

Features

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Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev's meditation and breathing techniques make his course a favorite.

Yoga master brings his class to Metro Detroit

By Barbara Hoover
The Detroit News

When Suma Shewale signed up for a weeklong yoga course given by an Indian guru last spring, she was intrigued but skeptical.

"It was one week of my time and \$200, but I thought it might be worth it if I got results," says Shewale, who lives in Flint, where the course was given. "The first two days, I was not impressed. I thought this is nothing great. But by the end of day two or three, it began to make a difference."

What began to have impact were the meditation and breathing techniques taught by Indian yoga master Sadhguru Jaggi

Yoga course

'The Art of Effortless Living'
■ Introductory lecture

2-4 p.m. Sat. Sokol Cultural Center.
23600 W. Warren, Dearborn Heights.
Admission: Free.

■ Seven-day course
6-9:15 p.m. weekdays, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. weekend.

April 25-May 1, Sokol Center.
Admission: \$200.

For information, call Dr. Kalpana Rajdev, (248) 478-4786 or Kathleen Wilk, (313) 882-5683, or go to www.ishafoundation.org.

Vasudev, who will give a free talk about the method from 2-4 p.m. Saturday at the Sokol Cultural Center in Dearborn Heights and offer a weeklong class, "The Art of Effortless Living," April 25-May 1 at the Sokol Center.

Unlike yoga devotee Madonna, students won't be doing headstands or twisting their limbs like pretzels — the physical yoga most familiar to Americans. Instead, Vasudev's approach goes to what he says is the heart of this

ancient practice: spiritual transformation.

The meditation and breathing techniques aim to help students quiet mental chatter, harness their energies and begin to "transcend the ego," which Vasudev, in a video about the course, says is the path to happiness and peace of mind.

In an article in *Holistic Journal*, he said: "Whether it is this religion or that religion or Tao or Zen or yoga, whatever — it all comes from the same source of an inner experience. ... In a way, I belong to all traditions, while I don't belong to any ..."

The program does require a serious commitment to be effective, however, says Shewale. To make what they learn a longterm habit, students are asked to meditate for an hour every morning and evening for 40 days after the course ends.

"Now I meditate and do breathing techniques for 45 minutes every morning and for 15 minutes in the evening," says Shewale. "It's very energizing, and makes me calm and peaceful and stress-free, and this lasts the whole day. It frees the mind."

Dr. Kalpana Rajdev of Farmington Hills, who took the course last year, has an even shorter routine, meditating for 15 minutes at noon and again at night.

"It has improved my concentration and memory tremendously," says Rajdev, who says she can easily recall details about the 250 patients she tends at Henry Ford Continuing Care centers in Roseville and Harper Woods. "Work has become a breeze."

The course is also empowering, says Shewale. After taking it, she quit her job doing marketing for a physical-therapy clinic and wrote a book of fiction.

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