

DYNAMIC YOGA: A WAKE UP CALL

Hatha Yoga is just that: an approach to yoga that relies on the body and its capacity for balanced action. For it to be yoga it must reveal the nondual unity at the core of all dualistic experience. For it to balance and harmonise energy internally and externally it must use action as enquiry rather than imposition. It must be a systematic enquiry into the nature of body, mind, and consciousness that accesses their inherent unity from the accessibility and stability of the body so that the nature of the self is simultaneously revealed without the need for blind acquiescence to conceptual dogma. The inherent unity of self and other, and of body mind and spirit is not only overlooked and compromised in almost all cultural activities, but obscured by the conscious and unconscious agendas of modern yoga practice, both postural and meditative.

The claims that yoga, its practitioners and teachers, make for itself are as grandiose as they are compelling. Yet if any practice, process or methodology is to provide the understanding, peace, joy, wisdom and compassion that yoga has always promised, then it can neither be superficial, nor random. Nor is it likely to be easy, though this certainly does not mean it need be complicated nor that it is impossible. Nevertheless it can not be based on hope nor wishful thinking. It must be based on how body, mind and spirit actually express themselves. Yet yoga is neither science nor therapy. It is a total transformation in and of body, mind and being. Any process that sincerely calls itself yoga will need to break through not only the somatic defences that restrict human responsiveness, but clarify the unconscious and conscious conceptual confusion that drives dissatisfying behavioural tendencies. It is not enough to simply provide a temporary

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release from dissatisfaction, or a momentary peak experience. Genuine freedom rests on a clarity of understanding that comes only from direct and profound experience.

Dynamic yoga is based on accessing the deeper subtleties of being human directly from physical action. Both spirit and mind depend for their expression on the body and its capacity for action obvious and subtle. This dependency permits both mind and spirit to be fully accessed and realised through and from the body. Therefore Dynamic Yoga does not rely on, nor use, any esoteric or mystical concepts, metaphysical dogma or wishful thinking. It relies only on the intelligence of body, mind and consciousness. It does not depend on, nor impose, the acceptance of any external authority, not even that of the teacher. Instead it seeks and honours the authority of life itself functioning through the intelligence of consciousness and nature in and as the human being.

The key premise of the method is that life is intelligence and that intelligence is consciousness; a premise derived directly from the method itself as a process of ongoing, somatically based enquiry. This intelligence is encoded in DNA and most obviously functions as the somatic intelligence of the body underlying its ability to regulate and sustain itself. The deep process of the method is to enquire into the possibility of experiencing and recognising the source of human intelligence in and as the root intelligence of consciousness itself. This enquiry is framed somatically in the sensitising techniques of Ullola and Xandranamaskar which function as the dynamic supports to the stillness of traditional yoga postures by providing a neuromuscular and cognitive

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recalibration deep enough to release limiting habits of both action and reaction. These simple, accessible techniques allow a deep enough intimacy with sensation to provide a direct, clear experience of the inherent unity of body, mind and spirit and the continuity of intelligence flowing from consciousness, through the body into mind, without any need for belief, dogma or philosophical instruction.

The root intelligence of consciousness expresses itself as the intelligence of mind as well as that of the body. It is the conditioned split between body and mind that causes so much of the suffering that drives people to yoga in the first place. Yet this split must be resolved if that suffering is to come to an end. This is rarely actually the case, and even though yoga posture practice is enjoyed and appreciated by millions, most of them do not find in it the permanent satisfaction that they are most deeply looking for. This is because yoga posture practice and teaching remain captured by the intelligence of the mind and the doubt at its core. Only when yoga posture practice is given back to the intelligence of the body can somatic and cerebral intelligence unite and reveal the presence, power and significance of the intelligence of consciousness.

While reintegration of body and mind reveals the inherent unity of body, mind and spirit it is based on somatic integration. Yet it also depends on mind being released from the principal imperative of its need to protect the body so that it can freely recognise its own nature and source. This can not happen until the body is able to function fully and freely from its inherent integrity. The effectiveness of yoga posture practice, therefore,

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depends upon the recovery of structural integrity. This has nothing to do with extremes of flexibility or strength, and everything to do with functional integrity. Yet the way the body acts and moves is not only an expression of its natural design and intelligence, but also of the ways that it has been used. The human body learns, through conditioned enculturation, to act with or without integrity on the basis of habit.

The first task of yoga posture practice is to release the body from restricted and limiting habits of action and movement. Somatic habits are embedded in neuromuscular pathways, upon which all actions and movements depend. This biomechanical fact necessitates the use of safe, simple movements to develop neuromuscular pathways of integrity, for it is through movement that the body learns. This takes time as repetition of consistent movements is the only way that neuromuscular pathways can be well established. The power of stillness depends entirely on its resting on neuromuscular pathways of integrity. Otherwise the restrictions, tensions and discomforts of the body will galvanise mind to protective and or displacing activity. Only when mind is released from the needs of the body can it begin to let go of its habits and become intimate enough with its own activity to recognise its nature and source.

Yet this intimacy not only depends on structural integrity, but also on mind becoming free from its restrictions and habits. Cognitive recalibration is as essential to yoga posture practice as is muscular recalibration. Otherwise mind will neither be able to recognise its own distortions and deceptions, nor to recognise the source of its own power in that of consciousness itself. For

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mind to become free from its learned limitations it must arrive at the truths of its own condition and source for itself. Neither freedom nor integration can result from the transfer of information and concepts. The cognitive recalibration upon which yoga depends relies on direct experience of the functioning of mind. In yoga posture practice the core activity of mind is recognising the implications of the sensations generated by the body. By becoming intimate with the body as sensation we are necessitated to become intimate with the mind as interpretation. As we go deeper into yoga posture practice we are going deeper not into its capacity, but its nature. To do so not only must the body be completely at ease, but very, very quiet. Then it becomes possible for mind to recognise not only the instability of its own activity, but its nature as a story teller. By becoming intimate with the simulative nature of its own activity as projection mind begins to surrender to the intelligence of consciousness itself as the expression and source of genuine understanding and wisdom.

Mind is conditioned by experience. Somatic experience is a more powerful conditioning force than intellectual experience. More powerful than either is a conscious experience within which the intelligence of mind recognises the intelligence of consciousness while interpreting the intelligence of the body. This is the purpose and deep possibility of Dynamic Yoga. When the intelligence of consciousness, mind and body unite in direct experience of both body and mind as consciousness there is no need to rely any more on hope, wishful thinking or external authority. Continuous and consistent exposure to the presence of consciousness in and as the depths of the body gradually releases mind from the

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distortions of its learned assumptions about mind, body, action, volition and self. This can no more be imposed or transposed than structural or functional integrity. It depends on the liberating power of direct experience being clearly understood. Just as neuromuscular recalibration depends on action and structural integrity depends on consistent and repetitive action, cognitive recalibration depends on consistent and repetitive recognition. If this recalibration is to be profound and comprehensive enough to free mind completely from its habit of false authority it must be based on deep exposure to the intelligence of consciousness itself.

This is all a matter of experience, and can never be only a question of intellectual understanding alone. No matter what concepts can be derived from experience, and no matter how accurate they may be, the authenticity and power of a concept derives only from its origin in direct experience. So even though concepts can and must be used to direct the flow of experience, it is only within the depths of direct experience that these concepts gain any genuine significance and real power. The depths of the body must be recognised by mind if mind is to become free, yet mind cannot access these depths without the intelligence of the body. As long as the unconscious carries distorting and limiting beliefs these can and will undermine the hard won clarity of the conscious mind.

While to those without deep, direct experience of the body it can only be wishful thinking or dogma, nevertheless the body is mind. The most direct and simple way to release the unconscious is through conscious, sensitive action based on the intelligence of

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the body. This sets definite limits on the somatic path to yoga. This path must be not only based on the biomechanical nature of the body, it must simultaneously access and reveal its relationship to mind and spirit. While the way in which yoga postures are commonly practiced hardly provides this possibility, nevertheless deep intimacy with body, mind and consciousness is only possible when their singular and multiple natures are able to freely and fully express themselves. Even though the task of yoga posture practice must be to reveal the intelligence of body, mind and consciousness, this can only happen if that intelligence is its driving force. This paradox necessitates the use of somatic enquiry as the basis and ongoing flavour of yoga posture practice.

Neither the intelligence of the body nor that of mind can function freely if the body is not completely at ease, in action and movement as well as at rest. The primary role of functional integrity necessitates the systematic sensitisation of the body's vulnerabilities: the joints. Therefore the preliminary task of yoga posture practice has to be the comprehensive and systematic sensitisation of the joints. As the joints are the fulcrum of movement, it is only through movement that this can be achieved. Simple, accessible and symmetrical movements become the indispensable context within which neuromuscular and cognitive recalibration take place: ullola and namaskar. Without this sensitisation the intelligence of mind is unlikely to become free enough from the needs of the body to recognise the presence and intelligence of consciousness at work in all the experiences and activities of body and mind.

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Yoga posture practice and teaching can never be matters of opinion. If they are to be anything other than a pretence and mockery of the word yoga they must rest directly on the intelligence of consciousness functioning as the intelligence of mind and the intelligence of the body. Therefor only techniques that simultaneously express and reveal natural intelligence can participate in the path to yoga as genuine peace, joy and freedom.

While it is relatively easy for anyone to be guided to the primacy of consciousness by way of intimacy with sensation, it is not so easy for mind to recognise the full implications of that experience, and thereby let go of its learned assumptions about consciousness, mind and body. This requires deep and sustained intimacy with body as sensation and mind as interpretation, until both mind and body are not only understood to be expressions of impersonal consciousness, but also recognised as being so within the ongoing experiences of daily life without being obscured by the tantalising impressions of independence, autonomy and volition or nondualistic dogma.

Nor are a few glimpses of body and mind as consciousness enough to fully release the conscious mind from the specific assumptions of the unconscious mind that drive its interpretations and experiences as if it were an autonomous, independent entity functioning in the vast otherness of existence. These assumptions can only be relinquished, and replaced with the clear seeing of unprejudiced awareness, when the body has released the residual imprints left over from unresolved past experiences within which its limitations are held. The deep

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release of the body from past experience and habit requires that action become grounded systematically in the intelligence and integrity of the body and be applied to releasing the whole body from obvious and subtle tension and limitation.

This is the purpose of the Dynamics of Integrity, through which the Seven Universal Actions are used to recover the inherent integrity of the body in response to the sensations that they generate being accurately interpreted by the mind in the clear light of awareness. The Seven Universal Actions clearly reveal the conditioned nature of all action by way of their necessitated impacts. Without the systematisation of action this will not happen. Yet that systematisation must be based on the inherent intelligence and integrity of the body or it will not work. When the same enquiry into what is actually happening within is brought to the stillness of supported verticality the completely conditioned nature of perception becomes equally clear. This is especially so when based on deep familiarity with the conditioned nature of action. Clear seeing of the nature of body and mind as consciousness within the context of the conditioned nature of all perception and action deeply undermines the sense of self as personal doer, thinker and chooser, as it reveals the illusory nature of volition, autonomy and independence

Just as scientists hypothesising that the embodiment of the conditions necessary to sentient life in and as this universe is a random statistical necessitation of the existence of an infinite number of universes is pure wishful thinking based on their own

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assumptions¹ with no objective grounding in experience, evidence or reason, so too is the notion that there can be many paths to the release of the bodimind from its learned limitations. The possible somatic paths to freedom are determined and limited by the nature of the body, mind and consciousness, not by politically correct notions of equivalence nor by the inability to differentiate between hypothetical and actual possibility that generates the shame, guilt, blame and hostility that maintain the delude sense of self and uphold a society based on competition and conflict.

Ideas not grounded in experience can never be more than beliefs functioning as a wishful thinking that obscures the ground of what actually is and what is actually possible. Unless they are relinquished in the light of genuine, deep, ongoing enquiry then yoga practice can only serve to reinforce them along with the sense of independent, autonomous self that they so insidiously serve.

¹ especially with regard to the existence and nature of god