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Do you have any videos?

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Recently, some people have been nice enough to respond to my musings and essays on Yoga, Buddhism and better health and living in appreciative and encouraging tones and words.

It is always rewarding when someone says that their state of consciousness has been redirected to a better understanding or appreciation when I share some of my own experiences on the life journey and within the context of the Yoga and Buddhist paths and practices.

One of the true gifts of life, and one that all humans possess and can develop, is the ability to communicate with others, through word and writing, in ways that are enriching, inspiring and enhancing.

Sometimes it strikes me as charming and humorous when individuals ask me if I have any videos or dvds available. I assume they mean videos or dvds about yoga and yoga postures.

There certainly are a lot of great teachers of Hatha Yoga in the world today, slim and trim and strong, making fine videos that demonstrate and teach both simple and advanced postures.

If I made a video, it probably would not be too popular, what with my big belly and limited flexibility.

Surprisingly, I find myself to be, at times, less flexible than I was few years back.

Of course, the postures that I do practice, on a regular basis, do come quite easily for me.

These are postures such as the sitting forward bend, the camel, the cobra, the triangle, and others.

Perhaps with so many videos and dvds available these days, we reinforce the notion that Yoga is something that can be seen only and is done with the body.

Any book or video shows pretty much the same postures, so we probably do not need to buy or own more than one book or video.

One very good book that I found many years back in Sri Lanka is a small book entitled *Yoga Postures* by James Hewitt. It shows and describes almost every posture imaginable, with clear descriptions.

James Hewitt also wrote some other fine books on Yoga, including a small manual entitled *Teach Yourself Yoga*.

These books may be found in bookshops in India, Nepal or Sri Lanka with some searching.

They may be more difficult to find in the West these days, where there is more of an emphasis on colorful and glossy presentations.

I think that these days, among Hatha Yoga teachers, the making of a video is a sign of achievement in teaching and it is something to be proud of, and could be worthwhile to strive for.

At the same time, the proliferation of videos and what they imply as being the objective of Yoga may take people away from a deeper understanding of what the path and practice of Yoga asks from us.

Yes, for many, the practice of Yoga does begin through the body, so videos and dvds certainly are fulfilling a need through an efficient use of modern technology.

However, they may not always be suitable in bringing about on a personal level, the understanding and nurturing that one may need in order to grow fully with and from Yoga.

The yamas and niyamas should be understood and implemented by all practitioners of Yoga.

It is worthwhile to understand that what we can or can not do with our body can affect our ego in certain ways, such as feeling superior to another, or feeling inferior to another.

If teachers, or videos also make a person feel this way, they may be creating a problem or strengthening a hindrance to the cultivation of the consciousness.

It is states of consciousness rooted in things like comparing and competing with others that have created many of the problems that people experience, and that we are trying to weaken and eradicate through our practice.

Teachers, present and available, can remind practitioners that Yoga is a mental discipline that has at its roots values like non-violence, honesty and contentment, and the ensuing spiritual values that arise from these states, such as loving kindness, compassion and wisdom.

Teachers can take the time to talk with practitioners so some of their immediate concerns or feelings can be addressed, or at the very least, they are given some support, encouragement and understanding as they work through their own issues and strive towards something better.

The practice of Yoga is holistic, with the postures, among other things, being facilitators for the wholesome evolution of one's consciousness.

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