

Saraswati River Yoga Newsletter

Editor: Judith Lockard

Vol. 2, No. 8

August 2004

Wisdom of the Dakinis Workshop

By *Denyce Correlli-Nuccio*



In May of this year Kirin Mishra gave a workshop at SRY called “Wisdom of the Directions: The Dance of the Dakinis”. The workshop was a fascinating interweaving of the mythical and practical. We learned about the sacred mandala of the Dakinis – mythological wisdom sky dancers who protect, educate and guide yoga practitioners. This mandala provides a practical system of working with the emotions to illuminate our emotional patterns and reactivity.

In yoga, the “emotions” are thoughts that are *felt*. We often act out our emotions in order to diffuse them. We find it difficult to simply be with our emotions because there is an underlying false assumption that we cannot bear them.

The Dakini principle allows us to transform our emotions with awareness – rather than acting out. By gaining awareness of our emotional patterns, we can meet our emotions and see the root fear from which the emotional pattern stems and ultimately, diffuse this...pulling the weed out by its roots.

The 5 elements of the Dakinis make up a fascinating “personality type” system that helps us to see our patterns of reactivity and points to the root cause, or rather, root fear which underlies them. The system consists of the 5 elements each with a direction, color, time of day, seed sound, symbol, season, landscape, “personality traits”, and more. When an element is obstructed in us, we have difficulty meeting life. This manifests uniquely for each of the 5 elements. When it is liberated, each element yields its own gem of wisdom. Below is a very basic outline of the 5 elements to help clarify. The system is much richer than this, complete with meditation practices, etc. But here’s a taste...

Each of us has a ‘direction’ that we gravitate toward when meeting difficulties in life:

South – Earth element

How one meets life when in the southern realm: Feeling insubstantial and impoverished.

When further obstructed: Becomes combative and full of pride. Covers their impoverishment by seeking information and intellectualizing. They build physical, emotional and spiritual territories due to an inner feeling of bankruptcy. Then may seek dominance and “power over”.

When liberated: Yields the wisdom of equanimity.

West – Fire element

How one who meets life when in the southern realm: Feeling isolated, desolate, separate.

When further obstructed: To “confirm” that they are not desolate they will start grasping, becoming obsessive compulsive, possessive, and indulging in consumerism.

When liberated: Yields discriminating wisdom, pure appropriateness, compassion.

North - Air element.

How one who meets life when in the southern realm: With vulnerability, anxiety or nervousness.

When further obstructed: Fear of failure and that their purpose in life will not be met. This leads to busyness and ambition, suspicion, concern about losing ground. Can become jealous and envious.

When liberated: Yields the wisdom of accomplishment. Tremendous creativity and the energy to get a lot done.

East – Water element

How one who meets life when in the southern realm: With fear and terror.

When further obstructed: Becomes angry and full of hatred.

When liberated: Yields clarity – mirror-like wisdom.

Center – Space element

How One who Meets Life when in the Southern Realm: With bewilderment, feeling overwhelmed.

When Further Obstructed: Becomes intentionally arrogant and willfully forgetful, deliberately torpid. Leads to paralysis in attempting to control the overwhelming whole.

When Liberated: Yields all-encompassing wisdom. Unrestricted intelligence.

My Practical Experience

So this all sounds interesting, but can it really have an impact on our lives? For me - yes. A week or so after this workshop the Dakini principle helped expose one of my patterns of emotional reactivity. While driving to the center, I passed the local elementary school. As I approached a stop sign near the school, I stopped my car to allow a woman in the school parking lot to pull out in front of me. There was a lot of traffic and she could have sat there for a while waiting to pull out. As she pulled in front of me, I noticed that she was smoking a cigarette. Immediately, I observed that I

was angry. I imagined that she had just dropped her kids off at school and that she had been smoking with the kids in the car. Then, I felt that I should have never let “that woman” out ahead of me. After observing these instantaneous reactions, I caught myself.

Why does a woman smoking a cigarette have any less “right” to my kindness? I had clearly judged her for this behavior and the more I thought about it the more I realized how ridiculous this really was. My father, whom I love dearly, smoked for over 30 years. Why should this woman deserve less love and compassion because she was a smoker? So I came to quickly see that my reaction was not so much about the woman and her smoking habit, but about me and my need to feel “better than.” My unfair reaction to this woman was really caused by my own root fear that I will not be “good enough”. This fear is very common and those of us who have not yet pulled it out by the roots can observe it manifesting as judgment – a way to set ourselves up as “better than”, thereby protecting the root fear that we will not be “good enough”.

I was amazed at how quickly and clearly this all unraveled before my mind’s eye. The mind did try to trick me. It said: “Hey, you aren’t judgmental! People don’t see you that way. You never say judgmental things.” And perhaps I don’t generally judge others in obvious BIG ways. However, my inner landscape is using judgment in more subtle ways to aggrandize itself for fear of not being “good enough”. This was a big eye-opener.

As Kirin taught in the workshop, we never change a pattern by acting it out. Acting out *is* the pattern. Awareness of the emotional patterns (and the underlying *I, me, mine* reference) will change it. The emotions are the pathway into egolessness – letting go of the *I, me, mine* that solidifies when we are experiencing painful emotions, allows us to open to spaciousness.

All emotions arise for a reason. They are “penetrating communications”. If we can hold them fully – the “good” and the “bad” – without manipulating, they will reveal their nectar.

Tantrasana



Saraswati River Yoga Center is now offering a newly created asana class; Tantrasana. Sourced by Kirin Mishra it is currently being taught by senior teacher, Sharon Jarboe. This class reflects ancient tantric practices in a more formal structure than traditional hatha yoga.

Tantric practice flows to us from an ancient stream of wisdom that has been passed from teacher to student for thousands of years. By taking a Tantric approach to one's asana practice we can open more fully to the reciprocity between asana form, which opens energies, and the Tantric tools, that deepen awareness and consciousness.

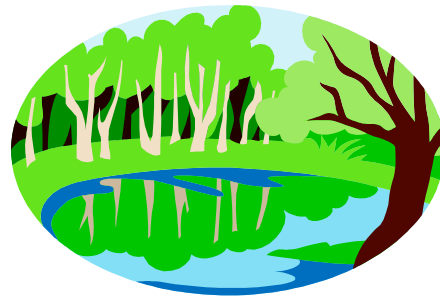
The class is designed to accommodate students who are seeking new ways to deepen their practices and incorporate the essence of the SRY teachings into their day-to-day living. Over time, students will move deeply into the experience and traditions of yoga as it was originally taught.

Tantra translates from Sanskrit as "a weave." It is a path of self-inquiry and discovery. Tantrasana class allows for a flow, weaving together the threads of one's life and self, pulling them into a meaningful rhythm and pattern. This

facilitates the unfolding of deeper layers of Truth; and reclaims our connectedness to nature.

It is accomplished by integrating hatha asana poses with mantras, visualizations, philosophy and pranayama in the Saraswati River Yoga tradition. Under the direct guidance of Kirin Mishra, students are offered an opportunity to use asana as a gateway to higher energies by taking this Tantric approach to their practices.

Tantrasana is currently being offered on Mondays 11-12:30, to yoga students with interest and experience. However advanced asana skills are not required.





CHAI CHAT

Om Shanti dear yogis and yoginis. I hope you have all managed surviving the flood without too much difficulty, and are back standing on dry ground in Tadasana. I know of several people in our SRY community who have luckily survived that uninvited river guest showing up at their door, under their door, and in their homes.



Sloshing right along, I bring forth the most obvious news. Saraswati River Yoga Center is having a face-lift. Yes, many of you know I swore I would age as gracefully as nature allowed and never succumb, but if our little shopping strip can be beautified I just might have to have that tummy tuck after all.

Yogini Anne Connors Schwantes is starring in *Cats* at the Philadelphia Walnut St. Theater. What a great and fun excursion for the Christmas season. Anne is thrilled to be cast as the seductive Bombe Ballerina. Quite a coup for a 47year old Showgirl. She swears it is yoga that keeps her kicks high, her figure lean and her head clear. If you are lucky you can even get her to Purrrrrr for you. Don't know her? Tuck a note in her shoes in the hall. It's a safe

bet you will know which ones are hers. The spikey high heeled ones.



Sources tell me that Zanora Margolis has just written an article on Shiatsu that appeared in the September issue of *New Visions Magazine*. Way to go Zanora!

It was just like the old days at class seeing Lissa Gabel and husband John Barbati, mat to mat. Has time passed quickly! Their son Nino is now a 3 year old in daycare. Welcome back John, we've missed you and hope your dedication to preserve the Solebury environs is paying off.

Talking about class, check out the new Tantrasana class on Monday mornings with Sharon Jarboe. It needs to be directly experienced but one way she has described the class to me is that it opens the flow for weaving together more threads of one's life and self and pulling them into a meaningful rhythm and pattern. This facilitates the unfolding of deeper layers of Truth; and reclaims our connectedness to nature.

I overheard two women in the parking lot (wish I knew their names).

They were looking forward to Kirin's Thought For The Month class on occasional Friday's. One said to the other, "Asana is great, but I've missed her voice and stories." Miss no more.

How wonderful to see lots of new faces in class. We welcome you, and here's a friendly reminder: you never know when

someone next to you chats you up, it just
might be the chai chat lady!

Folks, I've got to run and batten down
the hatches. Oh, I forgot to invite you
all –please join me, I'm building an ark.
Bring your own hammer and I'll make



Conscious Cooking

Upcoming Events & Announcements

Check lobby for flyers and details!

There will be a sign-up sheet in the center to gauge what the interest would be for Pre-Natal Yoga, Kids Yoga (2 sessions: ages 8-12 and ages 13-17) and Yoga Classes on Friday night.

Please look for it and sign up if you are interested

NEW CLASSES:
Kameshwari Vidya
Thursday at 6:30
CHECK IT OUT!

New Level 2/3 Asana
Friday Nights, Funky Music!
with Yvonne

Philosophy Classes
with Kirin Mishra
Tuesday Nights and Friday Mornings

Kid's Yoga ages 3 -7
with Alisa Rose
Friday 5:00 - 6:00pm

Prenatal Yoga
Beginning Oct 25th

SRYS 4th Anniversary Party



Nov. 13

Submit your ideas for entertainment for our big Birthday Bash to Gayle - All ideas will be considered ... no matter how ludicrous!

SARASWATI RIVER YOGA

415 South York Road • New Hope, PA 18938 • 215-862-4520

www.saraswatiriver yoga.com

CONNECTING TO THE INNER RIVER OF BLISS, WISDOM AND CREATIVITY