

LIVE and BREATHE DEEPLY

One of my greatest challenges as a human being is staying present in the moment. One unhealthy habit that many of us repeat often is returning our thoughts and energy to past events that did not turn out as we might have hoped. In times of self-doubt and anxiousness, we might dredge up things that we have no ability to change, and spend time wallowing in that quagmire. Would my life have turned out differently if I had done this, or that, or if someone else had done things differently? We lose precious energy to things that we can never change from our past history (or herstory!) each time we revisit those events or situations.

Some people focus much of their vital energy on the future. It is important to have plans, dreams and aspirations...of course, as long as that is not taking the place of what is going on right now. **At this moment.**

The practice of Yoga has taught me many things about life. The people that I meet and the conversations I have frequently have a deeper importance. Are there more coincidences on a daily basis? Or am I more present in each moment? Often now, I find that I am looking for the meaning in different situations that arise, whereas in the past, my mind was moving on to the next event without giving much thought to the present moment.

So why is this important? If we are all as one, and I believe that we are, then this takes on a level of significance to each of us. To look into the eyes of another person and say, "I see myself in you" allows us to become a reflection of each other, and all that human life encompasses. This is possible only when we are present in the moment.

Use of your breathing as a tool can help you stay present in the moment. Breathing is a basic human function. It is the first thing that we do after passing through the birth canal. It is also the last thing that we do before dying. Breathing is a vital part of our journey throughout life. Without breath, there is no life. Use of the breath in the practice of Yoga and life gives us the opportunity to slow down the mental chatter...the distractions...the judgments and criticisms of others. If I am looking for the "me" in "you", I will be looking for that connection in each person that I meet, and must allow the openness that is necessary for that to happen.

In a Yoga session, I am as easily distracted as the person next to me. I frequently encourage students to return to the awareness of their breathing whenever the mind starts to wander, or to leave the moment. This becomes a practice during the class, and then the goal is to take this one practice home with you. Take it to work with you. Let it become a way of life. You will not be disappointed. Your life will become richer because you will bring a new awareness to each situation or event. The gift that you give to others will be that of your total presence. What a beautiful gift that is!

Namaste...Dianne