

Surrender the Mind

As children, our bodies and minds were united, we ate, slept, and played when we wanted to. There was little disconnect between what the body needed and what it got. Once in school, however, we were taught to put off or even to ignore the body's needs. We asked permission to use the washroom, waited until a particular hour to eat, sat still in a chair when really we wanted to get up and move.

As adults, we are now adept at ignoring the body. The will of the mind has taken over. We don't take breaks, drag ourselves into work when we are ill, and ignore pain. Carpel Tunnel Syndrome is not an "accidental" injury but one achieved through chronic neglect and abuse. Is this a loving relationship?

When we come to our yoga practice, it is essential that we leave this attitude behind. Forcing the body into postures it is not ready for or stretching into pain just perpetuates the abuse of the body at the whim of a mind demanding more results or more status. On the mat we need to respond to how our yoga practice feels, not what the ever-analytical mind thinks about it.

When we allow the body to lead we discover more pleasure in our practice. Pain, frustration and fruitless goal seeking are left behind. We begin to see the relationship between muscle groups, the partnership between the heart and lungs, the true miracle of ourselves. The mind, now given permission to relax, becomes a passive observer and a truly meditative experience arises.

Remember, there is nothing to achieve in yoga. There are no belts, no competitions. There is no such thing as a "Level Ten Yogi". Your practice is already perfect. Surrender the mind to the body and watch a loving relationship evolve.

Enjoy your practice.