

# Get Real!

*When we use the term “Get real” we use it without thought to its meaning. What is real? How do we get real? Being “real” is about knowing who you are not what other people say you are. Why is it that the reflection of others onto ourselves seems more important than finding out who the real us is? Here are a few ideas and ways of helping to think about trying to be real and to work from a different perspective for a happier, more well-balanced you.*

### 1. INNER THINKING

Everything positive that happens to us tends to come from a start point of us feeling good about ourselves, standing up for ourselves and being happy with who we are and from being in gratitude. Being in our personal power, with firm boundaries in all our relationships, indicates much to others about how we feel about ourselves and how we are then likely to be treated. Learning to quiet the negative mental chit-chat through quiet meditation is an essential tool for life, and quiet reflection.

### 2. LOOK AND FEEL TERRIFIC

Regular yoga practice keeps us in touch with essential mind-body connection. As a rule, six lessons with a qualified yoga teacher can set you on the right path with good practices. Unlike other forms of exercise that focus only on the body, yoga opens our minds to the possibility that we are the master of our future. *Feeling good* is an essential experience for emotional balance and yoga lets you develop this skill for life. Regular yoga helps you *look* terrific too. It will lift, tone, sculpt and strengthen your body and can take years of you with improved posture.

### 3. IDENTIFYING "SELF"

As we develop our senses and

understand how they affect our physiology and wellbeing, we begin the real journey of discovering ourselves. We have lived within our body all our life yet it's often the one relationship we give little credit to. The "Who am I?" Spending time in conscious thought on the breath lets us get to truly know ourselves, not the "I want self" but the "I am" *Self*. When we learn to connect to our true self we are able to express ourselves better in all forms of communication. Our needs and values are clearer with yogic thinking.

### 4. MOVING ON FROM BAD HABITS & ADDICTIONS

Look a little deeper within your life if you want to let go of some bad habits or addictions. If you want to make some changes don't be too hard on yourself, or expect changes to happen quickly. Use small steps with solid intentions, and the practice of switching your power of choice to healthier, supportive choices. If we want to improve our mental state or habitual patterns, we must first look within for the reasons for self-sabotaging behavior – the core of which is likely to be a self-esteem that may need some fine tuning. Our mind is our most powerful tool for changing our reality – a yogic mind provides focus and clarity.



### 5. BEING IN THE NOW

As the mind is tamed so is the body. As we discover our real personality and not the conditioned one we have learned from parent to peer, we realise we can actually exist without others' opinions of ourselves! As a mother, lover, wife or sister we learn more of who we are through others' reflections of us. This may not be the real you! Yoga practice keeps you in the moment, the here and the now... present and attentive!

### 6. REVOLUTIONISE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships change as you change. Maya, a yogic "term" is known as "the veil of illusion"... how we see the world. We often see what we want to see and not what we should see. For ultimately healthy relationships and communication we need to practice the art of living without Maya.

### 7. PRACTISE SELF-LOVE NOT SELF-HATE

How we were raised plays an important part in learned behaviours that you will bring to all relationships. If we learn the art of self-appreciation, without ego, and unconditional self love and appreciation, we are then able to truly love others. If we practise any form of self-hate (additions, judging others, negatively judging ourselves, procrastination – as examples), we limit our unconditional love-ability and the flow of reciprocal love to us.

## 8. "YOGIC" SEX

Learning to be in the moment and using the power of breath for control. Many people wonder what Tantric Sex is. In simple terms, it is about being in the moment with your sexual partner where the "Big O" is not the primary goal. It is learning to experience and prolong the heady intensity of, and with, another, emotionally, and not just physically. Yoga helps to direct the breath as the key to any experience, and this means "noticing it" – whatever IT happens to be.

A good guide is to stay with in your "happy to do it" zone!

## 9. SPLENDID ISOLATION

After a long term relationship has failed it's too easy to jump into another one. Our fear of being alone is so frightening that we would rather fill our empty space with someone else than be alone. "Being Alone" are an interesting two words – "being" means we feel and "alone" means single in my interpretation, and both these words go well together. Alone is not the same as lonely. We learn to be lonely as a child when our feelings are not respected or acknowledged. "Alone" is an experience and a chance for some deep inner work. Looking down on being alone is like stepping out and then back into the bigger picture. It's the hardest thing I have had to endure personally but I do now understand and appreciate the words "Splendid Isolation"!

## 10. THE THREE KEYS TO FREEDOM

I have spent some time this year reading and practising some Zen

Meditation and thoughts on finding peace. I have practised meditation for many years and always felt that something did not feel right with me. I used mantra but never felt in touch with the practice. Reading the work of Cherie Huber (see sidebar) woke me up for ever! I felt inside rather than outside my body. Zen uses the breath to stay in touch with the body and its feelings. Stay with the feeling and do not attach labels to those feelings. "I feel sad because I am lonely" etc.

### About Cheri Huber

Cheri Huber has been a student and teacher of Zen for over 30 years. She is the author of 19 books including *There Is Nothing Wrong With You; The Depression Book* (she has been acknowledged as the USA's foremost expert on depression and spirituality), *When You're Falling, Dive;* and her most recent, *Transform Your Life: A Year of Awareness Practice*. Cheri founded the Palo Alto Zen Center and the Zen Monastery Peace Center in California, and is a member of Social Venture Network, an organisation that combines social responsibility, spirituality, and business. She is founder and director of Living Compassion, a nonprofit organisation dedicated to peace and service.

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The first key I discovered was: Be Attentive! Notice everything and take your time.

Second key: Believe nothing! Experience it for your self!

Third key: Take nothing personally. I really mean nothing!

All that is liberating, my friends! Truly liberating!

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