

**Weekend Workshop - on “Memory” -
with Lina Franco.
Clonlea Yoga Studio,
Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland
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Is Memory (Smrti) a support or obstacle for us?

We can't completely experience the transformation process towards creativity to which Yoga invites us if we don't take the time to reflect upon memory and how it functions.

Yogic wisdom doesn't come from a particular philosophy with its abstract, conceptual thinking nor from a psychoanalytic approach trying to scrutinize the individual subconscious.

However, it reserves the highest attention to memory - *smrti* - a subject present as early as sutra 6 of the first chapter of the Tradition's major text.

And if Yoga continually appeals to “change” memory it's because it knows how much one's own image depends on memories to which life is so strongly and profoundly attached. Certainly meditation helps to “clean out” the mind but it will never destroy what lives in

it: good and bad habits, past feelings, old experiences, knowledge, certitudes, beliefs, and so on.

All along, the Yoga Sûtra points out the principles of (i) economy, and (ii) fear of the unknown. These influence one's thinking and preferences so that the brain will "let in" a "new" element only on the condition that it will neither disrupt the memory mind-set, nor discard what already exists in it. As a result, undeniably, each of us directs his attention, actions and life, in one way or another, to something that is, at least partially, "known".

"Practice" (*abhyâsa*) and "letting go" (*vairâgya*) are the two suggestions from the *Yoga Sûtra* to limit this tendency to try to satisfy one's thirst for what is already heard and experienced. From this point of view, practice constitutes a permanent invitation to re-open one's vision and listen freely to the unexplored, the unfamiliar, and the unrecognized.

Desire of the unknown is probably a "sane" risk to maintain creativity alive.

What in fact does it mean to move toward the unknown, to see beyond the bounds (of memory) if not to plunge into the mystery of a person, into the silence of his mind and memory where life is still not captured in a category, reduced to a concept, transformed into an idea, classified as a memory, enclosed within a project...

Questioning memory is a fundamental step bringing us towards a new consciousness of the human being.

What does each of us do with his own memory? How can one allow his own memory to stay open and available to the present? How can one keep what is in one's memory free and alive? And concerning the transmission of Yoga, which is the part of memory to preserve and which is the part to open into a genuine interaction with the present so that it can be changed, transformed into something new? As Yoga teachers and trainers, which place should we give to creativity? How should we combine the act of that transmission of an immemorial Tradition with the unknown here and now?

<http://www.body-yoga-paris.com/stages-yoga/2017/201-irlande-dublin-workshop>