



Awaken Initiative To Overcome Fear

By
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Initiative, is the inherent power of the individual mind and will. Classical Raja yoga teaches how to cultivate the power of initiative in a threefold manner, namely, self-discipline (tapasya), a reflective mind (svadhaya) and having faith in the Divine (ishwara pranidhana). Alternatively, Ayurveda promotes fearlessness by enhancing the mind-body relationship through proper diet and lifestyle.

Today more than ever societies have become dependent on being governed or basically relying on being told what to do. Humans need structure and need to be taught what the purpose of life is. Indulgence in more materialism, work, and social events only bring superficial satisfaction that is experienced through the senses. The power of initiative provides for us the capacity to fulfill all material desires but more importantly, it affords us the capacity to overcome the obstacles that create fear only to realize that love is the natural state of our existence.

The power of initiative is not attained through status, money or who you know, it comes from the soul. Integral yoga (sadhana, sangha, seva) by design bring us back into accordance with our true nature, however, we must change the ratios of our lifestyle. This means taking accountability for

how many hours we spend each day in our activities including sleep, work, eating, socializing, driving, etc...One might realize that after all the busy doings of the day there is not much time for yoga and the inner process of transformation that is so necessary to attain the power of initiative. The primary step towards this is to have a willingness to change and accept that we are not yet perfected in our love for all living things. According to yoga, love or *prem*, is not conditional on some outer experience, it is an inner state of being that abides within the spiritual heart or *hridaya*.

Today, our need for being creative is being diminished and humans more often are being identified according to social security numbers, diagnosed according to diseases and our culture gives merits to all, regardless of the courage many demonstrate to follow their own path and be true to themselves.

Yoga teaches us to be free and how to break away from the shackles of a world bound by fear. The practice of integral yoga invokes the inner potential of the soul that is linked to the field of unconditioned consciousness. It's important to understand the ego (conditioned consciousness) operates through the senses and inevitably develops limitations according to various associations, family background, personal experiences and most of all, their collective environment. All of these types of associations create boundaries that inhibit creativity and inspiration.

The willingness to brave the path of inner change must be coupled with embracing life as a gift that should not be taken for granted and therefore yogi's must look to the wisdom of Ayurvedic self-care regimens (daily, seasonal) and follow a plant-based diet.

Yoga and Ayurveda are major solutions to the current health care crisis through an emphasis on individual responsibility. A lack of personal responsibility is a major reason for the disorder we see in the world and especially on the level of the mind-body relationship. Current western systems of health promote dependency on insurance policies, doctors, medications and surgery to support health with little to no emphasis on prevention. Free yourself from the crutch of stories and a level of consciousness that promotes fear. Governments and societies today live in fear and the limitations of the conditioned mind. Yoga has always taught us the power of the mind is greater than anything else, except love. However, in order to experience love, the mind and all its components (thoughts, emotions, ego, senses, and intellect) must be overcome, otherwise, major obstacles will always exist. Everyone has a story but consciousness has no story, no narrator and by connecting to this domain within us through yoga meditation we can attain great spiritual freedom and peace of mind simply by observing and feeling the vibrations of an eternal song of joy that is constantly playing within our heart. The very essence of Vedantic thought aims to dissolve the mind into the heart, this ideal reigns supreme on the yogic path.

Making this world a better place is actually quite simple, we used to call it vegetarianism but now we refer to it as a "plant based diet" and has much broader implications inferring a person is also spiritually orientated. This plant-based diet trend is a salient feature of the *dwapara yuga*, or age of ascending world consciousness, because the expansion of awareness must begin at the very core of our existence (*muladhara chakra*). Following a plant-based diet demonstrates initiative towards living responsibly and this begins with care of the self or *spirit-ecos*, a term I coined in my first book, *Sun, Moon and Earth*. Ecology must begin with care for our own body as the ecosystem of our consciousness. When we take care of ourselves, demonstrating appreciation for the Divine gift of life, we naturally want to care for nature and all her beautiful creatures.

Why is it that we live in a world where millions do not have enough food to eat, where millions struggle to maintain health and where humans continue to kill each other and animals and destroy our ecology? One word explains this, Fear! Fear can exist in a myriad of forms and is the most crippling of emotions that burdens *vata dosha* through the mind, nervous system and weakening the digestive system, a major assault on all systemic functions. Psychologically, fear closes the heart, narrows our vision and socially alienates people from touching, feeling and connecting with nature.

When the higher mind is awakened, it is referred to Vedic thought as *buddhi* or the power of initiative for practical purposes. This newly awakened energy is directly linked to the *supermind* or grander field of intelligence as referred to by the modern sage Sri Aurobindo. Exercising initiative can never occur as long as the ego and its vices continue to rule our lives. Creativity exists in every human being and especially in the yogi, its explosive, dynamic and relentless, while in others it's dormant like a drunk in the park, oblivious of his own true power. The world is drunken with the illusion of blame that perpetuates attachment to the world process. People keep ignoring their own true nature until the tides turn and the story of life no longer entertains us and the world becomes our foe. Turn off your televisions and computers and attain the inner vision of the soul.

So again, the power of initiative is attained through integral yoga and by slowing the mind down through a comprehensive Ayurvedic lifestyle. The practice of mantra-japa is also another powerful technique for managing the mind. Sacred sounds and mantras coincide to dissolve the mental chatter and thoughts to re-establish the mind in its natural peaceful state. The recitation of mantras and also bhajans like those of kirtan are a simple practice that has profound implications. Musical skill and devotion are two very separate things with the latter being more essential to progress over the mind and senses. Transform any emotion into devotion with japa, kirtan and good associations (sangha). Many skilled musicians have focused too much attention on the actual performance while sacrificing the feeling or bhava of the chants. Each mantra has its own feeling or energy the sadhaka (aspirant) should connect to in order for the mantra to activate the higher mind all of which occurs when the senses are gradually withdrawn. The methods of yoga are ideal for managing the mind and harnessing its powers and the common sense teachings of Ayurveda are ideal for bridging the mind-body relationship to promote unity consciousness. Both systems serve us, heal us and help us increase harmony and peace within ourselves and the world.

May your lifestyle be your dharma and may we always serve others as our own and with such an attitude our actions transform the world around us. Follow your dharma unceasingly until the goal of inner contentment is reached. Your dharma is the path that relates to your disposition and constitution. Ayurveda says, follow your true nature or *prakriti* and Vedanta says you are one with the source of all existence as sat (life), chit (light) and love (ananda). The physical body is your vehicle of life, the astral body (chakras) is filled with light and soul is supreme bliss, and as one the great mahavakyas states *tat, tvam asi*, thou art that!

Money is good only if it can buy you more time for sadhana, yoga practice or help others. The Vedic lifestyle principles taught millenniums ago are remarkably universal and timeless and they can help us today to live an evolutionary life, in that our consciousness is gradually increasing its knowledge of one force that sustains all life and one love that permeates all living beings.

A major part of our life is set as per our prarabdha karma and the time your body will leave this earth is not entirely up to you. No insurance policy can alter this. Only your consciousness and the attitude you carry through each and every breath, through each and every experience. If fear is predominant in your subconscious mind then your attitude will reflect a mannerism that limits your capacity to perceive the Divine in all living things. When you begin to take initiative and make things happen not because someone else told you to but because your consciousness was attuned to a grander force, beyond the limited thinking that "I" can do this and instead realize "We" can do this, now you have the power to take initiative and do whatever you choose. Realize, there is a Divine hand behind you that is guiding you to true freedom and that freedom is what yoga teaches us is the goal of life, moksha dharma. Practice yoga, live Ayurveda and let the Divine take care of the rest~!

Namaste ☺

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