

Iyengar Yoga Center of Ojai  
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### The effect of Yoga on My Life and the Life of Students

#### **To measure the effects of yoga practice, we have to ask ourselves, Is it making us a complex or a simple human being?**

As a Yoga teacher, I see people who are coming to yoga from various reasons, they want to be fit/ well shaped/ looking for spirituality or mystic experiences and so on. The common aspect is that we all want to get something and are not satisfied with what we are.

I noticed that the people that stick to the Iyengar yoga practice for a long time become balanced!

–what makes them balanced, I ask myself? Is it because they learn to face the pain and pleasure evenly in the poses?

You see when you practice yoga in the Iyengar way, you face pain, and when you try to avoid pain, it seems like we invite insanity into our life.

#### **How does our yoga practice help us in any way?**

Of course there are physical benefits- therapeutic aspects, but what is the kernel gift of the practice?

When we hold a pose for a length of time with all the adjustments related, we are totally active in body and mind, stretching our will to its full capacity. Holding our hands up, lifting our kneecaps, lengthening our inner legs etc. we encounter many obstacles and difficulties, which create friction that brings inconvenience with no quietness, rather it creates a disturbance to the body and mind. The way we face this state of “disturbance of peace” determines if it has a healing effect on us or no effect at all.

People who are not willing to experience and face the “disturbance” effect of yoga and the pain it brings about, and only want to rest, enjoy and close their eyes in a pose, never seem to be touched by the fire of yoga. They do not allow any change to occur but you find them still seeking, groping, going from one workshop to another, one healing system to another, and are unsatisfied in their life.

We usually seek to sit quietly, rest, meditate in a pose- we reject noise and disturbance from the outside world and inside mind. However, when we practice sincerely we find there is no quietness, peace, but total disturbance. Yoga brings total disturbance in our being and puts a challenge to us: “how are you going to meet me”?

If we stay with this disturbance without demanding anything else, we come out a new out of each practice or a class without even being aware that something has touched and brought a change in us, we feel in retrospect that we are less burdened in our mind and our lives are simpler than before. What a joy!!!

This is the real gift of yoga for me.

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