

Self-Judgment

As I was practicing to a yoga video recently, I was marveling at the grace and ease that Richard Freeman did some of the asanas. After observing what I perceived to be a particularly difficult sequence of poses, Richard says in his smooth, flowing voice that at first the asanas may seem difficult, but if you practice for a “couple of weeks” you will gain proficiency. I thought to myself, “not likely in this lifetime” and laughed it off. I began to see how thoughts about my ability in those poses affect my sense of self worth and also affect my ability to be compassionate for those around me. Practice of the asanas often represent struggle to us, but Patanjali said, “sthira-sukham asanam” – the posture should be steady and comfortable. Work on comfort instead of effort.

Asanas



Virabhadrasana 2
Warrior 2



Virabhadrasana 1
Warrior 1



Parsvakonasana
Side Angle



Adho Mukha
Svanasana (var)
Downward Dog



Adho Mukha
Vrksasana
Handstand



Bekasana
Frog



Dhanurasana
Bow



Janu Sirsasana



Upavista Konasana
Wide Angle
Forward Bend



Parsva Upavista
Konasana
Twisted Wide Angle

Application. Take on a pose that you have often thought to impossible in your practice. Look at all of the possible variations to the asana, and allow yourself to be in the pose in the modified version that you have created. Observe your self-judging thoughts, but continue to practice the pose. Soon you will notice that you develop some competency in the pose or its modifications; just stick with it on a daily basis. (See www.fulcrumblu.com for more practice sheets.)

Photos: Alyce Hensen

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