



ASHTANGA YOGA: A PERSONAL JOURNEY AND DISCOVERIES

There are certain connections in life that feel older than we know, threads woven long before we ever recognised them. My relationship with Ashtanga yoga is one of those connections. It feels as though it came from a previous life, patiently waiting for me to remember it.

I first fell in love with Ashtanga twenty three years ago. After attending my very first yoga class, without knowing anything about what yoga should feel like, I left the studio and walked straight into a bookshop. I browsed through countless yoga books, yet my heart chose just one, an Ashtanga yoga book. I took it home, held it close, and without realising it, stepped into a lifelong journey.

At that time, my son was only six months old, so my days began early. Every morning at 5am, while the world was still asleep, I unrolled my mat and began my practice. Those dawn practices felt like stepping into a new world, untouched by noise or distraction. Moving through the sequence, I felt as though I was flying, just like a bird.

As the years unfolded, my practice deepened and evolved. Today, it has become a continuous journey inward, toward self discovery. Each day on the mat is a new beginning, an opportunity to dive deeper and to learn more, and often, new lessons arrive through the asanas I least expect.

There's something truly magical in Ashtanga yoga that I've never found in any other style. I love the structure and the order, I find it incredibly exciting because, although the sequence stays the same, the experience never does. The practice gives you exactly what you need, not what you want. It evolves with you. It reveals what is buried inside you and mirrors your fears and struggles back to you.

Over time, your practice becomes your teacher. It guides you toward your inner strength, and with every unlocked asana, you rise to the next level, to discover more, to learn more, and to free yourself more. Each time you practice, you meet yourself with courage and grace.

Perhaps the most precious truth Ashtanga reveals is that happiness is already within you. The moments you spend with yourself, flowing on the mat, are a continuous return to this truth. Ashtanga teaches that happiness arises when you begin to master your mind. Those moments when you are in deep meditation, or when you are flowing and deeply connected to the breath and the asana, while the mind is quiet, are moments of pure bliss.

Through practice, you also learn patience and discipline. What you cultivate on the mat begins to shape your daily life, your experiences, connections, and decisions. Your life starts to take a new form. Your thoughts become more organised, your decisions more direct and clear. Your choices become focused, without hesitation or confusion. Slowly, you begin to see more clearly.

Practicing from the source has completely changed my perspective and revealed the simple yet powerful truth behind this lineage.

Around this time two years ago, on a taxi ride from Gokulam to Bangalore Airport, I reflected on my experience in Mysore, India. Practicing under Sharath Jois' guidance had been pure bliss, his presence a light that goes straight to your heart and quietly shows you the way.

Living the simple life of a yogi in India shifted something inside me forever. I realised that the modesty, devotion, and quiet discipline of Indian culture mirror the essence of Ashtanga yoga. The humility and simplicity there carry a softness that lifts weight from the heart, something we often miss in the West.

This month, let your practice guide you through the final page of this year. Reflect on the challenges, the growth, and the lessons, and carry only what nourishes your heart into the new year. Be free to explore, to evolve, and to welcome new beginnings, both on and off the mat. Allow your practice to be the light that shows you the path to happiness.