

Yoga and Ashram Life

A Transformative Experience

Divya

Rocklyn Yoga Ashram is a place of inspiration, sharing and hope. It is a place where people from all walks of life meet, come together and experience a way of life - the yogic life - that has the infinite potential to transform the personality.

I first arrived at the ashram in the spring of 2013, where I was a part of Yoga and Ashram Life for nine months. During my stay, I took part in courses such as Living Consciously and Yoga & Ashram Life for Self-Transformation. These courses, which combined daily yogic discussions along with the practice of yogic concepts, effectively guided and supported my stay at the ashram. These courses expanded my understanding of what Yoga is - the Yoga that consists of, but is essentially beyond the physical. The sense of dynamism, community, simplicity and authentic living in a traditional yoga environment inspired me every day. This experience at the ashram eventually led me to embark on my Yogic Studies journey in 2015.

Creativity

It is said that all of life is a creative expression of the Absolute, and Yoga is inclusive of that. Yoga is the expression of the creative energy that is beautifully manifested through life. Yoga creatively comes to life through lifestyle, service, learning, teaching, devotion, nature, self-understanding, expanding awareness, the sense of harmony between body, mind, spirit and being present in every single moment.

As a student, I wanted to study and live in an environment that supported creativity in all expressions, and one that supported the holistic enhancement of both the inner and outer life. The ashram was such an environment for creative exploration while living a yogic lifestyle. I was generously provided, by living in nature and in a supportive yoga community, the space for me to learn and live creatively, confidently and authentically.

Routine and Regularity

The routine and regularity of the daily ashram programme was an important element that kept me connected to my studies and inner life. The routine always provided me with a task or practice to center myself in whenever the highs or lows set in. Each day at the ashram had a similar routine, yet each day was different, new and refreshing. The coming and going of visitors, the sharing of tasks and colourful interactions, resulted in a constant flow of change. There was never a mundane moment. This experience taught me to approach each day with a fresh and positive attitude.

Yoga Practices

The daily ashram programme flowed with an abundance of yoga practices that the ashram community participated in together. These practices included, asana, pranayama, yoga nidra, meditation, karma yoga, mantra chanting, kirtan, havan and yogic or spiritual discussions. The availability of these practices gave me the opportunity to develop a personal sadhana (spiritual practice). It also enabled me to experience how the integration of yoga practices can harmonise

the personality. Each practice was key in enabling different aspects of the personality to be expressed through different mediums.

Karma Yoga

Karma yoga, which cultivates awareness through action, was key in expressing dynamism, service and non-attachment. It was also a practice where excess energy, physical or mental, could be directed towards. It taught me how to constantly adapt to change and to also approach my studies with an attitude of karma yoga.

Mantra

The commitment towards mantra chanting at Rocklyn Yoga Ashram, is what I feel makes the ashram so special, unique and protected. While I am no expert on the subjects of Sound or Sanskrit, through experience, I have felt for myself, the transformative power of mantra chanting. Mantra chanting shifted me from a state of darkness to light. Kirtan, a form of singing and chanting with music, gave me hope, a connection with the Higher Source, and allowed healing to continually take place. The simple act of chanting the mantra 'Om' and 'Om Shantih' before and after every session, brought about instant moments of peace, silence and inner-connection. Different sets of mantra were chanted each day, each holding specific intentions. All were however, essentially chanted for harmony, healing, wisdom, and the intention that we may live our highest life. It was truly my privilege to be in an environment where my life and studies were greatly supported by the vibration of mantra every single day.

Learning

Throughout my stay at the ashram, I was provided many opportunities to grow and develop as a student, teacher and an aspirant on the path. The ashram lifestyle gave me the opportunity to learn new skills such as gardening, cooking, housekeeping, maintenance and so much more. The most memorable was learning to start a wood fire during the cold seasons - something which living in the tropics would never require! This lifestyle also actively ensured that I was constantly sharing with others how to acquire these new and practical skills.

The ashram programme also enabled me to creatively express my interests of singing and teaching. As a Yogic Studies student, I was provided many valuable opportunities to teach classes and lead programmes. I was always learning from teachers and fellow students, from the colourful diversity of people who come to the ashram, and most profoundly, from the simple, natural environment all around.

Moving Forward

While another chapter at Rocklyn Yoga Ashram has once again ended, it won't be long before another begins. The energy of the ashram will always live in my heart, propelling me forward and reminding me of the eternal light within. My experience at the ashram has given me confidence, inspiration and hope. I feel ready to teach, sing, live, and share with others how Yoga has inspired me to live my life with fullness and authenticity.

With deepest gratitude and love.

Om Shanti.