‘Light On Yoga’ by B.K.S. Iyengar

Many of you already know that my background in Yoga is based on Iyengar asanas. The theories expressed and held by this great individual are practiced throughout the world. Here are some thoughts from the writings in his book ‘Light On Yoga’:

BKS Iyengar translates sadhana from the sanskrit as:

Sādhanā is a discipline undertaken in the pursuit of a goal. Abhyāsa is repeated practice performed with observation and reflection. Kriyā, or action, also implies perfect execution with study and investigation. Therefore, sādhanā, abhyāsa, and kriyā all mean one and the same thing. A sādhaka, or practitioner, is one who skillfully applies mind and intelligence in practice towards a spiritual goal.

In the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, we find the concept of aparigraha. Here are some ways we can consider aparigraha in our life:

What do you hold on to (maybe a little too tightly) in your life? Does it still serve you or could it be time to let it go? By releasing what is no longer useful, we open ourselves to fresh ideas, new relationships, and more harmonious ways of living and being. These tips may help you practice the principle of non-possessiveness.

Let It Go. Possessions take up space and energy—in your head as well as in your home. So try this: Every time you buy something new, let go of something old—give it away, or toss it out. By letting go of things from the past, you can live more fully in the present.

1. Breathe. When we get stressed out, we tend to hold our breath. This makes us even more anxious. Release the breath and allow it to flow fully and deeply. Then you will feel more relaxed, open, and spontaneous.

2. Practice Self-Care. When we are afraid and insecure, we may feel a need to cling to and control those who are closest to us. That rarely works. Instead, find ways to nurture and center yourself so that you feel independent and strong in your own right, and can allow others to be who they need to be.

3. Be Positive. When we cling to negative thoughts, emotions, or memories, we spiral into destructive habit patterns. By replacing negative thoughts with positive ones, and by remembering your mantra, you create a harmonious space for yourself and others.
4. Forgive. Let go of painful memories from your past. Free yourself by offering forgiveness to those who have hurt you and to yourself.

5. Practice. Sometimes we try so hard to be perfect—in our asanas, meditation, contemplation—that we miss the essence of practice. Do your best and then remember to release—physically, mentally, emotionally. Let go and stay open to guidance from within.

6. Be generous. Expand your capacity to stretch yourself. Share your time, your energy, your knowledge, your attention, your connections. Donate. Volunteer. Give in whatever way you can.

I hope you have found these ideas/thoughts to be helpful in your daily life. By its very nature, yoga is connected with the Universal Laws of nature: respect for life, truth and patience: all indispensable factors found in our breath, in the calmness of our minds and in the firmness of our will.

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