

## **Yoga & Life ~ Keeping it Simple**

Living in the beautiful south west, life is indeed sweet. The beach, the bush and nature calls us from our doorsteps. We have abundant choices of food, housing, work, relaxation and education - everything we need to thrive in life. Yet it's also here in the beautiful south west that life is becoming, well, 'busy'. The laid-back lifestyle that we are all here to enjoy has the potential to disappear amidst the trappings and pace of modern, material life. In my line of work, I have the chance to connect with and closely observe people every day - and I watch with great interest the spread of this disease that I call 'busy-ness'. More and more people seem to be incessantly 'busy', jumping mindlessly from one thing to the next.

The irony about busy-ness - always striving to go somewhere else, have the next thing or be someone better - is that it is never-ending. If you keep chasing, you'll never get there! In yoga, this is due to what we call '*citta vrtti*' or fluctuating mind. It is the tendency of our egoic minds to be continually distracted. To always want. It is the goal of yoga to disengage from this and quieten the mind, so that our true peaceful nature can shine forth. In yoga, we work with the body and the breath to access the mind. Yoga allows us to experience a sense of clarity and happiness in life that is beyond the mind - helping us to live out of need and not greed - and have a healthy, balanced body in the process.

Stop and ask yourself - what is it that I am really chasing in life? And, is what I am doing really helping me? Here are some suggestions.

**Connect.** Spend regular time, at least two hours each week, doing something that is meaningful to you - that simply brings you back to you. Block this time-out in your diary to make it happen.

**Turn it off.** Make (at least!) one night of the week 'techno-free'. This means no computer, no television, no mobile phone, no MP3. Get back to having a meaningful, face-to-face conversation with your loved ones. Share what's going on with you and ask them how they are, and really mean it. Express your care and love. Foster this habit with your children.

**Focus.** Whatever you are doing in any moment of your day, try to keep your attention completely and utterly focused on that activity. Distractions to do other things will arise. Ignore them. Do one thing at a time. Try and spend a whole day like this.

**Say yes.** The next time someone offers to do something for you or invites you somewhere, simply say 'yes'. Don't say you'll think about it and get back to them. Their invitation is a precious opportunity, a gift right now.

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