Applying Yoga Philosophy To Life



Yoga philosophy is often presented in complicated Sanskrit terms and sometimes can be a little intimidating and difficult to understand, but here I'd like to offer you five simply explained life tips that stem from the philosophy of yoga but can be applied to everyday life to give you a happier, healthier lifestyle.

Tip 1

Live in the moment and be grateful

Start noticing and living in the present. Take time out to stop thinking about all you want or are working towards in the future and stop wasting time thinking about the past and what did or did not happen. Learn to be in the here and now and take time

to notice and **Experience** life as it unfolds moment to moment. Appreciate and feel true gratitude for what you hold in your hand right now, because it may slip through your fingers or the thing you think you want may never be quite within your reach.

Instead of always waiting for the big things to happen, like a promotion or a much needed holiday, enjoy the small everyday things like the pleasure of reading a good book or going for a stroll. Noticing these small pleasures on a daily basis makes a big difference to your quality of life.

Finally stop waiting to be ready, there is almost no such thing as ready, there is only now.

Live in the moment because right now is the only moment that is guaranteed to you!

Experience the now by taking five minutes to sit quietly and write down five things you appreciate and feel grateful for today.

Tip 2

Listen to yourself – be totally honest and trust yourself

Your happiness ultimately starts and ends with you-no one else can bestow it or deny you your happiness. So we need to start making happiness our priority, our own needs matter and telling ourselves that we don't have time to fulfil them is counter productive not only for our own well-being but also to those around us. Remember, it is possible to take care of your own needs whilst caring for those around you.

So start by being totally honest with yourself about everything, celebrate what is right in your life as well as searching for the things that need to be changed. Listen to your inner voice and trust yourself enough to follow your intuition about your ideas, and aspirations and allow yourself to be the best version of yourself that you can be.

Finally, start creating your own happiness. Choose happiness, smile right now just because you can.

Experience the happy mindset by writing down a situation that you found challenging and then thinking of the silver lining or a positive outcome or message that you can take from that situation. Turning the negative into positive is just one way to re-programme our minds for a happier way of living.

Tip 3

Take responsibility for yourself

One of the quickest ways to feel good about yourself is to take control of your life, start by holding yourself accountable for all your choices whether they are good or bad. Celebrate your successes and equally contemplate your mistakes and be willing to learn from them or take steps to improve upon them. You are the only one who can directly control the outcome of your life.

To this end, we need to face our problems head on and realise that our problems don't define us, but that our reactions to and our recovery from problems is what makes us who we are. Problems will not disappear unless you take action, so we need to do what we can, when we can.

We also need to acknowledge what we have done and realise the difference between the things we can control and those that we should just let go. We can't change everything and wasting time, talent and emotional energy on things that are beyond our control is a recipe for frustration.

Finally pay attention to yourself and if you feel your stress levels rising, take a short break to re-charge.

Invest your energy in the things you can control, and act on them now.

Experience the benefits of being in control by taking ten minutes now to sit or lie

quietly. Take slow deep breaths and allow all the muscles of the body to relax. Give yourself permission to pause, regroup and take back your control.

Tip 4

Our relationships with our loved ones are truly important

Key to our well-being is love and community, so we need to take a look at the people who are close to us. Having relationships with others is a selective process. We need to surround ourselves with people who are dependable and honest, we must enjoy spending our time with them, as time is precious, and they must be people who love and appreciate us, who encourage us and help us become our best selves. We need to admire our friends and have the desire to give back to them in the same way they give to us.

We need to also, naturally and willingly let go of old relationships that no longer work. If we pay attention to people's actions and how they treat us, not just to the words they say, we will be better able to discern whether we want them in our lives and then we can move on to appreciating the possibility of new relationships or enhancing our existing ones.

Finally and most importantly we need to actively nurture our most important relationships. We can't be everything to everyone, but we can be so much to a few people. Decide who these people are in your life and treat them like royalty, making time for them is crucial and letting them know that you care and that you need them is vital.

You don't need a certain number of friends, just a number of friends you can be certain of.

Experience the satisfaction of taking care of a loved one now, by writing a text, sending an email or calling someone important in your life and telling them how much they mean to you. Try and do this on a regular basis.

Tip 5

Giving back
The last tip is one that takes us outside of ourselves and yet can be fulfilling on a very profound and deep level.

Giving back to others, to a community or to someone less privileged is known in yoga as selfless service. It can come in many forms.

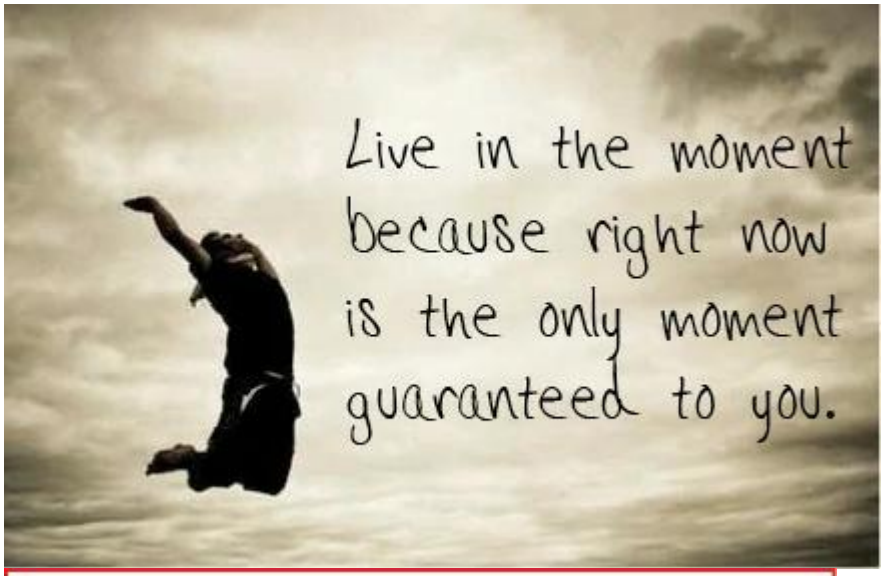
We can start simply by helping those around us, caring for them and guiding them. Or we can make our plan for selfless service wider by volunteering on a mentoring programme, taking time to teach something for free or work for an environmental cause.

Finally we should cheer for other people's victories, be happy for those who are making progress, be openly thankful for their blessings. What goes around comes around, and sooner or later the people you're cheering for will start cheering for you.

Love and kindness begets love and kindness.

Experience giving back today by thinking of a friend who has had recent success and then giving them a quick call to congratulate them!

There are many other things we can do for ourselves and others to enhance our lives, get started with these and see where they lead-you may be surprised. Column by Serena Burgess from the Om Space



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