



The Westernisation/Modernisation of Yoga Āsana

with its increasing emphasis on structural postural focus according to the latest postural trends or particular flavour of the teachers style are prominent within the modern diversity which sees Yoga taught as only a Postural Practice and extending into many varied fields of exercise ranging from Aqua Yoga to Zen Yoga.

However there are questions that increasingly need to be asked within these approaches, especially where the boundaries around what is now generically grouped Yoga Āsana, blur into more generalised concepts of Yoga as hot exercise, cool exercise, medicalised exercise, meditative exercise, etc.

Otherwise in this simplification or reductionism of Yoga into Āsana, into modern postural exercise, or the current increasing mis-identification of postural exercise with Yoga, or even more tragic, with Yoga itself; the deeper purposeful principles within the relationship of the physical body, within the energetic body, within the psychic body, disappear in the search for perfect posture, perfect performance, perfect structural integrity, safe postural practice, etc.

One such principle taught to me by my teacher, related to our relationship with our spine from a Yoga perspective, whether on a physical, energetic or psychic level, and the notion that we are looking for a little movement in a lot of places rather than a lot of movement in a few places.

The basis for expanding, exploring and realising the reality of this simple statement can be appreciated by an integration of the Yoga teachings from an energetic or Hatha level, such as inquiring from this perspective into the way we practice postural forms within the exercise aspect of our personal practice.

However these teachings require study of the Yoga theory that underpins the popularised interpretation that passes for Hatha Yoga these days and furthermore, these principles need to be applied to the practice.

The viniyoga of Haṭha Yoga includes study and integration of energetic and psychological concepts such as: Prāṇa-Apāna; Amṛtam-Candra; Sūrya-Agni; Mūla-Mala; Tridoṣa-Dvadasa Nādi; Kuṇḍalinī-Avidyā; Ṣat Cakra-Dhyānam.

These are some examples of the deeper legacy left from the teachings of T Krishnamacharya within the more popularised, or more secularised, or more institutionalised interpretation of his teachings becoming prevalent, and even competing with each other, in todays Postural Yoga market place.