



On Sunday morning, May 31st we gathered together to honor the life of Sri K. Pattabhi Jois, who passed away on May 18th at the ripe age of 94. Pattabhi Jois was one of the few leading yogis who studied directly with the legendary Krishnamacharya, known as the father of yoga. His death has made a significant ripple in the global yoga community and May 31st marked the day that yogis around the world united to celebrate his life and the contribution he's made to the world.

I am deeply moved to consider how one man's dedication to the tradition of yoga has influenced so many lives. I am personally reflecting on my studies with him in Mysore, India and how my perspective on life was permanently altered from this experience.

This bold and committed human being not only transformed the lives of his many students throughout various pockets of the world, he also enhanced the economy of his Indian community. On any given day, there could be up to 350 western students earnestly making their way to his shala (school) to practice under his tutelage. Everyone from the coconut vender to local hotels, restaurants and textile shops benefited from his vision.

And his dream did not come about without great sacrifice. Jois began his studies with Krishnamacharya at the age of 12 and spent many years begging for food, after leaving his family to pursue his yogic life. Imagine leaving your family at that age with nothing more than 2 rupies in your pocket?

He was often heard quoting a verse in the Bhagavad Gita that claims "one comes to yoga only by having practiced it in a previous life and is pulled toward it against one's will, as toward a magnet." I bet some of you can relate to this statement as well, as your curiosity for the practice becomes more and more compelling.

As modern yogis, we can all honor Pattabhi Jois, who followed his soul calling despite uncertainty and social scrutiny and in so doing, changed the world. In 1975 when he and his son Manju came to North America for the first time, he said "We may only have 25 people practicing today, but in 20 years it will be fully spreading." You did it Guruji—today there are virtually hundred's of thousands of people practicing yoga and that's just the tip of the iceberg! As we reflect on this great man's life, we can ask ourselves what contribution have we been longing to offer the world...

As I work on the Phys. Ed Yoga I I curriculum for Nova Scotia, to be implemented in schools in September, I am mindful (and heartfelt) of his vision and feel his presence guiding my writing.

To health, radiance, understanding and peace, may we all enjoy the sweet rewards of this practice, thanks to Pattabhi Jois!

Respectfully,
Jenny