



Empowered in Marienthal: Our 6th Conference

From June 11 -14, 2009 women from 12 countries gathered for the 6th Netzwerk Ost-West conference held in Marienthal, Germany. This year's theme was "Women, Empowerment, and Yoga" which attracted 55 women 16-71 years old from as far away as Kazakhstan and Australia.

Two participants share their reflections from the experience.

Dr. Rumiana Stoilova, Bulgaria:

This is the second time I joined the international meeting of the Network. The first time, the meeting in Uzana, Bulgaria (2007), I was driven by the curiosity and, above all by surprise that one theme brings two different sides of my life together. I have been exploring the issue of women's equality for many years and I've been practicing yoga for eight years. Now it was possible to bring together both sides of my life, and thus be "complete".

The word empowerment in this year's title called me to seek a definition that is closer to yoga. The interpretation of empowerment as the awakening of women's energy, the development of self-reliance, the capacity to positively influence the world around us and with love is very

inspiring. Sw. Niranjan has spoken of conceptualizing love, with virtue, to understand others, indeed like the "soft" power of women.

The meeting in Marienthal was a manifestation of women's power - in their diversity, spontaneity and different stages of maturity. I wish to express my gratitude to the three women who moved from the very beginning up to this sixth meeting of the network - Inge, and Inge Heide. The synchronicity between the three is difficult to describe – it's the energy and the ability of forming personal relationships with each of us to stand firm, a disciplining force, the capacity to stay grounded and offer soft affection, with humor and joy.

Another example of empowerment were the women who presented workshops. This was an opportunity for them to come out of the everyday and offer others the issues that are close to their hearts. Here, I name only a few topics: "Yoga for Menopause" with Sw. Kevalyananda, "The balanced meal" with Andrea von Schenk, "The value and the risk of Hypersensitive" with Evelyn Rittmeyer, "Between Want and Ought" by Erika Haubold, and Annette Drews' "Music and reflection from Morocco."

The best is that there is no prerequisite that workshops be led by yoga teachers or university professors. One must simply believe in oneself – with self-confidence that one has something interesting to offer. It is necessary to discover the strength within ourselves and thereby make other women stronger. That is the concept of empowerment (empowerment), which I have experienced in the network.

It seems most important to encourage more women to find their creative powers and to show the others who continue to join the network and become active participants. The network can help us all find the strength within ourselves and to form a community with the magical mix of striving for more spirituality and beauty in our lives and relationships.

Swami Kevalyananda, Greece:

This conference was an impressive gathering where women from all the world shared knowledge and expressed their creativity.

The gathering had an essential role to support and give inspiration to many young women geographically isolated, living in remote countries with difficult natural conditions. I was moved by these new beginners, young and thirsty for international contacts, yoga and spiritual knowledge.

It also encouraged and motivated some other women who have not managed yet to put into practice the yogic lifestyle.

Netzwerk Ost-West is an international network, inspired by Satyananda Yoga, with the aim to bring women from East and West together for empowerment, yoga and intercultural exchange.

To learn more about Satyananda yoga, visit www.yogavision.net and for listings of international centers, see www.yogamag.net/links.shtml

During the June 2009 gathering, the women created a sand mandala of the Tara Yantra (below), which was then liberated in the Bible garden



Netzwerk News from the East

New Yoga Centre in Hungary

Satyanada Yoga welcomes its first Central-European Residential Centre in Szólád, Hungary as works progress on two pieces of land which will also include ecological farming. Once a fortnight yogis and yoginis travel to the site near Lake Balaton for Karma Yoga: planting trees, bushes and looking after the the fire ceremony site. Construction work is set to start in April 2010 and the venue will also begin to host programmes under 'nomadic' circumstances at this time. For additional information, or to join in the work, email Annamaria Molnar: dharmavati1@gmail.com or Bhaktananda: info@ananda.hu or visit www.satyananda.hu (in Hungarian).

Beyond this great endeavor, the Satyanada Yoga Centre in Budapest has been busy with regular events such as Satsang DVD screenings, kirtan, and mantra chanting as well as with special visits from visiting Swamis. In July, Sw. Muktidharma from New Zealand offered a seminar on "Bhakti Yoga and Chakra Shuddhi, followed by a Tattwa Suddhi programme by Italian Swami Anandanada in September. ॐ

Paramahansa Satyananda, who revolutionized yoga by adapting it to Westerners' needs while maintaining its ancient tradition and inspired millions with his spiritual force, took Mahasamadhi on December 5. Using yogic techniques, he left his body while sitting in meditation.

Yoga Balance Group in Ukraine

A new informal women's group began regular yoga classes under leadership of Oksana Kis in late August 2009 in Lviv, Ukraine. It unites women of various age and professional backgrounds seeking effective means to deal with permanent stress. Satyanada Yoga is not officially represented in Ukraine, so upon repeated requests from female friends Oksana decided to share her knowledge and experience of what she finds most beneficial in yoga as an active, busy, urban woman. She calls the class "Yoga Balance" to underline the goal and mode of practice. After six weeks, the women confidently express satisfaction and report positive effects on their physical and emotional states. For more information, write to oksanakis55@gmail.com. ॐ



Yoga & Menopause

Here is a summary of the conference workshop given by Sw. Kevalyananda

The two sessions combined theory and practice. The programs were done in an interactive manner so that the women had the possibility to express and share their personal experience either past or present.

First the two key stages in womanhood, puberty and menopause, were presented and compared. Both are seen as a natural event, as a time of self-transformation. Then the following points were developed:

- Need to look at menopause with the right perspective: as a powerful force for positive change in woman's life, contrary to the distorted information and ideas coming from society
- The physical changes that have to be handled
- The symptoms are a response from the body that has to adjust to the chemical changes. As soon as it does, they will disappear
- The psychological disturbances are not necessarily caused by menopause but the result of frustrations at a deeper level in one's life.
- The yogic outlook: the management of menopause can be achieved through:
 - a correct balanced yoga program
 - yogic lifestyle
 - yogic lifestyle attitude

The relevant techniques were taught: asana, pranayama, mudra, bandha, relaxation and meditation. ॐ



Swami Kevalyananda lives and works at the Satyanadashram Hellas in Greece - www.satyanadashram.gr

Upcoming events

January 30-31, 2010

Healthy Shoulders Open Energy & Heart – a workshop by Dr. Biljana Stojanovic (Belgrade), in Kronberg, Germany
Registration & Inquiry: : Inge Friedrich-Rust +49-6173-79924 or Inge.friedrich-rust@gmx.de, more on: www.women-sy.de

Feb. 1–July 25 & Aug. 1–Jan. 25

Gurukul Lifestyle Courses - details and application at www.biharyoga.net

February 12-14, 2010

Shakti Rising Winter Celebration

Women's Yoga and Tantra Retreat for Healing, Empowerment and Positive Connections at Hawkwood College, Stroud, Gloucestershire.

More on: www.sitaram.org.

March 13-Sept 16, 2010

Satyananda Yoga Academy Europe
Yogic Studies 1 - details from admin@syae.org

March 26-28, 2010

Biographies East-West and Yoga, St. Marienthal, Germany. Registration & Inquiry: Inge Friedrich-Rust +49-6173-79924, Inge.friedrich-rust@gmx.de, more on: www.women-sy.de

September 11 -18 2010

Yoga Holiday in Morocco - see details in box on the right. Registration and details from Inge Friedrich-Rust:

Inge.friedrich-rust@gmx.de

+49-6173-79924

For more, see www.women-sy.de

Winter 2011

Journey to Yoga and Meditation

14 days in South India with Yoga, Ayurveda and visit of Amma's Ashram in Kerala. Price: Including flight approx. €1400 - for Women only. More information at www.artofyoga.de.

Yoga Holiday In Morocco

Following-up to last conference's popular workshops by Annette Drews on the culture and music of the Gnawa, Netzwerk Ost-West members are invited to Morocco for yoga, dance, and expanding the network South September 11 – 18, 2010!



This journey near Errachidia, Sahara – an eight hour bus trip from Marrakesh via the Atlas mountains – will include morning yoga in the sand dunes, meditation under the desert sky, walks in the Sahara, Camel tours with overnight stay in an oasis, music and dance workshop with the Gnawa, visit of carpet weaving Berber community and workshops by attendants. ॐ

**The next
Netzwerk Ost-West
conference
WOMEN,
EMPOWERMENT & YOGA
June, 2011**

Brittany, France. A week of yoga, ashram activities and workshops.
For more information about our host and ashram, visit ecoledeyogasatyananda.net

Pool of Needs & Potential

Facilitating the process of giving & taking is one of the core functions of a network. Our vision is to develop an appropriate way of strengthening the natural process of mutual growth based on the values of Netzwerk Ost-West within:

- intercultural exchange between East-West,
- inter-generational relationships
- diverse professional backgrounds.

My proposal is to facilitate a Pool of Needs & Potentials (PNP) for:

- women who'll send their ideas about activities they want to start in their region
- others to express their needs for knowledge, skills, courage or any other assistance to start-up activities between our conferences
- those who want to offer their potential to meet those needs expressed

My tasks will be:

- Collecting input throughout the year
- Responding to obvious matches individually, by facilitating their exchange
- Offering a summary in this newsletter

I am sure each one of us has felt the added value of our network during the conferences and I strongly believe the added value for each of us can be expanded during the intervals between the conferences and decentralised from international to national, to regional levels...

Awaiting your response to sangheet@women-sy.de

Hari Om Tat Sat,
Sangheet (Annegret Spelleken)

On behalf of **Netzwerk Ost-West e.V.**, we wish you and yours very happy, peaceful holidays and a bright New Year!

We hope to see you at our 2010 events.

To include your news, events, or other input in this international newsletter please email us at newsletter@women-sy.de