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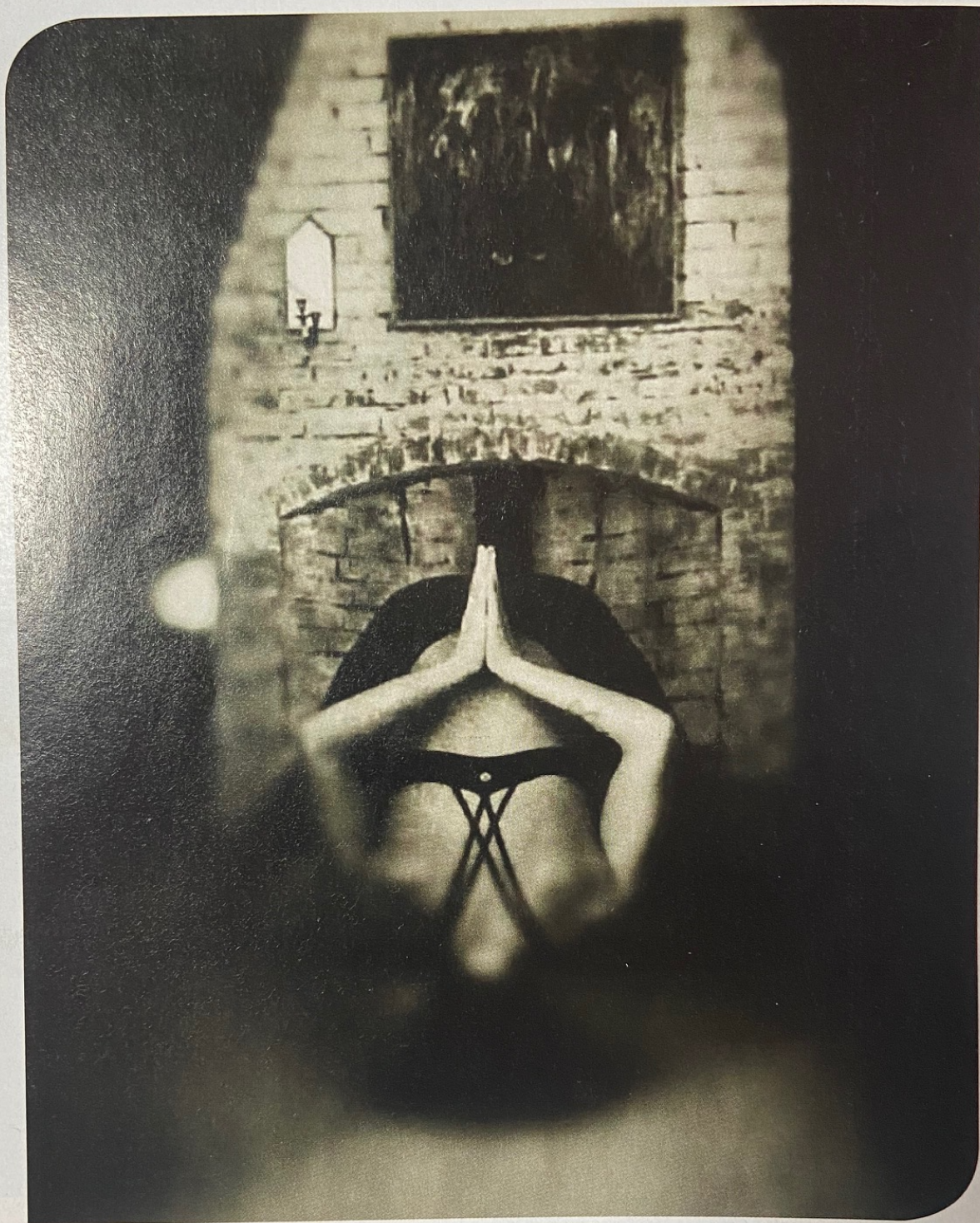
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DISPLAY UNTIL END OF FEBRUARY

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

No Place Like Ohm



I have heard it all my life, A voice calling a name I recognized as my own. Sometimes it comes as a soft-bellied whisper. Sometimes it holds an edge of urgency. But always it says: Wake up, my love. You are walking asleep. There's no safety in that!
~Oriah Mountain Dreamer, The Call

It's January and my one New Year's Resolution is to accept myself and trust I will be guided. Not an easy practice, but a worthy one to share:

In 2004, my then-husband and I bought our first home, an 1870's farmhouse that had been abandoned. It had great bones, but was a real fixer upper. New windows, walls to be knocked down and fresh coats of paint were all needed. But the heart of the revamping project was the floors. Blackened and warped, they did not exactly match my dream of fluffy slippers on golden amber wood floors. However, there were more necessary renovations needed, and money was tight, so it seemed my new floors would have to wait.

That is, until I rented a sander myself, and got to work. The floor was too buckled and warped to even sand, so I got down on my knees and removed each plank, one by one, to see what was underneath. The task was easier than I imagined; and underneath? Sand and debris that I simply vacuumed out. After that, each board fell into place beautifully and evenly with its neighbor as I replaced them. Next came the sanding, and with a light brush of the machine on the wood, the most beautiful antique oak revealed itself before my delighted eyes; happy to show itself after so many years undercover.

These floors taught me a beautiful lesson: what I had been searching for had been there all along. Under the abandoned, the darkened, the weathered, was something even better than new! Rich with history, the floors revealed the spirit of every foot that had walked it before mine, brilliant, just waiting to be seen and appreciated again.

I realize today, I too am like the floors of this house. I forget sometimes. We all do. I burden myself with all the ways I can be an improved version of myself-- thinner, stronger, richer, nicer. A better this and a lesser that. I set goals and make lists of things to do that will make me feel more important. But then I sit down on my yoga mat and it is revealed to me that, just like the floors, if I can go deeper and remove the debris, I am already whole and perfect. Right here. Right now.

So my wish for all of us is that we resolve to have no resolutions this year.

This does not mean we do not have intentions to be happier or more fulfilled in our lives. It simply means that we embrace a new understanding of accepting ourselves, and take on the practices that

help us employ a more holistic understanding of the word "resolution". For resolution means peace.

The Sanskrit word sankalpa often translates to the English word intention or resolution, but its true meaning is much more vast than focusing on our lack or where we need improvement. Derived from the root word "san", which means truth and kalpa, which means "the rule to be followed above all other rules". Sankalpa is intention setting based on embodying the trust that we are already whole, and that if we do the work to align with this basic truth, then we will be led with determination and courage to move towards the actions that align with our greatest good. Also that we are supported by the Universe while doing so.

When we set Sankalpa, we are asking of our highest self that we remove any interference that gets in the way of our own healing and the healing of humanity. It may sound esoteric or too hopeful,

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but it has a very practical format in our everyday lives.

How to practice Sankalpa?

First, we must cultivate tremendous will & energy to listen to the inner guide. This comes from practicing yoga postures, breath work and meditations. Through a devoted yoga and spiritual practice to "journey through the self to the self" without judgments, we begin to notice our faults, limitations, and fears. Through this compassionate observation, we can travel towards the seeds from whence these beliefs sprouted and heal them. We are reminded that the slightest shifts in

attitude do in fact influence our behavior, and that the subconscious things we've always done to hide ourselves from our faults, limitations and fears are no longer necessary. Through our practice, we cultivate the capacity to put into action new behaviors that replace the old ones that no longer work for us.

Let's get practical here. Imagine that one of my resolutions was to "make more money in 2016". Instead of simply focusing on my current lack, and action steps for making money, I'd be more curious about the why and hows of my current finances and what behavior patterns are influencing my want for more. So perhaps I'd spend some time in inquiry, asking myself a few simple questions: *What will making more money do for my life that my current amount does not? How does not making "enough" make me feel? What is my current relationship to finances?*

What I find in this inquiry is the medicine for healing. Perhaps I will be shown that I am valuing myself as a person based upon how much money I make. Perhaps not having enough to do the things I want to do for my children makes me feel like a bad parent because I got divorced? Maybe I will uncover a childhood memory of how my parents used to fight about money and I'm simply trying to heal that old wound by never having to feel tension around finances.

For each of us it will be different, but maybe we'll find that needing more money is not the point after all. And maybe it is. Either way, we are moving towards a more holistic truth of seeing self, and the actions we take from there on will be guided from this place.

Yoga does not make us new and improved versions of ourselves. Just like my wood floors, we are all shining bright underneath the covering.

What we've been searching for has been here all along. Already Whole.

Remember what you are, and let a deeper knowing color the shape of your humanness. There is nowhere to go. What you are looking for is right here. Open the fist clenched in wanting and see what you already hold in your hand. There is no waiting for something to happen, no point in the future to get to. All you have ever longed for is here in this moment, right now. You are wearing yourself out with all this searching. Come home and rest.

~Oria Mountain Dreamer, The Call