

Eyes Wide Open

We would like to share with you two very special skills, which if practised regularly, can really change your life.

One of the most important skills one can learn in yoga is **AWARENESS**. To stay AWARE is not necessarily easy, as our minds can constantly get caught up reflecting on the past, or planning for or worrying about the future. However, to be aware requires you to hold your attention completely in the Now. In Yoga we ask you to try to do this with your class practice, however, how many of you try to do this during your day to day lives – to stay completely aware of your actions, movements, thoughts, feelings, reactions, interactions, etc. It is quite difficult, but it can also be quite rewarding. With awareness you can gain profound insight into yourself, and through awareness, positive transformation can take place. If you have negative habits you would like to change, then AWARENESS may be the pathway to change. With awareness, you are also more fully present and accessing your inner intelligence, rather than responding habitually or mindlessly, so accidents and mistakes are less likely to occur.

There are 3 things to consider when practising AWARENESS:

- You need to keep reminding your self to be AWARE.
- You need to develop an attitude of acceptance and non judgement – JUST be aware of what you are doing, don't be critical. Positive change is more likely to occur from the awareness, than from any criticism. Criticism just creates mental agitation, and the desire to avoid being aware.
- Slow down a little with your life – give yourself time and permission to be AWARE.

When you act from AWARENESS, then you doing that action the best you can, you are taking responsibility for yourself and your life, and you may find that interactions and relationships with others changes.

If we could all be a little more AWARE then the world may be quite a different place.

The second skill is being **AUTHENTIC** to your self. This means to be:

- Be true to yourself. How? Don't listen to anybody else. Always listen to your own inner voice. This of course develops as we become AWARE.....
- Don't wear a mask. If you are angry, then be angry. It is risky, but don't smile, because that is to be untrue. If you smile when you're angry, then your smile is a false mask. Then this other thing may also happen – when you want to smile, you may not be able to. Your heart or throat may feel choked. Blocks, suppressions, dysfunctions, are then created in body and mind. So be true. It is not necessary to wear the mask.
- Always try to remain in the present, because all falseness enters either from the past or from the future. That which has passed has passed; not necessary to carry it like a burden, either. And the future has not yet come. Be true to the present, and you will be authentic, in the here and now.