

Taking Care of the House of You!

Many people in Barrington take pride in decorating their homes throughout the year. Choosing just the right paint colors, furniture styles, and accent pieces help bring your entire home into focus. You can think of your body like a home – your body is your temple, your “beautiful home.” It requires love and attention, and when you give it these things, you bring your body into focus.

These are the principles behind yoga – helping you give love and attention to your body, which brings your life into focus.

In yoga, the energy that animates all living things is called *prana* (life force). Think of this as the electricity in your house. We connect to this energy through our breath. In the practice of Anusara yoga, we focus on breathing to help change the gage of electrical wiring in your house (your body). With improved wiring, you can run more current through your body without blowing a fuse.

Many people decide to begin a yoga practice to lose weight, decrease back pain (gardener back), improve their health, reduce stress, or even to relieve the pressures of going through divorce. Anusara yoga can help with all these issues.

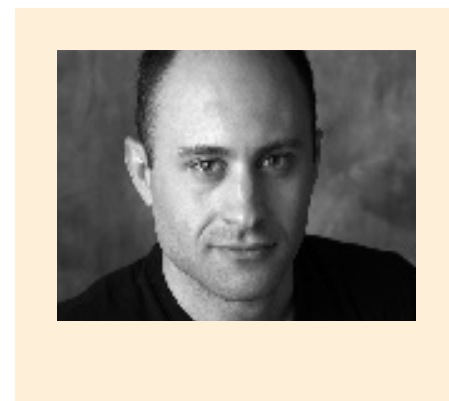
“Asusara” means flowing with grace, going with the flow, following your heart. It is a playful, powerful *hatha* yoga system that combines tantric philosophy with principles of alignment. John Friend founded Anusara yoga in 1997, and since then he has expanded its reach into the U.K., Europe, Japan, and Australia. John Friend was listed as one of the World’s Greatest Yoga Masters in the June 2007 issue of *Vanity Fair*.

He also happens to be my yoga teacher, and he often tells me, “If we don’t breathe fully, we won’t open up as fully. The energy in the breath can be moved into every particle of the body and mind. Pump your breath into every molecule of the body. Make your inner body bright.” It’s kind of like installing solar lights in your garden. Your garden will look and feel better!

I studied three separate yoga systems prior to Anusara that I thought were excellent, but up until working with John Friend, I had never had a yoga teacher who explained so clearly how to cultivate energy and how energy moved in the body. Anusara yoga has advanced my practice the most and at the same time opened my heart. As we open to the expansive energy around us, we experience our own energetic nature, which enables us to offer and receive more love in our lives.

Anusara yoga helps you clean out your emotional garage. The garage, like the basement, accumulates “stuff.” Similarly, many of us are holding on to old thought patterns that are not serving us. Letting go of this “stuff” makes us feel more mentally free and helps us live more fully in the present moment. We all feel better when the garage is clean! Anusara yoga helps you free up and clean out your emotions by aligning the body in various poses. Some believe it is more like a form of dance than exercise or meditation.

Most of you are probably homeowners, and as you know, it’s ten times more work to own a home than to rent one. Taking care of your home and



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garden is a year-round practice, but the work pays off as your home appreciates in value. It’s the same with your body. Like planting bulbs, it may take you six months to see the bloom of results in your yoga practice. But it’s worth the time and effort.

You’ve probably spent some time this winter thinking about your house or garden, and you’ve likely come up with some pet projects you want to tackle this spring. I’d like you do the same thing for your life. What is the pet word or phrase that can be your theme for 2008? Mine is “focused intent.” “Trust” is a great word, as is “play,” “love,” and so on. Let this word or phrase frame your year.

In 2008, take ownership of your health and well-being. You have to be clear what your goals are, so I suggest making a list of goals that will make this your best year ever. My favorite quote for 2008 is “Discipline is remembering what you want!”

Happy spring!

