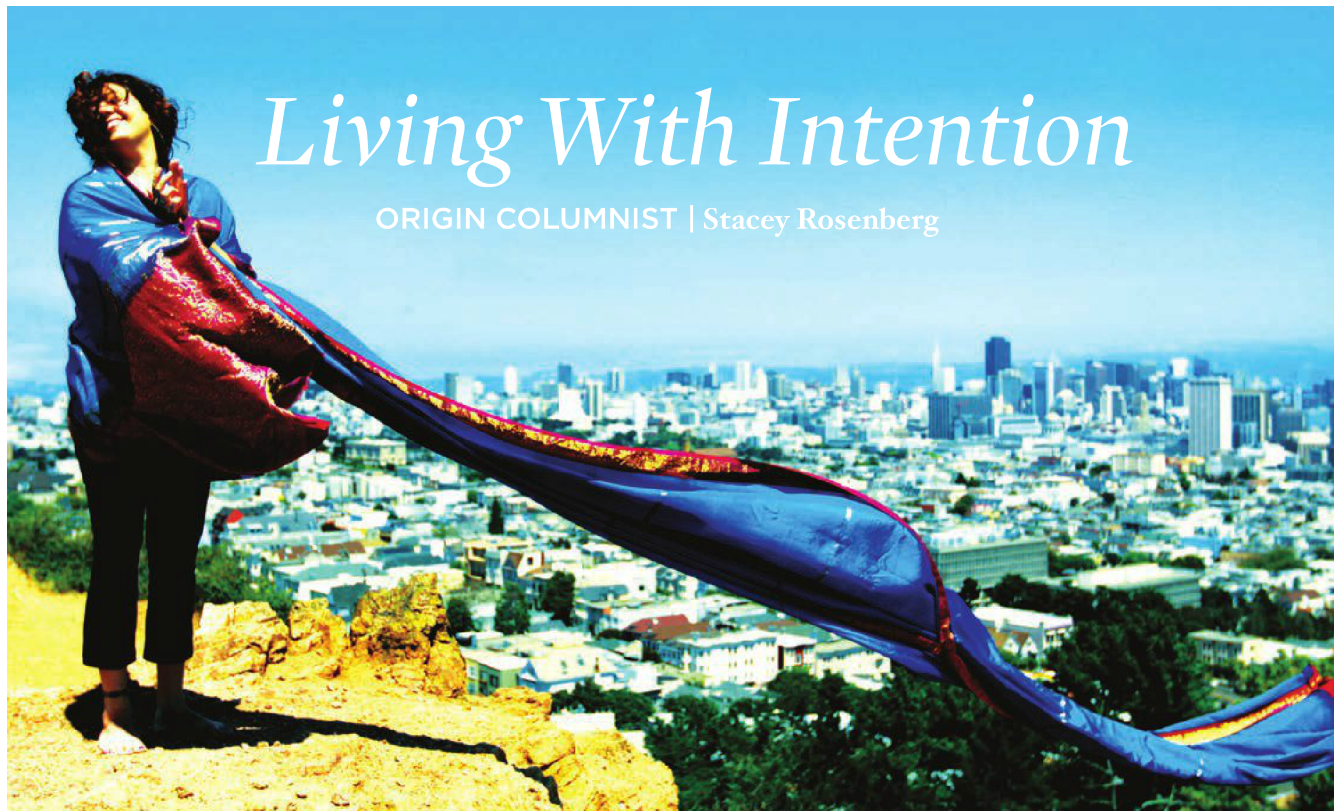


Living With Intention

ORIGIN COLUMNIST | Stacey Rosenberg



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Each September as part of the California Coastal Clean Up Day I teach a free yoga class on the beach. As we practice beside the rolling waves and then pick up trash, we see the link between taking a plastic bag at the market or a to-go cup from the coffee shop and the world around us. Often we go through our days meeting our immediate needs and not thinking about their impact. But if we set our intention to live with conscious awareness about our choices and their effects, together we can radically change the world.

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Living in the world often seems to mean living half-asleep. The societal downloads we receive tend to emphasize following routines and patterns set for us by our parents, our schools, our

community and the media. Sometimes those structures of behavior can have value, but often they dissuade us from paying attention to how we inhabit the world. This seems to be true both physically and spiritually.

When we wake up each morning we can take a moment to make conscious choices about how we are going to live in the world. Whether we sit for meditation, practice asana, or turn off the water while brushing our teeth, there are opportunities great and small for creating habits that have a positive impact both on ourselves and on the world. The habits we create become part of the fabric of who we are. How is the way you are living shaping the world?

There are a lot of ways to cultivate living with conscious awareness. Of course, we can focus our attention on the resources we use, but we can also focus on living with consideration for those around us, and cultivating more harmony within our communities. No matter what your aim the cultivation of awareness involves slowing down, paying attention, and listening, looking, and feeling in each moment.

Teaching yoga, I often see students who are new to the practice becoming aware of parts of their bodies and considering their physical relationship to the ground or space for the first time in their lives. Even

something as simple as the placement of their feet can have profound impacts throughout their body. When we start to think about how we are aligning our bodies on the mat we begin to think about how we are standing in our lives, our relationships, and in the world.

I've practiced yoga for over 15 years. As I learned how to align my body I began to notice the larger places of misalignment in the ways my habitual behaviors weren't serving my deeper intentions. What we do on the mat is really just a practice for how we are living our lives. When you find your feet on the ground, connected to the earth and to your breath there is a natural unfolding of your authentic self. This manifests as becoming more comfortable with yourself and how you move in the world, empowering you to live your vision. I've experienced this in my own life and have seen it happen over and over in the lives of my students.

I believe that each of us has something unique to offer the world. Cultivating a practice of inner listening and living with more presence in each moment allows you to unfold to your most natural self. This authentically shifts your focus from the need to compete with or please others to the desire to simply be your own true self. I have learned from my teacher, the Tantric scholar Dr. Douglas Brooks, that the purpose of life is nothing more than a process of deepening our engagement, appreciation and participation in life. Cultivating conscious awareness and consideration for the world around us is an integral part of that process, a process that unfolds the sweetest of fruits: our own hearts.



Stacey Rosenberg is a Certified Anusara® Yoga Instructor in the San Francisco Bay Area and around the globe. Her classes are dynamic and playful and provide a fun, safe, and nurturing environment that invites students to move deeply into their own hearts and transform their lives.

For more info visit www.namastacey.com.