DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
Thank you so much for joining us today. We are just going to put up all up so we can understand where our members are. I'm the Vice President here at yoga alliance and I'm excited to be able to be joined and have a conversation in terms of how we define and construct and understand concepts related to yoga.

He holds an MA in South Asian studies and MA and PhD in philosophy. He is the member of Department of philosophy for Asian research at York University in Toronto and a translation expert. Professional philosopher and scholar of South Asia with over 50 peer-reviewed publications. Two monographs, two translations and one… After over two decades of research across relevant disciplines, he decided to form yoga philosophies.org

Thank you so much for being here and I want to let you know those of us who are joining that this is a four week series. Please stay tuned and he is really working from looking at the bigger concepts and breaking it down to make sense of this particular point of view in looking at this topic as well as hopefully making it relevant to all of you. Thank you so much for being here.

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
Thank you, this is great. I guess I will just turn on the presentation now. This is part two of the four-part series. The topic of this particular presentation is yoga and thinking philosophically. One of the discoveries that I came across at a pivotal moment in my own research was how closely related the broad practices of yoga to being a philosopher so we often think about philosophy has two sets, there's the very common sense of having a perspective, and it's this usage that informs people that they have a philosophy about something. When you ask them what their philosophy is it just turns out with the perspective is and we are willing to study competing contributions to a disagreement. The essential work is basically work that's involved in yoga, the bigger project. A lot of us come to yoga… One of the ideas I have been impressed with by virtue of studying the history of yoga and what's involved in doing philosophy is that these are not really different activities and that in order for you to be philosophical is to practice yoga in this big sense.

In this talk I want to… This is the abstract. I'm going to leave the PDF for your viewing later on. One of the things that happens when we live in a world that is dominated by a cultural tradition neighing, Western tradition, there's a tendency for people to think that the cultural quirks of that tradition are universal features of understanding or the human experience. There is a tendency to overgeneralize from the history of Western experience. Because the west of this -- West is the global imperial power almost everywhere you go you are going to see some type of social confirmation of this perspective. That's historical. That actually has to do with imperialism. If we look at South Asia that had a precolonial history, we have something to compare it to when we are thinking about our current contact. One of the issues that's pressing out is what we do about systemic discrimination. And moving past what are fruits of the colonial experiment. One step
that we can make in this direction is to stop believing that the kinds of things that we experience in and paralyzed world are necessary and having this historical awareness helps us move away from that conviction. I want to start by reviewing some of the ideas that I covered last time. I'm going to go back to the yoga Sutra. In the first four sutras suggest that we have a choice. Either we can treat mental content or experience, as a function of our own agency in which case we do not treat our experiences as basic fact but an outcome of our choices or we treat our choices as facts that define us. These are basic and incompatible objects. What's interesting about starting it off this way is that it's putting the philosophical choice that we have with how we deal with the evidence as the first step of yoga. For those who are interested in how to deepen the practice, I think this is a really important starting point. What's the basic choice that we are faced with and what's the yoga choice? The basic choice we are faced with is this contrast between seeing our experiences as a function of our agency or a basic fact that defines us. One option is the yoga option. Which is why the practice then becomes so important because as you practice yoga you are showing yourself how it is that your experiences are a function of your choice and agency. Something else I introduced was… I think in some ways, commonplace but also perhaps it seemed a bit obtuse to some people, distinctions between two ways you can go about understanding something. I will start with the more common places. Either you can understand what you take to be true or say, that's called interpretation. Or this other activity where you render explicit, the reasons that someone has for their conclusions. Why is this different? Because when we try to understand reason for conclusion we are not understanding and in terms of what's true, we try to understand how reason supports a conclusion. Where everything is false, and you can have a bad argument where there is into this support between reasons and conclusions and everything is true. So we really have this stark choice between understanding things, or taking responsibility for things. This distinction is basically a modern way of putting the choice, that potentially gives us at the start of the day yoga citrate. The second Sutra is the programmatic account of yoga as the stilling or directing or responsible steering of the mind. If you are engaging in yoga, you are going explaining things in terms of what you believe. You are not going to do interpretation. You are going to be treating your mind to something influenced. Which means you do not treat your mind and your experiences as a basic fact. Rather it something that you have to take responsibility for. Interpretation is anti-philosophical because if I want to understand a philosophy I have to understand how reasons support conclusion. Interpretation will not allow you that because it tries to not explain things in terms of reason but in terms of what you believe. Interestingly enough if you are going to do yoga you are also going to have to give up on interpretation. You are going to have to treat your experiences and your mind and the thoughts you are considering as things to be influenced and controlled and guided by your choosing. I will come back to this as we go along but really the two options between them responsible for your mind are explaining things by your experience, is the option being philosophical and yoga is on the side of criticizing the latter option. The idea that you accept everything afterward. It's based on the idea that we have to take responsibility for our mind and experience as agents. What I also note in my research is that there is a historical origin to this idea that we should be explaining things by way of what we believe and that's the linguistic model of thought. If you endorse this you think that by is something that could be true or false? A thought could be that it's raining outside. If you endorse the linguistic model of thought, you take it to be the meaning of the sentence. So then you think about it as understanding the thought that's really about decoding the linguistic meaning of the words included in that sentence. This, you can find in any philosophy. Taoists are fiercely critical of it. Interestingly, it's the default assumption about thought and the Western tradition and it's so default it's neither defended nor criticized. It's just one of these things that's assumed in the background. And it's such a basic commitment that no one thinks that they really need to defend
it. It goes all the way back to this ancient Greek idea of logos, one word for thought language. If I think that thought is demeaning of what I say, then to understand others I would have to understand others in the way that I would say. Then I'm basically interpreting. And others… This is the political and moral problem with interpretation. Others are always treated as a prop for what I would say. Others cannot have their own perspective. This is the source of imperialism. If I think that the whole world has to be explained by what I would say then I cannot really tolerate dissenting views or alternative perspectives. Everything has to be my way. As I continue to interpret I simply deny the possibility of contrary perspective. For me, I came upon this rather accidentally. I was interested in accounting for translation which is what I wrote my PhD is on. If you have is the linguistic model thought, you think the translation is about matching the meaning of words across language is. But because they are different, then you are not going to be able to match them. So translation is going to be impossible. Not only were intellectuals all assuming the linguistic model of thought but they were also drawing these very skeptical conclusions about the prospects of translation. What I learned was the translators actually don't do this. They don't take languages and try to match them. If we believe what philosophers say, translation is about translating languages but what translated -- translators actually translate our text. These common types. What a translator dies is a look at the original as the work to be reproduced in any medium. Then, they used the type of text that they have the text under as providing the criteria for what successful reconstruction would be. If you want analogy think about a sculpture that's made out of pebbles and you want to re-create that with elbow pasta. You're not going to be able to match up pieces of pebbles with peoples of elbow pasta. They are different shapes. If you thought the reconstruction had to burrow down to the level you will not be able to do it. Then you use the type of text for providing the criteria about what the successful reproduction would be like. That is the way translators actually translate text. There is no such thing as just being a translator. You have to specialize. What I started to realize, actually, was this was a yoga point. In order to understand what someone is saying in another language or culture, it is not about sharing their perspective, it is about having a discipline that allows you to take responsibility for that initial representation and then understand what that same content looks like from a different cultural vantage point. The translation -- translation then is not about trying to understand about how things look like from the vantage of the people you are trying to translate, it is rather trying to reproduce what they are talking about your cultural vantage.

You have to then use your own cultural resources in creative ways to talk about things that are anyway foreign to your own life and cultural experiences. So translation that is both informative and slightly subversive. It allows the flow in of alien ideas. One of the things I noted is that this was also the way that higher learning and research goes. When you engage in higher learning, it is not like you learn everything. We specialize in disciplines. Or maybe enter disciplines. But even then there is kind of a limit to the disciplines that are involved. Everything about disciplines as providing as criteria that allow us to disambiguate the significance of what someone is looking at, then a discipline provides us ways to correlate different perspectives on a topic. And once we are able to correlate different perspectives on a topic we are in a better position to understand what it is we are talking about. That is exactly what research facilitates. It is not just this kind of forever automation of some perspective. It is an effort to come out of individual perspectives to understand the data as something you can look at from different perspectives and then to say something informative about what it is we are observing.
Another thing I noticed – well, lots of thoughts started creeping up on me. One was that the Western tradition was poorly placed to explain how higher learning functions. If you thought you thought was just the meaning of what you said then learning is always a kind of exercise in the linguistics or entomology or something like that. That is not what researchers do. They are not forever forming dictionaries or looking up in the dictionary to figure out what water is made out of. I have to go out and do something that reveals the data in interesting and informative ways. What is far more useful in understanding of higher learning is this ancient salvation distinction between conventional truth and ultimate truth.

Conventional truth are facts of how the world looks like from some cultural vintage. And often these facts are made up of what side of the road you should drive on is a conventional truth. In North America it is the right side of the road. You go to the UK and it is the left side of the road. There is no ultimate fact about which side of the road you should drive on. But there can be ultimate facts about asphalt. That is because we can look at the topic from different cultural perspectives and use the discipline to sort out what the data is presenting us. This ancient salvation distinction became increasingly plausible to me when I realized you need a yoga, you need a discipline is something that mediates sifting of the data. Nobody just goes out and learns stuff. They need a discipline or practice that allows them to be responsible about their experiences in the way they come to understand the ways they are investigating.

This ancient salvation way of looking at things fits in rather nicely with higher learning. It also supports philosophically what is called realism. Realism is the idea that there are things independent of your perspective and that learning or knowledge has to meet the external standards. A lot of people think that realism is a kind of impossible goal because it would claim we are able to understand things beyond us, but really it is a position of modesty.

It says that our ability to understand is constrained by our perspective. Insofar as we really do understand, we have done something to deal with this constraint. It provides a kind of modest or critical check to the idea that our experiences or our perspective are the final story. I am going to come back to this next webinar too, but one of the things I think is interesting about the salvation tradition, and I mentioned this last time, as they have these neat models for objectivity. If objects are simply things you view from your own perspective then it is unclear how we could ever know anything objective. But if an object is something that we can look at from different perspectives and then disagree about, so that no one's perspective is the final word on the object, then if we introduce some type of yoga or discipline to sort out the competing perspectives we can arrive in an explanation of what it is that produces the disagreement.

So here I think the conch is a great model of how it is the observer. The holdup objectivity is to show he is not destroying things in the world. The neat thing about a conscious that it looks different from every perspective. To understand what a conch is is to understand it is a thing that is explaining our different perspectives of the one object. This allows us to distinguish between different kinds of truth. So subjective truth is truth of how things seem to you. It really tells you a lot about the observer, conventional truth is a kind of shared subjective truth. And then there is objective truth. Objective truth is in the idea that you have got the right perspective, it is rather the idea of what we are disagreeing about.

When my thinking is both factual and objective, I have an understanding of different perspectives. Relative to the things that we can disagree about. An example of objectivity is like logic. When you understand an argument, I understand how the premises supported conclusion.
That is not the same as understanding whether the promise of an understanding is true. You and I can understand the same argument, understand how the premises supported the conclusion but disagree about whether the premise of the conclusion is true.

Just to wrap up the ideas of salvation, I was trying to think about how do we account for translating translation in the Academy and scholarship and research. All of these ancient salvation ideas started presenting themselves as obvious solutions. The kind of very stubborn historical Western idea that it is just all about your cultural perspective into language, that seemed like a weird cultural left over. That was always trying very hard to render itself relevant, but there is also evidence that it wasn't. The people try to make sense of the world from this vintage. They would come up with all sorts of skeptical conclusions.

Another interesting feature of this tradition, because it treats what I would say from my cultural vintage -- vantage of the full limit of the think about, it has this history of trying to understand knowledge from a privilege perspective. You can go back to Plato. From Plato on there is a history of intellectuals who try to account for the truth from having a special view. It is like the best view. From there you see everything. What struck me is if this is right, you have to believe there is something special about any perspective. But if there is such a thing as objectivity and what we can view and disagree about different perspectives, there is no special perspective. Any perspective is just as good as another if you are willing to be critical about what it has to offer.

This linguistic account I thought really kind of leads you to think there is no better perspective from mine or what I would say. I think when you start to compare these traditions up is that you start to see that a lot of these things about taking your perspective very seriously under cultural position very seriously as a condition of explanation is a cultural quirk of the Western tradition. It is a cultural quirk that comes from the linguistic account of thought.

So it leads to this idea that everything is about this special vintage. It was at this time that I was transiting the yoga sutra. It was the nourishment I needed because what it is teaching is that it is about what you do with your perspective. It is not that you have a perspective. What are you doing with your perspective? That is you, right? How is it that you are changing your life? How is it that you are taking responsibility for your experiences? That was a completely healing counterpoint to this very strange monologue as a Western tradition where everybody has their own view about what the white -- right perspective is and they would battle each other out about what this amounted to.

Alright, so there are of course other interesting -- just checking the time, I don't want to be talking too long -- outcomes of the when we stick model of thought. One is that it is going to lead to the anthropocentric which as we notice language is a human phenomenon. Even if we think your dog understand some of what you say, your dog is not speaking any human language. There is always a kind of anthropocentrism in the modeling of thought on the basic -- basis of language. It is going to be communitarian. Communitarian is the view the your agency is defined by your place in your social context.

But these two together and you were going to get this view of life is something where humans are the most important and the ones in your community are the most important. What is interesting is that this is controversial in the East Asian tradition. This model of thought was
never entertained the widely criticized. It was always an argument against. It is this kind of basis model of thinking in the Western tradition.

Historically, how does the show up? I think this shows up in the history of the West is a history that is preferred social conformity and punish those that are nonconforming. We need to go back to Socrates treatment at the hands of the Athenian court where he was executed for allegedly promoting false gods and corrupting the youth. Another interesting kind of projection, interesting in the kind of macaw or ironic sense is this history of thinking about life in terms of martyrdom. We have Socrates, who was killed and Jesus, high pay Sheol, Boethius, early Christians were martyred but once they came to power they were kind of big into killing heretics. And then also genocide as a function of proselytization, which is very ironic, this idea that you have to convince people to be part of your worldview. And then colonialism.

As a Canadian, I feel like I should always bring this up. We have these horrible, lamentable and absolutely criticizable history of red is it -- residential schools where the government paid churches – first of all, the government snatch First Nation kids from their families and put them into these horrible church run schools where they were abused. The goal was to make them into Europeans. They were not allowed to speak their Indigenous language. They had to learn French or English. That makes perfect sense if you have a lingual stick model of thought in the background.

Because all the sudden common language becomes important, social conformity becomes important. All you have to do is make them speak English or French the way you do. Let’s compare that –

DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
Shyam, can I just happen? We have one consistent question. People are wondering why the italicized W. If you could just speak to that.

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
I will come to this later on, but I made this up because I wanted to distinguish between a cultural and intellectual tradition. And just being Western. Accidentally Western. Geographically Western. You and I were accidentally geographically Western. That is not the same as endorsing this political tradition of imperialism. I think one of the yogic lessons is that we don’t have to be embarrassed or think that speaking English is a bad thing. But we have to take responsibility for understanding and not treat it as though it is just a fact of our cultural vintage. That is a very innocent way to be Western. When I grew up there was all sorts of weird pressure to see salvation. My family and friends would have this idea of what I would be. When I grew up it was totaled 90. For instance, Southeast and think that is born. It is not actually salvation. Temples. Probably Greek or Iranian. Historically, temple worship was not part of South Asia. One of the funny things about this experience of growing up South Asian in the West is how people kind of took this model of proper behavior is about social conformity and they would try to adopt it. They would change the cultural requirements. It would be the same expectation that you have to speak a certain language, you have to act a certain way, you have to participate in certain cultural events. None of this really makes much sense when we switch to yoga. So there is a way in which, and this is another important feature of the West, there is a way in which you can think you are not being Western, like a lot of my family did, be completely Western. This expectation of cultural conformity as the proper mode of the individual in life is a continuity of a certain intellectual tradition that is not indigenously salvation. Part of it is also when I criticize the
Western tradition, it's not to criticize people. That's a contingency, we don't have to make bad choices. I want to be able to distinguish between cultural differences and the possibilities of people in any geography. So thank you, that's a really important question. In the previous slide, I talked about how the West is... Oh, this is another little moment. This is the W that leans on the east. It was to represent the imperialism of the West. Where is the restaurant -- the Western tradition is this long social conformity and punish those... No one was being put to death because they were promoting false gods because the entire question was, what God's should we have? What is the proper way to raise people and to be a person? If you want and need little contrast, I think this is a poly cannon. I have a link. It's this cute dialogue where this person goes from one philosopher to another asking them what they thought the point of philosophy was. What this speaks to is the ancient practice of the freedom people have in South Asia. If they did not like conventional morality that was largely defined by these kinds of caste hierarchies and idealization's. They could decide to just not participate and this was someone who decided to figure it out on their own. Some were very successful. And then there are weird ones that we do not hear anymore because they are just wacky and another interesting feature, it's really hard to find a concepts to martyr them early on. Later on, they become important... And this is according to tradition, local Muslim kings that were not converting. I that time South Asia was slowly being patronized. Another thing was people fleeing and Jews. Since the birth of Israel they have been leaving to go there. Historically, there have been communities of Jews. What we should be asking why is there anti-Semitism anywhere else? Why do we have this expectation? That's and normative visitation of the Western model and Christians also came in ancient times. Unlike the Western tradition that's dominated by this idea of values that are imposed hierarchy from the top down, South Asia is historically home to all sorts of philosophical projects. This is one of my favorite contrasts and I should be wrapping it up soon so we can have some questions. There's this poet from Greece but he comments, the obedience make their gods black... Yes, and if oxen and horses had hands and could paint with their hands and produce works of art horses would paint the horns of the gods like horses. All of God is an extrapolation of your own experience. If this were true, when we came to South Asia we would expect only human divides. But not true. There's a bore, a monkey, Goethe is at K and in South Asia people were perfectly willing to entertain divinity as unknown and interprets -- entropy centric phenomenon. We would expect that it carries over into South Asia but it's not it's just a quirk of the Western tradition. This is a nerdy philosophy thing, but if you read systemic philosophy, there's this custom of giving the opponent priority first. Then, it will give a large section to their opponents view. You have to you from -- it's interesting because you have to hear from the other side first. That's a particularly South Asian way of going about philosophy. It was kind of conventional iced. -- Conventional iced. -- What I was talking about is to a precolonial phenomena. It would be wrong to think that this is an enduring feature. Colonialism happened and South Asia becomes westernized in many ways. The openness I was interested in contrasting with the historical. This inclination to understand this cultural quirk there's nothing necessary about it

If I have to understand everything in terms of the privilege perspective and it has a certain racial characteristics, then and anything that deviates is not going to be tolerated. Racism just ends up being a function of the treating. -- This tradition. We can buck this trend by yoga. And this is my slide that I have already talked about. The point is really not about the language we speak or the close that we wear. But the question is, what do we do with all of these? Do we treat these as facts that have to explain everything else or do we have experience as something that we are responsible for. When we can inflate our experiences with our perspective we engage in what calls us methodical. Egotism consists of completing the power of the sphere with the natural
powers of perception into single perception of self. When people interpret, they do this completion of the data they are experiencing and how they come to experience something with themselves. What that means is that they treat the status quo of something of their own survival. One of the implications for practice, so now I'm pretty much done. I think you already part of his -- part of the solution. To practice yoga is to reject interpretation and if you reject interpretation you have to end up rejecting the communitarianism of the tradition. I set it up as an argument. Reject --'s rejecting interpretation is yoga, so then this logical inference, you end up rejecting communitarianism. As a practical matter I think they are not just going to think that they are the only critters that matter. They are also not going to think that the community experience is anything peering racism is just going to be something that's going to be systemic discrimination and general will be something they fight against because they are rejecting the privilege of any perspective as the basic motive expectation. I want to bring this back as core yoga practice. The question I like to raise is what's the difference between this and contortion is him? Why is it we urge -- why is it we are not just moving our bodies in strange ways? It's about dying that explanation by way of perspective. You are teaching yourself that your experience is a function of that choice to put yourself into that post. You are actively deconstructing the idea that there some type of fact about your experience and you are really learning and informing yourself that how you experience and what you experience is a function of your choice and that puts you in a state where you are able to testing was between what you are experiencing and yourself. This practice is not just about relaxing your body or getting a workout, clearly, there are all sorts of ways you could do that. It's the practice of your own sovereignty. That's why this practice is just not any other physical practice. And what it has to do with the topics that we have been discussing. I have included limited bibliography here and I'm going to leave this stuff with Krista. And I believe you will be able to access that. Thank you.

DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
Thank you so much, that was fascinating and helpful. We have lots of wonderful questions and people engaging with this topic. Susan is wondering, where does the Western philosophical break postmodern and postcolonial thought into this?

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
One of the things that I noticed in my research was that the folks who engaged in this type of criticism did not give up on these very basic commitments of the Western tradition. Rather they pointed out the problems. They were interested in pointing out the problems but they do not have an alternative. That's where the deconstructive concept from his. So I find myself learning a lot from these intellectuals but at the same time what it really pointed out to me was how they share so much with the people they are criticizing with. They share this commitment to language of the spaces of thought. They share a commitment thinking about the possibilities in terms of the Western tradition. That's why yoga was so exciting to me. It was a real alternative. It is really something else provides us a way to be critical of all traditions.

DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
Thank you. I think you know especially in terms of thinking about that postmodern postcolonial space between language, there is an idea called the linguistic turn that happens with the postcolonial/postmodern idea where it is this critique. As Shyam said, is void of what is next. And in some ways is a whole body of scholarship that is being produced from a sort of postcolonial perspective but from those people that didn't necessarily have a voice before. It is really the idea that we give narrative to the experiences, the subjectivity of experiences of individuals without that privileging of position of Western constructive language etc. I think there
is the tie and all of this. I was talking to Shyam before this started. There is a book that came out maybe a year ago called "Heathan American Hindu" which speaks a lot to this trying to deconstruct and reconstruct anyway that isn't privileging those same systems. I think awareness is OK for all of us as yogis and being able to practice this thing we call yoga. Patricia is asking could you please give an example of a conventional truth?

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
So how you should greet someone. What side of the road to drive on. Should we wear masks? Is a mask requirement? It is interesting because these can overlap with questions of ultimate truth. In so far as a researcher says it is a good idea, they're not suggesting it because we have a convention of wearing masks. When you do the research you look at the transmission of the virus from lots of different cultural contexts. You say look, if we can interrupt certain kinds of pathways and we have a way of stopping the spread. You have that ultimate fact or observation in forming a proposed convention.

Then the question is which takes precedence? The people who are like wear masks, we should give precedence to this ultimate observation that isn't about your local practice. Especially in the West we don't wear masks. We always watched Asian people wearing masks. It shows it is not a kind of conventional background here. I think there are legal definitions that are conventional eyes. Then there is the philosophical question, the ultimate question. That is another aspect of yoga that I love, it really pushes us to challenge the ground of our conventional ideas about who counts and why.

DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
Think you. Well said. Someone is asking if you would say the linguistic model of thought interjects you go into the equation and that further removes interpretive reasoning from yoga?

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
I think it absolutely involves egotism because what you are doing is you are giving explanatory privilege to the experiences that you are having given what you are doing. What it does is it removes the agency, what you are doing, out of the picture and makes it seem like it is a kind of fact about you. That does create a kind of strong ego driven model of the self. Absolutely.

DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
Beth is asking does the South Asian depiction mean their energies to be evoked or expressed?

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
This is an interesting question. Is there a method story about the gods? As a scholar of yoga I note that in book 2 they're talking about governance of self-study is something you discover by virtue of practice. But I think what that means also is that you are responsible for the ideals you set yourself and you come to terms with that as you practice. I think the diversity of gods is an expression of the diversity of ideas -- ideals that South Asian's were willing to entertain. Each God is a kind of different idea. They have different functions. They stop being quite so competitive about alternatives.

But then within the context of yogurt they are then ideals you can set yourself to emulate in your practice. I would think there is something very practical about this diversity of gods.

DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
I think it also speaks to that idea that within the traditions, the South Asian traditions of the inclusive practice, that there are as many expressions of God's as there are expressions of us in the way we exist in the world. Not even just as human beings but as expressions of Raman or universal consciousness or whatever. There is the saying of theirs 333 gods, there's 332,000 gods, there's 3 million gods and really there is only one God. You hold that tension in ways that the Western perspective has a harder time when we like to really understand things as more categorized and black-and-white in that sense.

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
The hierarchy. It is kind of the top down. All of the sudden the diversity of options is very difficult to miss.

DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
exactly. Wonderful. They like more ideas about how they could facilitate this line of thinking for her students.

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
Great. I think the question that should open up practice and maybe even teaching is inviting people to own how doing yoga just isn't within your body. Not just breathing. Asana is not just moving your body. We do those things all the time. It doesn't mean we are doing yoga. I think ideally when you are a yogi all life becomes practice. You think every moment I should be on top of myself. What is this idea that somehow for one hour a day I am on top of myself and the rest of the time I am freaking out. But the way you introduce people to deepening their practice think is by inviting them to ask the question and then also have the answer ready for them. So why this is yoga and not just moving through a bunch of postures.

And then when you ask the question you have the answer and you are inviting people to see their behavior as part of a wider ethical practice. That will kind of be number four in this series. Every choice, every behavior and every action is part of the practice. I think that is how people start to transform in their practice. It stops being the one thing they are doing at the time and instructive about how they should live more generally.

DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
Definitely. It is the experience versus the interpretation. Teach your students to be in that moment fully present and conscious and breath as I told to be able to that in the asana as a tool to anchor yourself in this moment as ways of understanding are needed to interpret the world and then our choice as yogis to do that unpacking. Hopefully that is helpful. Allison is asking what type of truth is race and racism from your explanation? I believe racism is subjective. Yoga speaks to unity consciousness but I think it can be used as a way to deny subjective truth that we are one race, the human race, as the absolute truth. I think she is asking about the concept of you guys this unions we should all be the same versus the idea that it is subjective.

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
Yoga is about her own kind of individuality. At the union is about the coordination of aspects of our own life. When you are a yogi you don't leave aspects of your life kind of disconnected. They are all brought under your control as an agent responsible for your life. But as you practice, and this is very clear in book 4, the experience of the yogi stops being about the experience of other people because the yogi is someone whose life is being converted by virtue of choice and practice whereas other people are not engaging in this are reacting to old habits.
that they haven't criticized and they just keep in play. I think then the lesson for yoga is not that we are kind of all one but there is something valuable about the quirkiness of individuality. That each one of us is an individual, but what makes us all people is we share an interest in sovereignty and so we have a way to relate to other individuals as people who have an interest in their own sovereignty.

If we start to act this way we deconstruct systemic discrimination on all sorts of levels because we no longer see people as playing a role in our experiences. We see them as people who deserve their own lives, to be their own masters. Just like we do with ourselves. With respect to truth I think racism is a weird function of a conventional truth about what it means to be a person insert and are -- jurisdictions. If you have a racial view of a person to be white that is the paradigm case. People have to deviate from this conventional truth will be treated harshly because they are not conforming. How is a black person supposed to conform to that? It is impossible. That is exactly what happens in systemic racism. I think that thinking about yoga where we get down to the basic fact of what our interests are has a way of deconstructing and criticizing conventional truths that are not good for us.

DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
Exactly. I recognize we only have three minutes left. There's one that popped up that is more of a comment. I'm going to speak to that comment and then I will turn it over to you to say any last words you want to share or anything else about next week in the topic. Valerie just said it is not only Canadians here in the US but Native Americans are also guilty of this as well. Many Native Americans were sent to schools to have their native nests trained out of them. This is a global issue as well.

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
Residential schools are just something I know about. It is the same formula everywhere. Aboriginals in Australia, Africans in Africa and Latin America Indigenous people. It is the same story that is played out because it is the same logic of Western imperialism playing itself out. Unfortunately there is just no end to examples of this kind of thing. That is kind of a bummer. It is important for us to also acknowledge this too instead of just pretending like it is all OK. Thank you so much for that.

Last comments. Is this a good time for that?

DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
We only have two minutes left.

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
Next week I'm going to be talking more directly to the historical construction and evolution of the idea of religion as a way that the Western tradition deals with what it can't interpret. I think this is really important for yogis because we derive a practice from a colonized tradition. So then trying to reclaim what yoga is from Western imperialism involved in understanding of how the history of the West tries to intervene and repackage diversity and philosophical system as religion and spirituality. It is one of the things it does. The fourth webinar, I am going to move to Ottawa understand the options without the interventions of Western tradition? We will just see that it can be open to philosophical disagreement. That will also be a topic of next week because one of the things I point out in my book is that salvation was this tradition of philosophical dissent and diversity in the British came along and gave it one word – Hinduism. Since then, people of had a
very difficult way of accessing the reality of the history of philosophical receptivity and openness. I will leave it at that.

DR CHRISTA KUBERRY:
Wonderful. Thank you for speaking with us today. Thank you all for your wonderful comments and for engaging in this topic. I am looking forward to the continued conversations.

DR SHYAM RANGANATHAN:
Thank you so much.