

Eight Movements Teacher Training

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by Carlos Mena and Vicky Amarillo

Around twenty-five people participated in an **Eight Movements of Yantra Yoga Teacher Training** given by Fabio Andrico from November 16th– 25th, 2018 at Dzamling Gar. The course was aimed to train qualified instructors to teach *Lungsang – Purifying the Prana, Lung Ro Salwa – Exhaling the Stale Air and Sabmo Jorwa Zhiden or the Pranayama of The Four Profound Application* (with open hold only) openly.

Rinpoche has given Fabio permission to prepare instructors, in three different formats, according to the student's circumstances. The training involved learning not only the main practices mentioned

above, but also warm-ups specific to each one of the Eight Movements and various exercises to improve the different aspects of our breathing in a smooth and harmonious way.



The principles of this ancient yoga tradition have come to us through an uninterrupted lineage of adepts and masters. The tantra *Nyida Khajor – The Union of the Sun and Moon Yantra*, which is the Yantra Yoga root text written by Vairochana, is connected to the Dzogchen teachings. The Sanskrit term yoga means “union”, however the Tibetan translation “naljor” helps to give us a more precise understanding; naljor means to remain in the real condition as it is. So, we understand Yoga as an experience of our condition, where we embody what we are doing, and we experience movement in that dimension – the state of being. So this practice has its transmission and its final goal is to discover our true condition.

During the course Fabio shared that he once asked Rinpoche what the real meaning of yoga is. His response was that yoga is conservation of energy. Through the integration of body, voice and mind, we are able to expend less effort in all our activities.

Over the first few days, Fabio gave an in-depth introduction about the origin and key points of these teachings from a carefully thought out secular approach. Working with the transmission is something concrete which is explained in detail by Rinpoche in the Teachers’ Training booklet (SS Series of Teachings 187E). To be an instructor is not only related to mastering the practice; you

are teaching because you want to help. An instructor should remember that each individual who comes to these classes has their own abilities and weak points, try to be aware of them and the reasons of why they are coming to learn. For example, some people want to take an open course to deal with a physical ailment, someone else might take it to learn how to concentrate or relax, or to become more energetic, etc.



Communication was a key aspect of this training. There are no specific guidelines of how to work with those that don't have transmission, but we work with the circumstances and apply common sense in order to benefit them. We want to be able to communicate at everyone's level, to have the capacity to allow everybody to understand, not in an intellectual way but in an experiential way. People that come to the classes are looking for



something. When they find an aspect that helps them, the practice becomes something concrete for them, and that can be adopted into their lives. When teaching an open course, we should keep in mind the audience, by using clear language that is not charged with spiritual jargon that is hard to understand. We should present the information so that someone without a background in yoga or Buddhism, feels they can participate, and get something out of it that will be useful in their daily life. An example of communicating to a wider audience is *The Tibetan Yoga of Movement*, which was meticulously developed with these considerations in mind.

These ten days were an immersion into deepening our understanding and experience of the

dimension of the breath. We can observe if there is tension in our body, if the movement or the breath doesn't flow. It is easier to observe when some aspect of our condition is overcome by stress, other emotions are more subtle, but they condition our breath and the other way around is also true.

The Breath is the bridge that helps unify body, voice and mind. We work with the dimension of the body, the movement shapes the breath, and helps us to integrate the dimension of the energy, prana – the base to work with the mind. We cannot see energy but somehow it is easier to bring awareness to feel the dimension of the energy, but the mind is a more subtle realm; and *not being distracted* is the game changer. Being present and aware allows us to work with the mind, and through working with the mind we can access our natural condition.





There is a Tibetan word *bag chags* for habitual tendencies, one way to understand it would be through viewing these as mental habits, related to the origin of emotional patterns that condition our breathing. And the reverse is also true, we purify the traces by purifying the karmic prana through working with our breath, which is interconnected with the emotions that are conditioned by our potential inclinations. This allows us to refresh and let go of mental states.

So now and then take a deep breath. Yantra Yoga works with harmony as the seed of the quality of the breath. The warm up exercises involved training and becoming aware of the different aspects of the complete breathing, with diaphragm or abdominal breathing, intercostal muscles and upper chest muscles, clavicular breathing, pelvic diaphragm breathing, dorsal breathing. These exercises helped us develop full and complete breathing in an integrated way, to breathe with less effort and less mechanically. This is fully explained in the book *Breathe as You Are*. Fabio wrote it to expound the micro details of the three dimensional approach of our breathing.

Little tricks were taught to bring awareness, to remind the mind to be present in the breathing, to be aware of the necessity of being aware, to coordinate the energy. In Yantra Yoga we let the body look for the balance to settle on, every session is slightly different, we come to the practice in different circumstances, sometimes there are variations needed – we never step in the same river twice. When you want to know if you did it well, you check the breathing, but when people don't understand the essence of the practice they tend to focus on copying the physical details. We embody the importance of why fluid breathing should be free of any control except the position. Yantra Yoga's golden rule is not force anything.



When Fabio introduced the rhythmic breathing he explained that all of our dimension is rhythm, from the belly of the mother, the rhythm of the heartbeats, circadian rhythms. All the movements were designed around the holds. Inside the dimension of the breathing, the holding is the deepest level of cellular breathing. and it is the movement that makes it happen, that shapes the breathing into the holding. The Health benefit of each movement is explained in detail in the book *Healing with Yantra Yoga* written by Elio Guarisco and Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo.

Those who went through the supervision process, and received Fabio's final approval to give classes, left with the promise to be back in two years, to re-check that no mutations have developed in the teachings. Participating in the course doesn't imply that you need to go through the supervision, one can also participate to deepen the practice. There may be more opportunities in the future. In Dzamling Gar there is a Harmonious Breathing Teacher Training later in 2019.