

"Life is sacred, celebrate life. Care for others, and share whatever you have with those less fortunate than you. Broaden your vision, for the whole world belongs to you. Instead of thinking, 'What about me? What can I gain from this world?', think, 'What can I do for the world?' When everyone considers what they can only contribute to society, you will have a Divine society".

"Our first foremost commitment is to do seva (service) in the world. When you make the service your sole purpose of life, it eliminates fear, brings focus in your mind, purposefulness in action, and long term joy"



Sri Sri Ravi Shankar comforting tsunami victims

*"My vision is a world
that is violence-free,
crime-free and stress-free*

H. H. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar
Founder



*Why take the Art Of Living Program to the people of Afghanistan? What can it do for them? What are the benefits?
What is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder?*

It is a well-documented fact that many illnesses are caused by stress, i.e., high blood pressure, heart attacks, and some forms of cancer, as well as many other health difficulties. Stress also weakens the strength of the immune system, making one more vulnerable to diseases. War populations are affected by chronic acute stressors; threat to safety, life threatening or perceived life threatening incidents, bombings, displacement, etc. Stress from person on person violence is higher than stress from natural disasters, so war affected populations are experiencing high levels of stress and these high levels of stress contribute to lowered efficiency of the immune system with increased risk of illnesses.

Many people in Afghanistan experienced at least 4 traumatic events, and many more than 11 traumatic events, over a ten year period. People exposed to multiple traumas may have difficulty sleeping, nightmares, irritability, unwelcome memories of the troubling events coming into their minds, flashbacks, panic attacks, anxiety attacks, depression, sleeping difficulties and other troubling symptoms. These are symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, PTSD.

There are various estimates on the levels of PTSD in the Afghan population from studies conducted by organizations such as the Center for Disease Control and the World Health Organization, as high as 42% from respondents. Symptoms of depression were reported by over 67%, two-thirds of the people interviewed, and anxiety was present for over 72%. Afghan women were found to have higher levels of mental and emotional problems, due to physical, mental, and emotional anguish under the practices of the Taliban. Feelings of hatred were high at 84%, and most often reported coping mechanisms were *religious and spiritual practices* and focusing on basic needs.

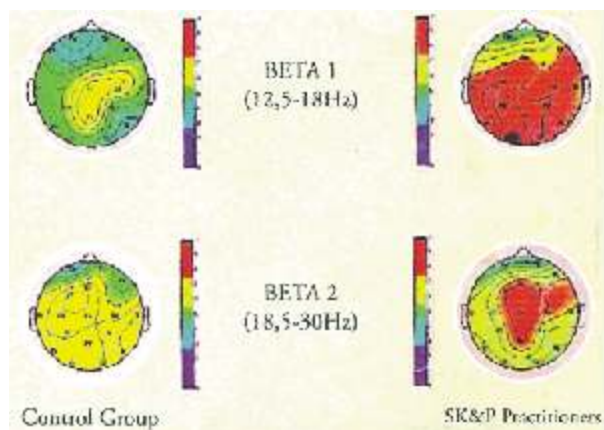
Mental Health has been made a priority by the Afghanistan Parliament and the Minister of Public Health, Dr. Fatimie. Funding for services is low, however, and is still and will be for probably a long time, dependent on outside sources.

Beneficial Effects of Sudarshan Kriya for Afghan Trauma Victims

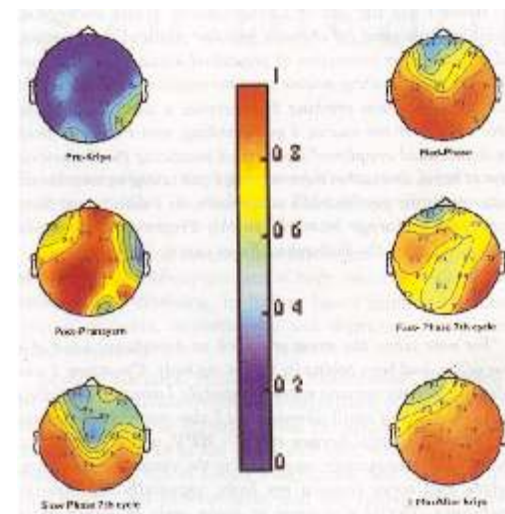
Neurological studies of EEGs of depressed people show they have low levels of alpha and beta wave activity. National Institute of Mental Health and Neurological Sciences studies of people with depression show that these specific brain wave activities increase with the practice of Sudarshan Kriya and that regular practice of SKY eliminates their depression and they are happy and well. EEGs of people who do the Sudarshan Kriya regularly show that they have significantly higher levels of alpha and beta waves simultaneously, that their minds are alert, while their bodies are relaxed.

Cumulative stress is a factor in lowering the immune system, and medical studies have shown that people who practice the SKY regularly have increased levels of t-cells and NK cells. All Indian Institute of Medical Sciences cancer studies showed a significant increase in t-cells and NK cells in cancer patients who were taught the SKY and practiced it.

People in Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Beslan, Kashmir and disaster sites such as Hurricane Katrina and the tsunami report that nightmares, insomnia, panic attacks, and other symptoms of PTSD cease after practicing the SKY.



Comparison EEGs of beta activity of control group of doctors to SK & Pranayam Practitioners.



EEG of SKY practitioner showing increase in electrical activity during and after SKY.

Applying medical research findings to field experience, Sudarshan Kriya and pranayam techniques directly address the destructive effects of critical and chronic stress on war victims. Symptoms of PTSD and depression cease or decrease significantly, the immune system is strengthened and people report feelings of happiness, well - being, and belongingness. People are students, not patients, and are self - empowered. Courses are taught for free or low fee, people learn how to practice the techniques themselves, making this a cost-effective remedy for a major problem.

For Research information contact : srisriresearch@gmail.com

Afghanistan was, in ancient Asian history, an important and integral part of the world socioeconomic development as the center of the famed Silk Route, which traversed Afghanistan, with caravans of traders from Europe seeking the spices, silks, and jewels of India and the Orient.



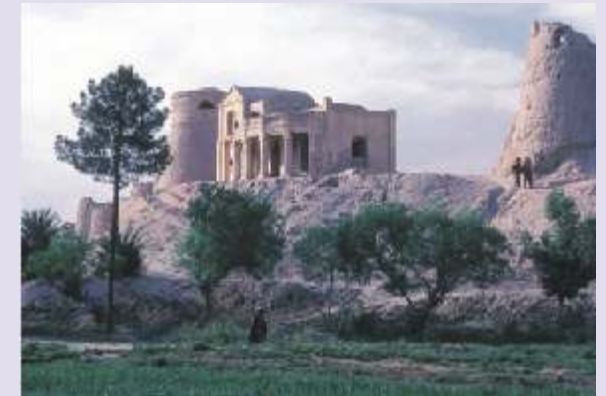
Many conquerors invaded Afghanistan and in the wake of the destruction left vestiges of some value, such as some medical knowledge within the culture, residue from the Alexandrian physicians. Blends of different schools of art and architecture are found, among them the Gandhara arts, buildings and sculptures in sacred areas now being looted for sale in foreign lands.



The travelers also brought cultural and spiritual practices and values from the East and the West, with the Buddhist influence symbolized by the great Buddhas of Bhamiyan, which were destroyed by the Taliban in 1998.



Afghanistan was long known as “the fruit basket of Asia”, with many varieties of delicious fruits.



Faizabad 2000

Afghanistan is today one of the world's tragedies. A country rich in cultural and spiritual history, its people are now struggling to recover from 25 plus years of war, destruction, and strife. Successive conflicts of transgression by foreign intruders, the “Great Game” of the Western powers, national revolution, and present day turmoil and aggression by the once respected, once national, Taliban, a group now directed again by foreign terrorist intruders, has the people in mental and emotional anguish.



Suffering old man

Afghanistan is now the top producer of opium poppies, and women are forced into the fields to harvest the crops. They become ill often from inhaling the fumes or by skin contact with the opium resin. Poppy crops are easily viewed from the roads, and a journalist who traveled into the interior of Afghanistan said there is an "ocean of poppies" growing in Afghanistan at this time.



Opium poppy crop next to Shrine of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, Sufi poet



Food line



U.S. soldier in poppy field in southern Afghanistan

International military forces as well as national military forces are involved in eradicating the poppy crops. Money raised from opium production funds the Taliban terrorist activities.

"Unless trauma is released, food and medicines won't work. People can't sleep or eat because their minds are full of the terrible tragedy that has befallen them."

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

In a land where the population is now reduced to 28,000,000 there is an unofficial estimate of 10,000,000 land mines. The streets of Kabul are lined daily with one legged and legless beggars, men and boys. Women and girl amputees are usually hidden from the public eye by their families.



Demining

Demining technicians from all over the globe, dedicated to serving others, work daily in extreme weather conditions in a hazardous occupation removing land mines. The Danish Demining Group reported that 100 mines were being found daily in the city of Kabul itself.



Members of the Afghanistan Association for Bicycling for Rehabilitation and Recreation, an NGO which has successfully assisted many amputees regain mental, emotional, and physical strength





Winter weather is extreme, with temperatures dipping to 20 below 0 and further, for months at a time. The infrastructure is minimal, with electricity and heat available usually only through generators, with high fuel costs.



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Education is still a great need, to adults as well as boys and girls, with schools held in tents even through the freezing winters. The literacy rate is very low, with at least one generation, now adult, uneducated. Al Qaeda and the Taliban are planting remote controlled explosive devices in schools for girls on a regular basis. Suicide bombing is increasing, both in rate and in numbers killed.

The role of women is seen in need of upliftment, but within Kabul most women still wear the burka and outside Kabul it is necessary for safety of the women and their families. They are faceless.



Women and their children in prison for protection from "honor" killings.



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Girls and women have been taught not to laugh in public.



Darlaman Palace in the west of Kabul



Kabul, February 2007

The International Art Of Living Foundation began delivering relief services to the war weary Afghans in Feb. 2003, with the first trainings in stress reduction and stress management taught to child war victims with chronic health problems and mine injuries in Union Services for Afghan Refugees, a joint Afghan-German NGO in Wazir Akbar Khan, Kabul, at “Peace House”, a residence for girls and small children.

The small girls and smaller boys were taught in the first Breath, Water, Sound Course there and the Teachers said immediately that they saw big differences in the state of the children, that they were happier and calmer. They asked for instruction so they could continue the breathing techniques with the children. During the fun playing, the girls would cover their mouths if they wanted to giggle, as it is culturally forbidden there for women and girls to laugh.

Art Of Living Teachers then taught the Course to some older boys in “Peace House” of the NGO in Shahr E Naw, another part of Kabul, with ecstatic results for the boys and the staff. The cook, who did not take the Course, felt the joy of the others so much he began dancing for us and the boys began spontaneous playing “ad lib” routines.



The BWS Programs relieve people of stress, instill a sense of belonging, and increase overall health, mental well-being, enthusiasm and focus. People report greater ease in relationships, mental clarity, greater joy and peace in life.



This Istalif woman heard that some one brought donations to her village and she immediately brought these flowers in gratitude.

Some donations from United Arab Emirates Art Of Living members were distributed to villagers in Istalif, a village where over 30,000 homes were destroyed by the Taliban.

Courses for Children in Peace House



Children peering through a hole in the wall of their school

The Afghan people are warm and open hearted, despite the long years of violence and many losses. It is the custom that “the guest is king” and the famed Afghan hospitality is still present today, although the people of the general population are very poor. On arrival in Kabul, the AOL staff had to make the poor drivers of the yellow Toyota Corollas take money for their fee; they would say, “No, no, you are here to help our people!” The Muslim population is deep in faith and surrendered to the will of Allah.



Children play on and around wrecks of military vehicles. Often they are mined and the children are injured or killed.



This is a street boy named Hassan, he has leishmaniasis on his face, a disfiguring disease from a sand flea bite, very common in Afghanistan

The Indian Special Police Unit guarding the Indian Embassy in Kabul and Indian Embassy Administrative staff enjoyed the Course and techniques enthusiastically and the Ambassador requested a Course at his residence, India House, with his Personal Guard Unit. In the very early morning hours, the Ambassador and his guards gathered on the rooftop garden area and practiced pranayams, Bhastrika and meditation.

State Bank of India Administrators arranged for a Course 1 to be taught for their staffs at their residence, with the Indian Medical Mission physicians who were serving at Indira Ghandi Hospital.



The fruit of Love is Service, The fruit of Service is Peace

H.H. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Several international businessmen, an Afghan physician and an American NGO Director also attended. They all spoke of stress due to the insecure situation, hardship conditions and long hours of work in their service.

The doctors and the other students happily enjoyed the play and spoke appreciatively of the relief they felt from stress with the Sudarshan Kriya, techniques, and the knowledge.

***Courses for Indian Embassy Staffs, National and International NGOs
United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, UNIFEM***

Other Courses were then taught to the staffs of various national and international NGOs, many of them counselors and social workers, with much happiness and relief seen on the faces of the students. The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes counseling staffs at Wadan Drug Treatment Center and the Drug Treatment Unit in the Psychiatric Unit of the Hospital took the BWS Course and showed discomfort at moving their bodies. After the Course they spoke enthusiastically of their relief and enjoyment of the stress reducing breathing practices and meditations.

UNODC Administrators were so impressed with what they heard about the BWS Course and techniques that they requested a Course for the Administrators, which was held at the UNAMA compound in Shahr E Naw, Kabul.

The staffs of the United Nations UNIFEM relaxed after the knowledge points, hatha yoga, and pranayams in the Course 1 and the Sudarshan Kriya.

"This Course is superb! It's wonderful! I feel years younger!" Afghan Attorney for International Law with the Ministry of Women's Affairs

"This is real spiritual work!" Doctor, Wadan Drug Treatment Unit

News of the Courses began to circulate around Kabul, but without phones or a Center and with insecure situations, Courses still needed to be arranged through direct contacts at NGO and UN offices.

*"People get into the drug habit assuming drugs will provide the happiness they're looking for.
The only way to wriggle them out of this is to show them
that only the spiritual path can give unlimited joy"*

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

UNIFEM then sponsored a Program to provide the Breath, Water, Sound Course to over 100 women in Centers in Kapisa Province in the villages of Danesh and Bhakukhan, a 4-5 hours drive outside Kabul on rough mud and gravel roads. The AOL staff, driver, and translator traveled many hours daily into insecure areas to serve the women. We had to be back in Kabul before sunset. The villages were clusters of small mud houses with gardens around them. Most do not have glass in the windows to protect from the cold. The residents obtain their water from ditches running beside the roads and past their houses, into which waste and sewage are also dumped. Housing is primitive and inadequate for the inclement weather conditions.



Little boy getting water from the ditch for his mother

The centers were primitive and in dilapidated condition.

As the women gathered in the rooms of the center, they were restless and distractible, with difficulty paying attention, but soon felt the relief from the yogic breathing techniques and told their friends and family members. Many more came to enter the Courses, and laughter rang through the centers. Women kept trying to sneak into the Courses, some with babies under their bharukas!



Destroyed Village

"When you train a woman, you help the entire family, the village and the nation." Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

What began as small Courses in two Centers of 10 to 15

Course for village women in UNIFEM Centers

students, grew to over 100, with the Teacher, the translator and driver leaving Kabul before dawn and returning before sundown. One beneficiary, a wizened older woman who had endured much violence and hardship, said at the end of the Course: ***“Well, these Courses are the BEST!! I want MORE of these!! I have not slept IN YEARS and I have been sleeping EVERY NIGHT since I started doing these techniques!!”*** These kinds of results are why Art Of Living volunteers all over the world are reaching out to help others in need. Witnessing the visible, deep changes in the people's faces is like watching flowers open up, only it is people.

No photos of the women were allowed to be taken there, but photos were taken of their children and gifted to them.



The women must always wear the Bhurka in the provinces, and they struggle to tend to their children while walking and working in these cumbersome shrouds. They are looking out at the world around them through a small rectangular mesh screen.

Bhakukhan Boy

He was anxious and it took a lot of cajoling to get this shy smile



An Afghan government contact at the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism received an inquiry regarding yoga classes from the Chancellor of Kabul Medical University, Dr. Cheragh Ali Cheragh, a highly respected physician who was surgery instructor for all the surgeons at Kabul Medical University. The Art Of Living was recommended and Dr. Cheragh called the Art Of Living Teacher. He and the supervising surgical faculty attended a presentation with video on the medical research grounding the efficacy of the Sudarshan Kriya in reducing the effects of stress and increasing the body's capacity to function in a more healthy manner. They were so impressed by the research findings that they immediately requested a Course, and when the Courses to the village ladies were completed, their Course began at a home in Shahr E Naw at 5:00 in the morning, before their daily surgical and university duties.



*"Service is to see what is needed,
and be available to the surrounding circumstances.
It is the willingness to jump in
and be available to the situation."*

Most of these physicians had lived in Kabul during the 25 years of upheaval and violence and experienced the same violent, chaotic war stresses other residents had experienced, while attending to medical needs of others, witnessing the carnage and heartbreaking events.

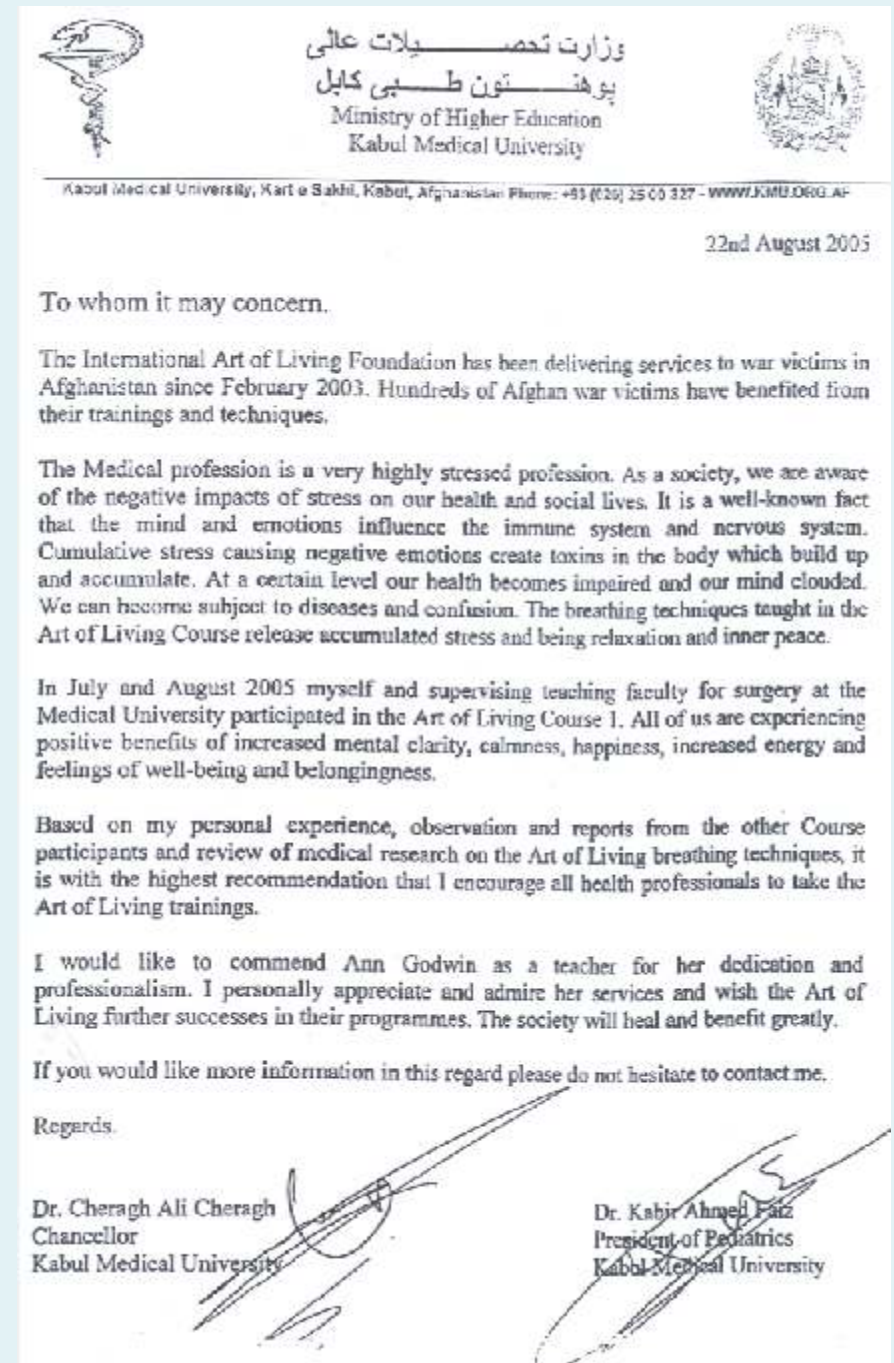
A specialized Course was given, and the doctors relaxed more and more as the days passed with more and more practice of the specialized techniques. Their amazement and pleasure at the positive changes they felt in their bodies and noticed in their thinking as the stress levels reduced gave way to laughter, sparkling smiles and gratitude. They began to tell their families and colleagues of the deep benefits they experienced from the yoga.



*Drs. Cheragh Ali Cheragh,
Kabir Faiz and Bashir Noormal,
studying in the United States*

*"Nobody has taught us how to get rid of stress.
Neither in school nor at home has anyone
taught us how to manage our emotions, feelings or mind.
This is where one can take recourse in the breath,
meditation and a few exercises"*

Course for Kabul Medical University



A telephone call was received one morning from a young man representing his uncle, who he said was a very important man. They were inquiring about the Yoga Course and where was it given, and when? The Teacher informed that due to the security needs, the Courses were usually taught at the student's place, and the schedule could be arranged for the participant's busy schedules. He was delighted and introduced his uncle by phone, Mr. Sayeed Mansoor Naderi, the Ismaili Khan, former Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and recently elected Member of Parliament for Baghlan Province. Arrangements were made again to teach in the early morning hours at 5 AM, at the nephew's residence, as even at that early hour, his uncle's residence was thronged with people seeking his assistance.

A large 4-wheel drive vehicle with many armed guards arrived at the orphanage before dawn the next morning and flew through the bumpy and difficult streets to Taimanny. Dawood would translate for his uncle and participate in the Course. He had been taken to London with his mother for safety after the disappearance of his father by the Russian military, and is fluent in English.

The weather was still very cold, frigid, with temperatures far below freezing, and generators were turned on in the predawn hours to power the electric space heaters and lights.

The Khan was gracious, appreciative and impressive. His eyes are large and dark, and he emanates genuine deep loving energy. He is tall, dignified and stately, naturally drawing respect, and yet exhibits the childlike simplicity of the spiritually evolved, innocence in a leader who had to take up the sword of war to help his people.

Investigations had been done by various international human rights organizations on the four Northern Alliance Commanders, Sayeed Mansoor, Fahim, Masood, and Dostum: no human rights transgressions had been found due to military operations under the Khan.

Over the days of the Course the practices emptied much of the effects of the cumulative stressors from his system, and the resonant laughter of the man reverberated through the crisp early morning air. His body became more agile and relaxed as the toxins emptied through the breath. He pointed out the changes he noticed with delight; increased range of motion, more alacrity and easy and restful sleep. The family was very happy with the relaxation seen in Sayeed and Dawood, and the women of the family, his wife, daughters, and in-laws, gathered in the living room to take part in a Breath, Water, Sound Course, laughing and relaxing themselves. They were able to express themselves and the “Laughing Club” was energetic and highly enjoyed.

Courses for Ismaili Khan and Family, Kabul

Sayeed Mansoor Naderi
Ismaili Khan
Member of Parliament, Baghlan Province
Kabul, Afghanistan

December 10, 2005

It is my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for the International Art Of Living Foundation. I participated in the Art Of Living Course 1 in November, 2005, and have been practicing the techniques learned in the Course since. I have noted many improvements in my health and sense of well-being.

I have been involved in life long public service in my country, during many years of conflicts, upheavals, and violence, as a Military Commander and leader. I serve as the spiritual leader, Ismaili Khan, and as a political leader, the popularly elected Member of Parliament for Baghlan Province. I was Vice President of the Republic of Afghanistan under President Rabbani.

Since learning the knowledge and techniques in the Art Of Living Course, I notice increased energy, feelings of peacefulness and calmness, improved concentration, and greater physical flexibility.

I strongly and wholeheartedly commend the Art Of Living Program for the people of Afghanistan and hold the Art Of Living staff in high regard.

Peace begins within the individual. I am informed that the Founder of the Art Of Living, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, is a Nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize for his global efforts to uplift humanity through individual development and the many social humanitarian programs of the Art Of Living around the world. I support his nomination and selection for the award, and wish the Art Of Living continuing success in their many programs.

Sincerely,

Sayeed Mansoor Naderi
Ismaili Khan
Member of Parliament, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Former Vice President, Republic of Afghanistan



S.D. Naderi
President
Kayan Construction Company
Kabul, Afghanistan

December 9, 2005

I am a busy professional businessman and politician in Kabul, Afghanistan. I have many work and time-related pressures, as well as the stresses of being involved in reconstruction of my country under difficult and sometimes dangerous circumstances.

I participated in the Art Of Living Course 1 and have felt relief of much of the stresses I felt. I feel calmer, more peaceful, and able to be relaxed during what were before stressful situations. My concentration has improved and my work life is less stressful.

I recommend the Art Of Living Course to others who are dealing with the many stresses of working and living in high tension areas. The natural and easily learned techniques are effective in lessening the effects of daily stresses as well as the effects of pent up stresses in the body and mind.

Sincerely,

S. Dawood Naderi,
President
Kayan Construction Company



"Violence ends where love begins."

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Following these Courses there were recommendations for the Course to the Minister of Public Health and he met with the Art Of Living staff to discuss the benefits of the Art Of Living Courses and techniques, especially for the traumatized population, and a Course for the medical administrative staff of the Ministry of Public Health. Arrangements were made within the MoPH premises. Course 1 with Sudarshan Kriya was conducted for one of the Deputy Ministers of Public Health, the President of Administration, President of Human Resources, and other high-ranking medical officers.

Again, the Course was taught in circumstances made difficult by the cold, cold weather and lack of electricity. The room was cold and heaters had to be found and arranged to warm the room while generators were running to power facilities in the MoPH office building to run the stoves and lights.



Yoga was new for them, and there was initial stiffness and slowness. Practice over the days brought praise and exclamations of the new energy and relaxation they found daily in their routines. They remarked on the differences their family members saw in their behavior and lowered stress. The students were surprised at the results and the differences they felt, the relaxation and peacefulness. Warm expressions of gratitude came at each following meeting with the AOL staff, and recommendations for more Courses and requests followed.

Course for Ministry of Public Health



Spirits lifted, and the party at the end of the Course was merry and informal.

At this time the earthquake in Pakistan occurred and AOL trained a team of earthquake victim/volunteers in Islamabad to assist disaster victims in remote areas.



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Ministry of public Health
Human Resources General Directorate

جمهوری اسلامی افغانستان
وزارت صحت عامه
ریاست عمومی قوای بشری
شماره و تاریخ: _____

No. & date: _____

To whom it may concern

About the Art of Living Course and breathing Techniques and its benefits for stress reduction and weight reduction as well as benefits for increased mental clarity, calmness, happiness, increased energy and feelings of well-being I heard from one of my good friends – Prof. Cheragh Ali Cheragh, advisor to the Minister of Higher Education in Medical education, who experienced the course in August 2005 in Kabul.

As far as I became very much interested in taking this course, I talked about to some of my friends and colleagues and encouraged them to take this course. Mid December we contacted Ms Ann Godwin to kindly organize the course for us. She was so kind in accepting our request.

Being participant of the course late December 2005, I experienced physical, mental and emotional improvement. It has really helped me to improve my mental alertness and reduce mental tension especially working in highly tense situations. Based on my personal experience, I recommend it for every body who would like to reduce their stress, and encourage all health professionals to take the Art of Living trainings.

I am indeed very much thankful to Ms Ann Godwin for her kind co- operation, professionalism and dedication in running this useful course for our war affected population and wish her and Art of Living Foundation grand success.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Bashir Noormal
Human Resource Director General
Ministry of Public Health, Afghanistan
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noormalb@atg.emh.gov.af



CONCERN, the international Irish NGO, contacted AOL staff and requested a Course for their international and national staffs in Taloquan, a northern city above Kunduz, near the Northwest Frontier Province. The plane flew in and landed first on a metal grid left by the Russians in a field in Kunduz to pick up other passengers, and on into Faizabad, landing in a creekbed. CONCERN staff took the Teacher on into Taloquan by vehicle. Taloquan is an ancient city which was visited by Marco Polo. The universities and libraries were burned to the ground by the Taliban and much destruction and violence to the people had taken place there. The staffs were Irish, Chinese, Filipino and Afghan. The Afghan staffs all told of terrible and horrific experiences during the wars and the rule of the Taliban.



They participated with enjoyment and relief, and a dust storm which hovered over the city all week did not lower until the last day of the Course had ended. The CONCERN staffs continued to gather together to practice the techniques together.

*"We are here to make the whole world aware of the possibilities of life.
We are here to make everyone aware of how far they can reach, and how joyful they can be."*

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Course for CONCERN NGO Staff, Taloquan

Concern Worldwide

Taloqan, N. E. Afghanistan.

Tel: 00-93-(0)799-095166 00-93-(0)70-704820

To: Dr. Anna Thurairatnam, International Medical Corps, OB/GYN Unit, Rabia Balkhi Hospital, Kabul

I know Ann Godwin for past one year now. She had conducted a Basic Course of Art of Living at our office in Taloqan for our national and international staff members. Before requesting her to do the course for our staff, I had already attended a course in Pakistan by another trainer of the Art of Living and in the light of my own experience of the course, I wanted him to come to Afghanistan to conduct a course for our staff. He recommended Ann Godwin to conduct the course. This whole basic course which gives one exposure to techniques of breathing in a certain order has a very calming affect on the personality of people.

The course was very well received by the staff members of Concern Afghanistan . As an example of the impact of the course, I will quote some of the participants below:

- Seleha, one of the participants of the course, is a mother of 5 children. After the course she shared her experience and said, "My mood has become much better. I am no longer an irritable woman and mother. Nowadays I do not scold my children on everything. I listen to them more patiently." She also added that as result of observing this behaviour, her husband remarked, "What a wonderful and pleasant person you have become. Tell me what is it that has changed your temperament so much." She also said that as a result of course and regular practice her sleep had become better. She said her abdomen was also becoming small and she was no longer breathless.

- Another participant of the course, Mohebullah said that he was feeling much more relaxed and was joyful. He said that he began to like coming to work which earlier for him was a difficult task.

- One woman named Zeyadah remarked that she generally felt more energetic after the course.

- My personal experience of the course has been very positive. I used to have a lot of pain before the start of my menses and I used to take very strong pain killers. With the regular practice now the pain has come to a tolerable level and I no longer take pain killers.

There are people who as a result of attending this course and then practicing it later on in their lives have considerably improved in terms of getting rid of stress, and being able to enjoy the life more thoroughly.

There are doctors and scientists who are researching the impact of Sudarshan Kriya as a detoxifying technique for the human body.

As a trainer, Ann is very meticulous in terms of training people on the techniques of breathing and the other accompanying aspects of the course. She has tried to be flexible on the meeting schedule and adjusted it according to the needs and availability of the participants. She tries to balance the course requirement with the pace of learning of the participants. All our staff were very grateful to her for giving them an opportunity to know and be able to practice Sudarshan Kriya.

There are a number of other related courses that she conducts for professionals and executives. Once there is less stress, the efficiency of the staff also improves. Therefore I would recommend that most of us do need such a course to help us relieve our negative stress every day to become better persons.

I wish all the best in her efforts for making people better persons.

Best regards.

Farrah Naz

Assistant Country Director Programmes



Two more Courses were taught to physicians at the specialized International Medical Corps OB/GYN Unit at Rabia Balkhi Hospital in Kabul. These doctors and their families had also been through extreme hardships and personal physical attacks at the hands of the Taliban. Dr. Fatima had experienced many years of intrusive troubling memories of near death assaults on her husband and son by the Taliban and the burning of their home, with anxiety and much grief. She said that God had sent these techniques to help her and relieve her of the painful and troubling symptoms she had been burdened by all that time.

Miracles of Breath



These two doctors both had very high blood pressure of 165/115. By the end of the Course their BPs had reduced to 120/90 and 115/80!

The female doctors requested two separate Courses, one male and one female. They felt that doing yoga on the floor in the same room as men was still prohibited.

The students did not dance during the happy exercises and Muslim music of the famed song, “Eliahu” was played. In the men's Course, the men enthusiastically and loudly sang along with their eyes closed, sometimes peeking to see what the others were doing, and with the hospital officials knocking on the door, as the loud singing was fear arousing. It was not that long since the Taliban were beating and killing people for playing music. They felt it was still dangerous.

Course for International Medical Corps



Rabia Balkhi Hospital, OB/GYN Unit male Doctors' Course,
with Director Dr. Anna Thurairatnam

When the same music was played for the women doctors in their Course, they stood still with eyes closed, not singing, but with tears streaming silently down their faces, a silent but profound experience.

Even though they are doctors, highly educated women, they were too apprehensive to allow their photos to be taken.

They were all surprised at how much relief they felt from just breathing. They said their families told them they were much more pleasant and were happy with the changes.

During the rhythmic breathing of the Sudarshan Kriya, a space of love is created. In such a space, the body, mind and spirit are rejuvenated and healed. Pure consciousness is pure love, and love is the greatest healer.

"There is a great secret in the breath. You have an inbuilt ability to calm the mind, heal the body and energize the whole system in minutes. The secret is in the breath."

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar



Children from Khorosan House, a private orphanage in Kabul.

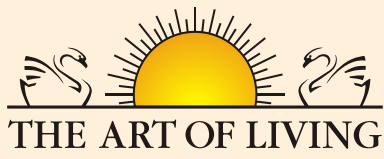


Lunch for children in the tent schools



The lessons of life come in many different ways. We see that there are a number of places in the world where conflict has continued for many years; the Balkans, Palestine, and Afghanistan to name a few. Afghanistan has many paradoxes, while there have been years of conflict, it was a cradle of development for several different religions. While looking out a window in March, 2003, in Kabul at a frozen landscape that was a dull grey brown, a moonscape almost, I was thinking of how much I loved it there. One winter day a few years later at Massood Circle, a guard at the Ministry of Public Health in a drab brown woolen uniform was watching a legless man maneuver through snow, frozen mud and ice across the traffic. The expression on his face was a beautiful mixture of love, compassion and respect, so human. I was standing one day buying a soccer ball for my friend's kids and turned and someone had placed a beautiful legless 11 year old boy there, while I was holding the soccer ball; training Pakistani earthquake victims how to help other victims; giving BWS healing techniques to Afghan refugees in Peshawar. I have worked for many years with victims of rape, car accidents, assaults, war, earthquakes, torture, and many kinds of abuse. Nothing has helped the people so much as the knowledge and techniques taught in the Art Of Living programs. I have been very fortunate to be an instrument to bring these to the people of Afghanistan.

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I belong to you, you belong to me

