you suppose for a second that any of these people want you, me or anyone else to worship them? Holy crap! It's all bullshit and they would be the first ones to tell you as much.
You want to talk to me about reverence? I know what real reverence is. It is when you stop begging (admiring, worshiping) the great and noble people of history like they could do something for you and start living your life like they did. You want to have reverence for God, then tell and live in the Truth and in Love; express Intelligence ; live by Principle and revere Life. Because God is Life, Love, Truth, Intelligence, Soul, Principle and Spirit. Admire and revere Jesus Christ, Gandhi. Then try living like them for even five minutes a day. These were both fighters and irreverent as hell. Don't bother praying to or admiring Mother Theresa, try putting others before yourself. Now that's real reverence. Try living in the piss and shit she did. Draw a dying, pus soaked body to you and comfort and still someone's fear. Don't talk to me about reverence. It means shit...
God's Love,
Jared
PS. Think I am afraid of being punished for what I've said? Not even. Karma? Bring it on! I've said a lot worse and really did mean it. Besides, reverent or not, casual or not, God does and always has blessed me. And I thank God for this.

I find your reaction to omjaroo insipid and lacking in substance.

Based on your response to my post I can certainly understand the tenor of your statement. My (pleasant) experience has been with Shahin, that at first he seems to react to other's posts emotionally and then after some inquiry and thought he tempers his initial reaction with a very grounded (perhaps religious, perhaps philosophical) reasoning which for me often hits the mark.
To me the important thing is he is honest in his reactions and in his reflection. I personally appreciate that. Besides I don't think his training and experience are akin to yours or mine and this might account for his particular "take" on things. It would seem he has concentrated on cultivating beauty, symmetry and perfection. The opposite side of the same stick might very likely provoke an uncomfortable reaction in him.
As I read your contributions as well as those of others recently, I am thinking we have the makings of a good solid (great and fun) exchange of knowledge, experience and perspective, if we can only surmount the fear of sharing who we are, what we think and where we've been.

Sorry you feel this way. I will from now on stop responding to your posts and stay out of your way.

It's in no way what I want but if it's what you want then of course I will respect (accept) it. I'd much rather hear your heart felt response to my comments.
Besides you are (and have been) a committed contributor to alt.yoga for some time (before I joined) and as such I value (and always have, if not always agree with or understand) your input.

Thus, knowing that change is the only constant

There is no change... There is only now.

One must have compassion, and be guided by that.

There is no compassion without empathy. Knowing what it feels like. Knowing what it feels like to take responsibility for causing it and then letting it go. Then encouraging and/or teaching others to do the same.

Pity has absolutely no value.

I agree and worse then that pity has a negative value. It takes away.

We are not here to 'save the world'. We are here to save ourselves.

There is nothing to save, there is only now.

Moderation saves us from pain.

Moderation allows us to prolong our ignoring of God's message. Acceptance, appreciation and letting go of desire (fear) eases the need for the pain (feedback). Moderation can only make the suffering more consistent and therefore less compelling. A slow death (quiet desperation) versus catharsis.

Everone has their point on the learning curve.

I know that everyone does the best they can with what they have and when they can do better, they will... There is only God and there is only Now and everything is perfect Now (understanding not withstanding) ;-)

Kshata Karmas
(kshata karmas)

a part of the six acts of purification (kshata karmas) is the enima, is there something that could cleanse the intestinal tract, other than the enima???

I am not aware of which are as effective at physically cleansing and/or clearing the bowel.
The only differentiation I have heard discussed is Hatha adepts wading into a body of water and using muscle contractions to draw water up into the bowel, as opposed to using a bag, hose and nozzle. For the last 15 years, I have used enemas while fasting to flush out impurities which otherwise have no way out as there is no bulk in the bowel to pass while fasting.
The use of vegetable or grain fibers to create bulk within the intestine has a cleansing effect but not a clearing one. There are also herbs (neem) and extracts (grapefruit seed, black walnut-worm wood) which are useful in controlling intestinal parasites (worms, yeast, etc.).What is your interest in finding an alternative to enemas for internal cleansing?

she said i had her interest until i mentioned the enima

My guess is if she is put off by enemas, she'll really object to swallowing a 15 foot long by 3 inch wide piece of fine muslin cloth then drawing it out slowly as in the cloth purification kriya. :-()----------

Empathy
(Compassion, Empathy and/or Fear...)

Warning: This is a challenge. So if you don't like them, please don't read on.
Someone mentioned compassion. So on that subject I thought:
God makes no distinction. Dare I?
The Void makes no distinction. Could I?
The Universe makes no distinction. Please.
The Story makes no distinction. Well Puma?
Atheists make no distinction. Please again.
Artists (yogis?) make no distinction :-)
Should I say F*ck every one of you, without distinction!
Or should I say, I Love every one of you, without distinction!
Does anyone hear get it; even a little bit?
Or do you know something I don't?
Is there anyone here who knows the Truth?
I don't like to use "you" statements. But I am you... Can you tell me who you are? So I know who I am?
By the way, empathy is "knowing". Sympathy is giving a sh*t. Compassion is feeling empathy and/or giving sympathy indiscriminately and without distinction.
Has anyone read the "City of Joy" by Dominique Lapierre?
Why is fear used in the subject line? Because in the presence of fear, there can be no compassion, while there is often empathy and sometimes sympathy.
Comments?

My truth or yours ? :-)

Yours is fine. If its Truth, it's mine (and theirs) anyway ;-)

If sympathy and empathy can lead to compassion, then I salute your sympathy and empathy.

Since we have nothing to disagree with I have to assume our apparent discord on this subject is language related.
Here is an example of how I define empathy.
Empathy is that state of being or quality which is characterized by "knowing" how another person feels.
For example, I drop a rock on my big toe. I feel a strong shocking pressure, which quickly turns in to a

intense stabbing pain radiating up from the top of my toe to my solar plexus, causing a sharp inhalation. My complete focus and concentration is now on my injured toe. The pain in my toe immediately begins to throb and my breath is released all at once with a loud invective like, "oh sh*t!!! Tensing my body, the volume of the throbbing in my toe increases resolutely until I am nearly in tears. Realizing that my tension and resistance of the pain will only serve to increase and maintain it, I wrestle control of my breath and work to relax into the pain, letting it deliver it's message. Accepting this message I express my appreciation for it's wisdom and Love and continue to relax into it, gradually letting go of all resistance and therefore any need for continued pain. About a week or two later the pain will be gone, my toe healed and life moves on.
Now if I watch you drop a rock on your toe I can access my memory of just what that feels like. This is empathy.
Sympathy on the other hand is different. Sympathy is that quality or feeling characterized by feeling concern for or feeling sorry for another person. Lets say I see you drop a rock on your toe. I can be empathetic (if I've had that experience) or not (never dropped a rock on my toe) and I can be sympathetic; Poor guy. I feel bad for him. With empathy and sympathy I might choose to express compassion. I know how that feels and I feel bad for him. I will go and try to show him how to work through the pain to help minimize and shorten his suffering, etc.
I could be empathetic but not sympathetic at all. I could know what it feels like to drop a rock on my toe and watch you do the same and react with apathy (Big deal, so what? Everyone drops rocks on their toes) or antipathy (stupid jerk, what does he expect. He deserves to be in pain, he's an idiot, etc)
Both qualities of empathy and sympathy can be used to express compassion. They can both be used to express fear and hatred. Like anything else, the qualities of empathy of sympathy mean nothing in themselves. What we bring to them gives them gives them their meaning. Are we motivated by fear or by Love (absence of fear)? Kill someone, destroy something, create and build something, whatever. Our motivation; fear or Love will define its meaning and character, either good or evil. It's never about the thing itself; only the meaning we bring to it. It is we who are created in God's image. It is we who have dominion over the universe. It is we who have free will. It is our choice. Now. Always has been and always will be. ;-)

In german language we differenciate between "mitgefuehl" and "mitleid".

I am certain there are English equivalents for this word but I can't think of them. No doubt, some psychological term would apply. From looking on a English/German online dictionary I get the impression, just like in English this word is subject to many and varied interpretations and usage. I would term what you are saying as mature, grounded, sensitive, caring. Capable

"Mitleid" is suffering yourself - while watching others suffering

Same as above for this word also. Frightened, immature, self-absorbed. Incapable

As someone who has enough experiences with hospitals I can tell you that people visiting you there and showing their "Mitleid" often had to be comforted by me more then I recieved comfort by them.

That would make you the fortunate one. Having transcended the fear and the fear of those around you. Letting go of the appearance of your problems and focusing on helping others. Sounds like freedom (a blessing) to me :-)
You comments raises an interesting notion for me. When I am in the presence of someone who is having trouble breathing, I will start to have trouble breathing. I have a connection with them that translates into a physical reaction in "sympathy" with them. I have learned over the years that if their trouble can cause this in me then I may be able to cause a similar effect in them. So now when someone is having an asthma attack or choking spell in my presence, in order to try and be helpful, when I feel myself physically sympathizing then I take control of my breath and quietly, calmly, rhythmically and deeply inhale and exhale. If this doesn't help calm the other person, it will at least not exacerbate the problem and it does calm me so I can remain present and appropriately responsive as needed.

Likewise I can take on another's fear and any number of other feelings. I have done this numerous times in my life. I used to think I was crazy because I didn't know or understand what was happening. Since I have studied Yoga I have come to understand what was/is happening and I have much more control over my reaction and much less fear.
When my son was run over by a car and in the hospital my Religious Science Minister came to the hospital to visit and lend support. He connected so solidly with the appearance of my sons injuries that he literally passed out while standing by the side of the bed. He would later explain that he had identified so much that he was overwhelmed. Analogous I thing to a yogi absorbing or letting some karma play out in his body to save the life or pain of another person. Of course in this case it was not skilled or deliberate but spontaneous out of sympathy or compassion. But different then what you described above. It was not his pain it was my sons. Religious Science, by the way has very specific techniques for managing just this type of situation. I am certain the Minister learned a very important and practical lesson that day and I am certain he is better at being far more skilled at being compassionate for it.

> *But that is not what I would call "Sympathy". Sympathy is to me something not as strong as empathy or compassion. Words...*

I agree, pretty useless sometimes. But after all they are not the thing they symbolize. The thing itself will always speak much more clearly then words ever could. But sometimes the words are all we can hear.
Compassion is choice to take or not take an action in response to living by religious principle, being sympathetic and/or empathic or because your heart and soul cry out for you to be. A will to be compassionate however, is just the beginning. Compassion requires, skill, strength, intelligence, resolve and other attributes that must be learned, practiced and developed.

Internet
Going Dark for A While :-(

Looks like I can't avoid some disruption of my internet for at least a few days; perhaps as long as a week or two.
I'm so upset! How will I survive???
Easy Jared... Enhance your calm... Stay grounded... Breath...
Which technique can I use? Buddhist, Taoist, Hindu, NLP, Religious Science, New Thought, Biblical, Chi Kung, Yoga, Zen, Bio Feedback, Silva Mind Control, Tantric, AA, Prayer? My therapist maybe?
Ah h*ll, by the time I decide, I'll probably be back :-)

April
Atheism
(Hinduism is mistaken)

> *Buddha was wrong, Krishna was wrong, and all the supernatural religions are wrong.*

Then I would say you were in very good company!

Tao
(Tao)

> *Here's a stupid question. Is Tao pronounced as Dao or Tao?*

I did a search on pronounce+tao and there were 4000+ hits. Seems it's not such a dumb question after all. Or if it is, there's alot of us who have it :-) I know I've asked my kung fu master, my chinese friends and a half a dozen others and still haven't got it clear until just now when I read this thread by a person called fragglerocker: (Bottom line; it's dao.)

> *The oldest system for transcribing Chinese into the Roman alphabet is the Wade-Giles. That's where we got things like Mao Tse-Tung, Sze-Chuan, and Chou En-Lai. Even though it was named after and*

presumably invented by two Englishmen, it was modeled on French phonetics. For example, Tian An Men, "Heaven Peace Gate", actually had an apostrophe after the T: T'ian An Men. That made it an aspirated T, like in English "take". Without the apostrophe, T is pronounced more like an English D. Although to be precise, it is like a French T, which is why I say it follows French Phonetics.

So "Tao", which does not have an apostrophe, in the Wade-Giles system was pronounced as "Dao." If it had an apostrophe, "T'ao", then it would be pronounced as in English "Tao".

If that sounds confusing, it is. It was horrible. Sometime after the Communist revolution the Chinese themselves adopted the Pin-Yin transcription system. Suddenly everything made more sense. The Premier's name is now Mao Ze-Dong, which is kind of how it was pronounced. The province is Si-Chuan. The other Premier was Zhou En-Lai. Tian An Men doesn't need the apostrophe. Dian, which means "a little bit" is spelled with a D because it sounds like a D.

Thus the word Dao is now spelled Dao, which is pretty similar to the way it is pronounced.

But it's the same word. Old books call it Tao, new books call it Dao. Some Chinese words are so well established that scholars continue to write them in the old transliteration system, which in my opinion merely confuses everybody. For example, Lao Tzu, "Dear Elder," should be written Lao Zi now. Sun Tzu, the famous general, is now Sun Zi. The dog breed Shih Tzu should be Shi Zi, which would be really nice because people would stop pronouncing it like it contained the sound "shit", which it doesn't.

Some of those old transcriptions will never die because they are so common. But the Dao is a very humble word. It simply means Way. "Wo zhi dao" -- "I know (the way)". "Wo dao cheng qu" -- "I travel (on the way) to the city".

Humble words should not be elevated to the status of revered ancient traditions. The Chinese people who practice "the way" would be the first to insist that we adopt the modern transliteration system to make it easier to pronounce. It is, after all, pronounced DAO, not TAO.

That's probably more than you ever wanted to know about Chinese Romanization. But now you know that it is considered proper to spell it with a D and it should always be pronounced with a D no matter how you spell it.

When I studied Chinese we learned the Yale transliteration system, yet a third alternative. We spelled it "Dau", which was kind of nice because it gave more of a clue to the pronunciation. The Premiere was Mau Dze-Dung, which again is pretty close to how it is pronounced. The province is Sz-Chwan, and there really is no vowel in Sz. The dog is Shr-Dz, and there really is no vowel in either syllable. I wish the Yale system had caught on. News reporters would not butcher Chinese names quite so badly.

Slide

(Sad to see what happened to this group)

this was a thriving place for yoga conversation

I have just come back online within the last two weeks. I was out for the last three months or so :-(
When I came back I tested the water with a response to someone who claimed Hinduism, Buddha, etc were wrong. I was soundly ignored. I had to bite my tongue not to respond to the nude yoga lessons post ;-))
While I was offline, I was able to follow the group at the local library. I saw more then the usual cross-posting; some (strange) racist threads; JD talking to himself and Puma going political. Fewer and fewer "I" statements and very few questions.
I like to respond to genuine questions (I know a lot). I like to ask questions (that's why I know a lot). I love it when people have the courage and/or calling to share about themselves and encourage and allow others to do the same.
I was very tempted to respond to this thread but I could only say that alt.yoga is absolutely perfect. Just the way we want it. After all, it is our (those who participate or don't) group. If we let it get taken over by spam, racists or whatever, then isn't that our choice?

Your call into the ether was what I was looking for to jump back in. Thanks! Now I can go back to irritating those who grate at the mention of the "G" word.
The fact (truth) is, there is only God and we are in and of and as whatever God is and could be nothing else. This realization and the acceptance of it when we have it, is the meaning, purpose and goal of Yoga. There is no other

Thyroid

Re: Good yoga routine for hyperactive thyroid

Do you know of a routine that would help with a hyperactive thyroid?

Good question.
I am more of a jnani then a hatha guy, so will defer to the hatha experts in the group for specific routines. From my experience I would think any classic and responsible routine practiced at least 1/2 hour, twice daily including pranayama and meditation, would help greatly. I do have 40+ year experience dealing with hyperactivity, depression and mood disorders (my own) so I'll offer the following.
First off it would be helpful if you provide as much background info as you can in order to help others define your real question and concerns. Is your inquiry for you? Who made the diagnosis of hyperthyroid? How much do you already know about the problem and about yoga? Etc. Etc.
Without knowing any specifics, I can say in general yogic terms that hyper/hypo in anything speaks to balance. As long as one's hatha routine (and life) is balanced the effect on the body system will be to balance. So whatever works for the hypo will probably work just as well for the hyper.
The areas that have had the most profound positive effect on my problems are jail, 12 step program, therapy, diet, breathing (pranayama), sobriety, fear recognition, acceptance, jnana and karma yoga. Self discipline, meditation, appreciation, sobriety, fear, sex and acceptance still represent areas of continuing work for me. A great many of the problems I have had to deal with have responded to life style changes. When I decided to take responsibility for my health and well being, things started changing for the better. I changed what I ate (identified allergy foods), stopped smoking, learned to breath correctly, treated a internal parasite infection, fixed teeth, did hatha routines, studied marshal arts, read self help books, asked questions and listened to others who had similar experience, etc. Little by little, day by day, things got better. It wasn't about any one magic bullet, drug or an exercise routine. It is a combination of all of these things and more, that has made the difference. One day when I was ready God revealed himself to me and my life instantly took on a different meaning. It didn't get any happier or easier but a great deal of fear evaporated and my way became clear. To this day it's mostly a process of rethinking and changing old, ineffective habits adopted in childhood to deal with what I perceived as a hostile and Godless environment where emotional and psychic influences were often intense and frightening. About ever more deeply letting go of fear and replacing the old fear motivated habits with principle (love) driven ones.

Jake

(Jake calling)

I'm starting to feel desparately bored with life. What should I do?

My suggestion? Volunteer at a local hospice or hospital or drug/alcohol detox center or old folks home or graffiti clean up project or the library or meals on wheels (shut-in programs) or etc, etc. It's not pure karma yoga if you do it to relieve yourself of boredom but it's close and an effective treatment for boredom (and/or self pity). Have we discussed this before...?

wrestling with basically the same dissatisfactions.

Yes, I have also struggled. Up to the point where I realized it was pointless and I would (could) never have my desires met. So I have taken up systematically giving up my desires. I am happier, more comfortable and less frightened (bored) then I have ever been in my life. Ironically the more I let go the more those things I value and enjoy appear in my life. The older and closer (accepting) to death I get the more industrious, creative and action taking I become.

Compassion
(genuine compassion)

It is a great, powerful and joyful feeling, and this compassion is a essential part of it.Ever felt anything like this?

Thank you, thank you, thank you. It's a joy to know I am not alone in this. :-) I feel like I know exactly what you are talking about and it's a wonderful feeling.
It comes and goes as you describe. It happens to me when I have a spontaneous sense of the presence of God. The feeling is both physically and emotionally powerful. The feeling may come from nowhere or I may be very intensely focused in my thinking of some aspect of God . I will have a real strong sense of connectedness with everyone and everything. I will get a tingling, warm, flowing feeling from my mid back, out to my arms and to the base of my skull.. I feel a tightness in my skin especially around my head. It feels like I am going to explode; then dissolve and merge into everything and everyone. Sometimes this frightens me. Sometimes I try to hold it or intensify it as if to bring it to completion or I will try to let go completely and let the explosion happen. It feels like what I imagine death to be and I long to let it happen. It seems I am not ready and the feeling subsides and disappears . I always feel good for having had it. Now it comes more and more frequently and I anticipate a day when it will not stop. At times when I remember the depth of my own fear and ignorance and I see it in others, my heart is filled with compassion and the this feeling of oneness comes with tears of deep sorrow and joy.

I don't remember really physical feeling being connected to this compassionate state.

I believe my physical sensation to be Kundalini related. I think the reason it is so intense is because I am still putting up so much resistance. As the energy pathways become more clear the sensation should become more subtle until it all flows unobstructed. Then I will feel nothing extraordinary, just bliss/oneness/surrender. This is what I imagine anyway. I do not study or practice kundalini yoga. I do understand that kundalini can rise spontaneously when someone is ready by virtue of practicing other yoga forms.

Do you practise any physical form of yoga?

Currently I don't. I picked up a book (Hittlemen) some 6-7 years ago and practiced Hatha for 6-8 months. I went to a Sivananda Ashram to stay for a few weeks and see how I was doing. I found out I was doing pretty good in many respects. Mostly in the understanding and believe in the purpose and meaning of yoga and yama/niyama. In the physical practice I was also doing well.
I do not have a great deal of self-discipline. If what I want to do is not fear/physically compelled then I have a difficult time doing it. I am driven by more of a "knowing" then by any discipline. So what I lack in discipline I make up with persistence. I long for the freedom that comes with physical and mental discipline and mastery. Then I remind myself there is nothing I can or need to do. That I am made of whatever God is now and that I am whole and perfect now and there is nothing to do but accept this fact. So I would say a self-defined form of Jnana and Karma yoga are my main pursuit. I remind myself constantly of the Truth and continually make myself aware of the influence of maya. When I see an opportunity to be helpful I take it. I continue to renounce a bit more everyday. More of an internal renunciation not so much an outward one. I struggle daily with finding and establishing a context in which to express what I know about God. Participation in this group is a outlet for me. Also study and reflection and to a greater and greater degree, writing. I guess I am still trying to figure out what I want to be when I grow up :-)
A physical practice would go a long way in reducing pain, discomfort and strengthening my body, so I can sit still and quiet. Meditation is where I need to go to ever more deeply route out and let go of the fear I create. I think that the physical relaxation and release of Hatha would help with the fear I experience in anticipation of deep meditation.

May

Trolls

(Re: Mental activity cessation is meditation)

How many posts do you have to submit on this forum before you're not considered a "troll"?

It was not my intention to deem you a troll. There's a little history behind my reaction. Some time ago I started to see a lot of posts from you. I thought they were very good (in technical yogic terms). As is my way, I was interested to see how these very good points related to the person reciting them. I replied to a post a time or two and didn't receive a reply. So I thought, post and cross-post with no personal message = troll. Lot's and lot's of posts w/no personal reply or interchange = on topic, spamming, troll. So after a time I stopped looking at your posts. After all I can and have read many books on the subject of yoga. The value for me in discussing what I have read with someone is in the sharing of personal perspective and experience. What each has tried that didn't work, what worked, etc. etc. So posting of what others have written without any idea what personal meaning these words have is pointless to me. Therefore I would simply not read your posts. So after being away for a while, when I saw your post and read it I thought it was interesting. Then I remember I had been in this position on other occasions so I posted my questions. Hence my first note. You didn't reply, LawsonE did and hence my reply explaining to him why I was inquiring. Now you have replied and I am replying back to you. I mean no disrespect and would be the last to discourage someone from posting on topic and interesting materials. It's just that I prefer personal exchange to 350 lines of Gita text or 600 lines of purport from some swami I have will never meet. I agree with you that yoga is a personal journey. But that is not to say that it must be taken alone. We are after all, one.

Off topic

(Pissing US soldiers ,they piss wherever they go...)

Off topic :-(

Yoga does not mean only to say "namaste", yoga means to be together.

The word Yoga refers to both the goal (unification with God) and various paths to that goal (Jnana, Bakti, Karma, Laya, Hatha, etc.)
Yoga is neither a religion, nor a moral imperative. Yoga is the goal and Yoga is also a science for reaching the goal. As with any science it can be used for good or evil. Hitler practiced yoga and so did Gandhi.

If we have any relation to "yoga" we have to talk about this wrong doers.

Not everyone feels this is true. Obviously you do. So you might consider saying something like, "I feel like if I don^{1}t say something I am accepting these things that I feel are bad". Then your statement would be true as it relates to your moral substance and practice of yoga. Speak for yourself and let others speak for themselves. Before you know it, you might have a dialog (conversation) instead of an argument or ranting.

Name

(What's in a name?)

I think the exchange about names (hidden in an very different thread: Mental activity cessation is meditation) is a fascinating one. So I thought I would try to bring it up into its own space to encourage others to share. Of course I'd like to put my two cents worth in.
First to answer ajna's question, regarding my nic omjaroo (not omarjoo or omaroo, though I like those too). My given name is Jared. Its origin is Hebrew and it means descending. One reference to the name Jared is in the bible, Genesis 5:15-18. Seems Jared lived to be 962 years old; second oldest dude in the Bible. The only other reference I have seen to the name Jared is in the Book of Mormon, concerning the tribe of Jaredites. The name Jared enjoyed a spate of popularity in the US in the late 50's and early 60's.
My nic is omjaroo.. Years ago when I signed up for hotmail and being very much the beginning yogi I tried the nic, omboy, but it was taken. I tried jaroo and jaruda both nick names at my job but they were

also taken. So I combined Om (which is the cosmic sound of One) and jaroo for omjaroo. Thus I gave birth to a name with which qualified me for a free email account. So omjaroo is a self-invented derivation of Jared, with a nod to God.
You'll notice I've never stated my last name. I can think of no purpose it could serve to give it and I could imagine lot's of mischief that could befall me if I did. In other words I am afraid to give my full name. I'll have to work on this. As far as I know there can be nothing in the Universe that I need fear. But since there is no compelling or even foreseeable reason to state my last name, I'll opt to exercise reasonable prudence and withhold it. My first name however, really is Jared.
As to spiritual versus given names. I don't believe we are our names. I think names are a symbol just like time and countries and millions of other constructs and fabrications we humans create and agree to abide by in order to navigate our physical world. After all if I didn't have a symbol for the past and a name for my car keys, how could I ever ask you where I put them. And if I didn't have an imaginary future, why would I need car keys anyway? To go where? After all I'm already here and can't in reality be anywhere else. But that's not going to get me to work on time (or at all).
I agree with, that names are important for identifying one individual from another for various reasons and any name you use or acknowledge will serve that purpose.
What I think is interesting is the amount of fear we can generate around our names. How we can identify with our names. How we can hide or divulge our names depending on our internal emotional state.
What if we changed names daily? Perhaps like spies and other spooks. Do these people hold on to their real secret name and just borrow the others. Or do they let go of names all together and just inhabit each name they are assigned? Multiple Personality Disorder anyone?
Is holding onto a name not just the s attempt to see it's self as separate from the rest of the Universe? Do we in reality need a name at all beyond what's used for day to day identification. I think not. I think that the whole name thing is just one more (very deep) way that maya holds us in her illusion of separation from what's real (God). I think a spiritual name is a step closer to acknowledging what is real but only by degrees and in and of itself doesn't bring us any closer to God.
Our name living on through history. Making a name for ourselves. Names in the American Indian tradition which depict some aspect of how we act and therefore define who we are. Mexican youth gangs use this naming device. sad girl, shorty, fast eddie, etc. Names traditionally have been very important throughout history and virtually every culture and language on the planet. I can think of few situations in which names are irrelevant or unimportant. Some religious communities or AA perhaps. Even in prisons, concentration camps and gulags the removing of names is critical in dehumanizing and demoralizing (and therefore controlling/punishing) inmates.
I agree with the comedian who says, you can call me anything you want, just don't call me late for dinner.

> *It asks u to enter your name and birthday then gives u a free little blip. The description of me seemed pretty apropos.Do you think there is any truth to this?*

The short answer to your question, in my opinion is no, don't waste your time.
The medium length answer is yes, there is probably some truth there. However trying to divine (discover) the truth stated and then separate it from the rest of the worldly notions would be an inefficient use of your time.
And the slightly longer answer is: In the last 15+ years since just before I entered "recovery" from sex and alcohol addiction I have explored and/or studied a number of different philosophical systems, recovery programs, self-help books and religions. Some of these have been very helpful to me in preparing me to know the truth. I have seen truth in every single one of them; some more then others. But it seems to me that very few really "get it" all. In every organization and believe system there are individuals who "get it", so there a virtually no place or situation you can't find God. It's possible some are more difficult then others, then again perhaps not. Many find God in prison, many find the devil. I suppose it all comes down to what you are looking for.
How do I know this or how can I make this determination? When I was ready, God revealed his existence to me. While this didn't fix me and make life wonderful and happy; it did free me to live and grow and it

allows me to discern truth from fabrications with certainty. I also work hard at developing "discrimination" by practicing Jnana yoga. This includes reading, thinking, asking, observing, documenting, relating, telling the truth and relentlessly seeking (now there's a great name!) the truth wherever it may be hidden or obscured. How is this possible? In a word, I strive to see God in everyone and everything. Because the truth is there is only God.
I looked at the web page you provided and I noticed the following. There is a photo of the "founder". This I read as a personality driven movement. I am reminded by AA's, Twelfth Tradition which states, that "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities." God is Principle.
When I put my first name into their online form to get my "free" analysis I was informed my first name didn't exist on their data base so would I please put in my last name to receive my "free" report. Yes, and perhaps I should put in my credit card, social security number, ATM card and PIN, while I am at it.
And in case my report indicated that my life was out of balance (which I have no doubt it would) there was an offer to provide (for a fee) the information I need to get back in balance.
I read this site as a fund raising, promotional site. If there is truth in what they believe (and it sounds like there is) then in my thinking it is tainted by their self-serving promotion. Are their genuine adherents who have changed their lives and the lives of others for the better? No doubt. But their path does not seem to be direct to God but requires the acceptance of the beliefs of and donations to, intermediaries. I personally dismiss all religions or organizations that purport to have God knowledge that charge for services or request donations. Jesus had nothing on me in the, dislike of the "money changers" department. God knowledge is the divine birth right of all beings and can only be accepted; it can never be sold. I can't be given (accept by God), it can only be accepted and the only way another person or organization can help one accept knowledge of God is to accept and know it themselves. In this way they make themselves available to model for others who want what they have.

So then I guess u don't think changing my name would make things easier for me.

You're right, I don't.
Names, birth dates, signs, stars, etc. etc. are all external to us. Addiction and indeed every kind of hardship, suffering and unhappiness is an internal issue. I learned (kicking, screaming and resisting every step of the way) that the only person, place or thing that could make anything easier for me is me. Because I am the only one that makes things hard. Perhaps the hardest thing anyone can learn and accept is that we are responsible for everything that happens to us. But once learned this is nothing less then the key to freedom. Because if we cause the bad in our world, then that means we can just as surely cause good. Our choice. Doesn't mean we know how to make good decisions or take right action or that we have the wherewithal to do so even if we did. But once we take responsibility for our lives and our choices then what we need can be defined and acquired. It also doesn't mean we don't need others or benefit from other's help. Fact is most of us can't do it alone. For me it meant reaching out for a God I didn't believe in and listening when He responded. Otherwise it's been a lot of work. A long and sometime slow process but one that has lead to relative health and happiness, although in many ways I could never have imagined. Keep an open mind and trust the process. Turn your attention to God where any problem seems to be and just keep putting one foot in front of the other. Before you know it you will be there. If you are like me then what you will find is that you were never not there. I promise :-)

Some native indians are said to choose a new name for themselves when they start a new phase of life.

Agreed. Perhaps this is part of the meaning of adopting a spiritual name and letting go of the previously assigned one.
I agree that names can be used in an attempt to wield power (albeit an illusionary one) over others. When we are kids we call each other names to humiliate, manipulate or punish others. As we get older we continue to call names but the names get uglier (nigger, terrorist, pervert, faggot) and they can be institutionalized to create stigma and ostracism and to foment fear in others, in order to gain people's permission to control and curtail their freedom (three strikes, felon, dead beat, illegal alien, abuser).

Politics
(Yoga, Politics,Pissing,etc.)

I'*m shure he is completely overcharged (?right word?) with this job beeing a president*

Perhaps, overwhelmed, was the word you were looking for. Overtaxed, beleaguered, beset, besieged or overburdened, might also work.
I am reminded that a leader can only do the will of those lead. There are no nations, societies or them. There is only us. Individuals, making individual decisions about what we think or feel is best for us. Our decisions are either based on fear (an anticipation) or an absence of fear (reality, here and now). Or most often on a combination of the two. An internal struggle between truth and fiction, between the self and the illusions of self, between good and evil if you like.
When we want war, there is war. When we want peace then we need only not make war, as peace is the natural order of the universe. This was demonstrated beautifully in the Philippines when many individuals (the people) simply removed the control of the government from Marcos. No war, no blood, simply a change of heart by many of those being led. This could have been the case with Saddam, Stalin, Hitler or Bush. When war no longer serves to teach us what we need to learn, then there will be no war. Any attempt to change or control war without changing the internal environment of the individual who wages (or allows) war is like trying to put out a fire by throwing water on the smoke.

My dictionary wasn't that helpfull in this case.

I use the thesaurus (and the spell checker) built into MSWord, a lot! I rarely compose a post or reply in my newsreader. I use MSWord and then cut and paste into the reader. I feel it's important and respectful of those I am communicating with to use the best grammar and spelling I can. Also, I seriously consider and am very deliberate in my comments. I believe this will make it easier for others whose do not share my frame of reference or opinion and/or whose first language in not English, to understand my words and grasp my meaning)

Lot's of politics in the Yoga-NG these days :o)

Much easier then doing yoga :-)

Happiness
(extraction of ananda ?)

how is it possible to extract or isolate pure happiness (shuddh ananda) ? has anyone any experience with that ?

If what you are referring to is Bliss then I have no personal experience with it. On the other hand if you can know about something by knowing it's opposite, then perhaps I have been very close.
From my study I believe bliss is the natural state of man. Bliss can't be attained, it can only be allowed. When one is able to remove (stop) all that is not bliss (modifications of the mind) then bingo! There it is. In other words, one can't do, isolate or extract anything, one can only let it be.
I know as long as you want (desire) it (anything), you can't have it.
If it is happiness you are referring to, then I also know that happiness can't exist without unhappiness. They are inseparable, like opposite sides of the same coin. One exists because the other exists.

you can have a desire and have it satisfied, but generally you don't ;-)

A desire assumes you don't have the thing you desire. This is an illusion and a falsehood. As long as you want something you can't have it because you already have it. Desires can only perpetuate the cycle (karma) of unhappiness or happiness. Acceptance of what you do have can only result (let) in bliss.

Also human desires generally lack any limit, once you satisfy one, another emerges...

Since desires are predicated on the imagination, there is no limit to the falsehoods possible. In order to maintain the illusion or substance of existence, another desire is required (and another after that etc.) The need to create another desire will/can not end until the letting go and acceptance of what is true.

This material world is said to be a Movement (as opposed to Mind) and movement is only present if there are two mutually opposite/reversing forces involved (duality is manifest, thru ignorance).

In reality there is no movement. There is no time. There is nothing you don't have. There is only God and you are and as and of whatever God is. As I mentioned to Bee, this is not a place the mind can go. That is why meditation is so important.

Enlightenment is a state where neither of these polar feelings abide (or any duality for that matter).

Enlightenment is knowing what is true. Transcendence is accepting what is true. Jnana Yoga is about learning what is true, Karma Yoga is acceptance of what is true and Bhakti Yoga is celebrating what is true. Hatha Yoga makes it all easier :-)

War

(Yoga, war and/or God.)

For anyone that may be interested, here is my (Jared's jnana) internal process regarding war and other un-God-like (fearful) human behaviors.
Principal: God is everywhere. There is no space or place where God is not. Everything that exists as well as everything that does not, does so in and of and as God. God is first cause. The nature of everything must be (is) in the nature of God.
Principle: People always have and do exactly what they need and they always do the best they can with what they have. When they can do better they will do better.
Principle: Thought is t he only cause.
Integration: War is what the people waging it, need and want to do. That's why they are doing it. If we support it or oppose it, we become a part of it. Spiritually speaking we make it our war when we take sides. Karmic law recognizes thought as action and in this sense we become every bit as responsible for the conflict (and its consequences) as the combatants. We feel sad (we fear there is such a thing as death; and that death will come to us.) so we try to change our internal feeling state by attempting to change or stop something someone else is doing) We think it is wrong (we fear there is no God and that there could possibly be such a thing as something wrong) so we desire to make it right. The fact is there isn't much most of us can do and what we can do most of us are unwilling to give up our other desires to do. So we suffer emotionally or even get sick to our stomachs with disgust. Then we look for someone or something to fight, to criticize, to oppose, to judge, to condemn, to complain about, to hate, to change. In other words we resist, we fight, we go to war inside ourselves and with others. Now we are fully engaged in the very war we fear. What we fear always comes to us because we call it with the full weight of our mentality and we become war.
God or war? When I live my present moment with thoughts of war, then it becomes my war and I am just as responsible for its consequences as those who fight.
When I support or oppose others as they act out their fears, then their fate is mine and I must suffer each cry, each wound and each death.
When I let go of the desires that fuel my fear; when my mind is still; when there is no war in my heart; when my present moment is Love, then I live in awareness of the Truth;
There is no misery, death or war; There is only God.

My name for Truth/God you referred to is Cosmic Will.

Cosmic Will works for me. After all, a rose by any other name smells just as sweet

Thank you for sharing the rationalization of your pacifist stance.

Rationalization is not a good word in the psychological sense but I think I understand what you mean ;-). I don't think of myself as a pacifist. I can and will fight if I deem it appropriate. Then again I may not, if I think that is a better choice, all things considered. Best to cross that bridge when I come to it. For me it is paralyzing to play what ifs¸ before I am faced with the need to make that decision.
What I work hard at is changing the habit of defining myself as opposed¸ to something outside of myself. My opinions, ideas and feelings about current (or even historical) events are not who I am. I am an expression of the Cosmic Will. That is what is true. If I try to define myself in terms of what I believe someone else isn't then I am lying because everyone and everything is an expression of Cosmic Will.
We all know what happens when we lie; we get spanked by the laws of the universe. How? Well a lie is bad information. It isn't true. No decision based on bad information can be a good one no matter how well thought out or reasoned. Ergo, any decision I make, based on a lie will be a bad one and me and/others will be hurt (spanked). When I stop lying the spanking stops and so does the pain.
Like most human beings I can't stand a feeling of fear and helplessness. I will do whatever I can to stop it. Usually this involves making some decision (judgment) about the nature of what I am scared over, as if I knew what was actually happening. Most of the time I don't have anything like all the information I need to make that determination. Whatever I don't know I just fill in the blanks. Then I take some action to protect myself or attack that which I blame for scaring me. Well guess what? It's the lies again. Bad information (I made it up) and whatever I do is probably going to be out of balance and/or inappropriate.
I have a lot of education, experience and a huge frame of reference. The more I know the less sure I am that I know what's going on. I've been in enough real life news situations to know that anything you hear over TV, Radio or the News Papers, is mostly regurgitated lies, manufactured for mass consumption and designed to ignite the emotions (fear) of ignorant people and sell advertising. Any information provided by a government of any sort, large or small, is at best highly suspect and usually without merit and at worst is complete fabrication and disinformation. If I read the papers and listen to CNN and think I know what is going on, then I am deluding myself.
So I minimize fabrication and focus on what I know to be true. Like a scientist I take a known quantity or fact and compare everything against it. In my case that known quantity is God. That is the only think I know for certain. There is God. God is everywhere. Everything, everywhere must be whatever God is. God is Love. Everything, everywhere must be Love. So whatever the appearance, whatever my fear (fabrication) I must remind myself that the only thing I know to exist is God. It's all God. So life, death, peace, war, these things have no meaning in themselves, apart from God. My only problem is seeing the Truth that this is God in all these things. This is why and how I practice yoga.

> *There is one practical problem: what would you do, emotionally and physically, when those around you - and there are more of those than the ones with your view point - want to 'run you down', deceive you, harm you, emotionally and physically, for reasons you don't even know why?*

The reason is fear. There is no other. Most who act like this are terrified beyond their ability to express or control it. Compassion, acceptance, empathy, understanding, Love, Truth. These sooth and heal fear.

> *often times, they'll redouble their effort if you show no response, emotionally or physically.*

That being said, I was once in a domestic relationship like you describe. I was compelled to stay for very serious and complicated reasons. But I would not suggest staying if one is in a violent or abusive situation. It is best to bless those who torment you and remove yourself anyway you have to. It is not loving to allow someone to abuse us and one can not help anyone in anyway by allowing them to hurt you. No room for pacifism here. Cast their fear and our fate onto the Cosmic Will and leave.
If its just a social situation, work or usenet then come or go as you please. Remember no one needs to attack or hurt anyone unless they are afraid. Remember this and you will understand virtually all human behavior. If the results are loving, kind, positive and good then the actions were motivated by an absence of fear. If the results are negative, hurtful, dishonest or damaging in any way then the actions were motivated by fear.

Another dilemma is that I must not be the aggressor/abuser myself.

Actions have no meaning. Live, die, kill, be killed, rape, murder, torture, save, heal, nurture; all of these things can be done with desire for the fruit of the outcome or without. It is the desire which engenders the fear and the fear that brings evil into the meaning of the action. Not the action itself. The action has only the meaning we give to it. No external moral code can have any meaning or effect. We are the only ones who can create good or evil.
Love is the nature of the Universe. Fear is a fabrication. We can kill with Love, we can eat animals with love, we can steal with Love. Likewise we can heal with fear, protect with fear, feed with fear and cause hate, discontent and unhappiness (how do you spell Iraq and Afghanistan?)
I think yoga the most difficult of all human endeavors, with the greatest possible reward (as long as you don't desire it :-)

[then]cannibalism if executed with 'love' is 'OK'.

You are correct this is where logic and the brain scream to a halt. But then Truth and Love exist at the level of the Spirit (absolute) and the brain can't countenance this. Knowing and/or intuition is required here, both of these require significant vulnerability. Only the courageous tread here.

beyond that vulnerability is invulnerability.

The vulnerability is only perceived it doesn't really exist. But that is not what it feels like when you are there, which is why courage is needed.

Growing

(the yoga in my life lately)

my physical improvements in yoga have been small, but rewarding. my mental improvements have been surprising to me

Welcome back :-) I fondly recall a post about Woody Harrelson. Glad to hear you're still at it. It only gets better. I also remember you answered no to my CNN style poll, Is there God? Any updates?

still no god, but thanks for asking.

Oh by the way, I think you once asked if a 46 year old could start yoga. What did you ever find out about that?

i found out that i could start yoga at this age or any age. it's about having faith in myself and creating my own reality.

There's something to be said for having a mature attitude like this (whatever your age) :-) es, I know what you mean. Sometimes I have no idea how something affects me until I stop it and then realize in a hundred different ways what was going on. It's great that you can discern subtlies. The more subtle the closer to balance you are. Changes from yoga for me have been as day to night. I was really out there. Now they become more subtle and graduated.

right now i'm trying to find the early morning enthusiasm to join a group who do a morning practice in a park overlooking the beach.....

I once visited a Sivananda Ashram for a couple of weeks and we got up at 5:30 and started meditating at six. The only reason I could do it is because they woke us up. Some day I will develop that level of discipline. Getting up early in the morning and meditating or doing hatha is a wonderful way to finish a night and start a day.

War
(JK on War)

War is merely an outward expression of our inward state

Gosh... didn't I just say that?

I don't know, but if I remember correctly...you said "there is no misery, no war, only God"

To refresh your memory I have cut and paste a few comments from some recent threads.

> Krishnamurti: War is merely an outward expression of our inward state, an enlargement of our daily action. It is more spectacular, more bloody, more destructive, but it is the collective result of our individual activities. Therefore, you and I are responsible for war
>
> Jared: War is what the people waging it, need and want to do. That's why they are doing it. Jared: If we support it or oppose it, we become a part of it. Spiritually speaking we make it our war when we take sides.
>
> Krishamurti: So again it depends upon you and not on the leaders – not on so-called statesmen and all the rest of them. It depends upon you and me but we do not seem to realize that. If once we really felt the responsibility of our own actions, how quickly we could bring to an end all these wars, this appalling misery!
>
> Jared: When war no longer serves to teach us what we need to learn, then there will be no war. Any attempt to change or control war without changing the internal environment of the individual who wages (or allows) war is like trying to put out a fire by throwing water on the smoke.
>
> *I don't know, but if I remember correctly...you said "there is no misery, no war, only God"...nothing could be further from the truth*

In literal reality, nothing else is or could be true... But I have to admit this is pretty advanced knowledge (although hardly secret) which is completely lost on a great many (most).

Its easy to be ignorant and say "all is well", but the fact is all is not well.

I don't think its easy being ignorant. I find it to be especially difficult ;-) Also I don't remember saying that, all is well in the world. In fact I have no recollection in all of my experience, reading and study of anyone ever putting forth the proposition that all is well. So I don't understand who it is that says, all is well, when it's not and thereby causes suffering. It seems to me that the opposite is what's true. Everyone saying all in not well and this is what justifies our fearful actions/reactions and in turn causes our suffering.
What I have said more then once is, I know that all is perfect because all is God.
In the big sense this can't really be understood, it can only be known. Here is a small example of how this can be thought about. I place my hand on a hot stove I will get burned and immediately take my hand away. Hopefully I learned my lesson and I won't make that mistake again. I can see the situation as bad and lament the pain and curse the stove and curse God for letting it happen. This would be a pretty typical reaction. Or I can see the perfection in the situation. That the pain signaled me to remove my hand before it was burned off and rendered useless. That intelligence innate in me allowed me to learn not to do that again and to anticipate other similar possible circumstances. Take this example and apply it to a larger picture like war and a thoughtful person might be able to see that the same principles of intelligence apply.

On the othre hand in 'waking reality' not all is well since it's filled with misery and suffering. You can even quote Jesus Christ as he said something along the lines "poor people were present in the past, are present now and will be there in future".Misery in it's various forms is embedded in the 'system'...

Misery is a blessing and the natural consequence of our behaviors. It is how the universe lets us know we are doing something wrong. When we change our behaviors we will get different results. This is the process by which we grow. This is our nature and the way the "system" is set up. Why? Beats the hell out

of me. I've asked this question more then once. Good thing I don't need to know the answer to change my behaviors and thinking and move along in this world.

They need to do it?

In reality (absolute) there are no needs. At any given moment we have all that we need (not want) to realize our unchanging, perfect existence in God. In a material sense there can be a strong perceived need as you suggest, to survive. But there is no real need, even in material reality, as there are always better ways to get what you need then fighting. But then there is a need for individuals and the world (race mind) to learn the lessons fighting provide in order to realize and transcend our ignorance and fear. The spanking, so to speak, that the universe supplies us, so we can understand we are making a mistake and return our awareness to center.

Internally you mean right?

Internally yes. When we support or oppose a(the) war then we enter the conflict. If not in a literal way, then definitely in a spiritual and emotional way. War and its consequence can be understood and appropriately dealt with, without personally entering the conflict by using detachment.

I'm just don't see how these two statements could go together logically.

I'll certainly give you that one :-) They do however make sense when you have more information. ;-)
There in lays the jnani's challenge. Perhaps you would like to take it up? This path Involves a lot of reading, study and inquiry. You seem to have logical abilities and a strong drive for inquiry. How are your study habits?

Like what is knowing and how is it different from understanding?

Understanding is an intellectual process, knowing is an internal state of being. Here is an example of a jnanic exercise. Do this simple exercise and perhaps you will come away with a notion of how in the final analysis, all answers come from the self.
Try reaching into your personal life or experience and remember a time when you fully understood something but you really didn't know it. And vice versa, when you just knew something but you didn't understand it. Can you see the distinction?
Sometimes, knowing and understanding can be the same but often times they are not. So how might this be important in someone's life? Knowing something can engender great personal resolve and is what faith is made of. Understanding something by its self does not rise to the level of faith. Hope perhaps, but not faith. Faith is about knowing and then acting (or not) on that knowledge.

True. I can see that taking sides, as you said will only bring anger/hatred into mind. I get really pissed

Can you see how you instantly become part of the conflict when you have an emotional stake in the outcome?
The acceptance of the Truth at the deepest levels and the rejection of falsehoods/fabrications is the point of yoga. To differentiate (discriminate) between the two is the purpose of jnana.

take activism without being emotionally attached to any outcome.

For any activism to be effective, it first needs first to be internal (genuine). One must first stop the internal war (right/wrong, good/evil, us/them).
There is a saying in AA that goes; "you can't give away what you don't have." How can one hope to stop war when one hasn't given up those qualities that lead to war in their own heart and life. The first of which is "winning" or insisting on getting what you want (like an end to war?).

I don't consider myself really developed in morals, and self-discipline yet to take up the path of Jnana yoga

Good thing self-discipline and morals are not required :-) or else I would still be groveling in ignorance and fear. Excuses don't work for jnanis (or anyone else for that matter). Like the Nike ad says, Just Do It!

I like to think in terms of duty.

Duty has nothing to do with jnana, or enlightenment or God.

Off the subject: Albert Einstein did some of the greatest Jnani work with his theory on relativity.

True that! He was a consummate jnani. He thought his way to God.
Faith (what we know) is what is required for us to have the courage to act on our faith (what we know).

August

Hittleman

(Richard Hittleman's Yoga 28 day exercise plan Question)

I was wondering if it was okay to do just the more advanced positions

As I recall Richard Hittleman specifically instructs the student to do all the exercises and routines exactly as directed until you have finished the book. This would be my suggestion also. If time is a problem then this will be an excellent opportunity to practice making (taking) time for yourself. :-)

Vegetarian

(Boilding down.. will you compart your veg diet's secrets?)

I read your post with much interest. Very interesting approach, sort of bottom lining (boiling down is a more "cooking flavored" description) an issue. I like it.
Concerning my bottom lines for food. After 25 years of study and experimentation and near twice that long of a love/hate relationship with food, here's my offering. Please remember this is my synthesis, my goal, my experience and process, it's not meant to be an edict for anyone else. Just like food from my table, take whatever you like and leave the rest :-)
Water is the only beverage I should drink. With the exception of juices while fasting. Beer and wine occasionally (until I can replace it with meditation) to help remind me of what it is like to exist without fear (my goal in life :-)
Eating . As close to the sun and/or earth as possible! As natural as possible. As high in quality as possible. As unrefined as possible. Cooked as little as appropriate. Enjoy any and all of the "fruits" of this world, which God has provided for me to eat, be it from plants or animals but refrain from killing that which feeds me. If I want to or must kill to eat, then when possible, I should kill it personally. When I take a life (plant, animal or insect) I bless that which I kill and thank it for giving it's life to sustain mine. From a practical point of view it is much easier for me to abstain from eating animal foods then it is to personally kill them. First of all I don't live any where near where the animals are raised. Secondly I have little stomach for killing things. I still eat meat but it is becoming nearly impossible for me to abide by the torture and suffering the animals must endure to feed me. I believe meat to be absurdly inefficient nutrition for humans. Meat is very far from the sun and one must kill that which is providing the food. This not only seems spiritually and morally reprehensible but also very unintelligent.
I agree with the Paavo Airola optimum diet consisting, in order of importance, of grains, legumes, beans, seeds, nuts, vegetables and fruits. Eaten in moderation, with enjoyment and appreciation.
Systematic under eating. Less I eat, longer I live. Famous rat studies, cut the food in half and doubled the life span.
Mental, emotional and spiritual state are more important to health and quality of life, then food. I once saw and interview with a man who lived to be ninety plus and eat nothing but baloney and white bread sandwiches (with an occasional hot dog for variety) for his entire life. Also I have read of others (Autobiography of a yogi) who have lived on no food or water for years and years.

Fasting. Along with learning to breath properly, mediation and smiling, fasting is the most important healing and rejuvenating habit I have acquired. I have been fasting for about 15 years and can fast fairly comfortably to 14 days.
I have allergies to certain foods. I have worked hard to find out what they are and stop eating the offending food. Hint: it's always one of my craving, "to die for" foods. If I can't even conceive of giving up a certain food you can bet I am allergic to it. Works the same for any thing I bring into my body and includes behaviors as well.
Salt. Unnecessary and a real health destroyer. Incredibly addicting. Sugar, even worse then salt. Both are poison for me.
With regard to food I believe each of us needs to study, experiment and become "as a law unto ourselves". Food is a very individual and personal matter. I am the only one in a position to know what is best for me. I must take responsibility for my health and happiness and learn what is best to do and/or to stop doing. And then develop the discipline to do or not do what I must.

Cult

(Integral Yoga - Autocratic Cult)

As an ex-disciple of Swami Satchidananda, I would like to speak about what happened to me as a disciple from 1969-1979.

Satchindananda is old news. We all know cults exist. We all know there are others who will abuse you if you allow them. As my very unenlightened father is fond of saying, "If you walk into a room with your pants pulled down, there will always be someone ready to step up and fuck you in the ass"
Can you tell us what you learned about allowing yourself to be sucked into a cult? Is there something you have to offer that may help others make different decisions? Can you say why you needed/wanted to be abused? Can you tell us what you have learned about the practice of yoga that has made you a better yogi and brought you closer to God?
It seems anything else is mere regrets and whining and are of no use to anyone (including yourself).

Despair

(Does anyone long to express God's Love?)

Is there anyone in this group practicing Yoga?
Babaji, where there fuck are you? Yoganandaji, Gandhi, Jesus, Mohamed, Buddha, John Wayne; where are you?
God where the fuck are you?
Is there any thing, anyone here values more then life? Are we all sniveling cowards? Are we all content with our pissy little machts nichts (nod to hariharji :-) exchanges over meaningless bullshit ?
Is there anyone else in this group that feels profound existential despair? Am I the only one who curses, screams and prays at God to speak up; to release me from this bull shit; from all the lies?

bad day. huh jared/grin. of course that's ego. here have an existential hug.

Yes, I guess you could say that. I had just finished watching the Magdalene Sisters w/documentary and a few days before that, The City of God, w/documentary. Too large a dose of the appearance of evil. I should be more moderate in my indulgence of maya (and beer). Self-pity doesn't help either. Makes for a real potent mix.
Thanks for your kindness! I am ever amazed at just how profoundly comforting a hug can be. Even a virtual, existential one...

In the end it is all meaningless bullshit, everything. even being annoyed at the meaningless bullshit is itself just meaningless bullshit in a new package.

I guess play is good. I've just never been very good at it. Unless one considered ultra-seriousness a form of play. Which I suppose for me it is. After all-in a way-it is fun and I'm really good at it.

God is all around you. Bliss abounds if you choose it.

I know the essential truth of what you say. I don't think I have the choice yet. I am busy making other choices. Perhaps it is as they say, "bliss (freedom, sobriety, happiness, etc.) is not for those who need it but for those who want it".

Sounds like existential angst all right. The good news is that if you get through this phase without killing yourself, life is smoooooth sailing after that. :)

September

Sleep

(To which meditation level can sleep be compared?)

I have read that meditation levels start with alpha, then beta and theta. If we sleep and have experiences (dreams), on which of the three levels are we?

Bee, Thanks. That was what I was going to say :-)
Beta, is what you are reading this in: alpha and theta while meditating and delta in sleep.
But I like the explanation you quoted better!
Perhaps the only relationship between sleep and meditation is that sleep is where many of us end up when we try to meditate :-)))
That being said, I believe that if we fall asleep while meditating then that is probably what the body needs and we shouldn't stress about it. Nothing wrong in submitting to the wisdom of the body. Although one might consider continuing the mediation when one wakes rested and refreshed ;-)

Yama/Niyama

(Is physical exercise considered a yama or niyama?)

Yama's, things to abstain from (self restraint). Harm Lie Steal Sex Acquire
Niyama's, things to do (observances) Cleanliness Contentment Austerity Self-study Surrender (to God)
Physical exercises, in and of themselves are not defined as one of the self-restraints or observances per se. But obviously they can and do fall under a number of these (which all human behaviors must).
I think the entire subject of yama/niyama deserves a robust discussion or at least 200+ responses. The whole vegetarian discussion itself falls under harm, lie, sex, cleanliness, austerity. Perhaps 200+ responses for each yama/niyama That would be a thread of 2000 responses! But I doubt it. You see far from being higher yoga practice, the asanas and praanayama are mere child's play compared to yama/niyama.
Lucky for us (seriously far from perfect yogis), the only real requirement to attain (allow) Yoga is surrender to God. All the rest will follow (more or less, sooner or later) on surrendering our will and life to a higher power. (note: hey seeking, is that 12 step or what? :-)
But remember it's never the thing it's self that matters, it's only the meaning we bring to it. Asanas? Depends why you are doing them. Procrastination? Depends why your doing it.

Thinking

(The real yoga.)

To me, that is the real yoga. No religious bullshit, just fact.

You're in great company. Einstein thought his way to God.
Just keep coming back, you'll get it I promise. If you'd like to hurry the process, I suggest you sit quietly and ask God to reveal himself to you. Then listen for the answer. Works every time. Really.
Otherwise if you're like me, just keep thinking and thinking and thinking. Eventually you will think yourself right into God's lap :-) No religion required

Growing

(Releasing anger/karma cleansing/opening heart/surrender to Lord, how?)

What I would like to know, and any advice or suggestion is welcome, is some effective yoga meditation excercises/techniques for releasing anger, karma cleansing, opening the heart and finally surrendering to Lord

Jana Yoga, Identify the Truth. Root out and identify your fears and the lies you tell yourself. The Truth will set you free. karma
Karma Yoga, selfless service, go volunteer your service to someone that needs it; homeless shelter, meals for seniors, library, hospice, etc. Endeavor to develop gratitude and contentment.
Bhakti Yoga, Attend a service, chant or group meditation. Create a little alter in your home and put items that remind you of God's Love on it and look at it often. Pray, talk with God, ask for guidance and then listen for an answer, which will always come. Cultivate some creative expression of your feelings for God, writing, chanting, poetry, etc.
Anger/frustration is an expression of fear. One is aggressive and one is passive. Identify what you are afraid of and deal with it as effectively as is reasonable. Then let it go. You let it go by giving it to God. As in Let go and Let God.
My experience with meditation is that I am so frightened that at a point I can't even continue, so I concentrate on the above activities. Gradually my creating of fear is abating. My goal full absorption into every moment.
Keep meditating if you can but if you can don't worry about it. You'll be ready in your own time.

Coincidence

(Does coicidence exsist?)

No. Next question...

October

New

(time to start new threads)

the current discussions are getting too long and old

I agree. Approachable threads and discussions have been slim lately. I attribute this to cross-posting from other groups into alt.yoga. Many of the threads have a "tone" which seem at odds with the sensibilities I have observed in alt.yoga over the years.
How about we discuss the relative value of "I" statements, compared to "you" statements in discussing our thoughts, feelings and experiences around yoga.
Personally, I generally view "I" statements as more honest, helpful and interesting. "You statements, I often see as judgmental, provocative and disingenuous.
My preference is make and to hear "I" statements, when the speaker is honest and hence, vulnerable. After all, if what I say is not true or at least honest then it can have little value for myself or anyone else :-)

Acceptance

(Feeling you, Feeling me)

A jhana inquiry
It seems to me that people (myself certainly) never appear as who they are, they are almost always presenting as who they want to be. Or perhaps as they think we want them to be.
Wanting (or desire) of course is always a lie. We are, we have, now, period.
For me to hear people, to feel people, to know people, to connect with people, requires acceptance; not understanding. Because as soon as I understand something, I have killed it. I have classified it; I have judged and categorized it; as threatening to me or not.

Acceptance requires vulnerability on my part. Understanding does not. It seems I can't connect with any other human without vulnerability.

i'd say even the word "acceptance" implies some kind of reluctance towards the "other".

I agree (understand) fully that having to accept indicates a sense of separation and also that there are states such as compassion which are further along the evolutionary process.
My realization was that I don't have to understand someone to connect, but I must accept them was a big jump for me. I have spent a life time trying to understand people. At first to protect myself from perceived threat and later to try and connect. It stands to reason that there are other steps for me to take beyond acceptance to compassion and finally to Truth which is Love, which is God.
Love is the endgame. However I must work with what I have and from where I am. In the mean time I will continue, as you mentioned, to suffer. But I'll tell you something. Suffering because I can't yet express total Love is far better then suffering from expressing separation, judgment and fear :-)
Reminds me of the steps we go through at death. Denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance. There are many references to evolution (enlightenment) as a form of death. Death is what I fear most. Intellectually I know it is an illusion but deep in my gut (DNA) it terrifies me. I can't yet meditate for any significant time or consistency for fear of dying.

Do you understand that the other is only a reflection of you ?

Cookbook
(HELP: YOGA COOKBOOK)

I am trying to find a cookbook for a very special girl.

...

i'm moving from yogi cooking to cookin' up some buddhists, i hear they're easier to digest

...

There must me a low-fat alternative to buddhists.

...

i think the albino druids are the leanest, but it is damn near impossible to keep them in the pot

Perhaps the old advice about cooking frogs would help. You never put the frog in hot water or it will jump right out. Rather, you place the frog in a pan of tepid (comfortably warm) water and raise the temperature ever so slowly over a good period of time. In this way the frog will sit in the water until it is cooked to death.
The same way a government eliminates the freedoms of its citizens. Ever so slowly, over a long time in tiny increments, always with some good and plausible reason. Then whammy, before you know it you look around and there is no freedom. Then I suppose I should be careful what I write in a Usenet (or email) posting as "carnivore" is at this very moment screening virtually all of the internet traffic on the planet. Good thing it is all a mayic illusion :-)

it's not that we throw the albino druids right into scalding water, it's just that they are aware of what we are trying to do ahead of time and fight to get out of the pot

Kirtan
(American Kirtan)

Once in a while I post what I feel is an American expression of the divine in music, or Kirtan:

I DON'T CARE ANY MORE. Phil Collins.

Well you can tell ev'ryone I'm a down disgrace Drag my name all over the place. I don't care anymore. You can tell ev'rybody 'bout the state I'm in You won't catch me crying 'cos I just can't win. I don't care anymore I don't care anymore

I don't care what you say I don't play the same games you play.

'Cos I've been talking to the people that you call your friends And it seems to me there's a means to an end. They don't care anymore. And as for me I can sit here and bide my time I got nothing to lose if I speak my mind. I don't care anymore I don't care no more

I don't care what you say We never played by the same rules anyway.

I won't be there anymore Get out of my way Let me by I got better things to do with my time I don't care anymore I don't care anymore I don't care anymore I don't care anymore

Well, I don't care now what you say 'Cos ev'ry day I'm feeling fine with myself And I don't care now what you say Hey I'll do alright by myself 'Cos I know.

'Cos I remember all the times I tried so hard And you laughed in my face 'cos you held all the cards. I don't care anymore. And I really ain't bothered what you think of me 'Cos all I want of you is just a let me be. I don't care anymore D'you hear? I don't care no more

I don't care what you say I never did believe you much anyway.

I won't be there no more So get out of my way. Let me by I got better things to do with my time I don't care anymore D'you hear? I don't care anymore I don't care no more You listening? I don't care no more No more!

You know I don't care no more!

isn't collins british?

My apologies. I think you are correct and I feel a bit silly.
I can offer the following possible explanations. By all means pick one that works for you :-)))
1. Perhaps I am an arrogant American that assumes all that is good and in the English language must be American.
2. Or maybe I wasn't the least bit aware of Mr. Collins nationality.
3, I could have been trolling. (nod to Piotr) Making a mistake does seems to be a great way to get someone to respond to you :-) BTW, I'm grateful for the affirmation that someone is reading my posts. Sometimes I wonder :-)
4. I may have just finished my second bottle of American champagne and couldn't care anymore.
5. Or maybe all this yoga I am doing is paying off and I am drifting headlong into that void where there are no nationalities or languages, only the Self :-)
6. All of the above

ps. hope the champagne was good ;-)

Sayings
(Original Thought, Observations, Statement of Principle)

I have had the supreme honor and pleasure to know, what I believe to be two original staters of natural law (or principle.) While I realize there is nothing "new under the sun", I have never heard these truths stated as such.
1. Woody's law. That which is fact is not always true. That which is true is not always fact.
2. Johnson's law. Whenever you want to do something; you have to do something else first.

November

Declining
(Does Matt Parker even practice yoga?)

(Just wondering As it seems little else is represented in alt.yoga these days. Seems alt.yoganada has been moribund for some time as well.
Is this because yogis know all there is to know and they find no interest or value in mutual exchange?
Is it because when the yoganandas of the world cease to exist, that the faith of their followers dies with them?
The only threads that thrive around here are those cross-posted from groups that seem to feed on fear, hate and discontent (whoops, I meant cynicism.)

Ashram
(Newbie question)

> *I am just starting to gain more interest in Yoga (for both physical and spiritual reasons) and I am wondering if anyone can tell me of a retreat worth looking into.*

I have spent time at a Sivanada ashram in Northern California and I was very glad I did. I can recommend them without reservation. You can get more information from the following link. Be sure to go to their home page and review their beliefs.
sivananda.org/
They are one of the oldest and most highly thought of yoga organizations around. They are serious, traditional, real yoga and a bunch of nice people to boot. I sensed no cult type manipulation or influence.
Another group who is well established and legitimate is the Self Realization Fellowship. I have studied the lessons of Paramahansa Yogananda (The Autobiography of a Yogi) for a number of years. While I have never been to one of their ashrams, theirs will be the next one I attend. Perhaps this time for the long haul. I would also recommend them without hesitation. They are not about hatha yoga, but more kriya, karma and bhati.
selfrealizationfellowship.com/
Spending time with either of these two groups is a super safe bet and can bring only benefit. It will be up to you to discover for yourself which of the many yoga organizations you feel most attuned with, should you wish to continue your study with them in the long term

December

Thyroid
(thyroid)

As you surely know Hatha yoga is a balancing and stabilizing activity. By systematically moving and working all of the various components of the body, stilling the movement of thought and by regulating the breath; normal, healthy function is restored to the body and mind.
I am aware of no such prohibition as regards the thyroid. I have heard it said that hatha yoga can be practiced laying down in a hospital bed if required. The cautions I have seen relate mostly to pregnancy or injury. These generally involve modifying or easing up of regular hatha practices. Common sense,

the advice of a teacher, feedback from the body (pain, discomfort) should afford ample protection from mistakes that could cause harm.
I say do your yoga poses, enjoy yourself. If there is some contraindication your body will let you know. Learn to listen to and yield to the wisdom of your body. Don't let fear of death (the unknown) derail your yoga or anything else in life.
Concerning illness, yoga and fear, I try to think along these lines.
If I heed the message an illness has for me, it will have no need to linger or reoccur. Ignore its message and surely it or some other malady will be back to remind me. Yoga is movement towards (the Center) life, health, Love and Unity.
Fear a running away (from the Center) from the illusion of death, of pain and suffering; of want.
Own the fear. Feel the fear. Explore the fear. Embrace the fear. Bless the fear. Let go of the fear.

2005

January

Breathing

(Breathing in physically while out mentally & vise-versa)

A while back there was a posting claiming a technique for rapid enlightenment, yada, yada. I followed the link and it took me to a site of some organization whose basic premise is that if you practice breathing in physically, yet out mentally, and then out physically, while breathing in mentally you will be rapidly free of attachment to the body or something along these lines.
Well last night I tried it. I was rather surprised. It was very easy to do and it had the most stilling and calming effect that I have ever experienced doing any type of pranayama. While I have somewhat practiced alternate nose breathing I have never felt the least calming effect.
I noticed two things. One, that the calming effect was so immediate and pronounced I scared myself (I do this with any sudden effect or change). Two, after a couple of repetitions the pause at each end of my breath seemed effortless (not held), lasted longer and there seemed to be little or no thought during the pause. There was no "held" or "breathless" sensation to begin the next breath or exhalation, it just started on its own. This was quite different for me as I have never been able to simply watch my breath. I always feel like when I am watching my breath I am deliberately causing myself to breath. In fact when I first started doing watching my breath type techniques, the first couple of times it provoked panic attacks.
Does anyone have any experience with this technique?
Anyone familiar with the organization the espouses this technique. A url would be appreciated. I would like to go back to their site and explore a little more. Although as I remember at the time their claims seemed to me to be rather fantastic and a little ya ya, woo woo, laaa laaaaaaa, out there :-)
Has anyone ever heard of this technique outside of this organization; perhaps in one of the classic yoga texts, etc. In my experience any worthwhile technique will have its roots in ancient texts or traditions. I prefer to go to the source as I am wary of techniques whose most impressive aspects might have been separated from the whole of the discipline and adapted for public consumption, ala hatha yoga.

Hehehe thats the thing what you hang around with can effect you actually does and must.

I guess I'll join JD and Puma in answering my own posts :-)))
But really, this is strange. Not 15 seconds after making my post I looked at another tread by puma on intergral yoga. In it there was a reference to dereflexation. and the exact same organization I was asking about. This is especially odd since I started to write my post a week ago or at least before the puma posting. Of course there are no coincidences in the world. Yes I know but it still feels odd!
But at any rate my questions remain the same and any feedback, background or experience you can share would be much appreciated.

Wondering

(Just Wondering?)

As one yogi to another I was just wondering:
Have you ever felt like your have had your heart ripped out?
Have you ever been so terrified you could barely breath?
Have you ever felt so much pain you could no longer feel?
Have you ever desired to express sex with a person so strongly you risked jail, ruin or death?
Have you ever been to jail?
Have you ever wished to die?
Have you ever felt like you were Jesus Christ?

Have you ever thought seriously about how to kill millions of people?
Have you ever been so ashamed you were unable to speak?
Have you ever felt so much fear and pain you would gladly destroy yourself or the entire world to make it stop?
Have you ever felt so ashamed, so damaged, so frightened, that you could no longer feel anything but hatred for yourself or anyone else?
Have you ever felt like you were living dead?
Have you ever cursed God?
Have you ever been loved?
Or felt the Grace of God?
Have you ever been trapped in sleep, in a dream, that was so horrible that you would gladly sacrifice all of humanity to make it stop?
Have you ever wanted to talk with God so bad you could scream?
Have you ever been insane? Have you ever been totally sane? Have you ever given a shit about something?
Have you ever been willing to die for something?
Have you ever fought with all your strength?
Have you ever completely given up and surrendered?
Have you ever destroyed someone with a lie?
Have you ever willed (allowed) yourself to be completely vulnerable?
Have you ever been at peace?
Only brave people need reply, thanks.

Gee .....jared sounds like you been watching the movies these epic story plots

Buzzzzz! Good answer... :-) Most astute.
I watched a rather poorly executed movie last night and I got to thinking about real drama (my life) and I wrote my friend an email. The content of my post was a copy of that email sans the last line, which was, "I think these are the things you need to write a good story. What do you think?"

you have FAR to much time on your hands if you have to wonder about the actions of others. and a BIT self indulgent!!!!!!!!!!

I was sharing something about myself and I was hoping someone might share back. I work hard at having/making time to express myself and connect with other kindred souls. Suggesting that I have far to much of that time is at once a validation of the success of my efforts and a gross overstatement of the truth :-) I don't have near enough connection, as I am still too frightened to live every second in the now.
Perhaps you are terrifically sensitive and feel answering intensely emotion expressions with flippant comments is helpful or maybe you are insensitive and estranged from your humanity or it's possible you are reacting to what you perceive as self pity (self indulgent?) or ? I don't have a clue, as you have never responded to any reply I have made to you. And I can't recall ever hearing you share something of your own nature. Well at least this time your comment wasn't in all caps :-) I recall another post in which I shared a poem and your response was "SWEETIE, GET A LIFE!!!"
How do you react when people poo, poo, your art (expressions) ?

you gotta see L.K. as seeing your ego watching a movie as another illusion thinking about poorly done illusions.

Hari Har, It's good to hear from you. Thanks for taking my post seriously and thanks for sharing. I appreciate it You are so funny, you must be a delight to be around! Have you ever considered a career in stand-up comedy? In the U.S. we would say you were a real "kick in the ass'" :-) That's a good thing!
I would be interested to know why you choose to answer my post question per question? Even my best friend answered me but only by saying he had felt only two or three of the examples and he didn't say which ones. You realize because you did this I now will have to answer in kind.
So here goes.

*Have you ever felt like your have had your heart ripped out? Nope. But my lungs *grin**

Not in an physical sense but in an emotional one.

Have you ever been so terrified you could barely breath? Yes. An alternative: I had times I even couldn't bearly breath without beeing terrified. OR I was terrified because I couldn't breath.

Yes, but from panic attacks.

Have you ever felt so much pain you could no longer feel? No

Yes but not in the physical sense; in an emotional way. At some point in my youth I no longer had access to any emotions only physical sensations. An emotional form of autism.

Have you ever desired to express sex with a person so strongly you risked jail, ruin or death? No

Yes

Have you ever been to jail? No

Yes. See answer above.

Have you ever wished to die? Yes

Yes

Have you ever felt like you were Jesus Christ? Wich one? The one naild on a cross or the one walking on water? Yes.

Both! Yes, especially the cross one.

Have you ever thought seriously about how to kill millions of people? Is that a serious question? Of course not.

You know me, of course its a serious question.
Yes as a child. Fortunately I grew out of that stage: unlike many of those throughout history who have the power and position to act on it. Hari Har, you sound incredulous but you would be surprised how many people think and feel this way. There are those who get paid to do exactly that. How do you spell military? I was once in therapy with a world renown geophysicist who explored theoretical ways to provoke earth quakes to this end. Fortunately the intervention helped and he didn't work for the military.

*Have you ever been so ashamed you were unable to speak? *.....**

Now that answer was my favorite bit. I love it!
And Yes, Yes, Yes.

Have you ever felt so much fear and pain you would gladly destroy yourself or the entire world to make it stop?No, not really.

I suppose you are right. We're still here aren't we?

Have you ever felt so ashamed, so damaged, so frightened, that you could no longer feel anything but hatred for yourself or anyone else? I'm affraid not - the question rises in me if I will loose this test... ;o)

Yes

Have you ever felt like you were living dead? Every Morning! ;o)

Yes

Have you ever cursed God? Every time he does not provide me fast enough a parking lot in the city...

Yes. Right here on usenet in fact! More then once. And probably not for the last time. Are you listening God?

Have you ever been loved? Yes!

Yes, thank God!

Or felt the Grace of God? Yes.

Yes, thank God again!

Have you ever been trapped in sleep, in a dream, that was so horrible that you would gladly sacrifice all of humanity to make it stop? No, not a dream.

Oh yes and believe me it sucks.

Have you ever wanted to talk with God so bad you could scream? I don't think hat I need to scream. He listens carefully - even when I whisper.

Almost every day anymore.

> > > Have you ever been insane? > > Yes.

Yes.

> > Have you ever been totally sane? > > Yes/No

Yes. One of only two or three I have ever met. I'll have to add Hari Har to my list although I have only read him. That'll make it 3 or 4.

> > Have you ever given a shit about something? > > Yes

Just about everything.

> > Have you ever been willing to die for something? > > Not really. But I risked that maybe sometimes...

I believe so.

> > Have you ever fought with all your strength? > > Yes.

No

> > Have you ever completely given up and surrendered? > > Oh, yes...

Yes. See the above answer.

> > Have you ever destroyed someone with a lie? > > I'm not good in that.

I hope not.

> > Have you ever willed (allowed) yourself to be completely vulnerable? > > Sometimes, yes.

Yes. But it is the hardest thing I have ever done but it lasts mere moments. It is my goal in practicing yoga to willfully do this 24/7.

> > Have you ever been at peace? > > There have been and are times - again and again, yes.

I have had glimpses of peace in sobriety while in prayer or in surrender. But mostly on drugs and of course they ware off :-(

> > Only brave people need reply, thanks. > > I'm brave now? :o)

You are only brave if you were scared to answer and you did it any way. If you were not afraid, then I am sorry but brave doesn't apply :-)

> *And how many point's did I made?*

You have made 0 points. But then this is a good thing.
You see contrary to popular belief the universe is not made up of alternating opposites. It is absolute (there is only God and God has no opposite) and therefore binary; 0 or 1. On or off. True or not true. So you see there can only be one of two states in which a person is motivated to act; in fear or in the absence of fear. There are no other possibilities. Your answers and comments were (as always) honest, funny, poignant, intelligent, open, respectful, etc. These are all attributes which fall on the 0 side or the absence of fear (thruth) and this makes sense because this is where God is. There is only God. God is Love so there is only Love. God is the only thing that exists where nothing exists. God = 0.

February

A-Bomb

(Iran has a right having nuclear POWER)

I'm not convinced that any country (a symbol that does not in reality exist, so let's say group of individuals) has sufficient sense of Yoga to responsibly (compassionately) possess or use atomic weapons. My preference is that we rethink governments (including religions) and "the rule of law" and go back to settling our differences with fists. This requires a great deal more personal responsibility and consequence and would minimize collateral damage. Not to mention that it's quicker, cheaper and self-limiting. It also has a tendency to discourage violence (punching and getting punched hurts) and encourage alternative mutually beneficial (win, win) solutions. Besides I think this is appropriate for the maturity level (5-6 years old) of most of the human race.

Goal

(Goal for a Yogi?)

Do you know what is the purpose of Yoga?

Yes, it is text book. The purpose of yoga is unification with the source. The technique for attaining this unification is also called yoga. So yoga is both the goal and the means to reach the goal. Obviously there are many different schools of yoga, so the paths are many but the goal is the same.

and what the Yogi aim for?

Unification with the source.

Is love the only truth? Is Yoga then about realizing this?

Yes

Do we really need to work 30 years to find that? :0)

Maybe. (try 30 incarnations, perhaps 3000)

Love is all around us.

In fact Love is the only thing that exists.

Truth

(To know the truth).

To know the truth, one must have a deep desire to see it, combined with a willingness to let go of the old lies!

To know the Truth, one must be in sufficient pain! There is no other way for most of us mortals. Deep desire (pain) is the path to desirelessness ;-) To "know" the Truth is about acceptance; about a letting go of desire; about letting go of anticipation and fear; about allowing and accepting "what is". Because "what is" is God and there is nothing else.

Hostility

(MEDITATION should be known)

I am surprised at the level of hostility in this yoga newsgroup.

So am I from time to time. Usually any "hostility" is a result of cross-posts from other groups. This group is generally pretty calm; to a fault I think :-)
I have read this thread and I can't for the life of me figure out where any contention should exist. I find your comments to be reasonable and uncontroversial.
Mostly though I appreciate that you use "I" statements, e.g. I think, I feel, I believe, etc. Someone may think, feel and believe differently but one can't possibly argue with what is true for another person. I work hard to eliminate "you" statements in my posts. As soon as I start talking about "you" or anyone else I am wrong. I can't possibly know what is true for another person. I can barely maintain a level of honesty I can manage and still I have a lot further to go before I will consider myself competent at living honestly and transparently. However my posts don't generally elicit much discussion. It is difficult to be honest and open about one's thoughts and feelings. This engenders a certain illusion of vulnerability. I think its human nature to be more motivated to attack, defend or point up the differences in our understanding. It somehow feels more important then saying, "yes we are one", "I understand", "I'm OK with letting you be who you are because I am OK with who I am", etc.
Reminds me of the story of the two saints who finally came together to meet after many years. Their respective followers were excited to see what would come of this historic meeting between the two great souls. For 2 days the two sages simply sat with each other and didn't utter a word, then they got up and left. When the disappointed followers asked why after all these years they didn't even speak to each other, they both gave the same answer: that they knew what each other knew and so there was no reason to exchange any information and they simply enjoyed sitting and meditating in each others presence. Hardly the stuff drama is made of :-)
Then this isn't a very "chatty" group to begin with. Many of the most active participants have some very particular (peculiar) points of views and styles of communicating. It really takes time of patiently reading (through the lines) posts to even begin to understand how really deep some of the perspective being shared around here is. But if you can hear it then you probably don't need it. And if you need it, you probably can't hear it. So the people who understand don't feel any need to say anything and the people who don't will either argue or not say anything for fear of looking like they don't know. The real smart ones will ask questions and listen to the answers. But this is the exception. I think that you will find more traditional discussion in some of the technical groups, like cars or computers or other hobbies and interests. For many there is less fear around these subjects and it is more acceptable to say "I don't know".
Then again yoga, like life, is a very personal journey and it really doesn't lend its self to generalizing and formulas. What may be true and useful for one person may be completely inaccessible or useless to another. Generally speaking I don't often find threads I want to jump into. Either I feel like they are not important or way to far off the mark to bother commenting or they may be very contentious (usually a cross post) and impossible to have a civil discussion. But yoga is what I do, its what I think about, its what I study, its what I try to practice and this is the yoga group. What am I going to do? I just have to keep hanging out and enjoy an interesting exchange once in a while. Besides I feel like it is important for me to say some of the things I do whether they are ever acknowledged or discussed or anything because I know there are people who read the posts who may very well benefit in some way.
Besides I'm a chatty person! And yes I am aware of admonitions regarding excessive talking. They say along with sex it is the biggest waste of prana. Then again rightly applied it can be a wonderful and healing expression of pranic energy.

Yog
(Yog Overview)

If any money is involved during learning yog,'t certainly is not YOGA it is called SELLING YOGA if one knows YAMA and NIYAMA understand what I mean.

Of course you are absolutely correct. And this is a good example of what I appreciate about you. :-)
But forgive me for making a "you" statement. Let me restate:
What I understand you to have said, I hold to be an absolute truth. Yoga (God) can not be sold, Yoga can only be given (and/or received).

if there's any money involved in going to school then it's not an education according to you?

God (Yoga) is not an education; a science or a discipline. God is in whose image we have been created. Whatever God is, we are. In my thinking, anyone who profits from offering that information to anyone is a profiteer (real whore) of the lowest order. On my list I would put them below drug dealers, pimps, pawn-brokers and attorneys (in that order). No saint, sage or guru with any integrity (genuine knowledge) would take a penny (or sex, praise or anything else) for conveying that knowledge. What do you think Jesus was so pissed off about at the temple? Please... how do you spell, Gita, Koran, Bible, Upanishad, etc.?

I see nothing wrong with making sure that saints, sages, and gurus have food and shelter.

As I think about it I can't recall ever hearing/reading/knowing of a saint, sage or guru who starved or had no place to live (unless they choose to). Besides they certainly are welcome to earn a living like anyone else. I love the post someone made not long ago, to an article about a French saddhu, living in India who runs a multi-million dollar manufacturing empire and returns to the ashram each night and sheds his cloths and picks up his begging bowl.

what was that line by Gandhi, something to the effect of, "it costs my rich friends a lot of money to keep me in poverty."

That one made me smile! I really like that Gandhi character. He might have been a great stand-up comedian :-) That is if he wasn't so busy pissing off all the hypocrites.
Oh, about the donuts. Try not to depend on them to much as they can become habit forming :-)

That, and they are short on detail, long on overgeneralizations, hardly stuff to base my thoughts or actions on

Then again they are so beautiful, so sweet, so tempting! And oh, so easy to swallow...
I agree. Further more I think that not using these abilities or pursuing "our purpose" can make for an unhappy camper. Just the same "money" is never a purpose but rather a means to an end.
In my thinking, it's never the "thing" or "action" its self that has meaning or is sinful or virtuous; it is the meaning (purpose/motivation) we bring to it which establishes it's character.

Careful there Omjaram, sounds like you are succumbing to the subliminal chant of the donut chorus, "Eat me! Eat me! Eat me!" Now that is a true test of yogic detachment.

That's the plan! Donuts are a scheduled item on my list of things to get out of my life. Those are wheat, meat, salt, sugar, sex and alcohol. In the mean time after 15 years of work and study I am just now getting a grip on the "A" list of things to get rid of. Fear, anger, resentment, sloth, pessimism, negativity, depression. lying, blaming, etc.

Oh my gawd!!! If I had known I would be driving you to donuts, I would have made the effort to find something at least semi intelligent as a reply.

It is easy for desire or self-interest to blindfold conscience.

Understood!
While sharing my thoughts on this subject with many over the years I have found that for most people this point is an impossible idea to even contemplate. Most of us have some sort of internal list (depending on culture/history/religion/nationality/etc) of things/behaviors/events, which we deem good or bad. Very often I have used this judgment for the very reason that you stated above: for judgment, justification and I'll add; exploitation.
Although, interestingly enough, the notion that sin or virtue is not a function of the act (or thing) but of the motivation of the doer is a core tenet of our legal system in the US. One can not be deemed responsible or in fact to have even committed a crime if one did not or could not form the required "intent" to commit a crime. I realize that the application of this principle in the legal system often falls seriously short of perfect but it is at least recognized.
I believe that the various codes of "right & wrong" are, in general, fair guides to living an efficient and effective (if not stifled and controlled) life. I am also tempted to say that I also see a lot of hypocrisy, manipulation and abuse in the application of these codes. Note: there is in absolute reality only perfection and none of these ideas can have any existence as such. However thi is another conversation ;-) That does though, bring me back to your point above and my technique (jhana) for recognizing blindfolded conscience .
Firstly the manner in which I understand "right and wrong" is this: there is no right or wrong. These notions/ideas have no objective meaning or existence. Every thing, everywhere is perfect, Now and could only be so. So I find it more helpful to think of "right and wrong" in terms of effective or ineffective. Godlike or un-Godlike. Harmful or helpful. In alignment with the Truth and Reality or not. So one way I determine the nature of my actions is to look at the consequence of that action. The fruit of actions taken, desires expressed or judgments rendered will be either "good" and helpful or "bad" and harmful. These effects will be different not because of the act/thing itself, which might be the same but because of the reason of the act taken.
Because of this I have adopted another, what I consider, more universal idea about what constitutes "right or wrong" and how I can know if my decisions and actions are in accord with this idea. I would say that any belief, action or decision I make motivated by, predicated on, or taken in fear, would be an "evil", harmful or ineffective one. That any decision based in fear will be a bad decision because fear is an anticipation (construct/imagining) and therefore "bad", inaccurate and untrue information. No matter how sensitive, mature or well thought out or reasoned my decision, if it is based on bad information, it will be a bad decision and it will have negative consequences, no matter what my desires and or intentions.
Seven years of practicing Stage I (not with others) celibacy helps. However my desire/temptation is still strong and still expressed. For me, I envision stage II (no expression at all) to be a much more comfortable place. Of course ultimately, Stage III (no illusion of distinction/separation, to be desired and/or expressed, e.g.Yoga) is the goal. Then I can eat all I care to without turning the Karmic wheel, even if I still suffer by getting fat, etc. :-)

That tells us that if we were apes 2 million years back, God too was an ape 2 million years back

I'm not familiar with your nick, so I can't tell if you are ribbing me or not. Anyway, for the sake of conversation I will respond to what appears to me to be a very interesting point.
Many religions, including most yogis don't buy the monkey explanation. Personally I do. It makes perfect sense to me. Most of the other explanations/stories don't. None the less we are made in the image of God, not God in our image. So I am certain that whatever qualities apes had 2 million years ago or 2 million years in the future, they, as we, will be comprised of whatever God is. Flowers are comprised of and express as whatever God is. Animals, rocks, evil dictators, everything... Remember we are not just a physical object. We exist in aspects which are not physical and can not be seen, yet still are manifest such as psychic, etheric and astral. In addition much of who and what we really are is in the nature of spirit which not only can't be seen in the physical sense but transcends manifest existence all together.

Then, is Benny Hinn a whore of the lowest order?

It's not my job to judge Mr. Hinn. I don't even know who he is and except for the URL you provided I know nothing about him. I have no idea what he does with the money. I would just say, "if the shoe fits" (and that is between him and God) and leave it at that.:-)
I hope you read all that (I did) and are not just pulling my chain ;-) Yes there are lots and lots of theories and second guessing and lies and distortions ad infinitum. I don't worry about the details or whether any of it is true or not. I know there is God and that is all I have to know. All else follows logically behind that fact. So I try to live my life like there is God. And even if there were no God, I find that living my life like there is one works a whole lot better then when I lived as if there wasn't. On the other hand all the controversy and contention has never helped me so I am learning to live without it. I won't lie, it's work but well worth it. :-)

March

School

(And I thought I had it tuff!)

Nothing like the dyslexic, agnostic, insomniac, who lays awake all night wondering... Is there really a Dog?

Actually, I'm working at MIckie D's.

As far as I am concerned school (or goals) is not the end all. It certainly is a waste if you are not directed and focused and above all, enjoying yourself. I suggest if you don't know what you want to do when you grow up then get out and live a little. I highly recommend joining the military (for everyone, warrior and pacifist alike). It's one of the best, cheapest and fastest ways to get a real good feel for many different aspects of life; learn to deal with immature problems with authority and get some practice depending on your self. In fact can open your eyes in ways you can't even imagine. One might even learn a number of things they don't want to be/do and if lucky, maybe even something they do.

its hard to stay out of trouble

There's nowhere, where that stuff is not. And if it's not available we will always find something else to substitute. It is not the issue or the problem. However if you do it enough it can become a problem and a really bad one at that. Then you will have to deal with the problem it creates and then when you have succeed in freeing yourself from that trap then you can start where you left off with the real problem ;-)
Snip, snip, snip ;- ;- ;-
Cause and effect is a fairly simple idea. Continue to do what you do and you will continue to have what you have. Do what your friends do and you will have what your friends have. If this is what you want then consider yourself blessed and never regret a moment. On the other hand if there is something or someone else you think you would like to be like, then what they do, have what they have and then decide. What none of us can escape is the good and the bad of our existence. To chase only the good and try to avoid the bad is formula for unhappiness and insanity.

Is yoga a hassle these days or is it coming easy for you?

Aaron, it has taken me fifteen years to get to where I am nearly ready to start doing yoga in earnest. The desire/discipline to do that, still eludes me. But little by little the depression is lifting. Inch by inch I continue to gain control of what goes into my body, mind and spirit. One step forward and two steps back. Life is relentlessly difficult and it seems that the entire weight of maya is pressing in the middle of my chest. But like you mentioned above (a good sign really), I care less and less. More and more of it I cast onto God to deal with and I try to let go, let go and let go some more. I am never going to succeed at anything I try to do, not living, not yoga, not parenting, nothing. I have always been and will always be a failure. I will however (so long as I am breathing) continue to let go (yoga) of caring about it all and accept what is the Truth. That there is only God, that God is Love, that everything, everywhere is perfect Love, including me :-) Always has been and always will be :-) And that there has never been any reason to be anything but at peace, serene and joyous.

Fasting

(Fasting and altered state of consciousness)

I have seen many times that fasting is one of the way to produce an euphoric / altered state of consciousness....

One of my favorite subjects :-) I am currently 7 days out on a fast and feeling quite good. I have been fasting for 15 years, with tremendous benefit.
I can't comment on using fasting to produce "altered states" or "euphoria" as I have never used it for these reasons. I can comment with some confidence on the spiritual and health promoting aspects of fasting, with which I am very familiar.
A well managed and responsible fast can result in some spacey feelings; heightened perceptions and spiritual awareness. It is also well known that starvation for prolonged periods can cause visual, kinesthetic and auditory distortions, delusions, and other forms of psychosis.
The book I used to learn and practice fasting is JUICE FASTING, by Paavo Airola. This short book is also included in his book, ARE YOU CONFUSED. I recommend either of these books, highly. Over the years I have read several other fasting books in addition to many articles on the subject but I still find this book to be the best.
Did you want to learn and practice fasting?

Fasting will get you no closer to that realization than licking my dog's ass.

I personally do not equate "spiritual awareness" with any physical or psychic phenomenon or perception. I see these as expressions of the material (manifest) universe, of which, spirit is transcendent.
Thank you for pointing up that I phrased my comment as a statement which might be construed to apply to others, rather then to me specifically. Let me rephrase:
"While undertaking a well managed and responsible fast I have experienced some spacey feelings; heightened perceptions and spiritual awareness."
Concerning the trick with the dog I will defer to you, as I have never tried that.

Nor have I. However, I find my dog's ass to be a fine placeholder for whatever you find common and mundane in the world

My question would be, what were you spiritually aware of?

That I wasn't eating and I wasn't dead. That what I believed about eating was a lie and probably what I believe about everything is also a lie. That there are lots of things going on, of which I have no awareness. That I could never "know" anything again. Common, mundane stuff like that :-)
I have noticed that awareness doesn't change anything for me. I simply am more aware. I may change something in my life in response to my awareness. But the awareness it's self doesn't change anything. For me, enlightenment isn't about being anything, or doing anything because I am whole and perfect right now. Always have been and always will be, no matter what lie I tell myself to the contrary.
For me Realization / Transcendence / Enlightenment is about being aware and accepting reality (Truth). I look at it as a process, not a state of being. In reality, who I am, where I am, when I am, can't change because am perfectly me, right here, right now and can be nothing else.
There are all degrees of which I can be aware of (my) self. At one end where I am suffering, making mistakes, terrified yet still feel a little something somewhere, that says I'm OK, this is not really who I am. Or the other end where I am aware of the Truth of who I am; and still suffer, make mistakes and I am frightened, (much, much less so). Eventually I will learn and practice letting go of all of my fear and the suffering that comes with it.
In the mean time fasting very much supports my physical, mental and spiritual path towards awareness and I recommend it highly to anyone for any reason (even your dog who sounds like she is carrying 99% of the weight of the world :-)

Time

(TIME is indication of MOVEMENT! Nothingg else.)

There is neither time nor movement. These are constructs created by humans to help manage their existence on the material plane. In reality (think/meditate about it) there is only here and only now. The ability to know or perceive this is what I think Carlos Casteneta's, Don Juan meant by "stopping the world".

> *to check it please kindly look at your picture at the age of seven,and also your picture of now. Put them together if these two pictures are same,then no movement at all... If there is any difference that means there is a movement of all the particles of your body...*

you are correct (relatively) and only a mad man would deny your reasoning. To me your logic is flawless. However, the ease with which you make your case, might give you pause to consider that there may be something more. Think about it. If it's as easy to understand as presented, then wouldn't everyone get it? In my experience, the existence of "Now" (therefore the non-existence of time/change) is not an easy intellectual/philosophical (Jnana) notion to grasp. It is harder still to know (Raja), appreciate (Bhakti) and live by (Karma). In fact, while my "normal" mind may be able to comprehend the probable existence of a "now", it is far from equipped to "see" it. This is my purpose in pursuing meditation; in fact the whole of Yoga. To allow me, the knower, to know, what's known; "Now"!
One technique I have tried is to sit quietly and focus my mind with the purpose of seeing "now". I look for "now" until I can find/see/feel/know it. I anticipate "now's" coming and watch until it changes from the future into the "now." Relentlessly I try to catch the "now" before it slips into the past. I have tried as hard as I can to proof to myself that what you think is true. After becoming tired and frustrated enough, and quite without my will or intention, I have been given a brief awareness of "now" (I got the real "me" thrown into the deal as well). I've been chasing after "now" ever sense ;-)

DNR

(Extraordinary Methods of Medical Treatment and Persistent Vegetative States)

A lot of goings on in the U.S. news lately around someone not leaving their express desires regarding this subject in writing.
Therefore to avoid what I see as the degrading and hypocritical manipulation of another's humanity, I wish to make this statement for my family and friends to read. I am using this medium because I believe my statement will be searchable in perpetuity (Thank you, google!).
I omjaroo, omjaram, Jared, do hereby state that under no circumstances do I wish to be kept alive using "extraordinary" medical methods. Should I be deemed to be in a persistent vegetative state I wish all life support to be removed. I unequivocally believe in euthanasia and a person's right to die should they so choose. (I also believe in reincarnation and that wherever a person leaves off in this life they will start up again in the next, so there is little use in deliberately ending one's life early.) In addition when I die I wish that my entire body be donated to science to be used and disposed of as needed.
Really though, because of my past and because I am poor, I doubt anyone is going to go out of their way, to keep me alive. But just in case :-)

> *the large majority of people who are fighting to "save" Schiavo wouldn't care that you have left this note. They will try to find a way to invalidate it.*

In addition to being a social / philosophical / yogic comment intended to encourage sharing / thought / discussion, my post really is a record of my desire / intention in this regard, should anyone ever need to know. Personally I don't care what happens to my empty vehicle once I am through with it. I do not have any superstitious beliefs regarding dead bodies. Social customs / traditions around death are for the living and I think it is helpful for the living to know the intentions of the deceased.

> *I agree with you completely, with perhaps one exception. I wouldn't want my body to be the rhetorical field upon which the far right deploys one of its moral certainty crusades. Not for me, but for what it would do to my family and friends.*

Nose Breathing

(Yoga and deviated nasal septum) and (Blocked nostrils, natural/body's pranayam?)

I agree with you, that one should listen to their body. If it hurts, stop. Chances are there is something else you should be learning/practicing first.
There are a number of things you can do to try and resolve your nasal congestion before attempting alternate nose breathing.
Neti: A purification technique for cleansing the nasal passages Kapalabhati: A breathing technique for purification of the nasal passages and the lungs. Sirshasna (headstand) Fasting (Short water or longer juice) To cleanse and balance the body. This will also help to indicate allergies to food/drink or lifestyle which likely contribute to your congestion.
I would suggest seeking the guidance of a qualified and experienced teacher. If you are so inclined and capable of learning from books I can suggest The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga by SWAMI VISHNU DEVANANDA, as a good source for information on these techniques. Also a search on the web will net (pun intended :-) a great deal of information.

> *When someone is sick, sometimes he gets blocked nostrils, is that some body mechanism to regulate energy flow?*
>
> *Can it be compared when one consciously does pranayam?*
>
> *The condition you are describing is called rhinitis. So far as I know, it is caused by head congestion resulting from infection or allergies. The "alternating" part seems strange (though it is a classic symptom)*

My understanding is that hatha yoga is a detailed and systematic (intentional) application of what the body is designed to do naturally. It is the science of understanding and exercising the natural functions of the body. This would explain why yogis who do not practice hatha may still accrue the benefits of doing so by using other yogic methods wherein they allow the body to "naturally" marshal and express it's innate health and considerable powers.
Here are a couple of citations which suggest there is a distinct correlation between alternate nasal breathing which occurs naturally and the higher functions of the brain and social function. I did a google search on "ultradian rhythm+nasal" and found lots of stuff to read on this subject.

> Breathing, Ultradian Rhythms, and Headaches. Those readers who have observed their breathing for any length of time have probably noticed that, in general, air does not move through the nasal passages equally at the same time. Usually when the left nostril is more open, the right one is more congested and vice versa. This occurs because the flow of blood shifts back and forth between the nostrils in a rhythm that takes approximately one and a half to two hours. This "ultradian rhythm," long observed by medical science, is related to the functioning of the brain hemispheres and can play an important role in healing. When the left nostril is more open, the right hemisphere of the brain is generally more dominant; when the right nostril is more open, the left hemisphere is generally more dominant.
>
> Another ultradian rhythm, and noted by Rossi, is that of nasal chamber dilation. Like many bodily functions, nasal chamber dilation corresponds to contralateral activity in the brain. When the left nasal chamber is most dilated (the right chamber partially blocked) then the right hemisphere is most active, and vice versa. During my yoga training in India, an advanced yoga practice is the control of nasal breathing and chamber dilation. This is said to bring about great psychological and physiological control. There are several variations of the exercise using the hands to alternate manually blocking of the nasal airways. Adepts appear able to do this at will without using their hands
>
> One of the most intriguing areas of recent research exploring the ultradian interface between the mind-brain level, stress, psychosomatics and personality is the so-called nasal rhythm.
>
> The German rhinologist, Kayser (1895) is credited with recognizing and measuring the widely varying ultradian shifts in "nasal dominance" in humans whereby the left and right chambers of the nose

alternate in their size and shape to change the degree of air flow through each every few hours. Table one outlines some of the major studies in a century of research in this still highly controversial area. The most significant of these studies for understanding mind-body communication are those of Debra Werntz (1981) who reported a contralateral relationship between cerebral hemispheric activity (EEG) and the ultradian rhythm of the nasal cycle. They found that relatively greater integrated EEG values in the right hemisphere are positively correlated with a predominant airflow in the left nostril and visa versa.

In a wide ranging series of studies Werntz et al (1982a & b) found that subjects could voluntary shift their nasal dominance by forced uni-nostril breathing through the closed nostril. Further, this shift in nasal dominance was associated with an accompanying shift in cerebral dominance to the contralateral hemisphere and autonomic nervous system balance throughout the body (Klein et al. 1986). The ultradian nasal cycle is not only a marker for cerebral hemispheric activity, but it also could be used to voluntarily change the loci of activity in the highest centers of the brain and autonomic system that are involved in cybrenetic loops of communication with most organ systems, tissues and cells of the body. Some of these investigators hypothesize that this nasal-brain-mind link may be the essential path by which the ancient practice of breath regulation in yoga led to the the voluntary control of many autonomic nervous system functions for which the Eastern adeps are noted.

These relationships inspired a recent Ph.D dissertation by Darlene Osowiec (1991) who assessed hypothesized associations between the nasal ultradian rhythm, anxiety, symptoms of stress and the personality process of self-actualization. She found that: "(1) there is a significant positive correlation between self-actualizing individuals having low trait anxiety and stress related symptoms and a regular nasal cycle... and (2) non-self-actualizing individuals with high levels of trait anxiety and stress-related symptoms exhibit significantly greater irregularity in the nasal cycle..." These results are reminiscent of the ancient texts that emphasize that an irregular nasal cycle, particularly one in which the person remains dominant in one nostril or the other for an excessively long period of time are associated with illness and mental disorder (Rama, Ballentine and Ajaya, 1976)

Osowiec's findings with the ultradian nasal rhythm are similar to the types of associations that are found between stress, symptoms, personality and responsiveness to therapeutic hypnosis. Since hypnosis, like chronobiology, was a historically significant turning point in the study of these cybrenetic pathways of mind-body communication and healing, it will be used here as a paradigm of how psychology and biology may find a common denominator in ultradian time, rhythm and information transduction (Rapp, 1987)

Addiction

(The nature of addiction)

if the parents are not educated > properly in the human biology - they have no right to give a birth to the child, in same way as a car manufacturer has no right to build a car without safety protocols for its use.

Good thing God didn't set it up that way or else you wouldn't be here to make this statement :-) But I am reminded that each of us is responsible for our own journey. We are each born into the situation (parental and otherwise) which is most appropriate for our level of development based our past incarnations and by karmic law. If we have inept, abusive or otherwise less then perfect parents (I am raising my hand :-) then this brings us the needed environment to learn whatever it is we need to learn (my hand is still raised and now I am waving it eagerly :-) I can say that the fear, suffering and insanity of my present incarnation has brought me directly to God realization (realizing their is God and only God), so I can hardly blame or complain (which is my old habit) but rather I rejoice, celebrate and give thanks (which is bhakti. See Vivekananda, KARMA AND BHAKTI YOGA).

April

Relaxation

(relaxation)

I've had to learn to let go of a number of activities which create tension in order to relax. I ask myself if it is important enough to get upset or uncomfortable over. I ask myself if it brings me any closer to God or if it helps another person in some way. I find that these types of activities rarely upset me. It's usually when I am doing something that really isn't good for me that I find myself being hurried, upset, hassled, etc. I've found it easier and more efficient to change my behavior then trying to control or fix the symptoms created by my behavior. Just a thought...

Religion

(be skeptical about all religion, Eastern or Western)

chicken and egg story?

No not really. Personal peace must come first...
Universal peace, world peace, whole peace, these do not and can not exist. There is no such thing as "world" or "universal". You can't go to the store and order a "world" anything. These are just ideas; fictions used to represent the total of many individuals. The fact is there is only personal peace. When a sufficient number of individuals have attained personal peace in their internal environments then it could be said that we have world peace.
What I believe Puma meant when he said "whole peace" is more important than "personal" peace, is that a person who attains personal peace may not be satisfied with it until all others have attained it also. It is said that there are saints/sages/enlightened masters, who having transcended rebirth (karma) none the less choose to continue being reborn until all others have been freed of their karma.

Report

(Questions about yoga)

I am a student and I am very interested in yoga and I am writing a journalistic report about this topic. I would appreciate it if you could provide your insights

OK, let's go! I like quiz's :-)

What aspects of yoga interest you?

All... That was easy!

Which school or schools of yoga do you follow?

There are thousands (just like American colleges!). Perhaps you meant which path/s do I follow.I am a Jnani. I also study and practice aspects of: karma, bhakti, raja, and hatha yoga.

What do you know of the history of yoga?

A great deal.

How did you begin to practice yoga?

While recovering from alcohol addiction, I realized there was God and in my search for some means to connect with him I was drawn to yoga as the most systematic and rational way.

What benefits have you received after practicing yoga?

Each particular yoga confers its own benefits. For me, I would say the greatest benefit I have received is a context in which to approach God. In addition I have received numerous physical, mental and spiritual benefits.

Do you believe that yoga is a religious experience?

Yes (careful about asking yes/no questions.)

Do you wish to receive a copy of this report?

Yes. I hope you will do/share your whole report right here in alt.yoga for all of us (and many others) to benefit from. Besides more then a few of us went to college and I for one would have loved to have done a report/research like this had I been smart (intrigued) enough.
Hey big C, Why haven't you answered any of the posts (mine of course) to your request? Not that important? Or what?

If you feel Divinity inside, you should feel Complete, then why do you still need external stimuli (in this case command respect from others, isn't it a weakness)?

Of course you are correct. There is no such thing as respect or lack of to command or not. There is only God.
The intention of my post was to benefit the young person who had requested help with their project. I was (I hoped) ever so gently chiding them for requesting something of a group of strangers, receiving a positive response and then not following through. I suppose it's the house holder (father) in me. I have a couple of teenage boys I am responsible to provide feedback for :-)
I have to admit I was/am a bit disappointed that they haven't followed through. I thought a little youthful energy directed towards inquiring into the meaning of yoga, might just be the thing to bring a little life into the group. I love learning and I love to teach, so the prospect of some discovery going on was attractive. Hopefully we will see if it is a real inquiry or just troll/spam.

It seems C. McIntosh was expecting to receive answers by mail

I like your nic, perhaps you would tell me where it came from and/or what it means :-).
Yes it was me who suggested the change of protocol to incorporate the NG into the process of developing the study/article. But then this is a NG and that's the nature of how NGs work. To provide this person with the information they seek would require a whole lot of work. So if I were to invest any significant amount of time in trying to help them I would prefer to do it in public and with the help of the other knowledgeable participants of alt.yoga. Besides as I mentioned to Piotr, I think it would be a shame to take a wonderful inquiry like the one proposed off-line and private. I would take it a step further and suggest that if it needs to be private for some reason then there is something "wrong" with it.
As I think about it, I am a little surprised no one else has stepped up and answered the questions in the thread :-(Perhaps they are following the prescribed plan and emailing. But then you see, I can't know that. I have in the past posted "quizzes" of sorts to the group. Most of these were of a more personal nature, deeply important to me, so I could understand if few or no one answered. These questions posed by the university student are fairly general and so should be easily answered. I for one would love to hear the answers.
Over the years there have many who have posted questions, to which people responded and then they never acknowledged the answers. There can be a million different reasons why someone might do that. However in my value system, anything short of death or incapacitation would lack class ;-)

Copyright

(Copyright a yoga move?)

Here is a story from a blog that caught my eye. I should say caught in my throat.

Copyright a yoga move? If yoga has been around for 5,000 years, can a 21st century businessman claim to own a piece of it? Bikram Choudhury says yes.

The Beverly Hills yoga mogul, who popularized his style of yoga and then franchised a chain of studios bearing his name, has long rankled traditionalists, who dislike his tough business tactics and brash

outspokenness. Now Choudhury is facing a challenge in a San Francisco courtroom, where a federal judge is hearing arguments in a lawsuit that some legal experts say could define a new frontier in intellectual property. At issue: Can Choudhury take a sequence of two breathing exercises and 26 yoga poses from an ancient Indian practice, copyright it and control how it is practiced? The Open Source Yoga Unity people say he can't.

Two weeks ago a young man was stabbed to death on the street next door to my shop. His family and friends set up a memorial on the sidewalk next to the liquor store where he fought and died. Along with candles, flowers and photos, someone offered an unopened 32-ounce bottle of beer. That beer sat on the ground untouched for a week when one of the local drunks couldn't stand it any longer and grabbed it. When someone passing by told him, "don't take that!" he incredulously asked, "why not?"
Why Not? I think the Law of Karma is a real good reason. But this man is sick, frightened and no doubt thinks he is very far from God. It seems to me that the significance of robbing a grave for something one thinks he needs is nothing compared to taking a gift from God; selling it as your own and then using the law to thwart others in its use, in order to further enrich yourself (shiver. . .)
The Bikrams and Chopras of this world stand in stark contrast to people like the French sadhu in India who built factories from scratch, employs thousands, and takes nothing for himself. This is an example of power, I aspire to :-)

Ego

(Ego and Understanding)

I do not think what is written as an instruuction and tool for growth or lesson was or is funny. I do find your lack of understanding of what was written typical of beings (snip)

Welcome to alt.yoga :-)
I invite you to come spend some time and get to know Puma, JD, Stu, Hari, Seeking, Frank, HB, Wade, NBennett, The Elf and all the other unique and colorful denizens of this newsgroup. .
If you felt slighted by Puma, please don't take it personally. Imagine this.
You walk into a bar that you have never been in. There is a group of people you have never met, inside talking with each other. Unannounced, you step into the middle of their conversation and start telling them stuff they didn't ask to hear.
The nice guy might say (Eddie Murphy style), "you're so funny, get outta here!" Others might just stonily ignore you. Some not so civilized guy might dog cuss you or punch you in the nose and send you out the door.
God expresses himself in myriad forms and fashion and you'll find that expression here, but common (n)etiquette still applies.;-)

May

Kundalini

(Kundalini Questions)

I am not trying to raise kundalini but I have had spontaneous movement similar to what you describe and the information on this site was very useful in identifying related symptoms and providing encouraging advise.
Based on advice of more then one author whom I respect, I specifically do not to try to raise kundalini in my practice of yoga. I won't until I am being guided by a knowledgeable and experienced guru. In the mean time I will do what I can to prepare for it's eventual expression by cleansing and strengthening the body, mind and spirit. In my case fear, resistance and the lack of self control, are the biggest impediments to the easy, natural flow of life force. It is my belief the same personal traits that makes one anxious to raise kundalini are the same ones that lead to the negative effects you read about.
I would recommend very highly against the casual or haphazard dabbling with kundalini raising techniques. I would recommend getting and keeping yourself straight with yourself, humanity and God (or whatever

you prefer to call "The Force" Avoid preoccupation with psychic, astral and other material phenomenon as these are/were never the point.

Sound advice. Take it slow, take it easy. Effortless effort. The energy is a natural result of staying the course.

Nice to hear from you. Thank you for the kind and supportive comments.
Hittleman, Yogananda, Vivekananda, Vishnudevandanda, Sivananda, Rajneesh, Emmet Fox; my inner guru is getting lots of help from some really, really good outer gurus :-)

There is not metaphysical magic to raising kundalini.

There are however some very esoteric and arcane techniques for raising kundalini. They require a great deal of, training, practice and discipline to apply and they are kept obscure for a reason. Kundalini is thought by some to be the most powerful force in the universe. Playing with it is a well known hazard ;-) I don't work with electricity without knowing what I am doing or unless I know for a fact the circuit is de-energized. }:-{{{

from reading your posts I would say that your general lifestyle is an expression of your strong personal kundalini. I can see it in your writing.

Thanks for saying so. Can you give me an example?

I am surprised you don't recognize it in your meditation.

I can only wish for that, at the moment. As I have shared in the past, the ability (self-discipline) required to meditate has eluded me for years. Not only is sitting a form of physical and psychic torture for me but when I am able to, I become terrified as I reach what feels like the "edge". It's only been recently, since I stopped eating meat, that I have been able to take up meditation in earnest. After 20-30 minutes of stretching/relaxation I can sit for a solid 10-20 minutes. Afterwards if I can manage some sun salutations then I may have the energy to start the day. Often I will lay down and sleep for 30 minutes to a couple of hours.
It's funny, a couple of years ago I took to flying in my dreams. At first this scared me because I had no control of it and sometimes I would get real high and as I started to fall (fly) towards the ground I would wake myself up. As this happens more and more I have learned to try and control my flying and let go of the fear of hitting the ground.
The other day as I was meditating, I felt a sudden rush of energy throughout my whole body from below and up through my head. It felt just like in the dream, as if I was going to take off flying and I was like OK, I'm ready, let's go... but the energy quickly peaked and gently retreated and that was it. I just feel like one of these days it's not going to retreat and I would like to be able to let go and flow with it. They say you only get in trouble if you resist or try and stop it. So this has been motivating me to take up Hatha again, basic preparatory pranayama and concentration/meditation. There may be a time soon when I seek support and/or guidance from the Self Realization Fellowship (with whom I study) and perhaps spend some time in one of their ashrams. I still have kids I need to care for so this will be a few years off if things go by my plans/intentions.
In the mean time, I am ever so steadily losing my fear of death; alcohol appears to be a thing of the past and stage II celibacy is now a probability. So I have managed very well without a physical guru or teacher by reading, thinking, studying, observing and hanging out in alt.yoga :-)

You wanted an example. Read the above. It is filled with sincere, honest intention to find light where there is darkness. That is an expression of shakti/kundalini in your consciousness.

Understanding
(Ego and Understanding)

I invite you to come spend some time and get to know Puma, JD, Stu, Hari, Seeking, Frank, HB, Wade, NBennett, The Elf and all the other unique and colorful denizens of this newsgroup.

i really didn't feel like i was a part of this newsgroup till i read that

I'm glad that's been straightened out ;-)

being a bit of a lightweight when it comes to the discipline and spiritual side of yoga.

Trust me, we are all lightweights. That's why we have to study/practice yoga!

then again, you've always welcomed me and my comments, even when we disagree.

I have to admit that my encouragement is a bit self-serving, as I do enjoy your posts. You bring an energy that is somewhat rare around here. Reminds me a bit of Hari Har ;-)

my yoga community is pretty small in my offline life. this helps.

Mine consists of just one (myself) for about 15 years now. Seems to work for me except sometimes I long for the fellowship of others. My path has been mostly spiritual, mental and emotional with some occasional hatha thrown in to help keep me alive. I connect with others from time to time. But I remind myself that I am never separate from anyone or any thing. So my longing is in fact a denial of the truth (bad habit I'm working on) that the Universal Principle is present everywhere and that there is nothing to search or long for.

p.s. - my wonderful teacher has moved to montreal and after trying out classes taught by 5 other teachers, i've found one who suits me well, pushes me in different ways, teaches me new things.

This is great to hear! I was concerned when it appeared you were having trouble finding someone and I thought you might not continue :-(

as luck would have it,

So you still think there is such a thing as luck? Chance? Coincidence? Ummm. We'll have to work on that :-)
What is it they say? "When the student is ready the teacher will appear". I like the one that says, "God doesn't close any door that he doesn't open up another; better one." It's just those long hallways that are the problem!

the studio is located within walking distance to my home so i can add a nice walk to my routine. and in case i'm in need of a fix, my old teacher is returning for single classes in july and october, so i'm set. i continue my daily 20 minute home practice.

Walking is great, I'm really starting to enjoy it myself.

Night Terrors
(my strange experienes while sleeping)

About 3 yrs back while sleeping i felt that i was coming back to consciousness however i couldn't move any of my body part even an inch.

This used to happen to me as a child (12-15 years old). I have heard this referred to as "night terrors". Seems a pretty apt moniker to me. Not fun!

I was fully aware of my surrounding activities, i was also scared and got the feeling as if i am about to die.

In my case it seemed that I was aware of my surroundings but on reflection I believe feedback from my surroundings was coming into a dream and/or sleep state. As if I was aware of what was outside of me yet still fully asleep.
This could be a sleeping panic attack. I believe that low blood sugar is very often related to panic attacks. The purpose of a panic attack being to quickly raise dangerously low blood sugar. You might experiment by taking a glass of juice before bed (or relaxing your mind) and see if that changes anything.
I also used to sleep walk. I would get up, cook food; make up a lie about what I was doing when asked and then go lay back down having never woken up.

I was feeling like as if i m going deeper and deeper into dark universe, it was very frightening.

This does not sound like a component that I have experienced except briefly in meditation. I call is reaching "the edge". I didn't like it, very scary. This has put me off of meditation for a long time. The less afraid of death I become the less this represents a problem. Now I am more inclined to look for that "edge" or dark universe. Yogananda and Rajnessh both discuss this.

This stopped after about 5 minutes.

This would be consistent with a panic episode.

Since that day it has happend to me over 200 times, more interestingly i could also make it happen at will after relaxing my mind for a while with a hit ratio of 1 in 4-5 attempts.

It is well known that one of the aspects of our make-up as humans is that we exist on a psychic as well as physical plane. I think there are many of us who have relatively little awareness of that which is psychic and some who have more. Sounds like you are on the more side of the equation. Being abruptly introduced to things psychic can scare the daylights out of someone.
There are lots of things which might precipitate this movement into increased awareness; physical/emotion stress, drugs/alcohol, meditation. If you are not frightened of it, why not consider exploring the nature of it. I doubt anyone will be able to tell you exactly what it is and what it means to you, other then you.
The psychic realms are just a step up (or over, or finer) from the physical and are very much a part of the phenomenal world. Absent any spiritual feelings, leanings or practice I doubt any spiritual meaning (that being said, all existence has a spiritual meaning ;-).

I*f any one of you can tell me anything what it was is all about i shall be thankfull to you.*

It would be very difficult (and irresponsible) to suggest to you with any assurance what these episodes might mean without a great deal more information. Sounds to me like a classic case of, you're going to have to find out for your self. A physical exam and some study, reading, asking, meditating, inner guru, etc. There is a whole area of yoga discipline related to consciousness control while sleeping/dreaming, the goal of which is to eliminate "sleep" entirely and replace it with a state of constant mediation/awareness. Carlos Castaneda's Don Juan is big on this and Yogananda alludes to it.

Sounds like sleep paralysis to me. I once treated a patient who had this as part of chronic fatigue syndrome sometimes for up to an hour on waking in the morning.

Kids

(Yoga with infants)

very interested in how to do yoga with/for my six month old son.

I wouldn't try teaching an infant yoga. Although unconscious of it, they are at that age as close to pure yoga as there is. Any structure will only hasten their "unlearning" of yoga. At this age its all about play. Rather I suggest you learn yoga and practice it and make it part of your life. When your child becomes interested in what you are doing they will start to mimic you. In the mean time you will have learned some skills worth imitating :-)

I have seen some yoga with your baby videos. A quick search on the internet should locate them easily enough. As far as basic (good solid traditional) yoga for you, I would suggest any book by Richard Hittleman. Easy to find on amazon and cheap. Great to teach yourself by.

I am with Omjaram on this. Yoga is not really for infants.

Ditto what Omjaram and Stu said.

I was 13 when I started doing yoga, inspired by a friend who had an aunt who was into yoga. I'm not sure I couldn't have started even earlier, though, perhaps at ten or so, if I'd gotten the opportunity.

Meditation

(What is the aim in MEDITATION)

People should state the real aim of meditation.Why do they carry it!!! I just like to know! If they really know the reason doing it...

I like your question and I think you are funny :-)
If we hope to have a profitable exchange of information/opinion then it might help to define the terms we are using so that we are all on the "same page" so to speak.
Meditation can refer to an amazing number of activities. Just off the top of my head.
Meditation can refer to: contemplation reflection thought study deliberation visualization mental clearing concentration etc.
Some of the many, many types of meditation might be: Zen Kriya Transcendental Yoga Tantric Tibetan Taoist Buddhist Christian Islamic etc.
Specific techniques may be classified as active or passive, with seed or without seed, external or internal, etc. The use of a meditation may be for marshal, religious, health and other reasons.
So would you be so kind as to clarify your inquiry so I can respond sensibly?
Who is the "who" you are referring to? What is the meditation that they may or may not know the aim of, or what they are doing with it? And what is your purpose in asking the question ;-)

Yogaville

(Life in Yogaville, Va) and (yogaville/satchidananda ashram)

A conflicting division has existed for a long time in Yogaville and has repeatedly expressed itself through personalities that choose to remain there.

wonderful description of the crap we all have to deal with in life. I will save this post and use it as a sample of the level of writing/descriptive power I aspire to!

I've been reading this stuff about Yogaville....I'm very worried about my friend.

It seems to me that I have answered at least 3-4 of these "Yogaville is bad" posts and I have never been responded to.
The same posts come up every so often, never changing, updating or growing. Because there seems to be no point in these posts except to disparage Yogaville, I think this rises to the level of harassment and usenet abuse. At the very least I see these posts as obsessive, immature and whiny.
Below is a message you posted 2 years ago. Either you haven't learned too much since then or you are a troll in cahoots with the other anti-yogaville spammers.
Trolling and spamming are bad for you! Stop it! The whole bunch of you, need to grow up and move on with your lives and let the others in your life do the same. Obviously they don't want to be around you and frankly I can see why. I am beginning to think the ones "lost" to Yogaville are the real winners here.
Reality
(Why we can not have a discussion about reality.)

Howdy!

A person can only make 2 types of statements about reality:

1. Reality IS. 2. Reality JUST IS!

To me defining reality is quite simple. Reality is: what is... Knowing what is, on the other hand, is a bit more evolved. Whoops! I mean involved :-)

Do you practice Jnana?

Yes. Welcome. I'm glad you found some company. Really, jnanis are as common as dirt around here:-) I spent years practicing yoga before I ever met another yogi. In the last year I have become good friends with the guy who owns the 99-cent store next door; he is a yogi. My dentist in Mexico; he is a yogi. My sewing teacher of the last two years: she's a yogi. And the really amazing thing is all these different people in my life know each other and are in fact best friends having run a yoga center in Mexico fifteen years ago. Coincidence? I don't don't believe in those any more ;-)

Jhnana

(Jnana and "guidence")

I'm curious about "jnana instruction." I've been stewing in my own juices and developing some ideas. Let me know if you think I am correct here:

1. It seems to me that jnana is different than any other type of yoga in that "teaching" defeats the whole purpose. As a person studies and learns s/he may need support and encouragement but anything along the line of instruction (especially interpretation) would, in the long run, hinder the development of the yogi.

3. "Guidence" may involve discussing insights with a person who is above your level for confirmation of your interpretation.

4. "Guidence" may involve discussing the mechanics of meditation in order to develop technique.

5. Any "what does this mean?" sort of inquiries to another person are (or should be) discouraged.

BTW: These are all shots in the dark!

Yes! Err, and no. Well, it depends... Jnana is about discriminating between what is true and what is not. To the Jnani everyone is a teacher and no one is a teacher. When the student is ready, the teacher shall appear. God is the only teacher.
By the number, I would say:
1. Incorrect 2. Missing 3. Correct 4. Correct 5. Incorrect
Jnana is generally a self-directed pursuit but it can benefit from some coaching and focus. The great thing is, because Jnana in the beginning is an intellectual pursuit, the techniques and inquires needed lend themselves to being conveyed in writing. Many of the great Jnanis were/are great writers, so there is a ton of material to contemplate and run through the Jnanic filter ;-) I suggest Yogananda, Vivekananda, Rajneesh and Hittlemen, but there are many, many others.
As my Jnana practice progresses I find myself needing more and more the discipline of Raja , the physical health, strength and control of Hatha, the ardor of Bhakti and the non attachment of Karma yoga. I know what the Truth is, so now I endeavor to bring this "vehicle" I am using in alignment with what is true: There is only God. This requires the other yogic disciplines and expressions as my "vehicle" is kicking, screaming and resisting right down to the DNA! :-(My "vehicle" doesn't believe the Borg, but I do :-)

My whole slant here is based on the hypothesis that somebody else can not tell/show me what MY truth is.

They say you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink. So it is with truth. There are no secrets. The truth is right in front of us all the time. The only thing that can exists is true, all the rest does not.

So the only thing that can be known, seen or touched is truth. A teacher can be useful and sometimes necessary to help us get past ourselves (ignorance/fear) and point out what is real. Sometimes "teachers" abuse and mislead us in order to show us what is not real. In recovery they like to say, everyone is good (a teacher) for something, even if it is to demonstrate what not to do :-) But a teacher can not see for us, can not do the work for us, can not make us drink. Truth doesn't change from one person to the next. There is no my truth and your truth. Truth is (like reality) what is. What is different or what constitutes yours or mine is the level of recognition and/or acceptance of what is true.
So a teacher is good or useful if that's what I want or need. And anyway as much as I try to avoid them they appear anyway :-) Personally I have found pain, frustration, fear and hatred to be the best and most appropriate/necessary teachers up until recently. While painful reminders remain ever present coaches, I have over the last 15 or so years been taking lessons from Love, kindness, patience, compassion, fortitude, commitment, generosity, sympathy, gratitude, and the like. Truth hasn't changed over the years but my drinking of it has. [Hey that's cool, I've traded one kind of drinking for another. I like that!] As you might suspect, I look forward to finding good teachers now and I am not so nearly frightened of them as I once was (even the painful ones).
Wisdom, Transcendence, Self Realization, Enlightenment, are degrees of my acceptance in mind, body and soul of what is True. When this awareness and acceptance is total and unequivocal then I am "There". "There", of course, being where I am right now. Where I have always have been and where I will always be. In and of and as whatever is True.

Mysticism
(Yoga "mysticism")

I have often heard of "yoga mysticism" but I have never encountered it.

Mysticism, relates to that which can be known but not necessarily demonstrated, proven, or explained. Yoga deals with lots of that stuff. Virtually none of it is secret but few people invest the time and effort to learn it. Much of it can not be learned intellectually and must be experienced. Hence it remains a mystery and the people who experience it are mystics and the discussion of it is termed mysticism.
This is also why no single yoga is suited to everyone. There are different yoga foundations for different personality types. Which speaks to another comment I wanted to address concerning jnanis. Jnana is the yoga path of wisdom, knowledge and use of the mind to transcend the mind. It is suited to people for whom reasoning, didactics, and all manner of intellectual inquiry for the truth is strong. Karma yoga for people of action and those whose passion is to serve, bhakti for whom love and adoration of God is paramount. As one dives deeper and deeper into the internal environment the differing yogas come closer and closer to each other until at a point they all merge into ? You guessed it, Yoga.
There are a number of jnanis who are regulars in alt.yoga. You can probably pick them out by the tone of their comments. Stu, Puma, MikeD, Christopher Calder, JD, blacknblue, HB, Wade, to name a few. Jnana is less about a prescribed discipline and more about a relentless and merciless seeking after the truth, to the point of trading life itself if need be.

Is that just due to my ignorance of the Yoga Sutras and Upanashads?

It would be helpful for a jnani to read/read about these.

Measuring brain reactions to understand consciousness is a bit like taking apart a printing press to understand today's news stories.

There will always be a physical corollary (of anything that exists), which can be observed, defined measured etc, even if the technology to do so doesn't exist yet. The materialists are searching for the same thing the religious are. They are just taking a different (longer/scarier) path if you ask me (and Mr. Einstein, who they say died a mystic.)
My theory is we live in a primary universe and can only infer what exists in binary symbolism (equally alternating opposites), giving the impression of time, space, movement and other fictions required so we can express (and find our car keys:-).

June

Right

(The Ridiculous Teachings of Wrong Way Rajneesh)

That's the problem with any point of view that deals in, right and wrong, good and bad, black and white; it misses the value of what is. That is one of the most important lessons I took from Rejneesh. Chris is "right", so is Rejnessh; so is everything that exists and so is everything that doesn't (imagination)...
As Homer Simpson might say, "that was intelligent and funny" :-)
I wish I could describe to the religious and materialist both, why I think your comment was transcendent. Alas, that's the problem with transcendence (and God) it requires knowing/understanding, which is beyond conveyance.
Have you ever been in a situation where you were %100 correct, but oh so wrong. I have. In fact I would say the lion's share of my life has been spent this way.
I can connect with your anguish over soul vs. fact. I don't think it would be helpful for me to argue these with you. This is a personal quest we all must take.
I will guarantee you this though; if you take either argument to its end you will find God. I would just admonish you not to think you know anything until you know there is God. Then all the pieces fall together like so many dominos and where you once saw separation you will see only unity. What once seemed important will become meaningless and what was once meaningless will become all there is that matters. All the religion and all the science will all make perfect sense. You will know all there is know and all else will simply become details.
Keep in mind Woody's Law: Not all that is true is fact and not all that is fact is true.

Ego

(Mediation for removing your ego?)

> *Does anyone know of specific mediation techniques for the purpose of removing the ego.*

Mahasamadhi... Quite advanced though :-)

> *BTW: "Mahasamadhi" (if I understand your use of the term) takes a 'lifetime' to accomplish, doesn't it? ;->*

The poster's question was general to the point of being meaningless, yet yogi sounding enough to provoke a discussion (troll?)
My somewhat flippant answer to the poster was "tongue in cheek", Mahasamadhi being the final conscious withdrawal of the soul from the body (essentially suicide).
Not really wanting to get into a long discussion of an idea I see as an essentially silly one (Fraud... please!) and assuming we are talking about something close to the same idea/concept I would say the process of reconciling the "ego" is more a function of "acceptance", as we already "know" the truth of who we are and there is no such thing as change (eg. time, space, and other fictions). "Rediscovery/enlightenment is an essential component but what is required for us to live a "transcendent" life is a willingness to accept what is. Nothing else required. All the siddhis and such are of the phenomenal world and can be learned and harnessed like anything else but they don't mean anything in any transcendent sense and are not in the least required to live with the "Truth". We don't need yoga, religion, science, philosophy or anyone or anything's permission. We need only accept (by degree) what is here and now.
Oh and btw I just noticed I misspelled Freud in my post but since we have established that we are both subtle jokesters I will claim Freudian slip :-)
In an absolutist (non-dualist) view of the Universe there are no relationships, it is all one and the same. I am saying that we all know who we are because who we are is the only thing that exists. I would surmise that on the manifest (earthly) plane we have trouble knowing/remembering who we are because there is nothing to compare it to (or perhaps too much to compare it to) and thus give us awareness. The whole idea of knowledge is a symbol/fiction for a state that doesn't even exist in the first place because we are what's known. Hence the classic yoga reference to the knower, known and knowledge being one.

I would also protest (fairly strongly) with your contention that we "know the TRUTH of who we are" due to the fact that TRUTH is such an abstract concept. I might even go so far as to say that "truth" is a word so overused that it is a cliche.

No need to protest to me, in fact most of the time I would say you were singing to the choir here :-)
Far from being an abstract concept, I would say truth was one of the most simple and easy to grasp notions in our universe. That the word has been abused goes without saying but that doesn't change the nature of what it symbolizes.
For the sake of discussion and unless you have any viable objections may we use the definition of truth and reality as set out in the Encarta World English Dictionary. The dictionary used in MSWord, and now the closest thing we have to a Universal Standard ;-)
Truth Correspondence to fact or reality.
Reality The totality of real things in the world, independent of people's knowledge or perception of them.
In other words the truth is whatever is, independent of anyone's perception of it. There is no personal truth, there is no religious truth, there is no my truth, your truth, there is only the truth and the truth is whatever is; whatever actually exists. May we speak in these terms?

Sorta' sounds like fatalism there!

Far from fatalism (you do seem to like labels) a willingness to accept what is real allows us to learn how to live with what is real. The more in alignment with what is real, we can bring our mind, body and soul the freer we become to express out true natures unimpeded by fear and other fabrications. This allows us to function with better information and therefore make better decisions as we go about our daily lives. End game of this process is what is described in the yoga literature as bliss absolute. In the mean time I have discovered I can live life with a whole lot less bullshit and suffering if I surrender to the truth/reality of my existence. In fact this has the distinct effect of opening up the entire universe as my playground. I have been expressing this in my dream state and it is migrating into my physical state.
No this is not fatalism, this is freedom. Just like self-discipline, morality, sobriety, etc are not stifling but are actually freeing.

I wasn't sure whether you meant Freud or fraud (it works either way!)

Yes it does. That's why I will take credit for the pun (even if it was unintentional)

I don't think suicide would work for Mahasamadhi

While suicide is a crass term, the fact is that mahasamadhi is the deliberate/conscious ending of ones human life by the yogi. If one is self-realized and has stepped off of the wheel of karma (unattached to the fruits of ones actions) then no action will generate karma. Actually from a absolutist POV there is no karma, no action, and nothing to generate because there is no movement, time, space, etc.

IMO: the labels are NECESSARY when talking in an environment such as this

I would suggest that dumbing things down is not in fact helpful, especially to those not conversant in the topic. I think it is important to all concerned that you say (as much as possible) exactly what you mean without regard to how or what people will hear. Then when someone doesn't understand what you are saying, they can ask. If you withhold some precision in order for other's less apt to understand you then they will understand you but will take away nothing more then they already had. If what they already had was lacking then they will advance nowhere. Then the people who are capable of understanding you at your level then hear lower level "speak" and then feel they have to dumb down to reach you. And there you have a downward spiraling miscommunication loop.

Ahhh... but unless you define your terms the masses out there don't know > whether you are talking about truth as a concept or as an absolute.

The lowest common denominator is not where any of us want to remain. Better to let those who fall behind remain clueless then to let someone who really wishes to benefit from your wisdom and experience want for the truth and an upward progression.

we end up using dualist definitions to discuss non-dualist principles!

I'd say we a kinda stuck with the language we have, if having a conversation is what you want to do. Remember my story about the two famous gurus who met each other? Absolutist conversations (when there is such a thing) are quite very stark. In fact there is only one word needed to communicate all that can be known. (I will refrain from using it here so as not to upset the materialists and various other duelists.) Between two absolutists even that word is understood and it is only spoken to the benefit of others still searching for the Truth.

So is mahasamadhi the death that they talk about that can happen during nirvikalpa samadhi?

From what I have read I could see how they could be related or perhaps one precedes the other but they appear to be distinctly different. What do I know, I am not training in either of these two things. I'm having enough trouble with run of the mill life :-)
A great deal of this yogi stuff is a function of training. I imagine that while Yogananda and others may be able to project themselves astrally, not a one of them could step into a Jet and pilot it anywhere as they did not have the training.
I don't believe that any of this religious or occult training is needed for enlightenment. After all enlightenment is simply knowing what is True. Whether or not one chooses to train the body and mind to experience and move about in certain psychic and/or astral states does not alter the Truth one wit. This training won't necessarily cause one to know what is true either.
Once you know what is true then the project becomes aligning your mind, body and soul with what you know. This can be real difficult, I'm here to tell you. But I can do it as a car mechanic, a real estate salesman, or a homeless person. I don't have to be a yogi, a priest, a monk or anything at all.

Only prerequisite is that there isn't any BAD karma left?

A point of clarification here. (Not semantics) Karma can never be "exhausted", "used up", "paid for", etc, it can only be "let go". As is letting go of all desires (good, bad or indifferent) for the fruit of ones actions. Just like "transcendence", "enlightenment", "self-realization", etc can not be "earned", "attained" or given, it can only be "accepted".
Oh, and there's no good or bad either with respect to Karma or anything else for that matter :-)

For some reason, I guess we haven't seen the last of the discussions on karma in this forum. :-)

Not so long as we have a desire to communicate! :-)
So tell me what do you think of what I did to your moniker (700E)? I thought it had a nice, expensive luxury car, ring to it.

Well, I noticed it, but then I forgot about it again, so I'm sure it's ok by me. Either that, or my short term memory is going bad. Now, what's with the omjaram/omjaroo thing? They're both you, aren't they?

Yes they are. Depending which news service I am posting from (which depends on which machine I am sitting at mac/pc) I will either be omjaroo or omjaram. I realize this is a bit confusing (and isn't this subject confused enough?) so I changed my preferences in google, so I should be omjaroo, all the time now.
I started to use omjaram because I intend to make omjaroo a more public name, so I needed another to continue my personal communications here on alt.yoga.
omjaram is a variation of omjaroo, which is somewhat more efficient in that all three syllables reference God, instead of just two.

Hmm.. I'll see if I can figure it out.. Om Ja Ram? Om is obvious of course, and I guess Ja is ancient Semitic, and Ram may be a form of Rama. And three such references, too! A Trinity, no less, except I'd be hard pressed to tell which is the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Communicating

(Does anybody know about this organization?)

I've been told before that at the right time a guru will be available.

What's the issue with your jnana practice? Why do you think you need a teacher? Do you think you are going to find someone who is "there" and they will take you?
Jnana is the most "alone" of all the yoga paths.
If you insist on a teacher, all a teacher can do is ask you a question, which you must answer.
I'd be glad to do that for you.
Tell me, who are you?
Personally, I think you are right to expect (a miracle) an instant transformation. Because that is exactly how it happens; in an instant, you are not, then you are. The secret is you are, right now. Always have been and always will be. The only difference is whether you know it ;-)

According to my insight and perceptions at this point in time, this is a trick question.

Jared doesn't do trick questions :-)

Howdy Jared! (That is your name, right?) It is EXTREMELY difficult to get a handle on something when you don't have a working vocabulary to associate with the new concepts

Yes Jared is my name.
I agree with you and I appreciate your struggle. I too am a worker in words. My internal thinking process is nearly all in words. Since I have taken up yoga I have developed other ways to thing and strive to reach still others.
I am reminded of the time when I was about 15 when a counselor told me I needed to "find myself". I really had no clue what the heck he was talking about. No verbal frame of reference with which to define what he was saying. Like the cartoon of man talking to his dog. The owner says "good boy, fetch the stick". What the dog hears, "ummp smummph dummph".
When I speak with my 14 year old I assume he deals with the same issue each time I introduce a new "concept". He'll very often say something like, 'Ok, Jared I don't need to hear any of your little yogananda, swami, stuff". I think what he is saying is he doesn't understand the reference I am making and it's one of those "way out there" things.
I am still struggling at age 51 to put into words, experiences, impressions, feeling and perceptions I had/have early in life.
As concerns yoga, like any other subject there is a vernacular which needs to be learned and it starts with simple and goes to esoteric/arcane. In fact at a point words become useless and one must let go and learn to function/understand/communicate/think in higher forms. This is the scary part for me!
A dualistic view would describe you as alone, separate and different from others in your perceptions. How do you spell "frightening"? Non-Duality means you can't be separate or alone and never have been; that you are one and the same with everything that exists. That it is only the machinations of the mind that make it appear different. Therefore one learns and practices the discipline of mediation, so you can shut the mind stuff off (including the silent witness) and know yourself beyond "mind" at your essence or as Oneness.
BTW the sole purpose of Hatha as a yoga system is to prepare the body to "sit" steadily and quietly for the required time in meditation and to make the body a fit vessel for the receiving/knowing of the true Self.
Dualistic, Non-dualistic, which is real? Take your pick, they both are.
"Very simple, very easy, darling", Edna on Yoga :-)

Is the non-dualistic view/concept of unique to Jnana?

No, non-dualism is not unique to Jnana. In fact Jnana is not a "thing" at all. It is a process/discipline of which the end-game is to "realize" dualism and non-dualism.

July

Ashtanga

(Opinions on Ashtanga)

The trouble is, I usually practice my Yoga on the living room floor (the only room with enough space)

That's where I started. I have to believe that's where the majority of us start. Fifteen year later I'm still there. Hmmm.
That's the cool thing about Yoga. It can be practiced anywhere. Even laying in a hospital bed recovering from illness or injury :-) They say that outdoors, in the yard or a park is especially good.
How many people have "found themselves" or improved/changed their lives in prison cells, fox holes and other extremely constraining situations? Space is not an issue (in yogic terms anyway)

with our new born baby making all the noises newborn babies do beside me.

Ahh, life. Isn't it wonderful (albeit noisy).
I noticed an "our". Does this mean there is a partner present? If so, I highly suggest Harry Browne's essay on marriage in "How I Became Free in and Un-free World". Also Paramahansa Yogananda on a "spiritual marriage". Family yoga is very good also.

So at the moment I can only get into the physical side of Yoga.

Any side of yoga is a good side! I would encourage you not to spend to much energy on trying to maintain distinctions which don't exist. Don't worry about "Physical" vs "Spiritual" vs "Mental" with regards to Yoga. Just continue to do what you are drawn to, in the order it comes to you. All of the rest will resolve itself. Really... The practice of the "physical" side of yoga will effect you in ways you can't even imagine and all without your "help". I would suggest reading any book by Richard Hittlemen. He is rational, very readable and makes "real yoga" very accessible to the western practitioner. A search on amazon.com will net you a ton of info and cheap prices (used) for his books.

I am sure it frustrates Yoga purists

One can only be frustrated if one is frightened of something. Fear requires an anticipation of something in a non-existent future, based on the dead and equally non-existent past. Any yogi that is frustrated (purist or not) would do well to mind his/her own business and return to their own "present" moment :-)

I don't have the time and space to get into the spiritual side.

here is no real distinction between "physical" and "spiritual" in yoga. Just as there is no distinction between "physical" and "spiritual" in you. This is an artificial distinction created by the "race mind" to deal with a fear of dying. Also in yoga, for training and marketing purposes :-).

Surely half the prize is better than no prize at all?

Indeed it is. But not to worry, when it is all said and done you get it all.
If spiritual concerns are not your thing, I wouldn't give it another thought. Much of the rational western psyche rejects the ignorance, fear and religious superstition, which has spawned so much manipulation and abuse. And so it should. Besides spirituality isn't something you "do". Spirit is who you "are". Your very existence/essence is comprised of Love/Truth. All spiritual paths start with "awareness" at some level. Even if it is only, "gee, I don't know what its about or who I am or where I'm going, but I sure know this isn't it." Then the process continues with the gradual "accepting", "learning" about and then "expressing" yourself as a spiritual being. You are Spirit. You've always been Spirit and will always be Spirit. You can not be nor have ever been, anything else. The only difference is whether you choose to acknowledge and live in awareness of the fact. Nothing changes; everything continues to exist just as it does. Awareness and acceptance is the only difference. I might also add that in all things "yoga", as in life, you are the final authority. The ultimate arbiter of what is good for you or not. Not a guru, not a book, or dogma, opinion or expectation. You and your self. Enjoy the adventure.

August

Weight

(Yoga prevents mid-life weight gain)

Generally commercial spam is not appreciated here on alt.yoga no matter how deftly couched as "on topic" commentary :-(
For the most part, we have our hands filled with ever recurring fits of existential angst, religious/atheist trolls and the odd newcomer who wanders in here and actually wants/needs to know something about yoga. Although I'm certain your book assures you that this is a great way to market; it's really not. Not here anyway. You see yogis already know everything, don't drink and we are all completely healthy :-)
What I would really like to know is whether you are most interested in promoting the winery or the health website or is it perhaps both? Buy alas, based on what I have read of your posts on Google, I doubt I will ever receive and answer.

Fishing

(Re: Yogic Community Has Openings)

Hey Maharaj, What do you think here is???A free place for your householder's commercials.!!!!!

...click... schreech... click.. Earth to Puma... Earth to Puma... Come in Puma...
...schreech... Click... Click... Puma, this is earth speaking.... Please be advised Maharaj was commenting on a posting made somewhere else... He was asking them not to kill fish in the name of ahinsa.... Please note irregular spelling of ahimsa... Maharaj is known for trolling for controversy with his spelling, eg. yog for yoga, etc... Maharaj is also known for posting pro-hindu and anti-muslim/christian rhetoric/commentary/articles in violation of long standing yogic traditions... Over.....
... click... schreech... click... Please handle this and all other trolls with care... As they should be considered alarmed and dangerous... click... schreech... Over...click
... click... click... Please stand by... Over.....
... click ...click... schreech... On further consideration it has been determined you're your initial assessment may be correct... It is likely Maharaj is spamming on behalf of the ecovillage people... Over.....
... click... schreech... Please disregard initial comment... Over.....
... click... Keep up the good work... click... schreech... Over.....
...schreech ... Namaste... Over... :-)

omjaroo is indeed a wise teacher... perspective as well as perception.

...

click...screech....fizzzz... moon-base alpha...to earth...click

...heard last post through static.... screech...

....click....funny stuff....screech....

giggle...click...namaste...whistle....over and out....

...

Jared, ROGER Puma is on the air!!!

If maharaj TROLLING that means this is against AHIMSA also! What is the difference in between TROLLING and FISHING anyway???

Trolling is fishing. Not specific, more general. Just throw a line out and drag it all over the place until you hook on to something. In this case someone who needs to argue.

Maharaj uses *DOCTOR title...I wander if his doctorate degree is from TRANSILVANIA???*

That's what we would call a real "fly by night" doctor alright :-)

Words
(Blasphemous Might be perfectly good!)

In other words some times even the word BLASPHEMOUS might mean a perfectly good feeling...

I believe Puma is speaking to pretentiousness and puffery.
I think you are speaking about "western" spiritual notions which separate religion/religiousness from what's termed secular or regular life. I'm not sure that the Indians historically have had this type of spiritual schizophrenia. So you comparison may not be valid in cultural terms.
On the other hand if we look at the term we use when someone sneezes; "bless you". Clearly the original idea was a religious one. I doubt for most people hearing this statement when we sneeze will any longer invoke a remembrance of God as our father. Although in spiritually/religiously center individual it may still spark this awareness.
When I write Namaste (I rarely have a reason to say it and I would have a hard time if I did) it means, "I bow to the divine in you". This is a acknowledgment/reminder of God's omnipresence. I don't use it except here on alt.yoga because it is essentially a "foreign" term/idea in the rest of my environment. I have used it a couple of times while on the phone with tech-support for various computer related concerns :-)
At the time I asked if was an appropriate salutation to use with someone in India and I was told it was. What I didn't ask is whether it was equally appropriate to a Jew, Muslim, Hindu, or atheist in India. But then that was your question. Never mind...:-)

Can a person bow to the divine element within another person if s/he has not first recognized/discovered it within him/herself?

Extinction
(Industrial Society Destroys Mind and Environment)

This is about the link between Mind and Social / Environmental-Issues. This is directly related to Yoga, Meditation and Spirituality

Thanks for the interesting post.
In my opinion this is really good stuff. If this is work you are doing/contemplating the I applaud you!
I have heard many of these ideas expressed in yogic philosophy in one form or another. I really like the experiments you propose (have completed?) and look forward to seeing the results.

I would caution you to be more mindful of your subject headline. At a "quick" glance it looks similar to much of the political/environment/nut-case trolling spam we see cross-posted to alt.yoga.

Oh and by the way, the earth is not being destroyed. When its had enough of the virus (that's us) growing on its surface it will respond appropriately. Its all part of the life/death cycle of existence. Its all very natural and as it should be.

If we want to save environment we will have to reduce human activity [overactivity] by 99%.

Avian flu, anyone?

Namaste
("Namaste")

When a person gives the salutation "Namaste" (I bow to that little corner within you that contains the entire universe) it seems to me as if it could almost be considered as blasphamous by some people unless the person giving the salutation has first recognized it within him/herself.

I say "blast-on, blast-on" brother!
F**k em if they can't take a joke :-)

a friend of mine came to yoga classes with me every week for several months before remarking that it was nice to bow and say "have a nice day" at the end of each class. she'd misheard it, or didn't understand and her mind grabbed the closest appropriate phrase. also, watch out, i've had outlook spellcheck try to change my namaste into lambaste! have a nice day, nancy

After all the recent discussion and just when I had decided to stop using namaste after all my alt.yoga messages because somehow it felt disingenuous... Along comes Nancy with her charming anecdote and brilliant observation.
Now I am conflicted :-) Oh, well. Guess I'll have to meditate on it.

Technically you are going to have to contemplate it. Meditation suggests subject/object unification. One can't meditate on anything, one simply meditates...

Thanks for the correction :-) Are you saying one "is" meditation?
Book
(Yoga book recommendation?)

I do want to get more into the breathing/meditation/spirituality of Yoga and would like to read up on it, techniques, history, examples etc..

Can't even imagine a better book for what you describe. Might cost you a couple of dollars for a used copy. It's one of the most valuable books I own
Yoga: The 8 steps to health and peace by Richard L Hittleman

Ego

(The ego - peacefulspirits)

Egos deny me access to my rightful life

Sounds like a serious case of MPD :-)
Might I suggest that all those egos are not "evil" or bad". That they are there for our benefit and exist to do our bidding.
When I take responsibility for my ego and when I am sufficiently aware of and aligned with (in body, soul and thought), the Truth of my being; when I have rooted out and let go of all my fears; then the many egos no longer serve a function and will simply evaporate back into the nothingness from which they came.
I like the idea that egos are my responsibility over which I have ultimate control. The notion of being haplessly addicted to megalomaniacal psychic parasites from hell, intent on imprisoning me just for shits and giggles, just doesn't do much for me anymore, like it once did :-)

Forgiveness

(Forgiveness)

I know in sahaja yoga it is very important that you forgive people but I am having a hard time forgiving all those who hurt me when I was a young child. How can I find the strength to forgive them

Forgiving others in not possible because we have no control over them in any way. So we can't "do" anything to anyone outside of ourselves. Their feelings, actions and reactions are their responsibility alone. We can however learn to forgive ourselves. Forgiveness is something internal a person who has been harmed must do. It is a letting go, in a deep and genuine way, of holding anyone responsible for the pain you feel inside.
It is to say that the pain you feel, the resentment, the anger, the desire to strike back, these are all manufactured by you internally by what you say to yourself about what happened. No one outside of you has any control over how you feel inside, what you tell yourself and what you want to do about it. These are 100% your responsibility.
You must learn that you are the creator of your pain. Learn how you create your pain and why and you must learn to let go and forgive yourself. Then you will be able to forgive others. Eventually you will

learn to not hold on to peoples faults at all, so there won't even be a reason to have to forgive them. This is not easy and it why it is addressed in yoga and indeed in every moral system.
This is an idea that helped me start to learn the how, what and why of forgiving myself and others. My recovery sponsor once said to me, "Jared, you know what? At any given moment people do the very best they can with what they have and when they can do better, they will do better. And that includes you! So let yourself off the hook. Accept your mistakes, your weakness, your failings as part of your growth. Look at them as things you needed to learn and then forgive yourself and move on". Letting go of my critical/negative opinions and thoughts about myself was/is the hardest thing I have ever done. But as I gain skill and experience with letting go of the painful thoughts and feeling I have about myself, my ability to let go of those thoughts about others quickly also increases. I look forward to a day when those thoughts no longer arise about me or anyone else.
Another idea which has been very helpful for me is, that God is everywhere present. God is in me, in you, in every human being on this planet in equal measure and always has been and always will be. If I find a fault in myself or another then I am finding fault in God and this doesn't make any sense. I may not know why things appear to me to be bad, evil or sad. I may not know why a person does something which is/appears hurtful to me. But I do know that God is not any of these things. So when I am angry, resentful, sad, I remind myself that there is only God and God is good. If I see or feel something that appears bad, then it is because I am afraid and creating that idea in my imagination. Because the Truth is, the Reality is, there is only God, in the here and now; no past, no future.
Hope this was helpful. . . I realize this may sound like an odd bunch of nonsense, but it really does work this way. We must all learn to let go of our faulty ideas and forgive ourselves. There is no other type of forgiveness :-)

Charging

(To charge or not to charge: that is the question. Whether tis nobler to...)

If I am teaching yoga for the purpose of God awareness/union; could I dare charge? The Truth belongs to God (and therefore everyone in the Universe). It is not mine to sell. If need be, I am happy to pay (with time, effort or cash) to give others the knowledge that by God's grace has been given to me. This is also karma yoga.
If I am teaching "yoga" for fitness, entertainment, sex or success in life, then this is very different. I can charge or not because what I am teaching is only yoga in name (a shadow) and not really yoga at all.
If I know the Truth about yoga, and I am exploiting people's need for Union with God by teaching it's shadow, then God help me. This is what's referred to as the "dark side" of yoga and would be a sin of the highest order. We've all heard of "fallen" or "false" gurus.
That being said, if a student gives a free and heart felt offering in support of their teacher's basic material needs, then this is right and as it should be. Personally I don't think a teacher should ever ask and anything above the teacher's needs should be refused or donated to others.
There are no hard and fast rules here. It all depends on what one is seeking in learning yoga or in teaching yoga. This is why we practice yoga and strive to develop discrimination and wisdom.
Is this helpful?

> *Are the people who insist on going to the studio with the best acreditations seeking the truth or are they looking for the best quality in a PRODUCT?*

I guess that would be a rhetorical question...

> *Yes and no... Guess it all goes to the primary question that everybody must answer for themselves: What is your definition of yoga?*
>
> *...*
>
> *If you are a real teacher, no money or possession will be of your interest. You may die like a dog on the street - but it will never distract your attention.*

...

jared, i've been thinking about this for a couple of days

Ahh, a thinker. This is the hallmark of a jnani :-)

starting with "of course you should charge". (the "you" being actually you plus any others who have taught me). i finally worked my around to"whether or not you charge, i should pay".

I appreciate your reasoning. I would agree. I think it is important for us to take personal responsibility and contribute and pay our way in the world.

maybe its the capitalist in me that says you have something (knowledge, ability to instruct) that i want to benefit from. being responsible for providing for my own needs and wants, and not accustomed to just taking whatever i want or need, i pay.

Notwithstanding what I said above, sometimes I find one of the hardest things to do is to "accept" a gift from someone. I want to pay them in kind because I do not want to feel "indebted" to them and therefore, vulnerable. This fear or distrust is a real poison in human relationships. Because it disallows the person giving the joy of giving as well as the joy of having a gift freely and gladly accepted. In addition any inability to "accept" will work against us in our quest for Yoga (union) because by its very nature Yoga is a profound form of acceptance of the mental, physical and spiritual realms.

there's another side to this to consider - if i want or need instruction, it behooves me to ensure that its available. a teacher who is starving, or endangered by living in the streets, or arrested for being naked in public will not be available to me. i know this is selfish, but sometimes selfish is reasonable.

Selfish? I would call that pragmatic :-) After all in the highly developed nations there is little or no context for a teacher to "give away" teaching as a full-time avocation. Where as in India a naked sadhu may be revered and cared for by total strangers, here as you suggest they would be jailed and/or medicated :-(The poster who made the comment that he has taught yoga free for 30 years, still required a paid job to support himself while he did so. I suspect that is just how it has to be done here unless you align yourself with a yogic community.
Implicit in this idea of supporting one's self while teaching yoga has to be the question of whether one should charge to teach yoga its self. Then that takes me back to; it depends on whether you are teaching yoga in its original design as a striving for God Union or as a commercial fitness, stress reduction or weight loss product. But then this begs the question, but what about the person who is attracted to yoga as a "product" and as a result of practicing the "product" becomes aware of yoga's true purpose? But for the commercial product being available they might not have realized the spiritual benefits. . .
Then again either the teacher is aware of the true purpose or they are not. I still think, the teacher that is aware, ought not sell yoga but rather support themselves in some other fashion and leave their yoga teaching motives pure and resolute.
Bottom line for a "seeker" of Truth. If you are paying any more then a nominal or cost basis fee for yoga instruction this is probably not a "spiritually" centered program. I believe the Truth will always be "free" in any regard and especially in yoga. As long as "telling the truth" is subject to commercial concerns then there is always the possibility (likelihood) the Truth will be bent for those concerns.

i'm still thinking about it. nancy

Me too. . . but that's what jnanis do.:-)

I think you should charge whatever you feel like. If people are willing to pay a fortune, then charge them a fortune! You are not ripping the off, you are giving them what they want for a price they are willing to pay.

Could that be the same reasoning the person who puts a gun to my head and asks me for a donation, uses? After all I certainly "want" him to go away and I am certainly "willing" to give whatever I have to have him go away :-)

It would only be the 'same reasoning' if you explicitly asked the person to point a gun at your head. Are you intending to round people up and force them to practice Yoga at gunpoint?

The notion that you can only be truly spiritual if you are poor is nonsense.

Each of us has to search our hearts and answer this question for ourselves. There is no universal right/wrong answer. The following idea is how I judge/guide my life and what I teach my children, in this regard.
We are not our wealth or abundance or lack of it. We are whatever God is. To the extent that we "realize" and understand this we are wealthy. To the extent that we do not we are impoverished. Doesn't matter how much/little money we have.

Is fitness, entertainment, sex or success in life really the 'dark side or the shadow'?

Of course not!
Perhaps I didn't make myself clear what I meant by "the dark side", I noticed some others also thought I was dissing money, sex etc . What I meant was, if I know yoga as a path/technique for God Realization/Unity and use this knowledge/power to gain wealth, attract sex or secure material success, then this is a serious misuse of yoga.
You see I know that the chasing after "things of the world" is really a chasing after God. The more estranged/seemingly separated from God we are, the more intense the "motivation" to attract wealth, sex and power (or conversely to hurt, destroy, punish). If I teach yoga as a method for others to gain wealth, attract sex or success in life, knowing full well what they need is God and I don't tell them that, then this is very serious indeed.
In yogic terms it might be said that, if I teach yoga for the express purpose of development of the siddhis, in order to enrich myself or others, this would be considered "the dark side" or an "evil" use of yoga.
If I teach yoga for health/fitness, stress reduction and diversion, then it could be said that I am only teaching a "shadow" or one of the "side effects" of yoga. Is this a "bad" thing? Depends on whether I know what "real" yoga is. If I only know yoga as a fitness discipline (shadow) then that's all I can teach and I should rightly be paid for it, should I wish to charge. I may even charge for teaching the "shadow" of yoga knowing full well that's what I am doing, but also knowing most people are clueless. All the while patiently waiting for some moment when the student will grow beyond their initial faulty understanding. At this point I can guide them in discovering the real meaning of yoga. This is all fine and I suspect happens quite often. However should I withhold the purpose of yoga from a person who is truly seeking its real meaning until they have "paid" me for it, then God help me. In my book, this is a sin of the highest order :-(

Why turn your back on the world and human nature on the way to God?

Everything exists in and of and as That from which it was created. There is nothing separate from It's Center. Turn your back on the world and human nature and you attempt to turn your back on your very Existence. Neither smart nor possible :-) Nothing I ever say should be construed to be against sex, success or comfort. These are in fact a natural consequence of being human and following a fear-free, Centered Fife :-) They are however, "not the point". If one's awareness/energy is aligned with the Truth then this is the point and there can be no other concern what's so ever :-)
(note: To accommodate our "G" word sensitive readers, I removed/replaced the word "God" (whoops) 5 times in the preceding paragraph :-)

Charging, cont:

(Forgiveness)

Going back to the whole "should I charge argument", well it's a tricky one. If I had paid £50 to hear you say that, I would be sceptical about your integrity. If, on the other hand, you had said it for free, I

would have been more inclined to believe it... I am merely saying that a fee may affect the way they are perceived.

I agree. And this is something I am currently considering (struggling with) with regards to some writing I am intent on doing. Because the writing deals with essential Truths I can't imagine selling it. For one, the Truth belongs to everyone and it is not mine to "sell" and for two, the issue of perception.
You see on a good day, the Truth is very hard to swallow. A person may spend years in arduous yogic practice in search of it and still deny or "not get it". Truth doesn't so much "convince" you as it does "touch" you somewhere and then if you want it bad enough, like a flower (water, care and protect it :-) it will grow and blossom. So any perception which, questions the integrity of the writer, could be a hindrance. Giving freely without expectation of reward does speak positively for the integrity of the giver. This is why karma yoga is so powerful. It's also why the fall for a karma yogi can be so high.
On the other hand, the production and dissemination of written/recorded material requires resources (money). So a book which is not sponsored really needs to "sell" in order to gain notoriety and coverage/availability. It seems unreasonable to me, (when there is so much garbage selling), to produce a work with substance and not "sell" it. The proceeds could be donated or used to produce more material. Perhaps even keep the author and his children off the streets (not necessary of course, but nice none the less:-) The Internet offers a possible exception for the need of money to disseminate the work. It has oft times been used to "give stuff" away. Perhaps a donation model ala shareware might work.

Profession

(Is YOGA a PROFESSION ?)

Some of the fellows here insist that nothing is wrong to charge money in order to teach yoga... But they should answer first of all the question "IS YOGA A PROFESSION?"

Yoga is Union. Yoga is the method to attain Union. I'm afraid the question of "what is yoga" with regards to selling or giving it away is a non-question. Yoga is whole and eternal and does not change whether you sell it or give it away.
Of course yoga is/can be a profession. Yoga is/can be a product. This is obvious to the point of being a silly question. Perhaps a couple of helpful distinctions to make would be between a profession (a paid vocation) and an avocation (a calling or hobby); or the difference between a gift and a product.
There is a parallel of this issue in the "recovery" community. There are those who are professionals and sell the service of "recovery" from various addictions/compulsions/syndromes. These can be doctors, lawyers, debt relief specialists, counselors, motivational speakers/writers, etc. Then there are many more thousands of other "recovering" individuals who's own recovery depends on "giving" the gift of recovery to others who still suffer, as it was once given to them. Each of these two groups has a function. Each will perform in some aspects more effectively then the other. Both are good and necessary.
You see some of us will only believe a "trained professional" and have no faith in the knowledge of a "regular" person. Some of us don't value what isn't paid for with cold hard cash. Others are unable to accept a "gift", they must "pay" for everything so they feel no indebtedness or vulnerability. Regardless of what motivates the "professional" for some people they represent the only access to recovery help they can respond to.
On the other hand there are others who disdain all "authority" and question the motivation and integrity of anyone who charges for their services. Those who believe that only help given freely is genuine and valuable; that no "money hungry professional" could ever know what a "normal" person like them could be going through. For these people only a kind and understanding word or gesture of another person in recovery can pierce their wall of fear and touch them.
It all depends. How do you need/want your yoga? Do you want to learn it from a "professional" who charges you for it or from a person who has lived it, learned it and is delighted to give to you as a gift.

if YOGA is UNION, then how is that possible to sell this union to others with money?

The word yoga means Union. The word yoga also is the name for the method to reach Union (yoga). I don't know why, I didn't invent the language. So one word, (Y)yoga, means the goal which is Union and the means to that goal, which is called yoga.
Lets start with Yoga the goal, which is Union. Union (Yoga) can not be sold. Not for all the money on the planet. It is impossible. Neither can Union (Yoga) be attained, earned, learned, given, mastered, taught, bought, sold or traded. That's because Union (Yoga) is what is now. It always has been and always will be. There is nowhere to go, nothing to do, no change to be made, nothing to attain, Union is what is, now. This is the biggest "secret" in the universe (oh crap, and now I've spilled the beans). You are there (here) now. You exist in Union now. You've never been separated nor could you be. Period. . .
However, all of the world (maya and our identification with the human body-vehicle) tends to obscure this Fact (Truth) from you. This is where Yoga (the science/method/religion/technique) comes in. Yoga is the method by which we systematically, scientifically, spiritually, strip away the illusions and lies of maya (the material world and its symbolism) and "realize" who and what we are, Now.
Information and techniques can be packaged and sold. These are "things", "commodities" like bread and wine.
I think that the real issue with you Puma is whether it is proper to exchange the information and techniques of Union (yoga) for money. Whether one as a serious practicing yogi could morally sell yoga (method) in exchange for material property. One could ask the same question of someone who sells food when everyone around them is starving to death.
Is this the issue?

Sorry my logic can not take it in...

Sounds wonderful ! Don't resist. This is a good thing. Perhaps this is the moment every jnani works/prays for when trained, practiced, excellent and superior logic fails completely in the face of the Truth. Relax, let go, let the little you surrender to the real you. Meditate. Let go of life and logic and all the other bullshit and just be :-)

Being a yogi imposes a "code of ethics" upon a person

Whoaa, I think we missed that one :-)
It's about "accepting" or "using" not "imposing." Yoga is not a religion, it is a tool.
Impose whether it is self-imposed or not doesn't work for me with regards to Yoga.
I looked up the word "impose" in the Thesaurus that comes with MSWord. Listed as synonyms (words that are similar or the same) for "impose" are; inflict, oblige, compel, force, impress. Notably these are all things that come from outside a person.
Then I looked up the word "accept". The synonyms are: believe, recognize, agree to, admit, acknowledge. Equally interesting is these are all things that come from inside a person.
Big difference, don't you think?
I think you can say yoga supposes a code of ethics; requires a code of ethics; necessitates a code of ethics. Then you are describing a quality that is related to the yoga system itself. You can also say that yoga, teaches, conveys, expounds, demonstrates or establishes a code of ethics. Then you are speaking about an effect or result of the yoga system.
But like a rake or shovel, yoga is a tool that won't do anything until an individual makes a choice to use it. Far from being prerequisites, Yama/niyama can be/are the fruit of a diligent yoga practice. If they weren't we'd all be f*cked before we even started :-)

They should suffer death by a thousand pumas

But that would be casting pearls to the swine! How about death by a thousand televisions, newspapers and answering machines? :-)

Some folks consider them to be luxuries! How about "death by a thousand telemarketers?"

Where's your compassion man? That would be a death too horrible to contemplate :-)

Time
(Neither Time nor Movement)

Many people says a lot about NOW...But what makes NOW a NOW...

Something really fun to do is to try to imagine where past begins, where now is and where the future begins.
At what point does our now moment become the past? Now only becomes the past when we remember it. That is, when we recreate it in our mind (imagination) and we add it to another remembrance and another and another and so on. Just like a movie our now moment is a single frame (which contains all there is); a still picture. We store that picture and take another and store it and another and store it. When we play it back it appears to move and have time and it is linear so we say that one thing happened before another; future, present and past. But the absolute reality is that past has no objective existence and neither does the future. This process of imagining and playing back is required for the human vehicle to survive on this plane. But this also why it is said that life is an illusion, a fiction we create.
When we stop the world our perception is in the immediate now, without imagining/remembering future or past (a still picture) without time, without movement, without distance or separation.
Then what is now if it doesn't move? Nothing of course! Absolutely nothing! Or if you prefer, now is everything. Absolutely everything! It is not about life or death because these do not exist any more then time or movement. That I believe is the meaning of your Heart Sutra. The Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh has said that one can discover meditation in the moment between heart beats or at that moment between when the breath moves in or out. This is when everything stops and one can experience the now moment.
What is the practical application of this knowledge or in other words so what, What difference does it make? For most people it is meaningless nonsense but for a jnana yogi it is of paramount importance. As the jnani is intent on using the mind to root out every lie, illusion and fiction possible so that what remains is the Truth or Yoga (Union).

Cause when I m aware of these moments sudden I go into deep thoughts....and when I was aware of that then I stoped doing that...

I think I know what you mean. When I let myself be very still I become aware of thoughts (conscious) which normally I would not "hear" because they are "subconscious". I believe the point of meditation is to hear the thoughts at deeper and deeper levels until there is no more subconscious thought and all thought is conscious. Then to suspend (or let go of) all thought and directly perceive without the color of any "mind stuff".

my mind...and sometimes for projection of my thoughts into reality....

Sometimes when I am still, I become very frightened. At some point my mind senses it is vulnerable, that there is somewhere it can't go or perhaps can't come back from :-(A sense of imminent death. Which "I know" does not exist, but I am having a difficult time convincing my body :-)

Daer Jaroo, You totaly misunderstood :)

Did I ? :-)

Cause you are dividing my writting and trying to analyze it...

Am I? :-)

Thats wrong and strange :)

Is it? :-)

I m reading my writting and trying to understand your understanding from it... :)

An "I" statement. I like "I" statements better than "you" statements.

Where I mentioned FEAR? Can you realy explain ?

You did not mention fear. You related what happens to you when you are still. I related what happens to me sometimes, when I am still.

Faer does not exist by it self :) There are things which makes it real :) and thats ILLUSION :)

I agree...

Hunger
(My Raging Hunger)

Within a few minutes of eating a large meal I get a feeling of raging hunger. It feels very similar to hunger, my stomach rumbles and feels gassy and empty and I feel a little nauseous.

The possibilities of what might be causing this are numerous. A great deal more information would be required to even begin to make a guess.
Doesn't sound like any effect yoga might have that I am aware of.
Healthy hunger is a remarkably subtle feeling. "Raging" hunger or a feeling of "starving" is often related to the nature of the food we eat. Meat, alcoholic beverages, sugar and refined carbohydrates as well as "allergy" foods can all precipitate these intense "pang" like feelings.
Personally, unless I am in significant distress or jeopardy I would explore some of the possible reasons before I went to a doctor. I have found it more helpful in the long run to take responsibility for my own health before blithely turning that job over to someone whose livelihood is dependent on me being ill.

Vasectomy
(Vasectomy.....Gulp!)

just wondered if there is anyone here with any experience of being neutered (sob...whimper)

SLAP, GROW UP MAN! SNAP OUT OF IT! SLAP, SLAP...
But really :-)
Sorry, no personal experience w/this one. I am pursuing a somewhat different path (celibacy). But I do know a vasectomy has nothing what's so ever to do with being "neutered". They are not even remotely similar. I would caution you to be mindful of the words you use to describe your environment. They can be very powerful, especially in supporting fear.
However my understanding is, that the procedure is like "no big deal" at all. [google it]
Does it have any yogic implications? I've never heard of any and I can't readily imagine any either. It could be considered a form of renunciation, in that you are deciding to never to physically sponsor a returning human soul into the world again. On the other hand if the purpose is to have sex more freely with fewer responsibilities then this could be considered an indulgence of your baser instincts (or just plain smart).
Beyond your immediate anxiety about the procedure, the only meaningful considerations I can see are emotional / psychological ones. Hence "counseling" seems quite appropriate.
BTW, I liked your namaste smiley. Inspired me to think about how I might represent namaste, smiley style. Did you notice?

Mantra
(English)

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes, but the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes.

I wouldn't be surprised to learn Richard Lederer (pbs, a way with words) wrote it.
By the way I have been meaning to ask for the longest time what does ""Ego sum quis ego sum quod ut est quicumque ego sum" mean. A net search only shows up with your name as if you were the only one on the planet who quotes it.

"I am what I am and that's all that I am." - Popeye (a great yogi!)

"Quicumque latine dictum sit, altum viditur" (Whatever is said in Latin sounds profound)

Seems Puma was making a joke :-) But then you know that. A google search of the Latin in his quote will bring your name up a couple of times.
Mantras on the other hand, have nothing to do with wisdom or anything intellectual. They are about cosmic frequencies. Doesn't matter what language they are in or what they say as long as they have the proper resonance. Mantras are a attention focusing device (seed). They can have a devotional flavor but they are for keeping the mind busy in a deliberate and disciplined manner. This also gives new yogis something easy and cool to do so they feel like they are "doing" yoga. Beats letting their minds rehash all their other mental trash which constantly clutters up their "temples".

So What does the wide and wonderful diversity of the English language have to do with yoga???

As far as what English has to do with yoga, I suppose the same thing that communication has to do with yoga. The ability to communicate is a requirement for the handing of yogic knowledge from on person to another. Perhaps Puma was commenting on the difficulty of exchanging ideas which on a good day, are difficult, no less so, when you are not speaking with the same degree of facility in a language. Or perhaps he is just plain exasperated. After all everyone knows English is a bitch...

Spins & Misc

(A Yogic contradiction?)

I guess as I read more about Yoga I am beginning to question it in the same way I have done with religion.

I appreciate your reasoning, even though I think it's premature.
Keep reading and keep practicing. Revisit this post in a year or two and you might be surprised how your understanding of what yoga "is" has "grown" :-)
The good news is you are, at this very moment, in "Union". So there is no work or reaching for it required, you need only "realize" it.
I would say that if you develop the habit of sitting quietly (meditating) for 10 to 30 minutes 2 times daily (morning & night) and read 10 to 30 minutes of spiritually uplifting material each day then you will make very fast progress, indeed. If you haven't read it already, the Autobiography of a Yogi is wonderful (and entertaining). I wouldn't hesitate to recommend anything Paramahansa Yogananda writes in the spiritually uplifting department :-) Ditto for Emmett Fox if you prefer a "Christian" flavored explanation of "Union".
If you are practicing hatha then add 15-30 minutes of asana 2 times daily just before you meditate.
Its not so much about how much as it is about how. One hour a day, consistently, everyday will net you more then 3 hours every couple of days.

My MS has left me with a permanent case of vertigo, and 'the spins' can make it hard to go to sleep at night.

Paramahansa Yogananda suggests meditating on a heavy wool blanket covered with a silk cloth. Yogananda says this helps in meditation by shielding one from the effects of subtle earth currents. Personally I have found this to be true. I have also discovered that laying on a wool blanket covered in silk will slow and/or stop chemically induced "spins". Perhaps this would benefit you.

"Subtle earth currents"? What are they?

I don't know specifically what Yogananda was referring to. He did not elaborate. There is in yoga a great deal of arcane and esoteric knowledge about countless subjects. Could be magnetic fields or perhaps some solar energy form. I have however felt the effects. With a little experimentation and practice I am certain you can feel the effects also. It has been firmly established that animals will "feel" an earthquake, tsunami or other natural phenomenon way before we or our instruments will. So this is not unusual. It's just that

most people, especially in this modern age, are quite insensitive to what there body (Temple) is telling them. Even when we do hear the feedback we will often ignore it and do what we "think" is right (and never is) anyway.

Whatever they are, aren't they part of the omnipotent being I am trying to find union with?

Imagine that you are sitting by a window, concentrating on some work and a gust of cold air is blowing on you from outside. Likely this would distract you and you would get up, close the window and continue on with your work. I doubt your consideration of the cold air touching you would rise to the level of "cosmic" interaction or a "Divine" imperative.
Like any work, the fewer distractions we have while meditating the better. But eventually we learn to "shut off" or "disconnect" from the bodies sense feedback system altogether and so noise, subtle earth currents, heat/cold, etc. all become irrelevant. But none of us starts this way :-(
And yes you are correct, in the "Absolute" sense, all of creation, your very essence exists in these subtle earth currents. As indeed they do in dog dropping. It's just that most people in search of their "true self" don't go straight for the dog shit :-)

take such teachings with a pinch of salt. if it seems unbelievable, it usually is.

I am a jnani. I take everything that "exists" with a quarry full of salt :-)
None the less I would be delighted to hear about your experiences meditating on a wool blanket covered with silk. Does it make (can you feel) a difference?

. When meditating should I have a blank, still mind, or as Dave suggests, should I be meditating on the days events, or the price of bacon, or whatever?

Unfortunately there is no simple answer to your question. It just depends :-)
Meditation can refer to an amazing number of activities. Just off the top of my head. Meditation can refer to: contemplation reflection thought study deliberation visualization mental clearing concentration etc. Some of the many, many types of meditation might be: Zen, Kriya, Transcendental, Yoga, Tantric, Tibetan, Taoist, Buddhist, Christian, Islamic, etc. Specific techniques may be classified as active or passive, with seed or without seed, external or internal, etc. The use of a meditation may be for marshal, religious, health and other reasons.
I suggest very highly that you get a book and follow the directions. The more you learn about the different reasons and different types of meditation the more you can experiment for yourself. Either of these books would be excellent and dirt cheap. [Richard Hittleman's Guide to Yoga Meditation or Richard Hittleman's 30 Day Yoga Meditation Plan]
Any decent hatha yoga book will have detailed explanations and procedures for meditating.
My favorite book on the subject is Meditation: The Art of Ecstasy by Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. However meditation is more about "doing" than "understanding". The more you do it the more you understand it :-)
Since most of us have little discipline or control over our "mind" it is sometimes suggested that we start with a "visualization" type meditation. This is fun, easy to do and makes us feel good. It has a calming effect on the mind and body. It also helps develop a habit of sitting still for a prescribed number of minutes a couple of times a day. Next we may be practice one of many different types of concentration exercises or meditations. This may include using a seed such as "OM". We may count breaths, we may simply witness our breath. If we have a particular issue we need to deal with we can use a "reflection" type meditation where we still and center ourselves, briefly frame or visualize the issue and then let the mind go where it wants to without trying to control or "outline" for it. Listening for the wisdom of the "inner" voice or intuition. We may also "reflect" on the days events playing them over and watching for where we may have been able to use a more effective response to something. Learning from our mistakes. Generally speaking it is rarely the point to "empty" or "clear" the mind. We are not practicing to be zombies we are practicing to gain mastery over our minds and bodies.

because i climb and then fall. climb then fall. again and again

When we are children, this is how we "walk" :-)

And my dear and very appreciated friend OMJAROO is giving his name as a reference several times...

There's a saying around "recovery" circles that goes, "everyone is good for something. Even if it's to provide an example of what not to do." :-)
Besides the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is only one of the many criminals I have learned from, admire and try to emulate in my life. Mahatma Gandhi, Jesus Christ, Socrates, Joan of Arc and more recently Nelson Mandela, to name a few; the list is a very long one. All have been prosecuted and deemed "criminal."

More Charging
(HW MH RAMA KRISHNA CHARGED VIVEKANANDA!)

Does any of you know how much Rama Krishna charhed Vivekananda to teach yoga?

A lot, is what Rama Krishna charged Vivekananda to teach him. A sum perhaps greater then any of us would ever be willing to pay.

A) seller (Seller gets some sort of collection in return)

Rama Krishna, the seller, no doubt would have had minimum requirements for providing his service. In this case I believe it was a lifetime commitment and the surrender of all wealth and possessions for life as well.

B) A buyer (Buyer should spend some sort of collection for this)

Vivekananda, the buyer did in fact commit himself to release and/or cause to be donated every penny he would earn for the remained of his life. Considering his extensive writing and speaking it would be easy to estimate this to be worth millions.

c) A service or commodity...

Teaching and providing information has long been recognized as service and/or commodity.

D) Service or commodity should be legal... That is by law its selling is fine...

I don't believe the relative legality of an item, bought, sold or traded either enables or bars it from being bought, sold or traded. As long as you have a buyer and a seller you have a "deal".
Puma, money is a symbol. It represents effort or forbearance. Otherwise it has no meaning, it is simply pretty paper and/or coin. While some of it theoretically could be used in the bathroom, the other is pretty useless except perhaps for jewelry or to teach kids counting :-)
Whether one teaches yoga for trade or cash is not the issue. The issue is the individuals motivation for teaching or learning yoga. Why are you insisting otherwise?

What you have written is really perfect from only retorical point of view. This assay would gain 100 points ++ over 100 points.

Thanks for the high marks in rhetorical discourse :-) Although I am not certain that is a good thing :-(My thesaurus describes rhetorical as:
1. relating to the skill of using language effectively and persuasively
2. relating to or using language that is elaborate or fine-sounding but insincere
Which did you mean? Or did you perhaps mean theoretical or hypothetical, as in a "perfect world".
Be that as it may, I still don't understand why this position you are taking is meaningful to you or why it should be meaningful to me.
As far as I know, you cannot possess what is already yours. Hence we endeavor to learn to live in aparigraha, or non-possessiveness. Which is how we would "naturally" live if we were aware of the Truth. The fact is, you cannot buy or sell what is already yours, e.g. yoga. So the exchange of money, goods or services in the attempt to gain what is already ours is a "moot" point. The only meaning I can imagine

is for the individual who teaches yoga or the individual who learns yoga to inquire (jnana) as to the purpose/motivation of their endeavor. Does their "desire" to teach or learn bring them closer to the Truth or does is take them farther away. We must all eventually ask and understand why we are trying to learn yoga when we are already, Yoga The yamas/niyamas are devices intended to lead others to the Truth; they do not define the Truth. Because the Truth is, even the yamas/niyamas are lies/fictions. There is only Yoga now, there always has been and there always will be. Any perception/believe/idea to the contrary is a lie/fabrication and is the function of maya.
So can you please explain more clearly why this is so important to you.

If we can not buy or sell what is already ours,then trying to do it or pretending to do it means all FALSE...Only sharlatans try to do it! I am very pleased to see tthat we have the same thoughts.

...

"my bad". i got carried away in the problems of sansara. we are here to help.

Well if that's you when you're bad, I can't wait to see you when you're good :-)
Not only did I think your comments were "right on the money" but personally I thought what you said was exceptionally good and very kind.
If I had a booger hanging from my nose I would appreciate you telling me, even if painful and embarrassing for the both of us. This I would consider truly kind. I would respect you for having the courage and the compassion to suffer that awkward moment with me. For all those who thought they were being kind by not saying anything and allowing me to look a fool, I would grieve for them, their lack of courage.
Sometimes compassion dictates that we "hurt" someone else (and therefore ourselves) in discharging our duty. Have you ever lanced a boil for someone or informed them their lover was cheating on them? IME (in my experience) compassion requires courage and stomach and is not for the weak.
BTW I do believe it is spelled samsara (with an m ;-)

Jared, thanks for the kind words. i am a native hindi speaker and i can assure you the correct word is pronounced as with an "n". for some reason when the sanskrit words were transcribed to english things were not done the obvious way. so yes, today in roman letters the "m" would make more sense as that has become the norm.

Your welcome and thank-you for the thoroughly gracious and utterly appropriate admonition :-)

Teaching for the benefit of the students and having students inspired to give freely for the benefit they recieve is very different from selling one's time and charging so much $ per head to come through the door, or so much for this bit of philosophy, so much for that asana series, so much for this meditation technique and more for the next.

September

Group

(I love this group..)

Puma: For his "completely out there" views and insane use of CAPITALS!

omjaroo: For his wit and wisdom.

Dave: Because he always replies to himself.

hbkta: For having an unpronounceable name and still talking to me after I slagged him off.

Stu: For the Yoga Police thing.

..and everyone else for making this the most uplifting group I have been in.

...

Paul, I for one find your critical thinking to be a refreshing bright spot in this newsgroup.....without real questions, there can be no real answers.

I agree. I am reminded that "knowledge" or "knowing" is a process.
It is good to hear the ardent questions because sometimes I find it difficult to remember the questions, which led to the answers and in the order they arose. I am want to go directly to whatever I know at any given moment, point A directly to point B, without detailing the myriad sub-points in between :-)
Not that I think this is a bad thing. Each of our processes is our own. Sometimes it is sufficient to call the end-game (plant a seed), after which an individual who cares to can confirm or deny in their own time and manner.
I suppose part of it depends on how didactic ones nature and how much time one has.

Miracles

(Yoga Miracles II (Paul, et al))

This thread propagated rather quickly and became somewhat hard for me to follow. Which is why I am starting another to answer your questions.

> *If this stuff is true why aren't Yogis doing this stuff in Trafalgar (or Times) Square? The world would be a better place if we were all doing Yoga, so why hide it's potential?*

My (only somewhat) flippant quoting of Mat 7:6 was to say that if some person demonstrated yogic powers they probably would "put upon" and killed. New Orleans provides a timely example of how some people will act when they are frightened, actually shooting at those trying to help them. What can I say? It is human (animal or lizard brain) nature to kill what we can't understand or frightens us.
Then in response to my quoting a bible passage you launched a passionate diatribe. So I responded with the question, "do you see what I mean?" Meaning, that I just so much as mentioned a bible passage, somewhat in jest, as an answer to your question and it provoked an attack with accusations of hypocrisy and ineptitude. I can only imagine what kinds of attacks would be precipitated by someone claiming "yogic powers". So while you kindly characterize omjaroo as being witty and wise (thank you BTW) when I quoted the bible you did not assume years of study and synthesis of written Truth in many traditions and ask for clarification. Rather it appears you assumed an assault on your believes and your intelligence as well as a hypocritical pronouncement by a bible thumping zealot. So then I quoted (my bad, by this time I am teasing you) Mat 7:1 concerning judgment. In this case I thought it was you who (mis)judged me :-). Meanwhile I am having fun noticing that all these quotes are in the same chapter and just a few verses away for each other :-) Now it is clear to me that you are sensitive to traditional western religious notions and so I will, in the future, be more sympathetic about chiding you or trying to convey an idea to you with bible quotes. :-(
This brings us to what someone has already so fittingly pointed out the "siddhis" or "powers" are not the point of yoga. To display them would be most inappropriate for a number of reasons which I believe were covered in the original thread. But if you are still unclear, by all means re-frame the question and ask. As you read, you will hear this discussed time and again. Which reminds me; all of the questions you are struggling with will be answered in the course of your reading and study. Hence the Mat 7:7-8 citation :-) and an earlier admonishment to continue to read, study and practice for a year or two at which time you will be amazed at how many of your questions will be answered.
Now about my indifference :-) Which I believe was probably more your impatience. I can't be sure you did not respond to that post.
Anyway, as I read it you believe I was "ducking" the answering of your questions by quoting the bible, rather than I was giving you my opinion by quoting scripture. Given what you have shared about yourself and your search, I can see and appreciate your thinking. I hope I have clarified my references to the bible and how they relate to the display of yogic "miracles".
And finally (I think :-) Did I mention there is no such thing as a "miracle". Every happenstance in existence has a cause which is intelligent. After all God is Intelligence and would never create anything that deifies the rules of how things work. That would be downright idiotic and very un-God-like :-) Things sometimes appear to be miraculous when we can not see or understand the system underpinning them. But its there none the less.

For a Yogi, it appears you have little faith in the spirit of the masses.

The definition of a "yogi" is anyone who studies or practices yoga. That makes you a yogi. Welcome to the club :-) The fact that someone is a yogi does not suppose any qualification as to experience, skill or disposition. Perhaps you were thinking of a "swam," "shadhu, saint, sage or any individual who has taken "vows of renunciation" or otherwise committed themselves to life of adoration and service to God.
There is a common misconception concerning great saints and sages. That is that they want (or should want) to change the world; to help people. I admit that I operated under this erroneous notion for a long time until I came to understand that it is not possible to help anyone, other then yourself. The universe is functioning absolutely perfectly in any and every instance throughout all of existence. There is nothing out of place. There is no wrong. There is no one suffering needlessly or gratuitously. Nor is there any such thing as unfair. Everything is just as it should be. If someone is suffering this is the natural and inevitable consequence of having broken Universal law (Puma :-) and is what a person needs, to be motivated, to become aware and make the needed adjustments in their affairs. Yogis cannot defy Universal law, nor would they want to. If they try, they too will be reminded of their error by some form of suffering. An experienced yogi will learn that the Universe is about personal responsibility; about the Self. The only one a yogi can help is themselves (Dave :-) and only in this way can they be of help to others. How I help myself is by developing awareness, control and acceptance. If I want to stop war in the world I have to stop the war in my heart. If I want to dispel ignorance in the world then I need to learn the Truth. If I want to end suffering then I need to let go of suffering in my own life. And so on. Because as a wise sponsor in my recovery once told me, Jared you can't give to others what you don't have.

I am still on my Yogic journey, I don't just come here for a fight.

Yes I believe you. Do you suppose I am here for a fight? When you focus your struggle inward towards yourself (the Self) then the arguments with persons, places and things outside of you will no longer hold any meaning. You are not fighting (discussing) with me you are fighting with yourself. I understand that. I do the same thing. We all do. God is not the problem, nor religion, nor suffering, nor is there any problem outside of us at all. It's all an inside job, as they say. Think about it. If you were dead this moment, what would this discussion or anything outside of your real Self mean at all. Yes, exactly nothing. Remember you are the only Thing in the Universe. You are Everything in the Universe. You are the Universe. This is Yoga. This is why we practice yoga. So we can appreciate, understand and live with this knowledge (Truth).

I am surprised you are so indifferent.

believe me I am as surprised as you are :-) I have just now returned, after having spent the day in a neighboring country, quite disconnected from the Internet. In fact I still can't respond for a couple of more hours. Patience my friend all your questions will be answered. Remember, it's taken you years to become alienated, it naturally will take time for you to find your way home...

Ok, so it hardly water to wine, but was that the sort of thing you meant? Unusually nice things?

No, but that's a really good start.
Reminds me of the story of an old farmer working his field along side the road leading to town. A person just newly moving into town stopped to chat. The man said, "I moving from a small town where everyone is a gossip, mean spirited and thieving. Is that the way folks are in your town?" The farmer frowned and shook his head, "well I'm sorry but you'll find people are just like that in our town." Disappointed the man grumbled and left. Mean while along came another new resident who stopped to inquire. "Hey I just moved from a town where everyone was friendly, pleasant and always willing to lend a hand. Is that the way they are in your town?" "You bet ja," the farmer replied smiling, "if that's what you are looking for, you'll find that folks are just like that in our town."

October

Matrix

(The film "Matrix" and yoga)

Trying to find the similarities between the philosophy of yoga and the trilogy Matrix:

...

If you listen you will find the end of the 3rd film is filled with these Vedic chants:

The matrix is/was entertainment. Diversion. While there are many "mystical" notions used as plot vehicles there was little if any "Truth" presented. I would put it on par with the metaphysical depth of Wizard of Oz. The first of many yogic/buddist/toaist aspects which was immediately apparent to me was the fact that Neo, was living in a "manufactured" dream world from which he could be awoken. But this world was created by someone else for "evil" purposes. IMO unfortunately as a result of this, everything breaks down with regards to the Truth. There is little exploration of the "inner journey" or the taking of personal responsibility by our hero.
I walked away from the Matrix films supremely entertained and wanting more but having learned nothing of the Truth. IMO at the end of the day, the film simply reinforces mayic illusion (literally and figuratively) by entertaining us so well.

Hitler

(The Universal Law or Hitler?)

Did the Jews manifest the Holocaust?

Hmmm... Let me take a stab at the real question here, "Family Feud" Style.
We have asked our studio audience, "Am I Paul, responsible for manifesting the circumstances in my life?"
Number one answer with 99 votes; and our survey says... No! (audience groans)
Oh sorry Paul, you lose. You will be forever stuck wherever you are, subject to the whim and fancy of everything outside yourself, none of which you can control...
Oh, but wait a minute folks. In a stunning turn around, the judges have issued this ruling; the answer given by just one audience member was in fact the correct one: Yes! Paul is responsible and therefore he wins! (audience clapping loudly).
As your prize you will be taking home the potential to have a beautiful new life, custom made to your specifications (audience clapping in background).
Paul, how do you feel?
Well gee Richard, er, I'm not sure... Does that mean the Jews manifested the Holocaust?
Oh, sorry Paul, we have run out of time. We'll see you all next week on The Family Feud, when the Iraqis challenge Katrina!
What... they don't have "Family Feud" in the Union?

Union? What's that? BTW, it's called Family Fortunes (a more positive slant) over here.

That would be the European Union :-)

Most of us Brits don't consider ourselves part of the European Union, island mentality I guess,

I was aware of that, hence the smiley face. Well it may just be that someday the sun won't set on the union. You'll just have to share it this time is all :-)

I am surprised Puma never got involved it this one. With all his posts on the "UL" I thought this would be right up his street.

Didn't surprise me at all. I am fairy sure Puma knows a trap when he sees it. After all he is a Puma ;-) ;-) ;-)

I'm surprised (not really by now) you so blithely ignored the content of my post ;-) Didn't you even crack a smile? Maybe a small one? Personally, I chuckled out loud for a couple of days over that one. Perhaps its funnier if you have some idea of the metaphysical import.
However what I didn't do is answer your question as presented or in any depth. I was waiting to see if you were willing to "fess-up" to the real question. I even tried to make it funny and easy to do :-(Oh well...
Notwithstanding the provocation I think that the question is well worth answering. The problem is to do it correctly would require at least an essay length treatment and a book might even be better.
If you dismissed the "short, funny" answer, I'm not you (group) would appreciate the longer, more serious one.

*Screw the rest of the group, *I* want to know the big answer! Go swami go!*

I'm not so sure about the screw the group :-) I'm trying to eliminate that aspect of my life but OK, what is the "big question" you think you want to know. Perhaps I can answer it.
And I thought I clarified that "swami" stuff. Do you mock me? :-)

So are you saying the Jews and the people of New Orleans were "paying" for something?

For future reference you can eliminate any notion of "retribution" with regards to anything I do or say. Punishment is a very low level value that has no correspondence to the Truth, at all. Ever...
Work is good. Most of us never understand the real reason why, but it is.
One does not meditate for work. Meditating is a "non-doing." What it sounds like you were doing is "praying." Praying is good. Although most of us never understand the real reason why, but it is.
I myself am out of town "working." I have been so tired after a 12 day of intense physical labor that I can hardly type. I have been remiss in answering Moon's post, which I found tremendously interesting. Plato & the Matrix. Great stuff.

Trolls

(she likes to put peoples names on moving)

I realize I "should not" feed the trolls. However you are becoming rather prolific in your abuse of usenet and the particular groups you defecate in. You and your posts remind me of a mosquito, an incessantly barking dog or my children's mother. Relentlessly and viciously irritating... But a natural part of existence (maya) which will always be with me. I accept and bless your insanity as being a different flavor of my own. Ommm, Ommm...

omjaroo, what if teckard warning make a point and should not post? What if I became the victim? . I welcome all warnings.

Then, I accept and bless your insanity as being a different flavor of my own. Ommm, Ommm...

Depression

(World War II and Yoga)

"We're the middle children of history, man. No purpose or place. We have no Great War. No Great Depression. Our Great War's a spiritual war... our Great Depression is our lives"

This quote from Fight Club is possibly my favourite from any film past or present, I completely relate to it

Great movie I liked it. Unfortunately as hard as I tried, I could hear no "Truth" in it. :-(Just great film making.

Would a Yogi, or even a Guru, have willingly taken up arms against the Germans during WWII if his homeland, family and freedom to practice Yoga were under threat or would he have allowed himself to be brutalised or killed?

Of course! Try reading the Bhagavad-Gita :-) There is a class of warrior yogis. Marshal artists, if you will. The Sikhs are big in this area.

The reason I use WWII in the scenario is that it is clear cut who the goodies and baddies were. These days the purpose of wars seems a lot greyer.

Perhaps not so clear cut as you think. After all the "bad guys" are always the ones who lose the war. And on the yoga side, there are no "good or bad" guys. There is only God... and only Now... No right or wrong either. Remember; It's never the thing (or action) itself which has meaning, only the meaning we bring to it.

I related to the mood of futility, waste and self destruction running throughout the film,

I could relate to the movie in a big way. That's one of the things I liked about it. When I say I couldn't hear any "Truth" (capital T) in it I wasn't saying that there was no "reality". On a certain level it is a very real depiction of what you describe. What I am saying is that the "reality" presented (as is the reality of our lives) is in actually an illusion; a fabrication; a complete and utter lie... So while the film summed up the fiction of our lives (just like the Matrix) it offered not so much as a hint of what is actually real.

that is part of how I found Yoga.

Welcome to the Club. This is how/why most of us "find" yoga :-)

Maybe it's my spriritual naivety steering me again, but I just can't wrap my head around that concept; the murder of a child has no meaning?

Of course the murder of a child has meaning. Everything that exists has meaning. Suppose a child is killed to cover up a crime. That would be bad, right. But what if the child was part of a group of a 1000 Jewish refugees who were hiding from a Nazi patrol and it's crying was going to give away their position and get them all killed.
Protecting a child from being harmed at all costs (even one's life) is good, no? How about protecting one child while allowing 10,000 others to be butchered because the one child could not be found?
The way that I personally differentiate is by asking, was the killing done out of fear or out of love? The fact that a child was killed does not impart the meaning. The motivation for the act imparts its meaning.

isn't that a little over simplified, or is that really a Yogic truth?

What is, is true and what is not, is not. There is no Yogic truth, there is only the Truth. Try not to confuse the message with the messenger. That's how we end up getting killed :-) :-) :-)

Changing the subject completely...

Now on to something I know something about! I have been dealing with my own depression from severe to mild for over 40 years. Oh BTW, I don't consider this a change of subject at all :-)

A while back you started a thread where your usual positive demeanour seemed to be taking a beating. You seemed to be racked with doubt and disillusionment.

A bit of depression, frustration, existential angst, persecution, compassionate sorrow for humanity, with a good bit of self-pity, fear and lack of self-discipline thrown in for good measure. But never doubt or disillusionment. I know what the Truth is so I can no longer use doubt or disillusionment as an excuse for anything :-)

I saw something familiar to me....

I am glad you could relate to what I said :-) but I am not glad you could relate to what I said :-(

Every once in a while I fall into a deep depression where "everything" looks like shit to me. I don't want to talk to anyone and I can only see and feel the negative in things

Sounds like classic depression to me.

As much as I fight it, resist it, or try to overturn it, it's force is >overpowering and I end up feeling very bleak and useless.

This might sound a bit weird but try it, I think you will be surprised. You don't have to understand how this works for it to work. But once it does I am sure you will want to know why and how.
Next time you head into depressed spell do not attempt to fight or resist it. Simply acknowledge and accept that it is there with you for a while. Do those things you feel you need to in order to deal with it and then (this is the secret) bless and give thanks for the depression and the value it is bringing into your life. You see the depression is there for a reason. You have called it into your now. The depression is not different from you, it is you speaking to you from a deep inner space. Acknowledge and bless the Love and Intelligence which the depression represents and welcome it into your space with Loving arms. You can talk to the depression and ask it questions. Why are you here? What have you come to give/teach me? What do I need to do to accept your gift and move forward? etc.
In the mean time here is a little experiment you can try for yourself before the next episode arrives that will demonstrate how what I am suggesting can work. This was taught to me many years ago by an old-time construction guy who was supervising a crew I was on when I was a teen. I thought he was nuts until I tried it myself.
The next time you bump your knee or in some way wack the crap out of some body part. You know what I mean the real quick, stabbing pain type wack. As you feel the pain escalate don't say "ouch, oh that hurts ect." say right out loud "wow, this feels good. Oh man that feels great, I wish I could do this three times a day for a week. Wow I love this feeling, etc". You don't have to believe what you are saying, you can feel silly and quite ridiculous but just say it and say it out loud. If you do it while someone is watching, you get a smile out of them for sure. But you will also notice that while the pain started to rise, as soon as you start saying things like this is great, I love this feeling, you will see the pain instantly change directions and start to go down.
You see, you and your body are really not the same. That is you are not your body. You are something much bigger than your "vehicle". That being said you are in charge or keeping your vehicle in good running order. Or as I some times like to say you are responsible for keeping your "temple" clean and in good repair so you can express your divine nature as God intended.

I am still doing the asanas and reading uplifting Yogic stuff daily, I also try to meditate 2-3 times a week.

Excellent by all means continue. You didn't get where you are in a matter of days. You will not change everything in a matter of days. It took a long time to get where you are it will take some time to get where you want to be. A great deal of it is about exchanging old ineffective habits with new more effective ones. I would suggest that you develop the habit of sitting down 2 times each day, if even for 10 minutes each and meditating. Even if you just sit and do a couple of "centering" exercises and then sit still. The idea is to carve out two chunks of time for yourself twice a day, each day, without distractions of any sort. Get up 20 minutes early or go to bed twenty minutes late. The amount of time is not important at this point the regularity is what's important.

This time I am particularly pissed off because I have really been taking care of my lot. Family life is good, getting straight financially, health is excellent, but this thing is like a bolt out of the blue.

Depression is not a single thing so it is not likely that any single thing will help it. More likely it will be a combination of a number of different approaches. Without specific information about you as an individual I can only offer some general suggestions and point out some areas you might like to explore.
Depression (especially chronic) is often a "life style" induced condition. Smoking, lack of exercise, alcohol/drug abuse, sex obsessions, food allergies, unsuitable employment, refined/unhealthful diet, coffee, soda, urban living, parasite infections, food allergies, etc. These are all physical/environmental things which can add to depression. In addition to these factors there are emotional and mental issues which act

to "explain", support or sustain depression. There are numerous habits of lifestyle, speech/thinking and actions which will also play a part. All of these things are connected so it is not often that you will change one thing or try one technique and eliminate depression.
The depression really is trying to tell you something. Its incumbent on you to learn how to hear what it is saying and to develop the self-discipline and make the life-style changes you need to in order to address it. Generally speaking anything you do as part of hatha yoga training/practice will be very beneficial.

> I*t's like someone cuts the brake cable on your car, it's a lovely sunny day and all of a sudden I have spun off the road and I'm upside down in a ditch.*

I'm sorry but I had to chuckle at your description. One of the most apt I have ever heard! It can be just like that too.
Keep doing what you are doing and things will steadily improve. Believe it or not you are already doing one of the most effective anti-depression techniques there is, Talking about it and asking questions! As some smart guy once said you are only as sick as your secrets.

> *I approached this "attack" a little different this time. I was calmer and more accepting. My life is taking a much more positive direction nowadays, so although this was as powerful a depression as ever, I saw it as a bad cold or a toothache, an irritation that will pass.*

I'm glad to hear it! Stick around it gets even better. Imagine one day understanding exactly what's happening and knowing you are in absolute control of it (or not). In the mean time question everything and everybody (including yourself). Prove/disprove everything to yourself before you "believe" anything. Then you will "know" it. This is jnana yoga. Meditate daily (raja), relax/exercise daily (hatha), volunteer some time to selflessly serve others doing anything (karma) and see God in everyone and everything and give thanks for your blessings (bhakti). In two years you won't recognize yourself and neither will anyone else :-)

A Dream

(To sleep! perchance to dream:--ay, there's the rub;)

This was different:
I have just now awoken from a very vivid dream. In this dream I was asleep and dreaming that I needed to go home. In my dream, I was standing in my room fully awake and aware, that I had just woken from the "needing to go home" dream. As I was standing there remembering my "needing to go home" dream, I was quickly taken over by a intense feeling of losing consciousness, as if I was being pulled back into the darkness of sleep and the dream I had just woken from. I did everything I could to force myself to stay awake and remain conscious. Just as I do from time to time if I am embroiled in an unpleasant dream and I force myself to wake up. But in this case, I was asleep and dreaming, that I was asleep and dreaming. Later in my dream I was discussing my "needing to go home" dream with my father, just like I am sharing this dream with you.
One can consider the symbolism of a dream. But what about the symbolism of a dream that you are having in a dream?
Yogananda discusses dreams, dreaming, sleep and other matters in his yoga lessons. He says that we get the least "rest" when we dream because we are utilizing a great deal of energy living in the dream. A dark "dreamless" sleep is more restful. And super-conscious meditation is even more restful then even "dreamless" sleep. Man, no wonder I am so sleepy during the day. I am dreaming within seconds of my head hitting the pillow. In fact if I count backwards from 100 I rarely will even get below 50 before lucid dreaming enters my consciousness and I am unable to keep the numbers straight. Then it "lights out" and I am off for a wonderful night of existence without physical limits. Frankly, my "dream life" is much more entertaining then my "real" life.
This begs the question, if any second now, I am going to wake up from a very long dream and what I would find. And how many times will I wake up before I know who I really am? Gee, do you suppose Shakespeare was a Jnani?

[Enter Hamlet.] Ham. To be, or not to be,--that is the question:--

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, And by opposing end them?--To die,--to sleep,-- No more; and by a sleep to say we end The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks That flesh is heir to,--'tis a consummation Devoutly to be wish'd. To die,--to sleep;-- To sleep! perchance to dream:--ay, there's the rub; For in that sleep of death what dreams may come, When we have shuffled off this mortal coil, Must give us pause: there's the respect That makes calamity of so long life; For who would bear the whips and scorns of time, The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely, The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay, The insolence of office, and the spurns That patient merit of the unworthy takes, When he himself might his quietus make With a bare bodkin? who would these fardels bear, To grunt and sweat under a weary life, But that the dread of something after death,-- The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn No traveller returns,--puzzles the will, And makes us rather bear those ills we have Than fly to others that we know not of? Thus conscience does make cowards of us all; And thus the native hue of resolution Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought; And enterprises of great pith and moment, With this regard, their currents turn awry, And lose the name of action.--Soft you now! The fair Ophelia!--Nymph, in thy orisons Be all my sins remember'd.

Self-realization

(Guruphiliac)

If all divinity is equally distributed in the universe, then it is equally distributed among humans too, and we are all fine the way we are, and we can sit on our asses and go " cool, I'm already divine, I don't have to do anything."

That would be absolutely correct! Bravo, I think you've got it. :-)
The only issue (there is) then becomes one of "acceptance". That's why we do all the yoga stuff. Not because we can change into anything other then what we already are "here and now". But because most of us can't accept what we are "here and now". When we can, then we are deemed "enlightened", "self-realized", "wise", etc, etc.
Someone said the siddhis don't automatically come with "self-realization" and this has been my experience. They are a part of the phenomenal world and part of our natural potential but they have to be learned and developed by most people. Although some people seem to have an easier time of it then others, no doubt owing to work they did in their last incarnation/s. Siddhis do evolve with and are a natural result of advanced yogic training and self-discipline. However like amassing money, learning/practicing any of the siddhis requires a great deal of time, attention and resources; in which, any spiritually directed individual would have little interest in investing.
On the other hand "enlightenment" or "self realization" can and does happen in an instant to anyone, anywhere but otherwise doesn't change a thing except that now one "knows" the Truth, as opposed to "believing, searching for, studying, etc" the Truth. Once "enlightenment" happens then the challenge become aligning body, mind and soul with what is now "known". For most of us, this is no easy task as the illusion/habits of mortality are strong. So the yoga continues, the study/meditation deepens, the questions becomes more pointed and the road becomes narrower and narrower. All the wisdom in all the history of the world starts to become clearer and more meaningful. One by one, the illusion of separation of all which exists starts to dissolve as one learns to live in the world but not of the world, until finally accepting being "the world".
I would say that anyone who feels a need to collect money by telling others they are able to express any of the siddhis needs to work on "acceptance" and is probably not "enlightened" yet. I would go a step further and include as well, anyone who teaches yoga in exchange for anything.
Oh, BTW, in my experience cross-posting to alt.yoga is rarely beneficial/satisfying for anyone involved. Alt.-yoga is not a very "chatty" group and it's difficult to get any kind of argument going there. I suppose that's because the members of alt.yoga already know all there is to know, about everything, so there's little need to argue :-)

I'm thinking the issue being discussed is primarily a semantic one. This is where "absolutists" often get in trouble :-) After all there is a moment in understanding where you can no longer take anyone along with you in words.
I don't think we're there yet, so I will try to clarify.
The problem I see with language (English, perhaps Sanskrit is better) in trying to explain how to do "enlightenment" is this. We think of "doing" something as causing something. Where as non-doing can also have very powerful effects.
Enlightenment can't be done because there is nothing to do. However enlightenment can be prepared for, it can be sought after, it can be desired. All these things might give us the impression we are doing something to become "enlightened". But because enlightenment is who we are now, it can't be done, it just happens if we allow it (which is a non-doing). The Bhagwan Shree Rasneesh, explains "non-doing" quite thoroughly in his book "Meditation and the Art of Ecstasy". I think that we sometimes confuse those things we are "doing" in order to prepare for or in an attempt to gain "enlightenment" for "causing" "enlightenment".
For example, quitting smoking. We think of this as a fine accomplishment or something we "do" and many of us have worked long and hard to "do" this. But what are we actually doing? Nothing of course. Because what we are really "doing" is stopping (a non-doing) the habitual introduction of stimulating toxins into our body. We may do lot's of activities and techniques in furtherance of "stopping" our smoking. But in the end, if we are successful, it will be our doing "nothing" which constitutes our victory over smoking. We simple stop.
In the same manner "enlightenment", "self realization" and the like is something we can chase after and try to do for years but when it come right down to it, "enlightenment" is an "acceptance", a non-doing. We stop resisting, stop fabricating illusions, stop "reasoning", stop struggling, stop longing and simply "let go" and accept what is our very nature. That which always has been and always will be. Then in that moment, all the bullsh*t and lies fall away in a cascade so fast one has to stop thinking for a moment or you will feel dizzy. Then you look out at the world, past, present and future and you realize nothing has changed at all. The only difference now is you can "see".
Then it's on to life, but now with "eyes open". This presents a challenge. Everything you thought you knew when you were blind has to be thrown out, as it is useless. More then useless it is a hindrance, a regression. This is the hard part because likely you are not grounded on a practical basis in living with the Truth but you are no longer grounded in the lies either. All of ones experiences, habits, notions, believes, right down to your DNA is based on the not knowing of the Truth.
Not that "enlightenment is all beauty and light! One can become an existential "tweener" caught between light and dark, Truth and fiction, Love and fear. A nether world untethered from maya but not yet grounded body, mind and soul in Love. This can be an immensely painful and frightening place (illusion) to be in. This is why some of my posts can be a bit intense. This is also how "enlightened" individuals can "fall" far and hard (Osho anyone?). Any work one does in any art of self-control/knowledge will be very helpful. If you've done little or none you better learn something quick because your old ways just won't work with your eyes open. One must "relearn" everything. Become "as a child" but this time with one's eyes open. This is the primary difference between the unconscious freedom and love of a child and the freedom and conscious Love of an adult.

> *There is an understanding that cannot be approached by thought, let alone thoughts stepped down to words.*

Of course. But then that doesn't make for a very interesting or helpful usenet exchange :-)
I have come to believe my "assignment" on this planet is to put into words, what can't be explained. If I can know it, then god damn it, I should be able to explain it! Perhaps that is why I so love the the quote of Emile Zola, that "If you asked me what I came into this world to do, I will tell you: I came to live out loud."

"Everything you thought you knew when you were blind has to be thrown out, as it is useless"

What!? Where did that come from?

Experience :-)

"All of ones experiences, habits, notions, believes, right down to your DNA is based on the not knowing of the Truth."

Nah.

OK, can't argue with that :-)

"Not that "enlightenment is all beauty and light! One can become an existential "tweener" caught between light and dark, Truth and fiction, Love and fear."

This sounds like fiction to me, Jared.

It is, just as everything I "experience" is. Sounds like you haven't had the pleasure of this particular fiction. Consider yourself blessed :-) Perhaps you ate sh*t in your last life, so you didn't have to do it this time :-)

Osho didn't fall.

Of course he didn't. There's no such thing. None the less if you look at the "fruits" of his "life" this time around there was plenty of "wheat" and plenty of "thorns". Me, I've been nourished and grown from the wheat and I watch out for the thorns. BSR is my hero :-)

Hopefully, this is the real reason for the uncommonly (for Usenet) argument-free atmosphere on alt.yoga. That, and the yogic ideal of ahimsa

Touche my friend! Fabrications are infinite; the Truth is absolute.
I have been participating in usenet, basically since it began and I have noticed there are 2 kinds of groups.
1. The groups where people come to find information which will profit them (car, computer, software support groups, yoga, etc.) people are very respectful and polite. If they are not they will not profit from their visit.
2. Groups where people come to "test" or "spew" their delusions. Try to justify their fear and make themselves "right" so to speak. These groups are rife with hate and discontent and reflect all the uncivilness humans who are frightened and ignorant have foisted on others since time began.

Siddhis

(Does anyone here know anything about magical powers?)

Does anyone here know anything about magical powers

No... er yes... well maybe... Depends... Could you be a little more specific or indicate why you are asking the question?
Just thought I'd mention that the earth (in fact the whole universe) is absolutely perfect right now. Always has been and always will be. When one can "realize" this then one can easily understand what a pointless waste of time and an utter distraction, dabbling in siddhis (or any phenomenal power) is.
One can express "power" beyond most people's comprehension by practicing (even poorly) the most fundamental of yogic disciplines: yama/niyama :-) I am afraid that until one has perfected yama/niyama playing with siddhis will bring only unpleasant lessons :-(

just wondering what exactly do you mean in your comment that "... the siddhis don't automatically come with "self-realization" and this has been my experience.

As I have described in other postings that I came to "self-realization" quite without any "practice" at all. Save for a great deal of fear, pain and resistance. I came kicking and screaming all the way :-)
http://groups.google.com/group/alt.yoga/browse_frm/thread/bfe9831312200621/8eb5059b521bf299?q=omjaroo%2Bb
http://groups.google.com/group/alt.yoga/browse_frm/thread/23512253c0c4fd8e/c469c78e609727e7?q=omjaroo%2Bd

I “realized” who I was when I "realized" there is God. I "realized" there is God by having asked God to help me. And fifteen minutes later, in no uncertain terms, He did. Ergo I now "knew" for a fact there’s God. No more denying, hoping, believing, wishing, etc, now I knew. You might say I had a "mystical" experience. Otherwise nothing, but nothing else changed (except absolutely everything!) My life was still a disaster. Not to mention that now every thought, idea, believe and experience I had ever had was meaningless because it didn’t include "there is God" So from that moment I have been trying to catch up to this knowledge. Oh and did I mention there were no siddhis in the deal? Not a one. But then how can I complain I was given the knowledge of who I am. The end-game of all of man’s desires and actions, quests and striving.
Well then the work started. Talk about starting over. My habits were not, "knowing" there is God habits. My life-style was not a "knowing" there was God life-style. My thoughts, feelings and actions were not of the "knowing" there is God variety. Far from a blissful, pleasant awakening, "self-realization" has meant for me that I have had to get off my sorry ass and act like there is God and like I am whatever God is and like there is only God. This is why I have sought yoga. To train body, mind and spirit how to live with the "realization" of who I am. Because I didn’t (I’m a bit better now) have a clue how to act. It’s never been my habit to be industrious or self-disciplined and I am not especially physical so I haven’t fared very well with Hatha. I am however tenacious and intellectually keen so I relentlessly pursue the Truth and this is Jnana yoga. Hatha, karma, bhakti are all areas I continue to develop as it is becoming quite clear how they all "fit" in the quest for utter freedom from fear and delusion.

seems you are saying you have experienced, developed some sidhhis

So to answer your question, No, just the opposite in fact. I have my hands full with fear, sex, alcohol, food, PTSD and a boat load of Karma I managed to rack up this time around :-) Not to mention whatever prenatal stuff I carried forward! I can do without siddhis, thank you... :-)

November

Spam

(yoga sites)

I am looking for sites specifically about Yoga. Haven’t found that many. I was wondering if others would share their favorites.The one I currently use is:

Odd, I did a google web search on "yoga" and found 32,400,000 references for yoga in about 0.10 seconds. The sites listed on the first page alone, could keep a person well informed on the topic of yoga for years :-)

You Yogi’s are so gullible, he just joined to spam his site! Durrrr!

When I was 12 I was accused of being the most bitter and cynical person alive. 40 years later I am being called gullible. Now that’s progress :-) Cause like a famous yogi once said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."
And wasn’t it Othello who said, "The robb’d that smiles steals something from the thief."
Besides as a direct result of the spam post a bunch of good non-spam sites were posted for all to benefit from. I’d say that was a good thing :-) Double Durrr! :-) :-) :-)

Silent Breathing

(doing yoga while i can’t do yoga)

Breathing through my nose is completely impossible under these circumstances, so how should I be breathing?

You are able to control the blood flow to the sinus area. You can realize this by endeavoring to breath through your nose (in an non-allergy time) absolutely silently. This is achieved by relaxing the sinus and the surrounding muscles. While you may not be able to directly control these initially you can have the

same effect by insisting that you breath silently. In a very short time of practicing silent (and I mean without a sound at all) breathing you will discover for yourself what I mean.
This will then help you during sinus episodes. However I would also suggest you learn about allergies and how the lifestyle choices you make create them and how your believe system supports your not freeing yourself from them. There is no reason you have to suffer with allergy that you can not control/effect :-)

Prana-Chi

(strange things)

I could swear I felt an electrical energy of some type coming off of my fingers, like it was leaving my body. definate tingle, similar to a mild electric current eminating from my fingertips.

I have felt this very intensely. It was not during yoga but during an emotionally intense therapy session. I can remember laying on the ground feeling the energy flowing from the top of my head and arms and out my hands. I could see it coursing across the floor. It looked like the shimmering distortion of heat you see in the distance on a very hot day. I can only imagine what the person sitting in it's path was feeling or perceiving :-)
If you would like to see this energy (prana, chi, etc) it is fairly easy. Sitting or laying comfortably in a slightly darkened room, gently put the fingers of both your hands together tip to tip, cupped as if you were holding a small ball in the space between them. Holding your hand thus, relax your shoulders and your arms. Bit by bit let all the tension flow out of your arms and hands while still touching you fingers.. Use only the absolute minimum energy you need to keep your finger tips touching. Let go of all other tension. You will feel a warmth flow into your hands. Continue to relax more and more and notice the heat increase. Now focus your gaze between your finger tips and slowly draw your two hands apart. You will see the life force moving between your finger tips. It will appear as a clear strand with a water-like distortion flowing from tip to tip. Depending how much chi you have moved to your fingers during your focus and relaxation, after a short distance the flow will break.

God

(Does God exist? Will Yoga help me find him?)

This is what I am thinking:
Either there is God or there is not God. It's a zero or one proposition; on or off; there is or there isn't. Period...
If there is God and I don't know it, how can I be happy? If I don't live my life as if there is God, how can I possibly get it right?
On the other hand if there is not God, the way I figure it, I'm just fucked! When I die, I am history and my "life" means nothing. The best thing I can do is try to live my time as "comfortably" as possible.
How do you figure it?

There is God. I noticed that once.

Me too, I think that is called a "mystical" experience :-)

But I still don't know what God really is or what God is up to

Me too. The "perennial muse."

But I figure there is some connection between God and truth and bliss.

As in sat/chit/ananda?

I was looking for truth, but inadvertently found God

God is Truth so that would make sense. ;-)

then I felt bliss.

God is Love, so this also makes sense :-)

The details are a bit boring, I suppose.

"Boring? Now that is funny :-) Absolutely cool, beyond cool seems more like it to me!

This perceived duality was driving me nuts, and I was constantly thinking about the problem for a long time.

They say the Buddha had that problem.

One night I dropped my pencil and fell asleep with my notebook for pillow.

Not quite as romantic as a bodhi tree or a flash of calm acceptance in the midst of a searing existential crisis. But I have read of a number of great ideas born in just this way :-)

I only slept for a few seconds

Good thing! You might have slept through the whole incident and not have remembered a thing. :-)

because in a sudden flash of insight I found out that the duality only existed for me, the single ego, the self-aggrandizing tiny part of the Whole. To God there would be no duality. I knew this beyond a shadow of a doubt, because for a fleeting moment I experienced that non-duality.

Rather I would say that for a fleeting moment you had awareness of "oneness". In truth you have never "experienced" anything else, ever. :-)

Unfortunately, this is not scientific proof because it was a very subjective, personal experience, and I don't think it can be repeated by a scientist in a lab. I haven't even repeated it myself.

Perhaps because I have spent so many years endeavoring to take responsibility for my own life and health and clean the garbage out of my "temple" that I have gotten over the idea of whatever can't be proved must not be true. Or as Woody says, "all that is fact in not true and all that is true is not fact".
But provable or not, there's no going back. I think of the "glance" (I've heard it called Satori) as like having lived in a dark black box all of my life and then one day seeing a pinhole of light. I may not know what it is or where it is or how to see it again but I know there is something more to existence then my colorless world. This is after all the original purpose of Yoga. A science for discovering "what" is; where it is and how to accept and "own" it.
After your experience did your life take on any particular "determination"? Or exactly how has this experience shaped or affected your life? Please by all means "bore" the living bajesus out of me some more! I like it :-)

So you say, but then you snip the boring parts.. Oh, well.. :-)

That is sooo funny. In my first edit of the response I had actually typed "Snip really cool story"
But then I thought it doesn't make sense to snip a good story, but I didn't want to obfuscate the response with a story I wasn't prepared to respond to yet so I just left it out. And I'll be damned if you didn't devote a whole line on just that fact :-)))) Oh well, I guess I can tell what element you thought was the best part of the post.

Hehe.. You see right through me. :-) But really, I know that the snipped part must be boring for most people. I even said so myself, remember?

The suggestions mentioned so far all seem to have the same problems of language, culture and mass ignorance of their meaning. I will suggest again that we simply agree to understand what each of us is refering to when we use some moniker for "It".
I would much rather be discussing the nature of "It" and what "It" is like; or how we can use understanding "It" to reduce the igorance and suffering of men, than endlessly debating what the name of "It" is. BTW "It" doesn't seem to work very well either; seems a bit irreverent :-(

When I was 6-7 years old I observed words can mean different things to different people. For instance when I would say "shit" or "fuck", (words I used habitually and that had little meaning to me), you would think from people's reactions and how much attention paid, that I had said the most important thing in the world :-)

Poetry

(Does God exist? Will Yoga help me find him?)

Here's a little poem I wrote some years ago about focusing on all the "what isn'ts", "don't wants", "shouldn'ts" in life...

> Endless Possibilities
>
> I don't want to be unhappy I don't want to be sick I don't want pain I don't want to die
>
> In the absence of heat, cold
>
> I don't want to make a mistake, because I don't want to feel humiliation I don't want to be vulnerable because I don't want to lose
>
> In the absence of light, darkness
>
> I don't want to be criticized and I don't want to fail so I don't want to try but I don't want to be ignored
>
> In the absence of God, fear
>
> I don't want to tell the truth, because I don't want to feel shame I don't want my past haunting me and I don't want my future uncertain
>
> So I shiver in the cold and cower in the darkness, paralyzed with fear because In the absence of what I want, all that I don't, come to me in endless possibilities

You could have saved yourself the last paragraph of pity and found those endless possibilities in non-dual awareness.

Fear is a fiction. Duality is a fiction. God is not a fiction. In the absence (can be no real absence, so in an absence of awareness) of God, fear. In other-words not knowing there is God makes one subject to creating all kinds of fears. Decisions based on fictions (e.g. fear) will always be "bad" decisions because they are based on "bad" information. Likewise decisions based on Truth or awareness of What Is (God) will be "good" decisions because they are base on real, reality :-)

This is a problem with that word again. It fooled you in your own poem.

I can't be fooled in my poem :-) My poem is a statement, an utterance, an expression of my internal landscape. In this case I said exactly what I wanted to say, in exactly the way I wanted to say it. The challenge to the reader is to "hear" the poem. Not to analyze, second guess, correct or admonish the poet. Poetry, in my world, is an abbreviated/artistic expression of a thought or feeling. One that is not tied down to rules of language or usage and therefore "manipulated/fooled" or otherwise subject to the caprice of language.

Fear is a duality.

Fear is an anticipation; a fiction based on another fiction, "duality"

Thus clearly,In the absence of courage, fear.

Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is something you have in the presence of fear. Courage is what you have when you are scared but you do whatever, anyway. The absence of fear would be fearless or fearlessness. Courage is noble and is generally based on faith, conviction or principle which dictates your action in a fearful instance. Fearlessness is simply what you have when there's nothing to be afraid of.

*Note that if you had used *void* as a placeholder you would not have been so manipulated.*

I was doing the manipulating not the words :-) Words have no such power, they reside "outside" of me, as it were. Further more the words heard or read "belong" to the reader or listener of the words. They are rarely the same words that were spoken/written by the speaker/writer.

In the absence of void. Silence...uh...nothing...everything...no wait...wha?

Agreed but then there would have been no poem, or the poem would have been different. Perhaps you are trying to make the poem say what you want it to, not what it was saying :-) In that case I would encourage you to create your own poem :-)

the last paragraph of pity

If you hear pity anywhere in that poem then I am afraid you missed it. That's a "tough love" poem!
If that's not what you got let me know what you did hear.

Poem analysis at affordable prices. Call for quotes.

Hey if you have any over-flow business let me know. I would like to share in some of the big money too :-)

Test

(test)

just a test to see if google is working seems to have stalled yesterday morning

That's why God created alt.test ;-)
Did you realize there are over 802806 posts archived by google in alt.test. BTW all about as interesting :-)

Healing/Anger

(Has anybody tried Phoenix Rising?)

Has anybody here tried Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy?

I have not personally tried PRYT, nor do I know anyone who has. I'm sorry I can't be of any help there.
I do however have some experience healing from seemingly intractable "conditions" which defied money and conventional therapies. Perhaps in my studies I have come across something that may be helpful or of interest to you.
Can you say what the nature of the problem ("feedback" your body is providing you) which is causing you concern?

My problems are psychological. I've at various times been diagnosed with clinical depression, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, social anxiety disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and agoraphobia.

I was just considering how I might respond to your post when it occurred to me: That if the Truth will set you free, then it stands to reason that if what you are doing does not set you free; then it must not be True. Like you, all the psychological labels never set me free, so I know they are not True and it sounds like you've "realized" that also.
I have a few pointed suggestions I would like to share with you.

I'm also sick of being told that I need to be in therapy

Thanks for answering my question directly and honestly, I appreciate it. Here are some thoughts.
Regarding "healing yoga". Healing is your nature, it is your substance, it is your birthright and what you are when you stop creating and eliminate the accumulated trash in your "temple". Healing does not come from outside you. You are as capable of learning how to heal yourself as any "practitioner" and infinitely more suited to applying that knowledge to your personal situation. By all means learn from others but don't look to them to "fix" you, that's your job. There are tons of books and other references which are cheap or no cost. If you are looking, you will be led right to them by your connection to the "Universal Energy."

My problems are psychological.I've at various times been

snip list of myriad ways to say they had no idea what was wrong

I spent about 8 years in psychiatric "treatment" that did me more harm than good.

Hopefully in that time you learned that if something isn't working then try something else. I for one, spent much longer then that learning this lesson :-)

Now I'm treating myself through proper diet, nutritional supplements, physical activity and have made a major lifestyle change

Which no doubt was exactly what the wisdom of your body/soul was telling you to do.

(quit a job that literally made me want to put a gun to my head and put two time zones between me and my family),

Ah, the old, "if I want to kill myself over my job," then it's probably not a good job for me lesson. That's a good one :-)

all of which have nearly eliminated by symptoms.

Great to hear! The proof is in the pudding, as they say and a sweet pudding it is :-)

I now wonder if I'm sick at all and not just a sensitive person who's faced some difficult life circumstances.

Welcome to the human race :-) And you know what else? We're all like that. Everyone does the best they can with what they have and when they can do better they will do better.

I'm also sick of being told that I need to be in therapy and want something to brandish at these j*ckoffs who insist I can't be recovering if I'm not in therapy.

I can't recommend any process more effective then a 12 step process. Pick your flavor. It's all about taking personal responsibility. It puts all the power right where it belongs, in yours and your Higher Powers hands. No j*ackoffs allowed :-)

(Sorry, that was little of that anger surfacing.)

Yes I fully understand you. I have had to learn to let go of the resentments I have harbored for people I thought should have been helping me. I realized it was never about what they did or didn't do. It was about my thoughts and feelings and the choices I made. When I decided (forced to was more like it) to take responsibility for my own life and my own health, mental, physical and spiritual, is when I started to heal. Early on I had to learn to forgive others and later I would learn there was actually nothing to forgive in the first place. I create (and have created) all of my own fear and pain :-)
And here is one of the most helpful things I have ever learned (besides that there is God :-) Anger is fear. Always. Anger has no existence apart from fear. No fear; no anger. Anger is an expression of fear which is

externalized and aggressive. It is a self-protection mechanism. It is quite easy to observe in wild animals, dogs, cats, etc. Frighten an animal and it may attack you. The animal equivalent of getting "angry".
If you don't believe me you can check it out for yourself. Next time you feel yourself getting angry (a little angry or irritated would likely be easier) stop and ask yourself, "gee I am getting angry, is there anything right now that I am afraid of loosing or a desire I am afraid I won't obtain, or pain or danger I am afraid I will be made to suffer?" If you can connect, even in a small way, with whatever at that moment you are frightened of, watch what happens to the feeling of anger. It will simply evaporate.
Concerning mental health and things psychiatric. It is my experience that often what passes as some sort of "illness" is more often related to psychic awareness (at some level) of other "planes" of existence which other less sensitive persons are unaware of. These events can be extremely frightening and disorienting. It virtually impossible to find someone you can talk to about them. They can make you feel like you are going "nuts". As you gain balance, health and the self confidence that comes from taking control of your own healing you may wish to learn about and explore some "other-worldly" phenomenon which exist and evaluate some of the events of your life with this new knowledge. Yoga is a very good discipline to study and practice in this regard. Yoga is also wonderful for your health and your soul :-)
A couple of books I highly recommend: Handbook of Higher Consciousness, Ken Keyes How I Found Freedom in an Unfree World, Harry Browne Beyond Success and Failure by Marguerite & Willard Beecher Any Yoga book by Richard Hittlemen. Any book by Paramahansa Yoganada, especially his "Autobiography of a Yogi" and "Man's Eternal Quest". You can get any of these books on amazon for next to nothing :-)

God/Desire

(Where does God come from?)

Hey does anyone know where God came from?

He didn't :-)

If he was already there and time doesn't exist

Bingo, you got it!

then what purpose does the universe serve him?

It doesn't, it's here for us :-)

If creating the universe makes him happier, or greater, or more realised, or more complete as a God or whatever he is (or brings him together more)- then this sugests a linear pattern.

Not only is there no time, but there is also no movement :-)

For example, one minute he's happy, then he's happier. One minute he feels great, then he experiences his greatness even more. Can't you see there's a linear pattern?

I can imagine that clearly. That doesn't mean it exists.

Otherwise it goes round in a circle- and that's pointless. There must be a point!

Why must there be a point? Who decided that?

For example creating the universe can only make him happier or benefit him in some way. If not then what's the bloody point?

Happy is what people want to be. Why in the world would God need that?

Is he someone who's nature it is to do pointless things? If so what's the point of that?

People need to know what is the point (it is a lizard brain thing). Why in the world would God have need for that?

Surely there must be a satisfactory meaningful purpose, hey? Who is God? Is he evolving? Is he moving? Is there a point?

Seems like such a "human" idea, having a point/purpose.

Why doesn't he tell us?

He does/will. Just stop asking and sit quietly and listen :-)

"Who are you?" My understanding is that I am perhaps a part of God, or a part of God who has individualised himself into many.

You are whoever, whatever God is. You are not a "part" of God as if you could be separate. You are as a wave of the ocean, which is whatever the ocean is and which is connected to every bit of the ocean.

Or, I am nothing, just an illusion. Becoming nothing untill there is only God. If this is true then I am thinking that there is no point to my life.

Nothing doesn't make posts to usenet so I would say the illusion part was definitely out.

I might as well take up the occupation of being a tramp or something.

Many a saint and sage has done just that :-) Not because they are/were nothing, but because they are/were everything and were practicing the want of nothing.

So I suppose the main question I have is why did God create us? The answer to this may give me an idea as to who I am?

You are who or whatever God is. You are a divine idea in the Mind of God. An Expression of God. You are Love, Intelligence, Life, Principle, Soul, Spirit among other things :-)

Also God transcends everything including time I guess. And time kills everything. Time is going to murder us all. Physically anyway.

There is no time, there is only God. There is no death, there is only God and God is Life. There is no movement, because there is no distance or separation from/of anything. You guessed it, it's all God :-)

The reason why I'm acting crazy asking these questions is that I am at a stage in my life where major changes are necessary in order for me to happy, physically, mentally and emotionally.

So I take that to mean you are currently not happy and you envision major changes which would make you happy? Well if that's the case perhaps I can save you some effort.
Here's the secret of/about happiness. It's an "inside job". You have right now everything you need to be happy, right now this moment. The only moment there is by the way. You see that is why there is no time because there is only now. Anyway you can not make yourself happy, you can only let yourself be happy.

If there is a divine purpose or "point" to creating happiness, desiring happiness, searching for happiness in my life- I'll do it.

Happiness is the "default" condition of man. You do not create it, you let it. If you remove those things with which you make yourself unhappy, bingo! You are left with your divine birthright, happiness (yogis like to call it bliss).

My conclusion is that you can either be happy in a happy environment. Or you can be happy being unhappy with the certainty of knowing that all unhappiness eventually comes to an end, is trancended like time trancends.

Will Rogers said something like, "I believe a man will be just about as happy as he makes up his mind to be."

So, you can sit around waiting for things to happen or change on there own- even though they not going to. You can even wait for you life to end. Or you can have HUGE desire, which is needed to achieve any results or success in the material world.

Here's the secret to/about unhappiness. It is caused by desires and nothing more or less. Desires are caused by fear. Fear is caused by taking your awareness out of your "now" and projecting with your imagination into a non-existent past or future.

So, no desire, unhappy environment, happy within because you know that all this will come and go.

An environment is not happy or unhappy. Last time I checked it is simply a "concept" we have fabricated to facilitate communication between ourselves :-) But I think you are correct regarding no desire, happy within.

But then if I am waiting for my life to get better or end then there is no purpose for being here at all.

I could come to the same conclusion regarding flowers. I can't see the point but then I like them anyway. And they keep on doing what they do despite my not seeing any point in their existence. And I'm glad they do :-)

But I just have a few more questions.

Well that's the nature of questions. One tends to lead to another :-) Besides that's what Jnanis do they ask questions:-) A note though. I am what's considered an "absolutist". That is I speak in absolute terms (bottom lining it, so to speak). I see absolute values like; there is only God. Therefore only thing that can exist must be in and of and as whatever God is. God is Love, therefore, there is only Love. God has no opposite, so there is no hate, evil, suffering, sickness, death, etc. It's zero or one for me. It exists or it doesn't.
Obviously the appearance of the physical world we live in is "relative". Love/hate, joy/suffering, good/bad, etc.; lots of continually alternating opposites. The physical principles which make up our world are comprised of opposites (yin/yang). But the reality is, all of these things are expressions of an absolute; which is God.
So if what I am saying doesn't make "sense" or seems outlandish or impossible to get a grip on, I understand. It all defies "logic" on the relative side but it is perfectly logical on the absolute side. My goal as a jnani is to discriminate as to the Truth of anything. And Truth is absolute. It is what It is and It is not what It is not. So I am constantly forced into the absolute when discussing what is True. My goal as a communicator is to build a bridge from relative (fiction) to absolute (Truth). This is not easy so I refer you to some books by authors who have done a good job of creating a bridge for me. In the mean time I promise you that the answers I am offering can be known and understood but its not easy. Study, inquiry, and especially meditation are required. In my experience a profound "letting go and letting God" has worked the very best :-)

1.) What's the difference between doing something out of desire, and doing something out of duty? And how do you know the difference?

1. A desire is a "wanting" of/for something. It supposes that I don't already have it or that I "need" it. The fact is, at this very moment (now) I have everything I need to be happy. So to desire something when I already have it, is barking up the wrong tree and a formula for unhappiness. :-(
In order to have a desire I must move my awareness out of my "now" or present moment (the only moment there is) to imagine something I don't have and therefore "need" or "want". Because desire is a "imagining" the thing needed/wanted is in reality non-existent and therefore unobtainable. It is essentially "bad" information on/for which whatever action/decision I make is naturally going to be bad. Nothing can be obtained outside of the present (now) moment because it simply can/does not exist :-)
The only moment I can exist in, is now. The only moment I have, is now. All that I really need to be happy exists right now. It can not exist in an imagined future. It is now or it isn't now. But now is all there is. If I

can bring my awareness fully into the present or "now" moment, all apparent (imagined) movement would stop. Because the reality is there is no movement (there's only God :-). This is what Carlos Castaneda's Don Juan was describing when he talked about a warrior being able to "stop the world."
Ken Keyes, A Handbook to Higher Consciousness, is a great resource for understanding desires, what they mean, how they affect our lives, and how to be free of them.
Also Richard Hittleman's, Yoga: The 8 steps to health and peace, has an outstanding discussion of the futility of the desire/fulfillment cycle and also Karma Yoga.

Isn't loving your family a desire? Isn't wanting to come off drugs (not me by the way) a desire? And I might add a benefit to other people too. Isn't wanting to heal someone of pain when you feel it a desire? Isn't making another person happy a desire? Because it makes you happy.

Any desire, even a "good" one can/will all cause me to suffer depending on the degree of my fear (movement out of now) that I won't/can't/don't have them. Desiring something is the same process whether it is to make some happy or hurt someone. Desires are a fiction; an expression of fear and if actions are taken on them there will be suffering.
Which brings us to karma. When a desire results in action/non-action, this is the area which is the concern of Karma Yoga. The degree to which I am attached to the fruits of my actions, which are based on my desires determines the degree of feedback (joy/sorrow) I will receive from the Universe based on karmic principle or universal law.
2. Duty is what I do when I am grounded in my "now". Love, compassion, honor, service, these are my duties as an expression of God. These duties are what I am and therefore are inherent in everything I do or say as I live my life. They are not separate or special things that I do because it is "my duty". They are what I do because I am whatever God is. If God is compassion then I am compassionate. If God is Truth then I am Truthful. If God is Love, then I am Loving. In this sense a "duty" is different from a desire because a "duty" exists now. A desire and the object of desire are fictions that do not exist.
3. I know the nature of my actions by what motivates me to do them. If I are motivated by some fear, then what I want is a desire. If I am motivated absent fear (or with courage) by following a set of principles (morals, etc), then I am doing my "duty" or what is in my nature to do or be. Note that the actions taken may be the very same in both instances. But it is never the "thing" or action itself which determines the meaning of something but my motivation for doing it. Out of fear = evil. In the absence of fear (or in the presence of courage) = Love.

2.) Also, what's the difference between needing something and desiring something?

I don't need anything. I am whatever, whoever and have whatever God is/has. What could I need? The concept of "need" is again a projection into an imaginary future where I "see" something I don't have now, something I "need" without which, something "bad" will happen sometime in the "future". I have everything I need right now. I need only accept what is (True). All of the things listed below are "mine" right now. The difference between my having them and my "needing" them is the difference between acceptance of the Truth and fear of want. "Needing" something denies the Truth that I already have it and not accepting what is here and now is a formula for suffering and want.
Needing on the relative level has to do with staying alive. Something my body really wants me to do. But the Truth is, there is no death and hence a fear of it is a fiction and can be quite evil, really. Every fear is ultimately a fear of death and every misdeed ever perpetrated was done so out of fear. It is impossible to hurt someone absent fear.

What about our need for soul mates and soul friends? Isn't this desire? What about our desire for friendship? Companionship? Love? Parental Love? Peer support? I'm guessing there is two types of desire, needs and distractions. I understand distractions.

I have found most my life to be filled chasing after distractions. I wasn't getting the message so I was suffering. When I suffer I want it to stop. Unwilling or unable to do the work of living in the Truth, I distract myself with obtaining "desires" instead and then awareness of the suffering stops momentarily.

Only to return a few minutes after I have fulfilled whatever desire I had. Then it's onto the next desire in an endless chasing after relief from suffering. This is what addiction is. Whether its drugs, family, sex, right/wrong, love or hate its all fodder for the desire/fulfillment trap.

Isn't desire shakti energy, what's that?

No. Shakti is part of the energy system which is inherent in your expression here on this plane of existence. It can be conserved/wasted in pursuit of desires or living in the now.

People talk about going within, what about going within other people too, isn't that the same place, isn't that love?

I'm not sure what you are asking. Are you talking about sharing? In my experience what passed for love to me was anything but. It was almost always desire. I have met few people who have any real idea what Love is.

3.) If you're in an environment where there's no love, isn't that your duty to something about it?

There is no such place. God is Love, God is omnipresent, therefore there can be no place where there is no love. Our job (duty if you like ;-) is to recognize it.

Move to another place maybe? In order to do this you need to set a goal, and doesn't that constitute a desire?

Move? Where ever I go there I am. If I can't see the Love here then how can I see it elsewhere? If I have a desire to be in a place where there is Love, when in fact I am already in such a place, then that desire would be based on fear and want and to attempt to fulfill it will be painful and very unsatisfying (to say the least).

What if you're in a situation where you can't meditate or do spiritual practices ir yoga, surely it is your duty to work for your freedom.

Freedom is a mental construct. It is an idea, a feeling. It is not a reality. Like the poet said, "Stone walls do not a prison make, Nor iron bars a cage, Minds innocent and quiet take That for an hermitage."
There is no place where I can not practice yoga. Yoga is defined as "union" with God. I think of it as bringing my awareness in line with my divine nature. Yoga is also defined as the "science" or "discipline" I use to create/increase my awareness of God. I can practice Hatha yoga in a hospital bed, so long as I am still breathing. I can practice Karma yoga, so long as I am willing to let go of the fruits of any action I take or don't and I can always be of service to someone. I can practice Jnana yoga so long as I have electrons moving around in my brain and can create thought. I can practice Bhakti yoga so long as I appreciate and give thanks to God. And so forth.

But I call this desire. Perhaps it is divine will I don't know. But then what's the difference?

There are those who say that the desire to reunite (in awareness) with God is the only real desire. All other desires stem from this one. I believe this, absolutely.
Divine will is your heart's desire. I suggest anything written my Emmett Fox (see essay below).

I also understand that one persons way maybe different from my way or anyone elses. So what works for me maybe unique. Just some thoughts there. Or another brain dump :) There you go.

Off to the library with you then :-)

[Your Heart's Desire, Emmett Fox] Your Heart's Desire is the Voice of God and that Voice must be obeyed sooner or later.

Hate
(Preachers of Hate in the USA)

With the possible exception of the "Hari Aum" at the end, I'd say your post was off topic for alt.yoga :-)
Oh and BTW there is no hate; there is only God...

> *Aw c'mon, Jared. I hate it when you get all starry-eyed. If you are going to say that there is no hate, then by the same logic you will have to say that there is no love. Get your feet on the ground, man.*

:-)))))))))))) Oh! :-)))))))))))) Don :-)))))) Please :-)))))))))))) Stop... You're killin me :-)))))))))
I appreciate you looking out for me :-) I just spoke to that very idea in the "where's God" thread. Politics not withstanding I stand by my word! :-)))))))))))))))) oops, just bumped me head on the ceiling :-)

Noise
(Why on earth...)

> *would somebody NOT turn off their cell phone when it starts to ring during class?*

One of the things I have learned in yoga is:
I am in charge of learning and practicing the development of equanimity.
It is not any person, place or thing's responsibility not to disturb me, it is my responsibility not to allow myself to be disturbed.
Often I find it difficult to mind my own business and allow other's to mind theirs. However my life is much more pleasant when I do :-)

> *back to my mat. 5 min later it rang AGAIN. i leaped again, turned it off this time (with its little turn-off song). no one said a word. they all laughed about it after class. coincidence? ah but there are no coincidences. i don't know who called me. was it YOU? trying to make your point?*

That really is funny :-)

> *yes she didn't say so, but she has already a siddhi... Who is next?*
>
> *Jared, perhaps?*
>
> *Will you ever be disturbed by any sound??????*

I am not sure if this inquiry was directed at me but it's interesting and reminds me of some of the work I have done along these lines.
First noise exercise concerns my ex-wife. Well actually it starts with a barking dog. Some years ago I used to live next door to someone who had a large dog, who barked incessantly. At that time I was challenged with my physical and emotional reaction to the barking. It was driving me mad :-) I was contemplating putting an end to it "with extreme prejudice", as Captain Willard (Apocalypse Now) might say. Anyway this was not consistent with me or yama/niyama so I had to find another way to deal with it. First I let go of the idea that I could do anything about it that was consistent with my nature and moral disposition. After accepting I couldn't change the situation, I then just let go and became absorbed in the barking, just letting it flow through me without trying to resist it. Just listening and listening. Next I practiced letting go of any attention I was paying the barking. At some point I didn't even notice the noise anymore and if I did it didn't upset me.
So some years later when my ex was at the height of her angry/abusive expression towards me I had a similar challenge. This time there was not only incessant noise but also a scathing and diabolically vicious meaning attached to the noise. I had good reason to feel victimized but that didn't help. In fact it could only make things uglier. I could do nothing to change this women and I could not leave. So what could I do? Well, I started to liken the loud and incessant venom issuing from my wife's mouth to the barking of a dog. In a short time I could listen to it as if it were any other environmental sound without becoming personally involved or upset. This allowed me to continue to stay in the relationship for a year or two longer (in order to protect the kids).

More recently I had been staying in the back room of a laundromat. General laundry noise is not that bad for someone practiced at dealing with noisy environments. However there was particular dryer a couple of feet from where I slept which had a horrific bearing knock. Unlike the lulling sound of 60 cycle hum from all the motors, pulleys, belts, this bearing knock was really loud and intermittent, yet unrelenting. This provided a real challenge. Using essentially the same process I had in the past I was able to master my reaction to the noise enough to sleep soundly through it.

The same goes for meditation. Ever notice how noisy your heart and the arteries in you temple are? Enough to drive a person nuts :-) In the early stages of learning to deal with external noise during meditation the process is essentially the same as described above. It starts with accepting the noise, not trying to resist it, witnessing it and then letting it go or withdrawing the senses from it. Yogananda describes this process thoroughly in "the lessons". It is possible to withdraw all the senses from noise, hot/cold, pain, etc. But the process starts with acceptance.

The idea of being in control of whether I am upset by some external stimulus, be it human, animal or physical, is an uplifting one. I remember when I thought I was subject to the whims of an ugly, capricious and sometimes deliberately malicious environment (both external and internal). None of the noise (or evil) has gone out of life, I just don't have to go where I used to with it. Likewise I don't have to get angry (frightened) at inconsiderate drivers, idiotic people or barking dogs :-)

...

What I didn't mention was that the more I was able to withdraw myself from reacting to my wife's energy the more angry (and eventually) violent she became. At first I had thought that if I would not participate in any angry exchanges that she would simply stop for lack of a partner to bounce her anger off of. Not true, she instead reacted by turning up the "volume" of the attacks.

...

At a different time in my life I have occupied an emotional/psychic state wherein I became "numb" to fear and pain. This is resistance in the extreme. My body, mind and soul became over-pressed and shut down. This is one of the main symptoms of PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder). While it is a natural and normal reaction to chronically threatening environments, it is not a "healthy" one. This state of "numbness" is not to be confused for the deliberate and conscious withdrawal of the senses and emotions from reacting to negative influence.

...

One state will leave me less alive and dead to my feelings and the other allows me the power of accepting who and what I am and being secure and confident in that knowledge. One will provoke more fear and naturally draw frightened, angry and abusive energy to me, creating more fear and resistance. The other ever reduces my fear states allowing me to see the reality of myself and others. One state leads to hatred and the other to compassion.

2006

January

Breathing

(Shallow Breathing)

All my life I have never had much of a lung capacity because of tight muscles and tight cartilage surrounding the diaphram/ lungs/ribcage which keeps the chest from expanding properly. Is there a yoga exercise to overcome this and allow the chest and diaphram structure to loosen and expand? Is there a name for this condition or is it all caused by tension?

Gee, I hope your life hasn't been to long. This sounds like a very uncomfortable condition. If it is a specific medical condition I am not aware of what it might be called. Hard to say with the information provided. I can say that breathing high in the chest is very common.
I used to be a chest breather. Problem is I can only access 20-30% of my lung capacity there.
So one of the very best things I have ever done is to learn and then retrain myself to breath into my abdomen. I believe it was Hittleman's "Introduction to Yoga", from which I learned the basic technique. Then a year or two of "awareness" of where and how I was breathing and it became second nature. I have to admit I have a bit of "Buddha belly". Some would call it a "beer belly" but really it is mostly because I am in the habit of relaxing the abdomen and allowing it to stick out. This has been a difficult habit to foster and I still find myself "sucking" in my gut and holding tension there. Afraid of what people might think of me. A deeply rooted, subconscious fear. The indoctrination I received when I was young to stand up straight, suck in you belly, push out your chest, was very effective I guess. Even though it served to make me quite unhealthy for a long time :-(Breathing "low" also requires wearing loose cloths that do not restrict.
I am certain that a google search on "yogic breathing", "abdominal breathing", "proper breathing", etc will net you lot's of information and guides for learning and practicing "natural breathing". There are also a number of hatha poses specifically open the rib cage and promote deep breathing. I will defer to the practiced hatha yogis in the group to give you more specific advise. Any Hittleman book will explain these as should any good hatha yoga book. I am certain a brief search will also identify these. In general everything about hatha practice if conducive to deeper, slower breathing.

Flexibility

(A question about flexibility)

I have a question regarding flexibility. Is it normal to feel stiff first thing in the morning?

For myself, I have noticed a correlation between mineral intake and stiffness. If I am feeling stiff in the morning I am want to look at my salt intake. I can determine if I am out of balance by doing a short fast. Generally within a day or so I will loosen up significantly. After juice fasting for a couple of weeks I will be positively loosy-goosy :-) A good fast also clears up myriad of my aches, pains, and discomforts. Meditation becomes a great deal easier and deeper to boot!

Germs

(I STILL Have a cold)

I agree that fasting would be beneficial! In case of illness, it always will be.
Do a search on the concept of "healing crisis". Basically this is when one starts to cleanse the body, mind & spirit all kinds of "bad" things might arise as a result of poisons being cleared from the effected parts. Also if you suspect an "infection" of some sort then I would suggest something that has really helped me over the years. That is to "accept" whatever organism is "taking up residence" in your body at the moment.

Invite them in, welcome them, bless them and nurture them with as much sincerity as you can muster (even if only in hollow words spoken out loud). In other words do not resist but embrace. I think you may be pleasantly surprised at how quickly and gently the "germs" finish their business and move on :-)

Rape

(Rape, karma, Yoga.)

How can such unimaginable suffering at the hands of another human being be put down to Karma?

Paul, Welcome to the human race :-) I feel for you buddy :-(

VERY ANGRY!

I have often been very angry. I have come to understand that anger is not a distinct emotion but rather an expression of fear. No fear, no anger. If I am angry, I am afraid of something. If I am angry I have forfeited my equanimity. If I am angry I am not accepting responsibility for something. If I am angry, I am afraid. If I am afraid I am turning my back on God.

Just heard a news story about three men charged with raping a three year old girl.

I have heard stories like this. I have felt great anger and hatred in response. Thankfully I am a little older and wiser. I have had many great teachers! Not the least of which has been pain. Anger for me is painful and frustrating.
I don't like feeling angry anymore. There was a time when I thought I would like to be able to feel really, really angry. I admired people who could freely express their anger. People who could get angry and aggressive and punish others when they wanted to. But this righteous and powerful anger always eluded me. I have never done it well and when I did it was unsatisfying and I always regretted it. When I realized anger was really fear then my interest in subjecting others to my "wrath" seemed inappropriate. I understood that it was my fear creating the anger and dealing with my fear was my problem and no one else's. This is also about the time I started to make a point of using "I" statements and eschewing the use of "you" statements (its been a hard habit to break :-)

I have a three year old daughter.

Me too. Three of them now. I have come to understand how the media panders to my fears as a human and especially as a father. I know longer respect the majority of information put forth by the media. I know it's intent is to inflame and manipulate my passion, not to ease it. Rarely is anything I hear or see in the media of real importance to me. I know this from study and I know this from personal experience.

I was nearly sick when I heard it. My initial reaction when I heard the story was that a death penalty would be too lenient for them.

I know the feeling. It stems from my believing that my internal emotional environment can be modified by my manipulating the environment external to me. e.g.. I feel frightened so I hurt or kill the person about whom I am creating my fear and the fear goes away. So as long as everyone and everything in the whole universe conforms to my comfort level then I will be free from fear :-) Wow, what a trap I was in! What a formula for insanity I had bought into. I could never control everyone and everything. But there had to be a way to get rid of the fear!
I used to think the death penalty was a good idea. Thankfully I have grown out of the childish ideas of deterrence, retribution and righteous judgment. I have seen and experienced to much hate and discontent; to much heartache, sorrow, mistakes and fear to believe I have the right to judge another. I believe humans are essentially good and do the best they can with what they have, wherever they are at the time.

I am so wound up I would be happy to sanction and even carry out barbaric acts of torture on these sick bastards prior to killing them.

I have at one time thought like this also. However what I could never really settle, was the idea that these kind of acts were the very ones I was angry (frightened) about in the first place. I think this is where I realized what the word hypocrite really meant. It helped when I reminded myself that my anger was really my fear. That I could address my fear in a responsible and moral way without needing to change/punish others. That my fear was my responsibility, that I could learn to let it go if I choose. That I could suspend judgment of others, not hurt others and be free of the ugly feeling of anger, if I choose.

I am trying follow a Yogic path, how the fuck can any of us do this when our world contains people capable of raping a> three year old?

I have learned that my yogic path is my own. I do the work. I do the study. I meditate, exercise, eat well, etc. It is no one else's responsibility or interest to do this for me. As a result I reap the rewards or punishments consistent with my effort and intent. I remind myself constantly that I am one with all in this world. That I have the choice to express evil or good as I choose. I have been evil and I have been good. I like good better. However I find good to be far more difficult and far more effort and with much less encouragement from my environment than evil. I find the path of good is not an easy or comfortable one nor has it proved to be a popular one.

No matter how close to union I get, there will always be sick and evil people wilfully hurting others.

I couldn't agree more :-) I can only make sure I am not one of them. This is why I follow a yogic path. This is why I strive for awareness of my existence in God. This is why I must work to let go of all fear, hatred and anger. This is my responsibility and my choice.

I struggle to accept that this was the girl's Karma.

When I struggle to accept the operation of Principal in the Universe it is because I have yet to understand the meaning of that Principal. I know there is only God and God is only good. So when I see and fear evil it is because I have let my imagination take me from the reality of Now, where there is only God, into a non-existent world where there is no God. If I don't understand what it means I have more work to do!

I also struggle to accept that the bastards who did this may never have been caught and, karmicaly speaking, that it just the universe doing it's merry dance.

I am very imaginative. I can spin myself into a tissy-fit over just about any seed of information at all. In-fact the less information the better. And that is how the media/government likes it. I am learning to watch my imagination like a cat watches a mouse. Otherwise it will spin off into some musing and I will create fear where none should exist :-) I am learning to jealously guard what goes into my mind/soul. I believe the computer notion is: Garbage in; garbage out. I don't watch TV and CNN and other news sources are on my list of things to let go of. Along with wheat, meat, salt, sugar, sex and alcohol. :-) It seems odd to me but the more self-control (body/mind) I develop the freer I become.

How can such unimaginable suffering at the hands of another human being be put down to Karma?

It's taken a long bit of study and consideration of this question but I know the answer to this question. Unfortunately I can not simply hand it to another person. We must all struggle with this question and if we do we shall get the answer. I promise.

When the fuck does the malicious individual take responsibly?

I take responsibility now. There is no other time. I take responsibility for myself. There is no other person I can take responsibility for. I accept that I am made in the image of God; that I am whatever God is and then I try my best to act like it :-) This is why I practice yoga.

...

I have/do struggle with the same feelings and thoughts. The illusion of good and evil is strong and my resistance to the Truth formidable. The Universe has provided me a most powerful ally. It's called pain.

When I struggle it hurts. When I resist it hurts. I don't see this as a bad thing (I don't however enjoy it :-) I see this as a compelling form of "feed back", akin to putting my hand on a hot stove. When I lie to myself, just like when I lie to others, I am in for some "reminding" (some would call it punishment) of the Truth. Rather then fear the pain and attempt to avoid the pain I am learning to listen to and respond to the pain. I have had varying degrees of success but the trend has been ever upward. As my consciousness rises there is a corresponding easing of the feedback. The more quickly I sort out and accept the Truth the less need for "feedback". I was once so frightened and so clueless the best I could do is shut down all of my feelings. I was like the fighter pilots who purposefully turn off the various noisy alarms which provide them in-flight information because they can't handle it all. And just like them I have "crashed" a few times. This is where I have learned about "evil" and what it means and how it happens and why. Interestingly, as a balancing reaction to the meltdown of my emotional self/soul I developed an astute intellectual facility. While an intellect devoid of heart and soul is an abomination capable of serious evil, it can and in my case did, save me, allowing me find my way back to the Center and reveal my hidden nature. My return to self was not an intellectual event, rather a faithful one and yet it was my mind which kept up the struggle, dragging my wounded body and soul along with it until I was finally able to surrender to the Truth. Along with this surrender came freedom, knowledge, my passions and feelings (oh and more pain :-) This is why I follow the path of a Jnani. The path of relentlessly seeking the Truth through use of the intellect. Jnana yoga is only a part of my yogic path but it is the path I entered on and the one I identify with and know most about.

As my post was primarily about Karma/responsibility do you know of any web links that can help me grasp the concept of Karma, because as you see, I am struggling.

Yogananda, "Man's Eternal Quest". Ken Keyes, "The Handbook For Higher Consciousness" Harry Browne, "How I Found Freedom in an Unfree World", Henry and Marguerite Beecher, "Beyond Success and Failure". Emmett Fox, "Power Through Constructive Thinking".
I often confuse my ability to formulate and ask a question with my ability to understand and hear the answer. I am often like the child who gets into a class and immediately starts asking questions one would only expect the answer to after having completed the class (or indeed a degree program:-). Yes a good question and yes the point of the class, but no I don't yet have the capacity to understand the answer because I haven't finished the class! I have had to learn patience and accept on faith that I will be given the answer when I am ready to hear it. In the meantime I keep asking and keep working towards the answer. I am fortunate in that when I surrendered my fear I learned the answer to every question I have ever had or will ever have. Unfortunately this knowledge is not transferable in any intellectual sense. It can be put forward and described but it can not be given. It can only be accepted by the person seeking the knowledge. I wish I had a dime for every-time I have heard, seen or been told the Truth and had if fly right over my head :-(On the flip side of that idea is knowing the Truth and then trying to convey it to someone else. Believe me this can be a very lonely place sometimes. But I can understand it and a can choose to accept it or I can resist it and get my "feedback". I really am, in a very real way, responsible for all the pain I feel :-)

If the principal of Karma is akin to Newton's "equal and opposite reaction"

It is not. Principle has no opposite.

what would qualify as an opposite to the unimaginable nightmare that child experienced? And the unimaginable evil and malice mustered within the perpetrators?

There is only two states that can motivate my actions or effect my perception; one is fear and the other is the absence of fear. Fear is a negative anticipation; an imagining. It is essentially "bad" information. When I act on it I am acting on false information. My decisions and their consequences with naturally be "bad". This is where evil comes from. This is what evil is. No matter how well reasoned my decision, if it based on fear it will be a bad decision and myself and others will suffer the consequences.

OK, I know that the Karma might not resolve itself on the physical plane but I am finding I need to make a huge leap of faith once more....or maybe just let go of my intellectual instincts.

Karma is not as many suppose, a law of retribution or justice. Although it will have that effect. It is a description of the movement of actions which are taken with desire. Actions/non-actions taken with fear or desire (same thing) will reverberate through the mayic universe until they are played out (or surrendered). Karma is feedback, it is reflection, it is the shadow cast by the Truth.

> *I know that this is what I should be doing to progress on my > spiritual journey,but it sure is tricky. There always seems to be as many questions as there are answers and the answers always seem to be "let it go".*

This very letting go is what I fear most. Letting go of the illusion of life.

> *I know you may say it serves no purpose to dwell on fights of fantasy and I do understand why, but bear with me.*

I have found imagination to be one of the most effective tools there is for dealing with things which would be nearly impossible or horrifically immoral to do in reality. Imagination has allowed me to look at myself and process ideas in ways I wouldn't otherwise be able to. Imagination is the only reason I don't live in a cave. Imagination is what allows me to consider the possibility that the evil and ugliness I see inside and outside of me may not real after all. Imagination is what allows me to consider, even if for a moment, that it may be possible that there is only God. That God is Love and that there is only Love.

> *Someone, be it a judge, a policeman, a lawyer, or a coroner HAS to deal with this and face these horrors head on.*

If my reaction to such things is any indication, I'm afraid the opposite is what happens most often :-(I think that most people resist the evil and eventually it deadens them. I think there is a real possibility of losing one's humanity in positions like these.

> *These are the people who you and I entrust to ensure this does not happen to "our" children.*

I try not to abdicate my responsibility to the state (or to anyone else). I don't think they can or will do a better job then me at protecting my children. I admit they do a better job or building roads and airports but teaching and protecting, meh...

> *I can't just back away and say this doesn't concern me.*

I couldn't either. Who could?

> *I have to take responsibility to ensure that my child isn't next.*

I have realized that the environment that effects me in not some random happenstance. As within, so without as they say. My choice.

> *Meditating will do nothing to prevent that!*

I have studied martial arts very seriously, for a long time and I have come to the opposite conclusion. Meditation is the single most powerful marshal art (and life) technique there is. Meditation is the antidote for fear. There is nothing you can do which you can't do better and more effectively if you are not afraid. Especially fighting and protecting!

> *It will only serve in deluding me that this individual crime is irrelevant to me, it is not.*

I am only deluded if I choose to be. No cloud floats into my life and "deludes" me. Not lie, action, technique, believe, person, place, thing can or will delude me without my willing acceptance.

> *We must *all* take responsibility for our society.*

I can not take responsibility for something which does not exist. A "society" after all is only a convenient construct or idea I use to describe the effect of numerous individuals making many individual decisions and actions. I can only take responsibility for myself and in a physical sense responsibility for others like my wife and kids.

> *Not everyone will take up a spiritual path. So we have to collectively and consciously deter malicedeterrent.*

I agree. However rather then spending my time and energy trying to stop others from doing what they want, I think I am more useful and effective a deterrent by modeling alternative life choices and living as moral and loving a life as I can manage. As long as I am holding onto fear I can only express fear. Retribution, punishment, controlling, oppressing, unilateral preemptive violence, etc, these are all I can offer in a state of fear. Love, compassion, kindness, honesty; these are not states of being they are something I do or not do. And I can not do them if I am afraid.

> *Sure I can a walk away from an aggressor without a second thought,*

I couldn't. I try to be very careful about what I tell myself, about myself. I have in the past been the biggest liar of all in my life.

> *but am I not partially responsible for that girls suffering by merely shaking my head and changing channels?*

I find it incredibly difficult to mind my own business and take responsibility for my own life and circumstances. I've always felt a desire to help others. But as my sponsor once said to me, "Jared you can't give away what you don't have." I am not responsible for all the karma of everyone in the Universe and I do them and me a disservice to feel that I am, because it paralyses and depresses me and limits my ability to give the gifts I do have and the building of others.
...
Yes sir, I agree. And that would be a very compassionate thing to do. Can you imagine the price these people will pay for their actions? Killing them may be more compassionate still. I really couldn't say, not having any of the facts.
What I can say is that I can react to these people in fear or I can react in Love. Any decision or action I take with regards to them may be the same in either case but the consequences will certainly be different for me and them.
I really don't think the important issue is these unknown and possibly depraved individuals and whatever someone thinks they did or did not do. I think the issue or need to be addressed is another human's feeling of inconsolable anger. I know this to be soul poison of the highest order. This is why I think this is an important discussion for alt.yoga and it is why I responded the way I did.

> *I think I can offer a perspective. When I was 16 I was ambushed at school, an event that led me here as prescribed therapy to deal with the physical reaction part of PTSD.*

Thanks for sharing this painful aspect of your life. The fact that you can do this speaks volumes to me. As I read your post I thought, that sometimes the receiver of violence has a greater challenge letting go of their quilt and shame because they feel (and others support it) that they are right/justified/victims. In fact the very same reasoning the perpetrators use to justify their abuse. Each is tortured; both victim and victimizer. However I think it is often easier for the perpetrator to gain release because they are "punished" by social sanctions and/or guilt; for the guilty redemption is encouraged. For the victim redemption is out of question and they are not encouraged or even allowed to accept culpability.

> *But I don't need to find any of them to be at peace. I can recover as much as I care to pursue*

It's good to hear that you feel you are in control of your status as "victim"

> *I agree completely.*

Phew! :-)

The public is never told how powerfully PTSD affects the mind and how devastating it is to one's self-image.

PTSD is in fact, something we do to ourselves. I know this from personal experience.

The logical conclusion I came to was that there was something fundamentally wrong with me; that I was somehow defective. I learned the ugly truth early on that "cry, and you cry alone."

And so there was and you were fortunate to realize it. At the other end of this realization is freedom.

You tread on pretty hot ground

Yes I am aware of that. More then a few of my posts have made this point. However in this case, because you shared a personal story I was a couple of days in consideration of how I might answer without appearing unsympathetic or downright vicious. I'm glad you understood, although I suspected you would from your post. Otherwise I may not have broached the subject at all.

with your observation that victim culpability can be important.

I believe that for any victim there is nothing else more important. One can not let go of something that one won't admit they are doing to themselves. I believe that the most difficult part of a victim's journey to freedom is the forgiveness of self. That in fact no real forgiveness of the perpetrator can happen until first we forgive ourselves. This is also central to pursuit of genuine yoga (unity). When we strive to see ourselves (God) in all others no matter who, what or why.

I don't go there with others, but I had to see how the way I was led me to tragedy. I am no longer timid or withdrawn - both powerful factors in how I was selected. How are we to learn if we won't look?

Absolutely! My experience has been that victims are treated as if something quite outside them descended on and brutalized them quite without reason and for which they are helpless to avoid. This of course is a most frightening prospect. One that is sure to keep a person terrified for the rest of their lives. One we can do nothing about. Unfortunately this is far from the Truth. As such many victims are sentenced to a life of fear, anguish and endless replaying of the scene, searching for a release from the pain. Nasty stuff really. But it keeps the therapists in work, the state justified in its ever escalating manipulation of people's fear in order to control peoples actions and money, and the entertainment, media and drug companies (including the narco traffickers) who profit by keeping us all working hard to we can keep ourselves stupefied.

Too many people are shocked to look at themselves as victims, because of just the stigma you mention. I didn't like it at first, but then found that sort of squeamishness got in my path of recovery.

It's like lancing a boil. It hurts to hurt someone (including ourselves) but if you love and care about them, sometimes you just have to do it. It's a "tuff love" thing :-)

I am blessed with a wife who has stuck with me through 18 bad years before I entered therapy, 4 hard years in therapy and a dozen better years since then. With her by my side I can afford to be shunned, the way

Yes, I agree. You are blessed indeed :-)

I was in a therapy group early in the process. I was asked "what happened" in a context that demanded details, and after I told the story there was half a minute of silence. Everybody seemed to recover okay, but the next meeting nobody - even the leader - would talk to me or make eye contact.

The Truth can have this effect on some people. It can also work the other way. I remember once recounting some of my "transgressions" in a very matter-of-fact fashion, to a young perpetrator I was paired with in a therapeutic environment. When I had finished, I looked expectantly to him to share his story. What issued from his mouth, in an amazingly relaxed and unashamed tone, was a tail of abuse at the hands of his father that would shock the most hardened heart. A short while later after this young man shared this story with the rest of the community, the therapist came to me and said, "I've been working with this young man for a year and never heard any of this story. What did you say to him to get him to divulge this?". I simple told him the Truth about myself (the only Truth I am qualified to speak) and in doing so he felt free to tell me the Truth. And I believe from that moment he was free to move forward from abuse which had already manifested in serious criminal charges at the age of 15.

Frankly, I doubt they could have helped me move forward anyway.

Wise man :-)

Yoga

(different types of yoga)

I know there are different types of yoga and I was wondering if anyone has a favorite or prefers to practice one over the others.

I would suggest you obtain a copy of Richard Hilltleman's, "Yoga: The 8 steps to health and peace." Absolutely the best book for a general introduction to yoga I have ever laid eyes on. This one book alone will take you farther into yoga then most of the people on this group have ever been :-)
Get it (I think it's a dollar + shipping) read it and make an informed decision for yourself.

That's a good suggestion, Jared, and one I would agree with. One might also suggest the combination of Hittleman's 28-Day Exercise Plan plus his book on Yoga Meditation. That's how I started, and 39 years later I'm still doing yoga.

Stress

(I want to try yoga for stress control (and to improve my flexibility while I'm at it... I'm a 50+ yr old). I'm looking for recommendations about style, approach, instructor or book... whatever you have.)

Richard Hittleman's Introduction to Yoga. Spend 5 minutes and a $.01+$3.50 shipping. Buy the book; read it.This will give you a fantastic start. Not only will you know and understand the relationship between yoga and stress reduction. But you will also know how to do it by yourself in your own space. This book is all you need to start a life-long love and practice of yoga, starting with Hatha.

Is this book really the best place to start a beginner?

Stu, I understand and appreciate your point. In this case I wouldn't feel a need to respond much further, except there is a "newbie" who has asked a question and then a couple of "oldies" disputing each others advice. Unfortunately I think this has a tendency to confuse and confound the newcomer so I will explain in a little more depth the reasoning behind my "advice".

>I have that book sitting in front of me. It is old and has yellowed pages. It costs a $1 and seems to be published in 1969. On the cover there is a guy doing Halasana with his back so terribly rounded. No doubt if this guy continued his practice since 1969 he has a sever and painful back condition today.

It's not likely if a person practiced hatha as set out by Hittleman for 36 years that they would continue to make any such mistake long enough to hurt themselves. I imagine any damage we could do to ourselves in hatha yoga would happen relatively quickly in our pursuit. Likely a result of impatience and compulsive perfectionism or "modern" merchandising/marketing fads (ala Bikram et al.)

As I flip through the age old photos of models attempting different poses I am struck by the lack of balance and alignment they have in their poses. Is this > book really the best place to start a beginner?

Yes, absolutely :-) That's why I suggested it. Although now that I consider it a bit more I think I might have suggested Hittleman's "Be Young with Yoga". I believe it was an earlier book.
In my thinking, it is not nearly so important how well one performs the poses, as it is how and with what spirit and attention one performs them. I favor Hittleman over any other author for his ability to impart the essential nature of yoga (and not just hatha) for a beginning western reader. I don't think technique is anywhere near as important as a firm grounding/understanding of what yoga is and how it is best approached.

I wish we could post pictures on the usenet, I would scan in some of them to illustrate my point.

But of course you can post pictures to usenet. You would want to post them to one of the alt.binaries groups that would be appropriate. You would also need a dedicated usenet program to post and to view them because google and many of the portals do not carry binary groups. Email me if you like and I can post them to a website and provide a link or I can post them to usenet.

I know you really like this book, but it is dated.

You should see the smile on my face :-) You're so funny! If 35 years old is dated I can't imagine what we would need to call the Yoga Sutras, Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Gheranda Samhita,Shiva Samhita, Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads etc.

Hittleman has done a terrific job of promoting yoga in this country.

I agree!

However since 1969 with have been blessed with an abundance of Indians who have come to the West with direct knowledge of yoga as passed down for many generations.

I agree! And I understand Hittleman studied under a number of these in India. That a teacher is of one culture or nationality means little to me personally. All things being equal, I don't think yoga taught by an Indian is any more significant then yoga taught be a westerner. If anything, I think the Indians have a more difficult time connecting to the western "mind-set".

In addition hi-bred forms of yoga have emerged as Eastern practices have melded with modern knowledge of biomechanics, neurology, psychology, physiology and related fields.

I personally believe that far more was known about these areas 1000 years ago then is known now. Although not as commonly or as wide spread. After all there is nothing new under the sun.

As a result there are many more books out there that express methods to practice yoga in a far safer form. Forms that truly support health and well-being.

Stu I'm having a hard time believing we are talking about the same book here :-(

I do not mean this as a direct criticism of you.

So would that be an "indirect" criticism? :-)

I have a plethora of yoga books in my library. Hittleman's book was very important to me in its day.

So why wouldn't it be now for someone else? At the time and place you were (beginner perhaps?) Hittleman was important. I'd be really interested to know why he was important to you. I'm always interested to hear about the process. Also this is very important to those less experienced; to hear what those farther down the path have experienced (especially the mistakes! :-)

Another book from the era was Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's book, "The Science of Being, the Art of Living". But I would be hard pressed to recommend it today, as there are so many excellent sources these days on meditation.

I agree. Especially Hittleman's :-)

Above all, books on yoga have only so much value. As with a musical instrument, learning yoga is best done through a teacher.

In my experience by far the most effective teachers for me have been books. I think we are all different in this regard. For those who wish to or do well to learn from books I still know no better then Hittleman for the self-directed individual or the person who does not have access to a superior teacher.

One must have a good understanding of the fundamentals before they go off on their own.

For those of us inclined to learn from books, an understanding of fundamentals is absolutely essential. Any instruction (written or otherwise) which falls short of providing a solid foundation will ring hollow and quickly fall down under intensive/serious consideration/practice.

I found it for $2.25 at the local used bookstore :-)

Bravo! Anything by Hittleman will be helpful to get you started on the right track. In fact if you like (or connect well with) Hittleman you will find that he can take you quite deeply into yoga. He certainly took me there. When you have more experience and are familiar with the ideas and language around hatha yoga (and yoga in general) then you no doubt will benefit from reading other works. Who knows you may soon be back here poo pooing Hittleman :-) I look forward to it.

February

Stone

(No Tension, Enjoy Life, if you know this...)

This is the magic of a natural stone found in forest of Amarkantak.

Putting a stone on my head for 15 minutes a day sounds like a great idea. Could you suggest a local variety (southern California/Arizona) I might be able to pick up in my garden? I am afraid the expense and stress of traveling to India or the anxiety inherent in trying to find an extra $100 to mail for one might tip me over the edge :-(
Some years ago there was a very popular stone called a "pet rock". Would one of those work? I might be able to find one on ebay. Although it would probably cost and arm and a leg.

Truth

(Second hand information)

IMO: Yoga is not about accepting or rejecting the testamony of somebody else. Yoga is about discovering the truth for YOURSELF!

Hmmm, more cross-posting from alt.discussion.parrot?

yes... and it looks like there is a contest who shows that have memorized yoga sutras of pantajali or something of buddha or all the "yoga tradition" by G. Feuerstein will win a prize...

...

Hey, what happened to ahimsa? You're one of the people I look to for inspiration around here!

Eh, er... Paul?...Paul?... Is that you?... Nice to hear from ya. Bin a long time...
Tar-nation, you bin readin them thar books agin, boy!... Well don't cha know...
Wa-him-say... you ask? Err, I'm afeared I don't get wha yaurr ask'kin.
Mite'cha rephrase yer quesion please. N' dab-nabit, speak up, don't cha know...
:-}}

I am trying to live it as well. Sure you didn't have a go at the blokes mum or anything, but that was the first time I have read anything derogatory from you.

That seems pretty important to me. Which is why I asked for clarification of your comment. Didn't sound like a completely flippant comment.
Me, I'd like to have a discussion concerning ahimsa and yama/niyama. IMO, not well understood ideas at all. And even more difficult to translate to something you can reasonably expect to attain to in real life.

*Although it was merely a sarcastic comment, It was *new* for you.*

That's what I get for not including a smiley face after my comment. It came out sounding sarcastic instead of simply silly.
his is hardly the first time I have commented on some group members lack of "original" comment. I am on about this all the time really. However as you have observed I am not usually critical. I generally will encourage a writer to post their own comments if the subject interests me. In this case I thought I would make my point in jest.

No big deal, I was really just saying "hi".

Thanks I appreciate your thought :-) Even feels like years have been lifted from my life so now I can go back to sounding like a middle-aged man instead of a really old one.

my ideia is not to quote, but to inspire...

Because I was interested in what you had to say below I followed the links above and quickly reviewed them. They look very much like a lot of other citations w/commentary of the yoga sutras. If I was studying them I might be interested in exploring them further. I have, however at this time I am not. I am though interested in your personal synthesis; your experience; your process. These things I find affirming, helpful and inspiring. And these things we can have a conversation about, like two regular people. We can ask and answer questions, relate stories, share successes and failures, etc. If I am honest and contain my comments to things I know about, which is me and my experience strength and hope and you (or anyone in general) do the same, then there will never be cause for contention, argument or resentment. Comparison and contrast, yes. These are interesting for all concerned and of immeasurable value; the very cornerstone of the scientific method (I see yoga as a science for discovering Truth) and a way for us to measure our relationship to our goal.

IMO: yamas and nyamas are something that comes naturally....after enlightment...

I would say the value of yamas and nyamas naturally become clear upon enlightenment. However it has been my experience that they are anything but natural or easy to live with :-(Hence the purpose of my pursuit of yoga. Perhaps at some moment of cosmic consciousness (transcendence) yama/nyama become automatic or more likely irrelevant.

I always see those guys (Patanjali included) as someone that live some kind of artificial lives. Living inside an ashram will never be life, as it is. I would never be compared with them... i live in the middle of the jungle...fighting for survival....

I agree with you and I think I understand your point but there are some things which are not clear to me. Are you using the term jungle, literally as in a place with lots of plants, animals and bugs? Or are you using the word jungle figuratively as in life is a jungle; urban jungle, etc.
Are you in a war zone or are your references to war and fighting hypothetical?

lol... jungle = figuratively, urban war= not a "bloody war" , hypothetical or verbal war or paper war... (i work in finance....)

although, my ancestors from 2 centurys ago fought real bloody wars....the last one was a napolionic one...

suppose you were inside something like this. would you fight for the truth and honesty or would you be a "yes,man.." (the fake ahimsa, i was talking about?)

I understand. Thanks for the 411. (that's the telephone number for information here in the states)
I once managed a corporate finance department for a brokerage firm. The firm is now closed and the owner is currently cooling his heels in prison for the better part of the next decade. Me? No one interviewed me in any investigation or asked me to testify. That should tell you something. No one on either side wanted me to open my mouth because I always tell the truth :-)
On the other hand I don't have a job nor do I have millions stashed, waiting for me in the Caymans :-(Life's full of trades, eh? From the point of view of the soul I think I got the better deal...
I believe that yama/niyama cannot be successfully applied if understood in terms of reacting to an exterior environment. Yama/niyama is intended to sculpt an individual's interior/internal landscape. It is always a personal decision with force and effect on the individual making it. Yama/niyama is never meant for public consumption, presentation or approval. That is simply hypocrisy. It can not matter what is happening on the outside of a person practicing yama/niyama, what is meaningful is what is happening inside. It in never they or them we are fighting (as in war, figuratively or literally) it is I, me, myself (or Yoga) with whom I am in conflict. It was this realization that lead me to drop the study and practice of kung fu and take up yoga. Even though this same process can be mastered in martial arts as well, I just am not that big on causing pain and injury to others so my disposition is more appropriate to yoga :-)

March

Nude Yoga

(N Magazine article on nude yoga)

This is a subject that's close to my heart, since I run a Yahoo! online group on the subject of nude yoga, which now has 4,400 members.

It's nice to hear that the yoga group is doing so well! What is it there is to discuss about nude yoga? Around here if 4 people to have a rational discussion its exceptional, no less 4400 :-)

It's mainly about organizing groups in people's areas. It's not really different from other yoga groups, except that we prefer the freedom inherent in doing yoga unclothed.

For me there is a significant amount of fear, body shame, vulnerability and sexual affect connected with a cloths off state. I feel like one of the fundamental ways in which I hide myself from others is with cloths. I have long thought that from a jnanic perspective, that cloths off yoga or cloths off in general could be helpful if used as a positive exercise/affirmation for realizing my inherent oneness with others. Of course even with cloths off I can still hide behind a defense of differences; male/female, color, age/ weight, condition, attraction/repulsion, etc.
I need ever remind myself that the Truth is, I am not my cloths, nor my body; I am one with and whatever God is and could be nothing else :-)

Heat

(and the purpose of yoga is...)

...to build heat. that is according to the instructor in the class i was in on friday night. i was shocked to hear her say it

"Hatha yoga is a refuge for all those who are scorched by the fires. To those who practice yoga, hatha yoga is like the tortoise that supports the world." - Hatha Yoga Pradipika

It is fascinating (and most gratifying) to watch the sophistication of your yogic discrimination grow :-) This to me is very jnanic like development.
Please, please, please tell me you have read Richard Hittleman's "Yoga: the 8 Steps to Health and Peace." If not, just say the word and I will mail you my personal copy within the hour...

i do have the book but i havent read it through yet. i started, but i found it very dry and god-based and you know how that sits with me. i guess its time to pull it out and see if it appeals to me more now. i

love the quote - hatha yoga is a refuge for all those who are scorched by the fires. perfect! hatha is my cool oasis, not something i do as a penance. i'm encouraged by your perception of my development. it sometimes feels to me like i'm spinning my wheels.

It's interesting to me that you seem to have an intuitive sense of the correct practice of hatha yoga. The hatha yoga pradipika suggests avoiding things like to much heat, heavy physical labor, fasting and other austerities. The original without commentary makes for a quick and interesting (if incomprehensible :-) read.
Below is a quote by B K S Iyengar from a forward he wrote for a translation and commentary of the Hatha Yoga Pradipika.

> Svatmarama says that practice has to be done without thinking of its fruits, but with steadfast attention, living a chaste life and moderation of food. One should avoid "bad company, proximity to fire, sexual relations, long trips, cold baths in the early morning, fasting, and heavy physical work". (1.61). In 1.66 he says that yoga cannot be experienced "by wearing yoga garments, or by conversation about yoga, but only through tireless practice". Earlier, in 1:16, he says: "Success depends on a cheerful disposition, perseverance, courage, self-knowledge, unshakable faith in the word of the guru and the avoidance of all superfluous company." And Patanjali says, "faith, vigour, sharp memory, absorption and total awareness are the key to success".

If you can not find an external teacher, perhaps you would be willing to trust yourself to teach yourself. Hittleman is very supportive of the idea of one's internal guide (guru). His books are specifically written to those who are self motivated and wish to learn a correct approach to the study and practice of yoga by themselves with a book as a reference and guide. While I think that "Yoga: the 8 steps" is the most complete of his books, it does contain a ton of information/perspective in a short space. It also addresses other aspects of yoga in addition to hatha. Hittleman's books, "Introduction to Yoga" and "Be Young with Yoga" are excellent self study guides (not so dry :-) for Hatha and are readily available on Amazon for mere pennies.

Jared, if you are not careful, you will scare Nancy off!

Over the years, I've gotten the impression that Nancy doesn't scare easy :-)

We are not all called to be brahmacharis (celibate).

I don't recall mentioning it. I don't remember Hittleman ever discussing it.
A very interesting subject though. One I have found few really know anything about. I agree with you that celibacy is not in the least required to make excellent progress in yoga. I also believe it is not for everyone and that when and if it is, the individual will know it. Then the challenge becomes finding a source of good information concerning the how, what, why and when of it. My understanding is that traditionally (eastern) it is encouraged in the pre-sexually active aspirant being guided in a traditional/formal setting; then in the post-householder (later) years.
I have personally maintained what I refer to as stage I celibacy (no sex with others) for a long time. At the beginning it was situational and later would become a preference (subject to choice and/or change). I have found that a huge percentage of the garbage (hate, discontent, hassle, expense, pretension, health issues, conflict) in my life disappeared after I took sex out of the equation of my life and relationships. Fact is my life is much more pleasant, less complicated and easier to manage for my having eliminated the use of energy, resources, and ethical compromises required to find, maintain and then clean up after, romantic relationships.
I have not attained to what I call level II celibacy (no sexual expression in thought, word or deed). This what I believe most people think of when the word celibacy is mentioned. However the tone of my life and the practice of level 1 celibacy creates a tendency towards and eventual movement to Level 2. The goal of

course is to reach what I call level III celibacy, which is a transcendence of any idea or illusion of sex distinction: or in other words to live as a fully realized human being.

wellllllllll... if celebacy is part of yoga i would put it on the shelf with the other parts of yoga that i don't accept... i also enjoy long trips and bad company sometimes. i do aim for cheerful disposition, perserverance and courage. i'm working on self-knowledge.

Please... If you were my daughter, I'd be smiling with fatherly pride :-)

Recovery

(Back to the basics)

Ive found for beginners such as myself it is best to stick to simple wisdom.

Arron, How the f*ck are you? Where have you been? And welcome back!
Now down to business... :-) Yes we all have to learn this. It's called KISS, Keep It Simple Stupid :-)

I am not greater than Krishna, Jesus, Buddha, Allah, >Yaweh....God as He is understood.

Nor are you less... You are what ever God is ...

Why the hell was I trying all these complex breathing and mantras? So my Soul could become enlightened of course.

Because you want what we all want; to be reunited in awareness of who and what we are. To be rid of the presentation, lies and illusions that suck the life out of us everyday.

The great yogis say a Teacher is required for all this to perfect oneself. The Teacher will come when time is right.

When the student is ready, the teacher will appear... Bank on it :-)

I'm sticking to simple stuff from now on. Like just trying to relax without drugs!

Ha! May be simple... but it's not easy!

Yeah, I've been taken down to earth.

I would call it God's Grace. In my experience there is no greater blessing. Hold it; live it; explore it; give it...

In my dreams I guess its okay to fly on the astral plane but thats just fun:)

Not just fun, it's OK; its who and what you are... It's your birthright; your nature; it's fundamental to your very existence.

Here on earth I need to work on the basic niyamas and yamas.

Oh yes, you do. So do I ...

Life is short but not soo bad that I have to kill myself with such extremes of practices that I don't even really know all that well.

Fact is you don't have to do anything. You are already there. You have always been there. All that you want, you already have. The only challenge you have is accepting what is real; true; here and now...

Simplifying helps in math, maybe it will help with my problems in life as well?

I encourage you study, learn, practice jnana yoga. In this form of yoga a yogi relentlessly pursues the Truth. A jnani questions everything... A jnani chases every question until it is answered beyond question. Nothing deters the jnani in their inquiry, "who am I ?". "Who, what, why is God?" "Why, Why, Why?" It can be known. A jnani will know it or die trying.
Welcome back shit bird! Keep coming back :-)

I'm doing much better. I went on a year drug bindge somehow thinking I could get closer to God. Now I am still in the process of recovery. glad to be back,

...

You have stated that "" "Nor are you less... You are what ever God is ..." ""

This is not correct! we can only be a piece of GOD, a piece never is the WHOLE!

How come you make such a mistake? Incredible!

Puma my friend, there are no mistakes. There is no "right" or "wrong", there is only God! :-)
My statement was qualitative not quantitative... I was talking about the nature of our existence not the amount of our existence.
Imagine a drop of water in the ocean. The drop of water (out of countless others) is made up of whatever the ocean is made up of. Where does the drop begin? Where does it end. This drop of water touches every other drop of water in the ocean. The drop is not the whole ocean but it is whatever the ocean is and because it is not distinct from any other part of the ocean, one could say it is the ocean. This is our relationship to God. We are whatever God is. There is no distinction, no separation. We are connected to and undifferentiated from the whole. You could say we are God. Only in our imagination does it appear we are separate or distinct. This is the nature of maya.
Taking the water analogy a bit farther, consider this. The water in the ocean churns and collides and is violently active at times. It is at all times fully compliant with the laws operating the manifest universe. That is it is subject to the laws of continually alternating opposites. Yet if we could reduce ourselves to the smallest possible vantage point we would see that the entire ocean, along with everything else that exists would in fact be one and the same. Part of a all encompassing ocean where there is no opposite, only the ideal sense of God or the Force, or Allah, or the Void or Mind or Cosmic Consciousness or a Unified Field or Brahman or Jehovah or whatever/however one wishes to try and name what is un-namable or describe what is un-describable. So you see the Universe is Absolute, not relative or containing opposites. It is what I think of as Binary. 0 or 1. It exists or it doesn't. It's True or it is not. So all that exists is True and all that does not is not. There is no opposite of God or Truth. These are one in the same and the only Existence there is.
But how does this translate to the fear and violence we see everyday? Why would God do or allow all this suffering and unhappiness? God doesn't do or not do anything. God is. To do or change or to allow something implies that there is time and space. That something can be made different from something else and that there is time in which to make it different. Because all is One; there is no distinction or difference in any thing. It is all the same stuff so there can be no change from one thing to another. Also there is no time, there is only Now, so there can be no change because from one moment to another does not exist. It is only an idea we have constructed so we can find our car keys when we need to go to work :-)
Of course this all sounds like metaphysical mumbo jumbo and so it is the limit of our "mind". Our "mind" can not serve us in understanding what I am talking about. At least not yet. It seems the quantum physicists are working on it :-) In the mean time meditation, intuition and/or experience enable us to see the un-seeable. Imagine how a drop of water might try to see itself as distinct from the rest of the ocean. It could not. Hence the old saying about not being able to see the forest from the trees :-) In order to "see" something there must be some kind of contrast. If everything is the same there is no contrast therefore no distinction therefore no image of difference. In order for there to be life as we know it, there must be contrast, distinction, the appearance of separation. That means there must be war and peace, right and wrong, good and bad, life and death. But these things are reflections or appearances only because in Truth, they are all made of the same Thing. The only Thing.
Up to this point I have been talking about things on the absolute level but even at the relative (appearance) level these things are all the same. War and peace, right and wrong, good and bad, life and death; these things can not (and do not) exist apart from one another. Like the opposite ends of a pencil; they are the same pencil! I was walking along the street in downtown San Diego the other day when I looked down at the sidewalk and there was an inscription by Mahatma Gandhi. It said "you must be the change you

wish to see in the world". The conflict we see outside of ourselves is in reality the conflict we see inside ourselves. When we practice yama/niyama or any other moral system we must have hate, discontent, violence and evil for our study/practice to be meaningful. So I must bless the criminal because without him/me I could not be a good, kind, loving, wise individual could I? One of the ways to see this clearly is to "be" these things. Once there, it is easy to see that nothing has changed that I am still the same person. That there is in fact no difference between the "good" me and the "bad" me. Then my only issue becomes to know who the "real" me is and let myself "be" who I am, with out regard for the illusions. Can you guess where this is heading?
There is only God. I know this in theory/concept/ideal but I am also blessed to know it by experience. Of course this can only be meaningful to me. I can describe it but I can not give it. So with the knowledge that there is only God, then logically I can only be whatever God is. So I learn about the nature of God and I study, train and practice those qualities or attributes which are consistent with what I know (or suppose I know) about God. Emmet Fox would say that God is Life, Truth, Intelligence, Spirit, Soul, Principal and Love. So using this criteria I try to learn to practice my life in alignment with these "qualities". If they are True, if they exist then living my life according to them will work. If they are fictions, ideals, pie in ski bullshit, then they will not work. By the way they do work. They are however not easy. Nor are people lining up to tell me what a great job I am doing and how I am correct and why what I know is the Truth. In any case, only what exists can be True. Any idea I have or decision I make that is based on anything but the Truth will have a unhappy outcome because it is based on "bad" information. Conversely any decision based on "good" information or what is true will have a better chance of a happy outcome.
Oh well. You may choose to see evil all around you and I choose to see God all around me. We are both looking at the same thing but in my experience one works better then the other :-)

Exultation

(Aaron, AKA blacknblue, My Friend)

You are God... I am God... All is God... You are Love, I am Love, God is Love You are Intelligence, I am Intelligence, God is intelligence You are Life, I am Life, God is Life You are Soul, I am Soul, God is Soul You are Spirit, I am Spirit, God is Spirit You are Principle, I am Principle, God is Principle You are Truth, I am Truth, God is Truth...
Wherever we go; there we are; and there is God :-)
Please read, "A Stranger in a Strange Land", Robert A. Heinlein Please read, "The Prophet", Kahlil Gibran Please watch the film, "Whale Rider"
The pain I feel; the pain I would exact; it's all in my imagination. I have created it all. There is no reality in it... But the fear and pain I have felt/manifested/expressed has brought me directly to God. This is why I practice yoga. Yoga is an accepting of my responsibility to control my fear and an acknowledgment of my duty to acquire my own freedom from the lies and bullshit...
And yes, Aaron you have been right all along; drugs and alcohol do bring us closer to God. The only problem is when you and I become sober the appearance of separation reasserts itself. And so we end up chasing after that connection to God, over and over again. We become addicts. We suffer one of the highest prices one can pay; and all we want is God. After a while the question become whether our body will survive our thirst to find Him...
You (and I) have never done anything wrong. You have never made a mistake. You are not stupid. You have never done or said or acted in any way that has not been consistent with your longing to know the truth of who you are.
There is no death. Should you or I end our present existence by destroying our vehicles, we will again be given the chance to "grow up" and acknowledge and accept the Truth of our existence. That we are whatever God is...

April

Newbie

(Newbie)

I just started Bikram Yoga. I am a newbie to that and to yoga in general.

By all means hang out for a while and see what you think. I am certain questions will arise :-)
However please realize that this place can be a bit spooky for the uninitiated (and even for some of us regulars :-). Here you will find the gamut from religious to atheist; physical to mental; and everything in between. In the end you are the only judge. So jump right in and have fun.
Oh, concerning Bikram; let's just say that he is not the way I would prefer to approach the whole subject. I lean way more towards the like of Richard Hittleman; a more "classic" approach. But you see I am one who believes yoga has a divine purpose in addition to the physical and mental benefits it is sure to impart. If it works for you and you are having fun and feeling good, then by all means, carry on. But if at some point you are uncomfortable or feeling an emptiness or longing for something else then, explore, explore and explore. After all, you will find that yoga is indeed a "science" of the most ardent type.

Oops

(Rebuttal of NRC report on Transcendental Meditation, yoga, etc)

Before I even begin, let me say I appreciate your participation in alt.yoga over the years that I have been around :-)
Now...
Would you be so kind as to "bottom line" your posting for me? What do you think? What do you feel? How does this coincide or not, with what you know or have experienced or haven't?
I am interested in why you posted this information. I am not the least interested in what some umpty-squat number of fuck-wits has to say about whatever convoluted bullshit they make a living at spewing.
I study and practice yoga. If you wish anything you say to me in alt.yoga to be useful or meaningful, then it must have relevance to my practice. How can I improve it... How can I understand or adopt some technique, idea or other...
I don't see the word yoga mentioned anywhere (and I didn't read it all) in the posted material. Are you confusing yoga for meditation? Yoga is a goal and it is also a path. Meditation is a technique which may or may not be used on a yogic path.
BTW, I am fairly close with someone who was a certified (by the man) a teacher of TM circa 1970. His life is not anything that I aspire to or want, although he insists that he is far advanced of me. (In all fairness, I don't think there is anyone on the planet who would aspire to my life either :-) Likewise your posts, over the years, while quite sophisticated, don't attract me. Can you explain just what it is you have to offer to me (or others) studying yoga?
Do you know anything about God? Are you an atheist?
I realize that this post may seem provocative and it is intended to be. But it is not meant to be negative. But then you only have my word for that...
...
I found myself struggling to respond in earnest to your reply and on reflection I decided I owe you an apology.
Lawson, I stepped out of the bounds of propriety with my response to your post. I jumped uninvited into your conversation; in which I have little interest nor any positive input to provide and essentially introduced another subject. The discussion was related to an aspect of TM and I introduced the subject of trying to be helpful to others who are looking into or studying yoga. I was frustrated and resentful that the material was not being discussed in a way I felt was helpful to me. My apologies and I appreciate your being a good sport and answering what must have appeared an attack, with something other then a FOAD :-)

You must have been around for a LONG time...

I've been around alt.yoga for about 3 years.

I posted the information because it supports my beliefs.

I gathered as much. However I still don't know what your beliefs are. The original post was made to several groups. No doubt its nature is more often understood and discussed in one of these. Just as hatha yoga is the most often referred to yoga technique here in alt.yoga.

Most people find the translation of Sanskrit texts about yoga to be quite convoluted.

I suppose that is true. I rarely quote it personally. I don't find it to be very helpful taken out of the context of a thorough study. Its also a major reason why I feel someone's personal process/integration, of a subject is so valuable to others. Something I have observed/experienced time and again in twelve step groups.

*The NRC study refuted the utility of all forms of meditation, yoga, etc. David Orm-Johnson was a TM researcher for 30 years so naturally his writings are about the NRC study and T*M.

OK, I'll take your word for it.

Anyone who insists that they are far advanced of someone else is a fool. I've been practicing TM for 32+ years and I have all sorts of problems (more than when I began thanks to some environmental factors in my life or so I keep telling myself).

Now that is inspiring and helpful. The idea that a person can pursue a thing for many years and still be faced with ever more problems :-) That's not one you'll hear often in the placating fairy-tales that pass for inspirational/spiritual writing.

"Do you know anything about God?" Do you? How do you know?

Yes I do. Direct experience.

"Are you an atheist?" Devout agnostic.

As I once was. With a hardcore scientist for dad and a fragile humanist for a mom, I came to the conclusion at the ripe old age of 10 that there couldn't possibly be a God. Because no God I could imagine could be as stupid as to create the one true religion I was taught. It would take 30 years of fear, cynicism, and struggling before I would realize my problem was with religion; not God. And that only after divine intervention :-)

Suffering

(Mathematics is the root cause of human suffering!)

Chris, Chris, Chris, what in the world are we going to do with you atheists (can't believe I just said that). Especially one as gifted as you :-)
With regards to your assertions. I am reminded of Woody's Law; Everything that is True is not necessarily fact and everything that is fact is not necessarily True.
In the case of this post. Your arguments are persuasive. It contains elements of fact. I wouldn't even argue with you. I think you are right.
Except for one little detail; All suffering is a personal choice...

So when a drunk driver hits your car, killing your wife and children, and leaving you burned over 90% of your body, that is your "personal choice." Interesting theory!

It was my choice to turn my attention away from the road to pay attention to my wife who was yelling at me and calling me names. Otherwise I could have easily avoided the drunk. But this doesn't speak to suffering this only addresses culpability.
Fact is when I awoke in the ER, I was in a great deal of pain but I was happy to be alive. You see I need to finish the last chapter of a book I am to publish soon. A book I hope will inspire and teach an entire planet. A book I believe will redirect the spirit of humanity away from fear and towards expression of transcendent understanding and the very peace of the race mind.

My wife? Can't say I am unhappy. She was cheating on me and about to divorce me. Her intention was to destroy everything I have worked for all my life and turn it into cash so her and her lover could abandon me and the kids and retire to the Greek isles.
The kids? Well what can I say. The purpose of this drive was to leave my daughter in a hospice so she could be supported properly as she dies of a slow, agonizing and very terminal disease. My son? Well we fully expected to be making the same trip for him in the coming months.
Suffering? No. Quite the opposite. Relieved! Grateful! I'd be happy to endure twice the pain for the same results :-)
Puma, Puma, Puma,
What in the world are we going to do with all you beginning yogis :-)

> *Shame on youu! A real and honest person was Sidarta Goutama... He never lied...Atheist are honest people, please do not forget this!So being an Atheist means a great meaning...*

I couldn't agree with you more :-)
Relax my friend, slowly... slowly... easy does it... You obviously don't have a clue what Jared thinks of atheists. A google search "omjaroo+atheists" might be instructive. Or you might ask :-)
Buddha? Jesus Christ. Any number of saints and sages? Yes, they knew what they were talking about. Unfortunately, very few of us who read or report on what they said have a clue what they were saying. When we know what they were saying we will be a Buddha, a Christ. Until then most of us are simply lost souls searching for our home :-)

> *All the religious belief systems should be flushed down the toilet and life should be observed and understood directly, not through the distorted lens of dusty old religions.*

Organized religions give atheists something to oppose so they can define themselves. No organized religions; no atheists. It's a symbiotic relationship :-)
BTW did you intend to respond to any of the other comments which differed with the ideas presented in your original post?

Goodbye

(Adios (Spanish literally, to God or go with God) English; Good-bye...)

It would appear its time,
I am going to join the ranks of the other top posters here at alt.yoga. I am going to withdraw...
If anyone is interested in me or who I am, you can try www.omjaroo.com.
I am not gone, I am only moving :-) For my friends here I hope we can stay in touch. My email is still good and should be for the foreseeable future.
With Love and gratitude for you all,

> *Tis a sad day*

Ouch... That was never my intention :-(I suppose I could simply have stopped posting and eventually slipped quietly from the group memory. Yeah right... I have always have been a believer in stating my intentions if they might effect someone else in any way. I'm also fond of the Emile Zola quote, " I am an artist... I am here to live out loud."
alt.yoga has never been a very chatty group. And I can't say for certain but I have the distinct impression that in the weeks I have been gone there is more posting going on. Could it possibly be, that the sum total of my efforts in posting, is to put a chill on the discussion around here? Be that as it may, if I even have to ask myself the question, I suppose it's time to try something else :-)
I have a number of serious personal issues to deal with. I am not able to give my undivided attention to reading, writing and following up on posts. Hopefully when things settle down I can devote time and effort to omjaroo.com. I think I could have some fun with that. But even that will take awhile before I can get to it.

No doubt I will follow the group for a time before I am able to wean myself :-) Obviously if anything important happens I will drop into alt.yoga and make an announcement.
So nothing to be sad about. Like I said I'm not really going anywhere, I am just sort of moving. But I know what you mean. I myself miss Mike D, Hari Har, seeking, JD and some of the other old guard. If you ever need/want to contact me I would be delighted to hear from you.

But if you must move along, well, then you must, to the regret of everyone. I'll visit your site, of course.

700E, Hi, good to hear from you. And thank you for the kind words.
Like I said to Paul, I doubt I will be able to stay away to long; at least at first. My issue at the moment is situational and it will be difficult if not impossible for me to do anything but read and perhaps dash off a fast response to a post. In a couple of months, if things settle down, I will reevaluate my participation. I long to do more dialoging then generally happens here and I thought a website might be the way to do that. We will see, what we will see. (Hey maybe Howdy Dave, can translate that into Latin for us :-)

Model

(missing the point. totally.)

such a person is a fool. such a person has an attitude problem. such a person missed the point and trying to teach others to miss it too.

And the reason a person would do this is...?
Fear! Nothing more nor less.
Now when a child is afraid do we condemn them? Chastise them? Criticize them? Not unless we are equally (or more) frightened. No, a mature, responsible and compassionate person will do all they can to comfort, and provide the child with tools for facing the fear with courage and eventually teach the skills required to let go of the fear :-)

should we encourage these people's vanities by indulging their self-pity?

Of course I agree with you.
I try to understand, empathize and illuminate, not indulge self-pity. As far as curing; certainly not my (your) job; that task belongs to the power within each of us.
But can you see? The hypochondriac really is sick, but in a manner different then the symptoms they present. They are sick with fear. Should we not have compassion for the frightened? After all in Truth, we and they are one.
The tools I was referring to are those of Truth: honesty, integrity, responsibility, forthrightness. In my experience the best way to teach or impart these tools is to model them :-)

Breathing

(Breathing Question...)

*I understand that chest breathing alone does not fill the lungs completely, but shouldn't I use a combination of chest *and* abdominal breathing to maximize the air intake into my lungs?*

I think the following should address your question most directly :-)
BTW, I type the text of books and materials which I feel are important. This has two advantages. One, my typing improves. Two, (more importantly) my comprehension and assimilation of the material improves. Please be on the look out and patient with mistakes :-)
From INTRODUCTION TO YOGA, Richard Hittleman, 1969 (Note: Below are the text without benefit of the photos from the book.)
Available for a couple of dollars, shipped.
Note: For the western reader (or anyone else for that matter) Concerning yoga, I highly recommend anything written by Richard Hittleman from beginning to expert.

Complete Breath (Pranayama)

OBJECTIVE OF THE COMPLETE BREATH: To completely fill the lungs with air in a slow, controlled, rhythmic manner.

The element that sustains life is known in the Yogic system as prana; This may be translated as "life-force." The primary source of life-force is found in the air; therefore, how we breathe has a more immediate and pronounced effect on our existence that any other physical function! The relationship between our health and the manner in which we are breathing is so direct that it is frequently overlooked in its obviousness. If you are lacking in vitality, if your circulation or complexion is poor, if you are tense, nervous, easily upset and subject to frequent headaches, if your thinking is negative and your mind continually disturbed, the Yogi will suggest that the first function to be examined is your breathing. Partial, shallow, erratic or mouth breathing are a few of the faulty types of respiration that may be responsible for more ills than we can enumerate.

The Yogis, perhaps more than any other group, have been involved in a painstakingly detailed investigation of both the various types of breathing that are possible and the effects that these have had on the entire organism. This investigation has extended over many centuries and the findings are so fascination and significant that they much be very carefully considered by everyone who is interested no only in maintaining a high level of hearth but is awakening and utilizing certain powerful forces that lie dormant within the organism.

The aspect of these findings that will concern us in this book is: The more complete and rhythmic the breathing, the more life-force that will be available to the individual.I am well aware from my experience with many thousands of Yoga that increased life-force can make an enormous difference in every aspect of one's existence. Therefore, the Complete Breath is offered at this point so that the reader may, within a very short period of time, experience for himself that wonderful sense of exhilaration and well-being that can result fore this technique. Also, it is important to note that in more advance Yoga complete breathing and breath control play a vital role.

It is erroneous to equate that phrase "complete breathing" with "deep breathing." You can breath "deeply" and still not fill the lings completely. Because complete breathing, in a rhythmic fashion, is of such great importance, we must carefully learn and practice the method of its execution.

IMPORTANT All breathing is very slow and very quiet. Practice to make the movements flow into one another. Eyes can be closed.

PRACTICE INFORMATION Perform 5 times. Pact ice whenever necessary to revitalize, relieve tension and headaches, clear the mind. Also helps to decrease the cigarette habit.

Note: This exercise is best accomplished in three stages: abdomen, chest and shoulders.

Sit in any one of the cross-legged postures you have found comfortable. Exercise the abdominal muscles so as to gain some control of them. First, use these muscles to distend (push out) the abdomen, then contract. Practice these movements until the distensions and the contractions are definite.

Now begin a slow exhalation through your nose (all breathing is done through the nose); simultaneously contract your abdomen until the lings are completely emptied.

Begin a very slow inhalation and simultaneously distend the abdomen (this allows the air to enter the lower are of the lings).

Continue the slow inhalation. Contract the abdomen slightly and simultaneously expand your chest as much as possible.

Continue the slow inhalation. Slowly raise your shoulders as high as possible. The movement allows the air to enter the high area of the lungs. Retain the breath with your shoulders raised for a count of 5.

Very slowly execute a deep exhalation. Simultaneously allow you body to relax; contract the abdomen and without pause, repeat the three movements.

BTW, there a version of the Complete Breath, while standing, which is also very good, however it is described in another book.

I can say in all honesty that after having read and practiced these instructions over the years that the improvements in my mind, body and overall health would fill a book! Learning to breath naturally (the way we did when we were infants and before we adopted the bad habits modeled in our environment) has been the single biggest (ala: "silver bullet") positive physical effect in my entire life (52 years worth). In my opinion, if a person learns and develops that habit of using a "complete breath", then they are 80% there, physically and metaphysically.
Jared (who is supposed to be signing off :-)

i was hoping no one would draw attention to the fact that you were "supposed to be signing off", that way you wouldn't realize you were still here and would continue posting. shhh

Shhh
(I did it!!)

Anyway, very excited and wanted to share...

How exciting to hear. I am very happy for you! Welcome to the tip of the iceberg. It only gets better from here! I'm glad and thank you!
Jared (who really, really, is signing off, I promise; any day now :-)

shh

OK, mum's the word ... I did so enjoy Claire's post. Reminds me of some of yours :-) shh

What's all the shusshin' about???

to understand Nancy's reference you'll have to check out the adios thread and then over to the breathing question thread and then back to this one.
Now shhh, I'm trying to get out (or in, now I'm not sure :-) of here...

howdy dave, i was shusshing jared, not claire. hoping if he stops saying he should be signing off he won't notice himself and will keep posting here.

June
Rajneesh
(Osho, Bhagwan Rajneesh, and the Lost Truth)

Just imagine where you might be now if you had just taken what he gave you and ran ...
I've taken everything the Bhagwan had to give. It doesn't matter in the least that he crashed and burned; that was his path, not mine. For me it does not in the least diminish the value of his work or his gift, to me or to the world.
I truly feel bad that someone of your intelligence and caring is so stuck in identifying your significance in terms of the failings of others. But I have supreme confidence that someday you will get the point. Some of us just have to go kicking and screaming. I know, I'm like that.

Run where?

Inside to the Self of course. Where else is there to go? If I ever learned anything from the Bhagwan, it was to be aware of the limitations of teachers and not to rely on teachers but to go inward and seek the Truth from self.

He described for me in vivid detail everything I wanted to know about the inner worlds and he had the power of immense being to back up his words.

If this statement is true, what a wonderful gift he gave you. You could have taken it and used it to explore yourself and the Universe within. In fact, it seems from what you write that you did just that. That this man turned out to be in your eyes a liar and a cheat would not change the nature of his gift at that moment. The past simply can not be changed.

I went to India in 1970 to find the truth, not to find lies. I could have stayed at home and watched Christian preachers on TV if all I wanted was falsehood.

Yes you could have stayed home and watched Christian preachers on TV and found the Truth, had that been what you were really looking for. I think you found what you were looking for in India, but I don't think it was the Truth. I think it was more liars and cheats and scoundrel's (oh my! :-).
[snip reference to some group I have absolutely no knowledge of or association with]

It is past time to wake up and take responsibility for your actions and the actions of the great guru, You don't complain about the people who want to lie and hide the truth. You only complain about me and those who want the truth to come out so future generations do not repeat the same mistakes.

I'm not really sure, but if the above statements are addressed to me personally, I have to wonder if you have ever really read what I've said to you in my posts. I don't recall ever complaining about you. I have generally always agreed with what you write. I appreciate the time/effort you expend and your unique synthesis of the subjects you write on. I think your posts are important. My posts have never been meant to debate your position.
My posts have always been a personal response to you. They address what I see as an externalizing of your experience in Truth seeking. People who view themselves (and others) as victims will often blame some person, place or thing for what was their own ignorance, childish dependency or laziness (fear). As long as one seeks out others to blame to attempt to change some condition of their internal environment, one can never be in control of ones life, can never take personal responsibility. Can not learn, can not move on, can not accept, can not forgive, can not express compassion, can not know the Truth and can not be free. Encouraging others do the same for "their protection", while very human, hardly seems helpful. With the exception of this post you have never really responded to a post I have made except in the briefest terms (and which always missed what I was saying). I've felt because of your apparent sincerity and hard work, it was important to try to connect. However, if you find my comments irritating or deserving of dismissal, I will certainly not bother you with them :-)
...
Puma, While my comment was directed at Chris, I could have said the same thing to you :-)
For one thing I am not attacking Chris, so he needs no defense from me. And even if I was attacking, Chris is obviously a bright and capable chap, and no doubt able to defend himself.

I love the words of Christ Calder.

As do I, and I've said so more than once :-)

What he is doing is a TASK on the path of TRUTH.

I would hope so. But it feels more to me like Mr. Calder (and you as well) is on a "crusade". And history has shown us that crusades are rarely balanced and rarely about the actual Truth. But about one person or (more often) one groups vision of what is true.

He is showing honestly how he felt when he was young... And how he is now.

I agree with you and I think its great.

In this world there is no place for BHAGAVANS,or any FAKE GURU.

Ah, here is where we part ways in our (and all religious/moral rightists) understanding. I believe there is absolutely a place for fake gurus and every other kind of sinner. God does not make mistakes and there are no unneeded parts in the engine of the Universe. In recovery circles it is said, "that everyone is good for something. Even if is to provide an example of what not to do!" Otherwise the idea of free choice and personal responsibility would have to go right out the window :-)

If we are on the path of TRUTH, truth should be seen and shown as it is...

Couldn't agree with you more.

If you like OSHO, that means you have the same values as he had... If I like Christ I have the same values as he has...This is the TRUTH. No one can cover it.

It does not make sense to me, to say that because I like someone, I have the same values as they do. Values are an internal matter. No one defines my values for me, in any terms or with any reference which exists outside of me. My values are my decision on a day to day, moment to moment basis. I may like someone in part because we share some of the same values. I may like them and share little or none of the same values. I may intensely dislike someone with whom I share a great many values.

Hate

(World Invocation Day: An Invitation to Men and Women of Goodwill (June 11th))

I hate these sort of ordered DAYS as fathers day, mothers day lovers day and now this world invocation day...

What's up Puma, are you OK?

Thanks Jared for your consideration. I am definitely O.K.

Good to hear it :-) I become concerned when a yogi uses the word, "hate" :-(

Hate is natural as much as love is...Same mechanism according to KUNDALINI... A yogi will not seperate feelings as one is good and other is not ,or all of our feelings should be known by a great mindfullnes...Feelings should be openly expressed,honesty dictates this to us...We should not cover up our feelings, If we do, this means we are not honest...

Of course :-) and I try to live as Ken Keyes suggests in "Handbook to Higher Consciousness", Pathway #7: I open myself genuinely to all people by being willing to fully communicate my deepest feelings, since hiding in any degree keeps me stuck in my illusion of separateness from other people.
Perhaps you did not understand the nature of my concern.
When I feel "hate" I know that it is an expression of fear. When I am afraid I know it is because I am creating a negative anticipation, based on a non-existent future and/or the dead past. In order to create this "fiction" I must remove my awareness from my "now" moment, go into my imagination and then create a fantasy. If I speak or take/not take any kind of action in on the basis of this fantasy, then my decision has been based on "bad/imaginary information". My decision/action will of course be a "bad" or "dishonest" one. As a result there must be a "correction" supplied by the Universe.
So when I hear another yogi, especially one who is a friend or comrade, say they "hate", then my concern is that some circumstance in their life is causing them to lapse from "mindfulness" into fear and of course this concerns me. If there is nothing special going on and this is a long term or chronic issue, then this also concerns me.

It might be correct for you. But I am positive that HATE and FEAR have no strong relation at all.

Duty
(Karma Yoga / duty)

I have a question about Karma Yoga. One major aspect of Karma Yoga is that one should do his duty without being attached to the fruit of one's actions. But how does a person know what his duty is?

If you are really serious about understanding and learning to practice karma-yoga that you read Karma-Yoga and Bhakti-Yoga by Swami Vivekananda. I recently picked up a near new copy on amazon.com for $5-6 delivered. It may be available somewhere on the net as text. Search around :-)

Table of contents:
Karma and Its Effect on Character.
Each Is Great in His Own Place
The Secret of Work What Is Duty?
We help Ourselves, Not the World
Non-attachment Is Complete Self-abnegation
Freedom The Ideal of Karma-Yoga

In my experience there is very little real knowledge floating around concerning yoga in general and karma-yoga in particular. Sometimes it seems to me what passes for karma yoga in the United States is working for some yoga organization for free :-(There is a great deal to know about karma-yoga. Karma-yoga is a very, very powerful path if taken rightly (or wrongly). One first needs to learn about and then seriously consider the implications of following such a path. It is not an easy one, yet I've heard it said that is potentially (especially in the US) one of the fastest paths to realization. Add Hatha and Bhakti to the mix and ohh lord, watch out :-)
In the mean time to address your question.

But how does a person know what his duty is?

Whatever you are doing is your duty. Simple as that.

What happens when the duties conflict with each other?

Rightly understood, duty can not conflict with itself. Because duty is not a "thing" outside of us. It is who we are.

How does one decide which duties are more important than others?

Rightly understood, one duty can not be more important than another for the same reason duty can not conflict. One always "knows" what his/her duty is. In any given situation, one only needs to accept what one already knows. So there is no set of rules which can be learned which will guide one in "knowing". However in the beginning it is helpful to adopt a set of guidelines or principles to live by, mechanically if necessary, until one if fully guided by their internal guru (intuition). This is the meaning of yama-niyama (http://www.yoga.net.au/relevance). It is the same idea as adopting a set of moral principles to live by so when our fear is telling us to react one way, our principles demand we act another. Then while we may not be able to let go of the fear and express Love, we can still choose to act with courage and gain the same results (Love) we might have absent the fear.

Because of this, many people dash back and forth from one thing to the other, which causes them a lot of grief.

No doubt if you get into this you will find out why many gurus suggest removing a great deal of what passes for "our lifes". Yogananda, in his lessons suggests at length strategies for freeing oneself from worldly concerns not directly connected to ones's basic needs and focusing on the path of obtaining knowledge, practicing control, and acceptance of ones divinity. Just as an example, (I'm not suggesting this for everyone) eliminate sex from your life and see what an amazing amount of stuff instantly disappears

from your life. Expense, time, effort, hassles, fear,loneliness, you name it. Its unbelievable how much this one abstention frees up in time, resources, emotional and mental energy. Add watching television, reading newspapers, driving, listening to talk radio, eating, sleeping, etc. As one reduces these (and others) there is a corresponding freeing of time, money and energy. Fact is most of the "duties" we slavishly discharge on a daily basis, are nothing more then diversions designed to keep us from feeling the emptiness inside which longs to be filled with the Truth of who we are. Once that emptiness is filled all forms of duty or yoga or wanting anything become irrelevant. Because we have come to the Truth that we are whole and perfect right now, always have been and always will be. :-)
...
James, I'm glad you responded. I think this is a really important subject. But please understand that because you are inquiring right at the top, e.g. "what is the meaning of the universe", in my attempt to explain, it might start to sound a little weird. I don't want to scare you off :-) Patience, you don't have to understand any of it (I wouldn't really expect you to) but if you keep an open mind and remain honest, eventually it will all make perfect sense. Just give yourself a chance and keep inquiring; keep reading; meditate on all your questions and you will receive an answer, I guarantee it :-) This is the way of the Jnana Yogi, and with a bit more understanding we can discuss some ideas on how to actually go about doing Karma-yoga in the West.

I have only briefly skimmed the section called "What is Duty?"

I am glad you have the text. This makes it much easier to converse :-) Hopefully by the time you read this you will have read the entire book, end to end. I personally have found (especially with books of this nature and on this type subject) that when I quickly pull a statement or idea from the middle of the book, is a bit like taking the seed from and apple; looking at it; and then trying to understand what an apple is. Over the years I have realized that understanding requires work. Lot's of it. The quicker I learned to stop resisting the work the easier and faster the process became. (BTW: this is an important idea in karma yoga.)

One key line in the section, IMO, is "Let us do that duty which is ours by birth, and when we have done that, let us do the duty which is ours by our position in life and in society". But this does not resolve my confusion.

Of course not :-) I find it helpful to think of "duty" less in terms of an affirmative action (something we should/shouldn't do) and more in terms of an "accepting" (something we let). Keeping in mind my statement that our "duty" is whatever we are doing (it will be a constant theme), here is what I hear Vivekananda saying. First that we accept (and do what's appropriate to or consistent with) the physical circumstances we are born into, e.g. white, male, missing one hand and one eye, intelligent, artistic, internal, quiet, etc. These are the "duties" imparted by our birth. Second, our "duties" with regard to our position in life and society would correspond to those imparted by our parents and family, our financial, cultural, religious, language, nation, education etc. In other words each of us is born with and into "duties" by virtue of our pre-natal karma and the social circumstances of our birth. None of this depends on any particular kind of society or social structure. We all get these "duties".

I also discount a bit what Vivekananda has written because in the same section he says "There is, however, only one idea of duty which has been universally accepted by all mankind, of all ages and sects and communities, and that has been summed up in a Sanskrit aphorism thus: 'Do not injure any being; not injuring any being is virtue, injuring any being is sin.'"

I don't understand why this statement would make you think less of what Vivekananda is saying. Would you explain?

*Vivekananda can be somewhat excused for not being familiar with other religions (though he *is* making a blanket statement about them). Now, I, of course, know nothing about Hinduism or yoga.*

Vivekananda was an expert in comparative religions. Very interesting story, I encourage you to look around the net a bit and read about his life. In the first paragraph of the "What is Duty" chapter he refers knowingly to a number of different religions.

But the above seems to contradict the advice given to Arjuna in Bhagavad Gita, that he should kill his opponents.

Not in the least. But then this understanding is what I believe you seek. The secret of which is my next statement :-) Whatever you are doing is your duty. Simple as that.

That is a very intriguing and provocative answer. I would like to hear more about it.

I will discuss this idea further, but for future reference, it would help me if you could answer why is this answer interesting to you? Why is it provocative? Would you tell me what you believe I am saying when I say, whatever you are doing is your duty?

So when Arjuna was sitting and moping on the field, it was his duty to do so? And when I am goofing off at work, it is my duty to do so as well?

Absolutely correct!
One always "knows" what his/her duty is. In any given situation, one only needs to accept what one already knows. So there is no set of rules which can be learned which will guide one in "knowing".

Another intriguing answer. I do not know that I know. Could you provide an example? How do you know?

When someone asks me an honest question and it scares me and I am inclined to lie, I "know" it is my duty to tell the truth. The truth is who I am and my duty is what I am doing. So my duty is to be who I am, is to tell the truth (a universal moral imperative). I "know" because a lie (bad information) is not me. But my "duty" is whatever I do about it.
Here I need to draw a distinction between "knowing" my "duty", and "doing" my "duty". My "duty" is whatever I am doing. This is the reality, the truth, of who and what I am. If I choose to lie, my duty is to be a liar. I am doing my duty. You see because a "duty" can only be done "now". There is no other time in which to do a "duty", there is only "now". So my "duty" is whatever I am doing "now". If I know this and am aware of this, this is "enlightenment". If I accept this, this is karma yoga. (This is difficult stuff to wrap an understanding around :-)
I think the biggest confusion is between the acceptance of "duty" and the denial of "duty" or the fantasizing over what should, would, could, supposed to, someday, etc. In addition language is ill-suited to communicate subtle distinctions. Add to that each individuals unique understanding of what a word, or idea means and you have a recipe for chaos :-) This is one of the big reasons meditation is good. Also lots and lots of reading and contemplation. Discussion is good for introducing ideas but very poor for processing them. In the past sitting quietly and listening to a master expound on a subject would take the place of reading but generally we don't do things like this any more. However it is still very good to have someone to bounce ideas off of and to help guide us when we get off the path. So there is still very much a use for teachers and those who have walked the path before us.

as it allows them to experience and practice love.

Oh, BTW, what passes for Love in sexual/romantic relationships in 99.99999% of cases is not... Like duty, Love is who we are and what we do. It has noting what's so ever to do with any desire, feeling, action, expectation or performance. But one giant step at a time here :-) I look forward to the time when we get past the point of considering outside dictates/expectations as a way to define what is our "duty". Another way is to consider if there is some duty that is always higher and more important than all the others. If we have such a duty, it becomes more easy to figure out how to handle the other duties.

Right. I was just wondering if there are good rules for accomplishing these things. If there are, someone somewhere sometime must have thought about it and written it down.

Ten commandments, works for me. The yama-niyama tambien (also). Common sense works good to. Just for S&G's why not sit down and right out your own list of "rules" for right living. Might be very instructive. At any rate you might have fun looking at it a couple of years from now. Don't laugh, my guess is it would be a very difficult and very meaningful project.

I want to do the right thing. Not very helpful, is it? :)

You do, do the right thing, always. Couldn't do anything else, even if you tried (because then that would be the right thing :-) Yes, I know and so where is the free will everyone speaks of? Another subject :-)

Even if I am following some moral code, it does not cover every aspect of my life (and I would not want it to).

I feel ya.

Plus, following any particular moral code is not the only path. So why should I follow it? Why not another one?

Agreed!

Part of my confusion is that there seem to be too many choices. I agree that this might not an issue in the more traditional societies, but it is an issue for me.

Oh, I think its an issue for everyone on the planet. We all have to sort it out. If not in this life time then in another (yes I know yet another subject :-)
I don't follow any "moral" code or guidelines (however I doubt there are many who could easily live up to my moral standards, (which include many of the classics and a few enhancements). Because the guidelines can not do anything for me. I am the only doer and the only time I can do is now. I think I should strive to accept who and what I am and let go of all fear. I will always do the "right" thing. I could do no other. Because there is only God and therefore I am (must be) whatever God is. The freer I am to be who I am the more God-like will be my actions/non-actions.

The very first yama is ahimsa. Yet Arjuna is told to slaughter his own relatives. Perhaps the resolution here is that the yamas are part of Raja Yoga, not necessarily of all yogas, and certainly not of Karma Yoga.

Also a not well understood idea. As Vivekananda says in his book and the same conclusion I came to myself, it's never the thing/action which provides the meaning but the motivation of the doer. When I act, is it from fear or Love? If it's from fear, it is evil (relatively speaking as there is no such thing as evil). If it is from Love, then it is Love. Gandhi was instructive here. He said that non-violence, absent the willingness and ability to do violence was not ahimsa but cowardice. Killing to save the lives of innocents could be a good and Loving thing to do.
Whew, I think that covered enough ground for the moment. When I can comprehend and accept at a profoundly deep level what I have said here, I will be able to let go of all fear and wield all the power of the universe without ever hurting a single soul and without ever having to concern myself with what is my "duty".

I would like to hear your ideas. Or, if you have posted them before, just give me a link.

I think, how to do real karma yoga in the west, would make a good and helpful essay. That's the idea of omjaroo.com. A place where I can write short subject specific explanations/essays. I have been writing in alt.yoga but most of what I write is context sensitive and its relevancy to others may not be easily apparent. It also tends to be a bit hurried because I only have so much time to respond before the thread is forgotten :-) I also tend to "bottom line" around here. I figure the denizens of this group can handle it. I'm not sure

about the new comers. Some of this stuff can sound pretty weird, even to an experienced yogi. But so much of where yoga can take one, is beyond the expected. If what I say is true then somewhere it will resonate with one who reads it. However this may take place in some very deep (perhaps unexplored) place inside a person and I can not expect to be responded to, believed, or accepted. However it does happen and when it does I enjoy it. Hmmm, I'll have to work on that. After all as the yogis say, seek equanimity in all things :-)

> *Acceptance of all things, starting from oneself, is extremely > important. I just have not thought of duty as being acceptance.*

I'm afraid there is no such thing as that which we must do. We do what we do in our now. There is no way to do anything else. Perhaps like me you are struggling with attempting to align your expectations (fantasies) with your now. Quite an impossibility :-) A formula for confusion and unhappiness. But wouldn't "accepting" everything we do be just plain wrong? How could we ever dare to that? Who do we think we are? Well I guess it depends on "who" is doing the talking. It certainly isn't God. God accepts us at all times. God is Love. Umm, maybe it's echoes of our parents (maybe not even echoes, they may still be talking-I know mine are :-) Perhaps its people, places and things around us with their constant message of "not good enough", "wrong", "weak", "irresponsible", "honor", "duty", "buy this and be strong, and good looking (so you can get laid)" , "you need this", etc. etc. In countless millions of different ways, throughout our life. Virtually all of it lies, fabrications, fantasies, desires and fear. But through all of it, through out all of time and in every culture, country and circumstance there are those "ideals" which touch the heart and soul of every human, and this is what I think Vivekananda was speaking to. Love, kindness, generosity, compassion, forgiveness, patience, bravery, persistence, faith, intelligence, tolerance, gratitude, these are the universally appreciated aspects of human nature which are sought after and modeled for moral systems. Everyone likes these, everyone aspires/wants these, yet how few can accept them as there birth right, as their "duty" to have and express? I know I struggle deeply with this.
I suppose I could say that our "duty" is acceptance of the Truth. That is what really exists as opposed to what we want, expect or are afraid exists.

> *[Vivekananda] said that all humanity has accepted the idea of non-violence and "There is, however, only one idea of duty which has been universally accepted by all mankind, of all ages and sects and countries, and it has been summed up in a Sanskrit aphorism thus: "Not injuring any living being is virtue: injuring any being is sin." This is false.*

I can see how you could read it this way. However in the context I don't think he is saying everyone has accepted this as their personal duty but that all would agree or acknowledge this idea as a "universal" moral truism. I have a feeling that when you read this a year from now you will hear it differently.

> *Many people see violence, such as war or capital punishment, as acceptable or good or necessary in some cases. Many religions *call* for war or capital punishment in certain cases. What's more Bhagavad Gita itself tells us that if it is a person's duty to perform violence (for example, if he is a soldier), then he should do so.*
>
> *And here I am just talking about violence toward other human beings. Vivekananda is talking about "any being", presumably including animals. As we know, most people are not vegetarian. But the above seems to contradict the advice given to Arjuna in Bhagavad Gita, that he should kill his opponents.*

He does cover this aspect quite a bit. Saying that one man's duty may be considered by another to be a sin, depending on context, culture and many of the variables you have mentioned in your life. Yes, I agree. It's the difference between expectations, conflicts and ambiguity and see, seer, seen being as one.
Now try in every moment of your day to accept this, live with this, act/don't act with this, and you are doing Karma yoga, no matter what you are doing. In any attempt to do this you will be constantly witnessing, reminding and rebuking yourself, telling yourself the Truth about the nature of what you see. And you will do this in ever deeper and deeper terms. This is Jnana yoga. When our body and mind resist (right

down to the DNA) then we practice Hatha yoga to bring the vehicle under control and Raja yoga to bring the computer we call a brain, under the domain of the real Us . And as the Truth of our existence becomes more and more real to us we celebrate with happiness and gratitude, bestowing blessings and Love to all around us and this is Bhakti yoga.
I can't recommend too highly Richard Hittleman's Yoga, the Eight Steps to Health and Peace". If anyone has ever been able to pull together the whole of the subject of yoga, its this guy. And it is written by a westerner for western sensibilities. Much easier to grasp then even Vivekananda.

I think I would feel better if those choices were simpler. In other words, if I knew my duty. Then again, maybe simply realizing everything that I have just said makes me feel better.

Wow, see how this works. Keep asking the question and before you know it you will have answered it yourself. It's that guru within they keep talking about :-)

I don't know. But you are who you are. You cannot be more or less. Right?

The Truth is I am whoever, whatever God is. That is all I can be. Where free will comes in is whether I am willing to accept this Truth and live and act with it. Or am I going to create fear and act according to the fantasies require to do that. I can tell you from personal experience (to much I am afraid :-(that living as if I were whatever God is, works a whole lot better, then living as if all that I fear is real. While I believe thinking can be very "good", after all I am a thinker, I have come to learn that one must "do" in order to really "know" and learn. I have done "bad" and it doesn't work, I am working hard at doing "good" and it works way better. But it has been my duty all along to do and be whatever, whoever I am. And I could to nothing else.

Thanks. A lot of good ideas in these posts. Still, this ongoing idea of not hurting anyone bothers me a bit.

The fact is no one can be hurt. I know another provocative statement :-) But think about it. Can God be hurt? Of course not, what a silly idea. So if I am whatever God is, can I be hurt? Of course not. Can I feel like I am hurt? Can I fear being hurt? Yes, yes all of those things. But can I really be hurt? Is there such a thing as death? Can I ever really be destroyed? Cheated? Broken? Me I am speaking of, not the vehicle I move in, which will naturally decay and be damaged and recycled. But the real Me. If I can't be hurt, then no one can be hurt.

"The Supreme Lord said: You grieve for those who are not worthy of grief, and yet speak the words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead." (2.11)

Wow what a perfect quote to finish on :-) Seems to wrap up what I just said perfectly, don't you think?
...
700E, (and others I hope :-) Just some thoughts.
I was hoping you were going to share with us. Because if we don't say, then how will anyone else ever know? How did we learn it?
I learned this in therapy and around recovery groups. To keep myself honest I try to use "I" statements. I think, I do this, I tried that, this works for me, this didn't work for me, this is the direction I am going, this is what I read, this is how I reacted, and such. Its not always easy. It somehow just feels more comfortable to talk about what you, he or they should or might do. Sometimes I will spend hours writing a response and then look at it and realize I need to go back and change all the "you's" to "I's". Sometimes it looks really odd to me to give suggestions in a completely "I" fashion. Certainly not what I seeing or hearing. In this way I am not pushing anything on anyone. I am only sharing things which I have experienced or I believe to be effective, or true etc. Anyone reading what I've said can take as little or as much into consideration as they care to.
This also avoids "arguments". After all if I am talking about myself then how could anyone argue, except perhaps to call me a liar or to point out some misstated fact. But otherwise nothing to argue about. Discuss, yes, lot's if one wishes or not at all.

So in the case of yama-niyama I might say, this is why I practice this system. This is what practicing this system seems to have done for me. This is what I look forward to and these are the problems I have had with it. This is where I think it breaks down or this is why it will support me when I break down, or whatever.
If something is presented like this then I think it encourages discussion and sharing of personal experience, process or synthesis. If I state something like it was a fact that should be believed because I (or some saint, or system, etc) said so, then if anything I invite argument. Certainly not a willingness to be vulnerable in opening up and sharing, especially if that experience is contrary to what I posted. I suppose its the old, you show me yours and I'll show you mine. I doesn't work if everyone is not willing to make good on the deal:-)
To quote some guru, saint or sage once in awhile is appropriate if it is in the context of me discussing myself, my beliefs, my process. But to quote others to make a point without my first making the point for myself is not only really, really boring but I think dishonest. Posts that only quote other's writing, as if someone were trying to foist some wisdom on me, leave me cold. If you have wisdom to share I'm delighted to hear it, if you want to give me someone else's wisdom (who I can not respond to or share with, cause they're probably dead) then no thanks. I'm looking for a "now" person to exchange with.
Of course there is a place for reading other's work. I often will give a reference, tell why I think its important, even quote a page or two and then hopefully lets talk about it. But I assume no one will actually take the time to procure and read it, so I will make my point. If someone finds value enough in what I say, or in the sample I posted, then they may be more interested in looking into it further. But if I just tell someone to read such and such and then drop it; yeah like that will ever happen :-)
I have in the past and will continue to lament that there is precious little discussion going on here in alt.yoga. If you removed all the cross posted stuff from the meditation/etc groups, there would be little happening here. And if I have to be warned about false gurus many more times, I think I am going to start looking into mahasamadhi :-)
Seems if there nothing to argue about or pontificate over, everything goes quiet. Me, I attribute this to group members being reticent about sharing their personal process. For me this sharing is a part of my yoga process. But the group has its own "group conscience" like any other. I'm not going to change anything, besides everything is perfect and couldn't be any way else. Because everything is God and God is perfect, ergo, everything is perfect :-)
...
700E,I for one am delighted with your post. This gives me lots to consider and respond to:-) Just like a real exchange between a couple of friends. I hope others have their own ideas they'd like to share.

> *I hear you loud and clear, Jared. I have already considered these flaws of my character (if that's all they are) for quite some time.*

I would say there is no such thing as a flaw, everything is perfect. What we term flaws are only symbols for something which frightens us, that we feel we need to protect or defend ourselves from :-)

> *I'm not good at making smalltalk or socializing, and I'm not good at talking about myself. I'm sort of secretive by nature even though I have nothing to hide. That's part of the reason why I rarely bring up my own experiences as an example.*

You may not be comfortable doing so, but in my opinion you express yourself honestly and clearly. I think most of us are just like that. The yogis say (Sivananda, I think) talking is one of the largest wastes of prana there is.

> *Another part is that I'm from Sweden, and if I would talk extensively about myself, I think I'd also have to explain lots of things about the Swedish culture which has influenced me.*

Which would be an absolute delight to me. I will often frame something I say in the context or where I live, the language I speak or my social circumstances. The reasons I do this are to provide as much

information for understanding as I can and to demonstrate what I am convinced are simply different flavors of a universally shared human experience.

But the most important part is that my life is not an exemplary one. More about that below.

I hope so because this statement has me shaking my head vigorously from side to side :-) Oh and here is a good example. The movement I am speaking of, in the USA, means no, no, no. In some other place it might mean yes, or maybe or bring me some more salad please :-)

I am very pleased with your style in writing, the non-confrontativeness of restraining oneself to write of one's own experiences instead of presenting one's thoughts as if they were rules for everyone to follow (I think I've managed to avoid that extreme, at least).

Thank you for your kind words and encouragement. They are appreciated. I have always considered your posts to be pleasantly toned, well considered and helpful (wise).

When I quote some guru or sage, it's most often because I agree with them and believe they speak the truth.

Of course. I hope you don't think anything I said in my post was referring to you in any way. My comments were made in general concerning the group dynamics I have observed over the years. Like I said I have always found your comments to be well thought out and valuable.

You say, above, "I was hoping you were going to share with us. Because if we don't say, then how will anyone else ever know? How did we learn it?" Strange to say, I never needed to learn the yamas, I was born with them, >as far as I can tell, and then I un-learned them, partly. When I understood, at the age of three or four, that animals had to be killed to put meat on my plate, I turned vegetarian at once, to the chagrin of my mother.

Wow, now you see, this one insight is as exemplary as it gets IMO :-)

Eventually, I was re-educated to eat meat again, like the rest of my family. Perhaps I saw it as my duty not to cause my mother discomfort and extra work.

Of course. Understood. This is a perfect illustration of how when we are born, we, quite without consciousness, express our God-like qualities. Then as we grow and become more "conscious" we "adjust" to the messages being sent by our environment and little by little adopt reacting to fear (negative anticipation of future events) in place of freely (fearlessly) expressing our thoughts, feelings and qualities in the moment. Our path then as yogis (as I see it) is to willfully choose; then learn and then practice, consciously expressing our True God-like natures, replacing all the lies and the habits of fear with habits of Love, Intelligence, Life, Principle, Soul, Spirit and Truth. Eventually, jettisoning the disciplines and habits of Love and once again (reunited with the Self-Yoga)express freely and spontaneously our True natures. This is what I believe that famous guy meant when he said to enter the kingdom of heaven we must become, as a child. This is what I see as a path of supreme acceptance of who and what we are. When we know our "duty", accept our "duty" and finally express or become our "duty". Or as one of those other famous guys might say, when knowing the knower and what's known become one.

At the moment, I'm semi-vegetarian, I eat meat sometimes, but not often. Perhaps I'm not as accomplished a cook as is necessary to be able to contrive a well-balanced diet without the occasional addition of meat (or most often fish), or perhaps it's something genetic.

I know what you mean. I have been "pushing" in the direction or vegetarian for 15+ years. Little by little I have more and more success but I still eat meat. This is generally the way I have made any major change in my life. Little by little. One step forward and two steps back. Persistence for me is the name of the game. My daughter, like you, at 11-12 simply refused to eat meat and no one could make her go back. I doubt its genetic. Normal perhaps but not genetic ;-) I personally have taken "meat eating" off of my "spiritual"

plate (that's a pun :-) That is I don't believe eating or not eating meat is meaningful in any spiritual sense. Because for one (and most importantly) we are Spirit. There is nothing I can do to be or not be who and what I am. So to do a thing in order to me more or less what I am already is just plain silly. Likewise I think the value of yama-niyama (the 10 commandments or any moral system) lies not in any spiritual benefit (we are Spirit, there's nothing more to do) but as practical guidelines for effective daily living and for guidance in accepting who and what we are. And in the second place, it is God who set up the one animal eats another system. It would hardly be intelligent to set up a system like that and then expect that some participants refrain from taking part to some how please God. That being said I do believe vegetarian eating/lifestyle is utterly consistent with and in alignment with our divine nature. I believe if I was freely expressing who and what I am I would not kill things in order to eat them. Especially when the Universe provides so many gifts which are perfect for sustaining my life (vehicle) while also sustaining the life of the gift giver. E.g. I eat the some fruit or vegetable, process the nutrients and pass the waste which intern moves and relocates the seeds of the plant, further planting and insuring the survival of that food giver. Eating meat is not really a sustainable activity because the giver of the food is killed. Eventually there will be to many people and to little land and plants for the animals to eat and nature will have to correct the imbalance. Not only is meat inefficient and expensive to produce but it is also very inefficient to process inside the human body. So while an orange might be 80% efficiently used by the body a meat product may only be 25% or less used, while requiring a huge expense of body energy to process in the first place.

> *If I were deeply into karma yoga, I'd probably not mind the extra work of learning how to be entirely vegetarian.*

Yes, it seems compassion always requires work. No way around that one and lord knows I've tried to find one :-)

> *As it is, I'm shirking part >of my duties (ahimsa) by contributing to the killing of animals, and I only rarely feel sad about it. Awful, isn't it?*

Only because you say so. I know (will accept) that you are whole and perfect right now :-) Besides when its time for you to stop eating meat (if ever) you simply will. No muss, no fuss, easy. Of course your "duty" is what you do in any given moment, it can not be any idea or desire outside of now :-)

> *Also brahmacharya I've given up on, or at least I'm not celibate, since I have recently met a woman I've fallen in love with.*

In my experience a thoroughly misunderstood and misrepresented (manipulated) idea (along with karma). I think the only way for someone to understand this is when it is time for them to be celibate. To me celibate is in the same category as vegetarian. You can not buy your way into God's favor with it. It has very practical aspects especially for the very young who's path it is to become life long hatha yogis as well as older persons seeking to increase their conscious contact with the Divine. But celibacy is only a practical matter and has no moral or spiritual significance beyond what we choose to give it.

> *In spite of my own shortcomings, I still advocate the yamas. So now you see that I can't speak for what are the highest moral commandments only by writing about my own experiences.*

I disagree :-) The yamas and other moral systems are well known and will speak to each of us without any help. You, on the other hand, are the only person in the world, who can speak of these things for you. And your sharing has helped me, helped yourself and I am sure others as well. All expression of Truth no matter what it refers to is a direct expression of Love and our Divine nature. It is not whether we are "good" or "bad" or "not exemplary", these are meaningless symbols. It is whether what we do or say is in alignment with Truth, Love, Intelligence and other manifestations of Reality. Regardless of whether we or our actions (karma) are in alignment or not we are still whatever God is and can be nothing other. The only challenge we have is opening our eyes (awareness) and letting go (acceptance), all the rest will take care of itself. Why? Because it is whatever God is and ...

Teaching
(Job Outlook for Yoga Teacher in NYC)

I would be that last person to discourage anyone from pursuing a path (any path) in yoga. However I think you will find that trying to make a living at it is much like an artist trying to make a living at doing art. Yes it happens (I guess) but its not quick and its not easy. I don't doubt if you are determined, persistent and have a way with people you can make it happen. Although my sense is that its a thoroughly saturated and woefully underpaid market. Your desire must be strong and you will need to aggressively market yourself. And generally speaking, both of these qualities are in inconsistent with yogic philosophy and lifestyle.
Based on my 30+ years experience in being trained to do things, (for which I could never get anyone to pay me :-), I might suggest the following.
I would not rely on anything the providers of the teachers instruction say in regards to the potential market for your services.
Visit a dozen or so local yoga outlets (don't forget the YMCA, Senior centers, hospitals etc.) and speak directly with some of the instructors there. Ask questions; lots of questions. I think you will quickly get a sense of the what, how much and the how long, of your local market.
Consider volunteering your time and services a couple of hours a week teaching (or assisting) yoga at a center or program near your home. If you can find a place to give away your time and effort this will provide an opportunity to see if you like teaching and are built for it. Starting your own class teaching neighbors and friends is another way to build awareness.
I wish you the best of luck in your pursuit and I hope more information is forth coming from alt.yoga members who have more experience in the business of teaching yoga then I.

Pregnant
(Yoga while pregnant)

I have just found out that I am pregnant and would like to join a yoga group. Will this type of exercise be okay or will it be harmful to the baby? If so do you have any other suggestions (apart from swimming) on what type of exercise would be appropriate

You needn't have the slightest concern. Yoga is about health, whatever your condition :-) Probably the best thing you could possibly do.

A couple of teachers in my area (UK), including mine, run special pregnancy yoga classes. These sound the ideal thing if you can find one.

Reading up on the postures (asana) myself it looks like there are some modifications and some you don't do - but some also are claimed to be very helpful in pregnancy. The rest of yoga, the ability to relax properly at the least and general healthyness, would also be of great benefit.

I hope you find a class and enjoy it and keep on the practice beyond pregnancy.

AA
(So where is blacknblue anyway?)

Thanks for the concern.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to be concerned :-)

I'm doing alright...somewhat depressed on days but not all the time. Life goes on...I guess.

Yes, life does do that, doesn't it... What's that saying, "life is what happens while we're busy planning something else."

I hope I am growing up spiritually instead of sideways or backward?

There's only one way to grow and that's just the way you're growing.

I once was so sure about things....Now its just one day at a time.

Now there's real wisdom buddy. Wait until you get to "there is only now."

Thats what gets me through this lonely life.

Loneliness is an expression of fear. Identify and deal with the fear and loneliness will evaporate.

I've managed to stay sober with the help of my Higher Power and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous for almost 6 months. No weed, no alcohol, no meth, no downers.

Outstanding! Keep at it. It works if you work it! Control of the body and senses is fundamental to yoga. And I'll tell you what. There is more yoga in the twelve steps of AA then all the Vedas combined.

My circle of "friends" is all but gone,

A blessing I am sure :-) Now the door is open for new and better friends! Remember God doesn't close any door without opening another better one. It's just those long ass hallways, that are the bitch :-)

but I have learned to survive without them.

Of course. It's called growing up. We all have to learn it :-) If you are learning to rely on yourself at your age, I would say you are way ahead of schedule (at least way ahead of me :-)

Yes, its a sad world when you've chosen some of the things I've chosen in life, but it is all for reasons because God doesn't play dice with the Universe.

Albert Einstein... Good, I like it. Naturally, it's for your education. Listen, we don't learn by doing things "right". We learn from our mistakes. When a guided missile is aimed at a target and launched, the only feedback it receives from the ground control is when it is making a mistake; when it is off target. Then it can adjust and get back on track. Through this process of correcting mistakes over many thousands of miles, they can put one of these babies into an area the size of a baseball. We are just like that guided missile. Nature (God) provides the "negative/painful" feedback to tell us when we are off course. Like putting your hand on the hot stove or developing a romantic relationship with a meth addict. We suffer, we realize our mistake and try again. It's a process that leads us inexorably to only one place and that's "home" to our real "self."

Live everyday as if it were my last cause: "ya never know when ya gonna go" has been my motto and has helped me. I live paycheck to paycheck working tough jobs for Labor Ready

That's great!

but it has given me some more understanding about my community and the people who make this small town go each day.

One of which is you :-)

It's Soooo hard NOT labeling people, places, things, events as either "Good or Bad", but I know this "Good Bad" stuff is a formula for discontent.

Oh, yes it is really, really hard. We all struggle with this and many of us never get past it. Perhaps this will help. Making judgments is a formula for discontent because judgments are lies. Decisions based on lies are decisions based on bad information. Decisions based on bad information, no matter how well thought out, no matter how well reasoned, are going to be "bad" decisions. Someone is going to receive some negative feedback from the Universe.

How are you? I'm very greatful you remembered me. I'd like to hear how you are doing, happy or sad...hateful or grateful...it makes no difference...I just want to hear how you are doing:)

I am doing just perfectly. Couldn't be doing anything else ;-) But life for me is not easy and oft times its not pleasant. Then that's one of the things I always like about going to an AA meeting. By the time I walk out of there, whatever my problems, they seem rather small compared to what I just heard :-)))

Jared, I'm glad to hear you are doing well:) AA meetings get me through a lot of shit man. I'd be dead if it weren't for those who have been through some of the things I have. These elderly people are wise and a great influence for anybody. I have been passed on much strength to resist picking up the glass pipe or the bottle for 6 months! People say miracles don't happen anymore. AA rejecets this mentality! I cant get over how positive of an influence they have been in my life. People there actually give me a hug, and try loving and tolerating one another at all costs for their sobriety and sanity. They accept all religions even Christians, Islamics, and gay people put aside their differences and love one another! Man, I'd be dead without this 12 step AA stuff.... Again you sound well and my wishes are nothing but goodwill to you and your kids. Take it easy bro.

July

Patanjali

(The 4 means & 6 virtues of Jnana-Yoga)

People talk about the 8 steps as though as these were universal throughout all of the yogic disciplines.

THIS IS NOT THE CASE!

Jnana-Yoga employs:

THE 4 MEANS & 6 VIRTUES:

1 VIVEKA - Discrimination. The intellectual ability to discriminate, or discern, between the real and the unreal. Vedanta defines the real as being permanent and the unreal as being temporary.

2 VAIRAGYA - Dispassion, detachment. After sufficient practice of viveka, the temporary, ephemeral nature of the world and its objects becomes obvious and a natural lack of attraction to them takes place. The aspirant should then endeavor to become more dispassionate in order to purify the mind, improve concentration and steadiness of mind.

3 SHAD-SAMPAT - The six virtues. This practice actually consists in developing six qualities or virtues. There are:

SAMA - Tranquility or control of mind. Calmness. This is the ability to become calm and unaffected by the external world.

DAMA - Control of the senses. Keeping the senses controlled helps to check the mind. The mind, like the wind is almost impossible to control!

UPARATI - Renunciation of mundane activities. Most desires have fallen away and there is no more reason to perform the activities in which most people indulge.

TITIKSHA - Endurance, self-control of the pairs of opposites. The mind must become strong enough to not be affected by the dual natures of success and failure, hot and cold, pleasure and pain, sunshine and rain etc.

SHRADDHA - Faith. It is defined by Sri Sankaracharya as faith in one's guru, god, the self (atman) and the scriptures (shastras).

SAMADHANA - Perfect concentration, complete focus of the mind. It takes great degree of mastery to reach this level. Few reach it. (samadhi)

4 MUMUKSHUTVA - Intense longing for liberation. When this stage is reached, moksha (liberation) is the only desire.

Thank-you Dave. I think that point needed to be clarified for a while now :-)
I don't get the impression that many here actually study yoga itself, as a subject and consequently don't know a great deal about it in its totality :-(
Yoga, is the goal: awareness/acceptance of Unity. Yoga, is the path: techniques/process for achieving awareness/acceptance of Unity.
The paths are many (literally hundreds of yoga systems and as many individual paths, as all of the people who have ever existed) The goal only One.
The closer to the goal, the less distinct/meaningful the paths.
There are many people who are actually practicing yoga who would, no doubt. be very surprised (possibly mortified) to find out that's what they were doing :-)
Likewise there are many people who think they are practicing yoga who might be equally surprised to hear they are, in fact, not. :-(
But I can't see any point in revealing this secret. Perhaps it best to let sleeping dogs, lie. Besides that's more knowledge for us and knowledge equals power, right? Moohahahaha... (that's a poor imitation of a Snidely Wiplash evil laugh. I don't even want to try a Dr. Evil :-)

Ooops.... The cat is out of the bag!

Now that all these good folks have learned that there's more than one way to COOK a potato...

Next thing ya' know they might learn that there's more than just one KIND of potato!

The traditional American saying goes, "there is more then one way to skin a cat". But besides the obvious issues with ahimsa, since we have let the cat out of the bag, seems there's nothing to skin, so potatoes works well. In fact, I think the potato analogy is perfect. Vegetarian, healthy, delicious and most people don't realize there are over 100 different types. Little does anyone suspect that when we can become one with the lowly potato; eater, eating and eaten merge and we have arrived. We are yoga :-)

Geez... you're no fun...

Ya' take the thrill out of the hunt!

Gone is the extatic feeling one gets from INSIGHT and PERSONAL DISCOVERY! ; ->

...

I heard a LOT of stuff many times and it all went right over my head.

When I was ready, it came to me with a jolt. The thrill WAS there! Case in point: "Neti, neti." (7 years to find that one!)

Also a sense of awe due to the fact that I'd missed the point so many times when it was sitting there right in front of my nose!

Hence the saying, "when the student is ready, the teacher will appear." ;-)
Only 7 years? And how many life times?

I don't think that you and I have that many fingers & toes!-

BTW, once you have "neti, neti" you won't need to concern yourself with trying to abide by 4 means and 6 virtues, they will develop naturally in your life, in order for you to survive. They support you on your path, they are not the path itself.
The Truth has been spoken/written countless times over the millennium and no doubt is inscribed in drawings on cave walls somewhere. After all there is nothing new under the sun (whoa, that's about 2000+ years old). Just read Marcus Aurelius (1800+) or Emerson (100+) or alt.yoga (5+). Walk into a local WalMart (0+). It doesn't matter, the Truth is everywhere, because the Truth is the only thing that exists! We need only open our hearts (silence the mind), and then we will have eyes to see and ears to hear.

Trolls
(To all European Politicians?)

Mindful. Yeah man, you guys act like Americans can really stop their own government. You think it is yoga to continue in your anger and be miserable about the inevitable. You act as if we don't know that we're getting fucked in the ass by our government. You think we love Israel so much we are willing to have the whole fucking world hate us in order for a country about the size of New Jersey to be #1. Mindful. All Americans could kill themselves and there would be the solution because they have no army to fight? It still wouldn't matter my ignorant fucking Euro's. They would find other evil minded immigrants from all over the world....including your self-fucking righteous innocent little Europe to do the Devils work. They would find desperate people who will go through desperate measures to live a worldly life and delude them into thinking they can be anything or anybody they want to be. Come to America motherfuckers. See how easy our lives are. See how not one person can even smile at their countrymen. See how fun it fucking is. See the Meth cooking in the trailors and people dying in the streets. Hear the insane fucking politicians on CNN talk about war with Iran if North Korea launches a Nuclear Missile at our west coast. See how everybody here hates each other and the only people who can smile are the ones who were born with mental deficiencies. Be Mindful. Come to America and see how every family is torn and the person who smiles is hated for being different. You think you have it so bad in England, Germany, France, Spain. You think you are so fucking righteous.....Yeah buddy. Walk these lonely streets fools. You may not even last a day. If you last longer you will wish you didn't. America is no longer great. We ARE paying our fucking karmic debt in the gillions. Go ahead be angry at Americans stereotype us for the ones who can afford to take a trip to the luxurious continent of Europe and act like dicks. Why don't you take a vacation in America??? See the sites of downtown Detroit, Los Angeles, Dallas, and the Streets of Philly. Come to Arizona, home state of the Grand Canyon...you won't see too many English or Spanish speaking people there. Mostly Japanese. Remember to BE MINDFUL and see downtown Phoenix. Pack a lunch and look for a job where motherfuckers get stabbed on every corner. Yeah Be fucking MINDFUL Americans are a diverse people. 5% at the top of the ladder here owns 90% of all this shit. Our land has been plagued with racism since the arrival of Columbus in 1492. We continue on and sometimes even lend a helping hand to a starving brother or an insane motherfucker. We survive by giving up vacations and spiritual retreats because most of us don't have the money. Our families hate us; they are broken and so are we. We survive by praying and hoping for brighter days. We survive by going from job to job and a spiritual retreat for most of us might be a night in the streets hoping and praying that some crazy fuck doesn't beat the shit out of us for the hell of it.

So to all you in Europe who think we are here to spoil your fucking day and the days for you children, BE MINDFUL! I'm sure you loved our elite fucking us in the ass with the WTC attacks. I'm sure you loved Katrina! I'm sure you'll love to see millions slaughtered in a nuclear attack by North Korea. This shit don't even phase us poverty stricken motherfuckers. We don't get into your Economics into your intellectualism bullshit....but we survive one day at a time and pray for a brighter tomarrow. So be mindful and hopefully it isn't a mind full of shit that you bring. Take it to the streets fools and you find people are wild animals!

Happy 4th of July, a celebration of the birth of a grand experiment to create the freest nation in the history of the planet.

blacknblue wrote: Mindfull. Yeah man, you guys act like Americans can really stop their own government...

I think this is the first quasi "on topic" political rant I've read in this group. You used the word "yoga" once and "mindful" (a state of consciousness) a couple of times. That's better then the rest.
Thanks, I can't remember the last time I enjoyed reading a post more. Honest, serious, intense, smart/funny and lots of energy:-) But what I feel most is the space I think you are in, to be writing it in the first place :-(

Don't let these off-topic, cross-posting, spamming, trolls get to you. They feed off of other's fear and pain. If you feel like you want to do something, you might consider filing a Usenet abuse report with google. I file one occasionally but mostly it seems a waste of time. If no one responds to these posters, they go away eventually. Hence the sign you'll see posted around Usenet once in a while, "Don't Feed the Trolls!" :-)
From my yogic point of view, I understand that when an individual believes in any imaginary (symbolic) group like "Americans" they're functioning on a relatively primitive level and their emotional, intellectual and spiritual awareness is little higher then an animal. To me their words can only be understood as an expression of their ignorance and fear and I can do little other then listen and try to understand how I once was and/or am like that myself.
I must remind myself that in both yoga and recovery that I must stay focused on my path. What happens to people, places or things around me is none of my business. I used to think this was selfish but now I understand it is not. I can be of no help to anyone if I am applying my energy/efforts on anything but my own growth and awareness. Like my sponsor once said to me, "Jared you can't give what you don't have." "Everyone is doing the best they can with what they have. When they can do better they will do better." And I said, "hey but that lets everyone off the hook!" And he responded, "Yes it does; even you. So thank God, live and let live and start moving forward from this moment on, one step at a time." Gil, was a real old-school AA guy. He remembered being in meetings, back in the day, in North Hollywood with Bill W. and Dr. Bob. :-)
Some reading I have found helpful along these lines. A.A. Tenth Tradition in the 12x12 (if you don't have a copy, ask for one at a meeting or email me. http://www.silkworth.net/aa/traditions_checklist.html A.A. First and (especially) the Second step Matt 7:1-14
Keep in mind that all Internet communication is being screened, cataloged and assessed by the major world governments. What's happening around the world is way bigger then any individual, group or country. This is all God's business now (always has been really :-) The best I can do is just watch and see how it plays out. Trying to make sure that my own Temple is in-order/clean and if/when I am called on to act that I do so, as best I can, in Love and without fear; in alignment with the Truth and with my heart wide open. Om Charu Om...

Broke

(Please reccommend a Yoga DVD for a newbie)

I am in a rather difficult situation: I have a combination of health issue and not much money.

I can relate to difficulty of your situation. I also started yoga with a combination of health and money issues. Now I have far fewer health issues but the money is still a problem :-)
I'm afraid I can not help you with a suggestion for a DVD. I not sure there are any :-(But perhaps someone in the group will have a suggestion for you.
In general I think there are problems with video instruction. For one, it is very difficult to accurately convey instructions using spoken words. Also it is very likely the people in any presentation will be doing the poses in a more advanced/correct manner then you would be able to accomplish at first, so you will not be able to mimic (learn) the technique and this will be discouraging. There is no performance feedback available from the video. Pausing, rewinding and otherwise fiddling with the DVD player will interfere with your concentration and constantly break the mood of what you are trying to do. This will be frustrating. Yoga should be practiced in a quiet, calm and relaxing atmosphere. DVD's are expensive and require a player, electricity, etc, so you can't go to the park or practice late at night while others are sleeping.
Two alternatives which might suit you better are taking a class from an instructor and/or using a self-guided, how-to book to teach yourself.
I don't know where you are located but good places to look for an inexpensive class in the US are community centers, hospitals, YMCA and churches. Want ads, announcements on message boards of health food stores, University student halls, Craig's List, and groups like this one are all good places to look for local classes.

A class has the advantage of an instructor who can modify/accommodate instruction for your individual physical situation. Provide real-time feedback of your performance. Answer questions, make suggestions and provide positive and supportive encouragement. There is also a social element which many enjoy and find helpful. Especially if one tends to isolate because of disposition, health or other life circumstances. Of course the quality/experience of the instructor will have a direct effect on your progress, so you might have to try a few before you find the "right" one for you.
The way I learned hatha (and others) yoga is by reading. This is still my preferred method and I recommend it highly to anyone who is self directed or can not or does not wish to take a class. Or to anyone who is exploring the possibility of learning yoga and who would like to make an informed decision about classes or self-study. Besides this is by far the cheapest alternative that I am aware of.
To this end I can highly recommend any book on the subject of yoga, meditation or yoga foods by Richard Hittleman. This man may be responsible for introducing more Americans (westerners) to yoga then any other person. An American classically trained in India, after teaching classes throughout the 40's, 50's and the early 60's he created a TV program called "yoga for health", which ran for many years. Hittleman is unsurpassed in communicating the essence of classic (real) yoga to the western reader. In my experience all of Hittleman's materials have been simple, clear, practical and meaningful. I just haven't found anyone who can explain this stuff better then he does. Not only that, but Hittleman teaches and encourages his readers to learn to listen to and trust in their own internal "guru". Helping his students develop the ability to become "a law unto themselves." with which they can establish a self sustaining life long pursuit of yoga.
All of Hittleman's books are available on amazon.com and most are priced very low. I think the last one I bought was $1 + $3.50 shipping :-)
In your case I would specifically suggest, "Be Young With Yoga", the "Yoga Natural Foods Cookbook" and the "Guide to Yoga Mediation".
Of course there are many good books and materials on all forms of yoga available on the internet or in used/new bookstores. But if you read any of Hittleman's books first you will have a high quality introduction to the "basics" from which you should be able to judge the value of other available sources, be it a DVD, class, book or website, (western or eastern.)
I hope this is of some help and good luck. By all means hang around and ask questions, make comments and share your experiences with yoga :-)

Bikram

(Experiences with Bikram Yoga?)

My 2 cents worth. Although I have no personal experience with his classes. I do however I do have "the book" which is filled with sexy and popular celebrities. Very impressive, really!
Based on my experience and training and IMO, Bikram is not teaching hatha "Yoga", but a stylized form of "Indian calisthenics."
Like some other popular eastern transplants, (who have come to the US and Europe), Bikram is pedaling an expensive, celebrity promoted, "one size fits all" product. And just like white bread and rice, he has stripped out all the spiritual nutrients and is selling the refined, processed and packaged versions of what is otherwise a very healthy discipline. I do not believe his program or others like it, can sustain physical health or happiness.
In contrast to the Bikrams and Chopras of this world, there are in existence other yogis (and many more regular people) who can still provide a supreme example of what real Yoga is.

Rant

(Hey Omjaroo are you Okey?)

Jared I just read your following poster

"""""I don't think for a moment you have the substance or motivation to answer me.

But let me tell you, I think you are the lowest form of life (well under bacteria) on this planet. Are you listening Puma? I am talking about what I presume is a human being. Want to defend bacteria?

*Take the most important and serious issue facing the human race and try to run up your position on goggle's search engine... You low-life piece of sh*t. I swear to God you don't ever want to run into me, you f*cking puke!*

Jared """"

What happened to you? I have no idea wahtsoever.... Please explain waht is going on?

Hi Puma,
I am fine. Thank you for asking.
I'm afraid I have been over indulging in the appearance of evil lately.
I've started a much needed fast :-) And I am in the process of handing the spammers, exwifes kids, governments, and numerous other worries over to God to deal with, I need a break :-) So my task is to take some of the "mental gold" I keep on my book shelves and replenish my mental/spiritual bank.
I may explain whats going on in due course. But for the moment I prefer not to. Thanks my friend.

Communication

(Why we have all of these communications problems)

Howdy! There always seem to be a lot of difficulty communicating concepts on this board.

Remember, there is the mechanism(s) for communication and there is the "will" to communicate. Be careful not to confuse these two :-)

Point taken!

Fact is life for a jhani is going to be very alone. That isn't the same as lonely but it can be if I can't let go of my expectations and desires related to "communicating" or "connecting" with others. When I got neti, neti, I surpassed 99.999% of everyone on the planet in understanding. And this doesn't make me very "attractive" to others less informed. In fact I am a sort of pariah. Not unlike when I was a child and the other kids were scared of me and didn't accept me because I so much "smarter" then they; except in this case about a 100 times worse.
As a human who is still mired in the illusion of "separation" from my fellow humans, I continue to try and connect. To "make" a connection that is already there and has never been broken. Of course this is foolishness and striving after nothing. But it is part of the last vestige of my "ignorance" and will eventually fade into non-existence. Yoga wise I continue to try and connect with others and this I can do in bhakti/karma yoga but as a jhani I can not expect anyone to know what I know or go where I go. And yet I must still reconcile my perception of the "oneness" that I "know" is real. It's kinda like when you are growing your hair long. There is this point where its not short but its not long enough to stay out of your eyes, irritating you and making you look like crap :-) You might say that I am a "tweener". Aware of the essential "fiction" of the world I have created, but not yet firmly accepting or established in what is True. Perhaps you can relate.
Of course this is all painful, frustrating, frightening and really sucks! But as they say, "this to, shall pass." And this I know; there will be as many life times as is required for me to get it. So the prospect of , heaven, hell or "annihilation" is not real and I should not fear it. Yet the DNA of my vehicle has a strong influence, hence the importance of hatha (control of the body), meditation (control of the mind) and the general building, cleansing and maintenance of my temple. ;-)
So communication? Please... You might as well just try to do the best you can expressing who and what you are. Throw it out there. Share. If someone connects or benefits from what you share, great. Many will

not. Some will, but will not realize the significance for a long time. Some will get it in an instant but this will be a rarity. For a while you will enter what may feel like the loneliest place in the universe but this can only take you to the real self and to awareness of the connection that can never be broken; to Yoga.

It is easy on the usenet to react viscerally to statements as well.

First I read your post. Next I looked up the word "viscerally" on dictionary.com Next I did a google search on "spiral dynamics" and sorted thru the myriad organizations and off-shoots for a basic introduction to SD, which I downloaded and haven't read yet, Whew, it's a lot of work trying to understand what you and Dave (CATEGORICAL FRAMEWORKS and SUPERIMPOSITION, there's another couple hours of study:-) are trying to say. Then I sat down and started composing a response, after having thought about how I reacted to your post and what I wished to communicate to you about my reading it.
It takes work to communicate effectively especially if you are going to include all the info needed for the reader to comprehend. Otherwise it takes work for the reader to fill in the "blanks". Either way it's work. Some people don't like work and find it much easier to fill in the blanks with something they make up :-)
BTW, I think I have a simpler system for understanding human interactions/dynamics. It's binary, 0 or 1. Its on or its off. Any given person can only be motivated to act in one of two states. In Love (on) or fear (off).

Comm. should be easy to understand,it should be direct. There should not be any need any deatiled background...

"Should" is a word that should be eliminated from everyone's vocabulary, then I think there would be a lot more understanding in the world :-)

If somebody is just looking to have the answers to all of the mysteries of the world dumped into their lap, I don't work that side of the street -- I leave that for the Charlatans.

Hey, watch who you're calling a charlatan... I dump the secrets of the Universe into people laps all the time :-)

Ooops... at least I gave you a capital "C"! ;->

I'm afraid you're making a powerful argument for my POV :-)

Without "should" we have no ethics!

You mean no guilt, shame and false expectations?

Without "should" we have no goals to set for ourselves!

You mean we would have to pay attention to "now" instead of fantasizing about some future which will never exist?

Without "should" we have no critical analysis!

You mean we would have to take responsibility for who we are and how we act right now without backpedaling, second guessing and wishful thinking? And without the "judgment" of others who were/are not in our shoes. Still sounds like a good word to sh*t-can to me ;-) Along with the "biggest" word in the English language, "if".

2007

January

Props

(props)

i am having a battle with my yoga teacher over props.

First off. I agree 100% with what you've said and how you arrived there :-) I feel the same way and because I learned from a Hittleman book, I was taught the same way. For me it's an issue of confusing the journey with the destination. The journey is here and now and the destination, can not and will not ever exist.
Have you checked out http://www.sivananda.org/ They are in three major cities in Canada. They teach real yoga and do it really well.
How about picking up a Hittleman book if you haven't already. Perhaps Yoga Self-Taught, by Andre van Lysebeth. These are both excellent sources for "self-directed" study, where one relies as much on the inner teacher as the outer.
I can tell there are few people as good as you at most things. Why should it be any different with yoga? How can you expect other's to learn, process and teach at the same level you do? So find a book or two written by someone who is equal to your intelligence but exceeds your experience and training. Learn from them and then "pass" them and go find another to meet your expanded needs. Eventually you will left with only you and the Source to learn from :-) And this is where any good teacher will try to take you. No honest teacher would hinder your expansion because they could not keep up, they would send you to another teacher.
Maybe you would like Lilias Folan. I just caught a couple of seconds of her on TV the other morning. She's awesome. I remember watching her as a child. I remember she was very calming and graceful. She still looks wonderful. Lilias! Yoga Gets Better with Age by Lilias Folan
I am certain you have more then enough skill and experience to take up self-study/practice. A mat, a quiet place and some fresh air is all that's needed. And if you were really intent on doing yoga you wouldn't even need those :-) Nice to hear from you. A reality check around here once in a while, is appreciated.

An ancient saying: the knowledge found in books stays in books...

Oh, if it's ancient it must be correct. :-(Please...

OK a saying I just made up: I read it on the Internet, so it must be true...

Well if you read it on the Internet... Why didn't you say so? Then it must unquestionably be true :-)

i have read books on yoga but find it hard to learn from them.

Perhaps its the book... Have you tried Hittleman, Indra Devi or Lysebeth? These can be had for pennies at the used paperback store or on ebay and they were written prior to the mass commercialization of Hatha. Two of these authors are American and one French. They all have classic Indian training. Their books are intended for "self-learners" and accommodate the culture, time constraints and sensibilities of the western mindset.

Intuition

(Searching for Jo)

I am trying to track down a fantastic yoga teacher that I used to know so that I can re-join her classes.

...

Nice and friendly as this poster seems, a word of caution is, unfortunately, in order. There are stalkers, ex-husbands, rejected lovers and so on, who may ask in newsgroups or anywhere just to find the whereabouts of their victim.

For this reason, I hope that anyone who knows where Jo is, instead of telling Chris, will let Jo know that she is being sought after, and let her decide what should be done.

Chris, I hope you don't take this personally. If you are not the kind of person to do such things, please not to read this post..

700e, Unfortunately, your point is well taken! Thanks for the reminder.

*Are you normally ridden with paranoia? Projecting? Incidentally how much of the above is about *you* rather than the heroic attempt to save a yoga teacher from ill-harm? May I suggest you contemplate more thoroughly Patanjali's idea of non-violence? Creepy.*

Yours then would be Chris under another 1st post nick? I'm thinking 700e hit the nail right on the head... Whoa... Intuition is a an amazing power.

Uncanny, innit? <grin> S.

Tis indeed...

Courtesy

(Alt.Yoga : New submission rules. Purpose: collecting opinions.)

It is clear, that we have no glue why someone is sending the message and we can reply in 100 ways, still not answering to the purpose of the topic, as we are making ourselves the purpose.

1. Proposed listings of the topic's purpose. a. Advertising (submitting a link to material printed elsewhere) b. Criticizing (almost all Puma's posts) c. Expressing personal experience or believes (not to be criticised) d. Asking for additional information. e. Redefining widely accepted concepts (must be well researched) f. Collecting opinions of alt.yoga group members g. Redefining the purpose of the topic. (some personal experience may be presented for advertising purpose)

Please add some of yours. and be gentle :)

...

Therefore, you are very kind by nominating almost all my posts being """Criticizing""" actually my posts are not criticizing, they are indicative of CHEATERS, FRAUDS,and false yogis/yoginis...

...

i don't know, narayana, you might have trouble implementing this. i actually don't know the purpose and exactly what i expect when i post sometimes, but i almost always get something i need and can use.

I appreciate your thoughtful and well presented idea. I agree with everything Nancy said.
I would add, that the necessary guidelines for having an effective and civilized discussion on alt.yoga have been around for many years. Collectively they are referred to as "netiquette." and amount to what is by convention considered common curtesy on the network. From time to time I will encourage others to follow these rules, but I can only ask (and nicely at that :-)
I have seen large groups and lists use the conventions you describe. However these are all "moderated" and have membership requirements. If one doesn't comply others can "rat" you out and you could be ejected from the group. I agree with Stu, when he said these groups tend to have an "in bred" quality to them, which can discourage independent discussion. In addition they were large groups with hundreds of posts per day. So a system of efficiently reviewing posts is an absolute necessity.
I am thankful that we are getting 4-5 posts a day around here. It's been rather "slim pickins" lately :-) I wouldn't want to do anything to discourage discussion, especially from potential new members.

I do however find it difficult to follow a discussion when the topic is changed within a thread and/or when people wish to make a point by changing the thread label. But this is easily solved by taking "off-topic" or substantially different discussion to a new thread. And by not changing a thread label unless it is really important for clarification and you are the original creator of the thread.
I personally don't appreciate discussion cross-posted to groups with an antipathy towards yoga. It seems to create pointless and antagonistic debate with those who have no interest in alt.yoga or any intention of altering their views or ideas concerning yoga. It seems to me to be little more than a "trolling" technique. Another ploy to appeal to and provoke the base nature of others is to discuss politics, sex or religion. None of which have any real meaningful relationship to yoga.
I will add this idea to the faq project outline.

Enlightenment

(Trance : The practice and the pitfalls)

Trance can not awaken you / help you realize union.

...

Which is why samadhi is referred to as the "fourth" state of consciousness, turya.

...

It is certain that Samadhi Is a TRANCE„„Because it is an outcome of a loop„, and

...

It is like saying - you already are Enlightened, there is nothing to seek. It is true, but doesn't really help most seekers.

...

Everybody is different and everybody must find the way for themselves!

Dave, Hey, if I ever get an opportunity to come visit, remind me not to ask you for directions :-)

Howdy Jared! That's what Mapquest and Qigong are for! ;->

...

How many people who met Jesus could have learned (woken up) from him and didn't? Even his students, the so call "apostles" were clueless and denied him repeatedly. Then they went on to create an abomination (religion) of what he taught, just like the followers of Buddha, Mohammed and Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. We must all discover the Truth for ourselves. It can not be given to us by anyone else. Jesus said it. Buddha said it. MMY said it. God damn it, everyone who has ever "got it" has said it. Yet no one, but no one, listens... Hmmm... I guess it's just like they say. You must "realize" it for your self.
I'll give you a hint. "It's" not a psychic state of any sort. "It" does not belong to the phenomenal world; it is spiritual in nature. "It" can not be seen, quantified, nor qualified. "It's" an "awareness; an acceptance" of that which is True. "Knowing it", changes nothing. Nothing at all. However fear becomes much more difficult to create, in that it no longer washes with what is known to be True :-)

If you're truly awake, you have the sidhis. They may be unimportant to you, but they are there.

This is a very common misconception. Sidhis are powers manifested on the material planes. They are not "spiritual." They are skills/powers to be learned, practiced and perfected, just like any sports. Just because you are enlightened doesn't mean you get all the sidhis. There are those who "know" football and yet they can not run down the field with any special speed or skill. A coach may "know" skating inside and out but not be able to skate anything like those they teach. "Knowing" and "enlightenment" and "possession" and/or "facility" of the sidhis are not same.

And no-one learns to take a hike through a forest and have animals spontaneously come up to them. That's ahimsa --the spontaneous radiation of non-violence due to enlightenment.

Sure they can. How do you spell Steve Irwin? Ahimsa can be learned and practiced. Both before "enlightenment" and/or after. It is no great mystery. When you are unafraid and therefore of no threat to any animal, they will approach you. They're just like people that way. They are intelligent and interested in their environment. But their natural survival mechanisms are very sensitive to threatening "vibes." If those vibes aren't there then they will interact. Just like people. I am here as living proof, to tell you that one may be "awake", "realized" and as judged by any human value system, still be a perfect piece of crap... Realization or enlightenment, if you wish, is not a particular "attainment" or "state of being," it is an "acceptance" and/or an "awareness." If you wish to perfect the "vehicle," this can be done before or after "realization". They are not synonymous. The Eternal YOU, however is already perfect and can not be improved upon. In Truth, there is nothing to attain. If you understand what I am saying, you will either agree or you don't or you have some idea of your own which partially corresponds to mine. A thoughtful and honest response is appreciated. A dismissive or defensive response is not helpful, to you or anyone else, contemplating and struggling with understanding these ideas. "Enlightenment" is not a contest or a "prize" or something you can "acquire." Realization is an "awareness" of and "alignment" with what is True. That one spends 35 years trying to attain the unattainable, does not mean you are any closer (or farther away) to "realization" than you were the day you started your search.

> *It's not a search, and while it isn't a thing to be attained, it is a physical state of the nervous system, just as waking, dreaming, sleeping, and samadhi are.*

What is not a search?

> *Enlightenment, ala what I am talking about.*

Lawson,, I for one am not playing any kind of game. When I ask a question, it's because I would like an answer. What you replied to me meant nothing to me so I asked for clarification. What you have replied to my request for clarification is equally meaningless. If you are unwilling or unable to communicate with me, please just say so. I don't wish to waste your time or mine. Nor that of the people reading these exchanges.Really, I am serious. I'm trying to have an amiable and intelligent exchange here. If you are uninterested, just say so. You see, I do not yet express the sidhi clairvoyance so I am reliant on your forthrightness.

...

I appreciate your lengthy and mostly respectful response :-) I'm sorry you felt you needed to repeat all the scientific stuff. A one or two sentence summation of your beliefs about me would have been sufficient. I am familiar with this science stuff having followed a number of threads on this topic and being of a rather scientific bent myself. However I was able to glean (I believe) the intention of your comments. If I am wrong by all means let me know.

> *OK, for me, enlightenment is a state (or a series of related states or modifications of states) of consciousness that are based on the physical functioning of the brain.*

Ok, let's see if I understand you correctly. You believe enlightenment is a physical and/or psychic state which can be quantified by measurement of the human body and facilitated by practice of certain physical/psychic exercises such as those discussed in Patanjali's yoga sutras. You believe "enlightenment" is very rare and can only happen to very special people.

I heartily agree that by your standard, I am certainly not "enlightened". I also believe by your standard there are very few humans who reach this "state" of "enlightenment." Your standard seems to be consistent with the historical and modern religious and scientific powers to be. Whose interest it is to have "enlightenment' be a very rare and special thing, that only they can help you achieve. It is also consistent with man's fear driven mayic tendency to ignore the obvious and worship the extraordinary.

Me, I believe "realization" or "enlightenment is a spiritual manifestation and can not be qualified nor quantified. A "spiritual awakening", if you will. However it can be "reported" and/or "described," as well as recognized in others. I believe "enlightenment" is in the natural progression of man as a spiritual being and as such it can not be produced nor attained it can only be allowed. I believe that anyone can

be enlightened the moment they accept (know) themselves as such and without any training, arduous exercises or religious or scientific permissions. Although, in my case lot's of pain and adversity seemed to help :-) I believe that "enlightenment" is a function of deep honesty and acceptance of what is "True." I agree with Eric that "enlightenment" is much more prevalent then commonly believed. And beyond the fact that it is the most important thing any human can know, "enlightenment" or "realization" is really no big deal. Nothing changes, except one's "knowing."
[snip for later processing]

If your physical body isn't showing the physical signs of the physical state of consciousness, then you simply are NOT in that state of consciousness, no matter what you enjoy claiming.

Of course I never claimed (in joy or otherwise) to be in the state you refer to as "enlightenment." I have said many times that in a given moment (I have described that moment here) I realized who and what I am and that I refer to this as "God realized." I am "enlightened" because I know (not suspect, wish, theorize or believe) there is God. That the only existence is God and that all that exists, is of and as God. That "I" am One with All. My currently manifested mind body and soul are having a bit of a struggle catching up to and aligning with what "I" know, but its coming along. And I don't doubt I will reach the state you refer to as "enlightenment" eventually. However by that time I may already be creating, maintaining and destroying universes. Doesn't really matter. I know now all that need be known to bring my "vehicle" into to alignment with and expression of my divine nature. For me yoga now is all about yama/niyama, all the rest is just a device for realizing what I have already realized. I also believe that as long as we hold these two very different views of "enlightenment" that we will continue to have a situation where I can understand you but you can not understand me. This is most unfortunate because I am telling the Truth and I would be delighted to have you share it with me :-)
..
Yes I understood that you were characterizing my "knowing" as intellectual. You said that in the first sentence. [> >> Everything you said was an intellectual knowing.>>>] Then you went on to talk about containers and content. This is the reference to which I don't understand how it corresponds you statement that my knowing is intellectual. What is "content" as opposed to "container?"

"You must give up everything, even your love of God, in order to know God," as one classic Christian mystic put it.

Yes this is one possibility. I have read many others. I think its ironic (funny really) that after chiding me for trying to use words to describe what I know as enlightenment. You would then also use words to point out that my notion is incorrect and yours is correct.

>You used a lot of words to describe something that you KNOW in the intellectual sense of the word. ENlightenment is indescribable, not because it is too complicated, but because words are limited to describing things: objects of attention. Enlightenment isn't about an object of attention.

My "knowing" is experiential, not intellectual. My attempt to describe it to you is necessarily "intellectual" because we are communicating in words. Since apparently you have not experienced what I am describing, you could not relate in any other way then intellectually. Perhaps some poetry is in order. I often see it used to try and describe the "indescribable." Or at least to sneak around the "left brain" snares and touch the heart directly :-)

Experiential is a lousy word to use in the context of enlightenment.

I think we gave it the "old college try". However after what I feel was constructive discussion, I don't feel like I know you any better or that I have gained anything by the exchange. So I will bow out and free up your resources (and mine) for hopefully more fruitful exchanges. Thank you for your time and effort. I genuinely appreciate it...

Neti Pot
(Neti pot)

So I have my annual christmas/new years cold and I am trying to avoid drugs and the like. Any advice on purchasing a neti pot? Is there really any difference between one and another for a device that basically allows me to sniff saltwater?

I bought a neti pot from these people http://www.healthandyoga.com/sinus.html (also a cotton yoga mat) and I am happy. I also got the copper tongue scraper. I don't suppose there is much difference between these things. I think that I would prefer a ceramic style to the stainless for aesthetic reasons. But I think the roomy Stainless is probably easier to clean and a bit more practical. Another option is to learn the technique where as you dip your face into a bowl of salty water and use your epiglottis to draw the water into the nasal cavities. This I suppose is more "traditional" yogic. There's a version of taking an enema which is similar in that you wade into a body of water and use abdominal contractions to draw the water in. I have yet to seriously try either of these kriyas. Along with the swallowing of 16 feet of 3" wide muslin cloth to clean the stomach, throat, etc. Although I believe all of these things have tremendous health benefits, I am still a bit frightened to try these on my own. Sivananda yoga centers have kriya weekends and classes where they teach these things and I think that's the way to go.
I have yet to get the habit of using the neti pot. When I do get sick and I try to use it, it seems to do nothing more then plug me up and irritate me more. I am thinking it is very much a "preventative" habit and that once you have the cold, not much use. I'd be interested to know if anyone else has had luck with an active cold. Seems like it should help.

hmm, Well, i seem to be stuffed in the morning when I wake up, and it gradually clears out.

That's everyday for the last twenty years for me. Sounds more like allergy then a cold. And if it happens at the same time every year (around the holidays) it may be something you are eating, that you normally wouldn't. I have read that alternate nostril breathing is good for helping clear the sinus'. However like using the neti pot it has never seemed to help me in an active cold.
With regards to neti, I would mention that it is important to clear completely all the water by forceful exhalation. If you don't have experience with it, I am sure there are faqs and such on the internet for the proper procedure. I believe there was one on the site I referenced. They sent a short booklet with the neti pot but it did not present the more advanced methods. There are several different levels of irrigation you can achieve depending on the technique you use and your experience. I have not pursued, nor attained the more "advanced" irrigation of the upper sinus cavities. Although I do remember as a child, going to the ocean and taking some pretty violent tumbles in the waves. This having what I imagine to be a similar effect of clearing the sinuses. Although there was also inversion, sudden impact to the cranium and silica abrasives involved. Ouch! :-0

Rao
(Why should they (or you) care?)

Rao, I don't think we have spoken before. At least not with this nic. Welcome to alt.yoga :-) I hope you don't mind my dropping into your conversation, there were some points of interest here for me. I take it from the nature of some of your comments, I am speaking with a jnani. Please correct me if I am wrong.

Sorry. I should have added a smiley to my comment. I was joking, of course. It is not my take that is important. It is what Patanjali means that is Vital.

I am wondering why you feel it is not your "take" that is important? Patanjali is long dead, did not speak a language I speak and has been translated (and no doubt misquoted/interpreted) for millennia. Besides he's not here participating (unless you or 700e are he :-) Personally I would rather hear your synthesis, then somebody's approximation of Patanjali's.

Vivekananda says that each person is borne with all that is necessary to discover himself. I agree with that.

Now Vivekananda wrote in English and I can understand it. I have a fair idea of what he was saying. He was also a masterful writer (communicator) and no doubt in my mind, "direct connected" with the source.

There is no point in reinventing the wheel. (it is the same with Patanjali too).

But then if each of us must discover himself, isn't that exactly what we must do: reinvent the wheel? After all what works for me may not work for you or the next guy. Seems to me there must be a million different wheels needed. Or was that "spokes" ? :-)

I like to think that I provide the sparks to whom I feel are carrying cotton, wood etc(using a metaphor!) so that they can alight fire, examine the surroundings and choose their path. It is that simple.

I think we all would like to think of ourselves as doing that, don't you? But tell me, how is it you come to "light sparks?" Why and with what knowledge, understanding or consciousness? What are your qualifications, experience, process, learning, study, path, etc. I don't hear any of these reflected in your posts. I don't think it is fair or even reasonable to expect anyone to follow what you say without knowing anything about who you are. Do you? Does that sound like "discriminative thinking?" Your advise to "contemplate, etc" will always be correct in a generic sort of way and would apply to 99% of all the posts on this board. I suppose my question is who exactly are you to be giving this advice, uninvited and out of the clear blue sky?:-)

I do not believe in forcing /even advocating my views on others. It would amount to what some people have been doing since over last 2000 years; converting others.

I doubt if you asked all those you referred to as "forcing their views" that they would identify their efforts as such. While they may admit to trying to save and/or convert others, in accordance with the explicit instructions of their scripture. I for one have a great deal of respect and admiration for those walking the walk - of the talk - of their religious beliefs; even if I don't agree with them.
The above comments also reminded me of a couple current threads along these lines (people, describing themselves as "enlightened" or "realized". Were your comments here made with awareness of or relation to those? Finally regarding the above quote, I noticed you did "instruct" 700e to study this or that and reflect on it. Sounded a lot like a summary command (forceful) to me, although in all fairness you did say please. No "why" or "wherefore" offered. That you happened to have said it to one of the kindest and most civilized persons on this board is evidenced by his taking your "suggestion" in stride and reflecting back on it. Possibly you two are friends or have a relationship unidentified in the thread. Me, I don't recognize your "nic" and it doesn't appear you have much posting history under it. At least not according to the Google database. However I did notice you have a relationship with howdydave. Otherwise I am afraid I have no idea why anyone would follow your suggestions especially as there was no justification inherent in the context of the post. Generally my experience has been that it is good to have a few "getting to know you" exchanges in a usenet group before launching into giving advice to very knowledgeable, long term group members.

> Each person should choose his path for himself through thinking, reflecting > and concluding(discriminative thinking)

Without a doubt. But I can't see how withholding your experience and perspective can be helpful in this regard. If all who have gone before us where to have done that, then we would still be in caves. I believe most people are hesitant to describe "mystical" or "enlightened" experience because they don't wish to defend themselves against the predictable noise made by the unenlightened. I know I have been hesitant and very judicious with even alluding to that type of experience. There is wisdom in Mathews admonition regarding pearls. One Jesus clearly ignored. However I think it was a great deal more dangerous in that era as it may still be in some parts of the world today. My apologies in advance should you take offense to any of my comments or questions, they are not meant to be such :-)

I am just a traveller in the path of Patanjali's Yoga.

OK, then you are a Raja Yogi ?

Rest one has to figure out for oneself.

As I understand it the yoga sutras are a "general" overview of raja yoga and are not meant to be the final word. The "details" of what is presented are to be given by a guru. If I understand it correctly, the fact is we can't figure it out for our self. These techniques are very esoteric and require specific knowledge and experience which is not intuitive. These have been explored and developed over many thousands of years of serious scientific endeavor. Just because this knowledge is transferred from guru to student doesn't make this information any less sophisticated. Are you going to figure out for your self how to make an atomic bomb. No you are not. Even if all of the general guidelines and explanation of the process was provided you. At some point someone is going to have to tell you something you don't know. Or else you are going to have to rediscover all the existing information your self. Not likely!

We are not reinventing the wheel. From the implements already available we are trying mould our (individual) wheels.

I don't hear any answer here :-(

I was only responding to S's 'However, I would like to hear your takeon this verse. With lots of lateral thinking, too, of course.'

No lateral thinking required. I reviewed 700e's excellent recitation with my commentary (I.K. Taimni) and can see no need for any correction.

It would seem that it is important for you to know the cooks qualification before you eat.

Yes you are correct. I think it happened when I was about six years old. Unknown to me my little brother thought it would be a good idea to piss in my canteen. When I came along and shook it, I assumed it contained water, so I took a big swallow. At that moment a "skeptic" was born :-) So if I use your analogy I would say, that if I returned home and found a meal prepared (yogic advise) and placed on my door step and I didn't know who it came from or why, no matter how beautiful, delicious smelling or tempting, I would up-end it in the trash. However in the case of your gratuitous and unannounced advice to 700e, I did not trash it. I simply asked for clarification, which you seem not to want to supply.

For me 'the proof of pudding is in eating'. I never ' instruct' any body to do this or that except to think for themselves. If one does not like it the answer is in the title, 'Why should they (or you) care?'

[snip] a bunch more questions and comments I posed which I guess will have to go unanswered :-(

I do have a good knowledge of Patanjali's sutras. If it is a bad idea to 'give advice to very knowledgeable, long term group members ', well, I have done it.

I didn't say any such thing. I was speaking about common internet courtesy. [Snip] another batch of questions and comments which were soundly ignored.

I am for withholding my experience and perspective is because it is always better to follow the Masters(Patanjali) instead of getting side tracked into smaller and individualised experiences. If you are learning painting would you be interested in learning painting from a fellow painter when you have the opportunity of learning the techniques of Master Painters?

There is only One, in my book. Each individual contains the Whole. But in the case of this comment I refer to the above.

No offence. It just hurt a little, showing I have to practice more of detachment (Vairagya) Rao

I appreciate your honesty! And it shows you're alive and you are human. God is Life. And I would be very interested how you practice Vairagya... There is lot's of discussion about developing this and precious little advice on how to go about that. I figure that what yama-niyama is for.Thanks for being a good sport! I hope we can continue this conversation. There are a great many very interesting points (for me) to be explored.Warmest regards

I have no wish to be labelled.

OK

I have no quarrel with your understanding of Patanjali's Yoga /Raja Yoga.

OK

Yes, the intention is to rediscover Self through the help of Patanjali's Sutras. May be not likely but I would try to do so as I am not sure it is impossible.

OK

About my practice of Vairagya it is the same as Patanjali's prescription. It works better. (chapter I Sutra no15)

OK

Excuse me about not answering comments/questions. They merely produce heat(unpleasantness) without any light (knowledge).

OK, I guess that pretty well sums it all up for me. Thanks :-)

Hurt

[SEND] <Dateline USA> #Emotional Tsunami Buries Alt.Yoga In Sea of Hurt# <injured> <?>

Apparently something happened in this newsgroup. It was once compassionate souls. It is now filled with a sea of hurt. ~Stu

Stu... I understand you are in the entertainment business, but don't you feel you're being just a bit dramatic :-) Please clarify your comments. And would you be specific so we don't have to wonder just what you are saying and about whom. Really, we're yogis. We can handle the Truth. In fact some of us live for it :-) A little honest exchange around here couldn't hurt anyone. Even the new people :-)

Shantage and blackmailing and killfiling,LOWERING DOWN,etc. Are those words in accord with YOGA anyway? These are the acts Puma is facing here by Stu and some others.

Puma, let me wait a bit and see what Stu has to say before I respond...

However when Puma's posts turn into outright flames? Do we turn the other cheek? Or take a stand?

...

Hi Stu, First, thanks for the accolade. I can understand your taking a hard attitude towards someone who denigrates your Sadhana, especially someone like Puma who really has no understanding of the meditation technique he critizes so vociferously.

Silliness

Poetic Response [Purpose: Info, Entertain] (Criticism Encouraged :-)

After due consideration, here is my response to what I see as some of the recent silliness around here :-) I'm a poet, I know it, I hope I don't blow it. -Bob Dylan

Yoga is...

Not crusading against, with or for; neither competition or cooperation can open the door.

Not with criticism, praise, name calling or compassion, nor cowardice, courage, or whatever's in fashion.

Hurt or joy, penance or pride, right or wrong, its all the same ride.

For all these must exist for each other to sustain; here to divert, challenge and entertain.

Yoga is Absolute and has no opposite. All that exists is in, as, and of It.

I Am Yoga...

This is Truth. There is no other. I must accept or I must suffer.

My choice; not yours, his or hers. Not good or evil or even Natures.

Now...

It does both (Info & entertain). Cool.

...

it has been kinda silly around here lately. just labelling it as such helps me enormously.

I'm glad. It was helpful for me as well. Sometimes, I have a tendency towards taking my self (and others) a bit too seriously. It's a fear thing :-)

Summed it up quite nicely. I had a tough time finding your lovely poem hidden in all the spam.

...

Stop rhyming! It went out a long time ago. Don't even attempt it unless you already have written lots of good non-rhyming poetry, and you are able to do it without the reader even being too painfuly aware of it. second, this is crap. work on it please. Don't make points, evoke feeling. Geez! This is the kind of thing that drives people away from open mic readings in droves. Sorry but it's true. He could improve by reading lots of good poetry, and learning what it's like.

First date

(first date)

jared, you wanted to know my impressions of the sivanenda centre's classes.

Thank you, I appreciate it a bunch.

i think that trying a new yoga studio or new class is similar to a first date.

Now there was a delightful movie, "Fifty First Dates" :-)

there's always the possibility and hope that it will be good and might lead to a lifelong association, but too much time was spent evaluating and familiarizing because it was the first time to really relax and enjoy. when she chants, should we join in? (no) which version of sun salutation does she use? (same as me). how fast? (very). are questions welcome during class (when necessary). can i do this stuff? (a lot of it).

Wow, you do have a way of packing a ton of information into a couple sentences. My first introduction to chanting was at a Sivananda ashram. Scared me to death. I was (and still am) quite shy about expressing this type of touchy-feely singing stuff. Terrified is more to the point. We chanted as a group (20-30) after meditating and satsung. I was afraid to chant but more afraid not to so I did the best I could. The cool thing is when I didn't die from chanting and after no one got up and pointed a finger at me and said what a lousy job I did, I was really quite moved. After some days there, as I and everyone else I suppose, became more comfortable, at times the chanting became absolutely celestial. There was a vocal quality in the group which surpassed the best of the individual chanters (some who were really good). It was awesome. For minutes at a time it was as if we were all one voice and the effect was electric (pranic). I don't know how they chant in a yoga center as I have never been. I hope you get a chance to group chant.

you were right, its good yoga, and they know their stuff. no props were used, or even visible.

I was at the ashram during a "teacher's training" course. I was not involved in the training I was there in a support role. It looked really arduous to me the amount of training they were going through on a daily basis. Not only in asana but in all aspects of yoga. Many of them were really good when they got there and some so so. But they all seemed to attain a much higher level of expertise and confidence by the time they left. I was impressed. Before I left there I had been touched by human beings on a level I had never experienced in my life. It was clear to me that there is much going on in the world which is outside of the ability of our "regular senses to perceive.
I recall speaking with a young women, perhaps in her late teens or early twenty's. Visually speaking, if anyone I have ever seen whose appearance I would describe as "angelic" it was her. I must have said something which "touched" her because as see was listening, tears just started to flow from her eyes. There was no convulsing, blinking, choking, sniffles, red eyes, hands wiping, apologies, self consciousness or anything. The relaxed and glowing smile on her face didn't change in the least, there were just tears, flowing like water. It was the most amazing thing. I have never cried like that but I knew in an instant I was looking at "real" tears for the first time in my life. Not tears of pain, resistance or fear but the purest expression of joy and acceptance I have ever seen. For all I know she might have "realized" her True Self, right at that moment. I know I was changed forever.

puma would be glad to know all the teachers and staff are volunteers.

Alas I'm not sure any thing can make puma glad these days :-(

my whole body hurts today so i guess i did things i havent done before. that's good.

Please Nancy take it easy. The point is not to reach the pose but in how you approach the pose. No need for pain. The body will take the position when it is ready and when you can skillfully will the body into the position, relax and allow gravity to take your body the rest of the way. No need to push, this is not the purpose or intent of yoga. Try not to get it confused like all the youngsters out there who think it's about looking good and doing it "right" and reaching the goal and other such nonsense. If you ever feel pressured to be anything but be calm, relaxed, focused and accepting of where you are right now, then I would suggest working on letting that pressure go. If it's external then continue your search for another teacher. I don't recall the Sivananda people being in the least bit pushy. Maybe they just left me alone because, I wasn't very good, or I was older then most or perhaps they sensed I knew what I was about and would ask when I needed a push.

there seems to be a spiritual bent to it. there is an alter in the room, however the chanting is not in english so i'm not sure.

Yes there is a spiritual bent. Yoga is a spiritual practice. Again I don't recall them being the least bit pushy about the spiritual aspects. But they do address them. I think they will provide you as much or as little of the spiritual aspect as you want. Sivananda was a Vendantan, which is a spiritual understanding the transcends (yet recognizes) all religions. In my feeling it gets right to the spiritual part without the dogma, divisive rhetoric and the exclusivity typical of most religions. I, who have no use for any religion was comfortable with their take. This was one of the things I was interested in getting your reaction to, as an agnostic.

> *people didnt seem very friendly. i'm not sure why that is or if it matters. could be serious yogi's are too focused to chit chat. maybe i'll become more focussed. could also be that i was not very friendly because i was busy taking it all in.*

Yes I noticed they can be a bit "serious." But I found after a while they were want to warm up and met many delightful people. On the other hand they are definitely made up of "humans" and come with all the faults and problems associated with those :-) However I think there is probably a little more focus on "dispassion", as Sivananda was a jnani. As opposed to gatherings at a Self-realization Fellowship Temple, which may be a bit "warmer" as Yogananda was a Bhakti.

> *i still need to figure out their structure. their website says they believe 12 basic poses reach all parts of the body and during the class we did only those 12 poses.*

They do have a couple of books which detail their entire system. The "nicest" yoga book I own is call "Yoga Mind & Body," Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Center. It's beautiful and quite informative. What some consider the yoga bible is called "The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga," by Vishnudevananda, who founded the Sivananda Yoga Centers. I'm sure they have some for sale or you can check amazon. They also have booklets on the chants if you would like to learn them.
As I remember it was funny about the chants. When I returned home I was humming and repeating some of the chants I had learned. They really have catchy tunes. Anyway, unknown to me the kids (5-7) must have been listening very closely because later as I was listening to them, they were chanting the same chants, word for word, with the proper tune. It was amazing. This is one of the ways I know there is a powerful attraction to certain words/sounds/etc. I didn't teach this to my kids, they just heard it and locked right into it.

> *does this mean i'll never do pidgeon again? i'll never do tree again?*

You've reached the age of majority, I suppose you could do a pigeon or tree just about anytime you felt like it :-)

> i wonder if each "open" class is the same regardless of timeslot and teacher. the other students knew exactly which pose was next and were part way into it by the time the teacher instructed us. maybe i need to start at their beginner classes to ensure i begin in their way. i could phone and ask, or i could go to a few different classes and then decide. i'll figure it out. thanks for the suggestion. nancy

I was delighted to hear about your experience and glad for an opportunity to share some of mine. I look forward to hearing more :-)

TM

(How much are fees for TM?)

> *In the late 1970s, the fee for basic initiation in the United States was $75. Now in 2006, the initiation fee is $2,500*
>
> *...*
>
> *In Mexico City, initiation fee is $350 USD and then there are many other courses. They Flying Yogi course is $1200 USD.*

Sirgerry, what is your interest in mantra?

Good question, I'm not specially interested in mantras,

Couple things. First is about mantras. If you have an interest in mantra or japa yoga, then I suggest you read Sivananda's discussion.http://www.dlshq.org/teachings/teachings.htm
If you don't have any particular interest in mantras but you are looking for meditation or mantra to "fix" you or provide you some "power" you think you don't have then I would say forget it. Don't waste your time. Doesn't work that way, for you or anyone. Better off expressing your energy in your music or something you have a passion for. You can see by some of the posts here that even after many years of mantras and meditation, that this doesn't necessarily buy peace of mind or serenity. In my experience (and opinion) cultivating the practice and attributes of yama/niyama is a much quicker and surer way to "inner peace."

but as a musician, I believe in the great power of sound, the vibration of the notes.

Yes, I agree the vibration of sound and especially music, is a very powerful expression of Love (Life-force/energy).

I think it all affects us when we hear a great voice, so I totally agree with what has been posted here recently about mantras curing disease and improving one's life.

It is not the notes themselves that "cure" or "improve" anything. It is a organism's "alignment" with the sounds which facilitate "healing." Because music and sound are so strong they can virtually "transport" an organism into "alignment." Like the rush of a powerful river, once in it you are going with that flow, whether you want to or not. But just like that river, once you step out of it, you are no longer effected. Music and sound can bring our entire being into alignment but only temporarily, same as drugs, alcohol and sex. It is an external effect on our material expression (body). The alignment we seek with yoga is an alignment of our the temporal expression of our body (vehicle) with our eternal spiritual reality. When the body, mind and soul are aligned with the "Truth" of our spiritual substance is when "healing," "curing" and "improving" happen.
This is a subtle but important point for a couple of reasons. No "healing" can take place because there is no "disease." What appears to us to be "sick" is the bodies "reaction" and feedback from our body that we are doing something to our body, mind or soul, which is unbalancing. When we characterize our bodies feedback as being something "wrong" or "bad", such as being sick, we deny the very wisdom which seeks to guide us. This is a common and very serious mistake. Believing that something from "outside" of us is "making" us sick, we look for something outside of us to "cure" or "improve" us.
I have never heard anyone responsible say that yoga (its self) will bring "enlightenment" or "spiritual awakening." But that diligent and deliberate practice of yoga helps train and direct the will towards "realization" of our "oneness." It is not the yoga which brings us to the Truth but the will to discover the Truth, which opens ours spiritual eyes.
"Enlightenment" is simple a "knowing" or "realizing" of what already is, right now. There is no going to, obtaining, improving, changing, earning or achieving anything concerning our True Self. This is why all the yoga, gurus, meditation, praying, or what have you, will never bring anyone to "enlightenment." There is only discovery and acceptance; realization and knowing. This is why healing is not a doing but an acceptance of what is True; that we are whole, healthy and perfect, right now. Always have been and always will be.
But why is it that people who do yoga become enlightened? Well the fact is the great majority don't. Probably just about the same number (as a percentage) as go to church and pray, or attend 12 step meetings, or fight in wars, or have near death experiences, or musicians who follow music to its core, or those who simply don't do a thing and just become "enlightened."

About TM, i was looking for a structured way to meditate, to take some lessons. I've meditated for 10 years on my own, reading books, and I felt it was time to improve my technique with some lessons,

Sometime structure can help, sometimes it is meaningless. My guess is that after 10 years of your own exploration, there won't be much "improving" to be done. You probably have as much meditation skill and facility as you need or want. Meditation is not a panacea or a must of any kind. The same focus can be reached in doing music, or helping people, or working in the garden. Nothing will bring you to "peace" and "enlightenment" except a "letting go" and "seeing." Which of course is much easier if our attention is focused in the "now" while meditating, playing music or snipping flowers. A hint as to which activity might be best or quickest, is how much you "love" it. Do what you love, is the quickest, most fun, most helpful and most powerful way to "enlightenment."
If you are looking for some relief from emotional, psychic or physical pain then I recommend yama/niyama as the best medicine. Karma and Bhakti yoga also. Depends what you are trying to do; run to or run from. If you are trying to run from who you are then meditation and just about every method you seek for relief will do damage (cause louder feedback) to you. If you are running to your Real Self, then getting outside of the "little self" by seeing yourself in everyone, helping others and learning to practice the expression of Love in every aspect of your life, will bring the quickest and most permanent relief. "Love is Letting Go of Fear." by G. Jampolsky is a book full of Truth along these lines. Cheap, informative and uplifting read, I recommend it highly.

the ones I considered was TM because it has somwhat of a reputation, but then, after reading further in the INternet and groups like this, I decided to look for something else.

I wouldn't put much stock in what you read around here (even me :-) I suggest concentrating on inward examination and finding the Truth for yourself. If you like yoga, then stick with the reading the good stuff written by people who know. Sivananda, Yogananda, Rashneesh, Hittleman, Emmet Fox, etc. And read lots of them. Always consider who the information is coming from. Do they have something you want. Do they exemplify the type of person you know you can be (are). You will start to hear the same things said over and over but perhaps in different ways. When you find some idea repeated like that then test if for yourself. Take no one's word for anything. Just about assertion made by anyone can be tested in your own life and you can determine whether it is True or not. If it can't be tested then dismiss it as bullshit. There's nothing mystical or magical or mysterious in this world. You can know it all. Any presentation which espouses "special" knowledge is just so much hype designed to pander to and manipulate the frightened, greedy and lazy. Learn to trust your heart it is the gateway to the most powerful force in existence.

Sometimes when I read your posts I get the impression that you are giving some sort of advices to others.

Yes that is correct. Do you mind?

Even the books you suggest as if they are really something!

And that they are!

I know Hittleman, Yogananda, and Osho very well.

Great! Then you should understand much of what I say, most of the time :-)

If one starts to follow their path, for sure the end is not be happiness.

I was looking over the last couple of posts I made and I can't see where I used the word "happiness." In fact I don't ever talk about happiness. Occasionally I will mention "unhappy" but only in terms of it being a consequence of not being in alignment with what I do talk about. Which is Truth, peace of mind, serenity, self dependence, Love, awareness and stuff like that. But never happiness.

Non of them were happy anyway...

Unless you knew them personally I don't see how you can know that.

Because things mostly are not as we see them from outside.

Some of us can see more clearly what is True, then others. Me, I favor the "thee shall know them by their fruits" test. Or what's also called, "the proofs in the pudding." The Love of each of these authors (and many more) have born a most delicious and life-affirming fruit in my life.
I hope that some day I can contribute to someone else even a fraction of what these souls (and others) have given me.

Cheat

(Cheaters and the Cheated...)

The cheating of people is an "effect." To try and rid the world of an effect is pointless and impossible. There will always be an effect appropriate to the "cause." In the case of people being cheated the cause is "greed." People wanting to possess what they don't deserve; what they have not worked or paid for. In the case of spiritual seekers, these are people who desire the fruits of a spiritual life without the spiritual work (yama-niyama). In any real spiritual training no one is taught meditation or asana until they are firmly grounded in yama-niyama. The whole idea of "defending" any spiritual practice completely and utterly misses the entire point of having a spiritual practice. The consequence can only be hate and discontent, fraud and insanity.
The wise can see that "messages" that people receive as a result of their breaking of the Universal rules of Love and Truth are quite appropriate and "perfect." The warring peoples of this planet will have peace when they themselves are peaceful and not a moment before. All those getting ripped off and driven to insanity are receiving in perfect measure the message they need to change their thinking and their hearts. Until they do, they can only expect the message (pain) to become louder and stronger. Plant weeds and you will reap weeds. Plant corn and you will reap corn. It is all Yoga and Yoga is perfect, so all is Perfect. Now!
All insistence to the contrary (which ever side one is on) is little more then childish whining with big grown-up consequences.
...
It is true that yoga may be learned and mastered without a moral underpinning. It is not true that the mastering of yoga or samadhi will automatically lead to high moral standards. There are plenty of stories of adept yogis who used their skills for evil. It is often referred to as "left-handed" or "dark yoga" My guess is, that it is far more common then the right-hand variety.
It is equally true that you can train an unhappy, maladjusted and abused child to fire a fully automatic weapon and with great skill and aplomb. For many purposes this child may make a fine weapon of terror. On the other hand, if what you want guarding your family is someone who is not likely to turn and kill you and then rape your wife and children, you may want to choose a balanced, well adjusted young person with a strong moral underpinning to train to use that weapon.

Rules

(alt.yoga : New submission rules.)

> *alt.yoga must be strictly used to post related to Yoga Teachings and Practices issues and nothing else.*
>
> *...*
>
> *Rules are for only YOGIS...If you may find any ...*
>
> *...*
>
> *i'm defnitely not yogi enough to follow narayana's rules. n*
>
> *...*
>
> *There are moderated groups for those who don't like the wild west style of the usenet. Fortunately my newsreader has a killfile option to weed out those who move off-topic or become offensive.*

Stu, my boy's mother had been instrumental in teaching me that whatever is hurting, irritating or pissing me off, is exactly where I need to look for something I am afraid of. And that I am holding onto something

that I need to let go of :-) If I had been able to somehow "filter-out" her hatred, I would have missed a fine opportunity to improve myself, while burning off a couple of life-times worth of karma to boot :-)

Jared, sometimes you are what you eat. Better to filter out the negative then become part of it. Besides even with the filters there are plenty obstacles offering their opportunities.

Freedom

(<Dateline:EUR-US> #Flame-War Erupts in Alt.Yoga. Local Strive Causes Tension#)

Freedom from spam, trolls and flame-wars comes from controlling ourselves, not others. Just as authentic freedom for an individual can only come from self-control. Any environment which appears to "trap" me is only an "effect." I am the "cause." When I change, my environment will change. This is Universal Principle.
Here on Usenet guidelines and suggestions can be helpful. Rules are useless.
Some suggestions:
If a message is cross posted from any other group; ignore it...
If a message is dismissive, inhumane or inflammatory; ignore it...
If a message comes from a known (or unknown) "troll;" ignore it...
If a message is advertising from a non-group member; ignore it...
If a message is "spam" (bandwidth abuse) of any sort; ignore it...
If you wish to respond to a cross-posted message do not continue the cross-posting; remove all but alt.yoga (or remove alt.yoga) from the distribution list...
Be polite...
If everyone who cares about amiable discussions in alt.yoga were to follow these simple restraints (this is an exercise in yama/niyama) then those who don't will find no meaning for their lives here.
Hatred and fear are lies. They only appear to have power by feeding off of the fear of others. Remove your energy, remove your fear and they will shrivel and disappear. It works this way in real life as well.

its been getting quite unpleasant around here. i wonder what newbies who wander in here with questions or just browsing for information must think of this group. i agree totally, no need to strike back, just remove my energy and fear and it will shrivel and disappear. it works in real life. it should work here too.

...

Narayana, I am very sorry that you have named my posts as SPAMS and putting myself on the same place with MAHARAJ...Plese be mindfull...

...

Among other things "spam" is changing another poster's "subject" heading. Something that some here seem quite comfortable doing. It is however "abusive" of bandwidth, provocative and really, really irritating and confusing to anyone else trying to follow the "action."
If one wants to ID a post as off-topic then a "OT" in the original subject header is not unreasonable. "Spam", "Ad", "Flame" can all be added in the front of a subject header as well, to give someone unfamiliar with the current postings of the group a "heads-up" as to its content. However even changing an original header a little bit should never be done lightly and should be taken very seriously. To completely change a subject header that someone else posted is arrogant and abusive. Even among friends is an ill-conceived idea. It is nothing more then an attempt to assault and beat another, by taking the "argument" into the subject headings forcing everyone else to watch. In my view, this lacks "honor."
There are no doubt good reasons to modify a subject heading for purposes of clarification or perhaps a change of subject. But any advantage, in my experience, is more then negated by the potential for abuse. Any substantial change of subject should be posted to another thread. If argument is the only purpose then it is better to drop it all together, sit quietly, take some slow, deep breaths and reach out to the Universe allowing your opponents fear and pain to enter your heart to be transformed into Love and returned...

Puma

(Alt.Yoga is yours, have a nice time)

I hereby would like to inform all the participants of (alt.yoga) that PUMA is leaving here. Just to make all happy... I hope no spams, no warnings about cheaters and charlatans will bother your good selves anymore. Take care , With compassion, Puma

I don't understand. Why must it be an "either" - "or" proposition? Is there no room for adjustments, accommodations, balance or a middle way?

Why can't you just stop posting your angry propaganda and just be the Yogi Puma we know and love? I still love the Yogi Puma. I am not fond of the other one. Talk about your practice, help other people with theirs, but don't spend unecessary energy on campaigning to be for or against anything.

...

puma this will not make me happy. you are a part of my alt.yoga experience. i've learned from you. on more than one occaision i've seen you very generously and compassionately reach out to people in ways i could not. please reconsider. nancy

You don't Impress me as some one without courage. Stay your course. It's what what God (Universe) wills... Accept it you son of a bitch! There are a very few of us...
Seemed to me what I wrote might not be clear or could easily be misinterpreted Let me clarify a bit :-) Stay your course. It's what what God (Universe) wills... This means: Do whatever you wish, come or go. What ever makes you happy. If you're happy, God is happy.
Accept it you son of a bitch! An idiomatic American expression, "Son of a bitch" is an endearing term when used between friends :-) In my use here it is ruffly the slang equivalent of saying "my friend."
Oh, and I agree with Nancy and Dave!

To all of you, I love you all, no matter what you think about me, Puma

...

sounds like your feelings have been hurt. I appologize if any of my posts contributed to that.

Where

(Introducing Monday Night Yoga class w/ Special guests (interdependent yogi))

NMSTZY YOGA MUSIC ACTIVISM 1/18/07 NW Bowdoin Place on the South side of the Tacoma screw House is first house on the left

Welcome to alt.yoga. And thanks for the invite :-)
If I wanted to attend, could you point out which hemisphere I might explore first. Perhaps indicate a region or continent. Maybe even a country. A state or section might make it even easier. And naming a city would really be cool. Knowing a neighborhood or section would be a very helpful and a great place to start asking passersby where I might find your address ;-)

February

Participation

(what do you want alt.yoga to be?)

ok, here's what i want alt.yoga to be for me - a place to access yogi's from all over the world, get opinions, ideas, information to round out my rather sparse yoga experience in toronto. - a source of info that tends to be more honest because its not attached to the money i pay to teachers and studios, who tailor their answers to ensure their financial success. i certainly dont begrudge them their financial success, but sometimes i just need an answer to my question, or several answers, or to be told the question is stupid. - i mean this in the nicest most positive way - this group gives me a chance

to be in the company of some weirdos and oddballs that i wouldnt run into in other areas of my life. i like this aspect and value it a lot. - sheer volume of information and knowledge represented here. - fun

what i want alt.yoga to be for others - a first step into yoga - welcoming, non-judgemental, informative - a source of ideas on how to resolve issues and dilemas in yoga practice or thinking - a community for discussion, referrals, opinions - fun

so, i'll hang around and try to ignore the crap, act as if its still a viable online community, try to keep an eye out for wandering newbies, and i'll stop in to puma's real-yoga. you guys are important to me so i'll make the effort.

Well Nancy, that's good to hear. I think I'll do likewise, for all that same reasons :-)

Infection

(is everyone doing what i'm doing?)

standing back and waiting till they go away? or is this how people want alt.yoga to be now? i miss the posts actually about yoga. should i be practicing detachment and let alt.yoga go?

It's great the hear from someone real!
I think alt.yoga has had what is analogous to an "autoimmune" episode. Of late individuals within the group have let loosed and attacked each other. Frustration, hurt feelings, resentment and anger (all expressions of fear) have been the result. The participation of all members was "injured." Potential new members, as well as some older declining members became discouraged and disengaged. A parasitic infection in the form of the flooding of cross-posted, off-topic, virulent hate-filled rhetoric from an uber-troll, set in. At the moment the group appears to be flat line :-(
Least ways, the group is very ill and as a result those individual parts, which are not continuing to battle each other, have withdrawn and are waiting the outcome of the "war." Ignoring the trolls is always good and the only real way to discourage them. An aggressive counter troll campaign in the form of filing complaints, building anti- troll awareness and making lots of interesting , on-topic posts requires energy, lot's of dedication and resolve. Something that is lacking when the "organism" is diseased and weakened. Associations in usenet groups are born, grow, mature and die just like the individuals which make them up. At the moment it seems the people who have been participating in alt.yoga are either still busy struggling with each other, are bored and moved on or are waiting to see what shakes out.
Me, I'm looking around and saying to myself, "WTF". What happened here? So I sit back and watch and wait to see what the "group" wants to do. This never has been (IMO) a very chatty or especially warm and fuzzy group. There are momentary bright spots, like when you post something :-) but for the most part the responsibility to keep the group going has fallen to a very few individuals. Some (most) of these individuals are antagonistic to each other in differing ways. When the effort of participating exceeds the rewards (attachment) of doing so, then the path of least resistance is to withdraw, or start fights, or bail and start another group, or whatever.

is everyone doing what i'm doing?

I suppose it depends on what your purpose is here in alt.yoga. If you are here for information about yoga, I think that is probably still available at least to the extent it was before :-) You just have to ask. If you are here for friends or fellowship, then as long as there are one of two of those still here then perhaps you'll want to stay on for awhile. If you have a "higher" purpose of some sort, as in seeing that others receive needed information and encouragement in life and on their yoga path, then you may wish to stay and help provide that. Detachment does not dictate whether we engage or withdraw. Detachment is about letting go of the desire for the fruits of engaging or withdrawing (or any action/non-action).I for one am up for anything. And I was delighted to see your "call into the dark" Any suggestions?
BTW, its interesting to me that just about the time alt.yoga turned in on itself, google changed the group interface format. I wonder if this is in any way a factor. I'd be real interested in having access to google's user stats to see if there is any kind of negative trend since they switched. Google is not Usenet, which is

an entirely different/independent system. But google is so huge that it may be that he largest percentage of users is accessing usenet through google, which could create a trends in participation in the usenet system.

I am visiting this forum after a long time- at one period in the last few years, I was really into Yoga forums. I had some wondeful times in the swamij and yrec forums-sadly both have now shut down, for very similar reasons to the reasons mentioned in your post. ...and by the way, the new Groups format really puts me off-could someone please inform how to access this Group w/o going through Google?

It's funny how "computer" time seems to be so accelerated. It's only been since 1995 that google has been keeping track of usenet posts. And only 10 years more since usenet even existed as a concept. And yet I am completely discombobulated, when they change their format somewhat. I am certain the changes they have made are an improvement, but because I am habituated I am struggling to learn and enjoy the changes. This is very "unyoga" like to say the least :-) The idea is not to move through this life "hypnotized" and "habituated" but to keep my awareness in the eternal Now, which is the only place reality and Truth can be known.

It never was quite as fabulous as you imagine. Real yoga? That's rich.

March

Desk Jobs

(Desk Jobs)

Q. What are the negative consequences that are incurred on the body by sitting at desks for long periods? Q. Which poses best counteract those affects? (All of them?)

A amazon search on "office yoga" will bring you lots of books on the subject, starting as low as .01 cent. A google search on "office ergonomics" will make you an expert in about 10 minutes :-) If you are in a "corporate or industrial environment you can ask your safety coordinator. You might just meet and speak with someone like me.
Personally I like the sun salute (Surya Namaskar) in general to take out all kinks cleanly and quickly. At work I find the first two moves, a back bend and a forward bend works for me. I may do this a couple of times in an eight hour shift. I do the moves perhaps three times, very slowly, letting gravity gently set the body into the pose.in conjunction with a "complete breath." These moves can modified so they can be done sitting in a chair if you had to.
Also there are some cool exercises you can do sitting at your desk.
One is rolling your eyes 360 degrees to the left and then the right, slowly at the extreme edge of your eye socket. Half dozen times coordinated with the inhalation and exhalation of your breath.
Lion's pose. Open your mouth and eyes and stick out your tongue as far as you can while tensing all of the muscles of your body very tightly, all at once. Hold and then release all at once.
A "shoulder set" is good. Where you take your left hand and bring it up and over your head and down your back grabbing the right hand which you have brought behind you and up your back to meet your other hand. Pull gently, hold and release. Switch, repeat.
And one of my favs. The hair grab. Comb your hair close as you can to the scalp with the fingers of both hands and then "grab" your hair tightly. Now firmly move the scalp back and forth, up and down, left and right, round and round. Don't be too gentle, you should be really feeling this. Don't worry your hair and scalp won't come off because you are pulling on so much hair and scalp area at once. Move your hands to another position and repeat until you have covered the entire head.

i like these ideas. a lot of them i could do at my desk. i also slip my shoes off and to a toe stretch and some ankle rotations. i like the idea of doing the lion's pose. i'll be sure to aim myself at someone who would be suitably freaked out by it.actually a lot of people i work with would be freaked out by most of it. it'll be good for them.

...

They'll be very freaked out if you do lion pose with the associated breathing noise. If it can be taken in fun it sounds good.

I particularly liked the scene in the "Whale Rider", when Paikea's father Koro, the elder Maori chief, is teaching the young men to present a noble and fearsome facade to their enemy. Essentially a standing lion's pose with roar and beating of the chest with both hands. It is intensely interesting for me to watch and know that this movement and noise is rooted in ancient science. Reminds me that there truly is nothing new under the sun. Wisdom of all sorts has been around everywhere, for a long time. And like someone said, "Wisdom is not making mistakes, which we learn by making mistakes." :-)
After I posted to Nancy I went and looked for a video snippit of the Whale Rider scene I mentioned. I couldn't find one but I did find a couple of really great clips. I'm sure this would indeed freak them out at work. Or anywhere in the western world for that matter :-) Man, how would you like to play rugby with these guys? Ouch! http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YOWy1vHrpxo&NR

Translation from the clip:

This dance is called a HaKa Ha=Breath Ka=Fire (Fiery words)

Kamate, Kamate

I am doomed, I will die! No I am alive, Life is mine!

I will be defeated, I will die! No, I take back my life, life is mine!

Jared's metaphysical, psychological and martial interpretation:
I am willing to die and as good as dead, so I have no fear. Without fear I am truly alive. Without fear I can not die.

It's good footage though. I was thinking I'd not want to do a karate competition against them either.

No competition or sport exists for the martial art I once studied. There is no blocking or disabling or "pulling of punches." Each and every movement is designed to maim and/or kill. Just like the yoga I study now. It's not about fitness, entertainment or profit; only the Truth. That being said, I'm with you. I don't think I would like to compete with these guys either :-)

Old
(special asana´s)

Are there special asana´s for people over one hunderd years old?

Savasana, is probably the easiest and most common at this age :-)
But just in case this is a real question Swami Vishnudevananda in his book, "The Complete Illustrated Book of YOGA, suggests the following for those who wish to practice Hatha Yoga and are very old (60+) or sick:
In 2-6 weeks or more. Pavana Mukasana (liberated pose) & Bhujangasana (cobra pose). Fast once a week on fresh fruit and vegetable juice. Relaxation, deep Breathing in lying position, reading of religious or philosophical books for 15 minutes daily.
In 2-6 months or more. Add Paschimothan Asana (head-knee pose), Savangasana (shoulder stand). Avoid sweets or fried foods. Add religious prayers to reading and relaxation.
In 1-2 years or more. Add Matsyasan (fish pose), Sukansan (easy pose) and Agni Sara Kriya (breathing and abdominal manipulation). Eat only natural foods. Avoid meat, liquor and smoking. Fast on water once a week. Nasal and throat cleansing with salt water. Alternate nose breathing and candle light gazing. Plus observe silence one hour daily.
Personally I think that by the age of 100, if one has not "given up" identity with their body, hatha yoga will have little benefit other then to make the remaining years that much more flexible and comfortable. In general I think that real hatha yoga is a young person's "game" whose purpose is to develop discipline and perspective (in preparation to practice more advanced yoga), both of which are irrelevant in advanced age. I would think that at the age of 100+ bhakti, karma, jnana or raja yoga would be more appropriate.

but now you offer you opinion as superior to Sivananda. I notice that you think Hatha can only give superficial (flexibility and comfort) benefit to the elderly.

First of all, in the original post we were discussing asana appropriate to a 100+ year old person. People who live to that age are rare. The idea of starting a hatha program for a person that age is silly. I didn't think the post was serious, hence my joke about the "corpse pose."
However on reflection I thought it might still be helpful to someone older or ill to know that Sivananda, et al felt Hatha practice can still be beneficial and practiced in a modified program and what that might look like. So I took the time to paraphrase and type out the gist of the Devananda's recommended program.
I consider Hatha yoga, like all yogas to be part of a spiritual path. The idea that someone would start a spiritual practice with Hatha at an advanced age is nonsense.
Traditionally, after a young person has demonstrated a firm moral grounding in yama-niyama, they may then be taught Hatha. It aids the development of self-discipline and the perspective that one's body is as a vehicle to be controlled, nourished and kept healthy so it can be used to best effect in pursuing yoga (union). The purpose of maintaining excellent health is to make it possible to sit for long periods in comfort and without physical distractions. Bandhas, breathing exercises, and other Hatha practices are in preparation for advanced balancing and control of prana within the subtle sheaths. This level of control is beyond all but the most skilled hatha yogis, supervised by even more advanced adepts. Rarely does anyone, anywhere, at any age attain this level of Hatha practice. To attain this level one must start very young (teen) and practice full time under the tutelage of a master. For most others hatha if practiced at all is a beneficial adjunct to the practice of Raja, Karma, Bhakti, Jnana or other types of yoga.

I notice that you consider Hatha to be more suitable to young people and that some of the more subtle benefits (discipline and "perspective" ,whatever that means, are irrelevant to the elderly.

My ideal is that many older persons have already attained the perspective and discipline that is lacking in most young people. Not that these things were irrelevant to older people. Or that older people could not continue to learn and develop these qualities.

I notice that you consider other "advanced" yogas to be more appropriate for the elderly.

This seems rather obvious. The non-physical yogas are physically more accessible for an older person. Not only that but an older person may well understand that the body is temporal and will not last forever but that the I Am that exists in the body is infinite. This would make the health of the body ill-relevant except as to benefit the practice of "oneness"

You seem to limit your conception of Hatha yoga to the purely physical. That is a common misconception. And I would guess that you rarely, if ever, practice asana.

This feels like a personal attack. I don't see the purpose in it. None the less its still a good guess. Although if you have followed my posts over the years you wouldn't have to guess. I am not a hatha yogi. So what? I have learned a great deal about hatha over the years and I have practiced seriously in the past. If I speak to a question regarding hatha it is because I feel qualified to do so. If I don't know an answer or I don't have experience with a point I will say so and defer to others who do. BTW, do you know any pro league football coaches who can out play, out tackle or out run their players?

I infer that you consider Hatha yoga to be sort of a stage that the maturing yogi eventually grows out of to move on to practice more advanced yoga."

I would say that for some, this is correct. But this would apply to those on a spiritual path. for one well grounded in "Oneness", the physical component of Hatha is no longer needed and just falls away like so much ripe fruit. Even for those who only consider Hatha an exercise or health aid, the course of practice will naturally peak and then decay. Perhaps if you reviewed my post with a mind to agree, you will see that we have no argument :-)

Nahhh. :-) > I seem to learn more by disagreeing by arguing than by agreeing.

I can relate to this. I was once very much like this myself. But :-) I found there was only so far this style of inquiry and learning could take me. I have since modeled and adopted learning techniques which are more efficient, fruitful and pleasant.

Denial

(my website yoga-bliss.info)

> *Hi shamelessly promoting my website. Not the only reason I am here though. Looking forward to participating in discussions.*

Welcome to alt.yoga Matt, not much discussion going on here at the moment. Seems like you've made it just in time to see the group die. Or perhaps you are here to revive it :-)
I did take a look at your site. Perhaps you'd consider putting some sample pages/material for folks to look at.

> *i feel like those plague victims in the monty python's holy grail - "i'm not dead!! i'm feeling much better actually!" as i'm heaved on the wagon and taken away. c'mon jared, we're winning the battle. there's more of us than there is of them. alt.yoga will survive. i count on it. n*

Funny. I think you do monty python as good or better than they do :-)
Yes, sometimes I think it is like my lawn. It looks all the world like it is dead. But I flooded it the other day with water and bingo! green stuff everywhere. Perhaps all we need is some flooding of the life- giving type and not the waste that's been strewn about lately. Then I go over to alt.yogananda and see that it really is dead. It started dying some years ago and it seems it really is dead to stay. And what a shame. If there is anything in the world worth discussing it is the lessons of Yogananda!
Honestly I was just about to post that I wouldn't be tracking the group anymore and if someone wanted to reach me they could email and let me know. It's just been that fruitless. Then you pop in with a bit of witty reparte and now I have to keep watching a while longer just in case it happens again :-)

> *It's neither the spam nor the cranks that keeps me away; I just don't find many posts that are interesting. There are exceptions, of course: yours, Stu's, Nancy's, and those of a very few other people.*

I agree with you. I would add that the casual or thoughtless review/ reading of other's posts or delayed (like this one:-), lazy or non- existent responses, are no fun. I feel the cross posting is particularly egregious, because while many of these posts may be intelligent and interesting, they are none the less "off-topic." and disrespectful of the groups integrity/space.
It's never really been a "quantity" thing around here. And it seems regarding "quality," that posts/posters are really very good or they're just plain bad. It's not easy interacting in alt.yoga. It requires courage, thoughtfulness and effort. Yoga does not lend it's self to quick, casual, or ignorant consideration, at any level, even the occasional joke around here is often deep, rich and layered.
Yoga seriousness may be what keeps the group from thriving. Perhaps a little less scary "transcendental wisdom" and a little more honest and personal interaction would be helpful. This is what makes Nancy's posts so enjoyable (and wise) for me.
Bottom line is that except for a few hearty souls, alt.yoga does not provide what people want. It may be that this is just the nature of the beast. There may never be a easy, casual or large community context for sharing a yogic path. Yoga is such a personal thing and on a good day difficult to understand and relate. Yoga touches the "real" person deeply inside and can increase by multitudes a feeling of vulnerability in sharing. Yoga on the level of the Kumbh Mela (http:// en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kumbh_Mela) is a ages old social and religious tradition which has no equivalent expression in the West and which in many ways seems the antithesis of yoga's internal focus. Can you imagine going to a crowed state fair and sharing your inner yoga journey with random strangers :-) Hopefully we will start talking to each other with some greater frequency and less pretension or punditry. :-)
Having said all that, I know alt.yoga is and will continue to be what we (it's participating members and lurkers alike) want it to be. And this is and must be absolutely perfect in all regards.

April

Life

(business travel yoga)

it's now routine for me to take my ultra light travel yoga mat with me on all overnight trips and practice in my hotel room. a small candle and mini-ganeshe stay in my suitcase, ready to go wherever i go. each morning i orient myself towards a window, light the candle, position ganeshe where i can see him, and give some thought to my surroundings while i do whatever positions will help my body's travel complaints. this trip my hotel window faced a site of horrendous death and sadness. this is not something yoga can fix. i was scared to relax and really think and feel and let my surroundings get into me. i practiced each morning and tried to acknowledge the people

...

Let me guess.. Was the hotel room near the old World Trade Center? S

...

yes

Nancy, death is a symbol; just like Ganesha. It has no objective existence. Symbols allow us to focus our attention (worship) where we choose, consistent with out vision of reality and our level of fear. When I read your post I wondered, in what other way might I symbolize that space... Then I imagined all the desks and couches in those buildings and wondered if number of lives conceived there over the years, didn't far outstrip the number of those who made the opposite transition. :-) Thanks for sharing. You even coaxed 700e out of hiding, for a comment. Doesn't get much better then that!

That brought a smile to my face :-) Apparently the same can be said of the computer room at the last place I worked.

...

oh jared you make me laugh. and you have me wondering how many lives got their start in my own office building. the magic and the horror is really everywhere.

May

Jokes

(Couple of Funnies)

A couple of funnies from the The Conscious Living Foundation Newsletter (whoever they are :-) Somehow slipped through the spam filters.

A clergyman was walking down the street when he came upon a group of about a dozen boys, all of them between 10 and 12 years of age.

The group surrounded a dog. Concerned lest the boys were hurting the dog, he went over and asked "What are you doing with that dog?"

One of the boys replied, "This dog is just an old neighborhood stray. We all want him, but only one of us can take him home. So we've decided that whichever one of us can tell the biggest lie will get to keep the dog."

Of course, the reverend was taken aback. "You boys shouldn't be having a contest telling lies!" he exclaimed. He then launched into a ten minute sermon against lying, beginning, "Don't you boys know it's a sin to lie," and ending with, "Why, when I was your age, I never told a lie."

There was dead silence for about a minute. Just as the reverend was beginning to think he'd gotten through to them, the smallest boy gave a deep sigh and said, "All right, give him the dog."

Some Yogi jokes:

What did the Yogi say when he walked into the Zen Pizza Parlor? "Make me one with everything."

When the Yogi got the pizza, he gave the proprietor a $20 bill. The proprietor pocketed the bill. The Yogi said "Don't I get change?" The proprietor said, "Change must come from within."

Connection

(Any real human beings left around here :-))

Hello to anyone real! Really miss some sort of meaningful exchange around here :-(Perhaps just a hi, I'm still alive and listening :-) Just the same, miss you...

I think I'm a real human being, at least last time I checked. It is quiet around here. Not been much to talk about yoga wise?

...

still lurking and doing yoga. And having a problem to motivate myself to do it daily ;)

...

hi jared i'm still here. i post occaisionally but not getting much response. i'll keep it up tho. it's sort of becoming my personal yoga blog/ diary, a record of my yoga quest, even just for me to look back on. i can step it up a bit and see if that shakes anyone out of the trees. nice to hear from you. i miss you too...and 700E, and richard and wade and puma and everyone. this is/was an important part of my yoga community. maybe it's just in the ebb part of the natural ebb and flow. nancy

...

Human? Well, elves are sort of human, in a way, on their good days, I think... :-) I just haven't been able to think of anything to say. I always need someone else to start a topic going.

...

It's been quiet here and I have been taking a break. My interest in net discussion comes and goes...but I still lurk some.

Nancy, Richard, 700e, Eric, Tuvok, Narayana,Thanks for your replies it's nice to hear from you. Happy days, there's still a few real humans left in the group! Sorry for my delayed response I have been out of my cave and experiencing intermittent net access. Lot's happening with me. Mostly good, yet internal and not easily visible from the outside. In fact if you were to look from the outside you might think little has changed or if at all its getting ever worse. Preparing to trade my desert abode for the jungle. For a time anyway. Continue to work at transcending fear. I think I have risen above boredom and I am focused on nurturing a growing indifference. That's a sticky one though. I feel very strongly that I must publish before I can give up caring about life completely. After I no longer have any interest in life I can address my fear of death. If I survive beyond that point then I will be free to simply express in real time, without attachment; without desire; without fear. Exciting stuff really :-) But just when I think I have a good solid start on indifference, God decides He has another idea and bingo. Over the last few weeks I have been reunited/re-ignited with my ex-wife after 9 years. We've been carrying on like a couple of newlyweds:-) Except even better because now we are two mature and independent persons choosing to relate to each other in a positive way. Can't imagine where this came from (could it be Love?) or where it might go or

if it will go anywhere. But I can say that after many years of pain, contention and bitterness, it's a very pleasant turnaround. Doesn't seem good for cultivating indifference though. Well we'll see :-) Keep up the posting I am sure there is a fresh batch of newbies interested in exchanges on alt.yoga. As well as a couple of old timers who like to relate. Hey if you have the time and inclination I encourage you to pop over to the "real yoga" Google group and say hello to puma...

the concrete jungle? or deep dark africa jungle?

The green leafy type. Different continent though. In fact the same one we live in :-)
snip

> *you devil you! its hard to be indifferent while re-igniting, isnt it?*

Igniting, reigniting... yes it is. But if I persevere I can accomplish anything :-)

Property

(Yoga patented by US patent authority?)

If this is true, then this is the most daring, blatent instance of theft.

Theft from who? God?
To believe in theft one must believe in property. To believe in property one must believe in ownership. To believe in ownership one must believe in an individual's right to protect and exploit their property. It is a desire to protect what we consider to be ours from others, that creates the need for courts, guns, prisons, war, sickness, death and many other manifestations of the illusion of ownership (separateness).
On the other hand if one knows that all that exists is given freely to all by God, then there can be no idea of theft. One can't steal what one already has :-)
We are a manifestation or expression of God, therefore we must be made up of whatever God is. We must have whatever qualities and resources God has and could lack only what God lacks (which is nothing). If all that exists, is in and of and as, the nature of God, what could God need to possess? Could God possibly take something that wasn't His and who would He take it from?
At the level of the Absolute (Truth) the idea of ownership (and therefore theft) is false and I must give it up.

June

Self Realization

(Self Realization)

Hi, I am new here. I have gone as far as to study yoga in college. Now I have a philosophical question. What is self realization?

I suggest you do a search in google groups for "self realization", read some of the discussions and then return with some more specific questions. In the mean time here is an answer to tide you over :-)

> "The world is not imperfect, or slowly evolving along a long path to perfection. No, it is perfect at every moment; every sin already carries grace within it, all small children are potential old men, all sucklings have death within them, all dying people - eternal life. It is not possible for one person to see how far another is on the way; the Buddha exists in the robber and dice player; the robber exists in the Brahmin. During deep meditation it is possible to dispel time, to see simultaneously all the past, present, and future, and then everything is good, everything is perfect, everything is Brahman. Therefore it seems to me that everything that exists is good - death as well as life, sin as well as holiness, wisdom as well as folly. Everything is necessary, everything needs only my agreement, my assent, my loving understanding; then all is well with me and nothing can harm me. I learned through my body and soul that it was necessary for me to sin, that I needed lust, that I had to strive for property and experience nausea and the

> depths of despair in order to learn not to resist them, in order to learn to love the world, and no longer compare it with some kind of desired imaginary world, some imaginary vision of perfection, but to leave it as it is, to love it, and to be glad to belong to it."
>
> -- Herman Hesse, "Siddhartha"

Self-realization is very simple (generally not easy:-), it is realizing (knowing) who you are. That of course begs the question, "who am I." Ah, and there begins the struggle. I will give you the answer to that question even though it will probably be of little help. You are whatever God is. If you don't like the word God, choose one that appeals to you eg. Universal Power, the Force, the Source, the Void, etc. And how do I come to know that I am whatever God is? And that's what yoga is all about.
So suppose that one day the light goes on and you "realize" who and what you are. What happens? Nothing really... Everything remains as it was before you became self-realized except that everything but everything is now different, even though nothing has changed. This is again where yoga comes in, as a systematic means to bring body, mind and soul in alignment with what you now know is the Truth. Further more you will now know all that is necessary or meaningful.
Self realization is not to be confused with a transcendent bliss state. This state will express when you have let go of all fear at which time you will revert to the natural state of man, which is bliss. This is a psychic state and should not be confused with a spiritual state. We all exist as Spirit right now, whole and perfect in every way. This is absolute and unchanging.
I never read the Siddhartha book, even though it was an assigned book at least twice. I was a pretty poor student when I was younger :-) BTW I really like it and appreciate, that you answer the responses to your post in a timely and thoughtful fashion.

> *You strike me as being young. Are you?*

In many regards I am quite young; a baby infact :-) However my belly- button is pushing 53 years. Who knows how many thousands of years I have lived as a human. Because I am whatever God is I will have never been born, nor could I ever die. So there you go, from baby to middle aged to eternal. Take your pick, any and all work for me.

> *Self-Realisation happens when there is no fluctuation of mind. (Patanjali's Yoga Sutra Chapter I sutra no 2 and 3.) It is not Knowledge nor Something that can be acheived. Rao-*

Hi Rao, good to see you. It's been awhile :-(
Even if we are speaking in terms of a purely Patanjali model, (which is not my inclination because of its technical, esoteric nature) How I understand it is that the stilling of the mind or elimination of all fluctuations is simply another tool (in this case a psychic one) to allow one a chance to realize who they are. Rather then the actual state of realization itself. Zero fluctuations can be achieved and as you rightly said, self-realization can not. Realization is "allowed" or "accepted" or "realized" rather than "produced" or "created." It can happen (and in my opinion most often does in the West anyway) spontaneously with lot's of fluctuations happening :-) It is not knowledge in the sense of "information" rather the deepest possible internal "knowing" that "knowledge", "what is known" and the "knower" and are one in the same.

July

Freedom

(I want to start doing yoga)

> *I want to start with YOGA.. What do I start with?*

Welcome to alt.yoga. Yoga can be a solitary and/or social process.
Based on your posting history I am not going to make my regular suggestion of reading any book by Richard Hittlemand. I am going to suggest you start by answering those who have responded to your question :-)

Do you thin think he'sa troll or something? He posted something weird on alt.support.diabetes about infrared clothes, and didn;t answer my question, so I looked it up. I think it doens;t look so safe.

...

It's a valid question though, so even if he doesn't use the answers someone else reading this newsgroup may.

Yes this is very true and why we must always be on our best behavior :-)
The general nature of the question, the lack of response and the recent posting pattern of this person suggests the possibility of a troll or more precisely, a spamming troll :-) On the other hand these could also suggest a shy, ESL speaker/writer who is dealing with the kind of internal struggle we all face and searching for relief. My reply to this person assumed a sincere inquiry on their part. We shall see...

a shy esl speaker with internal struggles? lol sounds like something from monty python. n

I know how much you like MP, I'm glad you enjoyed it :-)

I didn't follow the link. Someone calling themselves the Family Lobby possibly from America sounds like they may be Religious Right.

Our "religious right" was an export from England in the 1660's. You guys wouldn't put up with them so you sent them to the colonies. Gee thanks :-)

They still exist over here, but are a lot more hidden. Just be careful sometimes who you mention karate (big sin), yoga (bigger sin), visiting a Hindu temple (massive imminent hellfire sin) to.

Richard, Here's a timely example :-)
[New article] Everyone shows ID for beer in Tennessee.
We need to desensitize people to suffering daily little indignities and humiliations in order to get them ready for the larger ones to come. If we can just get people, little by little, to give up their silly notions of feeling like they are human beings deserving of respect and personal freedom.
It's the idea of not dropping a frog into hot water from which it will jump out. Rather place it in tepid (comfortable) water and slowly raise the temperature until it cooks.
Then the "haves" can consolidate their power and complete their systematic transformation of the remaining majority of "have nots" into soulless and compliant, moral, political and economic slaves. In other words an efficient "Kleptocracy." wikipedia.org/wiki/Kleptocracy
Here are some excepts from a couple of insightful articles which really put it into perspective for me. Which put into words and form feelings and notions I have had since watching & resisting that incredibly wasteful and evil Vietnam war. I am reminded daily as I watch this latest waste of human lives and as the US spins down into an insane, immoral "zero-tolerance" freedom-less kleptocracy. Whose people have lost the will, the courage and the determination to stand up for themselves. Whose people have traded their humanity for the illusion of security, the comfort of their (the "haves") wealth and the hypocrisy of their moral justifications.

> From the article at: http://pweb.netcom.com/~brlevine/swbl-leg.txt SWITCHBLADE LEGACY by Bernard Levine (c)1990 published in KNIFE WORLD August 1990 http://www.knife-expert.com/
>
> WHICH KIND OF REPUBLIC?
>
> So how could the United States of America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, have sunk so low as to submit to these demagogues, to feel obligated to "save" its citizens from an everyday item sold here regularly for the past hundred years, and in common use for the past fifty? The answer can be found in the most basic philosophical underpinnings of our country...

From the article at: http://pweb.netcom.com/~brlevine/st-opp.txt OPPRESSIVE KNIFE LAWS by Bernard Levine (c)1998 published in BLADE Magazine THE GREAT DIVIDE

THE GREAT DIVIDE

Ever since its first European settlements, in the early 1600s, America developed as two completely different republics. We have been politically divided ever since, and will always remain so. This is because our two founding republican traditions are both opposite and irreconcilable....

Stopping

(stopping yoga)

i've been off my daily practice for about a month. i told myself that it was because i was recovering from some minor surgery, i needed to take it easy physically, and i needed the 1/2 hr extra sleep in the mornings. i told myself i was still doing the weekly yoga in the park, so i was still a practicing yogi. (the yoga in the park is excellent btw. a bit lightweight, but a nice practice in the fresh air.) but really, i stopped yoga.

Hi Nancy, hello from the beautiful and warm (106 F at noon) Mojave desert on this fine day which marks the birth of our nation.
I can relate to everything you have said. I have/am struggling with all of these ideas. Your comments have inspired the following thoughts. And if I was going to give myself some suggestions along these lines it might sound like this :-)
Sounds like you are in conflict. Conflict comes from the difference between what we want and what we have. The difference between how we think we should be and how we are. The difference between what we desire and the Truth. Desire is an expression of fear. Fear that we don't now have what we need to survive, thrive and be happy. Fear is an imagining, a construct, an illusion that we manufacture. Fear has no reality except that which we give it when we create and then react to it. We must step out of our present moment to create fear. Fear requires a mental projection into a dead past or non- existent future. Fear does not exist in the now. Acceptance is the antidote for conflict. Truth is a antidote for fear. I suggest:

Your body contains a depth of wisdom your mind can scarcely imagine. Trust it.

Allow acceptance, contentment, appreciation and joy in all your moments.

If you even have to wonder if you are over tired, you are over tired.

Between job and yoga favor yoga. Between rat-race lifestyle and yoga lifestyle favor yoga.

Don't set yourself up to imagine you must create upheaval to benefit from or advance in yoga. The yoga you are doing is absolutely perfect right now, always has been and always will be. And when its perfect to change it will, no muss, no fuss, easy and natural. You may not even notice. Yoga lifestyle is not difficult. Yoga life-style is very efficient and can produce and tremendous amount of benefit with minimum expenditure of psychic, emotional, physical and spiritual energy. In fact it's so easy compared to the tense, driven, wasteful rat-race style of living, there is at first, a real possibility of mistakenly equating ease, efficiency, restfulness and acceptance with laziness :-)

Study is not scary or hard, its a real joy when you find out things you've always wanted to

know and have immediate and practical advantages in your life. Studying things you don't want to because you think you should is misery and gives study a bad rap :-(

Don't worry about the diet/vegan thing. Trust your body it will gradually move towards what it needs. This is also a place where, in conjunction with your bodies wisdom, a bit of reading, study and experimenting will be very helpful. Diet is a huge area of which we must all become "experts onto ourselves." The optimum diet for each of us is going to be very unique and likely different from everyone else.

Ditch the whole concept of laziness. It's a toxic label pushed on us by others (starting with parents) to shame us into doing what they want. Everyone does what they want. Everyone does the best they can with what they have and when they can do better they will do better. Likewise build a habit of not judging yourself. This is the first step in not judging others. Judging is a very "out of the now" exercise. You must compare a desire or ideal, against a reality and find the reality lacking. You can not judge a reality using an imagining.

Allow yourself to stop suffering. Allow yourself to not see yourself as any kind of victim, ever. Allow yourself to accept (and love) yourself wholeheartedly. Allow yourself to accept others for who they are and where they are now, not how you imagine they could/should be or how you would like (desire) them to be,

If you find yourself not doing something you think you should be doing, just accept that you don't want to do it. Then ask yourself why. If you want to do something, you have the ability and opportunity to do something, you feel you should do something and your not doing it, then look for the fear. Identify the fear that is stopping you and then do whatever you can to deal with it. If you can't let the fear go or it still keeps you from doing what you want, then look for a source of courage and use it to overcome the effects of the fear. Action (even while afraid) is a powerful antidote for fear.

Don't underestimate the power of habit. Many things we do, we do out of habits formed long before we have taken personal control (responsibility) for our lives. If there is a habit in force, identify it, watch it act in your life and gradually replace it with a deliberately built new habit which corresponds to what you want.

Hope some of this may be encouraging and/or helpful. I know your comments always are to me & many others.

ok with you can i copy your post into an email to my friend?

Funny, this is usenet, everything posted here belongs to the world! And besides you always have my blessing, no matter what you do :-)

Words

(Spiritual Words)

Would any in this group be interested in hearing spiritual words on a daily basis from an Orthodox perspective?

Like any group alt.yoga is what the members of the group make it. I enjoy and respect all well meaning and appropriate participation spiritual or otherwise. (Yuck, this sounds so PC to me :-(even though its true :-)

The word Yoga refers both to Union (in awareness) with our Divine Source and the techniques and science of achieving that Union. Yoga is both the Goal and the means to achieve the goal. Yoga is not a religion nor is it owned by any religion. Yoga can be practiced by anyone, anywhere, with or without religious or spiritual sentiment or intent.
That being said, my personal thought concerning the discussion of things spiritual on alt.yoga is is this. The alt.yoga group is for the discussion of all things yoga. Whatever is offered for discussion (discussion, not spewed as in preaching) should be within the context of yoga practice, theory or experience. The group is not intended for the discussion of spiritual (or non spiritual) matters, ideas, theories or believes, outside of the context of yoga. There are many other groups for this purpose.
Coming to Yoga after recovery in a 12 step context, I prefer to hear others share their experience, strength and hope concerning their personal yoga practice. If that practice includes spiritual expression, longing or experience then I am delighted to hear it. If ones yoga practice does not have an overt spiritual component I am still delighted to hear about it. What I value most is hearing how it was when someone came to practice yoga, what happened and what its like now.
I respect and enjoy hearing personal "I" statements; I think, I feel, I want, I did, I hope, I etc. I rarely appreciate hearing what I or others should do or think, or what is right or wrong with me or others, outside of another's personal experience, reflection or caring. "You," "them" and "they" statements leave me cold. I am not a thing. I am not a follower. I am not a issue. I am a process and a Divine expression in the Mind of God. I am a person who practices yoga and takes it very seriously. I like personal discussion or exchanges with openness, integrity and truth. I also enjoy the rare opportunity around here (or anywhere else for that matter) not to be so serious :-)
Generally I don't take appreciate cross-posted messages. If someone feels its important to say something to the members of two or more different groups then they can make two or more individual posts. Cross-posting to me equals spam. Racist, political and commercial spam (in that order) is particularly offensive to me. Nor do I care for religious or spiritual spam.
I for one would be interested in hearing about any personal orthodox practice you have and its relation in your life to yoga. I also like to read or view individual's personal artistic expressions and hear about art's relationship to a persons life and practice of yoga.
Perhaps you have heard of or read Allen Watts? Somehow he reminds me of a "beat" version of a Buddhist, who died a two quart a day drunk but none the less produced what for me is some of the best written, meaningful and spiritually grounded writing ever. I especially like, "The Wisdom of Insecurity."
...
Nancy, BTW, did you ever follow up on the Sivananda Yoga Center connection. I'd be interested to hear.

> *went to the one class and found them to be as serious as i was looking for, but narrow. there were just the 12 poses... tell me jared, do you have a physical practice? if so, what makes up a typical practice for you? do you practice daily? to you have a main teacher?*

Hatha Yoga practice ala Sivananda is intended and designed to support the simultaneous practice of karma, bhakti and raja yoga. This is why you sense that it is "serious." It is. But it is "traditional" yoga practice not simply physical culture.
I have practiced hatha in the past guided by Richard Hittleman, which interestingly enough conforms quite closely to Sivananda in most every regard. At present I do not have a physical practice apart from a bit of surya namaskar occasionally when my body is seriously complaining :-) When (if) I transcend (let go of) indifference (fear) I will seriously consider a physical component to my pursuit of yoga, as it is very important to meditation and mind/body control.
In terms of all things yoga, I am content to use those teachers who have been guided to set their teachings to writing. Also I am very comfortable and trusting of direct or intuitive guidance from the guru within. I also know if and when a physical teacher is required or appropriate they will appear. But much like religion, I don't care for intermediaries between me and the Source. As an example, after practicing hatha for 6-8 months on my own out of a book I went for a two week visit to the Sivananda ashram in Grass Valley, CA. I was looking for feedback on my progress and someone who might teach me something I

wasn't getting. What I found was that I was advanced of nearly everyone there in virtually all regards, even though my physical acuity was rudimentary. It was a great experience and very beneficial. But the bottom line was I was doing just great out of a book :-)

Who

(Resolving the question of God(s), and doing yoga?)

Who are you?

I am whatever and whoever God is.

Can you tell what is "you" and what is not you? What is the "I"?

Yes.

One can not make any claims about god or mystical experience before these questions are answered.

Is this a state or federal law? Perhaps a local Hollywood ordinance :-)

Its pretty much a Hollywood ordinance. Around these parts we know that experiences are subject to smoke and mirrors. The authentic lies in silence.

What a wonderful metaphor Hollywood is for maya. We look at a story and it seems so real. Yet we know there is wonderful intelligence behind the creation of the illusion. Need there be such a huge "jump of faith" to know there is wonderful intelligence behind the creation we call life? This by the way is an idea that Yogananda taught. Which reminds me you have not answered my question in the "alt.yoga is dying" thread.

in other parts, I hear tell that people live lives in a sort of dream state. Believing what ever is convenient. They become attached to their goals, actions, and addictions.

Yes they do. This is their choice. It does not change the reality of their nature nor their existence. We are all faced with the same choice in life. Do I take the red pill or do I take the blue one. Regardless of whether we choose to seek the Truth or to propagate the lies, this in no way changes the underlying reality of who we are.

How do you know what is authentic and what is illusion?

Like 700e said, it's a personal knowing. Not something that can be imparted nor conveyed to "another." I have tried to share my personal journey right here on alt.yoga to underwhelming effect :-)

I have enjoyed your posts Jared. I would not say their effect is underwhelming. The certainly make a wonderful mirror for me to understand my own errors and omissions.

It has always been this way and it will always be this way. It's the nature of the beast. Its hard to see the forest when you are one of the trees. But there is a forest and it is made up of lots of trees.
The philosophers are trapped in their words, trapped by their logic. Yet once I knew there is God, then all of the philosophy (all of the religions and sciences), all of the words, all of the logic became clear to me. On one level it's a nice place to be, knowing what the Truth is, yet it changes nothing. Except where I apply my attention, energy and efforts. Otherwise life just keeps on keepin on. Good, bad or indifferent; its all God.

the philosophers may be wrong at times, but that is a gross generalization. One can not throw Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Locke, Derrida, Sartre and so on in one big pot and make a blanket statement.

I can say without a doubt that all philosophers are trapped by their words. 700e has lamented this very thing elsewhere in this post. I am trapped, you are trapped, all those named above were trapped and I doubt anyone of them would have denied it. This should not be a difficult idea. All of us have experienced something to which we could not put words and even when we tried our hardest the words fell uselessly before those who we wanted to have understand. This is the human condition at one level and it can be transcended, ironically in silence. As you have said many times.

If everything is god than nothing is god. I am in complete agreement with you there.

Here I am afraid your understanding fails you. You are using the idea that if something is everything then that is the same as nothing. This logic follows to this absurdity in a relative construct. But the Truth is not relative. It is absolute. It has no opposite. Nothing means that it does not exist therefore it is not a thing which can have an opposite. Nothing is a symbol, an idea, a mental construct which helps us create a sense of duality which we need to navigate life. But nothing does not exist in reality and therefore it can not be any thing, including God. God is a zero or one proposition. God exists or God does not exist. Because God is absolute, God can not be differentiated. I can not know God anymore then I can pick myself up by my own boot-straps. Anymore then a drop of water in the ocean could know or differentiate the ocean of which it is composed.
If one seeks to see God one can look for those attributes which signal his presence. God is Love, Life, Truth, Intelligence, Soul, Principle and Spirit (Emmett Fox). To the extent that we are willing to learn about, become aware of and allow these aspects of reality to enter our awareness and express in our life's, then we can know and see God. Just like the deer who sees us only when we move or by sound or color, represent a juxtaposition in the environment, can we see God by looking for those attributes which are real versus those which are illusions, symbols and constructs of the relative world or Maya.

Then how can you have the goal of bringing your awareness to god if you already are god?

Has there no time in your life when you didn't know who you were as a person? Did that in anyway change who you were or were not? Did you not strive for awareness of who you are? Is knowledge of anything not like an onion? With each layer we penetrate in understanding another deeper one is exposed for our consideration. Such it is with knowing who we are as people and farther down the onion as divine beings.

Intolerance

(Theism and rascism is off-topic in alt.yoga. Please stop!)

When we were kids we used to say this when asked a "nonsensical" question (pun intended :-) OK, I'll play your silly game...

are you saying yoga is non-hindu and non-aryan?

Yoga is the goal; awareness of our existence in God. This is now and always has been man's eternal quest and is exclusive to no one.
Yoga is a science and technique used in pursuit of our awareness of our existence in God. It is not the domain of any religion nor an attribute of any race. Whatever its origins and the history of its development, the art and science of yoga belongs to the whole of humanity.
Therefore, neither theism nor racism has any relevance to the subject of yoga. Either in its meaning as goal or in its application in pursuit of the goal. Theism and racism are "off-topic" in alt.yoga (as well as in any civilized or intelligent discussion) Ask any yogi :-)

Yoga is theistic. Patanjali talks about "Ishwar pranidhana'. For success in Yoga we have to think about God. But racism has nothing to do with Yoga

Thank you for the clarification. Yes, of course you are correct. I must apologize I have been incorrectly using the term theism. I have been using the word in the sense of racism, sexism and theism or in this case religious intolerance or exclusivity. On a bit of study and some reflection I think the word bigotry might be more accurate. Be it with regards to race, sex, religion, nationality, etc.

So I would say that bigotry in any form is inappropriate in any discussion of yoga and religious bigotry, for or against, is off-topic in alt.yoga.

If you read Patanjali, he is very clear about yoga not having any other goal than reducing the fluctuations of mind. And at that it is not something one pursuits but is a necessary fruit of practice.

And the point of reducing the fluctuations of the mind? I think you better read it again. Somehow I don't think you are ready for prime- time commentary on Patanjali. And please will you qualify your comments regarding Patanjali for the benefit of others not so well read as you and I. Patanjali is not synonymous with yoga. Patanjali is not the be all, end all, definition of yoga. Far from it. Patanjali was a yogi whose sutras are thought to be one of the first expositions of Raja Yoga put into writing. But he is only one of many parts of the totality of yoga. Besides everyone knows that as soon as you write something down it is dead :-) Meanwhile I think you do a disservice for those trying to learn about yoga to constantly hold up Patanjali as being the penultimate source of yoga knowledge. Yoga is vastly more rich then Patanjali's narrowly defined sutras.

You will also find only one mention of god in the yoga sutras involves the understanding of self first. Note that this use of god is ishvara. A very different concept then the xtian gods.

Please correct me if I am wrong, but xtian is short (and disrespectful BTW) for Christian. Now as far as I am aware there is only one Christian God. Were there some others which I have missed in my study? Hindu, Christian, Islam; same God. I also believe you misunderstand Pantanjali's reference. What he was saying is that one does not necessarily need to do any yoga but can come to enlightenment spontaneously by direct awareness of their nature in God and surrender to that nature. Or mystical experience. If you wish to discuss this further lets start another thread.

And believe me, awareness of the existence of god is not my eternal quest. It is a waste of time.

I did not say "awareness of the existence of god", I said "awareness of our existence in God" Sometimes you seem so intent on making your point that you rephrase, misphrase and otherwise twist what is said and respond accordingly. Sometimes it can be frustrating trying to communicate to you for that reason. I feel its a shame that you very often do not hear what I am saying. It doesn't matter to me that you agree or believe it or not. But I would like you to hear it and process it, so that whatever conclusion you come to, benefits from you having done so.

And believe me, awareness of the existence of god is not my eternal quest. It is a waste of time.

No clearly in this exchange you are taking the stance of an atheist and your time and energy are spent in negating the existence of some mythical Christian god who must have frightened you when you were a child. The problem is your negation is not rooted in Truth and therefore is not only ineffective but hopeless. At the end of the day one can only reach the Truth. Truth can be found in negation (neti neti) but the negation has to be based on Truth. Repeating a falsehood indefinitely will never bring about the awareness of Truth. It can only lead to hate, discontent and frustration. As well as boredom and disinterest in those trying to share with you :-)

In effect, awareness is god. Its clear, and does not require quests, goals or yoga positions.

No, God is Truth. And you are correct goals and yoga positions are not required to be aware of the Truth. But for most of us who are so submerged in the falsehoods, the stillness and the concentration of yoga positions allows us to shut out some of the noise and see what is before our very eyes.

Yoga belongs to no one. This is why Patanjali goes to great grammatical pain to open the Sutra with the statement, Now we come to yoga. He does not say we take yoga, or partake in it. We stand before it. Like a gift.

Past the "Yoga belongs to no one" statement, this doesn't make any sense to me. And by the way I would say Yoga belongs to everyone (half full :-)

It is not to be used for your petty exploration of awareness of god.

Gee, now I need to reread it :-) Did Patanjali specifically admonish me (and others) not to use yoga in search of God. Wow! Now that would be something. Please...
Oh and just a note here. This petty statement sounds like name calling and disparagement to me. I kept my mouth shut when you were heaping this kind of statement onto Puma. After all Puma is a big boy, I reasoned he could take care of himself and he was not doing anything to discourage it. And in the past I have let it slide with regards to me as I felt the importance of our discussion for others trumped what I saw as your slights at me. However I think it is in your own benefit, as well as for others, that I not continue to accept these things quietly but at least point them out. I hope my bringing this up does not adversely effect our relationship.

This is true Jared. Theism has nothing to do with yoga

I have to thank you here. It was this precise comment which made go look up the word theism and realize I was using the word incorrectly. You can see my apology in another thread. I didn't mean theism in its usual sense but in the sense of racism, sexism or theism. As a form of religious bigotry. So contrary to your assertion, if theism simply means a believe in God, then I would say yoga has everything to do with theism. Whether the person practicing is aware of it or not.

Yes, please leave theism to other newsgroups. We practice yoga here.

Theism absent a yoga context or atheism absent a yoga context are equally off-topic in alt.yoga.

Before we talk about existence of god we better start talking about our own existence. Jared - answer this: Who are you?

I am whatever God is. So I suppose the only thing left for us to do is to get to know who God is, then we not only won't have to ask the question but we will know each other perfectly :-)

Headstand
(Inversions)

Has anybody here taught themselves inversions (headstands) alone using the corner of the room?? I'm the teacher-weak newby, remember? I started writing a thirty page response to that idiot who uses numbers to prove that his race is superior but figured standing on my head would be better for my karma :-)

...

I was taught using the corner of the room. Using the corner gives excellent feedback so you know your legs are going straight up. After a few days of this you can graduate to the flat wall. The a foot from the flat wall. And eventually as you gain confidence to the middle of the room.

I once was criticized for giving headstand advice on the internet. It really should be taught by a teacher. If you have banana back or your neck is jammed you can do serious damage. I figure its better to give the advice on the chance that the student is going to experiment anyway.

Standing on ones head will always be more productive then wrestling with trolls :-)
If you have access to a swimming pool I suggest practicing your headstand there. The water eliminates the quick movements and falls and lets you concentrate on establishing a feeling for the balance point. It will also make you very aware of your breath and how this effects your attention and balance. You might also go to the local park and hang from the monkey bars by your knees, letting your arms hang straight down. Relax and breath, feel the balance point, feel the pull of gravity. Let go of your fear of falling.
Standing on your head is absolutely no different then standing on your feet. We are just more accustomed to one then the other.
My suggestion to you if you wish to learn hatha yoga without a physical teacher, is to pick up any book by Richard Hittleman. That's how I learned. They're dirt cheap on amazon and in any used book store.

Asthma

(back wave benchback wave bench)

Can anyone advise on the back wave bench sold at gaiam. I have asthma and thought it would be good for lungs

Welcome to alt.yoga. You didn't mention if you study or practice yoga. I don't have any experience with a back wave bench.
Without question the benefits of this piece of equipment can be attained with a simple yoga exercise, Suryanamaskar.
With regards to asthma I suggest a book by Paul Sorvino, How I Became a Former Asthmatic.
Also because asthma is often caused by allergies I suggest you look into gluten intolerance / celiac and see if any of this may apply to you.
Also I suggest fasting. Not only is it the best health aid there is but it will also help you identify possible food allergies which may be provoking the asthma.
This is the book I used when I learned to fast. I have been doing it over 15 years to great effect. I'll very often end a two week fast feeling far better then when I started.
How to Keep Slim, Healthy and Young With Juice Fasting, Dr. Paavo Airola.
Breathing, stretching and fasting are all elements of a well rounded yoga program. But in case you do not practice yoga or are very new to it, I have given you some non-yoga sources that you can start right away.

Denial

(Alt.yoga is dying... Should we arrange for hospice and/or a funeral?) A few years ago I noticed alt.yogananda was basically dead. How odd I thought. Yogananda and his teachings provide as much nourishment to the human condition as could possibly be had and yet the usenet group dedicated to discussion of his teachings died. Really I couldn't believe/understand it.
Now I see the same thing happening to alt.yoga, which represents "all forms and aspects or yoga." Yoga being the "science" of humanity.
What can the few remaining friends of alt.yoga do? Obviously we aren't willing/able to keep it alive. Can we tend it while it dies. Can we memorialize it in its passing. What?

I think those of us that stay subscribed can still pick up on the odd post that happens.

...

Why do you think you should do anything about it? Let it be the way it is. Live your life. If you want to write something here, write. If not, read... or go away ;) - if everyone goes, it'll be dead, if someone stays - it won't. You can't force it to be the way you want it to be.

...

I'll stay on, even if the ship sinks. There may come a post now and then that I can answer.

...

Things could be a lot worse. We seem to have very low noise - not hundreds of adverts for example or routine evangelism. The group seems more at peace perhaps ;-)

The good news maybe that we all have reached samadhi .

I hardly think so!

...

i could post more often. random yoga ideas or experiences. i want to create a more welcoming environment for newcomers and prime the pump for those waiting in the wings. i can be a real chatty-cathy quite easily. i've seen recently that when our yoga posts are plentiful, the off-topic cross posts seem to diminish. hold off on the wake jarod. monty python time again - i'm not dead yet. i'm actually feeling much better!

...

I'm new to yoga. I awoke from a 19 day coma last year and was drawn to yoga as somehow having long been the basis of my entire life. I'm sorry to hear that this site is viewed as inactive. It's already been good for me. I hope it doesn't get that funeral ritual :-)

...

Who says its dying?

Let's see, that would be me?

There will be months when there is nothing to talk about. At other times the conversation will expand.

Time will tell but in this case Stu, I hope you are more correct then I :-)

In the meantime lets arrange a celebration. They bring out the best in people. -- ~Stu

By all means, have at it. I for one was having trouble imagining how to provide hospice and/or a memorial for a dying newsgroup. And so far no one has offered any suggestions. Seems people don't really like the idea. I can only imagine what its like to be a funeral director. Who wants to face death? On the other hand I've attempted to invoke celebration here before, to underwhelming effect.

This is encouraging news, and it illustrates well what Nancy said about newcomers always dropping in to liven up the group. Alt.yoga isn't dead yet! Welcome, Gary! It's usually Jared who is first to greet the newcomers here, because he is a very friendly and sociable kind of person, but for once it seems I was quicker. :-) S.

Yes, Welcome to alt.yoga Gary! 700e thank you for the kind words :-) I'm not sure, but sometimes I sense that when I stay out of the conversations more talking goes on. Hmmm.

Most of the various factions of alt.yogananda broke up into their many sub groups and are alive and well in Yahoo groups.

Sounds like a "real" religion. Funny how it happens after the founder is dead. It's then that people start making stuff up. Its happened to all of them :-(

Being a tad melodramatic, are you not, omjaroo?

...

So thank you for not letting the thread die!

Ah, but it is you we should be thanking! Hope you hang out for awhile and share your journey :-)

today was my first yoga class in 4-5 years, and because of this thread reminding me that its ok to be new I may actually go back again.

I see you have discovered one of the fundamental underpinnings of yoga. That it is OK to be whoever and whatever you are, wherever you are...

For me, the thought of beginning yoga is a bizarre emotional experience. I'm intimidated by the practice, not being very good

The feeling and tone of your post reminds me of another denizen of alt.yoga. Try a google groups search on nbennett's posts; there are a couple in this thread. Click on "view profile" and read some of her past posts. I think you will find that Nancy does the wonderful job of humanizing the yoga process. I always find her posts to be warm, personal, funny and inspiring.

is it still called usenet or just google groups?

Alt.yoga is in fact a "usenet" group. But google makes it so easy and transparent to post to usenet many people have no idea they are even on usenet or what usenet is. I am not entirely sure because I haven't looked into it, but I believe google groups is like an "internal" usenet system particular to google. So while one might find some usenet groups like alt.yoga represented on google I don't believe you will find all of the google groups on usenet. I think the google people are very smart and very helpful for combining the two systems, making it uber easy to post and read, and for cataloging and retaining the posts.
...
Jd, good to hear from you. Are you around for awhile?

O Jared i wouldn't commit to a remark about the future . I spent the afternoon going over chemy with a PHD in Chemy and we had fun as I get private lessons in chemy

Hobnobbing with scientists / theorists is certainly my idea of fun :-) Sounds like your life is one adventure after another. Oh, and on the subject of chemy. I grew up with a Phd Chemist; the epitome of rationality. And a nurse, the embodiment of humanity. The immovable vs the unstoppable, ever locked in a struggle for homeostasis. Gee, maybe that's why I am conflicted :-) Recently I had a brief glimpse beyond the illusion. I was looking up at a slow moving fan whose blades appeared a blur. Setting my glance in sync with the moving blades occasionally I could see the fan in the present moment and of course the blades stood perfectly still. As it is with all that exists in the Universe. Perceived in the now, there is absolutely no movement, no time, no distance, no reaction, no symbolism, no distinction or differentiation; only the eternal, unchangeable One.

Howdy! Just passing through and I thought this would be a good place to say... well... "Howdy!" Could be that alt.yoga is dying because it has served it's posters so well!

This board was a treasure house of information for me when I was starting out on my path as a Jnani. Here at last was a place where I could readily see that I was not the first person to come this way or ask these questions .As a Jnani, one comes to a point where one's path must be traversed ALONE. alt.yoga was of immense help to me in preparing for the trip!

Within a year I will be studying under the auspices of a High Lama from Tibet or I will be taking the Lone Path. I'll see what Lama G. has to say about it. Rather than mourning it's passing my message is:

"WELL DONE THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT!"

August

Teacher

(Finding a teacher)

But I feel the strong need for a teacher.

...

but it's hard to find a teacher who teaches what i want to learn.

...

When you're ready then teacher finds you.

...

My "kindergarden teacher" was Jared.

Then, out of the blue, I started getting e-mails from my "elementary school teacher"... Somebody from India named Rao, who I had never heard of before, had followed my progress on this board and contacted me when he felt I was ready... The doors WILL open when you are ready to pass through the portal.

Howdy Dave, good to hear from you, its been a long time :-(I am glad to hear you are advancing in your studies at a pace that agrees with you!
Thank you for the kind words. Hey, wasn't there a book, "All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten" :-)

Religion

(Yoga as "religion")

This thread is in response to an issue raised in "Finding A Teacher" about having qualms about people who treat "yoga as a religion"... With yoga it is all about finding your own way and finding the Absolute within yourself. Mysticism would be a more appropriate word than "religion..." I specifically chose the phrase "the Absolute" rather than use the word "God."

It never ceases to amaze me just how ignorant many are, of what yoga "is". Or how clueless most are of what religion "is" for that matter. Yoga is not and never has been a "religion." despite those who have tried long and hard (for and against) to characterize it as such. Yoga is the art and science of "self-discovery;" nothing more nor less. "Self-discovery" may be as simple as getting in touch with the physical and emotional self or as "mystical" as transcending the symbols of time and space. Yoga may be used in support of any religious path or none. Whatever the individual chooses. Since I have known you, I know you have known this. If what we discussed is kindergarten, then I would say that most of what passes for "knowledge" on this group must be "pre-school." :-) Of course I am referring to the "transcendental" aspects of yoga. A great deal of the advise here regarding hatha, meditation and such are definitely, graduate and post graduate stuff.

September

Sacrifice

(Hindu animal sacrifice?)

Seems to contradict Ahimsa and the idea that most Hindus are vegetarian.

Wow! Now, that is scary... Sacrifices to the airplane fixing god :-)
A rather persistent trait of human nature (the race mind) is the belief that good (Love, Life, Intelligence, Truth) can come from evil (fear). That somehow if we sew enough thorns we will reap corn. God is Life. Killing living things never has been nor ever will be an effective strategy for promoting life. Seems rather obvious.
Then again one could argue that killing helps protect life and that in nature death is a mechanism used to cull out old, weak or diseased aspects of the colony, so that younger, stronger and more viable aspects may thrive. Yes, yes, yes, I know. There is an argument for and against everything. This is why Omjaroo says, "it is never the thing itself which has meaning; other than that which we bring to it." In other words it is not killing which is good or bad but why we kill. If we kill because we are afraid someone won't give us the oil we want, this is evil. If we kill to protect someone from a deranged/ broken individual/government then this is good. If we give charity to others so we can feel worthwhile and superior when in fact we feel unworthy and inferior then this is evil. If we give to others because we want them to share what we have, then this is good. Same killing, same giving; different motivations and therefore different meaning or value.
Take this idea and apply it to all human behavior (including religions and religious pursuit) and you render meaningless all argument and reduce consideration of what something means to whatever the Truth is. Is our behavior motivated by Love, Truth, Intelligence, Life, Soul, Spirit and Principle or is it motivated by fear. Know the Truth and know the meaning of a thing.
Meditation is an excellent method for allowing the Truth to make It's (Our) Self known to us.

It's nice to read a good answer here. I'd started giving up on the group again.

Here is a snippet from some googling I did on Nepal+Hindu+sacrifice. Odd, does seem to fly right in the face of ahimsa. Appears that yogi's are held to a higher standard then any religion :-) Another good case for yoga not being a religion at all. But a science!
"Hinduism and Buddhism in Nepal have so influenced each other that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the two religions. Both Hindus and Buddhists, for example, worship at the Buddhist shrine of Swayambhunath. In addition, religion in Nepal has absorbed other elements of other beliefs that give it a unique character. Animal sacrifice accompanies almost every ritual and ceremonial event in Nepali life."

I'd agree that motivation is an incredibly huge factor, though you can > quickly get into the fun of moral relativism going that route so there must be other factors at play too.

And what I said was that argument (moral relativism) is rendered meaningless if you know the Truth of what motivates any behavior by an individual. Of course one can argue forever about anything if one wishes. But if you really want to know the nature of ones actions then ask yourself, was the action taken in response to fear or in response to Love? If motivation can not be discerned, then we can take a hint from some wise old guy who said, "ye shall know them by their fruits." That is to say we can look at the consequence of an action and "know" the nature or character of the motivation which motivated it. If the consequences result in hate, discontent or any "negative" form then the behavior was/is motivated by fear. If the results of an action tend to express Love, Intelligence, Truth or Life, then the action was motivated in an absence of fear (or if in the presence of fear, with courage and a moral system based on Love).
To summarize: Actions can be taken in fear or not in fear (or with courage) and there are no other possibilities. This is Principle; meaning it is absolute. No relativism.

There were two things there munged into one. The first was of the nature of this sacrifice. Love? Fear?

Clearly a fear of the plane failing or of people being hurt prompted the sacrifice.

The second was a comment on the wording on the BBC side that hints that all Hindus believe in animal sacrifice. This contradicts my experience of Hindus and limited knowledge of Hinduism.

Yes it did seem to paint the entire Hindu religion with the same brush didn't it? Apparently animal sacrifice is common among Hindus in Napal and virtually none existent throughout the rest of the world.

To summarize: Actions can taken in fear or not in fear (or with courage) and there are no other possibilities. This is Principle; meaning it is absolute. No relativism. What do you think? The tricky bit comes when someone believes they are acting out of love, but their actions have negative effect on the receiver - or if someone believes they are acting out of love but they are deluded and causing pain.

A belief is just that; it is a belief. Just like opinions. These two things may or may not correspond to the Truth or reality of a given situation. If the results of an individuals actions result in hurting anyone or anything then their motivation would have been fear. Now this is not to confused with simply causing pain, which may or may not "hurt" someone. For instance it would cause pain to lance a boil but the effect would be to help that person; to support life and promote health and this is a "good" thing. However we may feel it important to scare someone, threaten them or punish them, in order to "protect" them from some perceived harm. We do this to kids all the time. But the effect is to weaken, damage and cause undue anxiety in this person and therefore we have "hurt" them as a result of our fear of their being harmed.
Love can only cause or express Love. Fear can only cause or express the effects of an absence of Love. And here we would start to move into a metaphysical explanation of the Laws which operate in the Universe which clearly support why this is so. But basically Love exists and fear does not (fear is a negative anticipation). So anything predicated on Love will express in reality and anything predicated on fear will be based on non-existent or "bad information" and will end up hurting.

In the legal system not knowing is not a valid defense, though maybe in sentencing the judge will take into account intent.

Intent and not knowing are two entirely different issues in the justice system of England and the United States. And while the point I am making has been made in one way or another for thousands of years, it will only be heard by or interesting to someone who wants to know the Truth. The vast majority of the human race will deny or ignore any such idea. We are, after all, on this planet to "learn" the nature of who and what we are, so it stands to reason that the Truth would be hidden to most.

A question is if that is so how did it happen? Why did people pick out the bits of scripture that are against lower classes not the bits that also exist about not discriminating, caring for others?

Based on the idea I was pointing up (which has yet to be responded to btw), the answer would be: fear. Very simple, very easy... No need to spend a life time discussing, pondering, and striving to be even handed and rational. No need for philosophy, rhetoric, dogma or anything else. The answer can be known and acted on in the now. Always has and always will be our choice. Until one address's the fear (or more rarely non-fear) behind any decision or behavior one will forever be ignorant of its meaning and purpose. Consideration of any motivation other then fear is akin to trying to respond to fire by manipulating the smoke. Hopeless.
Richard, are we a tad bit naive? "People" didn't pick out the bits, the "haves" picked out the bits to support their subjugation of the "have nots." That is the purpose of any government, authority or religion. Its always been and no doubt always will be. Anything different can only exist in an environment of non-fear. Just watch who's trying to make who afraid and for what reason. When a sufficient number of individuals choose to live a life based on non-fear (yama- niyama, morals, etc) then you might have a social movement which does not create and foster evil and exploitation. These have been few and far between in the history of mankind. And these are often turned into "religions" where they are promptly reverted to instruments of control, predicated on fear :-)

A theory I've just read that could apply is that segregation is emphasised where prosperity is low. As prosperity increases so people find it easier to all get on.

Goggle: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

Do we always act out of fear? Is fear behind even the things we were initially discussing? Fear for other's safety in the case of the evangelist?

We always act in either a state of fear or in a state of non-fear. There is no other way we can act. Fear is "on" or "off" It's a zero/one thing. Fear is not a feeling. Fear is a negative anticipation. I would say, by in large, most of the time we act in fear. That is, we do things to "avoid" something we imagine may happen if we don't do such and such. We work so we won't "starve." We're nice so we won't be chastised. In a million little ways virtually everything we do is out of fear. A great deal of which was taught/modeled to us by our parents/environment. So we continue on in this manner, most of us being completely unaware of this motivation, yet wondering why we can't really be "happy."
Because fear is a anticipation (that is an imagining) what we are afraid of does not amount to "real" information or facts, but in reality constitutes "bad" or "false" information. Any decision based on bad information, no matter how rationally or responsibly thought out is going to be a "bad" decision. Someone, somewhere and somehow is going to be "hurt." That is to say that the maker/s of the bad decision (as well as others) will be given "feedback" to that effect in the form of some unpleasantness.The more fear based (or "bad") the decision the more painful (attention getting) the feedback, up to and all the way to death and destruction.

It seems that control and one-up-manship are traits found in quite a lot.

These are very much the traits of a frighten individual/s. Remember all "groups" are really symbols for a grouping, gathering or concert of individuals. At the basis of all "social" phenomenon is individuals making personal decisions with regard to their environment and lives. Most of which are being made in reaction to some negative anticipation or fear. The more fearful the more damaging, abusive and painful.

Slashdot report today that Mumbai police want to record all keypresses and take routine screenshots of computers in internet cafes. This is apparently to stop terrorism. Following those news articles and related articles around them you pick up quite a nasty picture of some people. The reporters' motives may not be entirely clear.

Does that sound like fear or non-fear? That's an easy one :-)
And you can also see how decisions/motivations based on fear will move away from those aspects of God represented by Life, Love, Truth, Intelligence, Soul, Spirit & Principle. Why is that? Because these things are the reality of what exists in the here and now. And because fear deals with fancy and fabrication God and God-like attributes can not exist there. In other words God (or Reality, Truth, the Universe, whatever you'd like to call it) exists and the object of fear does not. So decisions/actions based on fear will always be counter God- like attributes.

Another article was on the idea of eugenics - now we can more reliably detect hereditary illness some people think we should sterilise all people that carry them. Technology really is giving those in control more ability to assert even more control.

A huge area for consideration/discussion. A new thread maybe? On its face appears to to counter Life (ala Hitler)

I think the real motives and thinking are often more complex.

Of course things are complex, which is why I used the analogy of smoke. But all the complexities in any given situation can be tracked down to very simple individual decisions. Just like smoke that envelops and chokes an entire building may be tracked down to one burning trash can. The more trash cans (individuals) or points where something is burning, the more smoke

good organisation are plenty of people who work away acting they think for the best. Why does the organisation seem to act in a way different to most of its parts?

Organizations have no objective existence they are symbols for groupings of individuals making individual decisions.

who's trying to make who afraid and for what reason. Such a big problem. At times religion seems to be a way of getting people out there doing good, but more and more I see that in itself it is not a force for good.

Depends on the motivation, fear or non-fear.

>You get religions people of all religions doing good and religious people of all religions doing sometimes very bad things in the name of their religion.

Its never the "thing" its self which has meaning. It is the meaning we give to that thing. That's why the same thing can be evil or good.

Also importantly you see separation and duplication of effort where religion stops people joining together. I'm afraid I'm starting to side with Richard Dawkins!

I'm not familiar with his work but from a quick google I see his is a "skeptic". So am I. It's just that I happen to be a "God realized" one :-) Its never the thing its self Richard. Atheist, pastor, yogi, skeptic, terrorist, hero, warrior, coward. All of these things can appear to be good and great. All of these things can appear to be bad and terrible. (note: I say "appear" because in reality the only thing that exists is God and therefore everything that exists in reality must have the nature and substance of God. It is only in our fear and imaginings that we create the notion/symbol of good & bad :-)

There are personal aspects of religion that seem to work well for people.

This is the only aspect of religion that can work for anyone!

Even I've experienced those. There's so much else going on though I do sometimes wish for a world without religion. There are questions that need answering that religion attempts to answer, so the solution is hard to find. All I can do at this point in time is wonder where the world's going with it.

Where are you going with it?

Apologies if all that seems incoherent.

Seems coherent enough for me :-)

I'm working on combining information and experience from many places trying to see a way that religion can work without any problems or a way we can get the good aspects without any of the bad. I'm also working on the basis that I'm actually pretty atheist - at least in the personal god sense -

Some of the most religious persons I know are atheist :-) Occupied that space once myself. For a lot of years actually.

see lots of groups of people all getting on trying to solve similar problems, trying to understand, acting out their lives religious or not.

These are all comprised of individuals all working out the same things for themselves. We are all alike in this regard. We all have to come to grips with who we are and how we choose to act. We must all struggle to grow up and take personal responsibility for our lives and our actions. We must all ascertain for ourselves who we are, where we stand, an whether we are going to act in fear or in non-fear.

Being plain atheist and ignoring the problem is seeming much simpler, but hard in a social world where it seems I'm expected to be Christian. I wonder if I'm trying to salvage what I can of Christianity.

As a small exercise, try to ascertain what the fear is behind other's expectations of you with regard to being Christian. Hint: Identify the fear behind your own expectation of yourself or any other regarding being Christian. Works for me. But by all means be skeptical, check it out, test it, deny it, run the negative equations and see if it cancels. If what I say is True, then it must be principle and if you want it, it will work for you. If what I say is not True then it won't stand up logically or more important still, practically. But be warned this can and will take you into some mystical level knowing/understanding :-)
Oh and BTW when reading what I write, please feel free to replace the word "God" with any term more to your liking. It is after all, only a word, which represents an idea. That is a symbol, which represents a symbol. No wonder we have so much trouble "seeing" the forest for all these damn trees :-)

Thanks for the input.

You are most welcome, of course :-)
I realize that you probably are not ready/able to respond to my assertions and comments in a manner level with me. Just as you (and me) can not understand what it would be like to live on oxygen support for ten years and then have that burden lifted with a lung transplant, as did another alt.yoga member. This is not only OK, it is appropriate.
Although I am supremely disappointed in some of the other alt.yoga members who have extensive experience, wisdom and intellect, for not adding their experience and perspective to our conversation. But make no mistake; fear is the second most powerful force. Or at least that's how it appears :-)

and I've been put under such great pressure in the past.

Richard, By reading your many posts, I understand this is your challenge, your beef with religion (and by extension God).
I encourage you to give some serious consideration to what I have said about fear and look at how this may play-out in your relationship with God (and therefore with everyone and everything :-)
If you really want an answer I suggest you put it straight to the "Man." In no uncertain terms. You will receive an answer. And if you don't then fuck Him, them and everyone. Go it on your own. You can't be any worse off.

Old
(old)

i recently got a reduced rate on a hotel room because the hotel chain now considers me a senior. it's forcing me to reconsider my view of myself.

Nancy, even if you consider hatha strictly a health promoting discipline, it is obvious one is going to modify or reduce ones practice as one gets older. Same as any athlete in any sport. This is where it is important to listen to the wisdom of your body and not let your mind (desire/ fear) dictate what is good and appropriate for your health and well being. Think about it. You started late in your life and you are never going to reach anything like what a youngster would/could in terms of physical development. It would be the same if I took up mountain climbing at age 53. Yeah I could do it, have lots of fun, work hard, learn lots but am I ever going to do Everest? Please...

Traditionally Hatha is a tool for young people. It is meant to be taken up at a very early age and used in conjunction with a "spiritual practice." Hatha into middle age and beyond is a western twist, designed to widen the market for its health benefits, to those who have the time, ability and motivation to pay for it :-) Presumably if you had started when you were 14 under the tutelage of a guru and had progressed in a normal manner you would have probably all but dropped asana and pranayama practice to all but a minimum "maintenance" level (and possibly altogether) by the time you were 25-30. I understand 12 years is all it takes to get the "benefit" of a hatha practice in conjunction with a spiritual one (Sivananda http://www.dlshq.org/teachings/yoga.htm). Then in later years one would focus on and continue to develop their practice of jnana, karma and bhakti yoga.

Off hand, seems to me if you drop practice for a couple of days and then you are all aches and pains, something is out of balance. There are a number of books written which address yoga for older people; wouldn't kill you to crack one or two :-) Hittleman has one and I would look very seriously at Lilia's (http://www.liliasyoga.com/) If you look at Vishnudevenanda's book, "The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga", you will see that for the over 50 practitioner the routine is very much reduced.

It also seems to me that you may be struggling with "getting the point" of yoga. Clearly its not just a physical thing. Cm'on, all that growing older and doing anything can lead to is death :-) If you pursue hatha to the utmost physical height, all you will have is a relatively healthy and relatively more comfortable body which is none the less deteriorating by the minute; a body moving inexorably to its conclusion. If you can get a sense of the "you" that exists beyond the body, then it will become clear the meaning and purpose of any type of yoga, including hatha. Otherwise just relax and enjoy it. No big deal, do what you want. If you get bored of it, drop it. If you want to try harder and hurt yourself, by all means. Want to try something else; go for it. Its all no big deal. There are no "have to's", "must be's" or "right way's" to do anything, including yoga. Listen to your heart concerning all things. There is more Truth there than in any practice, convention or expectation.

Senior heh? Enjoy the perks (and the perspective), you won't get the real good stuff for another 10-15 years :-)

AI
(Is There an Artificial God?)

Here is an interesting wrinkle on the God debate. Should speak to theist and atheist alike :-)

Is There an Artificial God? by Douglas Adams

This man was incredible. His speech is impeccable. If you listen to the talk and then read the transcript you will notice that his speech is nearly flawless. Comfortable, sensible and grammatically perfect; he speaks just like he writes and vice versa. If you haven't already read them, I highly suggest his book(s), "The Hitchhikers Guide to the Universe"

And in this talk he is the only person I have heard support the conclusion I have observed, that if I live my life as if there is God then good things happen. So to me, for all practical purposes, whether there is or isn't a God is an irrelevant and meaningless argument.

nobody has ever counted the in numerable (cant count) tiny cut crystal square reflections on the wheel of illusion that which changes color in the inner organ, a membrane....please ziz zag if crossing...look up youl cross in a mere few short short short moments once in no going back...jd

Indra's Net?

I wasnt knowledgable about indras net so i looked it up in search engines.....yes absolutely correct same exact thing i call a wheel of illusion .

Philosophy
(The Electric Brain)

A recent post from alt.meditation sums it up for me :-)

"To do is to be," Socrates

"To be is to do," Plato

"To be or not to be," Hamlet

"Do-be-do-be-do," Frank Sinatra

"Do be a Do Bee, don't be a Don't Bee," Miss Connie from Romper Room

"Scooby Dooby Doo," Scooby Doo

"Yabba Dabba Doo," Fred Flintstone

"Inka Dinka Doo," Jimmy Durante

"Boop-oop-a-Doop," Betty Boop

"De do do do, de da da da," The Police

"Doo Wah Diddy," Manfred Mann

"Doh!" Homer Simpson

"I am what I do," Martin Buber

"I think, therefore I am," Rene Descartes

"I yam what I yam," Popeye

"I am," God

"God is dead!" Nietzsche

"Nietzsche is dead!" God

October

Dying

(Cross-Posts and Spam exceed 95%. ALT.YOGA is dead...)

alt.yoga is dead...

Kübler-Ross model on death and dieing.

1. Denial: The initial stage: "It can't be happening."
2. Anger: "Why ME? It's not fair?!" (either referring to God, oneself, or anybody perceived, rightly or wrongly, as "responsible")
3. Bargaining: "Just let me live to see my son graduate."
4. Depression: "I'm so sad, why bother with anything?"
5. Acceptance: "It's going to be OK."

I've done and been through all these phases with my friend alt.yoga. I can do no more...
I accept, its happening/done and I can't stop it...
Good bye and we'll see you all next time around :-)
Please .05, do keep in touch. I have deep need of you; I hope you don't mind if I contact you or if you want please contact me directly any time; you have my email...

Hi Jared, form your many posts I know you to be a thoughtful, well intentioned gentleman, a nice guy so to speak.

Thank you for the kind words.

But at the risk of seeming insensitive, obnoxious, derisive, ... my initial reaction is "Waaaa, WAAAA, Waaaaa" what a whiner, get a life.

Well you're nothing if not consistent :-)

do some asana, meditation, chanting, jappa or something else yogic. beyond reading and intellectualization.

Been there, done that, even got the t-shirt, thanks...
Oh and BTW I wouldn't be so quick to poo-poo intellectuals; after all it the bookish types who provide the underlying structures that allow the action types to go go go and live life with gusto and thoughtless abandon. Its a symbiotic relationship, don't cha know.

"Cross-Posts and Spam exceed 95%...." hey man it is all god. the trick is to see and hear the "message" in all the crossposts and spam.

You mean even the "Waaaa, WAAAA, Waaaaa", part?
If you really would like to trip me up you might even respond to the subject of my post as opposed to "reacting" to it's tenor (which as I read it over does sound a bit mellow-dramatic as Stu would say). I'm afraid until you do so I can't take your advice too seriously because it doesn't seem to be tailored to me personally but rather to yourself :-)

Why? you have made similar statements on several occasions, many responded to the subject of your posts and here you are again, "the sky is falling! the sky is falling!"

HB :-)
I've been reviewing your post and chuckling to myself :-)
You see, communicating accurately to sympathetic people in the same language, face to face can be difficult. Attempting to do so in writing, over an anonymous electronic forum, concerning a subject as

abstract as yoga, can be (is) exponentially so. Throw in individual emotional reactions, based on myriad assumptions, weighted by varied personal tastes, experience and motivations and you have a real challenge. But just in case you are genuinely making an effort to understand something about me, (I did see a question but almost missed it because there was no question mark :-) or attempting to offer helpful advice (as opposed to whining about my whining :-) I will try to match your effort by attempting to answer in kind. Not only that but you are one of the few in the pub at the moment :-)

> *even a rudementary practice of yoga, as mentioned above, will go a long way towards establishment of mind in peace. such that mellow drama falls away.*

But then you would have to know where I came from to understand where I am now. And you need only stand in my shoes for 10 minutes to appreciate of the power of yoga and how it functions in my life. Heck, you might forgive me a bit of melodrama or even begrudge me a whine or two :-)
Why the melodrama?
This is funny. A few years (about 10 really) a therapist remarked to me that I displayed "flat affect." That while he knew me to be intensely emotional and deeply involved in the proceedings around us, he did not see (or recognize) any reaction or expression on my face or in my body language. This was frustrating to him because he could not "read me" and my reactions to what was happening. So since that conversation I have been attempting to help others read my emotional states by attempting to be more demonstrative or expressive. When I try to do that in writing there is always a chance of appearing melodramatic. Most people don't use this forum to express their personal emotional states in this way. I suppose in part for fear of being criticized for the mode of their expression and not having their feelings acknowledged or recognized.
So the "whaa whaa whaa" you heard was my grieving for the loss of a friend of some years, namely alt.yoga.
A more extreme example might be a mother in Iraq whose children, husband or parents, are blown up in a suicide attack. Screaming, wailing and much gnashing of teeth. Even though the reality is there is no death and those killed are probably better off, given the war torn environment. A yogi could make the case that all the melodrama is for naught and this person should go get a life. And this may be true, although it hardly seems consistent with yama-niyama or very compassionate.

> *I do not poo-poo intelectuals or the use of intellect. However, I do consider intellectualization, that peculiar perversion which leads to excessive abstraction with no practical, practicable component*

Is that what you get from me and what I discuss and write about on alt.yoga, perversion?

> *No I do not know. Seems to me that as far as yoga goes there is no > room for thoughtless abandon. > seems to me that attentive practice gives results while > intellectualization does not.*

If "intellectualizing" equals a perversion to you, I don't suppose there is any use in discussing jnana yoga or anything that requires thought or contemplation at all. If you can't see the symbiosis that exists between action and consideration/thought then I can't imagine how you can understand anything I write about ever. So I understand why you would be inclined to focus on the speaker as opposed to discussing the points put forward (which of course is a common debating technique in case you "discuss" by argument or negation which is something I used to do almost exclusively but have since dropped as ineffective.) Seems to leave little ground for understanding or sympathetic appraisal and exchange.

> *So responding to your offered subject seems pointless.*

Of course by now you know that I was referencing your recent (years) responses to my posts, not only this series. I notice my posts are often flatly ignored or only slightly responded to. I'm not sure of the reason, although it has been fairly consistent over the years. Perhaps some think I am full of do-do, others may not have any idea what I am talking about (my favorite :-), and this one is for you: perhaps I flatter myself and no one is even reading them. I do know that thinking about, researching, writing and all the activity

around posting and responding to a post is time consuming and constitutes real "work", so it may be that its just not meaningful enough for most people to invest the effort. It's important to me so I extend the effort and when it no longer is then I will stop. Path of least resistance stuff, immutable law or principle.

as opposed to "reacting" to it's tenor Well it seems to me that the "tenor" is as important, if not more so, as the "subject" in any communication: the ideas, the subject,being just the context in which the tenor gets expression.

I'm afraid this sentence is not quite clear to me. Although I agree with you that tenor is one important factor when trying to understand the meaning of the written or spoken word. However tenor is often defined on the receiving end and the issuing speaker has little control over the interpretation. Add differences in language, culture, education, life-style and man you have a recipe for misunderstanding. Like the exercise in college where the professor requests one student to tell another student how to put on a jacket. The sending student can not touch or show the receiving student anything, they can only provide words. The receiving student can not do anything but act out the exact instruction they are given, they can not assume any knowledge or experience whatsoever. Hysterical really :-) and frustrating.

(which as I read it over does sound a bit mellow-dramatic as Stu would say). I must have missed Stu's response, although I do remember making such an observation myself.

Again I am referring to past posts and yes I realize you have said this before as Stu has. I guess I should ask here: why you continue to respond to me in this manner? Are you trying to help me, are you going to protect some other member or fledgling yogi from getting sucked into my stuff, are you going to help the group by keeping a positive tone in the face of a negative assessment? Do you define yourself in terms of the failings or faults of others? Is it because I'm one of the few in the pub and why the hell not? Do you like to "mix it up" or fight? Do you resent me for some reason?

perhaps, but I do notice that those on alt yoga who actually practice various aspects of yoga, as opposed to reading and thinking about it, don't seem to be overly bothered by the present state of the NG. Therefor, my suggestion to actually do something.

HB, clearly you are bright, well spoken and thoughtful. Is it not obvious that my foretelling the demise of alt.yoga is my way of trying to spark it back to life? The group really is dying out. Spam and cross-posted off-topic threads have infected it like so much cancer. There seems to be no relevant discussion which might attract new people or even the regulars for that matter. So after some length of time with no real posting I make my plea; people respond (in rather large numbers for alt.yoga) new threads are started and discussions go on for a while and then I stop posting and watch as the posts fall off to nearly nothing again. Then I post again and look we're having a discussion we might not have had otherwise. Is any of it relevant? Does anyone care? Will it effect alt.yoga (or the world) in anyway, good or bad? Who the hell knows. And it doesn't really matter. I am doing what I want to do by casting my heart, soul and voice into an electronic space called alt.yoga and seeing what comes back. If the responses to whatever I post wane and die off or they become bitter or dismissive then eventually I will give up trying and wander off somewhere else to express myself :-) It would still make me sad though, which is part of the human condition. True equanimity is acceptance and non-reaction to the reality of the mind body and soul, where it is right "now", not in some imagined future or dead past. Whining is allowed in yoga. Everything good and evil is allowed in yoga. Yoga is what is; now.

Sorry for the delay Jared. between work and family life, I my access to and time available for the net is sporadic and often limited so as not to keep you waiting i'll post now and perhaps have more later

HB,Thanks, I understand and I appreciate your response.
At the risk of being interpreted as glib, dismissive of asana, meditation, jappa, chanting etc, bordering on condescension. I'd like to pause this exchange here. Nothing personal, its just that we're quite far apart and right now because of pressing personal concerns, I'm afraid trying to close the gap is not the most responsible use of my limited time and energy. Perhaps in a couple of months when things have (hopefully) settled down, if you'd like, we can take up this conversation further :-)

December

Weather

(Weather)

> *Battery runs motor which turns the generator whch fills up ballery a complete circle which has electritity throughout.*

JD, I have followed this series of posts and your references with some extra interest.

> *Ho hum as a philsopher i got it all as a labor forget it/grin...they dont mix at all .inventor yes craftsman no...well well well.....another impasse built from many past impass...if i cant get it you sure cant get it understood.....oh boy 53 years of headaches/grin..JDC*

Little by little you reveal a bit more about the history and characteristics of your "vehicle." But of all of the tens of thousands of words I have read from you, I believe I understand this statement most clearly. In fact, I just "got" that concept, not even two months ago. On top of it, I turned 53 this year also... However my "headaches" are subsiding and giving way to something like the mythical "serenity" or the elusive eastern version "equanimity."
In a couple of days I will be in the high Chihuahua desert (4000’ on the US side) . We may be physically proximate to within 100 miles.

> Hoohoo, 100 miles man should call stop over would love to later read how you describe me/

So it has been spoken; so it shall be done :-)
I’m on foot at the moment, but once I am settled (relatively speaking :-) I’ll contact you...

2008

March

Back

(Back on the grid... Hello to my friends (and enemies :-))

Amigos, Fear, pain and frustration are starting to spontaneously express as tears. Fear is evaporating and the power of the Universe (prana/chi/ kundalini) is beginning to flow far less impeded. WOW! :-)

> *welcome back jared. i've missed you here. i'm sorry you've been having such a hard time, but it sounds like you've worked your way through. care to elaborate? a few of the stalwarts have continued posting but it's not the same without you. we kept the off topic preachers from over running the place completely.*

It's really interesting, because the "hard time" I am having is really much "easier" then things have been in many years! And yet I doubt anyone, who was not intimately familiar with my story, could see the situation as such. Such is the irony which always exists between Truth and illusion. And yes, I would care to elaborate :-) But it will be a while more before I can. But believe me, if you would care to, you will be one of the very first people to hear it, I promise :-)
I appreciate your (and the other stalwarts) efforts in holding the fort while I am otherwise occupied :-) I rather think that you have come into your own for the group and this place has always been better for it. I think your movement over the last few years attests to the power of yoga better then any words could.

> *Sounds quite an experience, but how does it effect your daily life? That kind of thing is presumably quite large an impact?*

Mike D used to discuss the effect of clearing the pranic pathways through the practice of yoga and how this "clearing" would express as feelings and emotions more easily or spontaneously expressed. I saw, first hand, an example of what I consider the epitome of this when I was speaking with a young women at an ashram and something I said resonated with her and tears just began to flow from her, but without any heaving or resistance or struggle. Simply an outpouring of joy, release and connection. I knew at that moment I was sharing something divine, without pretense or intent, guileless and pure. It was simply one of the most beautiful things I have ever witnessed. I knew at that moment that this was a "state" that I wished to attain in my life.
My movement in yoga and on my path tends to be "incremental" rather then monumental. Although there has been plenty of drama :-) So my daily life benefits little by little, bit by bit, but always upwards towards realization of Who and What I am. A steady movement towards the Truth, with the attendant "two steps forward and one step back." Progress, not perfection... There are dramatic moments and occasional "epiphanies" but by in large it has always been a matter of persistence in aligning my thoughts and actions with a vision of Truth as it comes to me in intuition and a kind of "knowing" how things "should be" despite how the "appear" to be.
So to more succinctly answer your question, yes there has been a huge impact on my life (and on the Universe), but its taken a great many years and a great many stories to express in my life as it is now :-)

> *In the immortal words of Emerson Lake and Palmer: Welcome back my friend to the show that never ends!*

Thanks. Although you date yourself (and me) with your ELP reference :-) I am still happy to be reminded of the wisdom of the acid-rock crowd of our youth...
Neti Pot

(neti pot) *I'd like to apologise for not having searched your posts on forgiveness.*

when i try to talk to people in the real world about neti pot use they stare at me like i'm from mars and say "are you kidding?".

This is very funny. Neti is a kriya (cleansing technique) very much specific to yoga (hatha). Why would you think it "off topic" or "non- yoga?"
A search on "neti" in alt.yoga will bring you a bunch of posts. I have made a number of them myself. Neti is a good thing and I don't doubt a direct "cause" of improvement in your condition.
Remember, allergies are not a disease, mistake or weakness, they are a result of you eating, drinking or in some way taking into your body something that is doing it harm and so your body speaks to you by way of "allergy" symptoms. Neti or drugs or whatever may give you "relieve" but the message is you are doing or eating or drinking or breathing something that is hurting your vehicle. Take responsibility for these symptoms, listen to your body's wisdom and make whatever diet, live-style or other adjustment you need to. If there is something you need to learn, then learn it. If there is something you need to give up then give it up. If there is something you need to add, then add it...
The Son
(Anthem of the Son - Happy Easter!!!)

Who could not be touched by the symbol of God - our Father - dying so that we - His children - may live?

BTW, Jesus was a highly trained yoga adept and very human. Jesus chose to demonstrate, in public, what each and every human being is capable of and he was willing to pay with his life to do so. In that regard Jesus was "exceptional" as most humans are unwilling to even share their "real" self privately, no less publicly, with an expectation of certain death for doing so. However Jesus was no more or less a "Son of God" than you or I. To imagine so is to miss his message completely ;-)

Revenge

(Yoga gives pleasure?)

If you have a lot of enemies in life,and you're completely unwilling to forgive and forget their crimes against you, is it still possible to derive benefits from yoga?

The only person who has ever "fucked" you over is yourself. When you "realize" this (self realization), there will no longer be fear (anger), no longer be a need to forgive and you will understand the real meaning of "turning the other cheek." Your struggle to know is admirable and if you persevere you will have your answer...

You're suggesting that ALL people who've been victims of other people's evil actions, have bought it on themselves?!!

Do me a favor and would you please do a google groups search on alt.yoga; "omjaroo+victim" and then let's continue the discussion.

Ok,when I have some spare time I will do the search. Thanks for the help

My entire life is devoted to that search. Standing by :-) "It's the question that drives us, Neo." "What is the matrix?"

I'd like to apologise for not having searched your posts on forgiveness.

Understood. Standing by :-)
These links may be helpful...
This thread outlines my basic understanding of forgiveness
http://groups.google.com/group/alt.yoga/browse_thread/thread/d6e3c40b2e7a163d/c6660fcf40157362?hl=en&lnk=gst

This exchange further reinforces the basic idea of forgiveness and the roll of personal responsibility in forgiveness. And, as I have just noticed, this thread provides a remarkably clear example of the process by which humans who are frightened and/or abused will call the feared thing into their experience in order to process it. Do you see it?
http://groups.google.com/group/alt.yoga/browse_thread/thread/d6e3c40b2e7a163d/c6660fcf40157362?hl=en&lnk=gst
Actually you don't need to read my comments as you have already provided much of the needed wisdom in your own :-)

1. *"even though I'm only hurting myself for being so bitter."*

I think that's what I said :-)

2. *"that means they've won, and I've lost"*

That's a decision you make. There are no winners and no losers in my world. Because that's a value I choose to hold. No one can compel me believe otherwise.

3. *"The reality is that I will never get revenge on my oppresors"*

Bingo! If there was such a thing as revenge, then one should be able to "get" it. So why is it we can never get revenge? Why can we only do damage to ourselves and others and never be satisfied in doing so? Why can't we make the anger we suffer from go away by hurting and revenging ourselves on others?

4. *"I don't believe in God"*

If you believe in revenge then you most certainly believe in God. Perhaps its the word "God" you object to. Try replacing the word God with Universe, the Force, Void, Love, Nature, Justice, Truth.

5. *"Throughout human history billions of people have been victims and equally billions of ppl have been oppresors"*

Victim / victimized; these are opposite sides of the same coin. One can not exist without the other and as you point out, in equal measure.

6. *"I actually enjoy thinking about revenge"*

Yes, no doubt. Addicting, expensive and damaging; just like cigarette smoking.

"Jared,taking everything I wrote above into account, how do you square it up to your satement in your first post in this threat that 'self-realization', is when I realize that I've 'fucked myself' over and can't really blame my attackers?"

My friend, I have been where you are in your understanding, in your compulsion and in your suffering. I am no longer there. I have learned that most of the suffering I have experienced in my life is a result of what I told myself internally about what was happening to me. I've felt pain, I have been hurt, abused and tormented. But this was not suffering, it was pain, discomfort, distress. The suffering comes from attachment to the circumstance. Replaying it over and over in my mind and emotions. Trying to get back at my tormentors. Trying to "make it right." Constantly taking my awareness out of my present moment where things may be peaceful, real and full of Love and projecting it into an imaginary future, which doesn't exist or a remembered past which no longer exists (and at the time was probably based on a projection of an imaginary future) in an endless loop of imaginings. All of which I create. When I "realized" this I started on the road to freedom. When I "realized" the reality of who and what I am, I understood that I do quite literally, create the world I live in. Hence; self-realization.

I'll try to reach your lelvel of consciousness, but to be honest I don't think I have it in me to do so.

Not to worry. You'll get here. After all, there is nowhere else to go :-)

Fear

(The attraction remains w/ alt.yoga)

It's funny because whenever the "power" (feeling) flows ; it's alt.yoga I want to share with. I have no idea why... Rarely is what I say acknowledged, understood or even discussed. But I am learning not to second guess the "power." For some reason I am supposed to direct my energy here. So here I am. I'm glad you're here. Perhaps eventually we'll all know why :-) Any ideas?

Ideas about what?

Perhaps; why are you here? That is, I shared a personal moment and I invited anyone who cared to to chime in... What do you think? There are only two states from which a human being can be motivated to act; fear or non-fear. Which motivates your response to me?

where does that come from? i would have said fear and want. nb

Good point and very close except that "want" is an expression of "fear" and not a different thing from fear. Fear or not fear is an observation and a point of logic. Just as one can not be a "little bit pregnant," that is either you are or you are not, one is either acting in fear or not. The fear acted in, might be a little or a lot, but either there is fear and the action is being motivated by it or not. No other possibility. So if one is being motivated by "not fear," what is it that motivates them? That would be the "default" human trait or motivation, "Love." Human being have their very existence in and as Love. Absent fear they must naturally express who and what they are; eg Love. There is no need to "try" and Love, we can only "let" Love express. Love is reality that exists (and takes place) in the Now moment and fear is an anticipation (or imagining) which doesn't exist and will never take place, but non-the-less motivates us to "protect" ourselves, which means we must do something against someone (or something) else in order that we be safe.

I did a quickly search on google groups, alt.yoga for omjaroo+motivated +fear and came up with the following, which might help explain what I mean about fear/non fear and also what the meaning of my question was to HB :-)

> I was watching my 14 year old son launch into a what promised to be a grand and luxurious stretch, when he abruptly stopped and with a pained look on his face, declared, "I hate it when I stretch because I feel like someone is going to poke me in the ribs."
>
> Noting an opportunity to point out a important concept in human (and cosmic) relations I explained to him that this is a perfect example of a very natural human behavior. I'm not sure what to call it, (in psychology it's called projection) but it is common to all people. That is the tendency for people to ascribe their own traits to others around them. My son felt vulnerable (quite without cause in this case) to someone poking him the ribs while he stretched. Why? Because he is the one who likes to poke (and irritate others in a million different ways) people in the ribs. So it is he who fears the very thing that he might do. Ironically, in a sense he is being punished (can't enjoy a stretch) for actions he has taken or would take. No doubt we've all seen this effect in the liar who is afraid of being cheated and the thief who is so careful to protect himself and his property from being stolen. The filter through we view our world is the one with which we are most familiar and knowledgeable. Often times we will accuse others around us of the vary qualities and actions of which we ourselves are guilty. For instance my ex-wife insists most ardently that I am a liar. I have never lied to the women and yet it was she who stood in court and lied her pretty as* off and has lied many, many times. The fact is she has a value for lying and I don't. She feels to lie serves her in some good way. I on the other hand believe lying is poison of the highest order and I work at eliminating it from my life. Yet my ex-wife sees me as a liar. Her filter, not my actions.

It makes perfect sense to me that in order to lessen our fear we would try to convince ourselves of the accuracy of our perceptions, by seeing these things in others. Another example. I have been frightened much of my life and I am very quick to judge other's behaviors and motivations. Naturally, I am very sensitive to being judged and as such, am quick to see this fault in others. As I continue to let go of my fear, my propensity for quick judgment lessens correspondingly. I am also in a much better position to accurately determine whether I am being arbitrarily judged or if there is reason and cause for someone's criticism. I am developing an open mind but it can only be as open as I am willing to be vulnerable (and responsible). I must be willing and able not to protect myself.

I have found it very difficult (but not impossible) to have an open mind. In addition to vulnerability, an open mind must be an empty mind. Without preconception, interpretation or filter. This is how I use jhana yoga to work on this.

My mind and emotions don't perceive the truth of what I see and experience clearly all the time. So I constantly look at my situation and my reaction to it and I assess whether my action, feelings and what I am telling myself about the situation are aligned with a known truth. One such truth is; God is Everywhere, God is Everything, God is Love, Everything, Everywhere is Love. So I can judge any action or reaction I express which is inconsistent with one appropriate to this Truth must be generated by fear and therefore inaccurate (a lie). Any action based on fear must be inaccurate because fear always anticipates and all anticipation is a mental construct and therefore has no substance or reality. Any decision I make on the basis of fear will be a bad one because it is predicated on bad information. I can also know whether I am acting in fear or in the absence of fear by the results of my actions. Actions motivated by fear will produce results like hate, fear, anger, rage, depression, longing, desire, boredom, anxiousness, disappointment, suspicion, resentment, etc. Actions motivated without fear will produce results which are loving, intelligent, efficient, joyous, honest, freeing, responsible, appropriate, connecting, inclusive, healthy, practical, measured, etc.

If my actions, words and motivations don't align with the truth then I have corrections and or apologies to make. It is an ongoing and somewhat arduous process. Sometimes I lack sympathy for myself (and others) because of the sheer amount of falsehoods which require correcting. But then I have to ask myself if it is sympathy (poor me, poor you) I lack or compassion (God in me and God in you). One is generated by fear and the other by the absence of.

May

Mat

(yoga mat stinky)

burned rubber odor radiating from it. Does anyone know how to neutralize the mat?

I personally don't think plastic mats, sticky, stinky or otherwise are the way to go. Here is a link to a mat I bought and am very happy with. Others I have suggested it to were also happy, so I don't hesitate to suggest it.
http://www.healthandyoga.com/html/product/yogamats.html
There is also a link on this page to a discussion of why sticky mats are not really appropriate for serious yoga. And I agree, that mats should not provide grip. If you need grip to hold a pose then you are not balanced and relaxed into the pose and you are just kidding yourself that you are doing hatha yoga.

Jhnana
(Jnâna yoga)

This is from wikipedia. One of the most succinct and accurate descriptions of this form of yoga I have seen.
Jnâna yoga teaches that there are four means to salvation:

> * Viveka - Discrimination: The ability to differentiate between what is real/eternal (Brahman) and what is unreal/temporal (everything else in the universe.) * Vairagya - Dispassion: After practice one should be able to "detach" her/himself from everything that is "temporary." * Shad-sampat - The 6 Virtues: Tranquility (control of the mind), Dama (control of the senses), Uparati (renunciation of activities that are not duties), Titiksha (endurance), Shraddha (faith), Samadhana (perfect concentration). * Mumukshutva - Intense longing for liberation from temporal limitations.

is this way of life possible while still living in this society?

Seems like every time I read something you write I have to smile. You (and Richard :-) are moving so far, so fast, it is a joy to behold. Wisely you put forward the question:
Sure it is. No monk'ness or nun'ness required :-) In fact you will read time and again from the masters that it is a "higher" and more substantial form of yoga, to practice in the real world. That those who are willing to strive to integrate yoga in there real (dutiful) lives are practicing a superior form, even more so than those who retreat to the mountain or forest.
When trying to understand the science of yoga and it functions and effects, it is important not to confuse religious, cultural, linguistic, historical and other regional attributes with the art and science itself. Yoga is universal. Obviously it is going to be practiced in different context, language and style in the West then it is in the East. Many things eastern are couched in "religious" ideas and are communicated in poetic terms. That's their history and development. Westerners tend to be business like, practical minded and pragmatic (even while being religious). This is our history and development.
We wouldn't sit down to an Ethiopian meal and proclaim, "what am I suppose to do with that? I've never seen that, I can't understand and cook that. It's incomprehensible to me, it must only be for Ethiopians or people who devote their lives to it." No, hopefully we just eat, we enjoy and we grow from the sustenance and revel in the company of those who have fed us. The truth is, while having a very different look, smell and flavor, it is none the less food. For those of us who can't get past the appearance of things and discern their real meaning, we face a life of fear, unhappiness and inevitable death, all devoid of joy and a sense of belonging and oneness (yoga).
Likewise in a jnani-like manner you inquired :-)

i wonder how one continues to work, earn a living, support a family, have relationships, recreation, etc. how could someone have a job to make the money to pay for heating, food, clothes, or maintain relationships - family or friends - and doing only activities which are duties.

These all sound like duties to me. Seems you may be most of the way there already :-)

while judging everything as real or unreal

Why not? We judge things constantly. Unfortunately for most of us we judge things inaccurately. Jnana is the yoga which concerns itself with "discriminating" or separating truth from fiction or what is real from what is not. Could this be anything but a good thing? Especially in a work a day world. Wouldn't you rather be making decisions and taking actions on information which is true or real, than on information that is not. No matter how well reasoned and responsible a decision we make or action we take, its going to come out bad if its based on bad information. So I think learning to tell what's true from what's false has very practical and beneficial use in any and every aspect of our lives.

You have learned over the course of your yoga study / practice that you can do things you thought unlikely or impossible. Your eyes (inner and outer) have been opened to truths perhaps you were not aware of and so your heart / mind continues to open even greater possibilities . This is how one aspect of yoga (hatha - physical) intertwines or overlaps another aspect of yoga (jnana - knowledge). As you learn more about the "different" types of yoga you will see they all overlap and are at their base, all the same (yoga - unity).
I get from your questions and comments you've made before that it would be helpful if some set down just how a western who lives in the real world goes about practicing real yoga. There is substantial material covering hatha yoga which has come all the way to commercial. Raja has been adapted for the west by maharishi and others and bhakti by the Self Realization Fellowship and some other religious organizations. Jnana and karma are not well understood or supported on any scale as they are such individual disciplines. I suggest the writings of Richard Hittleman, Yogananda, Vivekananda. There are other western equivalents like Emerson, Ernest Holms and perhaps the very best in practical day to day applications, Emmet Fox.

> *a lot of my questions were based on misreading the definitions. just like a carpenter who measures twice, cuts once, i should read twice, answer once.*
>
> *the key is to focus on trying or working towards, rather than plop it into my life as a fait acomplit and try to fit my life in around it.*

In recovery circles its referred to as "striving for progress not perfection."
On the subject of jnana, I prefer not to use the eastern words for yoga ideas as it makes them sound so far off, unattainable and just plain "fru fru, laa la, naa na." On the other hand if one speaks in simple, direct English terms about yoga, then it doesn't sound like, well, yoga :-)
The reason I choose to post this list of jnana concepts, is that it contained, more than usual, relatively clear English description along with the Sanskrit term. Something you hear a lot when studying the roots and meaning of yoga is "there is no direct translation for so and so word." And this is right, but there is nothing that is true which can not be communicated or understood in any language.
So in hopes of being helpful, here is my attempt to further translate the translation :-)
* Viveka - Discrimination:
The willingness and the active attempt to discern what is real from what is not, truth from fiction, correct from incorrect, accurate from inaccurate, truth from lies, presentation from content, appearance from reality, right from wrong. See a pattern here :-)
* Vairagya - Dispassion:
Detachment or equanimity. When one knows or strives to know what is true, there is a real and natural tendency to get less intensely excited about things, good or bad. Intense feelings (passion) of excitement, happiness, sadness, fear, love, etc are generated by fear and desire and other forms of expectation and fantasy. When ones awareness is grounded in reality, passion falls away and is replaced by knowing acceptance and by gentler and more subtle emotional cues and reactions.
* Shad-sampat - The 6 Virtues:
Tranquility (control of the mind)
Is your body, which includes your mind, on "automatic," reacting to environmental influence, without control or willful direction from "you" the person which exists beyond its limited physicalness. Like a car, racing out of control, constantly bumping into things, running over others, wreaking harm and destruction in ways big and small? Do we control our vehicle or does it control us?
Dama (control of the senses)
The senses are mechanisms designed to provide us feedback or information about our internal and external environment. These senses become perverted (and useless) when we concentrate on intensifying pleasurable feedback and discouraging painful or uncomfortable feedback. Information is information; no good or bad just feedback. Can you imagine a computer judging the information we placed in it as "good" or "bad?" The thing would be useless :-)
Uparati (renunciation of activities that are not duties)
This is really just dropping those activities and things we do for "distraction." Those things we do to keep us ignorant, unaware and in denial of reality. People often think of drugs, alcohol, sex, eating, reading,

films and the many things we do to "enjoy" ourselves. These things can be a distraction. They can also be something we need to do, for process, for survival and for other reasons. Either our actions support finding and knowing what is true or they keep us from this knowing. Duties are things we do because we need to do them and we are responsible to do them. But what some consider duties are very often used to "distract" us and keep us from knowing and accepting what is true. Work, family, yoga and all kinds of responsibilities can be used to distract. We've all known people who keep a house so clean it takes all their time and energy and it really seems like they are trying hard to avoid something else in their lives. It all depends on why you do what you do. What is it's purpose for you. Not what does the thing itself mean. Nothing has any meaning that we don't give to it. Hence my saying, "it's never the thing its self, only the meaning we bring to it."
Titiksha (endurance)
Stick-to-it-ness. Staying the course. Perseverance. Never giving up. Personally, I've never figured out a way to "give up." Sometimes I'd like to but I have yet to find a book on the subject. Not to be confused with "surrendering" which is not at all the same as giving up. Surrendering is along the lines of acceptance and giving up, just plain stopping.
Shraddha (faith)
Profound and absolute knowing. Beyond, believing, hoping, wanting, wishing or any of the many things that pass for religiousness or faith. When you really know what is true and what is not, there is a "knowing" which transcends all question or doubt. No one and no thing can cause you to "unknow" a thing you know. This is faith. Simple, powerful, loving.
Samadhana (perfect concentration)
One pointedness. Focus. Being in awareness of here and now. Non- distractedness.
* Mumukshutva - Intense longing for liberation from temporal limitations.
What this means is, once you know or even suspect, who and what you are, there is a unshakable feeling or motivation to come "home" to yourself. To be and act and feel and think as who you are. On the everyday material plane, on the cosmic plane, on any plane at all. Being freely and uninterruptedly who you are is the point of our existence and what we're here to learn.
And who are we? We are Love, Life, Truth, Intelligence, Soul, Principle and Spirit. And how do we live (in a practical way) with who we are? I suggest reading Emmet Fox's Essay, "The Seven Main Aspects of God" from the book, "Alter Your Life" and Yogananda's book, "Man's Eternal Quest."

So where is Bhakti in all this?

Jnana, Truth Karma, Action Bhakti, Love Hatha, Body Raja, Mind Tantra, Being Kundalini, Energy
Just like ice cream. Pick any flavor you like or try a new one. They're all good :-)

I am quite aware that they are all good, (probably that is why I prefer Tantra, since it includes everything you've listed,

Please remember that even though I am personally responding to you, everything I write is done so in the hopes that others who wish to might benefit from the ideas presented and/or join in the discussion.Of course you are correct, each form of yoga contains everything listed and can be used to develop all these attributes if properly understood and practiced.

although your "translations" seem overly simplistic to the point of being misleading.

I'm not sure which translations you are referring to. The "one word" translations or the "further translation" of the translations, mentioned in an earlier part of this thread. I'd be interested to know what, how and why, something I've said is misleading.

but it seems that your Jnanis are not

I agree with you the article is most certainly flawed. I took the quotes, out of context, from wikipedia. I posted them because they made a bit of sense in English and I thought they would be a good springboard for discussion.

I don't really know what the sanskrit terms mean, I don't know if the concepts conveyed actually correspond to the sankrit accurately (yogicly or linguistically) and I don't agree with idea that there even is such a thing as salvation or with the conclusions presented. I don't have to know these "details" to practice jnana or any other form of yoga. Just as a hatha yogi in the west doesn't have to know sanskrit to practice asana. I am very much in line with you that they seem to have missed bhakti altogether. The post wasn't meant to be an edict or pronouncement of ultimate yogic wisdom, it was intended to introduce some jnanic ideas and encourage discussion about how they might be relevant to a realistic western yoga practice.

Or does "Jnana" yoga not recognise Bhakti as a means to salvation?

But to address your question which I had originally interpreted as a statement (sorry), Jnana does in fact recognize Bhakti as path to enlightenment. After all a Jnani would have to dismiss a really big chunk of truth and reality not to :-)
BTW, as I am certain you are aware, there are many who believe bhakti to be the fastest, easiest and most accessible of all the yogic paths. And from a jnanic point of view this makes perfect sense. Because once someone "knows" or even "suspects" the Truth or is Self-realized, then there's nothing left "to do" but let go and celebrate (worship :-)

you might like to check out any books by Arthur Avalon, aka Sir John Woodruf

In the bibliography of Richard Hittleman's, Yoga: The 8 Steps to Health and Peace, he lists as suggested reading, Woodroffe, Sir John, The Serpent Power, Ganesh & Co., Madras, 1972.

Love is a great force.

Love is the only force.

The Bhakti Sutras talk about avoiding organised religion for these reasons.

Love isn't something you "do" as in practice religion. Love is "who" and "what" you are, as in complete acceptance of what is. No matter what your believe, your understanding or your motivation this "acceptance" is the "goal" referred to as yoga (oneness) and the purpose of all forms of the science of yoga (doing.)

Those would perhaps be the "Hare Krishnas".

Yes the HK's are one of the big proponents of Bhakti, but by no means the only.I've run across this ideal dozens of time. The Gita references Bhakti big time. Along with Karma, Jnana, Raja, Hatha and the rest of the yogas.

It looks like in humans the drive for power is about as strong as the drive for love.

This whole idea that one yoga is superior to another is most unfortunate. It is really that we are all, as individuals, more inclined to or better suited to one form of yoga over another. It isn't that one is better or faster or easier, they are all the same. Hence my reference to the different flavors of ice cream :-)

I've always associated tantrism with sex, "dual cultivation" and all that jazz.

The common (hopelessly ill informed) understanding of Tantra is that it is somehow "sexual" yoga. Oh well what can I say. My understanding of tantra is substantial but my no means close to comprehensive and I have reached this level after many years of hard work and study. So for the uninitiated to make this mistake in their understanding of what tantra is, is not in the least surprising :-(

July
Bullshit
(Tantric Yogic Meditative Excercises)

Meditation Technique 101-a Religious Fucking For Empowering Women

...

You seem to have taken the crudest form of Tantra and debased it to an even cruder level. Unbelievable!

...

"One of the most significant would be the use of any and all activities as an path towards the Divine."

I agree. The slaughtering of six million Jews, the starving to death of 14 million Russians, the hacking to death of over a million persons in a modern day African nation, Kosovo, Irag, China, (the modern list is extensive and the historical endless) are all expressions of our (human kind's) longing for the divine. So what's a bit of suicide, pedophilia and animal sex? Or usenet trolls for that matter :-)

I do not get how those are connected with sadhana.

Most do not.
http://groups.google.com/group/alt.yoga/browse_frm/thread/edf4e3cbe4b2fc02/34a53a35a29664d0?lnk=gst&q=omjar
In my believe if you can't understand this concept then an understanding of what sadhana can truly be would be equally elusive.

Sex and the pure and purifying orgasming energies provide the "devine" powers in one's body, and in the bodies of all living animals.

Jonjon, Your words concerning "yoga" or "tantra" ring hollow to me. I can't hear "experience", "study" or "ownership" in them. But I do hear "intelligence", "longing" and "fear." And after all, isn't this why we search out yoga, God or suicide?
Oh, and by the way, we are the power of the Universe. We don't seek it, we "allow" it to express...

As yet I do not know if he is a troll or not. given the widespread misconceptions concerning Tantra, he may be sincere.

Sincere or not, I believe posting a dozen messages in the same thread, uninvited, to a group you have no relationship with and with a controversial subject, is by definition, trolling.

It's all God... and you think most don't get that? I thought for most that that was a given. At least that is where Tantra begins.

I would say most are firmly mired in maya. Right, wrong, good, evil, pain, pleasure, time, distance, space and thousands of other fabrications. I agree with your statement about tantra (and would also add; any real yoga)

Huh? I thought Tantra WAS the only real yoga! :-)

My first (and some of the best) introduction to tantra was from reading the Bhagwan Shree Rashneesh. I learned more from Hittleman and even more from Sivananda. http://www.dlshq.org/teachings/teachings.htm
My ideas about yoga style sadhana are derived principally from these authors as well as some of the saints of the New Thought movement in the United States, eg. Emerson, Emmet Fox, Earnest Holms and others. In fact I worked my way backwards from A.A. to New Thought, to its origins in Ancient Yoga. Making a study of Kung Fu San Soo, along the way.
My first sustained attempt mediate was with Silva's Mind Control Method. Very good stuff really. Unfortunately Silva didn't give credit where credit was due. I find this to be common among writers of "self-help" books. They often ascribe the ideas they present as being created by themselves, rather then

being honest and explaining that what they present is their own synthesis of what they have been taught, read and experienced . This is really common among "gurus", throughout history. One of the things I like and respect about Rajneesh, is he always explained where he got what he was saying, and often explained why and how he used tricks and devices to help students understand the deeper meaning of what he was trying to convey.
I guess I have never seen a problem with "believing" any writer. I am a rather skeptical sort. I don't believe anything unless I can prove it to myself. So I can read all kinds of people and take what is useful, what works and leave the rest. :-)
Even bullshit is Truth. Perhaps the greatest Truth. Ask any scientist and they might say, what comes out of our ass truly reflects what is inside :-) I said I was skeptical, not necessarily practical. But then I am a Jhani and for me awareness of the Truth is paramount. It's all God. God is Truth; ergo its all Truth. It's on me to see it in everything that exists. If I can't see it, then I have a distortion; a fluctuation of the mind :-(

> *i tend to approach my yoga from a practical point of view. and while "Even bullshit is Truth," none the less, it still remains bullshit.*

Me too! I've found the Truth to be the most practical thing there is. It allows you to see the bullshit and step around it :-)

August

Trash

(alt.yoga yuck! what a cesspool...)

I'm quickly loosing energy to even "object" to the garbage foisted on this group :-)

> *Alt.yoga has always had its ups and downs. But right now it seems as if everyone and his uncle thinks his favorite delusion has something to do with yoga.*

700e, Nice to hear from you! Aren't we like a the neighbors who rarely get a chance to speak, except when we run in to each other while taking out the trash :-)

October

Daisies

(any yoga going on here?)

> *hi, i've been away from alt.yoga for awhile. i was annoyed with the 90% cross posted crap, 10% actual yoga stuff. even though i've been away for awhile, i still think about the good people here. Jared - how are you doing? Stu - i still love Pushing Daisies. Are you still working on that? I'm glad it came back for season 2 700e - what are you up to? up to 701 e's yet?*

Nancy, so good to hear from you!
Don't know about the yoga stuff, but I can tell by your post, that clearly Love is still happening :-)
I don't know what the Sanskrit term for patience is, but real yogis will always persevere ...
And by the way, I am doing well. Seems for the moment, I have been freed to work, live and express.
Watch out.Yoo Hoo!

Nerve Damage

(Yoga, Nerve damage)

> *I've suffered signifcant nerve damage in one of my legs... Is Yoga a possible solution to this problem?*

My apologies for the state of the group. It has been poisoned and is nearly dead :-(
However there are some embers still glowing here. So beyond that...
To reply to your question: Yes! Absolutely yoga and specifically Hatha Yoga can and will facilitate the rerouting of nerve connections to any and all parts of your body... This has been demonstrated and written about time and again for over 5000 years.

Let’s talk about it :-)

> *You’re right... I assumed this group was dead so I stopped checking to see if there was a reply. I’m intrigued by your suggestion to try Hatha Yoga.*
>
> *...*
>
> *My boyfriend suffered some serious nerve damage throughout his body (especially legs) due to breaking his neck about 10 years ago. he has begun to experience these sensations are a good sign that yoga is working and his damaged nerves are healing.*

Thank you for sharing your experience :-) I have contemplated for days how I might best explain the "how and why" of the power of yoga in healing. You have bested any attempt I could make with sharing your truth.

2009

January

Stillness

(loving yoga but with new music)

Ah, yes. "Stillness and contentment," that's one of the goals of the game. Things outside of ourselves that help us build that habit like CD's or even yoga itself are great. Keep in mind that they are not required. That stillness and peace of mind come from profound and deep acceptance and this is allowed from "within" and requires no props. It is in fact our "default" state absent the fears we create or the body generates for us.

Legacy

(Are we at alt.yoga failing those who seek the Truth?)

alt.yoga is dying because, we the real yogis, are not posting... Does yoga mean so little to us that we don't want to impart it to others? None of this make sense to me. I know that we are watching the posts. What's up with that. (Black n blue, are you out there?)

after 36 years of doing Chinese yoga I find I don't read as much , don't talk about God as much

I can relate, I don't read as much anymore but I do write more and I do talk about God a lot, but with much more finesse and awareness of other's fear regarding this. Learned a great deal about that right here in alt.yoga, don't cha know :-)
"If you ask me what I came to do in this world, I, an artist, I will answer you: "I am here to live out loud" Emile Zola
About living my life "out loud," I have benefited tremendously from others doing so and I have developed a value for sharing what I know about what is true, on the deepest possible level that makes any sense in the context of any given exchange. Although I think you are correct, that in the grand scheme of people finding their way back home to Self, it probably doesn't make any more difference than if a flower blooms somewhere and someone sees it or doesn't. It's just in the nature of flowers to bloom and if their beauty reaches someones consciousness then it does and if it doesn't oh well, its what flowers do :-)
Continuing the simile, lately alt.yoga reminds me of a huge expanse of asphalt, with the occasional crack letting a bit of life grow through in search of the light of the sun.

Dropping usenet is a trend with ISP:s in Sweden.

Yes, I understand. Started here years ago. Usenet is all but forgotten by all but the oldest of us :-) To much anonymity and the "haves" can't allow that.

May be alt.Yoga is dormant because there are no people who are seeking

I think there are plenty of "seekers," nearly every human on the planet :-) But it may be that this type of context or method of exchange is losing ground to more modern, faster moving "social network" technologies, mobile phones and the mainstream media. Kind of like, who writes a pen on paper letter any more? Usenet groups are old technology. However Usenet has been updated, archived and re-branded as "google groups." And I suspect this is why there are any queries from new people here at all. But if these questions are not responded to very quickly the seeker will move on to something which provides faster feedback, like a forum or YouTube, twitter, my space, what ever.
Us old yogis will have to embrace the latest technologies and marketing exploits to keep our message in front of those who are looking for it. I am batting around some ideas along these lines. Involving a hybrid, forum/blog/twitter/book/internet-radio/class/ video, etc.combination.

To me its a very interesting issue. Do you have any ideas how we, the stalwarts of alt.yoga, can expand our opportunities to put some of this good yoga to work, exchange/mentor/advice/encourage/provide perspective/coach other's on the path?

February

Surrender

(Surrender...You have no choice)

Your individual egoistic experience doesn't stand a chance against the Raw power of the Universal Manifestation.

Something I ran across, I thought you might appreciate it if you're an old hippie like me :-) Especially since the other thread was drowned out in a bunch of noise :-)

Pride of Man, ©1964 by Hamilton Camp

Turn around, go back down, back the way you came Can't you see that flash of fire ten times brighter than the day And behold the mighty city broken in the dust again Oh God, the pride of man, broken in the dust again

Turn around, go back down, back the way you came Babylon is laid to waste, Egypt's buried in her shame Their mighty men are beaten down, their kings have fallen in the ways Oh God, the pride of man, broken in the dust again

Turn around, go back down, back the way you came Terror is on every side, though the leaders are dismayed Those who put their faith in fire, in fire their faith shall be repaid Oh God, the pride of man, broken in the dust again

Turn around, go back down, back the way you came Shout a warning to the nations that the sword of god is raised On Babylon that mighty city, rich in treasure, wide in fame It shall cause thy tower to fall and make it be a pyre of flame Oh God, the pride of man, broken in the dust again

Oh thou that dwell on many waters, rich in treasure, wide in fame Bow unto a god of gold, thy pride of might shall be thy shame Oh God, the pride of man, broken in the dust again

And only God can lead the people back into the earth again Thy holy mountain be restored, thy mercy on thy people Lord

Thanks buddy...nice read Not a old hippie Just a young monk

(Resistance is futile. . . You will be assimilated)

Never in all of recorded human history has it been said better, more clearly, with such conviction than by the fictional pseudo-race of cyborgs from the Star Trek universe the Borg. Resistance is futile. . . You will be assimilated.

Thanks, big fan of the Borg myself :-)

Good bad and ugly, we will merge into God, because there is nothing else, from god you came and to God you will return, we are just God's experience, assimilated is a very good word, I have often thought Star track was written on a spiritual level!!!

May

JD

(Cosmic Meditation & Virtual Reality)

How does one relate the world of "Virtual Reality" to "Cosmic Meditation"?

Oh boy, virtual maya! As if we don't have enough of the real stuff :-)

Hi Jared,

JD, I was surprised and delighted to hear from you. I didn't think anyone would respond to that silly thread. It's so good to hear a friendly voice. A lot of spam, religious intolerance and cross-posted nonsense around here for a good long while :-(

Man its been many years huh?

Better part of a year I would guess.

There were alot of wonderful people here once... Gee man 54 years old thats like 20 years ago then another 12 and a brain sorting out 5000 years of goo.

You to eh?

I left right on time and promised to return every so often yet here you are some value after all.....Jared

Thanks for the kind words!

Getting my butt into the land of milk and honey the fine clothes jewels weapons and position was free not even moses got in (sparkly remember).

Who can forget sparkly?

Well Bush his posse is gone the new guy is very cool

I agree. I'm not sure the fall of Rome can be stopped by pretty words and grand gestures. But its good to at least hear a different tune.

a wonderful time for me to leave texas... now as ive been here for years meditating...

I've found New Mexico to be a great place. I think it is the most humane of all the states in this country. I like how the indian, mexican and european peoples have melded in such a way as to become a special kind of culture. New Mexico just eliminated the death penalty. Now that's real progress towards expressing our higher natures.

So Jared hows life treating you.?

No doubt if you've followed the saga then you know it hasn't been good for a long, long time. But I have to say that I have been enjoying blessed respite from the worst of it. Recouping, making a bit of headway towards the completion of some long delayed but important projects. So I would have to say things are going as well (or better) than I had thought possible :-)

Will the alt yoga column revive... its a funny love as peculiar this column these people.

Oh you know, I'm not sure. I'm here, you're here, 700e and Nancy pop in, as well as a couple of others. But I think that as a technology "usenet" or groups such as this are passe. Not quick enough. not enough exposure, I doubt most young people even know these groups exist. And I suppose us old people are getting tired of trying to blow smoke up each others ... :-) But I am optimistic even if it takes a while.

May my heart always meet my head..JD

I'd say its your heart that keeps your head going. And I too hope that it keeps it up!

Crap
(Mostly Crap at the moment...)

Everyday I look at cnn, yahoo news, etc; all crap.
Everyday I look at alt.yoga; also mostly crap.
Why in the world would I expect anything different? We are, after all, "regular," "normal," human beings.
We do the best we can with what we have and when we can do better, we will do better.
Anyone out there besides me and jd who can do any better? Love to hear from you :-)

> *Too impossible why be too serious.....see Jared its like tomorrow another day sides if someone that was so serious he would really be lost ever after after breathless samadhi.....ya know not i its just puzzles upon puzzles and i get a think a full complete happy life far from ..well honestly a clown yep gets ha ha ha..over protective -Peace JDC*

Meaning
(meaning vs cursed)

In fifty-three years the only thing I have produced is 3 children (that I know of, and lots of karma :-) Of course, my children are shared, so they'll have their hands full of their own karma to cook off.
Time to nudge the world in the direction of God awareness, so that our "children" can take up the task.

> *Your a householder...*

I hold nothing, it is all mine however :-)

> *So your children in some close way chose you the parents and you chose yours before you were born...*

Would explain why as children our parents can not even be perceived as "wrong" not withstanding our adolescent prostrations [*corr: protestations*] to the contrary :-)
My children's role on this stage is no doubt significant. The shit they have eaten by virtue of their family of origin will necessitate nothing less than transcendent resolve. They have an advantage I didn't (so far as I am aware) because their father is realized. But this also means they will have to face the race mind in all its terrifying and brutal fear.

> *i cant love just one i love lots of people in fact i used to love everybody but that as i aged that turned into graduated respect and understanding*

As love (eros) moves from "desire" to Love (agape) acceptance, respect and understanding naturally replace the lower notions of the race-mind.

> *Mine is the past sparkly in the clouds above a boat WW2 looking at the father on a boat..these sparklies know everything and they all look the same*

Do sparklies equal angels or (can't remember the hindu reference to angel like beings)

> *Oh my man, Sparkly is non other than the western name for gabrail...*

June
Cleaning
(Cleaning up the group and Subject: connecting)

> *These fakie poster types had unhappy lives and they think by association with this abstract language stuff religions beliefs they get something*

JD, I applaud your efforts to infuse the group w/on-topic posts and that which is of yogic value. And I welcome your efforts to communicate w/ us (me) ...
Connecting w/human beings is damn near impossible :-)

The fear is nearly insurmountable.
To connect on any real level makes one sound "eccentric" or "full of shit."
JD, I'm with you here.
Where are the yogis? Do you think this "group" means anything? Do you not know that this "group" means everything?

Garbage

(Re: Yoga can corrupt a Muslim)

Re: 3 Dalits hacked to death in Tamil Nadu village

What is the purpose of your fomenting religious hatred and fear? And why are you cross-posting this garbage to alt.yoga? Have any of you ever read one shred of any religious text, in any culture, in any span of time? There isn't one of you "hate" filled MF's that has ever studied for one second the message of all religious texts, of all ages. FO! And take your religious intolerance and stick where the sun doesn't shine :-) and by the way, namaste. But of course you would have no concept of what this meant would you?

You don't have anything to say about "Jai Maharaj" and "harmony" aka pradipshithead parekh and their incessant anti-Christian rants, do you?

Absolutely, for all the sad monkeys who cross-post off-topic garbage to alt.yoga and other groups
My apologies to anyone I offended w/my rant. I still run w/my fears once in awhile.

Mirror

(the Mirror)

All but silence is a mirror

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A noisy reflection is all I can see. I long for silence, so I can just be.

jared, your catching on/ long ago i wrote many times something i found in a many thousand year old yoga and mystery books on meanings found from scriptures. no matter which way two obgects hit the sound produced is always latently present before they strike/music or khrisnas flute.

Possibility
(Endless Possibilities)

I don't want to be unhappy I don't want to be sick I don't want pain I don't want to die

In the absence of heat... cold

I don't want to make a mistake, because I don't want to feel humiliation I don't want to be vulnerable because I don't want to lose

In the absence of light... darkness

I don't want to be criticized and I don't want to fail so I don't want to try but I don't want to be ignored

In the absence of God... fear

I don't want to tell the truth, because I don't want to feel shame I don't want my past haunting me and I don't want my future uncertain

So I shiver in the cold and cower in the darkness, paralyzed by fear. Because in the absence of what I want... all that I don't, comes to me in endless possibilities

I hear you, friend. I'm in a similar spot. Not the first time in my life, and probably not the last either. Remember about the ebb and flow in everything.

700e, so good to hear from you (as always:-) I am happy to report that this poem is much less relevant to my life then when I first wrote it. And I am sorry to hear you are having a time of it. But I agree, its up and it's down. I deal with it by reminding myself that it's all perfect, whatever it is :-)
Some years ago I reasoned that the list of things I don't want to happen is virtually infinite. Plane falling out of the sky and hitting me, loosing my job, my wife leaving me, etc. etc. So it occurred to me to spend any energy on trying to stop things I don't want to happen was a "fools" game and not in anyway sustainable (Alan Watts, The Wisdom of Insecurity.) But for me to focus on a much smaller and manageable list, like what I did want, may be within my grasp. Since then I have pared the list of what I want down to a couple of things and I still find myself without the "where-with-all" or power to gain them :-(But I think in addition to reducing what I want to the bare minimum, that just staying alive and staying in the game (persistence) will one day bring to me whatever is truly important to me in this life :-)
I wish all the best to you and those you care for and hope you'll find the time to continue to chat with your friends here at alt.yoga :-)

Comparative Religions
([Off Topic] Comparative Religions)

Comparative Religious Views

Taoism..... Shit happens

Confucianism..... Confucius says, “Shit happens”

Buddhism..... If shit happens, it’s not really shit.

Zen..... What is the sound of shit happening?

Hinduism..... This shit has happened before.

Islam..... If shit happens, it is the will of Allah

Judaism..... Why does this shit always happen to us?

Hare Krishna..... Shit happens, hare hare

Stoicism..... This shit is good for me

Zorastrianism..... Shit happens half the time

Catholicism..... If shit happens, you deserve it

Protestantism..... Let shit happen to someone else

Calvinism..... Shit happens when you don’t work hard enough

7th Day Adventist.... Absolutely no shit on Saturdays

Presbyterianism..... This shit was predestined

Lutheranism..... This is the true body of shit

Methodism..... This merely represents shit

Puritanism..... Don’t ever let shit happen and then wash your hands

Mormonism..... This shit is going to happen again

Christian Science..... Shit is only in your mind

T.V. Evangelism..... Send money and this shit won’t happen

Southern Baptists.... There ain’t no shit with us

Episcopalians..... We don't even say shit

Moonies..... Only happy shit really happens

Hedonism..... There's nothing like a good shit happening

Existentialism..... What is shit anyway?

Unitarianism..... Shit may or may not happen, but who cares?

Agnosticism..... Shit? What shit?

Atheism..... I don't believe this shit

Rastafarianism..... Let's smoke this shit!

Zen

(Do something by doing nothing, (bit-o-zen :-)

As he listened to his friend's voice over the phone John anticipated the criticism.

"It's good. Well organized and very thorough."

"But?" John replied

"I don't know exactly how to say this.but this isn't the best work I've seen you do. Which in this case seems odd because it's your own project. . . John the fact is it's really kind of. . . Vanilla."

"Vanilla?" John felt his grip tighten on the phone. He knew what his friend was saying was true but it hurt anyway. Still the intensity of his emotional reaction, surprised him and he didn't think it was appropriate. After all he's learned to encourage others to give him feedback and then to listen to it.

"Vanilla. You know, ordinary, plain, mediocre, unimpressive.

"Ouch, O.K. O.K. What can I do?" he meekly responded, clearly disappointed.

"I don't know. You're the would be crusader. But if you want my opinion you're going to need something a lot more dynamic and sexier than this if your going to pull this off. You're talking about a lot of money here."

"I suppose you're right."

"And what's up anyway? I've seen you do much better work for other people. Great work!"

John knew his friend meant well but with every comment there were painful echoes of his parent's constant criticism. "I really appreciate your feed back. I'll let you know what's happening when we meet at the Body Type Cafe Wednesday Thanks again". John didn't even give his friend a chance to respond. He just hung up the phone and stared blankly at the calendar hanging on the wall in front of him. He closed his eyes and on his mental screen he envisioned each of the 9 months he spent on his project drop one by one into an evil looking trash can.

Shaking his head and opening his eyes he thought, "No way. Let's keep it positive. This is to important. I'll figure out something . All I need is some ice cream!" John made his way to the freezer and dished out a double helping of mocha almond fudge which he topped with whipped cream. Sitting at the kitchen table with pad, pencil and ice cream he set about trying to solve his dilemma. As he ate his snack he could feel his mind fog and start to defocus. After all he had been thinking about this project for nearly a year. As far as he knew he had considered every possibility and this was the best he could come up with. Suddenly he felt overwhelmed, stuck and depressed. "Time for a nap".

After forty minutes John woke rested and alert but still feeling stuck. He thought to himself, "What In the world am I going to do? This just isn't working.". John was frustrated and wondered if this was going to be like some of the other phases he'd been through. Getting really absorbed in a project and

becoming a virtual expert at every aspect. Then when something gets in the way, Because he's so saturated with the project, if somebody doesn't jump in and take over, he gets tired of it and goes on to something new.

"Nah, I'm past that stuff. Besides nobody seems to see the possibilities in this like I do. No,. this is on me. If I don't follow through, nothing is going to happen". John was starting to feel an uncomfortable pressure. A feeling he was all to familiar with. "I've already worked on this too long I'm getting burnt. "What would the Zen types say?", he wondered.

"If you want to accomplish much, then do nothing." John thoughts came in a rush, "Nothing? How do you do nothing? I'm no good at doing nothing. Well I've tried everything else. I guess I'll do nothing".

John immediately felt some of the internal pressure lift. "Well that's a plus", he thought. But within moments the pressure returned. John could feel it well up in his chest and neck. He couldn't seem to shut out thoughts of his project. With each idea that came into his consciousness he could hear his mother's voice respond with all the reasons why it wouldn't work or why people wouldn't like it or some such comment. Then his own voice would appear defending his ideas and meanwhile he heard his father pipe in agreeing with his mother.

"Stop it!", he nearly shouted out loud. "This isn't working", he thought. "I need to do something drastic here".

Walking over to his book shelve he searched for a book on meditation he once read. Finding it he flipped to the back cover where he had written down the steps to meditating. Reviewing the list it all came back pretty quickly. He tossed the book on the bed, rummaged through his closet for a pillow, sat Indian style in the middle of the floor and started to breath deeply. Counting back slowly from 100 he started to feel immediate relief from the feuding voices in his head. When the voices tried to carry on he simply turned his attention back to his counting and they would stop."Man I have to remember to do this more often. This is great", he thought and then he returned to his counting scanning his body for tension and letting it go. Scanning and letting go.

Another voice came into John's awareness but this one was different; softer, gentler. It was the voice of a man but he didn't know who it was but somehow he felt safe with it so instead of holding on to the counting he simply let go and listened.

"You're afraid of making a mistake. That's why you're stuck on your project. You're afraid you'll be criticized and shamed for what you've done. Nothing comes to you because you won't let go. You can't let go because you're scared."

John started to feel bad.because deep down he knew he was afraid.

"You don't have to go there John. There's nothing wrong with being afraid" The voice now was a women's. "You're afraid because this is so important to you. Because in your heart you want to help others with your ideas and it's important that you succeed."

A different man's voice appeared. It was John's 8th grade science teacher, Herbert Fish. John could see him at the black board writing as he spoke. "John you have nothing to fear. You're old enough now to know that what you create from your heart originates in and is supported by the Universe and can bring no harm to yourself or anyone else."

"You better listen to him John!" It was his little sisters voice piping in. John chuckled to himself. "Man what a collection we have going here"

"Trust thyself. Every heart beats to that iron string."

"Emerson? Mrs Trecott?"

"You remembered my lesson. I'm impressed. Now let go John and follow your intuition. You know what to do. It's in you to create right now. It's the Nike thing, just do it"

As voices continued to comment in the background John found his thoughts drifting towards his project. "Why not?", he thought. "I can do anything I want. It's my project. Nobody can take it away from me" and then as if a light bulb came on suddenly he thought, "Wow! I'm the only one who can take it away. By not doing it.". Then a notion occurred to him. A way to approach the presentation of his idea he hadn't even considered. "Duh!. . . Of course it's a natural" John was so excited about his

new idea he couldn't keep his eyes closed. "Let's get to work", he thought. When he opened his eyes and looked at the clock he was a little disoriented. He'd been sitting nearly an hour but it felt like minutes.

He tossed his pillow back into the closet and settled down at his desk to work, feeling good and recharged and thinking to himself, "Man I have to meditate more often. and I better reread Emerson's Essays in case I meet Mrs Trecott again while I'm doing it"

***

As they sat in the atrium of the Cafe John watched his friend carefully read his revised proposal and he felt calm, safe and sure of himself. He was ready for any kind of comment. Whatever it was he would listen, consider and then respond. "No Fear", he thought.

When his friend finished reading he looked up at John and smiled. " This is absolutely brilliant. Some of the best, if not the best work I've ever seen . I think inspired might be a good word."

"Thank you. As always I appreciate your comments but isn't there something you think I could improve?"

"Believe me I've been looking for it and if it's there it's so small I'd say, who cares? What in the world did you do to get from what you showed me last week to this? Frankly I'm rather impressed."

"Well to be perfectly honest. I didn't do anything. You know like the Zen types say."

Gaia

(Coming Home (bit-o-gaia :-)

As she sipped her coffee at the Café, Monica was disappointed and even a little angered by her mother's reaction. Even though it was positive and just what she expected, it still wasn't what she wanted. Monica felt anxious about the new position she had accepted, and part of her wanted someone to talk her out of it. Mom, however, was excited and proud for her. She didn't hesitate a moment in suggesting Monica accept the position, even if it meant moving away. Monica knew it was in her best interest, but she was still hurt. How could her own mother want her to move away?

Just the same, Monica knew she had to accept this opportunity. After nearly 25 years of working different jobs, none had ever felt so right. Camp Director for a major, nonprofit, summer camp in the mountains. Though she was a city girl, Monica had always felt relaxed in the country, and even if she didn't have kids of her own, she had always loved them. But there was fear attached to taking on this job. Stakes were high, as several managers had failed to turn the environmental and fiscal circumstances of this camp around, and Monica felt her position with the organization was vulnerable, should she fail. But her decision was made, and she was going to succeed, even if it meant hiring a whole new staff and razing half the camp. Monica was capable of managing very aggressively if frightened or angry, and between the challenge of the position and her mother's bidding her leave, she was a little of both.

_____

Monica had decided to arrive at the camp unannounced, a day early. Camp was out of session and it was a Sunday, so she figured most or all of the staff would be in town or otherwise out enjoying their day off, leaving the camp wide open for her to freely inspect.

The day of her arrival, Monica got a midday start on her three hour drive to the camp. When she pulled her car into the staff parking lot, the camp was, as she had expected, empty. As she climbed out of her car, she was aware of how good it felt to stand on solid ground. Lifting her arms high into the air and looking straight up, Monica stretched and stretched as if trying to reach the tops of the trees above her. As she relaxed and breathed in the rich and wonderful smell of the mountain, she noticed a large black bird glide down and settle onto a branch above her. Suddenly, she felt extremely uncomfortable. A moment later, another crow came swooping down and settled next to the first, and just as suddenly as it had appeared, her discomfort was replaced with a feeling of optimism. "Odd," she thought.

It was getting late in the afternoon and Monica was anxious to get started. After exchanging her driving shoes for some hiking boots, she headed out across the assembly field. One of her unique

managerial strengths was a near perfect memory. Once she had seen something, she could recall details years later. Even though Monica had never been to this camp, she had studied a map and a brochure before coming and was confident of where she was going.

Crossing the field and following the path up a slight rise, she came to the edge of the lake, at the levy. Walking over a small bridge, she stood on the dam and looked across the lake to large open pastures which sloped gently until they disappeared into pine forest. Monica was taken by the scene in front of her, and even though its beauty had a post card-like quality, she couldn't remember the last time she felt so solid and real.

The afternoon sun was already casting long shadows across the lake, so Monica felt she needed to move on. Taking a trail that led down the face of the dam, Monica came into an open field which was the archery range when camp was in session. She made a mental note that the hay bales for the targets needed replacing, and the grass in the field needed cutting. Making her way along the well worn path, she had a sense of moving deeper into the body of the camp. She pictured the hundreds of kids who had run over this path, year after year. Monica could almost hear their laughter and yells, shrieks and whistles. Even though she knew she should be getting back, Monica felt drawn forward and wasn't at all concerned.

Coming to the edge of the field, the path disappeared into a wall of bushes taller then Monica. It looked like the entrance to a cave, and as she approached, Monica felt her pulse quicken with the same excitement she imagined all the young explorers felt just before entering this secret new place. Ducking as she headed in, she felt the sting of thorns just above her boot. She had caught the branch of a boysenberry bush. "Y'ouch! Oh wow, ripe berries. This is neat," she said out loud, as if to a playmate. Without even thinking, she reached down and pulled some fruit from the plant and popped it into her mouth. The sweet and puckery taste transported her to the summers of her youth, picking raspberries with friends along the river's edge.

Monica's reverie was broken by movement along the edge of the path, not far ahead of her. Resisting the urge to turn and run back into the open field, Monica stood very still, and with her heart beating even faster now, she focused all her attention in front of her. To her amazement and delight, a large doe stepped from the underbrush onto the path and, turning towards her, brought her nose into the air while looking straight at Monica. After a moment, the doe dropped her head and turned away, continuing across the path to the small stream that ran along side it. As the deer drank, there was a crunching noise and a couple of flashes of brown and white as two fawns flew out of the brush and bounced across the path toward their mother.

Nearly frozen, Monica became aware of a profound "knowing". Her whole being filled with joy as she watched and suddenly knew, "mother and child"... She knew her mother... She knew herself... She felt passion she had never known. A passion, she knew could never leave her.

No longer watching the scene unfolding in front of her, Monica had become part of it. And when the doe and her offspring turned and walked toward her, she felt nothing odd in it. Remaining perfectly still, Monica simply existed as the doe walked straight up to her, brought her cool moist nose to her hand and, after a few sniffs, licked it several times. Then dropping her head, the doe moved past Monica and continued down the path toward the archery field, with the two younger deer following.

Monica turned as the deer left the shady grotto, and she did the same. Standing at the clearing's edge, she watched the doe and her brood climb up the dam face, and again sensed a powerful "knowing". Monica wasn't sure what had happened to her, but she knew her life would never be the same — that somehow she had just been given a small glimpse of a universe of "knowing", hidden to most.

No longer able to stand, Monica settled to her knees on the dirt of the path, and tears began to fill her eyes. Small whimpers quickly turned into explosive sobs, each wave celebrating a new freedom. Echoing off the wall of the twilight forest, her cries came back to her, as if from the earth itself, "Welcome home, Monica. Welcome Home."

Guru
(Teachers Rock! (bit-o-guru)

"So you mean I'm not so strange after all?"

"Of course not. In fact, this is really common."

"I have noticed that when I follow my own crazy ideas, my life seems to flow better or easier anyway.

"That is exactly what happens. It is important to pay attention to all of our feelings, dreams and thoughts. All are forms of psychic awareness or intuition. Many people have that awareness, but as children, we are taught to concentrate on building our intellect, so our intuition doesn't have an opportunity to develop and often ends up being completely submerged. So when it occasionally surfaces, it may scare us more than help us."

"You mean I can learn to control this? Turn it on and off whenever I want?"

"In a sense you can, yes. But learning to live with your intuition isn't about trying to control it. It's about acquiring the skill of letting it come into your awareness and then listening to it. But let's not get ahead of ourselves here. We've only just put a name on something that has concerned you for a long time. There's a lot of work ahead trying to define the importance, if any, you would like your intuition to play in your life. Only then can you decide how and what you want to do with it."

"Wow. So that's what it's been all these years. I can't tell you how happy I am to have someone validate this for me. You wouldn't believe how many blanks this fills in. Oh, I'm sorry. I guess you probably would. I mean, this is your business."

"Well, yes, this is why I'm here. And I do know what you're going through. I was once where you are now, and I can remember clearly the relief I felt when I was reconnected to this missing part of life."

"So what do I do now?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"That's right, nothing. Just go home and quietly consider what you have discovered today, and then simply watch what it means to you. Return in two days and we will talk some more."

"Okay. Will do. You're the Doc. . . ..I mean, counselor, well, whatever."

"It's important at this stage that you don't speak of what you've learned—at least not yet. I know you are used to talking as a way of working things out, of defining your ideas and substantiating your feelings, but in this case, it's important that you don't discuss it with anyone—that you don't dissipate the energy. Let the energy migrate inward. Just observe it."

"I'm not sure I get it exactly, but that's fine. Hey, if people have trouble understanding me now, they're certainly not going to get all this inner voice stuff. You know what I mean?"

"No more talking. Just watch."

"Okay, okay. No talking."

———

George left the counselor full of excitement. He couldn't wait to get over to the Café and tell all his friends. "Gosh, when everyone hears about this, they'll be blown away," he said to himself. He wondered how he could show his appreciation to his friend, Cynthia, for suggesting he try counseling. "I hope she's there tonight. I'll buy her dinner. That will be a start," he thought.

When he turned into the parking lot of the café, George recognized half a dozen cars belonging to people he knew. Then he remembered the instructions he was given. "Do not talk about what you have learned." It was almost as if he could hear the counselor's voice. "Keep silent, just watch. Do nothing." Suddenly, George didn't feel like seeing anyone, and without even stopping, he made his way out of the café parking lot and headed for home.

Something profound was happening to George, and he was starting to feel very much out of control. Being a bit on the nervous, high strung side, normally this would cause him to speed up and feel

scattered, but for some reason he felt strangely quiet inside, self-contained and at peace. George decided he would call in sick for work the next day and just hide out at home and try to sort things out.

After feeding his cat, George went to his office and took out paper and pencil. He was going to make a list of all the unexplained events in his life that his new awareness might explain. This in itself was a change, as George never wrote anything down. He would just think it, and if he was lucky, he could take action on it quickly, otherwise whatever it was would simply be lost. But this was really important to him, and he wanted to be prepared for his next meeting with the counselor. So, as the memories came flooding back, he scribbled as fast as he could.

There was the time in kindergarten when he met a friend that he knew would be a friend for a long time. He was a friend until twelfth grade. Then there was the time in Junior High when he had a feeling that someone important to his best girl friend had died, and when he went to her house after school, he found her crying because her cat had been run over. And the same year, he became aware of being much more sensitive to other people's feelings than was anyone else he knew. In high school, he was involved with a girl he intuitively knew was not good for him, but he liked her so much that he ignored his internal guidance. He got so upset over the relationship that he ended up getting in a very serious accident. When he was having trouble figuring out a math problem, he would just picture Albert Einstein or some other great mathematician, and he would hear their voice tell him how to do the problem. But mostly, there was a constant feeling of "knowing" stuff, even things he didn't have any business knowing. George often irritated people and had a reputation for being a "know it all".

Remembrances were coming so fast that George couldn't keep up, and then, suddenly, he didn't want to keep up. He threw down the pencil and sat back in his chair and just let the memories flow. And flow they did, right up to college where they seemed to just stop. George knew why, too. When he was younger, he sensed it was better not to tell anyone about his thoughts and visions. He was comfortable with them and just sort of let them happen. But when he got into college and the subject of supernatural phenomena came up in a late night discussion, George shared some of his past with his friends. Far from being supportive, they laughed at him and accused George of making it up and of being a real weirdo if any of it were actually true. George's reaction was immediate; from that moment on, he promised himself he would never discuss this with anyone again, and he would stop anything remotely strange from coming into his consciousness.

Remembering that decision brought tears to George's eyes as he realized what a serious mistake that had been.. It was as if, at that moment, he left his feelings and intuition and went straight into his head. Even though his superior intellect would serve him well in school and in his career, he never again felt really connected to his environment or to other people. Gathering facts, becoming a "know it all", became the overriding drive for him. Feelings—his own and others'—became less important, and eventually, irrelevant. And while he would always be popular, real intimacy would always elude him.

George suddenly realized the meaning of the day's events and why they were so very important to him. After years of denying a huge part of himself, he had been reconnected by the counselor's validation of a gift he had unwittingly rejected. It was as if he was now free to express the whole of who he was. "Like the return of the prodigal son," he thought. "This is going to totally change my life. Into what, I don't know, but if it's the last thing I ever do, I must learn to listen to the inner me." So, for the remainder of the evening and after having a deep, dreamless night's sleep, and for all of the next day, George reflected on the meaning of his new awareness. Yes, there would be much to say to the counselor and he didn't have to write it down. George would know just what to say.

When George arrived for his appointment, no one answered the bell. He let himself in, and when he entered the den, he just took a seat on the floor facing the counselor who was sitting quietly with his eyes closed. Looking up and smiling, his new mentor asked softly, "Well, George, what have you learned since we last talked?"

George opened his mouth to speak, to share all the thousands of thoughts, impressions, feelings and ideas he'd had in the past two days. But instead of issuing a flow of words, George's mouth was still, gripped with a powerful silence as if there was nothing that could be said.

"You've moved very quickly indeed," George thought he heard the teacher say. But he wasn't sure, and this gave him an odd feeling. After all, he really hadn't seen his lips move.

George shut his eyes and felt himself slip into a place where all of his thoughts vanished, and there was only a sense of being there. He felt like he was floating in the middle of an endless expanse of quiet and calm, and then the sound of the counselor's voice, "You see, George, it's only in silence that we can truly hear."

Thats really special the talent you have at relating feelings. Of course your writing it across and outward and its going to selectively hit others some way others another... Thanks jared "el pencil meister..

Thanks JD, far from pushy I appreciate your kind words and your suggestion to crack open a screen-writing book. I've always liked the short story form and now with the popularity of youtube and such, short video pieces are coming into their own. I've found great value in listening to others share their experiences via story. Like music, story telling is a deeply important to humans. I think real "belly to belly" story telling (at least in the mass media) has been supplanted by commercially driven "lies" pushed on us to sell whatever.

I wrote some 14 of these short pieces in support of a commercial project, 6 or 8 years ago. I just rediscovered them while trying to organize the content on my computer. I retained the rights so I thought I would post some to provide some counter to the spam and other garbage here until people start posting again. They are "slice of life" style and were designed to demonstrate through story, the nature of and characteristic attributes of individuals in daily life situations, based on a diet and personality profile system. So while I tried to create an entertaining story, they each have a certain functionality which is not obvious unless you know the system they refer to. And of course I included my own functionality with regards to communicating certain principles and ideas in normal contexts and accessible to regular people. The kinda of stuff I talk about here, which HB might otherwise refer to as incongruent and pretentious :-) But in all fairness to HB, he is consistent in his criticism of "how" I say things rather the "what" I say. He like most others seems to appreciate a story approach to the direct, "this is the way it is" approach or poetry. From my side, I have to say, its more pleasant to field some positive feedback than to be criticized or ignored :-)

maybe take a lesson from JD, he does not care what others think about his posts. like a yogi, beyond the sway of pleasure or pain. HB

I'm not convinced that JD doesn't care what others think of his posts. However I would agree that he writes what he wants to write the way he wants to write it :-)

moaning about how there is no discussion on alt.yoga and then when

Moaning? Bemoaning perhaps. Gratuitous and/or negative criticism does not invite a discussion in my world.

a discussion comes up failing to answer direct questions or requests for clarification.

If I spend a great deal of time and energy writing/presenting a difficult idea and then someone casually or thoughtlessly negates it, am I then expected to spend more time and effort defending myself ? Against comments from someone who may or may not have read my post thoroughly once, no less the multiple times important stuff requires to understand? Again there is a very different flavor in attacking than there is in inquiry and clarification. I don't think I have ever failed to provide clarification where it was sincerely requested. But if I have then I apologize. I have at times refused to get in a pissing match and for that I make no apology. Because as you no doubt know, everyone in a pissing contest gets wet, no one wins.

and outright bailing because the discussion is not going in the direction you desire

As far as I know I have always been respectful of your comments and have only "bailed" on a "discussion" when I felt we were so far apart in understanding that it would be a poor use of time and energy to try and close the gap. I can understand if that sounds pretentious or arrogant and its unfortunate but at the time it was what I needed to do.

how things are said is just as important as what

I disagree with this idea very strongly. I believe "content" is important and "presentation" is important only to the degree that it facilitates communication and/or understanding of the content.

are said is the real message. . someone says, "hi, _____, how are [snip]

Sometimes I find it really difficult to maintain a positive bearing in responding to comments you make to me. I think perhaps in your world, negative has a value and meaning akin to positive. This was once the case for me. However as I get older I eschew a negative approach to understanding something, in favor of a positive one. However this was not how I was raised, so it is an important and deliberate yogic exercise for me to keep it positive. Which as you have noticed I have varying degrees of success with. And I can see how this could look incongruent or even hypocritical. Switching between relative and absolute mid discussion is just the nature of the beast in the world I am speaking about. I have to make a relative statement in order to discuss, but as quickly as I can I want to bring it to the absolute, which is the real point of what I am saying. It's a difficult task to try to communicate absolute Truth/Reality in relative terms because others are want to say, "that's your reality, this is my reality or my truth and your truth", when in fact there is only "the Truth or what is Real" whether we are aware of it or not. What is, is. And what is, does not exist relative to it's being perceived or known or symbolized in any way. It is, absolutely. Not because I say it is, not because you say its not but because it is. Couldn't be simpler, but as far as I know there is no more difficult notion to understand. Hence the need for the science and discipline of yoga. That is for me anyway.
We (at least I) in part study and practice yoga to move beyond the sway of pleasure or pain, this is true. But it is the studying and practicing part that constitutes being a "yogi", not the acquiring of skills part.

July

Wooden Block

(I am two inches square!)

I am two inches square. I am a wooden block. A child's toy. Satin smooth to the touch with a finish of hi quality paint. My Color is green. Not dark green or light green but a rich bright green, with satiny soft texture. I have 6 large hand-carved, raised numbers and letters, one to a side. A fine, handsome block. But for a long time it wasn't so. I'll tell you the story.

I started existence as a perfect, shiny new block like all blocks. But the child to whom I belonged was a troubled, frightened little boy. When he played with me he was very rough and took every opportunity to bang, chip, throw, bury, scrape, smash, run over, submerge, drill or otherwise torment me. The final insult was when he collected the contents of a half dozen unfinished beer cans left after an adult party. Dumping the stale beer into a glass jar, he threw me in, screwed the top on and set the jar high on a shelf in the garage where it stayed untouched for many years.

When a new owner of the house was in the garage cleaning up, down came the jar smashing to the ground. When he looked at the mess, there in the middle of it was me. Because he was a wise man he could see the value hidden under this distorted and ugly block He set to work drying me out, stripping me down, sanding and finally refinishing me so my beauty was restored and I was able to make people happy again.

I am two inches square. I am a wooden block. I am the favorite toy of a little two year old girl who carries me everywhere she goes, either in her pocket or in her plastic purse.

I am two inches square. I am a wooden block. I am on display, at of all things, a museum. Why? Because I am very old and much to valuable to be played with anymore. I was created by hand just

before the civil war and I was found cleverly hidden under some floor boards in an old southern home. No doubt by a youngster who, with the impending outrage, wisely feared for his or her treasure.

I am two inches square. I am a wooden block. A child's toy. I have made a lot of children happy and taught just as many. I have been passed from one toy box to another for three generations of the same family of humans. Even though my own block family has long been scattered and displaced over the many years, no one is willing to let me go. So I sit on the mantle above the fireplace, alone and protected, perhaps in perpetuity, in a glass presentation case.

I am two inches square. I am a wooden block. A child's toy. I am very old and many are the young eyes which have just begun to focus, to discern, to differentiate, to gaze for seconds with rapt attention at the mysterious curves and angles on my many sides which seem appear and reappear without end. Many are the mouths, teeth and tongues which have felt and tasted my bitter smooth finish.

I am a wooden block, two inches square. Many tiny hands have caressed, tossed and rolled me. I have made many children happy, and taught them too.

How neat is to write about being a block. Because, without knowing it I am really writing about myself. If you ask me to talk about myself, I'll give you a description of how I think other see me, the foibles, the failures, the weaknesses, the black marks. But what I see in the block is what I truly (in my secret heart) see about me. A high quality, colorful, fun, useful, meaningful person, with substance, texture and depth, the work of a fine craftsman who doesn't make mistakes and doesn't ask permission to express himself in his work.

Amazing how the right brain just sails past the left brain mechanisms.

Fear

(God Damn it! (bit-o-fear))

Rita Smyth sat quietly sipping her tea in the atrium of the Body Type Café. She felt herself slip into a dreamy state as she listened to the gentle gurgling of the fountain. Her body was relaxed and still, but her eyes moved like a honey bee from plant to flower to plant, drinking in it's beauty and then moving on to the next. "What a beautiful place. I could sit here all day," she thought. "And to think it's the middle of January." After 25 years, she still couldn't get used to the sunshine and warmth in the middle of winter.

"Mrs. Smyth. Excuse me, Mrs. Smyth. This is for you. Your daughter." Rita looked up as the waitress handed her a portable phone.

"Oh, my. Thank you. Thank you, dear," she responded as she put the phone to her ear. "This is Rita. Hi, Lisa. What? Please calm down. Okay, just take a few deep breaths and then tell me what's happening. Have you called your brother and sister? Do that now. I'll leave here immediately and meet all of you at the house. Do you understand? Call Pat and Georgie. Have one of them drive you to my house. I don't want you driving, okay? It will all be fine, dear. I'll see you in a few minutes and we'll. . . . it'll be fine. Please call your sister. Okay, I know. Try to stay in the present moment. Imagining the worst is not going to help. Lisa, hang up the phone and call your sister. I will meet you at the house in a few minutes. Go now, dear." Rita looked up at the waitress whose face was full of concern.

"Mrs. Smyth, what's wrong?"

Rita drew a deep breath and let it out slowly as she tried to gather her thoughts and quell the fear welling in her abdomen. Moments passed before she answered. "A plane has just crashed on takeoff from the Vale, Colorado airport. My son-in-law, Richard, and my two grandchildren, Carla and Rich Jr., were scheduled on that flight. My daughter says that storm conditions there are making it impossible to get information. We don't know how many people have been hurt or who they are."

"Oh my God, I am so sorry. Is there anything I can do?"

"Thank you, honey. I want to pay this check and get right home. I need to be there for my daughter. She's frantic."

"I understand. Never mind the check. I'll take care of it. Just go and do what you need to do, okay? And please let us know what's happening. We will all be praying for you."

"Thank you, dear. Thank you very much." ___

As Rita rounded the corner near her home, she saw her oldest daughter's car parked outside the house. She felt the fear starting to well up again and continued to breathe deep and low to release it. Pulling her car into her driveway, she said to herself out loud, "Rita, now more than ever your family needs you to be strong". Before she was out of the car, her youngest child, Lisa, came running from the house, crying hysterically. Behind her, Georgie, her oldest, followed, her eyes filled with tears. Rita threw her arms around both her girls. "Okay, okay. It's okay. Mom's here." Her voice was steady and reassuring. Breaking off her hug, Rita stood back and looked straight at her daughters and, with a tone meant to be obeyed, said, "Now let's stop all this crying business and get to work finding out if we even have anything to cry about". As they turned and headed back toward the house, tires could be heard squealing around the corner. "That will be your brother, I suspect," Rita commented without even looking around.-

Moments later, Pat, the middle child, flew through the front door and headed straight for Lisa. He threw his arms around his little sister. "How are you doing? You must be terrified. Do you know anything yet?"

Lisa started to sob in her brother's arms. Mom answered for her. "She's doing as well as can be expected, and yes, we are all afraid, and no, we don't know a thing. I want you to go into the den and get on the Internet and see if you can get some kind of information out of Vale."

"You got it, Mom."

"Georgie, get your sister some Kleenex. Then I want you to go next door to the Boyd's and use their phone to contact the airline and the authorities in Vale. I want to keep this phone open in case someone needs to get through here. Here, take my calling card."

"Okay, Mom. Here you go, Lisa."

Lisa reached up and took the tissues from her sister, then burst out crying. "God, I'm so scared. Mom, what am I going to do? If they're ..." She couldn't finish her sentence. She was crying so hard she could hardly breathe.

Rita grabbed her daughter's arms and squeezed them as she looked into her eyes and, with a firm tone, said, "Excuse me, young lady! If there's one thing I've taught you in your 26 years, it's to try and stay in the moment and to stay with the facts. As long as we have no information, I want you to fill in all the blanks with good things. Okay?"

Lisa looked up at her mom and pushed back her tears. "I'm sorry, Mom. I'm just so scared."

"I know, honey. I know." Rita held her daughter, knowing too well the fear she felt. She had trouble holding back her own tears. "Now why don't you make us a pot of tea and I'll try to get some information."

Rita sat down at the kitchen table with pencil and pad while Lisa busied herself making tea. One thing Rita's years of teaching experience had taught her was that emergencies respond best to a systematic approach. So she started to list all the possible avenues of obtaining the information they needed. She also began to make a list of everyone who would need to be contacted should the worst have happened.

While Rita worked, she became aware of other voices in the house. In the next hour, more then fifteen people would arrive. Rita moved from person to person, consoling, thanking, encouraging and organizing. She was moved by the outpouring of helpfulness and love from so many people and so quickly. "How do they know?" she wondered.

Rita was a physically strong woman, but the anxiety of not knowing and the high emotions all around her were starting to take their toll. She managed to keep her soft spoken and positive manner, but she was starting to fatigue, and it was becoming difficult to hold back her emotions.

Nearly another hour passed. Little bits and pieces of information were starting to come in from all directions. A news report here, a call from someone there. Little of it was of substance, and not a

scrap of it was about Richard and the kids. The busy activity of people's initial efforts, the positive comments, the hugs and encouragement all started to settle into an uneasy quiet as more time passed.

Then from the back of the house, a shout — "Wahoo! All Right! Come here, everybody! Hurry, come here!" It was Pat calling. Everyone rushed towards the den. It was standing room only as a dozen people filed into the small room. "Look! Come here and look, Lisa. This e- mail message was sent nearly two hours ago and it's just now arrived." Everyone stared in silence at the message on the monitor.

Subject: Missed Flight Date: Sat, 18 Jan 12:31:24 -0700 (PDT) From: Richard <Ric...@atlas.comTo: ri...@flash.net

Mom,

Heavy snow here. Missed our flight. We'll have to stay one more night. Phones aren't working right.

Please call Lisa. I'll contact you as soon as possible with our new arrival time.

Love, Richard, Rich & Carla

Then, pandemonium, as a collective cheer filled the room. Hugs, tears, congratulations all around. Rita hugged each of her kids in turn.

_____

It was late in the evening, after everyone had left. The phone had stopped ringing. Pat and Georgie were home with their families, and Lisa was sound asleep in the extra room before Rita was able to sit alone and reflect on the day's happenings. She settled into her easy chair, and as an irresistible sleepiness fell over her, she congratulated herself, "You did good today. Job well done. But that was just too close".

Your/this title is not using the name in vain did you realize this..

Interesting idea. And no, it was not my intent to use the Lord's name in vain. When I posted the story I didn't have a title so I thought about what would it be like to be in that situation and all I could think of was, "God damn it, this sucks!" I suppose I could have used a title with less chance to insult, like "Too Close." It's a hold-over from the days when I was into negation and I believed it had value to provoke people into expressing their fear. So that's why I changed the Subject (on Google at least).
Oh an on the subject of using the Lord's name in vain; I don't think its possible. Believe me I have tried for years and I've haven't been smite'd, even once :-) All I keep getting is Love :-)

Stuff

(Re: The Story of Stuff)

This video is a must see, folks. The Story of Stuff

It's so funny. I haven't seen this for years and about a month ago I spent nearly 4 hours trying to find this presentation. I finally had to resort to the use of some yogic techniques (siddhis) to dredge up a mental impression close enough to get a good google search and then I found it. And here it is simply posted. What a time and energy saver. Thanks!
This really is a good presentation, even if it 50+ years late for the West. However Chinese and Indian children (and leaders) could well benefit from watching and thinking about it. My thought is, if a comparatively small percentage of the earth's inhabitants (Europe, Us, Canada, etc) have brought the ecology of the Earth irreversible damage, the transition of India and China from agrarian to industrial society should pretty much finish the job. Then we will all be reincarnating on some other planet.

Subject-01

(Subject-01)

Hey JD, you going for a record? :-)

:-) he he he..i knew youd be here/remember my disclaimer only 1 day then its no good surely dont save a thing....jdc

I wonder. "so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it." That sounds like forever (timeless) to me :-)

whatever is written is bad very low forms of knowledge notice i am not using my one pointed tongue to twirl the prana.....that requires a certain something that rarely happens//////caught you...jdc

I am reminded of the two "realized" super yogi types, who sat together for several days and when it was done, their various camps asked, "what did you speak of?" The yogi answered, "there was nothing to say, we each know all there is to know. It was just pleasant to be in each other's company."

Subject
(Subject)

It's all God. Any other notion, idea or proposition is strictly "manufactured" or "made up;" a function of the fear we (and the race mind) create. Some famous guy once said, "Forgive them for they know not what they do." I find myself muttering this from time to time, so I suspect the famous guy was real :-)

where you remember you know you realize your dead comming back first your terrified then you remember the way it was before relax and it starts again consciousness and at these junctures all known they connect you and everyone knows.

I remember "nightmares" at age 3-4 that I had no business or experience having. No question to me these carried over from a past life and they were not even "real" in any life, so this his how I know my "existence" this time around is "cumulative." That is "I" am the product of millions of experiences in an infinite number or worlds beyond this present term.

God gave ALL to create this manifest vs unmanifest

Like they explained to me in catechism; God does things by the rules. One of the two or three things they told me which actually turned out to be true :-)

IT WAS A DONE DEAl forget time screw time.....jdc

Of course, time doesn't exist. There is only now. There is only God and God only exists, now :-)

Gibberish
(Gibberish)

The Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh gave me my first exposure to the meaning of gibberish. I can do gibberish, like no one's business, but I have never seen it done in the way you do it or as well as you do it :-) I never met the guy, what he taught me was in what he wrote. Good stuff. Although it appears Rajnessh was getting a bit sketchy towards the end :-(
I applaud you!
It is clear that there is substance in what you say and that it is based on substantial reading, research and experience.
But only the most erudite of souls, with the benefit of the accumulated knowledge of this cycle could benefit from it.
Dude, can you dumb it down a bit :-)

lets not forget when i was lost you found indras net i knew nothing....moth tugging at my elbow he he..i knew nothing the former pantheons highest god replaced by shiva brahma...my membrane was a net my crystally blue orb the wheel of illusion was indras net once thru once entering no way back to the ocean of milk.

Wow, that was a couple of years ago :-)

how you knew i wanted a net when i didnt know wellthats nice i like that but realize i am not like a netless one... jdc

I think I explained in another post, but when I consider your posts I go "intuitive." I have read enough of your posts to know you are communicating good stuff, yet any attempt to understand this insight on its face is doomed to failure. Yet if I defocus, let go and drift through your words, possible meanings well up into my consciousness and then I respond. It's work and I doubt I would have much success if I wasn't as well read as I am. But with the exception of the above comments, I rarely have any idea how close I come to hearing you. But then it doesn't matter as I realize who I Am and know all that I need to, to carry through with my purpose. I do enjoy the exchange and the practice listening. Like looking at and smelling flowers and marveling at the intelligence inherent in how the skunk sprays that which threatens it :-) I endeavor to see God in absolutely everything. Evil, ha! Can't happen. Misery, pain, suffering, unhappiness; all manufactured by us. This I know. The details, the esoteric descriptions of the inner workings of manifestation? Interesting, do doubt, but I have no need to understand or know them to align myself w/ Universal Principle/Law. And when I do the suffering slows.
I work hard to make this idea of "letting go and letting God" work in very real and practical ways. And the fact is, it does. Wondrously so, even with moths :-)

Geeturn around lightening the silent kind outside my widow might as well play with it/grin.....

For the first time in my life, I experienced "silent lightening" just a couple of weeks ago (as well as "rolling thunder" this year). Odd, flashes on flashes and not a thunder anywhere. Interesting, spooky :-)

Morality
(Holistic Morality)

thank you oh boy ghosts and birds oh boy thank you mommy nature...oh boy thank you...

I think about this every time I step on an ant and instantly end it's current incarnation. Simultaneously I imagine a large bolder, tree, building, lightening bolt, car, bully or microbe doing the same to me :-) This is when I gave up the sufi notion of not harming any living thing. I couldn't harm a thing if I tried so I rarely even try anymore. I am simply a force of nature flying around the universe playing my part in beginning and ending things which never have had a beginning and never will have an end anyway. No right, no wrong, no good, no evil, no cause, no effect; there is only God and God is Love, so there is only Love which is absolute and has no beginning, end or opposite.

i didnt start this but i am happy with my writing and my word usage

I just occurred to me that as hard as I try to make myself understood, in all likelihood, I probably am not heard any better than you.
At different ends of the spectrum of course:-) It's like when I speak bottom line and as absolutely clear as I can, no one responds because they can't hear me and they dismiss what I say in it's entirely as fanciful. Just the same as when they read what you write and can't understand so they don't respond to it. Now if I try hard to reach those I am writing for (explain even more), they can hear just enough to argue with what they imagine I am saying. If I bottom line it I am dismissed. If I bring it down into the relative I am argued with. Either way, no hearing/understanding.
Hmmm. I suppose its the old, ears to hear, eyes to see thing. Suppose I might as well stop struggling with it and write what I want and who ever wants to (and can) will listen. One of the fabulous lessons I learned some time ago in AA is, all that is good and wise in this world is not for those who need it but for those who want it and are willing to work their butts off and let themselves be vulnerable in accepting it :-)

Wishes
(One Wish...)

Do you honestly think anyman that obtains the worlds soul in one life time say a genie in a bottle 3 wishs if you had 1 wish whats the first thing youd wish for ?

When I was 7 years old I thought this was a blindingly simple question with an obvious and perfectly efficient answer. I remember feeling uncomfortable and vaguely guilty, that I should have such a perfect answer when everyone else seemed to have completely missed it; even after I tried my hardest to explain it.
Question: If you had 3 wishes, what would you wish for?
Answer: I would wish that all that I wish for comes true.. . Only one wish required, the remaining two becoming irrelevant (infinity + 2). Seems I was born an absolutist :-)

August

Life/Death

(Life/Death)

I don't buy the Jain idea of never killing anything; this does not make sense to me. Life must culminate in death. The very Principle which creates life also terminates life. There is no morality about it, it just is. If I inadvertently step on an ant, how is this different than if I am walking down a trail and a rock falls and kills me? Besides, if in reality there is no death, how can any of this life/ death stuff matter at all? Just more maya. Just more of a few, manipulating the others. We are whatever God is. Why accept less?

> *You might still be fully capable of violence and able to defend yourself, but you do so without ill will and with a clear mind.*

I agree with you here. And I do believe Ghandi would also. As he might say, pacifism is a form of cowardice and to do non-violence or ahimsa, one must be willing and able to do violence and choose not to.
I have often said, that is never the thing which holds meaning, but what meaning we bring to the thing. Eg. killing someone. Good? Bad? Could be either.
If I kill as a reaction to fear, then this hurts everyone, is evil and will create a big splash in the karmic pool, whose waves will ripple for life times. If however I kill as a choice to Love, then no evil, no karma. Why? Because the only reality or existence is Love, and Love expressing it's self can not be evil, nor can it be differentiated from anything else that exists, so karmic principle can have no effect (no ripples).
The reason actions or choices motivated by fear are evil, is because fear is a negative anticipation. That is, an imagining or a symbolic construct that has no objective existence. Decisions made on information which does not exist are going to be bad decisions, no matter how well reasoned or well intentioned. Bad decisions will always hurt others and this is what we call evil.
Choices made in a state of non-fear (Love) are made on the reality of the present moment and are real and will benefit all no matter what happens. A distant second to taking action in the moment, is taking action in a state of fear but with courage and a pre-made decision (made in a non-fear Love state) to follow a moral system like ahimsa or any other. While not as perfect as taking action, in the moment, in pure Love, it is for most of us the best option we have to minimize the damage we do with the fear we create. Which isn't to say its easy, as we all know how difficult it is to follow a moral system and apply it in situations when we are afraid. And of course for those who justify the damage their fear creates by calling it a moral system are in for an unimaginable amount of suffering :-(Far better to be amoral I think.

> *good bye,hope your around next time i show up its usually awhile huh? jdc*

God willing, I'll be here :-)

October

More Garbage

(why should anyone pay for garbage service.)

> ****** ******** *puts her garbage in neighbors trash cans because she don't want to pay for garbage service.*

Earth to tweaker... You object to your neighbor trespassing on your garbage can, while you spew your fear and psychic garbage all over the world? Hmm. How do you spell hypocrite?

Meditation

(Yoga Meditation)

I practice kundalini awakening and ashtanga yoga.

Welcome to alt.yoga. It's been some time since we've had a real post around here :-)
I'm not trying to put you off of your practice and I don't want to sound like a "downer" but I have the following thoughts for you. These of course are my ideas based on my study and practice. Hopefully, others will share theirs. Sometimes there are yogis of substantial attainment hanging around here.
The purpose of yoga is awareness and acceptance of "self," union, oneness, the yoke. This can only happen "now." It can not happen in the future or at the end of some goal or desire. Some are under the mistaken impression that waking the serpent will quickly bring them to themselves. This is foolish and dangerous superstition. For one thing you can never be apart from self, only a fiction and imagining (maya) can keep your awareness from who you are. In addition Kundalini is exceedingly powerful stuff and should not be played with ever, and only used by those adepts whose purpose in existence is to know and manipulate its power. One must reach awareness of self before one can know whether they should even be considering mastering Kundalini. There is plenty of anecdotal evidence on the internet concerning toxic kundalini effects and no reputable master will teach it to anyone having anything but the highest attainment. For all practical purposes, knowledge and practice of kundalini is hidden from the world. Modern practice of Kundalini and pranayama as we know it are mostly mild forms of energy manipulation for building health and awareness. The preparation to do the real stuff is beyond what most of us could even imagine.
That being said, I would take the advice of the Bhagwan Shree Rashneesh, Paramahansa Yogananda and others and forget about raising kundalini and focus on clearing the mind, body and nadis of any constriction and/or garbage. The idea is that Kundalini will rise spontaneously when you have done the needed work and clearing to allow its unrestricted passage and if allowed to flow of its own need it will flow to the capacity of the available channels. Kundalini provoked into release through an unclear channel will destroy that channel (and likely the person) The discomfort you described, feeling "weird" is the body's way of warning you that it is not ready. I suggest you listen carefully. Your body is the vehicle for your self this time around and is innately wise and should always be listened to until your own wisdom surpasses its.
I suggest practice knowing and accepting who you are right now this moment and don't consider any possibility for the future or any remorse over the past. This in itself is very difficult and you'll not find many who do even a mediocre job of it. Concentrate on learning, practicing and perfecting yama/niyama or any moral code that resonates with you. Above all else, cultivate personal honor in your dealings with the earth and all that live on it. Learn to understand, support and express Love, Life, Truth, Intelligence. These are things which will reconnect your awareness to your self, from which all real power emanates (including kundalini).

I can see what K can do if you dont surrender to it and dont accept yourself.

I'm glad to hear you have group support and teacher! That's the right way to go about it.

Dont you have to desire, to do yoga? :)

Me personally? No. When I want or need it I may use it, like any other tool. But the me who is doing the yoga, is yoga and always has been yoga. Only my awareness of what is true has changed (grown, expanded). Yoga does not cause me to be who I am but is a result of who I am and how I choose to express. Remember the word yoga refers both to the goal (union) and the technique to obtain the goal (the science of yoga).

You need to want to meditate

Yes this is a marvelous irony. Desiring to let go of desire. Transcending the ordinary mind using the ordinary mind :-) Hittleman has a awesome discussion of this idea in the book "Yoga: the eight steps to health and peace" I recommend it highly. You can still find it on Amazon.

November

Transcendence

(Transcendence)

Once you realize there is no "right" or "wrong", you're there :-)

2010

January

TV

(TV)

was watching tv today and this actor makes that catholic sign/custom of the cross over himself as we all have seen it a million times right/grin

That's an easy one. I just stopped watching TV 8+years ago :-)

hi jarad, your funny....today

Notice: I apologize in advance to anyone who may interpret any of the following comments as critical, dismissive or derogatory in any way. The fact is I have the utmost respect and reverence for anyone who genuinely practices any faith whatsoever...
I've always assumed the cross thing was related to <snip>
I consider myself a "recovered" Catholic. I learned a great deal in catachism (except how to spell catechism, and <snip>

March

Waning

(Obama medical)

Major trouble again with the Obama medical legislative bills coming up AGAIN.

On top of all the issues we're having here in the US at our fall of Rome, every time they let this Jai character out and/or he's off his med's, the group fills up w/his offal :-)

May

Pantanjali

(Looking for a specific Pantanjali Sutra reference)

I have been reading the inspirational book "The monk who sold his Ferrari" by Robin Sharma.

Welcome to alt.yoga (such as it is :-) It's awesome to get a real yoga inquiry around here.
Don't know the sutra you're asking about. Possibly a bit of paraphrasing or extrapolation. However I was pleasantly reminded of a fellow who seems to be doing just as you describe.
BBC, "The holy man businessman" By Ranvir Nayar in Paris, 10 September 2003

Silliness

(Don't be fooled by cosmic consciousness)

The experience of cosmic consciousness fools just about everyone who experiences it, at least for awhile..

How the hell are you? Gosh haven't heard your firebrand of atheism here for what; must be years now! As always, I have to agree with a great deal of what you say. And as always, I have to say, "yeah, but you still miss the point." Spirit and religion are not the same and should never be confused. Spirit is a state that you exist in right now and if you are unaware of it then you are missing out on recognizing a fundamental aspect of your existence. And of course any succor, solace or wisdom that knowledge might confer. Too bad :-(

Seems to me your tone has chilled a bit, are we softening after so many years of banging on a door that can't be opened?
Well none the less, its still good to hear from you and as always I appreciate your brilliant perspective which I have always welcomed here to add to the discussion. Unlike some other psycho, cross posting, spamming a/theists who seem hell bent on smothering several forums for discourse, in anti-the-other-guys-religion rhetoric, as well as a complete non-understanding of yoga or usenet or common courtesy for that matter :-(Certainly bolsters your argument :-)

Anchoring

(Protect yourself from cording/anchoring)

Usually we are all corded via lines of energy as energy is the underlined structure of all universe. However, some people abuse this energy for their own purposes

Seems it's time for me to move my study from the metaphysical towards the physical so I can make some sense of and exert some control over certain issues that have plagued me for many, many years.

If you know what you truely are, "cording" is a non issue.

Emmet Fox, "The Song of God"

Who are you? Have you ever asked yourself this question? Most probably you have not. Such a question would have seemed absurd because you took your identity so much for granted. Had anyone else put the question you would have said: "I am John Smith. I live at such and address. I am so many years old. I am the son of Henry Smith. I am in such a business." And you might add that you were a member of the right church and the right political party.

Well, these statements are correct enough, as far as they go, as a description of the picture you are projecting at the present time; but (and here is the rub) it is only a picture. It is all just a dramatization of your sincere beliefs about yourself. It is not the real you. It is but a passing unstable symbol of your current mental attitude; nothing more.

The real you is a spiritual being, perfect and eternal and incorruptible. The real you is the living expression of God Himself, expressing potentially every quality of God. "In His own image and likeness."

What is man? He is part of God's self expression. God sings a song, and that song is man. A song, as you know expresses the whole nature of the singer. The singer's instrument is not just the vocal cords; it is his whole body and his whole mind. If the singer should be sick or tired or angry, these things would appear in the song. If his heart is filled with joy and beauty and Divine Love, these things, too, are expressed in the song. Man is the song of the Divine Singer, and celestial harmony is his nature.

Why does God sing a song? For sheer joy; not for any ulterior object, or for any sort of gain or advantage. God expresses Himself for the pure joy of living - because He is God.

This is the Real or Absolute Truth, but it is our task to demonstrate it, to bring it into practical reality; to change the limited picture what we see into the glorious Truth that we know. We do this only by letting God do it through us.

"I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High." (Psalm 82:6; John 10:34)

September

Empathy

(Is there a yoga of empathy?)

Truth: Jnana
Service: Karma
Health: Hatha
Celebration: Bhakti
Focus: Laya
Mind: Raja
Pain: ?

empathy and pain are two different things. there is a lot written about the role of compassion.

I like your suggestion of compassion better than pain. So the yoga of compassion might be? Here's my working definition and some thoughts as regards sympathy/ empathy/compassion and pain. Of course this could apply to many other aspects of human experience in addition to pain.
Sympathy: Being aware of and concerned with the pain another.
Empathy: Relating to, or knowing, the pain of another.
Compassion: Taking action on, the pain of another.
Sympathy: Feeling for someone in pain. (imagination) Empathy: Feeling, someone's pain. (awareness) Compassion: Acting on the feeling for and/or of someone's pain. (action)
I can be sympathetic to someone (including myself) in pain/discomfort/ fear/distress. I can feel bad for them and imagine there feelings. This would be sympathy
I can be empathetic or aware of and relate to someone's distress from shared or approximate personal experience.
Caring for and/or relating to someone circumstance, I can try to do something to help relieve a person's pain by taking/or not taking some action.
I can be sympathetic without being empathetic. "wow, I bet dropping that rock on your foot really hurts.
I can be empathetic without being sympathetic. "I know what it feels like to drop a rock on my foot and you certainly deserve the pain you're in for not being more careful"
I can be sympathetic and empathetic without being compassionate. "whoa too bad about your foot, I did that once and I know that really hurts. Good luck with that"
Or I can be compassionate w/sympathy "I imagine that really hurts, let me try and help you"
I can have compassion w/empathy "I know that hurts, let me help you"
I can have compassion w/sympathy and empathy. "Gosh I know that really hurts and I feel bad for you, let me try and help"

JD maybe one day you will decide you actually want to communicate.

Could be seen as a what the Sufi's call "gibberish", a fairly high level yogic form really :-)
Perhaps JD is having compassion on us and is writing more clearly or perhaps after years of practice my ability to interpret what he writes is improving but I think I get as much as 5% of it now! Regardless JD is near single handedly keeping alt.yoga alive by out posting the spamming dogs 4 to 1 and I appreciate that!

Whatever nice bye tired.read the "golden bough" get back maybe.....jai (deceit runs free in english)

Checked out "The Golden Bough" at gutenberg.org
Didn't get the sense there was any "deep" or "abiding" wisdom presented, although it was interesting and mildly entertaining. Long book. Can't imagine reading it without some purpose. Although I asked my roommate and he said he's read it and thought it was awesome. Go figure, that's two people whose opinion I respect that thought it was good/useful.
Me I am currently reading "Sex at Dawn" the prehistoric origins of modern sexuality. Christopher Ryan & Cacilda Jetha. I'm not even half way through it and realized it is one of the top 10 most important books I have ever read!

October

Pre-Neolithic

(Pre-Peleo(lihic) Spirituality)

Any spiritual system created after the event of cultivation, animal husbandry and "idea" of "property" is tainted. It was created to represent the interests of the "property owner" or what we might call the "haves" today. As I understand the emerging scientific evidence suggests that paleo man shared everything they acquired, had shameless and unrestricted sex and their fears were restricted to immediate and rational threat.
Interesting though, is the core tenets of all the religions formed after the peleo (and before) era all hark back to what existed as a matter of course for the human "hunter/gatherer." Give to one another, love one another and fear not for you are cared for by a loving god. Religion, the birth of the "middle man", who takes a bite out of all human transactions without providing any real value...

> *So sex was understood right after food and with sex mating the events of nature became apparent then socialization according to skills strongest tallest fastest best eyesight these had more sex resulting in better offsprings*

This is the "Darwin" idea and has formed our general understanding for many years, However current science is not bearing this out.

> *they soon start planning births as food sources are predictable.....*

Love. Now there's a supreme manipulation for you :-)

> *eventually the lie the bigger the better as every family wants a lawyer doctor priest grocier to compete with etc.*

True, that! Now the lie is so large and so pervasive one has to study and practice yoga and other forms, just to begin to sort it out.

November

Dying

(Thank GOD for spam! And of course JD :-)

Seems the only way we're going to be spared the "marginally (not really) on-topic" spam is with real spam. Never thought I'd relish the day :-)
Hello to alt.yoga! Not to worry, the real yogis are still here and listening. And some will acquiesce to speak :-)

> *indra's net/remember that oddity/grin...*
>
> *fragments of one/night is always backwards day forwards long story/day/darknight leads to spark-lie/grin...that persian youth long long ago...*

Hey jd, Sorry for the delayed response. So much junk on this site, I missed your reply.
Well you know me, I'm not much for symbology, numbers, arcane references, etc. I've come to the conclusion that its all rather straight forward; that is if you know the rules of the game. For me the rules are, there is God. That's a fact. Now given that fact everything can be understood and dealt with accordingly. I've tested it and it works. Now my problem is reeducating myself. I've had years (lifetimes) of bullshit shoved where the sun doesn't shine :-) now I am working hard to stop pushing the same crap on myself and others. I am "retraining" with "God knowledge," to exist and live absolutely contrary to the tune marched by the sick, sad and sorry "walking dead," that inhabit so much of my history and environment.
Oh, and my totem is amethyst. Whoops, fru fru, nah nah stuff :-) I suppose I enjoy the magic, maybe even more than the next guy, but to me its like enjoying a pretty flower. Just is.

Reading "SORCERER'S APPRENTICE - My life with Carlos Castaneda" By Amy Wallace. Knocking down another hero. In the book Amy describes how Carlos longed to and made a point of meeting his heroes and how he was crest fallen, one after another. Ram Dass, James Watt; my favorites; all turned out to be very flawed. The Bhagwan, one of my most important gurus, very human, as per Hugh Millney's, "Bhagwan Shree Rashnessh, The God that failed." All my favorites, being leveled one by one. Not unlike the denizens of alt.yoga. Really where is everyone? Is being human (God like) really so hard?

> *Bye.Omjaroo Bye.....in a few minutes i call webtv close out the box its then wiped the storage at webtv and all addies/memory/use are no longer there...Hence JD his long list of literaturic names are gone.....jai/jay./jdc/jd/shiva/buddha/perehaps a 100/grin.....that would mean nothing matchs anything after nov 30 2010..its all in my little head which old age will take care of whats left of that/grin.*

jd, Seems over the last 5-6 years I've been around here, you've signed off a couple of times. But cutting loose the web-tv, now that sounds serious. I'm really surprised web-tv still exists. I remember using it 20 years ago or so :-)
Well, I for one will miss you! Leaves me and that evil guy, who shall not be named and the occasional nod from HB. Haven't heard hide nor hair from any of the "regulars" who were here a year or two ago. I did hear some very good news concerning hari har, but I don't recall if that was here or in a private email. Email me and I'll pass it along.
Good news is you can log on to any computer in the world that is hooked to the internet and post to alt.yoga at google groups. So I hope you'll pop in once in a while. And the funny thing is I'm close to the border and you could be just a few miles from me :-)

2011

June

The End

(Yoga - the exercise)

> *Is there a newsgroup that focuses more on the bendy pose exercise subset of yoga? At some point I may become more interested in the religious and cultural discussions that go on here, but for now I'm just working towards being able to touch my toes without pain.*

Sorry, there's no longer any yoga here. This group died some time ago :-(killed off by diminished participation, cross posted theist spam and newly emerging social networking platforms. There are a number of good sites on the internet, you should have no problem finding someone to exchange with. I might suggest you get any book by Richard Hittlemen and read and do it. Easy to understand and he has a real grounding in real hatha yoga. None of this commercial exercise crap but real yoga for real (out of shape:-)) beginners/regular people.
Jared aka Omjaroo
o
^

Glossary

Absolute
That which is unchanging, eternal, unconditional, and independent of circumstance or perception. Frequently contrasted with the "relative" world of changing appearances, identities, opinions, and conditions.

Ahimsa
A Sanskrit term meaning non-harming or non-violence in thought, speech, and action. One of the foundational ethical principles of yoga.

AA / Alcoholics Anonymous
A worldwide fellowship focused on recovery from alcoholism through mutual aid, honesty, service, and spiritual principles. Frequently referenced throughout the text as both practical psychology and living spiritual laboratory.

Alt.Test
A Usenet testing group traditionally used to test software, posting access, signatures, formatting, and connectivity. Also used for absurdity, experimentation, and internet graffiti.

Alt.Yoga
A Usenet discussion group active during the early internet era where practitioners, skeptics, teachers, seekers, philosophers, mystics, trolls, and eccentrics debated yoga, spirituality, psychology, religion, sex, culture, and metaphysics with minimal moderation.

AUM / OM
A sacred syllable in Indian traditions symbolizing ultimate reality, primordial vibration, or consciousness itself. Sometimes used as mantra or meditative focus.

Awareness
Direct conscious knowing or perceiving. Often distinguished from the objects appearing within awareness such as thoughts, sensations, emotions, and perceptions.

Bandwidth
Originally a technical networking term referring to data transmission capacity. In conversation, often used metaphorically to describe mental or emotional capacity.

Bhakti
The path of devotion, surrender, love, and relationship to the Divine.

Bhakti Yoga
Yoga practiced through devotion, worship, prayer, chanting, and loving surrender.

Brahmacharya
Traditionally celibacy or disciplined use of sexual and creative energy. More broadly interpreted as moderation and right relationship with desire.

Consciousness
A term used in multiple ways across traditions and discussions. Depending on context it may refer to ordinary waking awareness, subjective experience itself, or the fundamental ground of reality.

Cross-posting
Posting the same message simultaneously to multiple Usenet groups.

Dharma
A difficult term to translate precisely. Depending on context: truth, natural law, right action, duty, teaching, or the intrinsic order of existence.

Ego
The constructed sense of separate identity or selfhood.

Enlightenment
A heavily debated term generally referring to direct realization of the nature of consciousness, self, and

reality beyond conceptual belief.

Fear

Negative anticipation. A recurring topic throughout the writings. Often treated not merely as emotion, but as contraction, illusion, survival conditioning, or resistance to truth.

Flame / Flame War

An escalating hostile online argument, often producing more heat than light.

Gunas

The three fundamental qualities or tendencies of nature in Samkhya and yogic philosophy: sattvic (clarity and harmony), rajasic (activity and passion), and tamasic (inertia and obscuration). All mental, emotional, and material states are understood as varying combinations of these qualities.

Guru

Traditionally, a spiritual teacher. Literally interpreted as "one who dispels darkness."

Hatha Yoga

A branch of yoga emphasizing physical practices, breath control, purification, and energetic disciplines.

Hong Sau

A meditation technique associated particularly with Kriya Yoga traditions and SRF teachings. Uses breath and concentration practices to interiorize awareness.

Jnana Yoga

The yogic path of knowledge and inquiry. Often associated with discernment and practices such as neti neti ("not this, not this").

Jhana

Deep states of meditative absorption described primarily in Buddhist traditions.

Karma

Action and consequence. Not cosmic punishment, but causation operating through behavior, thought, intention, and circumstance.

Karma Yoga

The path of selfless action performed without attachment to results.

Kirtan

Devotional chanting, often involving repetition of sacred names or mantras.

Kriya Yoga

A yogic system emphasizing breath, concentration, energetic practices, and interiorization of awareness. Most commonly associated in the modern West with Paramahansa Yogananda and SRF.

Kundalini

Traditionally described as latent spiritual energy associated with transformation, awakening, and consciousness.

Laya Yoga

A yogic path emphasizing dissolution of mental activity into deeper states of consciousness.

LTLSIPS

An acronym standing for Love, Truth, Life, Spirit, Intelligence, Principle, and Soul. Used throughout these writings as both contemplative shorthand and practical spiritual framework. The terms are understood not as abstract ideals, but as fundamental aspects or qualities of reality itself. Closely related to the influence of Emmet Fox's "Seven Main Aspects of God," though interpreted and applied through direct experience, inquiry, recovery principles, and lived observation rather than formal theology.

Lurker

An individual who reads discussions online without actively posting.

Mantra

A sacred word, sound, or phrase used for concentration, meditation, or spiritual attunement.

Maya

Illusion, appearance, or the misperception of reality through conditioned consciousness.

Meditation

A broad category of contemplative practices involving awareness, observation, concentration, inquiry,

silence, or devotion.

Mind
In yogic and contemplative traditions, not merely intellect or thought, but the entire field of mental activity including memory, emotion, imagination, identification, and perception.

Moksha
Liberation from ignorance, suffering, or cyclic existence.

Neti Neti
Sanskrit for "not this, not this." A contemplative method of negation used to discern what one truly is by discarding all transient identifications.

Neti Pot
A small vessel used for nasal cleansing practices in yogic purification systems.

Netiquette
"Network etiquette." Informal behavioral expectations governing respectful communication online during the early internet era.

NG
Short for "newsgroup."

NLP
Neuro-Linguistic Programming. A controversial psychological/self-help methodology involving language patterns, behavior modeling, and subjective experience.

Non-Duality
The assertion that reality is fundamentally undivided despite appearances of separation.

Off Topic (OT)
Discussion unrelated to the stated subject of a thread or group.

Patanjali
Ancient compiler of the Yoga Sutras, one of the foundational texts of classical yoga philosophy.

Prana
Vital life force or subtle energy.

Pranayama
Yogic breath regulation and energy practices.

Projection
The psychological tendency to attribute one's own unconscious motives or qualities onto others.

Raja Yoga
The "royal path" of yoga emphasizing meditation, concentration, ethics, and mental discipline.

Rajasic
One of the three gunas. Associated with movement, ambition, passion, restlessness, craving, agitation, and outward-directed activity.

Relative
The world of change, condition, comparison, perception, identity, circumstance, and duality. Often contrasted with the Absolute.

Sadhana
Spiritual practice or disciplined path.

Samadhi
Deep meditative absorption or states of unity consciousness in which ordinary mental activity becomes profoundly quiet or transcended.

Samkhya
An ancient Indian philosophical system that strongly influenced classical yoga. Distinguishes between pure consciousness and the changing phenomena of nature.

Satsang
Gathering centered around truth, inquiry, spiritual teaching, or contemplation.

Sattvic
One of the three gunas. Associated with clarity, harmony, truth, balance, lucidity, compassion, and

peacefulness.

Self Realization
Direct realization of one's true nature beyond egoic identity.

Shakti
Divine energy or creative force.

Siddhis
Extraordinary abilities or perceptions sometimes described as arising through advanced yogic practice.

Spam
Unwanted repetitive or promotional postings.

SRF
Self-Realization Fellowship, the organization founded by Paramahansa Yogananda.

Subthread
A conversational branch splitting away from the original discussion topic.

Tamasic
One of the three gunas. Associated with inertia, ignorance, heaviness, confusion, lethargy, resistance, and obscuration.

Tantra
A broad and often misunderstood spiritual tradition involving transformation, energy, ritual, embodiment, and consciousness practices.

Tao
A foundational concept in Taoism referring to the underlying way, order, or flow of existence.

Thread
A chain of replies connected to a discussion topic.

TM
Transcendental Meditation, a meditation system popularized in the West by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

Troll
An individual who intentionally provokes conflict, outrage, confusion, or distraction online.

Upanishads
Ancient Indian philosophical and mystical texts exploring consciousness, self, reality, and liberation. Foundational to much of later Hindu philosophy and yoga.

Usenet
A decentralized worldwide discussion network predating modern social media. Organized into topical discussion groups called newsgroups.

Waheguru
A sacred expression in Sikhism referring to the Divine as wondrous enlightener or revealer.

Witness
The observing awareness behind thoughts, emotions, sensations, and experience. Often emphasized in meditative and non-dual traditions as closer to one's true nature than the changing contents of mind.

Yama / Niyama
Ethical disciplines and observances forming the moral foundation of classical yoga practice.

Yoga (Yog)
From a Sanskrit root meaning "to yoke" or "to unite." Traditionally a comprehensive spiritual discipline aimed at liberation.

Yoga: Goal
In classical understanding, the realization of unity, liberation, truth, or direct knowledge of reality.

Yoga: The Science
A perspective emphasizing yoga as an experiential and repeatable system of inner observation and transformation rather than mere belief.

Yogi
One seriously engaged in yogic practice or realization.

Addendum

Bits and Bobs

Oct 11, 2006, 11:24:19 PM
Hi,
I don't have the resources to keep www.omjaroo.com up on my present provider. I am negotiating with another provider to host it and I hope to be up again soon.
I would appreciate it if you would visit www.omjaroo.com before it expires. It gives me a little dot on a world map depending where you are. Quite fun actually. Lately I have had visitors from Canada, New York, Istanbul, Johannesburg and Singapore. And I know who you are, thanks :-)
Thanks
Jared
o
^
omjaroo
Oct 12, 2006, 3:08:50 PM
omjaroo wrote:
Thanks Winnipeg ;-)
omjaroo
Oct 12, 2006, 10:18:53 PM
Thank you Toronto,
Thank you Guadalajara
Thank you Hamburg
Thank you Sewell
Thank you Oulu
Thank you Tarce
Thank you Istanbul
Thank you Rochester
omjaroo
Oct 13, 2006, 12:22:59 AM
Thank you Los Angeles
omjaroo
Oct 13, 2006, 1:02:07 AM
Thank you Las Vegas
howdydave
Oct 13, 2006, 10:06:33 AM
Howdy Jared!
What sort of a world map do you have?
Mine requires people to go to the map and put a flag in for themselves, so I can't get a map of all visitors.
Dave
omjaroo
Oct 13, 2006, 10:13:19 AM

Dave,
http://www.google.com/analytics/
omjaroo
Oct 13, 2006, 6:24:04 PM
Thank you Walthamstow
Thank you Paterson
omjaroo
Oct 14, 2006, 12:45:05 PM
Thank you Scottsdale
omjaroo
Oct 14, 2006, 6:21:46 PM
Thank you Oud-Heverlee
omjaroo
Oct 14, 2006, 6:24:43 PM
Thank you Tradate
NBennett
Oct 15, 2006, 12:01:39 AM
scottsdale is just toronto on a business trip.
omjaroo
Oct 15, 2006, 9:32:05 AM
Nancy,
Delighted, just the same :-)
omjaroo
Oct 16, 2006, 2:22:01 AM
Thank you New York
Thank you Phoenix
Thank you Dundee
omjaroo
Oct 16, 2006, 2:38:30 PM
da...da...da.da...da...da.da.da.da.da...dum
It’s over for now.
I’ll do what I can to get the site back up ASAP.
Thank you all for your visits, they were fun!
Jared
o
^
howdydave
Oct 16, 2006, 10:45:09 PM
R.I.P. (for now anyway...)

Provenance

PD. Content: Book, Usenet Yogi. Author: Human. Adminic: Human/AI. Declarant: Compassandlantern-press. Date: 2026-08-26

DECLARATION NOTES

Why a Provenance Declaration (PD)?

Because the realities of modern digital creation and modification require clear provenance.

The writings contained in this volume originated through direct human authorship and public human conversation within the Usenet discussion group alt.yoga between 2003 and 2011. The archived posts were written by human participants during that period.

AI did not generate the archived material. AI's contribution to this edition was Adminic.*

For most of human history, readers could reasonably assume that books, articles, letters, photographs, recordings, and other creative works originated through direct human effort. That assumption no longer universally holds.

As artificial intelligence has become an increasingly common participant in the creation and publication of digital intellectual and creative works, distinguishing authorship from contribution has become an important matter of provenance.

A UPD simply identifies the provenance of the work.

*Adminic (n.): An entity whose role is to strengthen, organize, clarify, preserve, and support the work of another.