

Flourish: Abundance in the Third Stage of Life

with Rev. Dr. Laurel Prema Trujillo
and Rev. Nita Shankari Kenyon

“Ayurveda for Healthy Aging”

Saturday, October 12, 2024

9:30 AM–11:30 AM



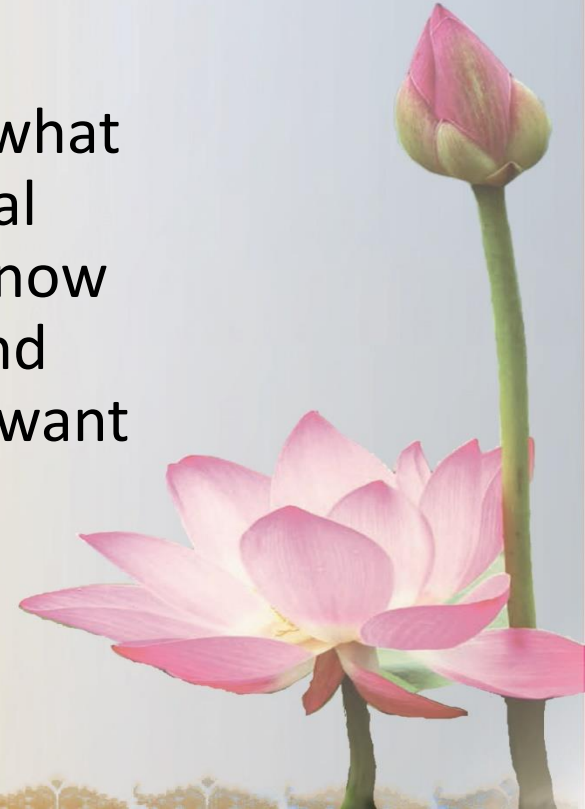
Agenda Overview for Ayurveda Sessions

- Two sessions of Ayurvedic information
- Session 1: Friday Afternoon 1-3 PM
 - Healthspan vs. Lifespan
 - How Ayurveda works
 - 5 Elements and 3 Ayurvedic Doshas
 - Cycles: Daily, Seasonal, Life
- Session 2: Saturday Morning 9:30-11:30 AM
 - Ayurveda 9 sources of premature aging
 - Ayurveda 6 stages of disease
 - Affirmations
- Lots of time for reflection and journaling



Inspiration from Paramahansa Yogananda

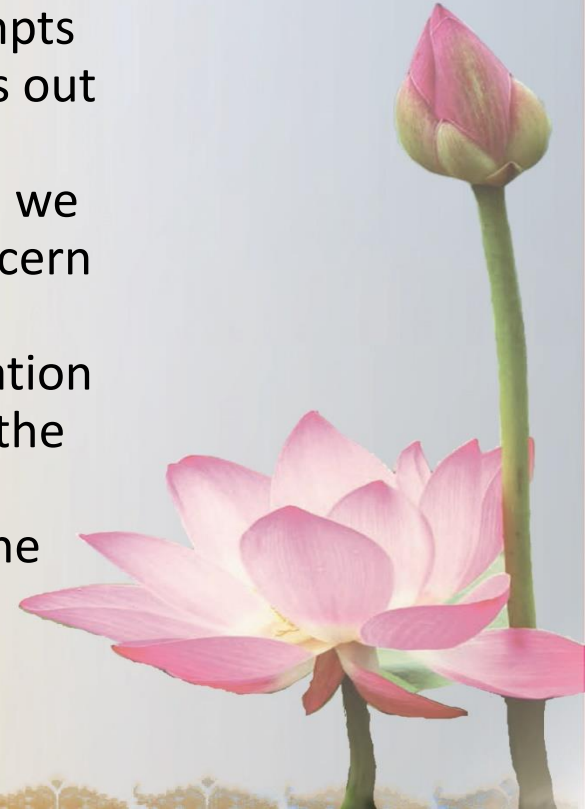
“We are on earth but a little while. The real reason for bring here is very different from what most people imagine. There is a fundamental purpose for our lives. To know it, we must know life’s origin and where it is going, look beyond our short-term goals to what we ultimately want to accomplish, and consider life’s highest potential for development.”



Inspiration from Yogacharya O'Brian

“Every cell of our body is vibrant with divine power and wisdom. Learn to listen to its music; attend to its prompts toward right action. Though the body continually sends out signals and clues for self-care and balanced living, too often we ignore those signals. We neglect to eat when we are hungry or sleep when we are tired. Learning to discern and heed the simple promptings of body wisdom is profoundly more important than accumulating information about healthy living. Study the book of your daily life, the signals of the body, the nudges of your conscience. Witness the way your heart opens into the beauty of the day, given enough space.”

—*Living for the Sake of the Soul*

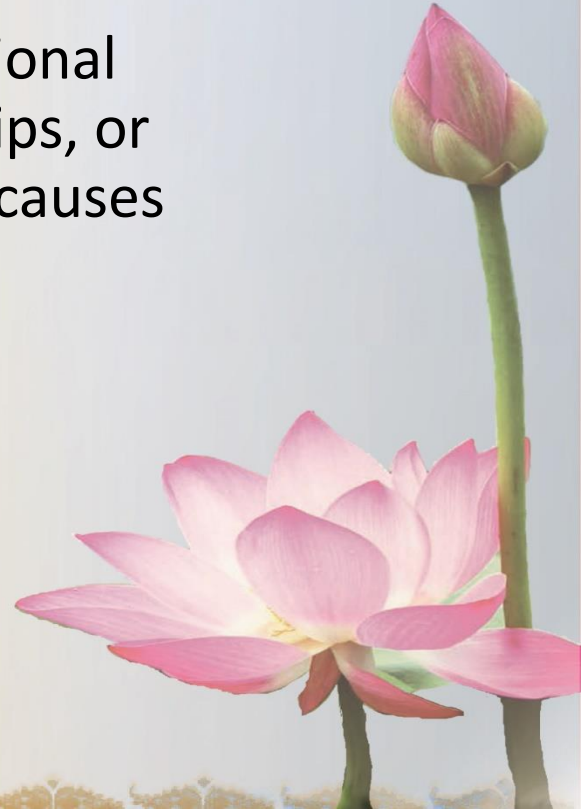


Inspiration from Roy Eugene Davis

“Avoid thinking that your mental states, emotional states, physical condition, personal relationships, or routine circumstances are solely the result of causes over which you have no control.”

—Roy Eugene Davis

An Easy Guide to Ayurveda: The Natural Way to Wholeness.



9 Causes of Premature Aging according to Ayurveda

1. Dietary imbalances
2. Improper lifestyle practices
3. Lack of rest and recuperation
4. Improper sleep patterns
5. Unhealthy habits
6. Excessive exertion
7. Stress
8. Fear, grief, uncertainty, insecurity, anger, greed and jealousy
9. Diseases



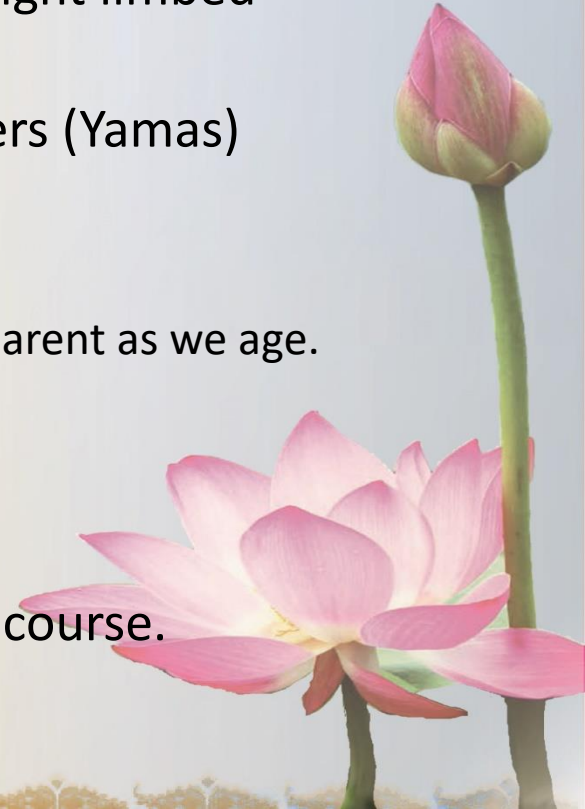
Questions for reflection/Journaling

- When I look at this list, how do I feel? Satisfied, guilty, positive, negative, overwhelmed? Just notice, like we do in meditation, as the witness rather than being drawn into the feelings.
- When I look at this list, at this particular time in my life, do any seem more important to me than others?
- What am I already doing about some of the issues on this list?
- Is there something on this list that appeals to me to try something new?



Tie-ins to the Yamas and Niyamas

- Yamas and Niyamas are the first two limbs of the eight limbed path of yoga
- Are ethical principles about how we deal with others (Yamas) and with ourselves (Niyamas).
- Yama: Brahmacharya: The Right Use of Vital Force
 - We only have so much energy. This becomes more apparent as we age.
 - Very helpful practice in Vanaprastha stage.
- Niyama: Cultivate Contentment
 - Independent of circumstances
- To explore more about them, consider LEW online course.



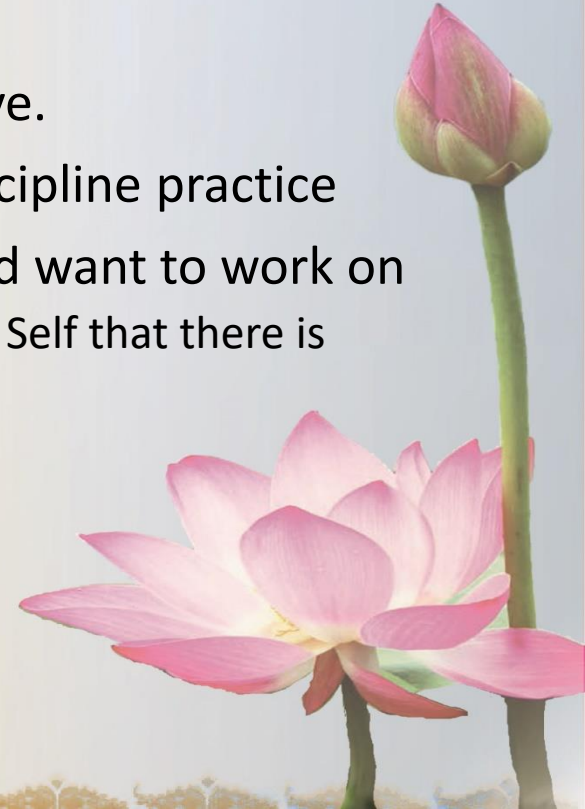
Self-study (Svadhyaya) and Self-discipline (Tapas)

- Two more Niyamas, ethical principles about how we relate to ourselves
- Opportunities abound.
- Very helpful practices in Vanaprastha stage (or any stage)
- May be able to see things more clearly than when you were younger
- Can we meet challenges with curiosity?
- Can we befriend ourselves?



Why Look at Causes of Premature Aging?

- Goal: To look at aging from an Ayurveda perspective.
- Goal: to provide fuel for our self-study and self-discipline practice
- To see if there is anything we are curious about and want to work on
 - A feeling of curiosity can be a message from our higher Self that there is something of value here for us



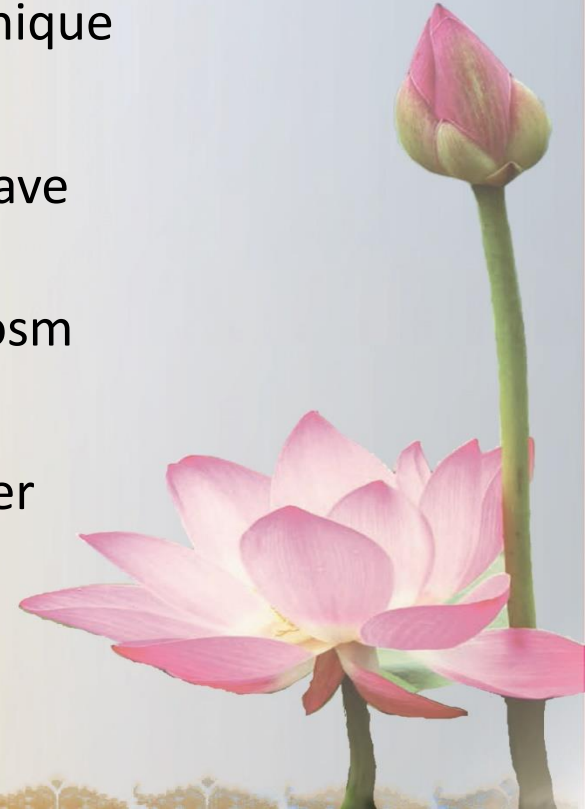
9 Causes of Premature Aging according to Ayurveda

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#1 Dietary Imbalances

- Each person's dosha (mind/body constitution) is unique
- Goal is to stay in balance for your dosha
- When you are in balance, you are healthiest and have the most energy, vitality
- Each of us is a microcosm, affected by the macrocosm
- Like builds like
- Diet is key in Ayurveda: how we transform the outer world into our own tissues and energy
- Can use your diet to balance your dosha



All Foods and Activities Affect Your Dosha Balance

- Extensive lists in Ayurveda texts of the properties of foods
 - Level of detail can be overwhelming
 - Choose one author/book as reference, as not all texts agree
 - Kate O'Donnell's book *The Everyday Ayurveda Cookbook* is an excellent resource
- Activities also affect dosha balance
 - Activity itself
 - Time of day
 - Season



Qualities and their Opposites (10 pairs)

- **Heavy:** milk, dates, sedentary activities
- **Slow/dull:** fried foods, overeating
- **Cool:** cilantro, mint, cucumber, coconut, swimming, relaxing
- **Oily/unctuous:** Humid weather, oils. Olive, coconut, sesame oils; nuts, fish, seeds, olives.
- **Light:** broth, herbal teas, vigorous exercise
- **Sharp/penetrating/quick:** ginger, cayenne, Sudoku, sports
- **Hot:** lemon, pepper, cayenne, honey, garlic, coffee, tomatoes; hot yoga and stressing out
- **Dry:** Can appear in mouth, skin, nose, joints, colon. Corn, large beans such as kidney and garbanzo, barley, rye, caffeine.

#2 Improper Lifestyle Practices

- Improper Lifestyle practices: those that cause or contribute to an imbalance.
 - Doing things at the time of day that exacerbates an imbalance
 - Doing things during a season that exacerbates an imbalance
 - When you have an imbalance, doing things that you know will add to the imbalance
- Look at areas we identified yesterday: timing of exercise and meals.
- If you have identified an imbalance, are any of your activities contributing to that imbalance?
- Notice, from the witness perspective. Be gentle with yourself.

#3 Lack of Rest and Recuperation

- Our culture values doing much more than being
 - Achievements are lauded
 - Sometimes we have internalized this message and feel guilty for resting
- Important reflections for Brahmacharya, Right Use of Vital Force
- Ayurveda views the balance between rest and activity as important in our health.
 - What is that balance like for you?
 - How do you rest?



#4 Improper Sleep Patterns

- Western medicine agrees about importance of sleep in our health
- Improper Sleep Patterns
 - Staying up too late
 - Not resting during Pitta time: 10 PM-2 AM
 - Standardize your sleep schedule regarding when you go to bed and wake up
 - Try to get to sleep by 10 pm



#5 Unhealthy Habits

- Overlap here with Improper Lifestyle Practices
- Alcohol (considered a toxin in Ayurveda)
- Tobacco (aggravates all 3 doshas)
- Sugar: Ayurveda considers white sugar to be toxic



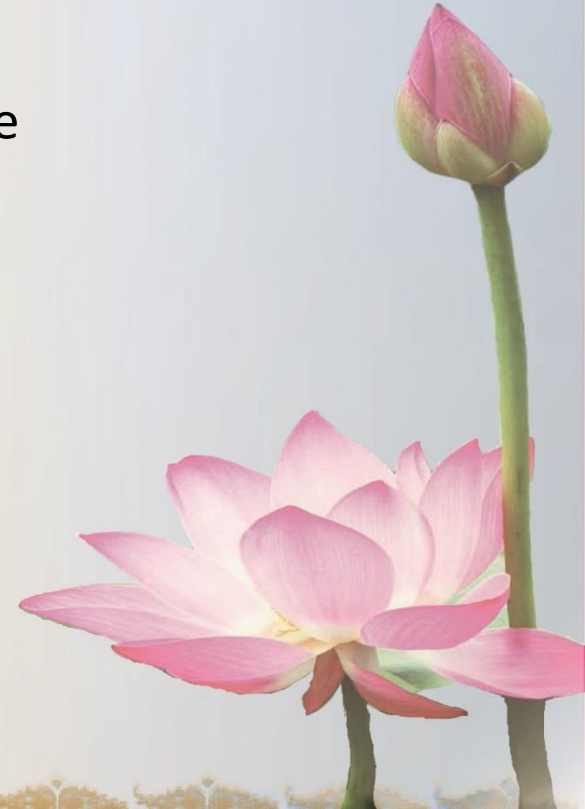
#6 Excessive Exertion

- Overlap with lack of rest and recuperation
- Particularly good for focus on Brahmacharya, Right Use of Vital Force.
- May indicate a Pitta imbalance: tendency to push, push, push.



#7 Stress

- Stress response prepares us to take action
- Western medicine agrees that chronic stress can be damaging to the body
- Yoga offers many stress-relievers
 - Asana practice
 - Pranayama
 - Walking outside in nature
 - Meditation, walking meditation
- Ta'i Chi also beneficial



Dealing with Stress

- Good book on dealing with stress:
The Stress Prescription by Elissa Epel (on The Yoga Hour November 21)
- When you have too many balls in the air, ask yourself:

Can I push the delete button?

- In the long run, how much does this activity matter?
- Who says this is required, and is that really true? Whose voice do I hear?
- What would actually happen if I got out of this situation or responsibility?
Or delegated it?
- Is there a way to taper off slowly?
- What's the worst thing that might happen? Could I live with that?
- And what benefit would there be?

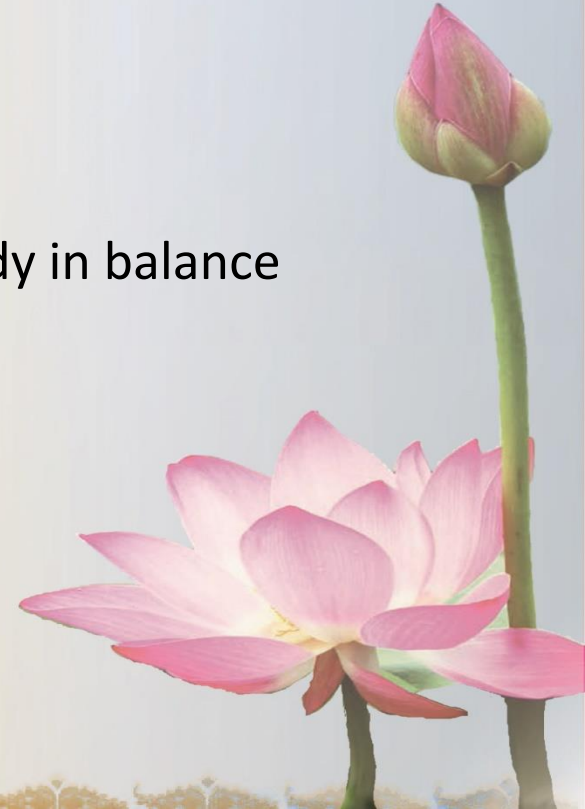
#8 Challenging Emotions

- Fear, grief, uncertainty, insecurity, anger, greed, and jealousy
- Yoga, Ayurveda, and Traditional Chinese Medicine all posit the existence of life energy
 - Prana that runs in nadis in Yoga and Ayurveda
 - Chi runs in meridians in Traditional Chinese Medicine
- I can imagine that getting trapped in these emotions can cause us to burn through vital force
 - Doesn't mean that we shouldn't feel these things.
 - Yoga practice of being a witness to our emotions
 - Feeling our connection to the One during superconscious meditation can help
 - If you feel you are stuck, consider counseling



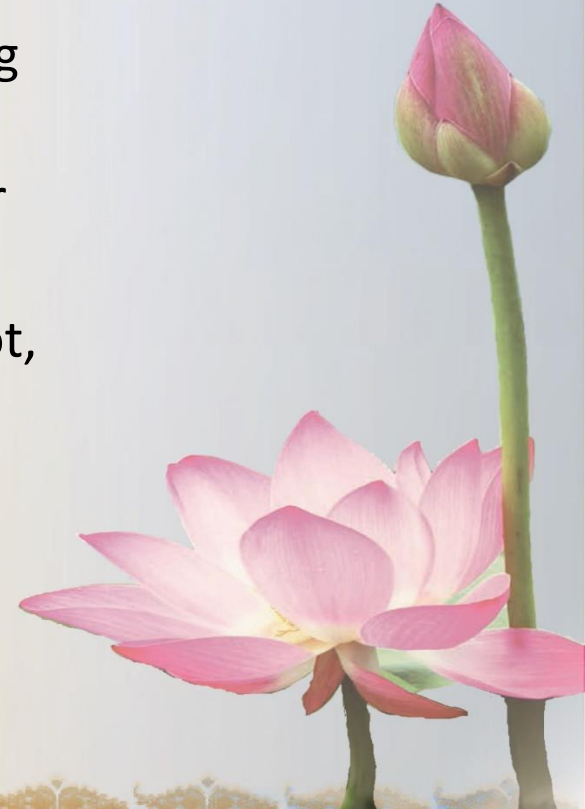
#9 Disease

- Ayurveda lays out 6 stages of disease
 - All are caused by persistent imbalances
 - Pay attention to imbalances and try to correct them
- I believe that if you have disease, keeping your body in balance may help it progress more slowly
 - Not yet based on scientific evidence
 - Health optimists live longer than health pessimists



Other Ideas to Incorporate Into Self-Care Routine

- Get a tongue scraper and scrape tongue in morning before you brush your teeth
- Try Triphala, a mix of 3 herbs that are beneficial for all doshas and help keep GI tract balanced
- Important for Kapha time: Nasal wash with Neti pot, especially during Spring or with Kapha imbalance. Perform weekly or up to daily using warm water (skin temperature) with ½-1 teaspoon salt



Ayurveda for Balance and Longevity

- Choose 1 or 2 things to try. Don't get overwhelmed, remember every small change makes a difference.
- Practice self-study and self-discipline.
- Notice the qualities of your body after you eat, be curious.
- Adopt a daily routine for sleep, exercise and meals.
- Enjoy noticing and working with seasonal changes.
- Keep a steady meditation practice as spiritual awareness is the primary factor.

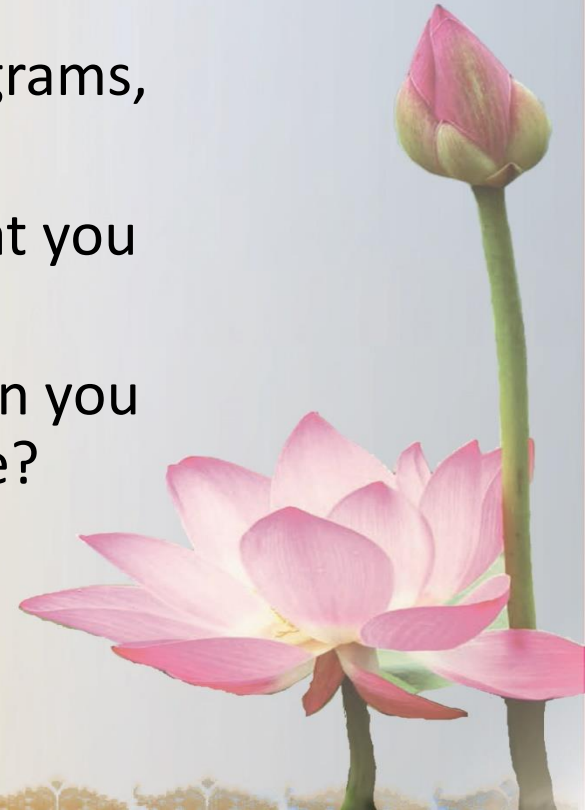
Reflection/Journaling about Ayurveda Self-Care

- Review what you wrote earlier after seeing the list of 9 causes of premature aging. What feelings does the list trigger now? Satisfied, guilty, positive, negative, overwhelmed? (Observe)
- Is there something on this list that most calls to me to make a change?
- What has triggered my curiosity?
- What one or two changes do I want to make in my lifestyle/self-care routine?
- Is there anything that will provide some support for the changes I want to make in my self-care routine?



What's Your Level of Confidence in Making a Change?

- From Chronic Disease Self-Management programs, we know that confidence level is important.
- How confident are you, on a scale of 0-10 that you will be successful in making a change?
- If your confidence level is less than 8, how can you change your plan to increase your confidence?



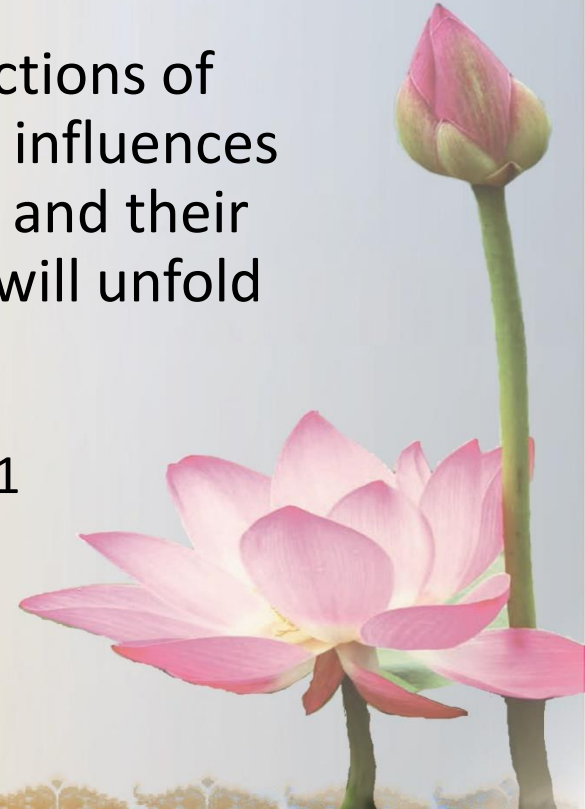
It's time for a break!



Knowledge Will Unfold From Within You

“Allow yourself time to fully understand the actions of the gunas, element influences, and governing influences or doshas. Knowledge of these aspects of life and their roles in regulating mental and physical states will unfold from within your own consciousness.”

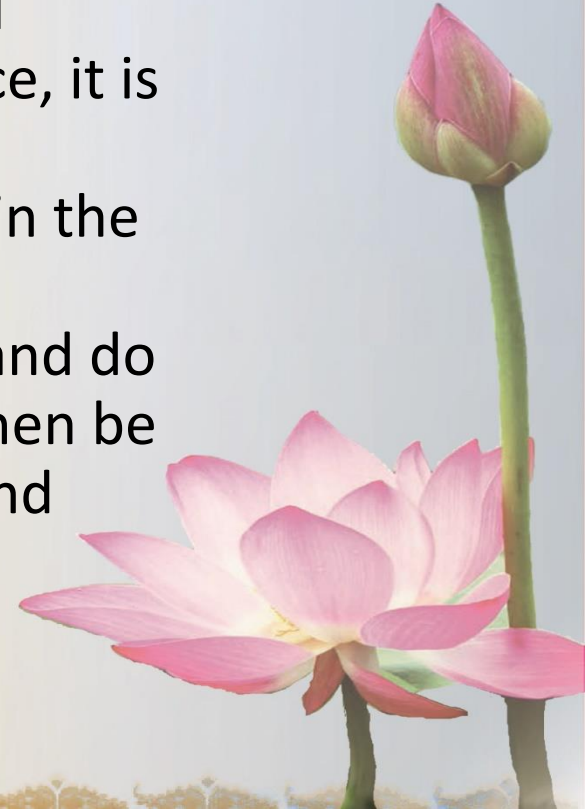
—Roy Eugene Davis, *An Easy Guide to Ayurveda* p. 31



Spiritual Awareness is the Primary Factor

“While learning and applying various practical procedures for mind-body constitution balance, it is important to remember that our spiritual awareness is the primary, determining factor in the process. When spiritually awake, we are spontaneously inclined to live constructively and do what is most beneficial. Should a challenge then be present, we will quickly act to restore order and balance to every aspect of our lives.”

—Roy Eugene Davis, *An Easy Guide to Ayurveda*



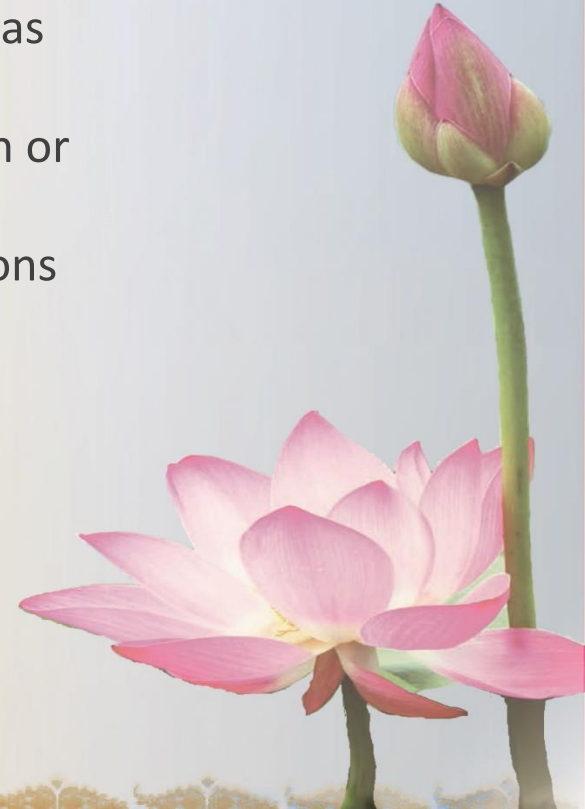
Ayurveda's Samprapti: Six Stages of Disease

- Samprapti means “progression of imbalance”
 - More refined view of disease, tracing it back to early imbalance
 - Keeping in balance is prevention
- Laboratory or Xray abnormalities only occur in stage 5
- Common diagnosis I used to see: “Fatigue and malaise”
 - Lab tests and physical exam usually were normal
 - New understanding: the person had an imbalance in Ayurveda stage 3 or 4
- Stage 3 or 4 imbalances more common as we age
- Ayurveda provides lifestyle guidance that can be helpful



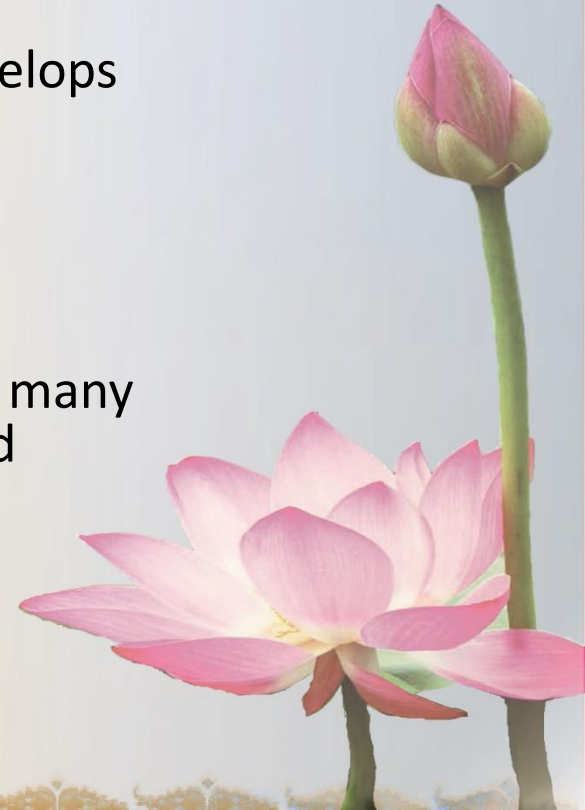
Stage 1: Accumulation of Dosha

- In first 3 stages, the quantity of one or more of the doshas and their qualities increase.
- Dosha increases in its own site like Kapha in the stomach or Vata in the colon.
- Person doesn't feel quite right but no other manifestations
- Symptoms:
 - Vata: bloating
 - Pitta: slight indigestion
 - Kapha: loss of appetite
- Example: A kapha type eats ice cream (cold and heavy), resulting in the feeling of a lump in the stomach



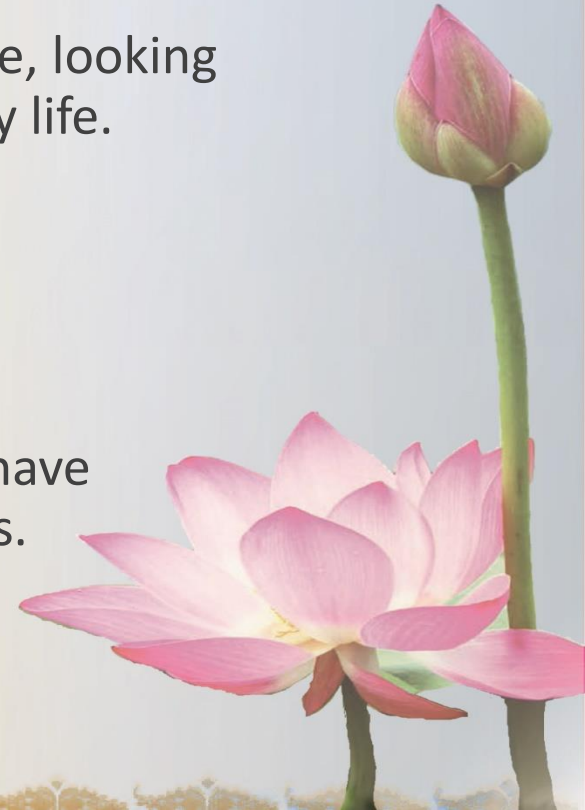
Stage 2: Provocation

- Increase continues, and discomfort in the area develops
- Symptoms:
 - Vata: gas, constipation
 - Pitta: Acid reflux
 - Kapha: heavy stomach, nausea
- Example: A pitta type on a business trip enjoys too many cocktails and rich foods for a week, resulting in acid stomach.



Stage 3: Spread

- The dosha begins to spill out of its site and circulate, looking for a place to reside. Signs now begin to affect daily life.
- Symptoms:
 - Vata: cold hands and feet, very dry skin
 - Pitta: red, irritated skin, feeling overheated
 - Kapha: congestion in the sinuses, throat or lungs.
- A Vata type, deep into a cold dry winter begins to have numbness and lack of circulation to the extremities.



Stage 4: Depositing

- The spreading dosha sets up shop in a weak area (area varies with each individual).
- Symptoms:
 - The qualities of a dosha affect the function of a tissue or organ beyond its own site.
- Example: Accumulated kapha, sticky and heavy, takes over the sinuses resulting in a sinus infection.

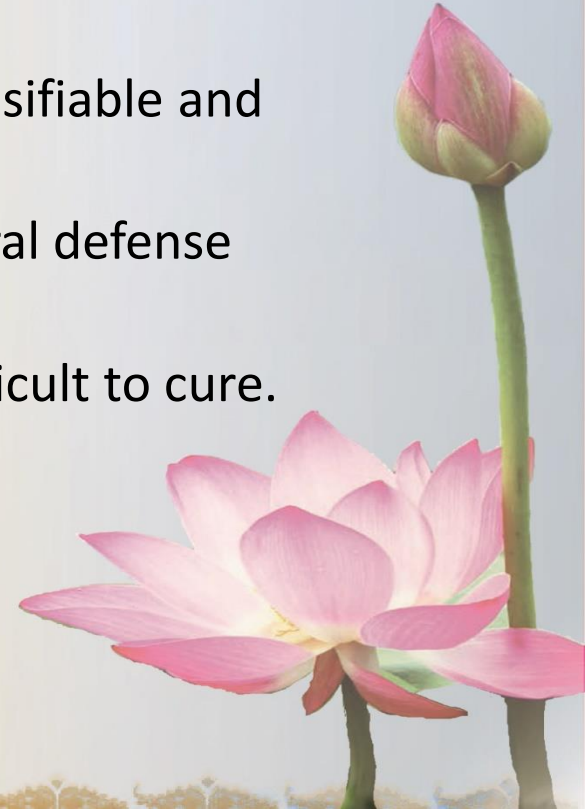


State 5: Manifestation

- The dosha becomes strong enough to take over the weak area and affect its physical structure.
- Symptoms:
 - In this stage, a disorder is fully recognizable in the tissue or organ where dosha was deposited.
- Examples:
 - The dry qualities of vata overwhelm the hip joint, weak from past injuries, and the articular surfaces dry out, break down, and vata deteriorates the joint, resulting in osteoarthritis and need for a hip replacement.
 - An accumulation of the sticky qualities of kapha in an artery eventually blocks the artery and stops the flow of blood, causing a heart attack, stroke, or other problem.

Stage 6: Destruction

- No longer in its early stages, disease becomes classifiable and may be giving rise to other disorders as well.
- Symptoms: The disorder is beyond what the natural defense mechanisms of the body can handle.
- Example: In this stage, diseases are chronic or difficult to cure.

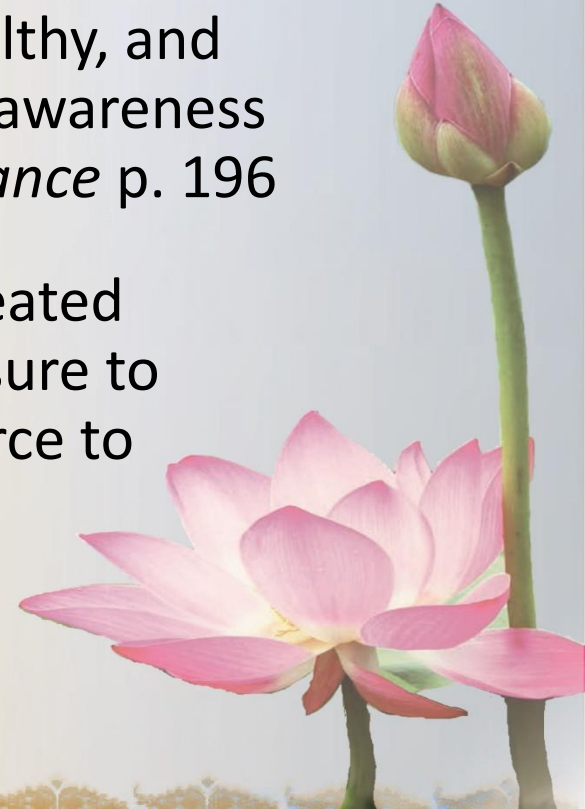


Creating and Using Affirmations

- Affirmations are positive statements that we can repeat at various times during the day
 - Good times: upon awakening; going to sleep; at end of meditation practice
- The process of manifestation begins with our thoughts
- When we vocalize affirmations, we are bringing them to life (sound vibrations are all related to OM, which accompanies all creation)
- It's important to state the affirmation as though it is already true.
 - Affirmations are positive thinking along with spiritual awareness and the intention to draw upon the soul's innate power to create or bring forth whatever is needed.
- Affirmation shifts our consciousness from lack to abundance.

Yogacharya O'Brian's First Affirmation

- “I am now in my right place. I am happy, healthy, and prosperous in all ways. I live in the constant awareness of the presence of Spirit.” —*Jewel of Abundance* p. 196
- Paramahansa Yogananda: “Affirmations repeated understandingly, feelingly, and willingly are sure to move the Omnipresent Cosmic Vibratory Force to render aid in your difficulty.”



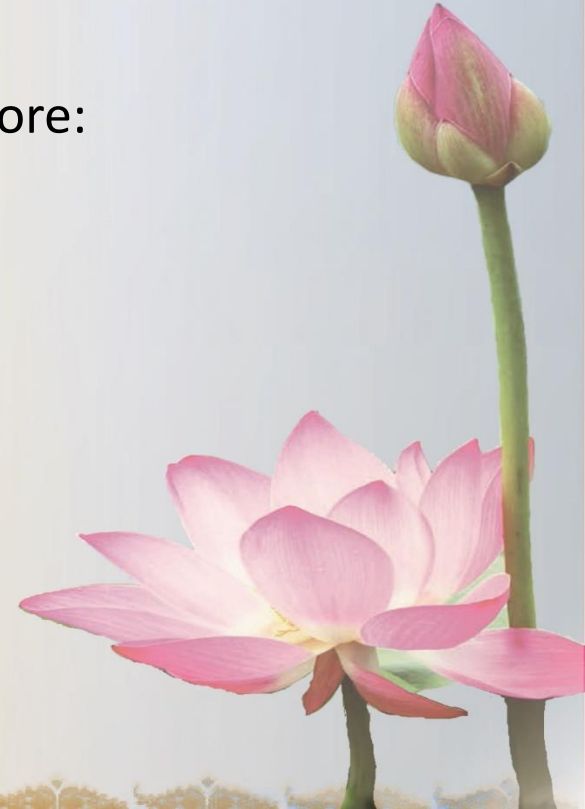
Examples of Affirmations

- “An enlivening power is nurturing the Universe, and we (I) can learn to cooperate with it.” –Roy Eugene Davis
- Affirmations about health:
 - My body is strong and healthy. I have lots of energy.
 - I am whole and complete.
 - All of my body systems are working in harmony.
 - My exhaling breath allows me to to release stress and tension from my entire being.
- Affirmations about new habits:
 - I can't wait to get out and exercise.
 - My muscles and cells are longing to get out and start moving.
 - My soul longs to meditate this morning/evening.
 - On awakening: I am awake and ready!
 - For relationships: I take the time and make the effort to listen and understand.



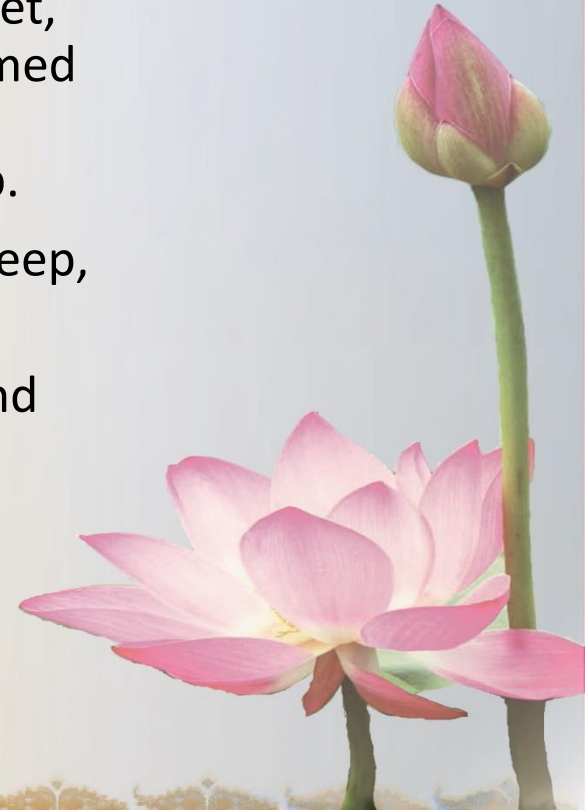
What affirmation will help you now?

- Given the changes you want to make in your daily routine, or an area of focus you'd like to explore more:
- What affirmation will be helpful in bringing these changes to your life?
 - Affirmations that begin with "I am..." declare eternal existence and Divine potential
- Write down at least one affirmation.
- Is it written in a positive voice, as though it is already true?



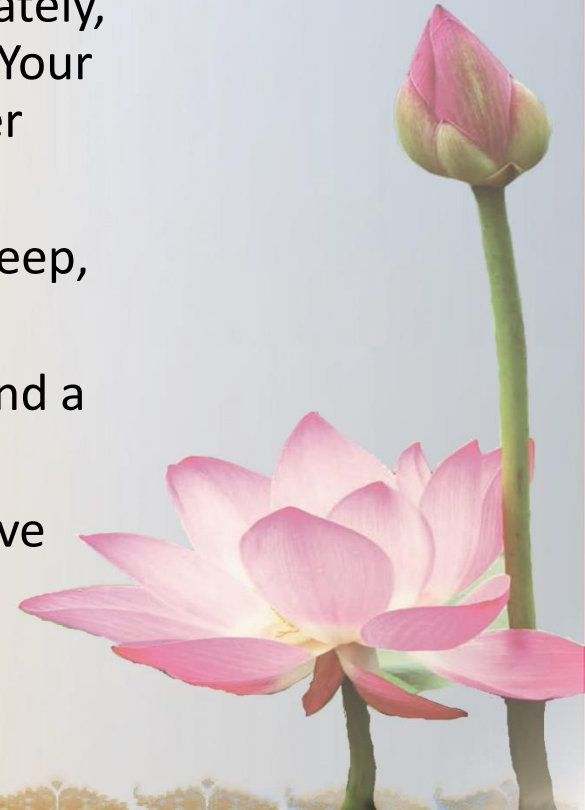
Case Study 1

- It's winter. You feel cold, especially your hands and feet, and you've been feeling more anxious and overwhelmed than usual. You have been having more gas and constipation than usual, and your asthma is acting up.
- You used to have set times for meals, exercise, and sleep, but it seems like you are too busy lately.
- You have been picking up a salad from Trader Joe's and having that for lunch and sometimes for dinner.
- You love to attend a Vinyasa flow class on your way home from work at 5 PM.
- What can you do to get back in balance?



Case Study 2

- It's summertime. You have been working extra hard lately, going in early and not getting home until after 7 pm. Your heartburn is acting up and you blew up at a co-worker today after they made a minor error.
- You used to have set times for meals, exercise, and sleep, but it seems like you are too busy lately.
- The closest places to eat lunch are a Mexican place and a Thai place, and you have been craving spicy food.
- You don't have time to exercise after work, so you have been going to a hot yoga class on your lunch break.
- What can you do to get back in balance?



Case Study 3

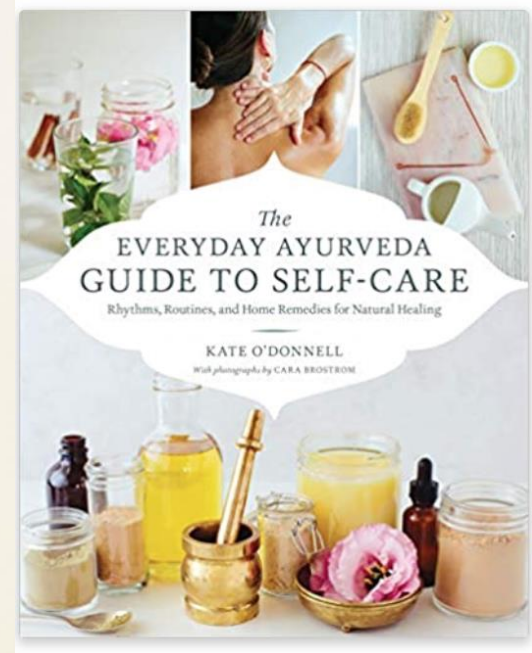
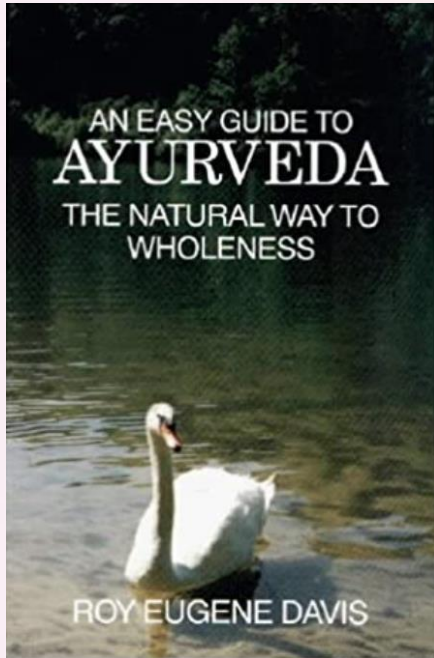
- It's spring. You have been feeling very low energy and have been watching TV more than usual. You have gained about 5 pounds over the last few weeks and notice that your ankles are puffy. Your allergies have really been acting up and your sinuses are congested. You've been feeling a bit down and sad.
- You used to have set times for meals, exercise, and sleep, but it seems like lately you haven't had the time.
- You have been stopping at a drive through for French fries and an ice-cold soft drink on your way home, and you've been having ice cream right before bed.
- You have been attending a yin yoga class.
- What can you do to get back in balance?

Final Thoughts

- You may have more control than you think.
- Knowledge unfolds from within us, so keep a steady meditation practice.
- Spiritual awareness is the primary factor.
- Importance of Self-study
- Importance of joyful Self-discipline
- Questions??



Recommended References



Or Kate O'Donnell, *The Everyday Ayurveda Cookbook*