



Finishing Well Yoga

Yoga at home and in the workplace

Dear Friend,

I have found over the years that it is the smaller, more personal moments and items that bring joyfulness into one's life. When you then expand that joy, and connect it to others, it's even more fulfilling.

Feeling true joy doesn't have to come from winning the lottery, buying something expensive, or finding a new love relationship. I believe sustainable joy comes from small tweaks in our lives each and every day. One particularly wonderful way to magnify your own joy is by bringing joy to others. It can be gifts, encouragement, support, money, or even a hug.

Here are a few ideas for expanding your joy by giving to others:

- Be mindful by taking in the giving moment, relishing it and feeling every bit of it.
- Feel the joy deeply when giving to others and seeing their happiness.
- Give without judgement. It encourages the receiver to react in their own way, filling them with more satisfaction, which in turn comes back to you!
- Offer your gift anonymously. It can remove any expectations and expand joy for both of you.
- Let go of all sense of accomplishment or need/desire to statistically add one more "joy" to your count.
- Bring empathy into your mind (see it through their eyes) when you experience someone else's joy.
- Listen to people closely to discover what makes them happy.

These experiences will often help us receive joy a little deeper and a little fuller.

I encourage you to try the above ideas and when you do, scan your body for the sensations. Usually you'll feel a sense of warmth that will come over your body. This is joy!



Before I close, I'd like to also recommend a wonderful book called [The Book of Joy](#) by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, with Douglas Abrams. "Joy is much bigger than happiness. While happiness is often seen as being dependent on external circumstances, joy is not." (Archbishop Desmond Tutu)

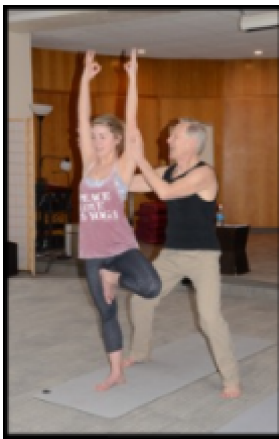
Namaste,

Ron Collins

My 2017 Classes

Yoga for SPS Students

8am - 9:15am
Wed, Thurs, & Fri
May, & June



Quote of the Day

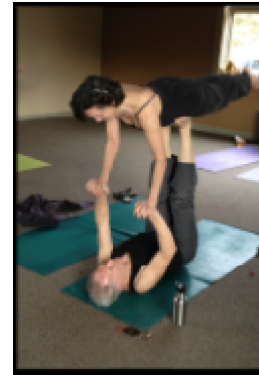


*"Strength doesn't come from
winning.
Your struggles develop your
strength.
When you go through
hardships and decide not to
surrender, that is strength."*

Mahatma Gandhi

Private Sessions

Thursdays
2pm - 7:30pm
Call 616-340-7338 or click
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more information.



Self-Care Article

The Art of the Pause

Have you ever reacted to someone else's comments or actions with an immediate response only to regret your words moments later? It's very common to respond quickly and without much thought to a perceived slight, usually to everyone's detriment.

When we act fast, it usually is a response with a fully engaged ego which can be a protective device for us and an antagonistic response for others. It can give us a sense of action, correctness, and a sense of thinking we are righting a wrong or an injustice. So many times, though, a 'knee jerk' reaction is filled with unsubstantiated judgements, personal biases, and a need to feel we are making the world more perfect. It often simply placates our ego, the response is not well thought out, and it can offend or injure others.

"The world is imperfect and will remain that way. I cannot change this but will see it as an opportunity to awaken," says Deok Won, a Buddhist monk from the Zen Center in Grand Rapids.

One of the ways we can awaken to our connection with others is to utilize the pause. The pause can start a conscious action of surrendering (the ego) and allow the world and everyone in it to respond rather than react as well. It stops the 'fight or flight' mentality and

lets the 'rest and relax' mode kick in, allowing us to be more genuine and heartfelt.

“The art of the pause” is a technique that can help us move through and change subconscious actions. It gives us time to look at the direction we are headed and decide if that is an action that would be beneficial for us. It can give us time to separate our action from the ever-present ego.

Subconscious actions are habits that we have learned to use. To change them takes mindfulness and conscious thinking in the Now. By incorporating a pause before we respond, we disrupt our usual habits and open to new creative ways of behaving.

Several ideas to engage this technique include:

- **Use the breath** – Learn to take three 'letting go breaths' before speaking. The [Magic Breath Tool Kit](#) can be very helpful in this.
- **Try paraphrasing** – “This technique helps us continue the flow and stay on the subject long enough for us to express a summary of all the information we received.” It is more of an indirect pause. “Paraphrasing is simply saying back to the speaker what we thought they said.” ([Listening for Treasures in the Wind](#), page 78)
- **Create a moment of silence** – A slice of silence allows us to explore our mind, heart, feelings, pains, suffering, humor, and excitement, and respond without the usual outside influences. It also allows us space for empathy, to get a sense of what might be motivating the other person. It is truly one of the best inventions the Divine has to offer.
- **Take a step back** – To physically step out of the energetic circle of communication can offer a moment to regather your thoughts and find clarity for your response.

So as not to be misunderstood by the person to whom you are talking, it may also help to say, “Just a minute, I’m practicing ‘the art of the pause’ so I am clear.”

Many books have been written on the subject and several are worth mentioning here:

[Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life](#) by Dr. Wayne W. Dyer

“Surrendering is a mental process: It involves taking a split second to stop yourself, to step back and be a witness rather than a protagonist.”

[Radical Acceptance](#) by Tara Brach PhD

“But by disrupting our habitual behaviors, we open to the possibility of new and creative ways of responding to our wants and fear.” (page 52)

“Through the sacred art of pausing, we develop the capacity to stop hiding, to stop running away from our experience.” (page 53)

Whether you take a physical step back, mentally use the breath, or close your eyes and tune out the world, using “the art of the pause” can help us connect more deeply with others and stay even tempered and relaxed in this wonderful experience of life.



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