

SWAN RIVER YOGA SHALA

Michele Baker & Keith Porteous, Co-Owners
Email: michele@swanriveryoga.com
Email: keith@swanriveryoga.com



2130 Magazine St
New Orleans, LA 70130
(504) 566-4922

July, 2008
Jivamukti
Theme

How to become a Master



Vita Raga Visayam Va Chittam PYS 1.37



" The color of a Saint's mind tints the color of the devotee's mind, when the saint's mind is the object of concentration. " In olden times, and up to the present, when artists wanted to learn how to paint, they started by copying the paintings of the masters who had come before them. Paintings are thought to be worth copying when all of the different elements are cohesive, belong together, support and enhance and balance each other, and create harmony and depth of feeling. In copying such great work of art, something of what makes that work of art work perfect is transmitted to the copier. An artist can study a painting by looking at it, reading about the artist's life, and the time in which he/she lived, but those actions won't reveal what is revealed through copying. It's like an attunement between the two artists, the one who made the original and the one who copies, even if there are centuries in between them. The connection is bigger than the two individuals. It is mysterious and awesome and holy and timeless. The artist, as originator and copier, contains everything. He or she can channel anything because they believe they can. Through faith, practice, discipline, effort and grace, and most importantly humility, the artist bows before the work he copies.

In olden times, and up to the present, when yogis wanted to reach enlightenment, they copied their teacher. They emulated what the teacher ate, how much they slept, when they meditated, what the nature of their thoughts were, how they showed kindness toward others, what holy books they read, what holy songs they sung, how equanimous they were in the midst of ups and downs, how saddened they were by the suffering of others, and how happy they were in the presence of the Lord.

The yogi noticed how the great teacher harmonized with nature and the animals, how the great teacher's voice was so soothing, and how the great teacher's eyes sparkled. And if the yogi copied the lifestyle of the great teacher with humility and sincerity and a desire to serve, and if the yogi had no selfish motive, or at least yearned not to have a selfish motive, worked hard not year to year, or week to week, but minute to minute not to have a selfish motive, gradually the yogi and the great teacher would become one.

Master Patanjali was one of the greatest yoga teachers, a master from olden times. He saw how to bring cohesion and harmony into the world. He knew how to channel the old masters all the way back to the oldest masters, and how to join hands with them. He knew how a human being could be useful in small ways and in big ways, practical ways and holy ways. In short, he knew how man could finally reach his potential, how the bud could flower, how man could become God.

Let us study the Yoga Sutras of Master Patanjali. Let us work with a playful spirit. Let us bow before Master Patanjali, and surely something substantial will sink in.

--Ruth Lauer Manenti, July 2008

