



## TriYoga® Center of Philadelphia at Mind-Body Services

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### YOGA MESSAGES IN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC: BEAUTY & YOUR TRUE SELF

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There is no doubt that music can transport us and transform our states of mind. There is also no doubt that lyrics can "get stuck" in our heads, internally repeating over and over long after the external sound has subsided. Many of us have had both of these experiences.

In acknowledgment of this, the yoga tradition includes nada yoga, mantra, kirtan, and bhajans. Nada yoga is the yoga of sound vibration. Thus, nada yoga is the path of union and self-realization through music and sound, both the audible and inaudible. In nada yoga, the focus on outer or audible sounds is a tool or step toward a focus on the "unstruck," inaudible, divine, transcendent, eternal sound. The word "mantra" comes from the Sanskrit "manas" (mind) and "tra" (protection). Mantra protects the mind through repetitive sound practices designed to help the mind become calmer, quieter, and more focused or concentrated. Mantra, therefore, aims to transform consciousness. Kirtan is devotional chanting or singing, often through call-and-response, in exaltation or praise of the divine. And bhajans are devotional songs or hymns (from the Sanskrit "bhaj," to honor or adore). All can be considered bhakti (devotional) yoga practices.

Fundamentally, yoga is an experiential practice, rather than an instructional one. Yoga affirms that each one of us has access to universal knowledge, that each one of us is part of the Universal and can unite with It, and that it is far more important to discover and experience this Truth than to introject that which others believe and

teach us. As Kaliji (2002a, p.9) has said, "All knowledge is within. Highest knowledge manifests in an expanded mind. The mind reflects the ageless teachings." Gannon and Life (2002, p.88) write "the realization of the yogi is the realization of the eternal Self, which cannot even be imagined or contained by thoughts. It must be experienced to be known, and yet it is beyond experience." Although there are outward teachers (gurus) to guide us, the wisdom is the teacher and is everywhere. The guru can be outside of oneself, but each of us is also our own guru - guide and teacher - and the Guru manifests in all things and experiences. As Kaliji (2002b) says, "The Self, residing in all beings and in all things, illustrates the teaching for those to hear."

This means that each of us has the capacity for wisdom and for living, speaking, and sharing this wisdom. We can, therefore, also hear wise and "yogic" messages in the lyrics of contemporary songs. Below are some examples to listen to, sing out loud, contemplate, repeat inside, and embody. I have highlighted in bold lyrics that strike me as particularly poignant, true, and yogic. In particular, since the lyrics of contemporary music often speak of romantic love, messages of admiration, love, acceptance and devotion are relatively common. Interpreting such lyrics as yogic messages involves seeing them as more than just representative of romantic love, but as representative of our true, perfect, beautiful, and wondrous natures. As Cope states (1999, p.42), "What we are seeking is already at the core of our nature. 'We are that' which we seek. We are already inherently perfect; we have already arrived; and we have the potential in each moment to wake up to our true nature." In the realization that we are inherently connected and expressions of the Universal, we cannot help but be radiant, beautiful, joyful, self-expressed, marvelous Selves.

### Firework

*©2010; performed by Katy Perry; written by Esther Dean, Mikkel Eriksen, Tor Erik Hermansen, Katy Perry, and Sandy Julien Wilhelm*

Do you ever feel like a plastic bag,  
Drifting through the wind  
Wanting to start again?  
Do you ever feel, feel so paper thin  
Like a house of cards,  
One blow from caving in?

Do you ever feel already buried deep?  
6 feet under screams but no one seems to hear a thing  
Do you know that there's still a chance for you  
**'Cause there's a spark in you**

**You just gotta ignite the light, and let it shine**  
Just own the night like the 4th of July

'Cause baby **you're a firework**  
Come on, show 'em what you're worth  
Make 'em go "Oh, oh, oh"  
As you shoot across the sky

Baby, you're a firework  
Come on, let **your colors burst**  
Make 'em go "Oh, oh, oh"  
**You're gonna leave 'em all in "awe, awe, awe"**

You don't have to feel like a wasted space  
**You're original, cannot be replaced**  
If you only knew what the future holds  
After a hurricane comes a rainbow

Maybe your reason why all the doors are closed  
So you could open one that leads you to the perfect road  
Like a lightning bolt, your heart will glow  
And when it's time, you'll know...

Boom, boom, boom  
**Even brighter than the moon, moon, moon**  
**It's always been inside of you, you, you**  
And now it's time to let it through...

### Halo

*© 2008; performed by Beyonce; written by Evan Bogart, Beyonce Knowles, and Ryan Tedder*

... **I can see your halo...**  
I can feel your halo...  
**It's like I've been awakened...**  
Hit me like a ray of sun  
Burning through my darkest night...  
Think I'm addicted to **your light...**

### Glad You Came

*© 2011; performed by The Wanted; written by Steve Mac, Wayne Hector, & Ed Drewett.*

...And all that counts  
Is here and now...  
**My universe will never be the same**  
I'm glad you came...

### You Are So Beautiful

*© 1974; written by Billy Preston, Bruce Fisher, and Dennis Wilson; popularized by Joe Cocker; performed by Preston, Cocker, and others*

**You are so beautiful to me**  
Can't you see  
You're everything I hope for  
You're everything I need  
You are so beautiful to me

### Absence of Fear

*© 1998; performed and written by Jewel Kilcher (aka "Jewel")*

Inside my skin there is this space  
It twists and turns  
It bleeds and aches  
Inside my heart there's an empty room  
It's waiting for lightning  
It's waiting for you  
And I am wanting  
And I am needing you here  
Inside the absence of fear  
Muscle and sinew  
Velvet and stone  
This vessel is haunted  
It creaks and moans  
My bones call to you  
In their separate skin  
I make myself translucent  
To let you in, for  
I am wanting  
And I am needing of you here  
Inside the absence of fear

there is this hunger  
This restlessness inside of me  
and it knows that you're no stranger  
you're my gravity  
My hands will adore you through all darkness aim  
They will lay you out in moonlight  
And reinvent your name  
For I am wanting you  
And I am needing you here  
I need you near  
Inside the absence of fear

### Beautiful

*© 2001; performed by Christina Aguilera; written by Linda Perry*

**I am beautiful** no matter what they say...  
**I am beautiful** in every single way...

**You're beautiful** no matter what they say...  
**You are beautiful** in every single way...

No matter what we do  
No matter what we say  
**We're the song** inside the tune...

And everywhere we go  
The sun will always shine  
And tomorrow we might wake on the other side...

### Just The Way You Are

*© 2010; performed by Bruno Mars; written by Bruno Mars, Philip Lawrence, Ari Levine, Khalil Walton, & Khari Cain.*

Oh, her eyes, **her eyes**, make the stars look like they're not shining  
Her hair, her hair, falls perfectly without her trying  
**She's so beautiful**, and I tell her every day

Yeah, I know, I know, when I compliment her she won't believe me  
And it's so, it's so, sad to think that she don't see what I see  
But every time she asks me do I look ok, I say

When I see your face, there's not a thing that I would change  
Cause you're amazing, just the way you are  
And when you smile, the whole world stops and stares for a while  
Because girl you're amazing, just the way you are (yeah)

... I'd never ask you to change  
If perfect's what you're searching for then just stay the same...

### Born This Way

*© 2010; performed and written by Lady Gaga*

...My mama told me when I was young  
We are all born superstars...

"There's nothing wrong with loving who you are"  
She said, "'Cause he made you perfect, babe"  
"So hold your head up girl and you'll go far..."

I'm beautiful in my way  
'Cause God makes no mistakes  
I'm on the right track, baby  
I was born this way  
Don't hide yourself in regret  
Just love yourself and you're set  
I'm on the right track, baby  
I was born this way...

...In the religion of the insecure  
I must be myself...

...Rejoice and love yourself today  
'cause baby you were born this way...

### Dark Side

*© 2011; performed by Kelly Clarkson; written by busbee & Alexander Geringas,*

There's a place that I know  
It's not pretty there and few have ever gone  
If I show it to you now  
Will it make you run away

Or will you stay  
Even if it hurts  
Even if I try to push you out  
Will you return?  
**And remind me who I really am**  
**Please remind me who I really am**

Everybody's got a dark side  
Do you love me?  
Can you love mine?  
**Nobody's a picture perfect**  
But we're worth it  
You know that we're worth it  
Will you love me?  
Even with my dark side?

Like a diamond  
From black dust  
It's hard to know  
It can become  
A few give up  
So don't give up on me  
**Please remind me who I really am...**

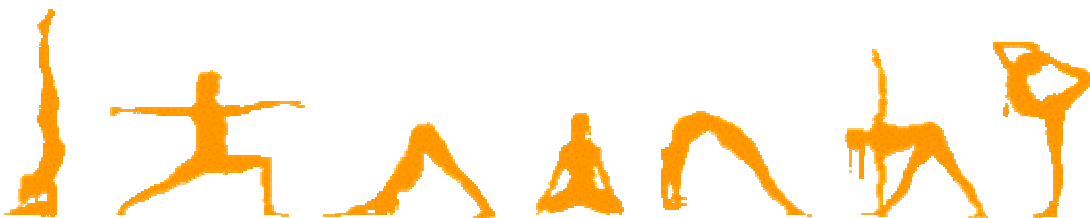
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