

Yoga and Gurus

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What is a Guru? Is it important to have a Guru to learn yoga? Are we all Gurus?

Recently, after a conversation with a yoga teacher friend of mine about some aspects of the modern yoga world, I started to reflect upon the importance of the yogi concept of "Guru".

Guru is a very important concept in the yoga tradition, because the ancient yogis used to learn yoga not from books or videos, but through the life-example of their gurus (masters).

Nowadays things seem to be different, nobody wants to have gurus anymore, but, paradoxically, a lot of people seem to be attracted by the idea of becoming a guru (or at least, by the idea of having followers). So, very few people seem to like to show respect for the people that educated them, they rarely admit that they learned something from somebody (unless the person from whom they learned is a mainstream, fashionable "guru", in that case it is fine to put his/her name in the "CV", because it gives good publicity).

This attitude seems to me just another ego-game, and a big trap for our real development. I can think about very few things more dangerous than to believe to be spontaneously enlighten gurus able to solve the problems of everyone on earth.

So, I think it could be healthy in the modern yoga world to return to be a bit more humble, and to show respect for all the people that educate us in our journey toward self-awareness, instead of celebrating ourselves as enlighten beings without a master.

In my life I can say that I have been lucky enough to meet (directly or indirectly) many inspiring teachers, masters, gurus.

and this is my (short) list of them:

- my earthly mother, which (totally unconsciously, like any mother), initiated me to the profound archetype of the Universal Mother.
- the archetype of the Christ, which I guess it was an ineluctable master-figure in my life, considering that I have grown up in a catholic culture
- the archetype of the Buddha, which taught me the importance of discipline, perseverance, and determination.
- Alan Watts, which gave me a deep sense of freedom, and taught me to dare to be brave and independent when I was a young high school student fascinated by the Japanese culture.
- Swami Shivananda, which initiated me to the science of Hatha Yoga through his books and his school's courses.
- Babaji, which taught me Karma Yoga
- my teacher of gymnastic in the high school, which initiated me to the (pop) art of modern yoga
- Acharya Pranaksnanandaji which initiated me to the subtle, fascinating knowledge of traditional Tantra.
- Shree Shree Anandamurtiji which taught me how to meditate and how to use this life in a meaningful way
- Shree Mata Amritanandamayi, which initiated me to Love
- Mick-Sylvian which taught me how to use music as a path of sadhana
- my students, which taught me how to teach
- Shiva, which taught me how to play the Game

I deeply salute all of you, teachers of mine, masters, Gurus.

And you, yogi? What is your list?