

RETURN TO VAIDYGRAMA, Ayurveda Healing Village December 2016

Sunday, January 1st, 2017

Overheard today from a new arrival from north India as she walked down the entrance to Vaidyagrama for the first time, "Oh, my God. This is Heaven!", she exclaimed spontaneously, experiencing the reality of this unique manifestation of the adage to 'live well'. The term 'organic life' comes to mind, though truly I feel it's very difficult to put into words, videos, website or photos.

Today our group co-created a New Year's Day luncheon, for coming together in the spirit of 'sankalpa' or setting of supported intentions for the year ahead. Each of us has a unique perception of our spiritual needs for the near future and each of us committed to supporting the others in the realization of our intentions, if obstacles come. Empowerment! What a marvelous note to begin this year, knowing this world is so much in need of Ayurveda, music, devotion, knowledge, teamwork, sustainability, simplicity and interconnectedness of higher consciousness.

Monday, January 9, 2017

Several days have gone by with no blog entries because I've been tired with this phase of treatment, and therefore keeping more introversion. Also, a scapular spasm developed over a few days, as my body 'softened' in preparation for deeper cleansing. Yesterday, I was deemed 'ready' for bitter ghee treatment, now on its second day of an increasing protocol, and now the scapular pain is past.

Early morning about sunrise, the doctor takes me to the healing room to sit directly in front of the Dhanvantari murthi (effigy of the God of healing in traditional Ayurveda) for specific classical prayers chanted by the doctor to empower the substances, the patient and all circumstances to converge for the well-being meant as the outcome, not only for the patient, but for all of Nature.

To know these verses have been chanted for thousands of years in the same way according to recorded medical scriptures, fills me with confidence and conviction. Experiencing is believing!

Such a holistic approach is only found in Ayurveda, I've found over many years of searching. No side-effects, strain or adverse reactions are among the goals of the thoughtful, professional management of each individual's elements (ratios of ether, air, fire, water and earth as ever-shifting, cyclical relationships) and psycho-spiritual qualities (clarity/balance of 'satva guna', hyperactivity of 'rajas guna' and hypo-activity of 'tamas guna'). Each of our group members is following an entirely unique program.

We've been delighting in sharing our personal experiences in this process of scientific rejuvenation. Today is our weekly luncheon get-together to check in together, a process each one looks forward to, at this mid-point of our program here in TamilNadu. The first two weeks seemed to unfold rather slowly, however this last week has gone by in a blink, it seems! Each one is becoming so aware of subtle mind/body functions that unconsciously became causative to symptoms.

Wednesday, January 18, 2017

Our group is experiencing the ups and downs of this ancient Ayurveda scientific cleansing process, each in our own way. Sometimes it's delightful, sometimes not. Abdominal cramps, headaches, swellings, anxiety, heartburn, spasm and other undesirable states of being can arise as reverberations from past disturbances, now under a reformation process. Developing equanimity to see these events as phases of life and opportunities for choosing Satva (mental equanimity) can bring more forbearance and contentment into the higher consciousness. All processes here are to support purification of body, mind and soul and the physicians act to minimize discomforts while achieving cellular cleansing.

As each cell has functional mind and intelligence according to Ayurveda, and each cell has memory, the cellular purification process also purifies mind and memory. Unresolved cellular memory can surprise us when we least expect it, that past experiences, especially traumas, which can be difficult to remember and 'digest' at a prior time, can become suppressed, and appear at this much later, but safe time of resolution and healing.

The art of the physician is to maintain physical focus, knowing that the now more matured consciousness can spontaneously resolve its own cellular impurities, moving us toward liberation from suffering and delusion. Truth, compassion, light, evolution and forgiveness of all wrongs, real and imagined, prevail in the microcosm, as in the macrocosm. This Ayurveda is an ancient, sophisticated, insightful and effective holistic science, prepared in the heavens before the advent of humanity, according to Charaka, one of the principal medical scriptures of Ayurveda science.

Sunday, January 22, 2017

Now our group is about five weeks along our six-week program. We're each winding down with our 'cleansing' karmas and preparing for the integration phase, here called 'Dina Charya', emphasizing daily self-care of the sense organs through morning routines for individual health optimization. My final 'basti' (enema therapy – is this too much information?) is this morning, to be followed by rest, but not daytime sleeping, which disturbs all bio-rhythms, especially digestive, neuro-transmitter and hormonal functions. All features of my health profile are notably improved, as for each and all of us.

Basti is one of the five (pancha) actions (karmas) of cleansing and rejuvenation and is considered to be an 'operation', therefore has pre- and post-operative requirements. The pre-operative measures or 'purva' karmas were mentioned earlier in this blog, and another of the five karmas, 'virechana' or purgation therapy were carefully calibrated to prepare my body for removing Vata dosha, the usual mechanism of human imbalance. Basti is the scientific drawing of undue Vata from various spaces in the cranium, torso, nervous systems and joints, etc. into the colon where its qualities can be eliminated downward through natural peristalsis, thus re-establishing integrity of the pranic channel systems.

In only 8 days, most of my group is planning to depart. I plan to depart last after helping to ensure smooth circumstances for participants heading 'home', soon to be in mostly cold climes. Adjustments to restore our daily routines can be challenged by the sheer momentum of our prior living habits and assumptions, though our group support system is already in place to help maintain gains made here.

Change is considered to bring 'danger' in Vedic thinking, as in a crossroads that requires more cautious attention to awareness, lest stress unduly influence the mind. Time is traveling quickly these days of completing our treatments on Friday and planning a weekend of rest and

shopping, with additional activities such as our Saturday evening community dinner and a tour of the Vaidyagrama grounds especially for our group to finally see beyond the thresholds of our hospital area confines. Saturday also I've been asked to give a short class on '**Simple Ayurveda Diagnostics Through Face and Tongue Reading**' for the patient community here. Should be informative!

Wednesday, January 25, 2017

Yesterday's treatment of 'Dina Charya' turned out to be a setback for me – too early for my body to digest the oil used for massage therapy, so my skin became quite itchy. Now I'm back to opening of the channels with pouring freshly cooked decoction of multiple herbs to help my body continue to cleanse from within. Along with the 6am and 6pm herbs for general detoxification and doshic balancing, I also am back to the bedtime bitter ghee, which helps ensure complete evacuation from the large intestine.

Now our group members' minds are beginning to focus on co-creating a smooth departure from India, with all wishes fulfilled, as all except me plan to return west, mostly for home in a few days. Then will begin the challenges of being alone in our personal worlds to guard and maintain the good habits now established with the hospital schedule, freshly-cooked digestible food, regular treatments, daily bookends of sadhana and worship at sunrise and sunset, and the wonderful support systems enjoyed here. The staff is always cheerful and helpful. Soon, we'll plant our departure trees!

Like last year, I'm planning 3 weeks of complete rest and mostly silence to help integrate and establish my health gains, while working on the Turiya Therapy manuscript at a beach resort in Kerala where fresh, local, digestible, vegetarian food is the norm. I plan to arrive there a week tomorrow, very probably missing my wonderful daily treatments here at Vaidyagrama.

Friday, January 27, 2017

Today was our final day of treatments with our amazing therapist team! 41 days of daily treatments brought the intended results all right – each member is so rejuvenated and bright! So many health conditions expressed on arrival are now history, while the most chronic complaints have been much mitigated. We've enjoyed such skillful medical management day-to-day, now accumulated to bring each participant more benefit than they ever expected.

This afternoon was also an amazing sign from Nature – a lovely warm rain that blessed this parched land with a blessing of shower, refreshment and renewal. Considering the recent global-warming related drought, this rain seemed to acknowledge and celebrate a type of recognition of humanity's dependence on the benedictions of grace from above and below. Such a friendly rain of large drops. It was the most auspicious opportunity for planting our departure trees, so their roots become well-watered and strong for their life ahead, making a small contribution to this lovely botanical garden.

Saturday, January 28, 2017

Today is the day for preparing our check-out medicines and related formalities. Each participant goes home with 3 months of take-home substances for maintaining the gains made here, provided of course, we maintain the critical digestible food program.

Today also, I've been requested to offer the 'satsang' this afternoon, on the topic of "**Self-Assessment of the Face and Tongue**" to share secrets of facial diagnostics learned from my amazing mentor and teacher, Vaidya Vasant D. Lad with the entire patient community. During the talk, the rain began, bringing a beautiful sign of auspiciousness to this region of drought at

the very unfolding of the topic! This is the second rain event in two days. Who can explain the ways of the Divine? We can only be in awe, wonder and gratitude for her goodness.

This evening is our final community dinner with new guests and patients. Our group has been rehearsing a popular and sweet Malayalam song to sing with some staff, many of whom are from Kerala and whose mother tongue is Malayalam. We are also preparing to sing John Lennon's 'Imagine' as our grand finale. Our group contains several musical members who have found a new purification of vocal expression in this cleansing process.

Sunday, January 29, 2017

Today is planned for shopping in Coimbatore with most of our group this afternoon, following the complicated check-out for the three leaving tomorrow morning! It was so fun to keep to our schedule while touching down at FabIndia and other outlets for gifts to bring home, kurtas and anklets! Shopping alone is such a drudgery to me usually, but we had a truly fine time helping each other find what we were each looking for and make sure we didn't linger too long in any one spot!

The ladies of our group had a wonderful time seeing the surrounding countryside, the spectacular western ghats and the farming area that stretches all the way to the outskirts of Coimbatore. Temples everywhere, motorcycles and families out for Sunday together, farmers going about their perpetual tasks in the increasingly hot weather. A couple of warm rain showers have come and gone, making the soil and leaves so happy!

Monday, January 30, 2017

Such a poignant day of departures homeward – only two of us remaining now, and how empty it feels to say good bye following this shared experience of humility and realization. Fatigue is now setting in, after attending to many details of a safe and secure departure from India. Time to rest and integrate! Thank goodness I've planned for beachside rest in Kerala before heading back to Canada March 2nd.