



WWW.PHILMILGROM.COM
PO BOX 1210
WARREN, MA 01083-1210
(800) 815-7374

This is to wish you a great start to 2004!

What we set in motion at the beginning of any endeavor can make a difference to what we experience in the end. But most important, of course, is what we do in between, moment by moment. January 1 is only one day. We have to sustain our enthusiasm, staying awake to our heart's energy and to that which inspired us in the first place, day by day.

Each morning is a good start for this. Awaken every morning with thanks for that day and for the opportunities it offers you. (Ok, you can get the groaning out of the way if you need to, but remember quickly as possible that each new day is a gift, and be thankful for that gift!) Let's remind ourselves every morning why we are here and where we are headed and, yes, where we are *hearted*! The head provides the headlight, while the heart brings the engine that moves us and delivers us life's purpose and joy.

I highly recommend starting the day first thing in the morning with yoga postures to loosen up the body, followed by meditation to connect you to your source. Too often in my life I have forgotten the significance of making that connection. If I want to enjoy waffles for breakfast, I know I have to plug in the waffle iron. It's the same with life: I need to be plugged in if I want to enjoy life and bring good to life. Meditation brings us to the source where we are energized, inspired, and awakened. It is not enough to just get out of bed in the morning!

Meditation helps free us from the clamor and vagaries of our mind and from the distractions of the world around us. We become quieter inside and more concentrated, and that enables us to connect to our source. When the surface waves of the mind dissipate, we see and know the depth of our being. It's quite powerful! With that inner knowing, we can maintain equanimity and wholeness as we head out the door to face the world and all the challenges that await us. This is much better than reacting to the challenges and falling apart. It's the difference between being a light and being a bomb! One illumines, the other detonates. We need more of the former today — more than ever.

Last month I attended a course entitled "Meditation Made Easy," taught by my teacher, Rama Berch, founder of Svaroopo yoga. This course inspired me to meditate more (and to enjoy it, too!). It has also reminded me of the ultimate purpose of yoga: the quieting of the mind that enables us to reunite with the sublime essence of our being, our true Self.¹ By the way, Rama will be teaching the course again at the end of this year at the Kripalu Center in Lenox, MA. See the schedule of Kripalu

¹ In Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, one of the oldest and perhaps greatest books on yoga and psychology, there are two sutras (verses) that answer that question nicely: Chapter 1, Sutra 2: *Yogas chitta-vrtti-nirodhah*, which means "Yoga is the stopping of the modifications (fluctuations) of the mind." Then, the next verse, Sutra 3: *Tadah drashtuh svaroope vasthanam*, which means "Then, in the resultant clarity, the Seer (your true nature, Self) is revealed/manifested. You are established in that."

courses at <http://www.kripalu.org/programguide.html>. She will also be teaching "Core Openings: Beyond Your Limitations" in the end of this month and several other courses through the year.

Another thing we can do for ourselves and the world this year is to be much more respectful of our planet. Just as it is important to respect our body and to conserve our own energy, so it is important to conserve the energy we use around us. Best of all, of course, is to decrease our dependence on fossil fuels. Carpool. Drive a hybrid (I can vouch for that one: the new Toyota Prius is a wonderful car). If you are a Mass Electric customer, join Mass Energy's New England GreenStart program. Mass Energy uses all of its resources to provide responsible energy choices that are affordable to a wide range of people. The GreenStart Program puts your electricity dollars toward cleaner and healthier sources of energy, including wind, solar, small hydro, and biomass energy. (For more information, see <http://www.massenergy.com>.) Another source of information about energy and, in particular, what you can do to offset global warming, is provided by the Environmental Defense website at <http://www.UnDoit.org>. See the 20 simple steps you can take to decrease emissions of carbon dioxide, at http://www.undoit.org/undoit_steps_1.cfm.

Another valuable source of information to take heart, especially if you are a teacher or have children, is offered by the HeartMath Institute. Go to http://www.heartmath.org/estk_t/estk_home.html and browse around. Teachers: you will find a free lesson plan for teaching your students how to deal with anger. Parents: you will find how you can be a role model for your children and how to help them connect with their heart for emotional security in these times of increasing anxiety, fear, and overwhelm. Anxiety, fear, and overwhelm quickly dissipate valuable energy. They can burn us out!

Peace, whether it's in our hearts or in the Mid-East, depends very much on how we use our energy. I hope this newsletter inspires you to use it well, and to help bring a better world for all. Once again, I wish you a healthy, peaceful, lovely new year.

Warmly,

Phil

Yoga Classes:

Wednesdays 12 Noon, First Church Unitarian,
Littleton on Foster St.

Wednesdays 7 pm, Beyond Bliss Yoga Center,
313 Littleton Rd (Rt 110), Chelmsford (<http://www.bbyoga.com>)

Embodiment: one-on-one healing therapy, using principles of yoga (you do very little but receive!)

Private Yoga Therapy Sessions

Public Speaking (see <http://www.philmilgrom.com>)