

Returning from the Himalayas after 30 years

Meditation, a deep-rooted tradition in the east, has become a household word globally, but *satsang*, the enquiry into one's true Self, is less known – until now!

Two Kiwis, Rebecca Williams and Malcolm Reid (Mayank), having returned from the Himalayas, where they lived for thirty years with an enlightened master, are now touring New Zealand to share how they live with those who join their *satsang*.

What is Satsang?

Satsang is the forum for discourse, reflection, and revelation of our true Self. 'Self' conventionally refers to the individual person - the body, mind, intellect and ego. *Satsang* expands the mind to recognise one's whole Self, within which the changing variety of thoughts and feelings play their various roles. Realising our integrated, ever-present Self releases us from the unnecessary struggle with the apparently changing nature of events, in order to be empowered and fulfilled from within.

The Dynamic Duo

Satsang is at the core of what Rebecca and Mayank teach. The deep knowledge they share is so relevant to today's lifestyle. Their wish is that *satsang* be as widely embraced. It is a potent means to realise that we are never bound in the patterns of the mind. Knowing this, our thoughts and feelings do not act as a barrier to attain our highest aspiration – freedom from the sense of division and separation.

Their teaching style is light and joyful, and yet profound. Out of their passion for Self awareness has evolved a full program, including *satsang*, meditation, *pranayam* (conscious breathing techniques), movement classes, and *kirtan* (uplifting the spirit through singing simple Sanskrit mantras).

The Back Story

In 1980, Rebecca and Malcolm met at Wellington Teacher's College. Malcolm resigned from teaching to pursue his passion for music. He was content and at ease with himself. Rebecca's story was a little different. She grew up in a wealthy family and yet, having had every opportunity to pursue her passions, she saw firsthand that despite privilege, money, and ability, that no matter what one accomplished, they still suffered from an imagined, unquenchable sense of lack.

Rebecca was not able to compromise with the human struggle that she was told to take for granted as a part of life. She had to find a way to understand the existential intensity she experienced. So, in 1986, she took a sabbatical to travel to India. "I'll learn to meditate, I'll master the mind, and I'll be back in three months!" she told Malcolm.

Looking for a practical approach to meditation, Rebecca arrived in India. She found the International Meditation Institute tucked away in the Himalayas, where a diverse, international group of people gathered for *satsang*. She was attracted to this tradition because it is a study with the view to strengthen the awareness of the unchanging observer of the ever-changing mind. The practice deepens as each life situation offers an opportunity to identify with the observer, rather than trying to control the fluctuating nature of thoughts.

Realising the depth of the eastern philosophical tradition, Rebecca soon understood that a three-month course would not bring about the personal transformation that was needed to unfold a complete understanding of the human struggle that is addressed in eastern wisdom.

Realising True Purpose

Intrigued by the revelations Rebecca wrote home, Malcolm started meditating and found deep fulfilment that did not detract from his passion for music, but rather completed the total picture. Malcolm soon joined Rebecca in India and discovered the beauty of Indian classical music. He mastered the Indian percussion instrument, the *tablas*. He also researched the beneficial effect that reciting *Sanskrit* has on one's health, and how such subtle vibrations are a powerful means to lead the attention deeper in meditation.

As time deepened Rebecca's connection with her inner Self, she was now intrigued to realise the full potential of that mind she had been struggling to control. That potential gave rise to the inspiration to share with others the knowledge of how meditation can work to recognise how valuable and powerful is one's inner wisdom when it is given a voice to be understood.

It became Rebecca's direction in life to talk about Self awareness. "Every person has the potential to awaken the observing ability of the mind and realise the deep presence of their true Self. It is those who feel the discontent from the limitation of relative knowledge who are receptive to hear of the existence of Self awareness."

Once afraid of the intensity of a mind awake to the limitations of relative existence, Rebecca now describes the mind as, "A glorious marvel of engineering. When one realises its full potential, the mind becomes a brilliant tool to live in health and happiness."

Sharing their Passion

The partnership between Rebecca and Malcolm, who adopted the Indian name Mayank, meaning the moon's cool and healing power, organically evolved to open up their lives and invite people to join them for a meditation retreat in the small Himalayan village where they live . Thus the popular meditation and yoga retreat, Retreat Himalaya, was born.

Mayank, a Soma Yoga teacher, pushes the boundaries of traditional yoga. His movement classes explore how one can incorporate simple, conscious movement into one's day-to-day life in order to combat the stress of modern society that is oriented toward long periods of sitting and leaning forward.

Mayank's cutting edge approach to movement incorporates modalities such as Original Strength and Nutritional Movement that draw on a range of non-threatening, accessible somatic movement patterns that build new neural pathways between the brain and the body. He takes yoga to a whole new level to release and lengthen the muscle systems effortlessly, increasing fluidity in movement, and opening the ability to enjoy moving through life with your body.

Rebecca and Mayank have emerged on the world spiritual stage as modern teachers who have imbibed the teachings from the east and have transformed them to be relevant to the western, more scientific mind. Meditation, as they teach, is natural. There are no steps, no stages, no attaining, no striving, no labels, no dogmas.

Wisdom of Meditation Tour, 2018

Rebecca and Mayank are invited to Vancouver and Toronto to teach at weekend meetings and residential retreats at various locations.

During September they will be visiting the Netherlands, Germany and France.

Visit wisdomofmeditation.com for more details.

[NZ United Independent newspaper article](#)