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Eight limbs: a local yogi questionnaire. Part 4 of many.

Mark Welte, SF Yoga Examiner

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Meditation teacher, breakthrough mentor & business consultant, Beata Piasek

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As one of yoga's eight limbs, meditation is less physical than the asana, but no less demanding. It is in many ways the parametric opposite of what most Americans' experience of yoga is comprised of: a swift succession of poses inducing a sweat to the sounds of sampled beats laid over quasi-Hindi music, with a Pollock-inspired smattering of colors and shapes and materials that make up our mats, props, clothes, and water bottles. From the door, yoga might look like a popular dance class. While Americans adopt other cultures readily, we usually adapt them to our own temperaments. Many traditionalists decry modern yoga as "exercise."

Meditation, on the other hand, is the cessation of all such activity and adaptation. It aims to strip away the frames, ideas, and confusion we carry in our hearts and minds to provide a vivid picture of clarity about life, the moment, and our place in it. Meditation quiets the "monkey mind" (and we all have one), and unites the mind and body temporarily to create a period of homeostasis where we are naturally ourselves and accepting ourselves in the present. In those moments, our brains are cleansed of limitations, and our bodies are liberated from fears. When we emerge from that "cleansed" state, we can more fully steer our lives toward simplicity and a more awesome (in the truest sense of the word) existence that creates greater connections, greater good, and ultimately, greater love in the world.

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Beata Piasek is a Bay Area mentor and consultant who uses various techniques including meditation to help individuals and organizations create deeper and more meaningful connections to one another, to their surroundings, work, and life journeys. As the founder of [Alchemy and Commerce](#), an organization dedicated to personally and professionally transforming people's lives, she works with people individually, in workshops, and with corporate clients. Check out her workshop on November 15 at the [SF Zen Center](#) (more info below).

1. What have you been doing new in your classes?

My recent meditation teachings incorporate a Positive Psychology framework for the life-enhancing practices of gratitude and acceptance. These principles meld perfectly with today's meditation "goals" of decreasing stress and increasing positivity.

2. How is your own yogic path maturing or changing?

My own path has evolved as a natural result of teaching, in both my home sitting practice as well as in my active yoga practice. In my sitting meditation practice, viewing the process from another vantage point has increased my understanding of the duality of our being (in both thought and action). In my active yoga practice, it has allowed me to be more accepting, receptive and appreciative of the gift of "being taught."

3. Tell us what's on your calendar for the rest of 2011.

Fall is a wonderful time to reflect on intentions and ambitions we have not yet fulfilled, with still enough time to make progress. Some of the areas I help my clients with during this transitional time are, pinpointing effective causes for change and constructively challenging themselves, gaining support and accountability to interactively draft and execute their life plan, and nurturing positivity and cultivating happiness daily.

4. Describe something a student taught you recently

A reminder I received recently that I can't seem to get enough of is, "Life is really that simple." I believe we all have that wisdom and understanding on some level, but sometimes we

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have a hard time implementing truly positive change because we can't get past the limitations and barriers we have placed upon ourselves.

5. How are you a different teacher from a year ago?

My practice and teaching is always evolving because my students, clients, life and the world are always evolving. It's a wonderful process.

6. Tell us what you're looking forward to--yoga or not

Right now I'm really looking forward to my next upcoming workshop—[Creating A Sustainable Work-Life Balance](#): An evening exploring how meditation and simple positive psychology principles can make you feel happier, more balanced and less stressed. It's a look at the impact of our daily jobs and how simple modifications of thought and action can directly affect our overall happiness and well-being. The workshop takes place Tuesday, November 15 from 7-9:30pm at the San Francisco Zen Center (more information at alchemyandcommerce.com/worklifebalance).

7. Are you writing anything?

Currently I'm writing research synopses and essays in the ever-expanding area of positivity and meditation study, and their affects on our mind and body.

8. What are you adding to your classes? Taking away?

Due to the various platforms of my teaching (workshops, one-on-one sessions, etc), I have the pleasure of presenting a curriculum that is continuously changing and being modified.


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By [Mark Welte](#)
SF Yoga Examiner

Mark Welte is a yoga-guided writer who has been practicing for over ten years and teaches in the San Francisco area. He aims to spread greater...

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