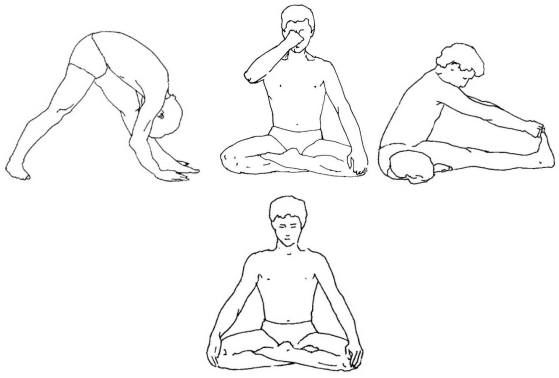
Cultivating a home Yoga practice is an odyssey through a relationship



Cultivating a home Yoga practice is an odyssey through a relationship. However, this odyssey not only requires patience and perseverance, but also enthusiasm and care. In this respect, as in any relationship, it is necessary to consider establishing priorities.

"Only through Yoga Yoga is known.
Only through Yoga Yoga arises.
One who is diligent with Yoga,
Enjoys Yoga for a long time."
Vyāsa Commentary to Yoga Sūtra Chapter Three verse 6

To students interested in forming a relationship with a home practice with its attendant fruits, two initial suggestions are offered: First, think of a personal Yoga practice as if acquiring a new book. However before you try to fit this book into what is probably the already overcrowded bookshelf of life, take a decision to remove an existing book to make room for the new one.

"Before there can be Yoga or linking there must be Viyoga or unlinking.
What are we prepared to unlink from in order to link?"

However, do not try to remove a large book thus making unrealistic adjustments in the space on your shelf and thus unrealistic expectations around the space available in your life for practice. Instead, start by taking out a slim volume and this way creating a more realistic space lest Yoga practice becomes another pressure and yet something else that is jammed into the already overcrowded bookshelf of our life.

"Our Yoga practice needs to be a conscious deepening of what we can do.
Rather than becoming an unconscious re-enforcing of what we can't do."

Equally this means that we start by taking on board a slim practice volume that fits more easily into our daily diary. Here it is better to establish fitting in a shorter practice on a more frequent, or even daily basis, rather than a unrealistic length or even a binge style infrequent practice that is difficult to sustain.

"We can make a profession out of the myriad of ways we find
to stay too busy to make time for home practice."

This leads on to the second suggestion. Life is often divided into agendas, two of which are headed "chore" and "reward". Try to keep some room on the latter list for your practice in the same way that you would greet an old friend. Take time in their company and return to your everyday life rejuvenated and better able to embrace your surroundings.