

Oct. 16, 2009

Welcome fellow yogi's & yogini's to the South Central Iyengar Association! To start with I would like to thank the past board members; Randy Just, Marj Rash, Peggy Kelley, Kitti Smith and Margaret Carr for all the time and effort they have put in to make our region successful.

We have a newly appointed board that I would like to introduce to you.

Paula Weithman – President, scholarship chair
Cheree Winston – Vice President, outreach chair
Devon Dederich – Secretary, communications chair
Sandra Torgren – Treasurer
Michelle Mock – Membership chair
Ann Bowery – Philosophy chair
Karen Phillips – Website chair

I am thankful we have a community that can support our practice. Sangha (community) and sadhana (practice). We need each other to grow spiritually. Iyengar yoga practices the path of service, knowledge, devotion as well as the 8 limb path. As a community, I would like to build our sangha with those aspects in mind.

Our society is in a crucial time of change as it was in the 60's. Fifty years have passed since that time. As an outsider looking in, most foreigners might describe the American way of living to look something like this; with the obsession of accumulation & wealth, social status, power and perfection. We strive harder as a nation to reach increasingly unreachable status goals leading to unsustainable consumer and business debt, rising dissatisfaction with life, deteriorating social and family relationships, environmental disrespect, and a rise in substance abuse and behavioral addictions.

Through the support of our community and practices we can be a gift to society in offering hope and a way of living that encourages peace. We have the opportunity to be of service to something larger than ourselves. So let's consider how we can improve our feelings of well-being for ourselves first.

A kind of tapas to get us motivated. Psychology has shown these things to be beneficial. Exercise, get sleep, live a rich social life with many strong friendships. Select major goals for which you are 50% likely to succeed given your talents, abilities, resources and social network rather than goals that are too easy or too difficult. Focus on the process rather than achievement (abhyasa & vairagya). Do purposeful meaningful work and activity in which you can grow. Find faith (sraddha). Act happy to be happy. There is evidence to support behavior induction, replacement of negative emotions, bodily motions, facial expressions, vocalizations with opposite ones. What we sow we reap. Develop the intelligence of the body so it can illuminate and come out from under the veil.

So let's reach out. Invite those around you in class who might not know about our region to become a member. Let's support each other with our goals in a community that supports acceptance.

Check out our website to gain knowledge. If you would like to participate at a deeper level you are welcome to help out on any of the committees. Meditate. Let's build healthy, strong hearts of devotion.

Sincerely,

Paula Weithman M.Ed, LPC