

Musings on Yoga: Dragonfly Vision

July 2022

*Summertime
sun-touched Yang time.
Human doings
swimmings, bikings, eatings, festivalings, visitings.
Glittering wings catch our eye
heart songs, actively
metabolizing all kinds of experience.
- b*

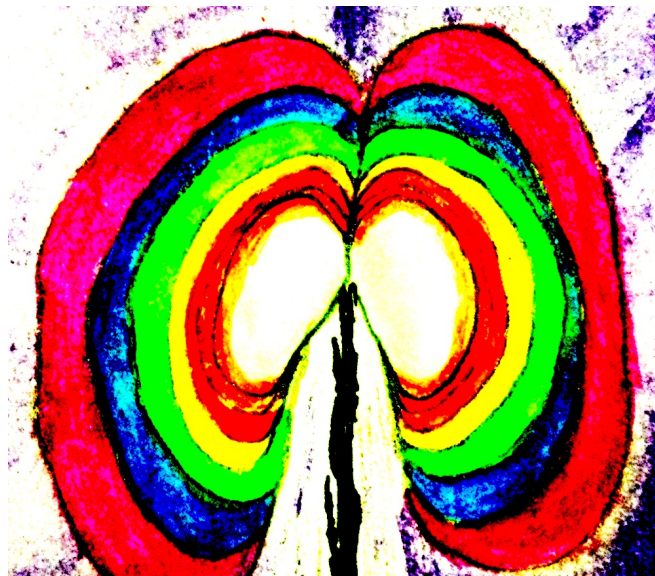
All about there are dragonflies a wing...drifting through the edges of our sight, hunting in the margins between shadow and light, wet and dry. Archetype of yang sparkling in the sun...purposeful in its hunt for food and mate... zooming by at 40 kilometres per hour.

And then, to STOP..."in the name of love" (*Supremes*)... hovering ...stillness, literally hanging in the air, YIN-like in the pause. "At the still point, there the dance is" (Eliot, 1943). Flying dragons released by sun's heat and lengthened days from their early life as nymphs hunting in the wet dark depths below the waters' surface. Dragons below, as much as dragons above, with their extendible, hinged jaws poised to seize tadpoles and leech, larvae and small fish. Transformed from early life's chapter into beings that fly above the blue waters surface in all their stunning iridescence and many jewelled colours drawing our hearts to create story.

Inspiring stories of change and growth, transformations of all kinds. I read somewhere that dragonfly was once dragon, now reduced to this wee creature in our lives now because of a story of hubris and pride, a story seemingly so useful in considering how we humans make choices in the world. I was once 'dragonfly' in one of those environmental education programs for children and youth where staff took names of something 'nature-ish' to further stir young imaginations of this amazing natural world, as they wandered through forest glades along creeks below rising peaks. Taking a name, not quite appreciating how it might shift reality, unfolding story. Dragonfly perched on a child's arm. Meanings in ink, stories leading to more stories. Drawn always to exploring journeys that lead to flight and deep seeing.

And in this movement of transformation from one reality to one more complex, we come to our practice of yoga, be it through sitting or posture, flow or stillness. Transforming realities through seeing, feeling, listening, breathing... revealing the hidden yet always present union between body and mind, heart and spirit, yin and yang. Exposing as well our interconnectedness with all, as we learn to see more clearly through dragonflies' multifaceted eyes, the nature of the world as one of many interlocking truths. Seeing the world with dragonfly vision expanding, revealing that which is veiled in the unfolding of the divine play of *lila* as we travel through shifting chapters of life, from within water to air, evolving ideas of home, identity and relationships, to life's purpose in the moment.

Emily Carr, Salvadore Dali, Frida Kahlo, Jackson Pollock, Norval Morrisseau - remarkable visual artists all, amazingly skilled with colour, expanding our interpretations of reality with their art. Presentations of a world of colour filtered by the capacity of our human vision, retinas of the eye filled with light sensitive proteins, opsins in the way of 3's; three opsins, three colours, red and blue and green defining our version of rainbow in the world. Musing what art might be possible if we could create with **dragonfly vision**, with their compound faceted eyes containing 11-30 opsins giving them 'ultra-multicolour' extending even beyond the visible spectrum into the Infra Red, and to the polarized light reflecting off water. What might we bring to the world of culture and identity, evolution of consciousness, even leadership if we could see the world, imagine the world, through dragonfly vision expanding our human rainbow beyond a continuum to a fluid rainbow universe of possibilities. Of colour, of being, even as yin dances with yang within each of us... "*Lucy in the sky with diamonds*" (Elton J.)... Reminding us of the usefulness of diversifying our focus and integrating the within with the perceptions of the without. Seeing deeply within and without opening more fully into the play of the hidden and the revealed....yoga! Learning to see the art of life in all its layers, and colours and complexities, from flows of systemic power benefiting some while harming others, to exploring across our layers of our consciousness to understanding a world of interbeing, with all our relations.



Opsins d'fly

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Dragonfly vision, opening the ways of seeing and acting in the world, finding what is truly important to us, or perhaps at least one small facet of truth. Discovering that while dragonfly with its huge compound eyes seeing in expanded colour can also see 'almost' 360 degrees with its compound eyes. Key noticing of the 'almost' a small gap in its vision, an angle not clearly seen...yet known. A lesson in leading our life, that even as we expand our vision, analysis, experiences of life, knowledge, and leadership that wise action lies in knowing of the gaps we all have at times, however 'knowing' we might be. Gaps resulting from not seeing or not hearing, not acting that can result in harming another, or even us. I once remember a wise saying, always be prepared to be absolutely wrong! Oh what a beautiful sense of a gap, guiding us to be prepared to reflect, prepared to listen; prepared to let go of defensiveness, or guilt or shame; prepared to apologize, make right, accept the consequences; prepared to listen. The practice of yoga giving us

the tools to not only respond to the consequences of our gaps, but to further examine them whatever they may be even looking deeper below the surface into our learned or conditioned patterns, or 'samskaras' to see where they limit ...freedom. Yoga is transformation.

Practice: *Hover like dragonfly*

*Pause. Breathe. Embrace kindness. Breathe. Listen. Notice. Breathe.
Fly on.*

As you find your rhythm of flight this summer, alive in the sun and clear moon nights, I encourage you to find your yoga practice, be it the gentle restorative quiet of Yin (...a good nap), or the deep flowing play of Yang (...climbing a tree). Come to your mat or simply make it the amazing earth we live on; on the beach beside ocean, beneath forests rising grace, on a rock shelf, bare bones of the earth. Find your teachers wherever, whoever they might be at the front of a class or livestream...be they tree or river, or even dragonfly. If you are *yin drawn* to *Yin Space*, and a moment to hover, join us on Thursday evenings throughout the summer streamed from beside the river Thames, *Deshkan Ziibi*.

Allow a glimpse of dragonfly, of this wee colour/FULL 'mindfulness bell' of presence and interconnection to bring you to slow for a bit in wonder at its articulate flow of flight as it moves forward and back, pausing at times in perfect stillness to hang in the sky. Perhaps inviting the touch of dragonfly vision to see the world in multi-coloured rainbows! Use it bring you into that work/play of transforming reality within and without, reverberating through all our relations. Remembering, that like dragonfly even with all its phenomenal capacity to see and interpret the world, there will be gaps where we miss things, make mistakes, or even cause harm. Knowing that gaps exist with their inherent energies of discomfort, part of the journey learning to see, and act more clearly. And lastly of course, beyond the seeing, exists the dancing of the world, dragonfly in flight...ever the dance, along with the capacity to be still...to hover, to pause, within the weaves of the dance.

in weaving,

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brad davis
E-RYT200 RYT500 M.Ed.
Yin Space
www.dragonflyvision.ca
brad@dragonflyvision.ca

I am grateful to be able to live and share this ancient and evolving practice of yoga from the traditional territories of the Attawandaron, Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Lunaapeewak Peoples (Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee-Delaware Nation), beside the river Thames, Deshkan Ziibi.