

YOGATM MAGAZINE

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ISSUE 199 / SEPTEMBER 2019

BE PRESENT IN THIS MOMENT. **LOVE YOUR LIFE.**



**WILD THING
THAT'S WHAT
YOU ARE**

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HOME SKINCARE RECIPES

**DAVID
SYE** ROCK STAR
OF THE
YOGA WORLD

DR. INGRID YANG & GEETA SIDHU-ROBB

9-5 BEHIND YOUR
'DESK' YOGA
POSES & WHAT TO
EAT & DRINK

AROMATHERAPIES & SPAS

AYURVEDIC HERBS
TO MANAGE DIABETES

WAYNE LÈAL

JUMPGA
THE SENSATIONAL NEW
YOGA FITNESS HYBRID

JULES WATSON

A CELEBRATION OF
**VANDA SCARAVELLI
& DIANE LONG**

ELISABETH GRANLI

śiddhant
INTERVIEW WITH A YOGI



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SKIN-CARE + COCO BIDU MALDIVES + MUSIC + HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN BEAUTY PRODUCTS
+ YOGA FOR HIGHLY SENSITIVE PEOPLE (HSP) + INDEPENDENT YOGA NETWORK CONFERENCE 2019

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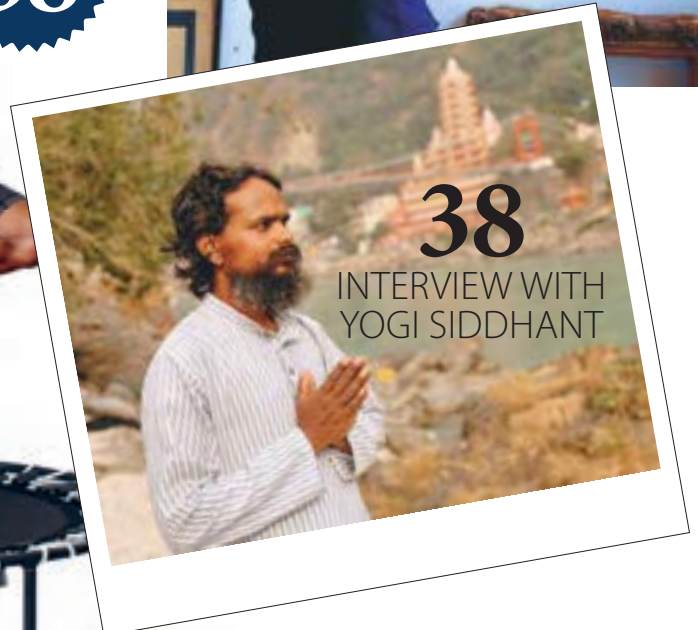
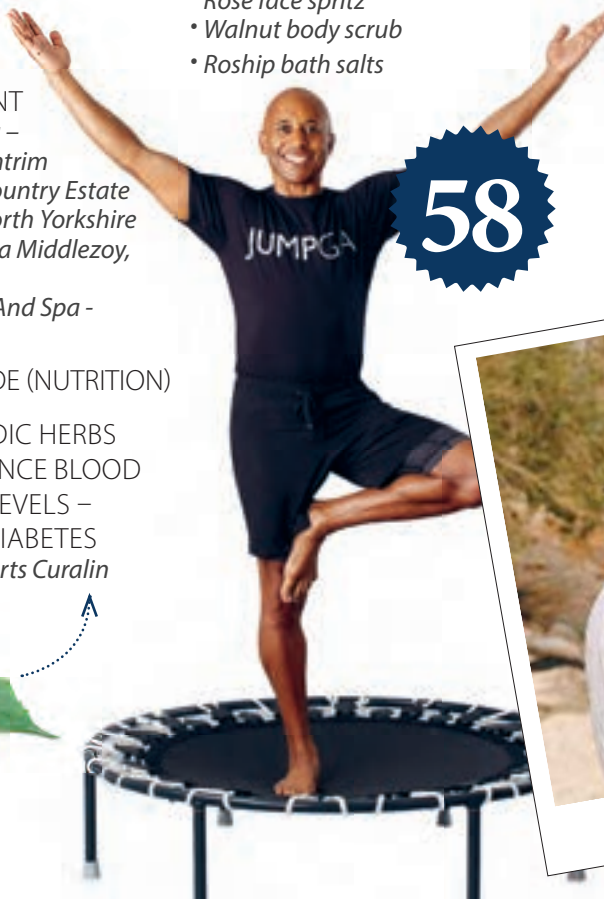
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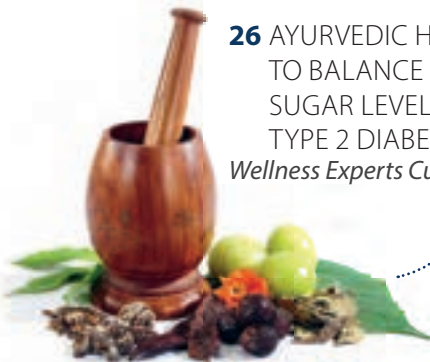
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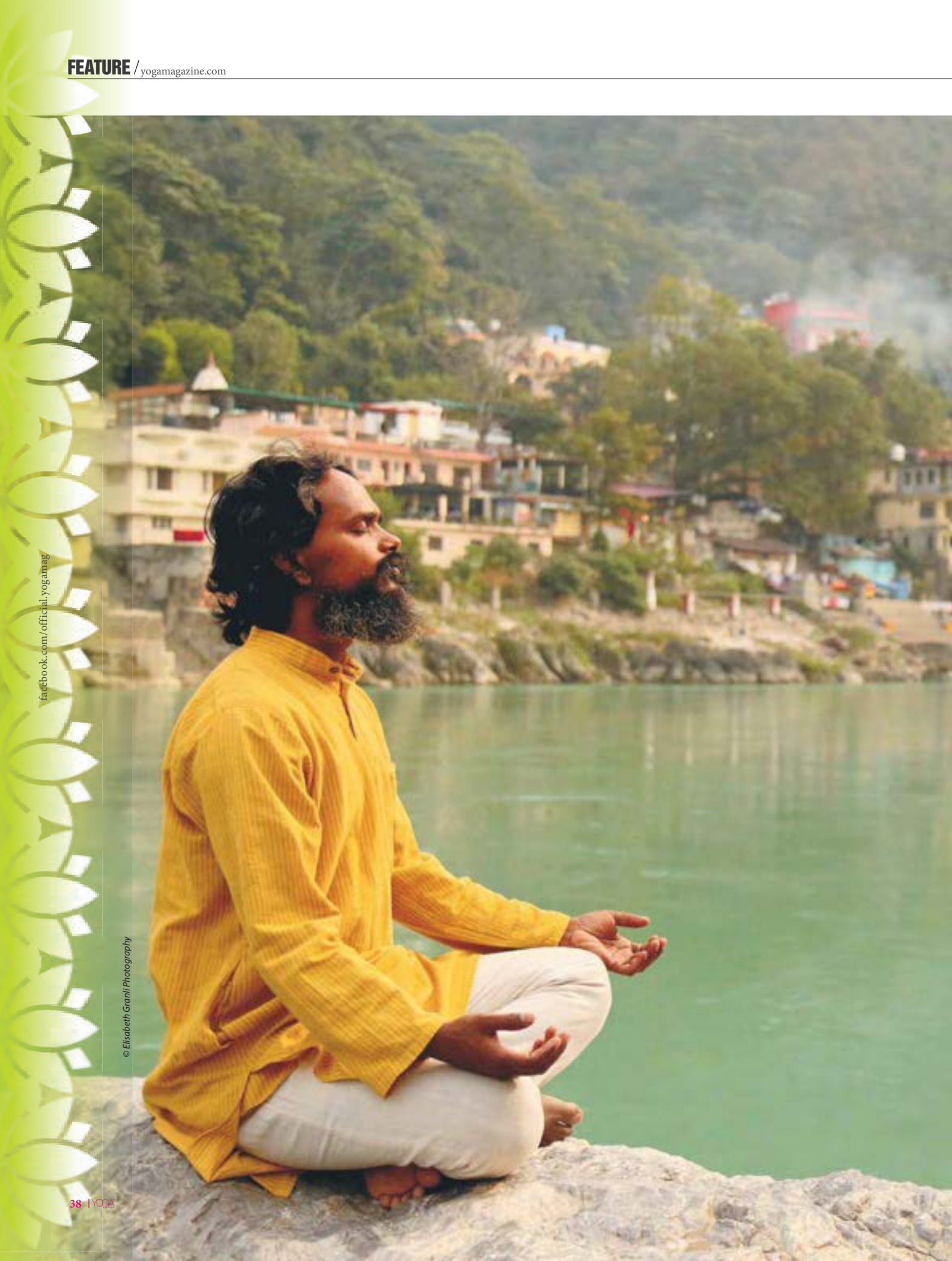
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INTERVIEW WITH

YOGI SIDDHANT

I sat down for an interview with Siddhant, the founder of Siddhant School of Yoga on my last day there. I had just finished a 200 hour teacher training, and I was amazed at how much I had learned, and wanted to find out more about Siddhant. What inspired him to open a yoga-school in Rishikesh, the birthplace of yoga?

ELISABETH: TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND.

Siddhant: I come from a very simple family, but I had a lot of intellectual stimulation growing up. As a child I was a very rebellious. I was interested in science, and always had a very unique outlook on things. I always made up my own mind, I was never a follower. And one day when I was 16 years old. I came to the realization that I can't stay in this "outer world" any longer.

E: WHAT DID YOU EAT?

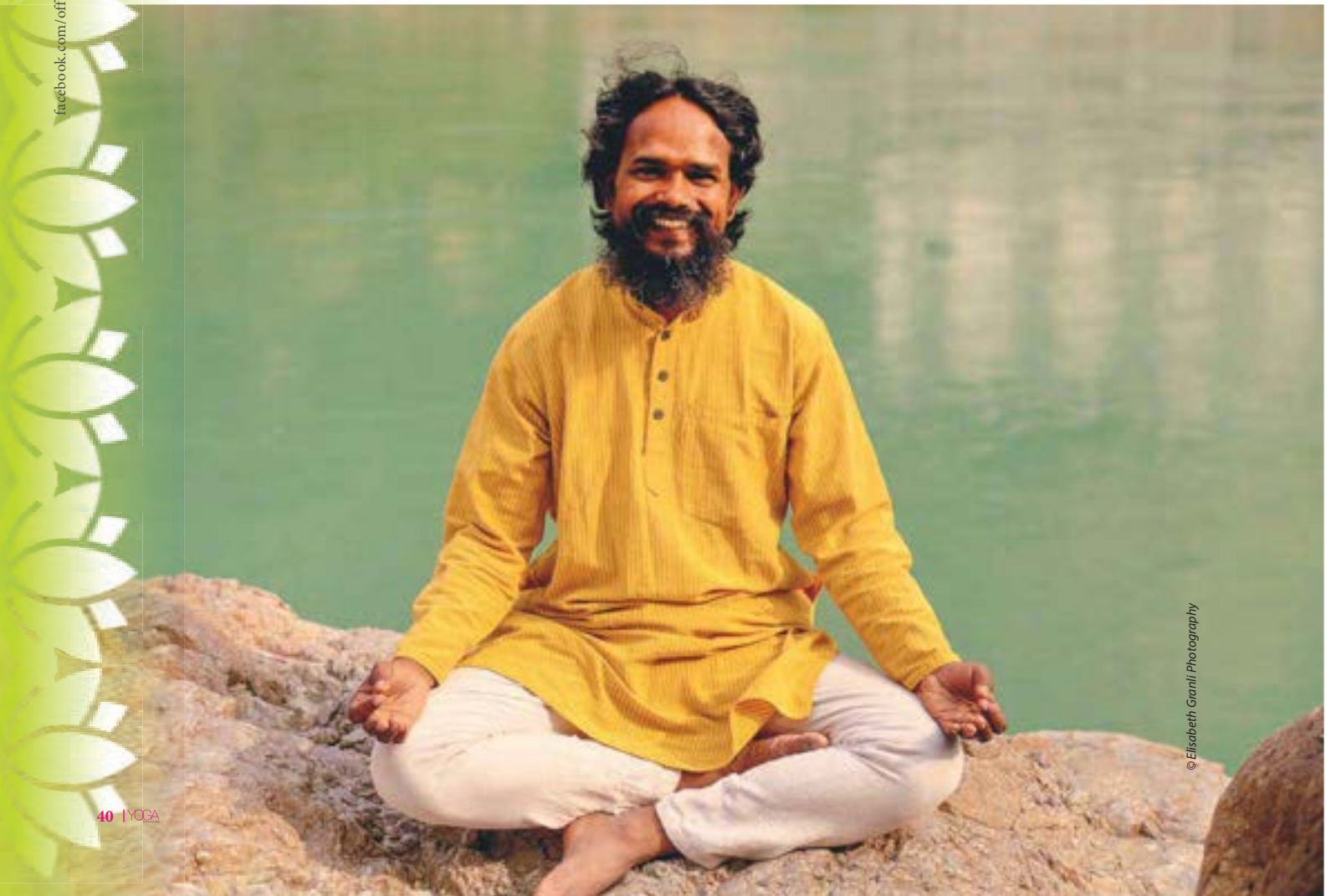
S: There was a temple nearby where I could eat, I paid 10 rupees for a meal. (about \$0.15)

E: WAS IT ONE EXPERIENCE THAT MADE YOU REALIZE THAT, OR WAS IT A GRADUAL REALIZATION?

S: I was a gradual realization. I wasn't really interested in anything in "the outer world". I was a very creative child, but besides from painting and decorating, nothing really interested me. I thought to myself that I couldn't stay at home anymore. I knew there was more to life than what you can find in "the outer world". So, when I was 16, I left my home, and built a small cottage in the jungle about a mile from our home. I had always been a very unique, independent child, and my parents supported me and trusted that I knew what I was doing. I stayed there for 3 years while continuing my education. I was not interested in the "outer world", or in the "normal world" you can say, as it is all "outer".

E: WHAT WAS IT THAT KEPT YOU GOING? WHAT WAS YOUR GOAL?

S: I wanted to find the answer to one question; I wanted to know who I am, and why I am here. What am I doing here? Why all the rules? What is the purpose? You live and then you die. For what? When I was 16 my father died, and that's what made me look deeper into my beliefs. It must be something more to this life than what is obvious. So that is what pushed me towards spirituality, I moved into the little cottage that I built and then went to study with different spiritual masters that I found interesting and was pulled towards. It is not like I found spirituality and renounced the world, the world automatically and gradually became less interesting to me. I found the solution, and later found the solution with spiritual masters. (One of



my best experiences was when I found a book that talked about by how by using your will you can achieve your goal and find God. After I read the book I went out exploring and once I stayed in the the jungle for 9-10 days without any food or drink. That's when I damaged my vocal cords.)

E: WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT THIS WAS THE RIGHT TIME FOR YOU TO START TEACHING? WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO START THE SCHOOL?

S: When I left home at 16 to start my spiritual practice I became well-known in the area, and people from surrounding villages and towns come to sit with me, talk to me and ask me questions. I lived in the hut that I built in the jungle from the ages of 16-21, and I was very dedicated to my spiritual practice. I left at 21, I then went to an ashram to study with a spiritual master. It is near Dehli, and the master is a woman, Anandamurti Gurumai. I stayed there for 6-7 years and then came to Rishikesh in 2014 I studied with one master from 1996 to 2010. It was at her ashram I learned to give presentations and to teach others. I traveled throughout India presenting for that ashram. She always asked me what I wanted to learn, what I wanted to understand and how she could help. I felt like I learned all I could from her, and decided to leave. That was in 2010, and that was the turning point. After I left that ashram, I travelled around in the Himalayas and studied with different masters for 4 years. I finally found one that I wanted to stay with; Sanjay. He's one of the most intelligent, wise people in the world.

E: WHERE CAN I FIND HIM? (WE LAUGH)

S: First I must say about Sanjay, that what I had been looking for the past 14 years, I found within 2 months with him.



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E: BUT YOU WERE PREPARED, BECAUSE OF ALL YOUR PREVIOUS STUDIES.

S: I agree. (laugh). My new master Sanjay had brand new ideas about awareness, I was working with my awareness in a different way. I had always been taught to be aware. To always stay in the present moment. Be aware of when you eat, when you get dressed etc etc. I'd been working with awareness for the last 12 years. Still there was not much change. Sanjay told me to forget everything I'd previously been taught about awareness. "If you feel like I'm someone who can help you find what you're looking for, throw what you think you know about awareness out the window. Forget about the concept, don't try to be aware, just be normal." And the moment I started to not try to be aware, I became 1000 times more aware. It happened automatically. I wondered, what am I to do, if not to be aware? He told me to focus, and that awareness is a result of a focused mind.

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E: TELL ME A LITTLE BIT MORE ABOUT FOCUS; HOW DO YOU DEFINE A FOCUSED MIND? DO YOU MEAN TO FOCUS ON A LONG TERM GOAL, OR TO FOCUS ON THE PRESENT MOMENT?

S: To focus means that you have a priority, a goal, and when you focus on your priority, everything else falls to the side effortlessly, you automatically ignore everything else. When you automatically ignore things, it does not create any thoughts or resistance. When you try to ignore something, you create thoughts and resistance. You cannot practice present moment. But, you can practice focus. When a person is talking

about the present moment, they're talking about a mind oriented life, where you're focusing on your senses. What do you see, hear, taste, smell, feel? (Later I'll delve more deeply into what defines a present moment, what is a mind oriented life.) To focus is to stay in the present moment. To practice Gratitude is to stay in the present moment. To practice yoga is to stay in the present moment To practice

Pranayama is to stay in the present moment. When people try to be in the present moment, they're following their thoughts, feelings and emotions and think they're being in the present moment. But , staying in the present moment is equal to meditation. No mind. No mind means no thoughts, no feelings, no emotions. Space. If you want to experience the present moment you must be focused.



E: BUT WHAT DO YOU FOCUS ON?

S: That's a great question...you focus on your priority. And everything is connected, for example yoga, if you start focusing on yoga, you'll become interested in other yoga-related themes, like the history and the benefits etc. Take your time and make a decision. Be discerning and make the right decision. Do not rush into it and listen to your thoughts, feelings or emotions. Normally your thoughts and feelings are pushing you to make decisions. The right decision always comes from experience. Start with a common decision, what to eat, whom to meet etc. So make a decision, the decision will create a point, and everything will then help you to experience the present moment. Then when you focus on your decision, everything you do will support it.

E: CAN YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN "POINT"?

S: Point means what you want to focus on. Say you wake up in the morning not sure what you'll do that day. Are you going to go to yoga, do pranayama, edit pictures, write, visit a friend? Do not make any spontaneous decisions; do not follow your thoughts, feelings or emotions, it will only create confusion. Take a few deep breaths and follow each thought to the end. Give every thought a few minutes, and see which action will lead to the most growth, and that should be your focus. After a while it becomes a habit. That is how you become wise and mature, that is how you become a master.

E: THANK YOU SIDDHANT FOR THIS INVALUABLE INFORMATION. NOW, I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT ONE OF MY FAVORITE SUBJECTS; CAN YOU TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT HOW TO REPROGRAM THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND USING THE YOGIC PRINCIPLES?

S: It is very simple; The subconscious mind is nothing but a bundle of habits. Whatever we repeatedly do becomes a habit. Whatever you do, Do it consciously, and If you repeat it, it will become a habit and move to the upper part of the subconscious mind. This how you redesign your subconscious mind.

E: HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE, ON AVERAGE?

S: It depends on how calm your mind is. If you are very conscious and have a still mind, it can happen immediately, but on average it takes about 90 days.

E: SO NICE TO HEAR YOU SAY THIS, GOOD TO KNOW WE'RE NOT VICTIMS FOR LIFE OF OUR OLD SUBCONSCIOUS LIMITING BELIEFS!

S: The result of yoga is gratitude. It is the only way! You can say practice yoga with gratitude or practice yoga with thankfulness and experience yoga with gratitude.

E: YOU MAKE THESE TEACHINGS SEEM SO DOABLE.

S: Yes, anyone can do it. A commitment to yoga will give you real growth. If I'll do yoga, what will happen? Like meditation, meditation give you a little bit of peace. People are using meditation as a relaxation technique.

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E: THAT'S WHY MANY PEOPLE DO IT.

S: But it is not what it's meant for. Same with yoga, people don't know all the benefits, they see it as a good workout or a way to gain flexibility, but way I talk about yoga is different, yoga can give you real growth. If you want money, do yoga, if you want a relationship, do yoga, if you want inner peace, do yoga, if you want enlightenment, do yoga, if you want sound sleep, do yoga, whatever you want, do yoga. It is working directly with your subconscious mind and can give you real growth and the tools to change. people don't know that by practicing yoga the proper way, you can get anything you want, because it is working directly with your subconscious mind.

It gives you a very balanced conscious mind. It is the ultimate solution. The world is finally now starting to understand this.

E: KNOWING THIS...WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NEXT?

S: I want to educate people. I want to share this with people who want to do something with society. We all want a better society, we all want a healthy society, both physically and mentally. We must practice pranayama, we must practice yoga.

E: HOW ARE YOU PLANNING ON SHARING THIS WITH PEOPLE, NOW WE'RE JUST 9 PEOPLE IN THE CLASS, WE'RE NOT THAT MANY! HOW ARE PLANNING TO SPREAD THESE TEACHINGS SO THEY REACH MORE PEOPLE, ARE YOU PLANNING TO CREATE A WEBSITE, WRITE A BOOK, MAKE A MOVIE?

S: I've started writing a book which is very practical, each page helps you to move forward. Samadhi, meditation, present moment, awareness, enlightenment...they're big words, and they're the results, they're not something to practice. Everything will be presented in the proper way so it will be easy to practice. And I also want to write some articles and maybe some videos. We can not aggressively push this on people. We have to make them aware that this is something that can be helpful.

E: BUT A LOT OF PEOPLE DON'T KNOW, THEY'RE JUST IGNORANT. MAYBE THEY'LL LIKE IT ONCE THEY KNOW ABOUT IT.

S: Yes I think first we have to show people that that yoga is a tool to create a better life. There are 2-3 things you must do: have a goal, a target, a priority. It's mandatory for everybody, or you cannot gather your energy to achieve anything unless you have a goal.

E: WHAT DO YOU MEAN, IT'S COMPULSORY FOR EVERYBODY?

S: Everybody wants to achieve something, but they're not prioritizing it, they want to live in the present moment. You can't live in the present moment and at the same time achieve your goal. It is impossible.

E: SO YOU WANT TO TELL PEOPLE THAT IF YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE ANYTHING, THEN TAKE THESE STEPS.

S: Yes exactly; be clear on what you want. I will provide few techniques, so you can move step by step. And 2nd thing; gratitude. Gratitude is not an option, you must practice gratitude. The 3rd element is focus. Focus, goal and gratitude.

And one more thing; commitment. Be committed to yourself.



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E: WE NEED THIS, MANY PEOPLE, MYSELF INCLUDED, ARE NOT CLEAR ON WHAT THEY WANT.

S: It has been proven that 60% of people die without knowing what they want.

E: SO WHAT ARE THE FIRST STEPS IF SOMEBODY DOESN'T KNOW WHAT THEY WANT?

S: There are 3 things you should do without thinking about it; : 1. Do some yoga asana, not for exercise but because the yoga asanas indirectly work with your chakras, and help you develop some qualities that will help you gain clarity and become more confident. So, for 10-20 minutes, do asanas. 2. Also without thinking about it, do some pranayama. Pranayama will give you energy. Energy is much more precious than any kind of power. 3. Do NOT follow your thoughts, feelings or emotions. Practice throughout the day. This is what you call “negative practice”, the 2 previously mentioned

are the positive practice; 10 min of asana, 10 min of pranayama. 4. And throughout the day, whenever you feel like spontaneously doing something, take a break and think it through.

In 3-4 months after practicing this you will get a lot of insights and you will find a place to learn more. Your intuition will become stronger and guide you. 10 minutes of asana-practice gives you a taste that makes you want more, same with pranayama. And taking a break and not following your feelings will make you a master.

Because following the feelings, thoughts and emotions is slavery. Take a 5 second break.

E: AND THIS GOES BACK TO OUR SUBCONSCIOUS MIND, DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT 95% OF OUR LIFE IS DOMINATED BY OUR SUBCONSCIOUS MIND.

S: Yes, exactly, so whenever you're following your thoughts, feelings or emotions, you're following your sub-conscious mind. When you take a break, you're not following it, and you're creating new habits. So, live more mindfully, with awareness, and you will not be following your subconscious mind.

This is how to change your life. Give it a try for 30-40 days, practice at least 10 minutes of yoga and pranayama every day, and before responding take a breath and consider; is this what you want to say and how you want to say it? Be mindful and discerning, will this support your goal? This is all you need to do change your life.

E: THANK YOU SO MUCH SIDDHANT FOR SHARING THIS INVALUABLE INFORMATION WITH US!

S: My pleasure, thank you very much!



Elisabeth Granli is a yoga teacher and grew up in Norway, travelled around in Europe working as a model and studying for a few years before moving to Los Angeles in 1994, right before the big earthquake. She however persisted and stayed in LA and started working as a model, in addition to taking acting classes and subsequently doing some plays and movies. She also worked at different tradeshows and marketing even. She then followed her passion and started working successfully, as a photographer including a magazine cover last year of the presidential candidate Marianne Williamson. She started practicing yoga about 10 years ago, and has come to love it deeply and practices 4-5 times a week. In 2012 she travelled to India, for the first time with a group of devotees on a spiritual journey and pilgrimage - to visit the place of Paramhansa Yogananda. She loved every minute. In 2014 she returned back for the 2nd time, with her boyfriend at the time and in 2016 she returned for the 3rd time when she also attended her friend's wedding in Mumbai, and also visited shelters of children who had been rescued from trafficking. Elisabeth also did some volunteer work and helped teach English and used her photography skills to bring awareness to the projects she was engaged in.

In 2018 she went back for the 4th time, and this time she decided she wanted to do a Yoga Teacher training in Rishikesh, in Northern India. Elisabeth states that "I had originally planned to go to a different school, but something there didn't feel quite right, and because of a series of "coincidences" I ended up at Siddhant's School of Yoga", which was absolutely amazing, I couldn't have asked for more. Simple living, discipline, and so much knowledge were imparted on the students. A truly life changing experience".

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