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**AALBORG UNIVERSITY**

Department of culture and Global Studies

Study Program: Tourism

## Master Thesis

## Yoga Tourism in Lives of Danes

A case study of potential transformations in the lives of Danish yoga practitioners after yoga travelling.

**MANINDER KAUR**

**31.05.2013**

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## Abstract

Trend for travelling for yoga is increasing in the contemporary Western societies, Denmark is not an exception. A lot of tour operators and yoga schools in Denmark are selling yoga tours in the form of yoga holidays or yoga retreat visits, some of the examples of yoga selling websites are [yogaferie.dk](http://yogaferie.dk), [yogaferie.net](http://yogaferie.net), [mindfultravel.dk](http://mindfultravel.dk), [yogabliss.dk](http://yogabliss.dk), [yogainmotion.dk](http://yogainmotion.dk), and many more. Therefore the trend of yoga travelling is already popular in Danish market.

In the tourism literature, yoga in the western societies is referred as non religious spiritual travel for self transformations; but a little can be found about what kind of potential transformations occur after yoga travel. Therefore I intend to explore more about potential transformations occurring in the lives of the Danish yoga travelers<sup>1</sup>. This thesis is a qualitative case study of potential transformations occurring in the lives of Danish yoga practitioners<sup>2</sup>, after they have travelled for yoga. Main aim of this research is to critically analyze the potential transformations in the lives of Danish yoga practitioners after yoga travelling. Main source of data is the qualitative semi-structured interviews with Danish yoga travelers; partial data collection methods include participant observations in a yoga holiday meeting in a yoga center in Copenhagen, study of selling propositions of yoga travel websites and the observation of the lifestyle of informants during the interviews. The sampling strategy is purposive, in which the informants have to be travelled for yoga at least once in their lifetime. The initially found samples helped me to find rest of the samples as snowballing technique. Collected data is analyzed by using several spirituality related theories presented in tourism literature, and some theories of cultural tourism.

The main findings from the project suggests that Danish yoga practitioners think that yoga travel affects their lives in various ways, like their lifestyle, their eating habits, changed preferences of residence, more care of self, changes in relationships, changes in personality, etc. The main reasons of these effects are suggested that in some cases these changes are traveler's

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<sup>1</sup> Danish yoga traveler is the term used for those Danes who have travelled for yoga.

<sup>2</sup> Danish yoga practitioner is the term used for those Danes who practice yoga.

own desires and make efforts to achieve their desires, some get impressed from local cultural practices at travel destination and think that these practices are yogic and eventually try to bring some cultural practices with them to their homes; some find the life during yoga travel more real than their own life in Denmark, but eventually make no efforts to make any change in their lives. Therefore there are diverse possibilities of transformations in the lives of the Danish yoga practitioners.

Danish yoga travelers mostly find the affects of yoga travel to be more limited to spiritual and transcendental, but this project considers many other perspectives of yoga travelling and critically analyzes the possible reasons of these affects; but also considers the constructivist approach that the affects and reasons of affects are not limited to the findings of this research. Hence this research project is suggestive rather than conclusive; as there are further open ends in the findings, and further research can be done on various discussed issues; and various more issues can be suggested in relevancy to this topic.

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## **1. Introduction**

This chapter contains the information of the thesis topic and background information for hypothesis and problem formulation; and also presents the hypothesis, problem formulation and aims of the research.

Michelis (2006) discusses that contemporary modern world has accepted yoga practice not only physically but also psychologically and scientifically (Michelis, 2006, p. 220). Lalonde (2012) argues that yoga has become not only highly profitable, but also almost unquestionably a “good” thing to be doing for self-development, stress-management and self-care (Lalonde 2012, p. 14). The trend of travelling for yoga is also increasing, even the airports have started to provide place for doing yoga for passengers during the stays at the airport, for example San Francisco airport has provided yoga room for waiting passengers (Airport yoga room in San Francisco, 2012); this is an important indicator of increasing trend of yoga in the contemporary tourism industry. Yoga is of Asian origin, the philosophy and practice are popular and very applicable in relation to wellbeing products in all over the world (Hjalager, et al., 2011, p. 24). Spirituality has been considered to be the basic and most important part of yoga practices (see Voigt, Brown & Howat, 2011). Doing yoga classes is one thing, but engaging in a yoga retreat, while on holiday is another thing. This cannot be considered as a mainstream practice, but new businesses entering in the yoga tourism market has shown the booming of yoga tourism market. A lot of yoga schools in Denmark provide yoga tours to different countries of the world, some of the examples of yoga selling websites are [yogaferie.dk](http://yogaferie.dk) (Yogaferie i Provence og Portugal, 2013), [yogaferie.net](http://yogaferie.net) (Yogaferie, 2013), [mindfultravel.dk](http://mindfultravel.dk) (Mindfultravel, 2013), [yogaworkshop.dk](http://yogaworkshop.dk) (Yogaferie i Grækenland - Kirsten slots, 2013), [yogabliss.dk](http://yogabliss.dk) (Yogaferie: yoga retreat Thailand 2014, 2013), [yogainmotion.dk](http://yogainmotion.dk) (Yogaskolen: yogaferie, 2013), etc. Most of the yoga centers in Denmark make and sell tours for yoga. Therefore the trend of yoga travelling is already popular in Danish market.

Besides the trend of yoga tourism, spirituality is becoming a buzz word in the contemporary western markets of tourism; because it is argued that modern life generates uncertainty (Steiner & Reisinger, 2006; cited in Holladay & Ponder, 2012). In the contemporary era of tourism in the western societies, spirituality is not a religion in the formal and organizational sense, instead it represents a personal spiritual quest that typically eschews traditional monotheistic religions (Dallen, Timothy & Paul, 2006, p. 141). More specifically in the tourism industry, scholars are



relating spirituality to tourist's self – transformations, transcendence and connectedness (Holladay & Ponder, 2012; Voigt et al. 2011, Dallen et al., 2006; Lalonde, 2012; Willson, 2010); whereas 'self –transformation' is considered as an overarching theme for wellness tourist including yoga tourist (Voigt et al., 2011, p.28).

Millions of trips are arranged in the contemporary tourism industry every year, which typically involve activities and destinations that help people in the eyes of the tour operators, 'to become more aware of themselves' and becoming less materialistic and more spiritual (see Dallen et al., 2006, p.143). Therefore new age spirituals have formed a remarkable number in tourism; growing number of tour operators have already discovered this valuable market (Cogswell, 1996; Lange, 2001; cited in Dallen et al., 2006, p.143). Yoga has been related to wellness tourism and specified as spiritual in recent tourism literature (see Holladay & Ponder, 2012; Voigt et al., 2011). Going further into depth, yoga tourism has been related to the concept of spiritual self transformations (see Lalonde, 2012; Voigt et al., 2011; Willson, 2010).

Therefore in the tourism literature, yoga travel is considered to be spiritual (without relation to religion in the contemporary western societies) and motive of yoga travel is related to spiritual self transformations. As Voigt et al., (2011) state that spiritual retreat visitors like yoga tourist aim for spiritual and psychological self transformation by seeking transcendence (Voigt et al., 2011, p.27). Spirituality is a wide and broad concept, and its two basic terms used to define non religious spirituality is transcendence and connectedness (Willson, 2010). According to Willson (2010) "there is a paucity of research exploring spirituality, outside that of religious tourism, within a tourism framework and, specifically, what role travel plays within the wider lives of individuals" (Willson, 2010, p.10). This research is aimed to explore the process of self transformations of the Danish yoga tourist in order to investigate the role of yoga travel in the lives of the Danish yoga practitioners after yoga travelling. The concepts of 'transcendence' and 'connectedness' are considered to be important attributes of this research project because yoga tourism is one form of non religious spiritual tourism in the western societies, as stated previously; and hence transcendence, connectedness, self identification and self enhancement are core concepts of yoga tourism (see Willson, 2010; Lalonde, 2012). The concepts of Transcendence and Connectedness are discussed in detail in theory. Below problem and hypothesis have been formulated in order to get in-depth insight of the process of self transformations amongst Danish yoga tourist.

## **1.1 Hypothesis**

Potential transformations occur in the lives of Danish yoga practitioners, after they have travelled for yoga.

## **1.2 Problem Formulation**

**How is yoga travel affecting the lives of Danish yoga practitioners?**

**How do Danish yoga practitioners perceive the affects of yoga travel on their lives?**

## **1.3 Aims**

- To analyze critically, if there are any changes/transformations in the lives of Danish yoga practitioners after yoga travelling.
- To analyze the possible causes of these potential self transformations of the Danish yoga travelers after yoga travel.
- To analyze the realizations of Danish yoga travelers, during their yoga travel experience.
- To examine the qualitative interviews of the Danish yoga travelers to find out their expectations from the yoga tours.
- To analyze the selling prepositions of yoga selling websites, and question these selling prepositions, in comparison to collected data during the qualitative interviews with Danish yoga travelers.

## **2. Methodology**

This chapter contains the information about the research process, including data collection method, data analysis method, limitations, delimitations and pitfalls of the research process.

This is a qualitative exploratory research that investigates the impact of yoga tourism on the lives of the Danish yoga travelers. The empirical data is collected by semi structured individual interviews for this research project, which makes the research primary. The approach applied to this research project is the combination of the inductive and deductive research strategies, because after choosing topic ‘yoga travel’, I decided to go through the literature written about yoga travel, the theoretical findings suggest that yoga tourism is considered a form

of spiritual tourism, and yoga travelers are considered to be searching for spiritual self transformations (see Lalonde, 2012; Voigt et al., 2011; Willson, 2010). But in-depth knowledge about transformations happening after yoga travel is missing in the yoga tourism literature. This approach makes research deductive, as beginning of research process is theory based. Then I decide to enter into the empirical field to collect information about yoga travel experiences of the Danish yoga travelers, and to investigate if there are any transformations in their lives after travelling for yoga. I chose only Danish yoga travelers because I am making this research based upon the Danish participants, therefore it is not valid to generalize it to general yoga travelling markets because of different cultural believes and reasons of travelling. The reason of choosing Denmark is, I wanted to meet the informants personally and built a rapport with them to get most possible valid information, and hence Denmark is practically and economically affordable destination for me being studying and living in Denmark. Data collection methods (discussed in details later) include in depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation in a yoga holiday selling meeting and online study of the yoga tour selling websites in Denmark. Data Analysis is guided by the findings from the fieldwork rather than theory itself, which makes this research inductive.

The major stakeholders of the research are Danes, who have travelled for yoga regardless of the destination, and duration of the stay. An important aspect for me is to be respectful and honest with the informants. As Salazar (2010) advises “it is important for the researcher to remain honest and humble and to ensure that the study does not harm or exploit those among whom the research is done” Salazar (2010,p.196). The other important ethical perspective is not to open the private information of the interviewees without their consent. Therefore informed consent and recording permission were taken from the informants before starting the interviews, by explaining them the purpose of the research.

## **2.1 Data Collection**

### **2.1.1 Participant observation**

Data collection process started from the participant observation in a yoga holiday meeting in Frederiksberg, Copenhagen. I read an advertisement of yoga holiday on 14<sup>th</sup> march in a local newspaper, which was from a local yoga center (Yogaferie til Spanien, Italien eller Grækenland, 2013). That advertisement was an invitation for the meeting for yoga holidays. The meeting was

on 17<sup>th</sup> march 2013, from 06:00 to 08:00 PM, two hours. The meeting started with Hatha Yoga and ended up with discussion about yoga holiday, I also had to do yoga with all the participants. During the discussions, I asked some questions from the teacher and other participants about the experience of yoga holiday, the focus of my observations was the selling propositions used by the teacher. The findings will be discussed in data analysis. I thought of joining that meeting because I could get empirical insight about the people who wish to join yoga holiday. There were only 6 participants including me and the 7<sup>th</sup> was the teacher, all were women, and the age was between 35 – 45 years. All participants except me have been on yoga holiday at least once and three of them have been on yoga holiday for three times and really looking forward for the next yoga holiday. The yoga center has plan of three tours in 2013, to Spain, Italy and Greece, and the tours are planned for April, May and September, respectively. Each holiday is having place for 19 persons; the teacher said that most of the places are already sold-out. Even the last one to Greece in sept. is having 11 seats sold already. This shows that people really look forward so much in advance for yoga holiday. Three of the participants have been travelling twice with the same yoga teacher, and also assigned for the next holiday with the same teacher, this shows a built up relationship of the travelers with the teacher. I observed that not only the teacher but these 3 members of the meeting were also trying to sell the yoga holiday to me. There was a lot of positive talk about the amazing experience of the yoga holiday. When I tried to ask about the feelings in detail, then everybody was explaining it as amazing realization, which cannot be explained in words; this shows that curiosity and personal recommendations are used as a selling tactic to attract more travelers. Meeting organizer also told me that this is the first time that they have given the advertisement in the newspaper, previously she had always marketed only through their own website. I consider participant observation as partial participating observation because observation is not the main data source, as semi structured Interviews are the main source of empirical data for this research project.

### **2.1.2 Semi structured individual interviews**

During the participant observation, I had informal conversations with some of the participants, then I fixed meetings with some of the informants, some of them invited me to their homes, I spent a range of time with informants. I did 9 Semi structured individual interviews with informants who have travelled for yoga, including yoga teachers. Some informants have travelled for yoga just for once and some have travelled several times. Semi structured

interviews offer advantage over structured and unstructured interviews because these interviews are relatively formal and open to the input and the direction of both researcher and research subject (see Hannam & Knox , 2010). In addition, because research questions occur in more or less natural conversation, the researcher can delve into points mentioned by the contributor/informant that may not have been known to the researcher in advance and gain a deep understanding of context (Laine, 2000, p. 41; Schensul S., Schensul J., LeCompte, 1999, p. 5). I use interview guide to keep validity of the discussions in relation to research question. I spent a lot of time with the informants and created a rapport with many of them and they shared a lot of personal feelings, experiences and achievements from the tour, including the changes they have experienced in themselves and their lives after yoga travelling. Some of the informants also shared the pictures of their yoga holiday (appendix 4), when they shared their stories of yoga travelling experience. I spent from 2 - 5 hours with informants, which also included the observations of their lifestyle and informal questions about their life and family, etc. I tried to create a relationship of trust with informants and to make them comfortable, the only purpose was to get the deeper insight of the transformations occurred due to yoga travelling, because some discussions included the talk of inner selves, and a good rapport might have helped them to proceed for easier expression of their inner thoughts.

The interview duration ranges from 25 minutes to 1.25 hours, most of the informants invited me to their residence and work places; which are located in central Copenhagen and in outskirts of Copenhagen. The individual interviews are the tools which help a skilled researcher for questioning informants in a language with which they are comfortable, thereby eliciting answers without prompting, and for allowing the researcher to cumulatively test previously collected data and adapt questioning accordingly (Le Compte & Goetz, 1982). I avoid using theoretical words and make the conversations in a common man language rather than using academic language. In addition, English has been used as the language of interview, but sometimes during the interview, I felt that language is a barrier – therefore informants were allowed to use Danish language to express the real feelings, and then to reconfirm their responses. I repeated the meanings of the informants in English, they agreed and disagreed on the meanings and some also have given further descriptions of what they want to say, as all my informants understood English really well but a little bit problematic in speaking in some cases.

The interviews include both direct and indirect questions, which focuses upon the tourist experience and the changes in their lives due to these experiences. The ad-hoc questions were taken from the responses of the interviewees and the key questions (in interview guide) were chosen to keep the discussion in the limits of the research area. I used the strategy of repeating the questions, by changing the way of asking when the interviewees gave unclear responses. I took special care for a non judge-mental, empathetic and respectful way of listening, building rapport and observations for body language, to get the best possible quality of data (McGivern, 2006,p.205-208). But no research is innocent as “researchers standpoint, values and Biases (...) play a role in shaping the researcher’s historical trajectory, and the way in which they interpret phenomena and construct texts”( Phillimore et al.,2004,p.5). As I carry my Indian culture and confidence of understanding Danish culture after living in Denmark for 8 years, moreover my educational background and my analytical skills shape the whole research process. Therefore I leave an impact on the research process. Being an Indian I was seen as yoga expert by many of the informants, for example I noticed some phrases in the data ‘*as you may already know*’, ‘*its not like Indian yoga*’, etc. This shows that the informants have certain perception of me and my knowledge about yoga tour, some think that I am expert on yoga and some think that I may perceive their yoga meanings in comparison to my perception of yoga (Indian yoga), and they think what they practice is different from Indian yoga. Therefore I have an impact on the quality of collected data. As Hammersley (2007) define that ‘the orientations of researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer upon them’ Hammersley (2007, p. 15). It is necessary to acknowledge that because the act of researching is inherently marginalizing and distancing (Schensul et al., 1999, p. 71 – 72), it is impossible for even resident researchers to completely avoid influencing and being influenced by their field. Therefore I cannot claim that my findings and the interpretations are only existing realities in relation to this research field, and I consider this research as suggestive rather than conclusive.

The visualization technique <sup>3</sup>was used for the interview, where the interviewees were stimulated to visualize the whole experience of their yoga travel by asking the same questions may be several times in different ways during different themes of the interviews. The

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<sup>3</sup> “allow respondents to recall in details the experience or a situation and to bring to mind thoughts and feelings about it” (McGivern,2006,p:202)

visualization was not limited to one scope like destination, or local people of the destination, or weather during travel; but their general experience of the yoga travel and to notice what is noticeable by the informants.

### ***Sampling***

I sent e-mails to the people I met during participant observations, all of them responded positively and gave time for the interview according to their convenience. Then I went through yoga holiday websites, and contacted a number of yoga teachers, from where I got information of other informants. Some of the informants also helped me to find more informants by using their own contacts as Snowballing technique; therefore the sampling can be classified as snowball sampling<sup>4</sup>. The criteria of the samples was that they must have at least one time travelled for yoga, regardless of travelled destination, duration of travel, season of travel, age and sex of the traveler. Therefore the used sampling technique is also purposive sampling<sup>5</sup>. The most important challenge was to fit in the schedule of some people, like they are working, and have plans during the weekend, hence I sometimes have to wait long to get appointments.

#### **2.1.3 Virtual ethnography**

All of my informants chose the yoga tours from the websites of different yoga centers; therefore I find it necessary to search what is included in the selling propositions of the yoga tour websites. What kind of online information is given about the yoga tours, including phrases of yoga and its effects in the life of an individual, pictures of yoga holiday destinations, and statements from previous yoga tourists? This information might affect the informant's expectations from the tour, and therefore also influences the affects of the tour on the lives of the people. I studied some of the websites of the yoga holidays for example Yogaferie i Grækenland - Kirsten slots, 2013; Yogaskolen: yogaferie, 2013; Yogaferie, 2013; Body,mind, energy and cosciousness, 2013, etc. in order to collect information about their selling prepositions. I looked for the information like the ways of offering yoga-holidays/retreat visits on the websites. The finding will be discussed in the analysis. But this virtual ethnography is also only partial data

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<sup>4</sup> "Snowball sampling is a sampling technique in which the reasercher samples initially a small group of people relevant to the research questions (...) and these participants will then suggest other participants and so on" (Bryman, 2012, p. 424).

<sup>5</sup>" Purposive sampling is a non-probability form of sampling. The goal of purposive sampling is to sample participants in a strategic way so that those sampled are relevant to the research question" (Bryman, 2012, p. 418).

collection method, as the main method of data collection is the semi – structured individual interviews.

#### **2.1.4 Validity and reliability**

The collected data has internal validity because it is the credible evidence for the problem statement, as suggested by McGivern(2006) that “internal validity refers to the ability of the research to deliver credible evidence to address the research problem” (McGivern 2006,p:79). The key questions of the interview are designed in relation to the subjective validity of the problem statement, which gives *Content validity*<sup>6</sup> to collected data through key questions and the ad-hoc questions, questions in the semi structure interview are related with the responses from the key questions of the research, which gives *Criterion validity*<sup>7</sup> to the collected data (McGivern 2006,p.337).

The repetition of the research may not produce exactly same results, the reason are related with change in related variables (e.g. new interviewer, new interviewees, maturity of the informants in their yoga travel career, etc.), because “interviewing is persistently slippery, unstable and ambiguous from person to person, from situation to situation, from time to time” (Fontana & Frey,2000,p.654).

## **2.2 Delimitations**

I consider yoga as one term in this project which includes all types of yoga and meditation for example, hatha yoga, bikram yoga, ashtanga yoga, iyengar yoga, mindfulness, etc. There are many types of yoga travelling like yoga holiday, yoga retreat visits, yoga weekends, backpacking for yoga, etc. I have used term ‘yoga travel’ which refers to all types of yoga travel. I have not differentiated about the destinations and local cultures of the destinations, like the informants have been travelling at different destinations for example Thailand, India, Indonesia, and many European countries like Italy, Greece, Spain, etc. I am just focusing upon the role of yoga tourism in the transformations process of the yoga tourist, but do not focus upon the intentions of the yoga tourist, for example, while he/she do it for physical or psychological

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<sup>6</sup> “Content validity is about the suitability of the question to measure the concept that it claims to measure.” McGivern(2006,p-337).

<sup>7</sup> “Criterion validity is about how well a new measure or question works in comparison to a well-established one, or how well a question works in relation to other questions that are considered valid..” McGivern(2006,p-337).



treatment, etc. The spirituality in yoga travel is considered as key theory for this research project, whereas the discussions related to special interest tourism and existential authenticity (discussed later in detail) are used as supportive theories to critically analyze the findings. The perceptions of the informants about affects of yoga travel on their lives might be affected through several ways, like their society, media, socio-cultural trends, their education, etc. I am only examining one type of media (yoga selling websites), I consider the others as out of the limits of this research. Yoga has three dimensions, physical, psychological and Philosophical (Lalonde, 2012); the affects of yoga travelling experience also might have these three dimensions, but this research process is guided by the information given by the informants in relation to the effect of yoga travel on their own lives, it makes this project a general social science research project rather than specific (physical, psychological or philosophical) affects of yoga travel on the lives of the informants.

### **2.3 Limitations**

The best possible way of making this kind of research is to analyze the lifestyle of the individuals before and after yoga travel, which could be done in the form of longitudinal research, and to collect information at proceeding span of times in the lives of the informants, but I am relying on the own narratives of informants, therefore the transformations presented by the informants might be affected by their own autobiographical concerns in their life story and their desire assemblage for the way of living their lives (see Gaviria & Bluemelhuber, 2010). I have not tried to make my own observation of the lifestyle of the people before and after yoga travel therefore I am dependent on the traveler's own perception of the life before and after yoga holiday. It is difficult to separate, whether informant statements are related to only yoga or yoga travel, because yoga is a part of their lives before and after travel, as this is special interest travel mostly for those who practice yoga (see Hannam & Knox, p.93).

Nine informants in the capital city might seem to be a small sample to generalize the affects of yoga travel on Danish yoga practitioners, but this can give an insight for the possibilities of affects of yoga travel on the lives of the Danish yoga practitioners. Hence I consider this research to be suggestive rather than conclusive, as the affects of yoga travel on the lives of Danish yoga practitioners are not only limited to the presented and analyzed affects in this research. I consider the possibilities that there might be several more or different affects of yoga travelling on the lives of the Danish yoga practitioners.

## **2.4 Pitfalls**

Some of the informants have done yoga travelling years ago, and then continued doing yoga afterwards, therefore when I ask them about the changes occurred after yoga travelling, they might end up discussing the changes that happened after continues practice of yoga upon arrival from yoga holiday. To reduce this, I make regular questions to keep the respondents aware of the difference between yoga travel and yoga practice in their daily life. The perceptions of the affects of yoga holiday in the lives of the informants might be affected by the received teaching's about ideal practitioners, during their yoga schools or yoga holidays; or they might have been reading and discussing a lot about yoga and the benefits of yoga, therefore I risk to end up getting only this accumulated information from the informants, rather than getting their actual realizations during yoga travel.

## **2.5 Data Analysis Method**

I am intended to keep the constructivist approach in order to investigate the transformations of the Danish yoga practitioners, where I am intended to do deconstructions of the transformation process in the lives of the informants. I am focusing upon the discourse of traveler's own perceptions about their self transformations. I take the theories as a base and deconstruct the empirical findings in comparison to the theories; where some findings are presented and found to be in harmony to the theory, while others are different or opposite to the theories. The core of discussions of theories and analysis is the reality of the affects of yoga tourism presented by the tourist, by considering the fact that many other realities can co-exist with the presented reality from the finding of the research (see Hannam & Knox, Discourse analysis in tourism research a critical perspective, 2005).

I transcribed all the interviews, and categorized the collected information in comparison to the theories, and then looked for similar and opposite examples in the data, which can give critical insight to develop the analysis. The analysis is considering the relations of different discourses, for example the traveler's discourse, some part of the seller's discourses and possibilities of traveler's experience. This is neither an attempt to make a discourse analysis nor an attempt to consider the dichotomy between yoga tourism (as spiritual tourism) and mainstream tourism; but the analytical discussions are focusing upon possible relations between mainstream tourism and more specifically cultural encounters in tourism and yoga tourism.

### 3. Theory

This chapter is designed to present the literature related to yoga tourism, where spirituality in yoga tourism is key concept, and the theories in tourism and consumer behavior in tourism are also used to explore the possibilities of other aspects of the impacts of yoga travel on the lives of Danish yoga practitioners. The framework of the theory is based upon literature related to spirituality (non - religious) in tourism, because spirituality (non-religious) is considered to be most important concept in yoga tourism related transformations as discussed previously in introduction; but yoga travel is not only doing yoga – it is also movement of the individual from one context (everyday life and local culture at home) to another context (host culture including yoga place and local society at the destination); this might also provide possibilities of affects on the lives of travelers. Therefore several other theories related to cultural encounters in tourism are also included in this chapter, which are presented in dialogue with the spirituality oriented theories for yoga tourism.

In the experience economy the term self transformation is referred, when an experience effects the subject so much that it changes/transforms the life of the person (Pine & Gilmore,1999). As per Foucault's concept, transformation in spirituality is a process, which is related to becoming 'other'; this process is related to ridding off one's bad habits and practice of self, which is an ongoing battle; and this process is a non linear but continually constituted in relation to the unfolding world; it is always an ongoing process because there is no absolute or final truth to be reached at the end, therefore it is not a preparation of life, but it is a form of life (Foucault, 2005; cited in Lea, 2009, p.74).

The '*other*' is "defining where you belong through a contrast with other places, or who you are through contrast with other people"(Rose, 1995, Cited in Aitchison: 2001,p.136). Othering is an important component of cultural studies in tourism as Hannam & Knox (2010) demonstrates the discourses of the 'other' reflect dominant power relations in tourism,"Said (1978) drew implicitly and explicitly reflect on the philosopher Foucault's proposition that power and knowledge are intimately related through a gaze on the 'other'" (Said,1978, cited in Hannam & Knox: 2010, p. 107). Therefore during the yoga travel, traveler is meeting two different types of 'others' (but limited to these two types only), and the tourist may find these 'others' in contrast to self; these 'others' could be - 'the other at yoga place' and 'the local other at the destination';

and the traveler may idealize any of the these ‘others’, in the process of potential transformation of becoming ‘other’, after yoga travelling.

The concept of self transformation has been discussed by many scholars in many different ways. Guest identifies that one path of self transformation in yoga (as one form of wellness tourism) is self – identification, which is influenced by the interactions of yoga, the development of the spiritual capital and/or ethical and moral beliefs (Guest, 2007; cited in Holladay and Ponder, 2012,p32). It has also been identified that physical and mental enhancements are the motivators of yoga and well-being practices (Xinran, Sally, Yi & Alastair, 2006). And it has also been discussed that yoga is able to transform due to possible interrelationship of the subject, to self as being, to knowledge and to the world Lea (2009). As discussed previously that yoga tourism is a form of spiritual tourism, therefore the feelings of transcendence and connectedness are important concepts of yoga tourism (see Willson,2010); this also indicates that transcendence and connectedness related affects also need to be examined during the yoga travel experience of Danish yogis, in order to analyze the yoga travel experience of the Danish yogis. Therefore I am analyzing the affects of yoga travelling in the lives of the Danish yoga practitioners, by using the following concepts, which have been related to yoga tourism by various scholars as discussed above (see Guest, 2007; Xinran et al., 2006; Willson, 2010).

1. Transcendence
2. Connectedness
3. Self identification
4. Self enhancement

Importantly, the affects of yoga travelling are not only limited to the above four concepts, because yoga travelling may add up to the life narratives of the travelers in many different ways, as consumer transformations are related to autobiography and desire of the consumer (see Pilar & Bluemelhuber; 2010). All the considerations of all concepts related to the affects of yoga travelling on the lives of the Danish yoga practitioners are beyond the limits of this research project. But the society where the informants live in considered important because even though spiritual yoga tourism can be regarded as personal transformational experiences, but informants as humans are not separate from the society, informants and society lives in each other and affect each other; and there are continuous negotiations between self and society (see Burkitt, 2008).

Therefore regardless that yoga travel is intended to cause personal transformations the affects of the society on the informants cannot be ignored.

Hannam & Knox (2010) consider yoga retreat as special interest tourism, the people who practice yoga as leisure activity usually go on yoga travelling, therefore there is a direct relationship between behavior at home prior to the holiday, holiday conduct and then behavior at home following at the end of the holiday in the form of manifestation of knowledge and practice from everyday life (Hannam & Knox, 2010,p.93). Therefore potential transformations after yoga travel, and the realizations during the yoga travelling might only be the reflection of the individual's own interest and knowledge about yoga and yoga travel. This eventually might help them to create their identity of yogic person as special interest tourism play a role in identity creation of the traveler (Hannam & Knox, 2010). Hence the transformations in the lives of the Danish yoga travelers might be the process of their 'self identity creation', by using their previous knowledge about yoga and their realizations during the yoga holiday, which might be the results of that previous knowledge.

Yoga traveler is practicing yoga activity during travel, therefore it can also be termed activity holiday, which is different than everyday life and hence helps to come out of the inauthenticity felt by the modern everyday life, because daily life and boredom of everyday life is creating lack of authenticity in the lives of the individuals (Vester 1987; cited in Wang, 1999,p.363). Therefore traveler is intended to find the yoga travel experiences as authentic experience.

From the above discussions, the affects of yoga travel might not only be limited to spiritual travel affects, but also the relation between self and society, identity creation of the special interest traveler and inauthenticity felt in everyday life, all can play potential role in creating affects of yoga travel, on the lives of the individuals after yoga travelling. Therefore literature related to self and society, activity holiday and special interest travel are included to get critical insight of the potential transformations occurring after yoga travelling. Moreover, as discussed previously it is also people moving from one destination to another, therefore cultural encounters might also be an important part of transformation process after yoga travelling. But Bruner (1991) claims that the self transformations perceived by the tourist are their own imaginary, and hence the transformations presented by the informants during the interviews for

this research might also be tourist's own imaginary, therefore I consider them as yoga traveler's discourse, instead of reality (see Bruner, 1991).

Below section of theory is related to the potential transcendence felt by the traveler.

### **3.1 Transcendental experience during yoga travel and self transformations**

Transcendence is core concept of yoga related spirituality and this concept can change meanings in each individual's life (see Willson, 2010). Lalonde (2010) discusses that yoga retreat has the capacity to offer the potential for 'incarnate transcendence' to the individuals, which means the experience beyond the physical limits of the human body (Lalonde, 2010). The word transcendence has broad scope of meanings, "Transcendence/ self-transcendence/spiritual transcendence is therefore seen by many scholars as being an integral part of any conceptual discussion of spirituality" (Butts, 1999; Emmons, 2000; Freeman, 1998; McCormick, 1994; Piedmont, 2001; Tanyi, 2002, Willson, 2010). Spirituality concern the transcendent dimensions of life (Freeman 1998, p.7); and spiritual transcendence concerns, "the capacity of individuals to stand outside of their immediate sense of time and place to view life from a larger, more objective perspective" (Piedmont 1999, p.988). Fisher also proffered that spiritual transcendence involves the "faith toward, adoration and worship of the source of Mystery of the universe" (Fisher 2001, p.48). From a psychological viewpoint transcendence also involves going past the ordinary confines of the body (Emmons, 2000). Similarly, self transcendence is described as reaching beyond personal boundaries and attaining a wider perspective, which facilitates finding meaning in life's experiences (Coward 1996, Cited in Tanyi, 2002,p.503).

On the other hand of spiritual transcendence, Vester (1987) discusses the concept of 'sensual transcendence' experienced by coming out of routine life, this concept means that change or adventure "plays a significant role in providing an opportunity to compensate for the boredom and lack of authenticity felt in ordinary life" (Vester 1987,p. 238-239; cited in Wang,1999,p.363). Therefore yoga travel as a change may be compensating the boredom and lack of authenticity of everyday life felt by the tourist, and transcendental realizations during the yoga travel, might be only 'sensual transcendental' realizations resulting from a change in everyday life. Moreover, yoga holiday being an active holiday, might be considered as adventure holiday the traveler and hence also result in realization of 'sensual transcendence'; rather than spiritual transcendence.

Therefore, based upon the above theoretical discussions, spiritual transcendence/self transcendence is a concept which brings an individual to a different level of understanding of self and world around him/herself. It facilitates the individuals to see the world from a greater perspective, which might go beyond the ordinary confines of the human body and personal boundaries. Whereas 'sensual transcendence' compensate the lack of authenticity felt in the daily life of the individual. The transcendence felt by the traveler might be due to any of two transcendences, or combination of both types of transcendences; but not limited to only these two. Hence, both spiritual and sensual transcendence might play role in transformations in the lives of the Danish yoga practitioners after yoga travelling. Related findings from the empirical data are discussed in data analysis.

The above part of theory provides a broad idea of transcendental experiences, but meanings of the experience might be different for every individual. The above discussions of Transcendence do not provide any tool for organizing the transcendental experiences of the Danish yoga tourist. The aim of including the above discussions in the theory is to get the brief description of the existing literature about non-religious transcendence, which provides the possibilities to explore the affects of transcendental experience on the broader lives of the Danish yoga travelers. Transcendence is considered as an important part of the spiritual tourism, the most critical point here is that transcendence does not have specific meaning in concrete terms, which can be identified and applied, but it is a fluid term, which can change meaning as per individual's experience. I am not trying to make a definition of transcendental experiences of the Danish yoga tourist, but I will analyze the information related to the transcendental experiences of the travelers during the yoga tour and how they think it has affected their lives afterwards, or if they have felt any change in themselves after that experience.

Both transcendence and connectedness are considered as important concepts in spiritual tourism; but is difficult to separate transcendence from connectedness because connectedness realized in spiritual tourism literature is considered transcendental connectedness (Willson, 2010). The details are discussed in the next section of theory.

### **3.2 Transcendental connectedness and self transformations**

There are many aspects of transcendental connectedness, which are considered in relation to yoga as spiritual tourism. Willson (2010) considers connectedness as important part of spiritual tourism, hence an important part of yoga tourism as well because yoga tourism is

considered spiritual tourism, in the tourism literature as discussed previously (Willson, 2010; Lalonde, 2012). Connectedness can be seen as being a harmonious relationship or “oneness” with self, “other” (including other people, animals, the earth, nature etc.) and/or God or higher power (Dyson et al., 1997; Meraviglia, 1999; Piedment, 1999; Zinnbauer et al., 1997; cited in Willson, 2010, p.55). A common word used to describe connectedness is relationship (Dyson et al., 1997; Schultz, 2005; Spaniol, 2001, cited in Willson, 2010, p.55).

My informants claim themselves to be spiritual beings, as they do not believe in religion; according to Tanyi (2002) “spirituality is connection to self-chosen religious beliefs, values and practices that give meaning to life, thereby inspiring and motivating individuals to achieve their optimal being” (Tanyi, 2002, p.506). Therefore traveler’s believe of connection to self might be according to self chosen beliefs, values and practices; and transformations presented by them would be their own meanings according to their chosen beliefs.

Lea discusses the concept of Foucault in relation to Lynger yoga (meditation); and indicates the interrelationship of Transformation to connectedness of the subject to the contextually changing demands of the world (Lea, 2009).

“Spirituality involves relationship – a relationship with someone or something beyond ourselves; someone or something that sustains and comforts us, guiding our decision making, forgiving our imperfections, and celebrating our journey through life. This someone or something can be another person, a spiritual guide, a belief in the goodness of human nature, and/or a belief in God. Our deepest spiritual encounters are experienced in and through our relationships – relationships that are intimate, mutual, and have the capacity to move us deeply” (Spaniol, 2001, p.321; cited in Willson, 2012, p. 56).

By following the above citation, individual’s own spiritual believes has the tendency to transform an individual. I will examine the empirical data related to transcendental connectedness in order to present the changes in informant’s connection with inner being. This concept is also difficult to find out, because it is related to the traveler’s internal believes, but some examples can show some part of it, details are discussed during data analysis.

According to Willson (2010), all individuals feel connected to something because all needs something outside of themselves to anchor their lives and give them meaning, people may have strong values, religious beliefs, a commitment to family, humanity, community, etc.; but some people have strong connection/relation to self and common needs related to self might include the need for meaning and purpose, vision, hope, dignity and to transcend life challenges (Taylor,



2001, cited in Willson, 2010, p. 58). Hence, according to Wilson (2010) the transformation related to connection related to self might be the need of meaning, purpose, vision, hope, dignity and to transcend life challenges.

Lea (2009) states that yoga (Iyengar) is a technique, which helps the individuals to develop relationships with their own current lives and find spaces in which this relationship (with self) flourishes (Lea, 2009, p.75). By considering yoga as special interest tourism, the traveler has his/her own knowledge about yoga and benefits of yoga travel, which might be collected by reading, practicing yoga as leisure activity or searching different yoga selling websites. This knowledge about yoga and yoga travel, plays a role in tourist's presented transformations about self after yoga travelling (see Hannam & Knox, 2010). Lalonde (2012) claims that modern Yoga tours offer message that an individual becomes separate from their bodies and themselves due to vagaries of modern capitalist society, and they can reclaim their innate goodness, wholeness and natural state of being through yoga (Lalonde, 2012, p. 257-258). Therefore by having this knowledge about yoga, yoga traveler might develop several expectations from yoga travelling, as they might think that yoga travel offers the tendency to flourish their relationship with themselves and promoting natural goodness and wholeness in their lives; their own spiritual believes carry the capacity to transform them, and provide a way to find themselves in the modern capitalist society by giving them an opportunity to fulfill their need of life meaning, purpose, vision, hope, dignity and to transcend life challenges. In this way, yoga tourism has the tendency to contribute in the process of self transformations. I will explore the meanings of Danish yoga traveler's realizations in order to investigate about these potential transformations. But 'authenticity of self' in modern society and tourism is another important issue that can play an important role in realization of connectedness to self; as Beathnach (2006) argues that an individual may experience toured place (yoga place in this case) as more real socially than one's every-day life "because processes of modernity have resulted in increased fragmentation and a sense of dislocation, people experience a deep sense of loss of authenticity, or wholeness, in everyday life" (Beathnach, 2006,p.104). Therefore yoga travel has tendency to influence the Danish yoga traveler's by making them feel like their experience of yoga travel is more real than their everyday life, because of the sense of loss of authenticity in their modern lives in Danish society. This also means that the authenticity felt by the tourist has nothing to do with the authenticity of the toured place, but it is related with the tourist's own experience of life,

therefore the authenticity felt by the tourist during the yoga travel is existential authenticity (see Wang, 1999). Hence the realization of connection to self is not only limited to transcendental realizations of connection to self, but the life in post modern society like Denmark can also play an important role in making the existential authenticity felt by Danish yoga travelers. But regardless of this experience of existential authenticity, one is not influenced enough to abandon social order and social responsibilities, and the individual is ready to come home and adapt to home society again (Wang,1999). Therefore Wang (1999) does not expect transformations in the traveler's life, when they return home.

I will reflect upon the empirical data in relation to connectedness with inner self and explore if they have felt this/any difference in relation with inner-selves; or just adapt to the home society again after coming home in Denmark.

Travelers as human beings are part of society, therefore social connections cannot be ignored, according to Wilson(2010), “Ashmos and Duchon (2000) highlight the importance of social connections for human beings by suggesting that part of being alive is connecting with others” (Willson, 2010, p,58); and human beings are social creatures, but each person will experience different types of connections, many may feel strong bond with other people; for example, their spouse, family, friends, etc., people engaging with their spirituality are also likely to believe that they are connected to a larger human reality that cuts across generations and age groups; they thus share a connection with people that came before them and will come after them on this earth (Piedmont, 1999; cited in Willson, 2010, p.58). Lea (2009) argues that skilled engagement with self mediates through questioning the individual's own style of living, where one questions self about self-conduct as well as relation to others; and in this way the individual connects the relation with self to external relations and others and the world (Lea 2009,p.75).

Therefore transformation in the contemporary yoga tourist might also include yoga traveler's relationship to the others, including the society and the world itself. I am intended to explore Danish yoga traveler's transformation process in relation to changes (if any) in their relationships with others in their society and larger human reality.

Yoga offers consumption of an exotic otherness, something 'natural' that was lost or hidden, and this lost or hidden knowledge lies innately within the embodied self (Singleston ; cited in Lalonde, 2012, p. 257). Therefore yoga tourism has the propensity to offer exotic otherness through engaging with natural self. Spiritual connectedness through yoga also

facilitates the individuals to realize that they themselves are extremely connected to nature, as they are a part of nature or are nature themselves (Willson, 2010). In the contemporary yoga tourism, another message offered through yoga practices is that humans have become separated from their bodies; and yoga is concerned to find an embodied connection with 'nature' (Lalonde, 2012, p.257-258). It is also important to consider that in the practices of the modern yoga, the body is considered as nature, while the mind is encultured sphere of the false identifications; and yoga offers a reconnection amongst the body (nature) and the mind, which facilitates to overcome the unhealthy disembodied habitual states of being developed in modern society's impoverished view of the body (Lalonde, 2012, p.257). According to Lalonde (2012), this reunification of self with nature and natural self, lies in the healing power of the yoga practice, which facilitates to become peaceful, and offers ease of experiencing self and others; and ultimately creating a society which values such things; the advancement in yoga makes the individuals realize that however far they go, they always return to this natural self (Farhi, 2000,p.xv; cited in Lalonde 2012, p 51).

Therefore yoga tourism has the propensity to offer a recognition of the natural self (body) and mind (en-cultured by the habits developed by growing in the developed society); in this way yoga facilitates the individuals to transform themselves by creating a new relation with natural self that always exist; and individuals seek/achieve the tendency to always return to that natural self.

But here it is also important to consider that as the experience of yoga is very individual and people may or may not experience this natural self. I examine the tourist's discourse of transformation by realizations of connectedness to self, others and nature in self; the other perspectives of transformation process are discussed in the data analysis.

### **3.3 Self transformation by self identification**

According to Guest, self identification is influenced by interactions of the yoga, the development of the spiritual capital and/ ethical and moral beliefs (Guest, 2007; cited in Holladay & Ponder, 2012,p.322). Holladay & Ponder (2012) further elaborate self identification and states that identification of the self is connected to the development of the spirit, which might be strengthened by travel; the compiling of yoga practice and yoga travel may lead the yogi traveler towards the unification for the self that means all aspects of inner self (Aggarwal, et al., 2008; Lehto, et al, 2006; cited in Holladay and Ponder, 2012,p.312).

By considering yoga travel as activity travel, the feelings related to the experience of the adventure in this travel is termed as ‘sensual transcendence’, in which adventure felt by the individual becomes a form of leisure and compensate for the lack of authenticity felt in the ordinary life of the individuals (Vester 1987, cited in Wang 1999,p363). This might give rise to the feeling of existential authenticity during the travel, existential authenticity can be defined in simple terms as “counterdose to the loss of ‘true self’ in the public roles and public spheres in modern western society” (Wang, 1999,p.358).

Various issues in the contemporary life of an individual can be recognized, which might play an important role in the process of self transformations through yoga tourism, like Spirituality as essence of being human (Lalonde, 2012; Willson, 2010); social status ambiguity, personal secularization and external spiritual entity (Wood 2007). Willson (2010) identifies life essence as an important part of the spiritual tourism, which means that for spiritual travelers the essence of being human is spirituality itself (Willson,2010). As people move through the ultimate concerns of food, sex, water, shelter; they will find them temporarily satisfying; however they are not able to quench the desire of human beings to determine who they are, and their purpose and ultimate meaning in life (Willson, 2010,p.54). One description of today’s society is given below:

“Our age is one which denounces love, hope and the transcendental. It is governed by the mundane; it is a time of lovelessness, of ‘us’ and ‘them’, of profit and loss, when we cut ourselves off from what makes us human, from our essence. It is a world which nullifies mutually sustaining, nurturing relationships and shuns beauty. Yet, our world does not merely ignore such relationships, it rails against them and so to even talk about them makes us vulnerable”(Pritchard, Morgan, & Ateljevic, 2011, p.18).

Based upon the above, even though the contemporary western societies are enjoying all the basic and materialistic needs, but emptiness still exists in the lives of the people and people seek something out of mundane. This situation might give rise to the need of Transcendence as, “Transcendence is argued to be spurred by a loss of meaning, or a longing for greater meaning within an individual’s life caused by issues including excessive materialism, secularism, stress, global warming, poverty, terrorism and personal life experiences” (Belk, 1985; Cushman, 1990; Elgin & Mitchell, 2003; Hartmann, 1999; Lengfelder & Timothy, 2000; Sharpley & Sundaram, 2005; cited in Willson,p.10). According to Willson (2010), this leads the people of the Western

world to move away from a strict focus on money, and are increasingly demanding that their life is meaningful, inspiring, and allows for personal, intrinsic growth (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Burack, 1999; Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2004; cited in Willson 2010, p.56). According to Lalonde (2012), yoga is promising to fulfill this search of life essence, life purpose and meanings out of the mundane, “as Yoga continues to be associated in the global cultural imaginary as a peaceful practice of self-discovery, a discipline based on non-harming that offers the potential for “incarnate transcendence” of the mundane aspects of the world to arrive at a blissful existence of incorruptible happiness” (Singleton, 2008; cited in Lalonde, 2012, p.22).

Based upon the above discussion, Danish yoga travelers might develop the transcendental needs in their lives, and they might find yoga to be answering these needs by fulfilling the search of life essence, life purpose and meaning of life, out of mundane. The traveler’s discourse is presented and discussed in the data analysis.

In the contemporary business world, the issue of ‘outsourcing’ is becoming quite common in business practices, which can cause social changes in the western societies, as Wood (2007,p.171) discusses that new age practices in the west (he relates to Great Britain and The United States of America) are related directly to shifting nature of authority, which he describes as decreased state of control, loss of strength in labour movements, increased professionalization and restructuring markets that transfer manufacturing to poorer countries with increased managerial and service sector jobs. “Therefore labour structure has been coupled with shifts from production to consumption economies, where class boundaries, particularly between middle and working classes, may become blurred in terms of “the status and material reward associated with the middle- class” (Wood, 2007,p.170). This kind of social process might contribute to a high degree of ambiguity in social status, authority, and identity. Denmark cannot be an exception of outsourcing issue, as many production companies of Denmark (for example Dong Energy, Danske Bank) are outsourcing labour from Asian countries like India, china. Moreover, constitution also claims to consider all individuals as equals, but there are a lot of discussions on religious and feminist inequalities in the society, like the issue of foreigners living in Denmark. Therefore some people may strive social status in Danish society. An important example of the mundane problems is worldwide economic recession, Internicola discusses that Yoga has become a mainstream discussion of the lifestyle choices about health, stress, fitness and beauty, coupled with a billion Dollar industry in The United States. And the trend of yoga has increased

in the United States after economic recession of 2009 and status ambiguity, because whatever is going in one's life, yoga has the capacity to reenergize and rejuvenate an individual (Internicola, 2009; cited in Lalonde, 2007,p.22). Yoga might provide an opportunity to think about self as an individual rather than a member of society with social status. This fact is an interesting example of as yoga facilitates the individuals to deal with any kind of problem in their lives, like popularity of yoga has been noticed to be increased after the economic crises in the united states of America.

Hence, yoga has the capacity to take individuals away from the mundane life problems and status ambiguity in their lives. I ask informants about the reasons of choosing yoga tours and achievements from the yoga tours in their lives or their status in the society. The findings are discussed during data analysis.

Wood ( 2007) discusses that in the modern western societies, many people are involved with non-formal religions, but have life experiences in which formative religious traditions (particularly Christianity) plays a definitive role; and rejection of these formative authorities leads them towards revitalization' of religious authority instead of secularization (Wood ( 2007,p.162). Wood (2007) refers this as 'Personal Secularization' where religious authority becomes weakened and more ambiguous, while still remaining individualistically active (Wood, 2007, p.162). Here spiritual practice like yoga can satisfy this personal secularization because as Smith(2007) argues that yoga is kept open for individuals to make their own spiritual meanings through their personal values and make them more aware of themselves by bringing them at different spiritual level or self transformations (Smith, 2007; Lalonde, 2012). Hence, Danish yoga tourist might be struggling with their 'personal secularization' due to the fact that they live in less religious surroundings, as there are no hard social rules to follow religions. But Danish society is still practicing religious practices like Baptism, confirmation, etc. (Reddy, 1993). Therefore there is a tendency in the Danish society that people may develop their own 'personal secularization'; and yoga tourism offers the potential to sooth the religious ambiguity developed due to personal secularization and transcendental need of being in the modern society; and at the same time it is open for every individual to make their own spiritual meanings.

On the other hand of the personal secularization, new age yoga practices are also related to external spiritual identity which eventually transforms the true inner spirit; as Wood argues that the goal of yoga is to embody one's true inner spirit by transcending an externally imposed

social identity, while in many new age practices people seek to become possessed by an external spiritual entity (Wood 2007). Both personal secularization and external spiritual identity represents the internal and external processes of the consumer behavior in tourism, and both plays role in the consumer decision making, where self-concept of the consumer plays the most important role in the decision making (Mountinho, 2007) . Therefore it depends upon the yoga tourist, that how he/she relates their life to personal secularization and/or external spiritual identity, as individuals are free to transform their personal life stories (Gaviria & Bluemelhuber, 2010, p. 128). And their yoga travelling plays an important role in their spiritual identity creation, because they travel for yoga which is their leisure activity; and the experiences collected during their yoga travel becomes ‘career like’ pursuit and re-perform their identity; and the prolonged involvement in certain leisure brings a number of rewards including personal and social rewards (Stebbins, 2007; cited in Hannam & Knox, 2010,p.93-94).

Therefore personal secularization and externally imposed social identity of the Danish yoga tourist, together or individually may result in yoga tourist’s self transformation; because yoga tour can contribute to one’s personal secularization, where one may relate his/own narratives to their life story in his/ her own ways.

I will explore from the empirical material if the Danish yoga travelers are under the process of self transformation by self identifications; as if they identify something about themselves through the yoga retreat visits. It is also important to consider that there can be only one of them (personal secularization and external spiritual entity) or one may be more important than other; but they both can also be together active in transformation process.

### **3.4 Self transformations by self enhancement**

Michelis (2006) discusses that contemporary modern world has accepted yoga practice not only as a physically but also psychologically and scientifically, because the benefits of yoga are related to the new age concepts of self improvement, which is related to the Sanskrit word (Svadhyaya), this means study of self (Michelis, 2006,p. 220). Willson argues that human beings have to experience transcendence to achieve the meaning or purpose of their lives; but engaging with their spirituality through seeking meaning or life purpose can cause them to feel vulnerable (Willson,2010, p.52). Willson (2010) also argues that one often should step outside the comfort zone, like change jobs, seek further education, etc in order to find meaning and purpose of life, and some people find spiritual strength in doing this (Bourne 2005; cited in Willson,2010,p.51).

Thus transcendental experience by yoga retreat might help the travelers to achieve their life purpose, which help them to provide spiritual enhancement and eventually leading them to transform themselves (Walker and Browne, 1985; cited in Willson, 2010, p.51). Yoga can provide a way to the individuals to break their comfort zones and offers control, relaxation and perhaps intimately salvation through conscious knowledge of the embodied self and shape the individual's transformative impulse, individual relates the literalization of the alternative reality (Lalonde, 2012,p.253). Therefore yoga retreat tours, provide a spiritual strength to meet the challenges of finding life purpose by stepping out of the comfort zone of everyday life at home; they experience transcendental enhancement as they get knowledge about embodied self by relating literalization of the alternative reality, which might lead them further on the self transformation process.

On the other hand, these interpretations of transcendental self enhancement can also be criticized as traveler's own imagination of spirituality in own life; because as per above discussions, spirituality is not about management and control but it is about openness and attentiveness, and only rule is to realize the unseen reality. Besides this spiritual realizations might only be the results of consumer's own knowledge from the past; which helps the consumer to make life narratives for present and desires for future (see Gaviria & Bluemelhuber, 2010). Therefore the realization of spiritual enhancement might be spiritual realization of understanding life purpose, or it can just be the imagined reflection of own past knowledge which help the travelers to make their life narratives for present and desires for future, which they see as their life purpose; and they mark this process as self enhancement.

According to Wilson(2010), transcendence is optimal human experience as a flow in which people are challenged by experiencing loss of self-consciousness and time (Van Ness 1996b; cited in Willson 2010,p.55). People seek to transcend themselves because they are aware of their own mortality and that physical death is inevitable; therefore they strive to find and construct meaning and purpose in their life (Piedmont,1999,p.5; cited in Willson,2010, p.55). These constructs affect their whole life because "spiritual practice is not one activity among other human activities; it is the ground of all human activities, their source and their validation; and it is a prior commitment to transcendent truth lived, breathed, intuited, and practiced twenty-four hours a day. To intuit your self is to commit your entire being to the actualization of that self in all beings" (Holladay & Ponder, 2012, p. 312). This is the indication of the deeper



transformation, which not only effects mind and body but the whole life. Hence transcendence through yoga carries the capacity to transform the whole life of the individual providing them experience of loss of self-consciousness and time and allowing them to construct the meaning of their lives at larger perspectives rather than a general mundane life.

Previous discussions were more focused upon spiritual enhancement. But it is also important to consider body and mind together with spirit, because these are also important aspects of the yoga practices (Lalonde, 2012; Xinran, Sally, Yi & Alastair, 2006). Lalonde (2012) emphasizes that the importance of health and wellbeing in yoga tourism cannot be understated, even in the case of spiritually motivated yoga tourism, because the elements of yoga are related to self betterment Lalonde (2012, p. 74). Therefore the individuals may be seeking/experiencing the transformation in themselves by feeling physical and/or psychological betterment in themselves. But gender is also an important issue to be considered in yoga tourism, because women might seek/experience a freedom through yoga retreat tours, as Freeman identifies self care techniques, such as life coaching and yoga as technique for achieving self-mastery and personal fulfillment, presenting entrepreneurial opportunities for women to integrate their desires for holistic lives in which private and public lives become increasingly indistinct, imbued with same effective qualities of care, self-fulfillment, reciprocity and support (Freeman, 2011; cited in Lalonde, 2012, p. 173). Therefore yoga not only facilitates for physical and mental transformations, but also facilitates the women to achieve internal and external freedom in their lives, which might transform the way of their lives as they might achieve freedom via self –mastery, personal fulfillment not only privately but socially as well, and they could achieve fulfillment, reciprocity and support for themselves. But this might also be applicable on men as well, as the status of men are also challenged in the contemporary western societies; this is because women are forward moving and may doing what they are not expected to do; for example asking men to contribute in household activities (like cooking, cleaning, etc) in this kind of situation yoga retreat can provide a better thinking opportunity to men so that they can place their own betterment and freedom in peace with women's betterment and freedom.

Therefore yoga has capacity to facilitate the individual to enhance self as a person, not only spiritually but also physically and psychologically. Yoga tourist seek/experience spiritual strength by coming out of their comfort zone of the materialistic world, as they acknowledge the alternative reality of their lives; as yoga satisfies the transcendental and spiritual needs of the

human mind, especially the tourist of the highly materialistic countries like Denmark. Yoga retreat visits also provides an opportunity to challenge self by coming out of consciousness and time; where human seek/achieve transcendence, which eventually facilitates the individuals to see themselves and their lives from a larger perspective. This experience carries the capacity of changing the individual's self transformation. Moreover, the enhancements due to yoga tourism are also related to physical and psychological betterment, where one might seek/achieve physical and psychological transformations; where freedom is an important aspect to be considered. Freedom helps to express the real self of the human being because yoga carries the capacity of making public and private indistinct, and Danish yoga tourist might seek/achieve this freedom of expressing themselves by seeking/achieving self-mastery, reciprocity and support.

#### **4. Data Analysis**

This chapter contains the presentations and interpretations of the empirical data; this chapter is divided into 12 sub-chapters as per findings from the empirical material.

The focus of the analysis is on the changes or effects in the lives of the Danish yoga practitioners, which are created by yoga travelling; but it is also important to consider that the effects are continuous process rather than a an achieved goal, as discussed previously in theory (Foucault, 2005; cited in Lea, 2009, p.74). Therefore I am exploring transformation processes of the Danish yoga practitioners which they think are happening after yoga travel.

When I ask the informants about their personal achievements before and after yoga travelling, I get expressions like *more happiness, more calmness, more peacefulness, more open mindedness about self and others, more consciousness about self and world around self, the path is the goal, I have started to wake up early in the morning, I have become vegetarian, etc.* These expressions might only be the presentation of the traveler's own knowledge about ideal affect of yoga travel, because various websites focus upon these points as selling prepositions. An example is given below:

*"Contemplation and inner peace, joy and intimacy are at the center of the Yoga holidays"* (Yogaferie i Provence og Portugal, 2013).

Therefore the transformations noticed by the travelers might be the result of effect of the information given on yoga selling websites. I will discuss above expressions during the analysis, but the point of stating them here is that informants do think that their perspectives about their

lives are changed or transformed after yoga travelling, which means that they perceive that yoga travelling has affected their broader lives. Almost all of the informants have tried yoga prior to their yoga travel, therefore by considering yoga travel as a special interest travel for the Danish yoga practitioners, the feelings of happiness, calmness, more peacefulness, etc. are related to the manifestation of their own knowledge and practice of yoga in their everyday life, instead of just impacts of their yoga travel as discussed in theory (see Hannam & Knox ;2010). These concepts can also be related to the idea of identity creation of self as yogic person, as they have knowledge about yoga and its effects; firstly, their realizations during the yoga travel might be the result of their own previous knowledge about yoga, and secondly they are creating their identity of yogic being by giving the example of the affects of yoga travel on their lives. Therefore the transformations presented by the Danish yoga travelers might be the result of their own previous knowledge about yoga and it's affects on lives; because there is a direct relationship between behavior at home prior to the holiday, holiday conduct and then behavior at home following at the end of the holiday in the form of manifestation of knowledge and practice from everyday life of the special interest tourist (see Hannam & Knox,2010). Therefore transformations after yoga travel can only be the reflection of the own interest and knowledge of the travelers. Data is analyzed under 12 headings based upon the empirical findings and relation of these findings with included theories.

#### **4.1 Transcendental realizations, existential authenticity, cultural encounters or own desire for change**

While discussing about their holiday, many of the informants said that some of the feelings of the yoga travel experience are so difficult to explain, but they think that these feelings during yoga travel changed their lives afterwards. I assume these feelings to be transcendental because transcendental experiences are difficult to explain in words, as they are experiences beyond human body. Some examples from the data are discussed below, when I ask Jensen (2013) about her personal achievements from yoga tour, she says:

*“I become Stronger in love terms, I (....) feel like world is good. I experienced many things in my life that made me feel sad (...) so there was not much place left for that. I felt that there was something that has started to get place, and felt like I have my own place in myself or (...) there was something that became mature (....) It was important to think that I need to have*

*more place for myself. (...) I came back and could feel that world has moved forward”* (Jensen,2013).

The above quote represents that according to the traveler’s own discourse, yoga tourism has the tendency to bring more love, goodness, happiness and place for self in their lives. The above quote might represent transcendence felt by the traveler, as the informant use the expression *‘something that has started to get place’*, which means that she find no word to say what is actually taking place, but her understanding of the world seems to be changed because she says that the world has moved forward, as the transcendental experience is difficult to explain but has changed her view about the world. But it is be too simplistic to consider these changes as transcendental, because this feeling might be the result of ‘sensual transcendence’ which could be the result of change and adventure in the boredom and lack of authenticity in her everyday life (see Wang, 1999). Hence these realizations during her yoga holiday might also be because of her experience of coming out of her mundane life. When I ask about meaning of love in the above quote, then she says:

*“It is difficult to explain, but love is taking care, send positive energy to each other and know nature and each other good (...) I think performance of this love could be, if there are many people in a group together like our little group on yoga tour, it feels like over all the world and we share everything in a great way”* (Jensen,2013).

The expressions like ‘sending positive energy to each other’ and ‘taking care of others’ can be interpreted as readymade expressions learnt by the informant during the yoga tour, because I noticed during the participant information that yoga teacher used the similar expressions during the yoga holiday meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> march. The yoga teacher said that traveler feels the positivity in life, and hence all in the group send positive energy to each other in your life. Therefore the travelers are trained to feel this positivity before going on a yoga holiday, and this knowledge might become interpretation of their narratives of yoga holiday realizations, and interpretations of change felt during and after yoga travel (see Gaviria & Bluemelhuber, 2010). Or simply, she is out of the boredom of her everyday life, and this might be the reason of this positive energy (happiness). But she perceives the achievement of realization of love, taking care and positive energy to each other in the group during the yoga holiday.

It is also important to consider that the reason of going on a yoga travel was desire for change, When I asked Jensen (2013) about the reason of going on yoga tour, then she says:

*“(...) This is because I could feel that there was something wrong in my life, boys grew up, and I had desire for a change, but I did not know what is wrong and what can be better”*(Jensen, 2013).

Above quote represents that she did yoga travelling for the desire of change in her personal life, therefore the transformations felt after yoga travel may only be the traveler's own desire for change in her life; and the traveler might be pushing herself to transform after yoga travelling due to her own desire for change, hence the felt transformation after yoga travelling might be the result of her own efforts of self change rather than affects of yoga travelling. This situation is like making new resolutions for self after coming back from holiday.

In the above discussed example, traveler went to Greece for yoga holiday, but some of the Danish yoga travelers also travel towards far eastern destinations, like, India, Indonesia and Thailand. Following quote gives deeper understanding of the informant's transcendental experience during yoga tour and it's affect on her life, this informant lived in yoga place in Indonesia.

*“The yogic philosophy was influence the whole way of being out there, that was quite amazing, it changed a lot to my life, I was going back to Denmark with new eyes on everything, (...) like what I was eating and was conscious about, not eating meat and the yogic ways change a lot about me as well. think about what consciousness do you kill, by eating pigs (...)they have really huge consciousness, they are more clever than dogs (...) we do not kill dogs, but we kill pigs and we treat them not really so nice. I got more conscious about all these things. and also the ways how you do with the earth, how you treat the planet and also much more conscious about not to make too big foot steps on the planet earth, that's why actually we live in the village like this like in echo village (...) I am never buying meat”* (Helsted, 2013).

The above informant perceives that she is changed by yoga travelling; she gives examples of changes in her lifestyle like - changed eating habits, changed preference of accommodation and changed rationality about animals and environment. She perceives that life in yoga asharam (where she stayed) is according to yogic philosophy, but she seems to be unaware of the fact that yogic philosophy has many discourses<sup>8</sup>; this is an example of existential

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<sup>8</sup> The analysis of the yogic philosophy is considered to be out of the limits of this project, because there are several philosophy's of yoga like Indian yogic philosophy, western yogic philosophy, and philosophies of different yoga experts (Lalonde, 2012).

authenticity, as she thinks that the life in yoga asharam is the authentic yogic life, this might be the result of feelings of existential authenticity; as she is out of the feeling of in-authenticity in her mundane lifestyle, hence the travelling experience becomes authentic for her, which is ‘counterdose’ of her everyday life in the modern society (see Wang, 2010). But this existential authenticity experienced during yoga travel is more effective than existential authenticity felt by ordinary mass tourist; because the traveler changes the lifestyle after coming home, on the contrary to mass tourist, who continue to live the previous life after coming back home (see Wang, 2010). The reason might be related to traveler’s own spiritual believes that carries the tendency to transform him/her (see theory; Wilson, 2010).

During the discussions in the interview with Helsted(2013), she gives several examples of life in Indonesia and mix her experience of being in Indonesia and being in yoga asharam, for example she discusses the example of people’s behavior, when the train came several hours late, and nobody amongst the people waiting for train at station got worried because of delay in train; she finds it amazing and very yogic, but she even does not know, if any of them practice yoga or know something about yoga. This example shows that yoga travelers go through two different types of cultural encounters during her yoga travel, the local people at the destination and the people living in yoga asharams; they cannot differentiate between the locals at the destination and locals at yoga asharam; that means ‘yogic other’ for yoga traveler could be everyone at that destination, the traveler may think that the locals at the destination are ‘authentic yogic other’ (see Hannam & Knox, 2010, p.106-107 ). Therefore tourist thinks that she is becoming like ‘yogic other’ during the transformation process after travelling, but she is becoming the ‘local other’ of the travelled destination, or might be becoming ‘other’ who might be the combination of the ‘local others’ and ‘others’ she met at yoga asharam. Therefore the transformation process of yoga travel is influenced by the traveler’s encounters with the local cultural practices and believes, besides the practices and believes of the people at yoga asharam. The cultural practices can be assumed transcendental by the traveler because he/she might have not experienced these practices before.

Therefore cultural encounters during the yoga travel affect the Danish yoga traveler’s way of thinking and living, when they come back home. By comparing the previous quote

(Jensen, 2013) to this quote (Helsted, 2013), it can also be noted that some Danish yoga travelers may get affected differently than others, according to the travel destination. The travelers going in more distant destinations (especially pre-modern and exotic) are affected by the cultural values because they find the local culture very different from their own way of living in modern society.

Another example of transcendental changes is discussed below:

*“Now I feel more that there is more between life and death, than just being, it’s also like I feel when I say spiritual, there is also feeling of calmness, that is bigger than just calmness. I do not know if its God or anything like that but that’s to me spirituality, it is also something that you can just be, and be happy just by being (...)”* (Dente, 2013).

This example shows that the informant might have developed a transcendental realization of something more between life and death, and she feels more calmness, happiness and satisfaction by just being. Therefore the spiritual sides of the yoga travelling can also realized by some of the yoga travelers, but there is always risk that these effects are the result of previous knowledge about yoga (this concept of previous knowledge about yoga is discussed later in detail).

### **Sub-conclusion**

According to the travelers discourse, transcendental realizations during the yoga travel have affected their lives afterwards. Danish yoga travelers claim that they have more positivity, happiness and satisfaction, and more consciousness about importance of self. But it is too simplistic to define the affects of yoga travel by considering only the spiritual aspects of yoga travel; because besides doing yoga people are also travelling and the combined affects of yoga and travel might result in transformation. Feeling of in-authenticity and boredom in everyday life might also play an important role in traveler’s realizations during the yoga travel, like existential authenticity might cause the travelers to believe that the experience during the yoga tour is authentic and the practices of the local people at the destination are authentic yogic practices. Yoga travelers go on different destinations, some travel to other European countries like Greece, Spain, etc, and others travel to far eastern destinations like India, Indonesia; Thailand, etc. Danish yoga practitioners who travel to far eastern destinations are influenced by the local culture and they have the tendency to bring local cultural practices and believes with them to Denmark; because they can mix up between the local people at the destination (the

exotic other), and the people at yoga asharams; and form their own perceptions of the behavior of the local people and true yogic philosophy. Hence the transformation process for becoming 'yogic other' might be the process of becoming 'other', which is the combination of 'local other' at the destination and the 'other' in the yoga asharam. Some of the transformations might occur after yoga travelling because of traveler's own desire for change in their own life after yoga travelling. Therefore the affects of the yoga travel in the lives of the Danish yoga travelers is not a linear process of transcendental realizations, the effects can be the result of travelers own spiritual believes; but there are several other aspects which might also be playing important roles in the transformation process, like existential authenticity, cultural encounters with exotic/yogic others and traveler's own desire for change in life after traveling. Further research can be conducted to reveal these concepts in relation to yoga tourism in detail.

## **4.2 Transcendental connectedness, personal preferences or own version of yogic philosophy**

Most of the informants talk about some kind of connectedness during the interviews. Informants also present different examples of realization of connectedness during their yoga traveling. In the first example, the informant talks about feeling of connectedness to something higher, or transcendental, because transcendental feelings are beyond the limits of the human body, as discussed in previous section. After having her first yoga travel in Thailand and Indonesia, when she came back to Denmark, she says that did not want to stay in central Copenhagen anymore and she moved to an echo village (Dissekylde) in the outskirts of Copenhagen, where she teaches yoga now in 'Dissekylde yogacenter'. Therefore yoga travel has the tendency to cause major changes in the life of the traveler. She says:

*"Sometimes it was very deep feeling of connection, deep feeling of love, feeling that I was expanding, (...) sometimes like connection to something higher, like self and higher being (...)feeling of gratefulness (...) its like you are very much awakened"* (Helsted, 2013)

Above information shows the realization of transcendental connectedness felt by the informant, but when I ask her about 'what kind of awakesness', then she gives examples of getting more conscious about animal killing, and carbon dioxide footprints on earth. As presented previously, she is affected by this consciousness, as she never buy meat, and moved from central Copenhagen, and start living in the echo village in the outskirts of Copenhagen. Her



perception of feeling of transcendental connectedness cannot be seen or proved; but the examples of changes in her life also seems as the result of the influence of local cultural believes, which she encountered during her travelling, as discussed in last section. Moreover, the post modern concern of environment friendliness in Danish society also seems to be affecting her thought of connectedness. Therefore changes in her life might not only be the result of realizations of connectedness during the yoga travel, but might be the combination of her realizations during yoga travel, her encounter with different people of different culture, her own knowledge about yoga and the trend of environment friendliness in her home society. She seems to be in the process of yogic identity creation of self by using her own knowledge about yoga yoga, she is a yoga teacher and she has read a lot of yogic philosophy, therefore her knowledge about yoga can be considered more than amateur yoga travelers, who practice yoga as leisure activity. As she claims during the informal discussions that she reads a lot about yoga and yogic philosophy. The reason of such severe affects in her life (taking yoga as career, moving into echo village), might be related to her greater knowledge about yoga. Therefore she seems to proceed in her process of identity creation of self as yogic person. This might be motivating her to practice more yoga in her life, which she perceives as curiosity of feeling of connectedness. But she perceives that transcendental connectedness during her yoga travel is embedded in her everyday life until the day of interview, and its about 10 years since her first yoga travel. She might be trying to live a balanced life between body (natural, realization by doing yoga) and mind (encultured, which she learned from her society), by living in echo village (see theory; Lalonde, 2012).

The phrase “(...) *its like you are very much awakened*” (Helsted, 2013) might be the affect of the information given on yoga selling websites, and when I ask meaning of awakesness, she might only think about new information gathered from local cultural practices and believes at her travel destination. It seems that the ‘awakesness’ is kind of ideal happening during yoga holiday, and hence make traveler think that they are supposed to be awakened during yoga travel. The meaning of awakesness is kept open, so every individual can adapt it according to personal interests, needs and abilities.

*“Yoga holiday -an outer as well as inner journey where you will be able to return to your everyday life with a greater awareness”* (Yogaferie, 2013).

Therefore the effects of yoga travel might be the result of increased knowledge of the travelers from selling tactics, instead of only personal realizations. This shows that lives of the yoga traveler can be very much affected after yoga travel experience; they may change their career and residential choices. They perceive the changes in their lives due to deeper connection to their inner being, which is the spiritual aspect of yoga travel, the spiritual connectedness or transcendental connectedness, which is the relationship with something higher, and these kind of deepest spiritual encounters are experienced through individual's intimate and mutual relationships, that have the capacity to move the individual deeply, as stated in theory (Spaniol, 2001; cited in Willson, 2010). But there might be other possible reasons for these transformations like local cultural exposures, personal preferences for lifestyle choice, the effects of the trends in home society and their own knowledge about yoga also influence the tendency of the transformation process after yoga travelling.

Another example of feeling of connectedness during yoga holiday is given below:

*“ I have higher studies from CBS (....)both long studies and I am used to analyze and be critical, you know all these kind of things, (...) there was so much energy in my head (....) I used to be more per-formative during my studies and always been doing my best, (....) and started to look for a job, where competition was high, therefore more performance was expected (...)”* (Poivey, 2013).

The above quote presents the situation of the informant's life before doing her first yoga travel. She informs that she started to practice more yoga after coming back from her first yoga holiday. She further tells the below story of her realizations during her travel to Thailand for yoga retreat holiday:

*“I now believe that there is something higher powers and higher consciousness in the universe, and there we all kind of connected and I experience that more and more like, we are energy and like the view of the body from the yogas and from eastern tradition is that we are with this energy body and I feel this more and more and I believe in more and more. And I believe that there is higher (...) I do not know if its, this God, or this God or this God, for me it does not mean but there is something like higher consciousness”* (Poivey, 2013).

The above example shows the changed rationality of the Danish yoga traveler, the traveler perceive that she experience more and more connectedness of self to everything in the universe, she think that her believes get more strong with time, and the process of transformation

is continuing in her life. As stated in the theory that transformation is process rather than achievement of a goal. She perceives that she believes in the Eastern philosophy more and more. She also informs during the interview that she started to do more yoga practice after her yoga holiday, and she continues on this realization of connection to everything by continuous practice of yoga in her life. She does not seem to be bothered by the fact that she is developing a different kind of rationality to live her life. Therefore yoga travel has the tendency to motivate the traveler to continue practicing more yoga after coming home, and hence also has the tendency to continuously affect the lives of the travelers. Or the traveler is trying to satisfy her need of meaning, purpose, vision, hope, dignity to transcend life challenges; which can help her to anchor her life somewhere, in this case, it this case, this need seems to be satisfied believing in something higher (see theory; Wilson,2010). Yoga traveler might get new rationality for living, and continue to live comfortably with this new developed rationality. This new rationality can create more affects in the lives of the travelers, as this informant has been affected:

*“ (....)Then I decided I will stop looking for job, now I want to become a yoga teacher, so I started practicing a lot of yoga and studying a lot, and I started to change the way I was eating also(....)I have become more peaceful” (Poivey, 2013).*

Hence changed rationality causes changes in her career and lifestyle choice. This example reveals the affect of the feeling of connectedness experienced by yoga travelers. The process of transformation might start by changed rationality, new rationality might attract the traveler to practice and study more yoga, the process continues and yoga might be taken as a career choice and the eating habits can also be transformed. And the travelers continue living comfortably and peacefully with their new rationality and new career by continuously practicing more and more yoga. Therefore yoga travel carries the capacity to create the progressive transformation in believes of the travelers with the span of time.

It is important to consider here that Poivey (2013) in her previously stated quote says that she has always been performative during her education and she find the career related to her study demanding the same even more; there she seemed to be tired of being performative and competitive, and she may find more relaxation in doing yoga where she does not have to compete or perform anything; and this practical quality of yoga attracted her towards doing more yoga and choosing yoga as a career. Therefore the reason for this transformation after yoga travel

might be her personal preference for relaxed attitude rather than continue to be performative, instead of just spiritual connectedness.

I visited her luxury apartment with all modern facilities, for the interview. There I observe that she is living a modern life with all modern facilities. Therefore yoga travel affects her rationality, career and eating patterns, but not her lifestyle. She continues to live her luxury life, but with more and more yoga practice, this makes yoga as a component of her modern lifestyle. It is like an ancient eastern practice going on a western modern life of the Danish yoga practitioner, the combination of yoga practice in the modern life is an example of globalization seen in the post modern societies, where practices of different cultures can exist together.

By comparing both these extreme examples of effect of yoga travel (Helsted (2013) and Poivey (2013)); both chose to become yoga teachers and chose yoga as career, but one chose to change the place of residence and consider moving to echo village and claim that she is following the yogic philosophy (she uses the term Eastern philosophy interchangeably); and the other continues to live in her luxury apartment and she also claims that her life is being affected more and more by Eastern philosophy; therefore it seems that both of them have perceived the eastern philosophy differently; and they have their own version of eastern philosophy. I am not concerned about which one is right, but this examples is another example of existential authenticity, which they might have experienced during their stay at their travel destinations (one in Indonesia and another in Thailand), and they both find the philosophy at their yoga travel place to be authentic yogic, they accept the philosophy of the place unquestionably, and they even try to bring this philosophy home, continue to believe in it and also try to live accordingly; unlike other cultural tourists (see Wang, 2010).

### **Sub –conclusion**

Yoga travelers perceive that they get extremely affected by the realization of connectedness to inner self or self as a being during their yoga travel; they give several example of extreme changes in their lives, like change in their choice for place of residence, yoga as their career choice, changes in their eating habits, changed rationality for life and continuation of more and more yoga practice in their everyday life. But all the extremely affected yoga tourists, who claim to practice and believe yogic philosophy are not affected in similar ways, their rationality can be affected in different ways, they might chose to become more echo friendly or they might continue to live their luxury life (as one informant moves to echo village and another continue to

live in Amager in her modern facilitative apartment); hence the affects of realization of connectedness during yoga travel can be diverse. The diversity can be due to their personal preferences of their lifestyle choice and their own version of yogic philosophy experienced during their yoga travel at a destination, due to existential authenticity in their own mind; their personal existing knowledge about yoga and its effects on life or their need of need of meaning, purpose, vision, hope, dignity, etc to transcend life challenges. Hence the roots of the transformations are not only limited to transcendental connectedness or spiritual aspects of the yoga travel.

### **4.3 Transcendental connection to inner self or relation to society**

As per discussions in theory, yoga tours have the tendency to facilitate travelers to flourish their relationship with their inner being and to promote natural goodness and ‘wholeness’ in their lives; and provide a way to find themselves in the modern capitalist society (see Willson, 2010; Lea, 2009, Lalonde, 2012). Most of the informants present examples about new relations with inner self, when they talk about the meditation practice during their yoga travel. For example, when I ask an informant about her feelings about meditation practice during her yoga travel, she says:

*“(....) Main thing was going from my head into my body, kind of being connected to my body and it was not the head that was controlling everything, (....) what happens is the sensation of being a whole person with the body and the head also. I think that was the main thing I felt on my first yoga holiday. (....)how important it is to be in your body and to connect to whole you and not only being up here (pointing towards head) because that’s how I was educated, to this one (pointing towards head)to use my head , all the time (....) it was physical and it was nice sensation in the body and it was relaxation and more relaxing in my head, I could feel more ground for myself, I could feel more balance afterwards (....) now I live more balanced life between by body and brain ” (Poivey, 2013).*

The above quote represents that the traveler perceives themselves to be transformed after feeling of connectedness to self because the above traveler claims that she has learned the ability to analyze self being in two parts, the body and the brain; this analysis has increased her ability to think herself as whole person including body and brain. Therefore yoga travelers perceive that yoga travelling helps them to connect to inner being and think themselves as a whole person including body and brain. This description to inner self, and self analysis in body and mind,

seems to be very much theoretical discussion, hence it seems that her own knowledge about theory of spirituality and yoga might have caused this perception effects of yoga travel in her life. Therefore this transformation occurring after yoga holiday might be only the result of her own desire of being an individual living a balanced life between body and mind; because of her own knowledge about yoga in her past (see Gaviria & Bluemelhuber, 2010). This affect of yoga travel on the travelers life seems to be theory based, because firstly the traveler is a yoga teacher and has read a lot about yoga and its effects on life, and secondly she is using very similar theoretical terms, as presented in the theory; this makes herself to be an ideal example of feeling of ideal wholeness felt by the yoga traveler. This is an example of the realizations of a yoga expert (yoga teacher); the below example of meditation is given by an amateur yoga traveler:

*“Meditation is really where you calm down and as I said that being within yourself (...)that’s the time when you can say when you are alone with yourself. And I think that scares (...) it’s a little bit scary to be alone with yourself. (why?) well because there are so many thoughts and that is what the meditation is good for; that is just because when I have a lot of crazy thoughts the meditation tells me that its ok they are just thoughts and sometimes, we just allow them to flow by (...) we understand them but do not really react on them, and do not really take too much notice of them because they are just there, so of course the meditation has helped me afterwards”* (Kristoffersen, 2013).

The analysis of self during the meditation is not considered as ideal by this informant; she is not comfortable with the mediation during yoga holiday. But she thinks that she has learned to manage her own thoughts, by looking at the negative sides of self being and hence find own way of living. Therefore the amateur travelers can also be affected by the practice of meditation during yoga travel, they it find to be helpful for their own thought management process. But this affect perceived by the travelers also might be the result of ideal results of the meditation, which they have learned from schooling or acquiring knowledge about yoga, yoga being their special interest.

Another informant gives an example of a feeling of new connection to self being, and its affect on the life:

*“ I felt sort of connection to something nice (...) that I can relate to me, and then I started, yoga practice... feel that it was something that was needed, something was really good to me, (...)it sort of open up to new perspectives, (...)I started practicing yoga, and it was the*

*moment where I changed job, I went from (...) an executive job in the large company, to a small company with less prestige. It was just at the moment I started my own company” (Poivey O. , 2013).*

This informant perceives that he has realization of goodness in self being during his yoga travel, and he starts to practice more yoga afterwards, and that he finds good for himself and he experience new options in life like different work, where external prestige is less valuable. Therefore yoga travel has the tendency to make travelers aware of goodness in self, which makes them practice more yoga and the external prestige issue become less important and traveler start to think about alternative perspectives of life.

But inner being is not most important part for every traveler, because the informants are a part of their society, as self and society effect on each other, as discussed in the theory (see Lea, 2009). An example is given below:

*“(...)I think in the beginning, when I came back I was a little bit obnoxious in the way that I became very strict what I was eating, like I started like no I cannot have onions, I cannot have garlic and stuff like this, and I kind of say ok I need a kind of balance, because otherwise I could be very yogic but I cannot be very social, and it did not took that long time for me, one year or 1½ year maximum, and then I realized ok I need to adapt the society, you are living in.(...)” ( Poivey, 2013).*

This example indicates that Danish yoga travelers are more affected immediately after holiday, but with span of time they start to negotiate these affects with their society. Even though the examples claim a lot of realizations of transcendence and connection to inner being, where external issues (like prestige) are less important, but with the span of time, they realize that their society is also important and they start to adapt back to their society, I cannot say that they start to live the same way they were living before travelling, but the transformation process due to yoga travel may also result in retransformation in the form of adaptation of self in home society. This process of retransformation can also be characterized as the realization of the importance of self in the society and therefore a new negotiated connection not only to self but also to the society occurs. Therefore yoga traveler adopts a different lifestyle after yoga travelling, this new lifestyle is the combination of yogic practices (achieved from yoga travel), the socio-cultural practices (with which the individual is brought up) and personal priorities (relation of self and society); the transformation process does not stop here, it is still happening. Hence yoga traveler

is floating in the middle of being self oriented and being a member of society, and it also seems that the process of transformation is in continuity, and more changes can be expected.

### **Sub-conclusion**

Some Danish yoga travelers find the meditation during their yoga travel to be very effective, they think that they learn to analyze self in body and mind and give importance to both in their life after travelling; and they think that this way of living is more balanced way. Some travelers think that they learn to organize their thoughts, by meditating during yoga holiday; and therefore affecting their life afterwards. Some also recognize natural goodness in self and stop giving importance to external prestige. These transformations might be the result of realization of transcendental connectedness, according to the traveler's own discourse. But their own knowledge about yoga and its effects seems to be influencing this presentation of transformation process. Some travelers claim that they become more self oriented beings, instead of external oriented beings. On the contrary, some travelers find the society also important and they negotiate the transformations with cultural practices and try to become a social being again, where they keep some of part of the realizations during the yoga travel, and some part of their social practices and they mix the two according to their personal preferred choices.

The next section of the analysis is about the new connection with others:

## **4.4 Making and breaking relationships with others**

Many of the informants talk about the other people in the group during their yoga travel. Those who travel in a group become close to each other, I did not have any problems in finding informants for this research, because all the informants whom I met during the yoga holiday meeting at Yoga center in Frederiksberg, they referred me to other people, who have been on yoga holiday, I observed that they share a special kind of link to each other, many said that they become close friends with other travel mates, and many also say that they have not met each other before and after that tour, but they trust that if I contact other person from their group, he/she will be remembering them and help me; and same happened, it was easy for them to remember each other even though they were not in contact with each other for years. I observed that they are having a special faith on each other after having yoga travel together, despite the fact they do not see each other after that travel. Following quote may represent a reason of that faith:



*“ (...) We did not know each other a week ago, and just after one week, we were just talking from depth of our heart, I mean nothing restricted and was so nice. It does not happen that often” (Poulsen, 2013).*

The above quote represents a special bond or connection of the informant to other people of the travelling group, as they become quite open to each other in a short while, and the informant thinks that it is not common happening, also related to the Danish society, because Danes take long to become close friends, as discussed by Reddy (1993). Most of the informants used ‘we’ many times during their conversations, this shows the connectedness to each other in the yoga travel group. Therefore the travelers have realizations of special connection to others in the travelling group, and Danes get close to other group members in short time, which is not a common practice in the Danish society.

It seems that the yoga tour selling websites in Denmark promote close relationships of the group members, for example:

*“ (...) Relaxing by the pool and inspiring interaction with peers - are some of the ingredients on your Yoga Holidays (...)” (Yogaferie i Provence og Portugal, 2013).*

They go together to a destination, they take all the yoga lessons together and discuss their realizations to each other; because during the interviews, various informants also talk about their quality time spend with the other group members and they question each other with their realizations. This might be a reason of special bond between the members of a yoga travelling group. This might also be a reason that most of the group members of one group have similar realizations during yoga travel, which might be due to their discussions and due to the same yoga instructor.

Below example explains a new developed relationship of the traveler with the others in the society back home:

*“Denmark is a place where I am brought up in the way that we have to have a goal in life (...) that you have jigsaw on your elbows, (...)so that you can move forward, and not caring so much about who is hurting on the way – as long as you move forward (...) its not very caring and loving attitude, and so I am the way like we make plans a head, and you need to think ahead in Denmark you just need to think more about tomorrow (...) it is very difficult for us to think about today and what is happening right now, that’s one of the parts of doing yoga tour, it gives*

*calmness.(....)I have learned to take one day at a time, and I feel more peaceful about it.”*  
(Kristoffersen, 2013).

As per traveler's discourse, the above example shows that yoga travel has the tendency to effect the travelers attitude towards others; Danish yoga traveler is intended develop more caring attitude about other in the society. The traveler also achieve the tendency to question the own way of living, for example the above informant questions the attitude of her own society, her own goal oriented lifestyle and starts to live present oriented lifestyle; as Lea(2009), argues that skilled engagement with self mediates though questioning the own way of living where individual questions self about self conduct and relation with others, and in this way an individual connects the relation with self to external relations and others and the world. Therefore engagement with self may cause the yoga traveler to develop a new relationship with their own society; the traveler questions careless attitude about hurting others and start living in present oriented manner rather than goal oriented manner; which might bring more peace and calmness in the lives of the travelers. This difference in attitude might be the result of recognition of natural goodness in self, realized during meditation as per previous discussions. But it is still unclear that how one can manage to be in a society with a different attitude than other members of the society, because of deep relation between self and society. Therefore there might be a tendency of the negotiation of this attitude due to the relation between self and society, as travelers might do (according to the findings in previous section). This means that this transformation of the caring attitude about other humans in the society and present oriented attitude, might also be negotiated by the traveler with the society and retransformation may occur, but this is not a certainty as transformation is an ongoing process, which can be diverse as per individual's own choice.

The realization of connectedness also offers the yoga travelers to think about future generations, as per discussion in theory. Spiritually connected people also start to care about the future generations, for example, Helsted(2013), decided to live in the echo village, as she argues that she cares about carbon footprints on the earth, which shows that she is not only realizing larger human reality but also care about the future generations (see theory; Piedmont, 1999; Cited in Willson, 2010, p.58). Below example also shows a new relationship developed for other human beings:

*“I have come to realize that I should not be afraid because I am not alone, even though I am alone if children and husband have moved out. I feel that I am very rich because I have so many people. So I feel richer in that way and very much grateful, really grateful. In that way, my feelings have grown up (...)”*(Jensen, 2013).

Therefore yoga travel causes the travelers to develop closeness with the other human beings in the society, in this way traveler realizes that feeling of being alone can be gone out of her life. Yoga traveler can find other persons (whom they know) as their assets and this feeling makes them feel rich, this also shows a deeper bond of the traveler with larger human reality.

On the contrary, Helsted (2013) informs during the interview that she left all her older friends and come closer to new friends who practice more yoga and believe in yoga philosophy, therefore yoga holiday has the tendency to break the traveler’s existing relationships with the friends. This means that yoga travel not only brings in new connections but also have the tendency to break older relations. When I asked Helsted (2013) why she leaved older friends, then she says that she did not feel comfortable in their company anymore. This could be just related to interest related friendship bonds, she might not want to be in the company of those friends, with whom she finds nothing in common; because many travelers discuss that they feel more comfortable with the people who also practice yoga and they find something common with them (the details are discussed in later sections).

But Poulsen (2013) denies any change in her relationships with others. She says during the interview that she become more mature (the details are discussed in the later sections) but she does not feel any change in her relationships, neither in the family, nor with friends. Therefore all the travelers do not feel the difference in their existing relationships with their friends and family. This example also shows that the affect of the yoga holiday tendency to affect the relationships differently, the reason of diverse affects might be related to the individual traveler’s own preferences.

### **Sub-conclusion**

According to the tourist’s discourse, some travelers feel changes in their relationships with other human beings. They develop a special bond with others in their travel group. The travelers also develop a caring attitude for the larger human reality in their own society, some Danish yoga travelers claim that they develop caring attitude instead of competitive attitude. Hence, they start to question their own way of living; this difference in attitude might be the

result of recognition of natural goodness in self, realized during meditation. The travelers may also find their relationships (with other people) as their asset and feel rich due to these relationships; this also takes away the feeling of loneliness. On the other hand some travelers might also break their relationships with older friends, because they do not feel comfortable in their company as they do not practice yoga; and they make new friends, who practice yoga. Some of the yoga travelers does not see any change in any of their relationships. Therefore the affect of yoga holiday on the relationships with others can be presented in a continuum, where the affects range from breaking of older relationships, to no effect on relationships at all and to new developed relationships with others. The process of transformations in relationships has this diversity due to the personal choices of each traveler.

#### **4.5 Relationship with nature**

Some of the informants think that they have realized a new relationship with nature, for example:

*“ I have got the feeling of happiness, and feeling of the connectedness, to earth and other people, (...) I think that there should not be hard rules, as far as people do things that do not harm others, (...)But I try to be ecology friendly”* (Jensen, 2013).

As per Willson (2010)’s concept discussed in the theory that yoga facilitates the individuals to realize that they are extremely connected to nature, the above quote represents that yoga traveler feels the connection to earth and other people, and think about not to harm others, and attempt to be echo-friendly. This example also shows the importance of nature in traveler’s life, as her attempt to be careful is related to echo friendliness, but critically, this might only be the result of the era of environmental care of the modern Denmark; or the result of increasing efforts of governmental and non- governmental organizations to make people aware about environment.

Another informant also expresses her new developed connection to nature in the below quote:

*“(....) When I came back to Copenhagen, I almost felt like this apartment and everything was a mess and just thought I can’t be in Copenhagen, I just went to my mom, in Helsingør. Because I thought I will be close to nature again, because there is a forest close to the place where she lives and at least its more cool and its more calm”* (Kristoffersen, 2013).

The informant thinks that she started to like nature after coming back from yoga travel; it seems that the meaning of nature for her is forest. She says she did not like her own apartment, when she came back; but this feeling might have happened because she was enjoying her days during her yoga camp, and perhaps was not ready to come home yet. Going back to her mother might have given her some time and make herself ready to come back. I interviewed her in her same apartment in the central city as she continues to live in same place afterwards. So she think that she developed a bond with nature, but there seems to be no transformation in her life in connection to nature. Or may be after being on yoga holiday, she might feel calm when she is close to nature, but did not move close to nature, as Helsted (2013) Fehler (2013) did, therefore the range of affects of feeling of closeness to nature can argued to be different.

Another important aspect is the economy of the Travelers, because not everybody can just easily be ecology friendly, for example Jensen says in the informal discussion that she tries to buy more ecological households, but also have to consider the fact that it is expensive to do that. Similarly, it is not possible for every traveler to move to echo village or close to nature or take such big decisions, because they have other priorities like their social life, work, study, etc. Therefore the transformations presented by the yoga travelers are according to their own meanings of nature and nature care, and their personal priorities might also play important role in their decision making. I do not consider any example as an ideal to be echo friendly because there can be very many different ways of echo friendliness (see Hannam & Knox, 2010). But it is important to consider here that the meanings of connection to nature are different for different informants, one moves to an echo village, another shows more connection to nature by trying being more biological and another wants to see forest around immediately after returning from yoga holiday. Another important showing a realization of the informant about his connection to nature is given below:

*“My first yoga holiday was very nice because it was a very simple place, very close to nature, a bit in the jungle and at the sea, so it was very simple and at the same time very much full of life, and being there was like we were just wandering for hours, and thinking why do I have a house and why I do have a car, and why do I have a job, like these things. Just super - flowers , whereas the core that is just needed was just there (...) like I have also done some yoga in large hotels for example, its completely different here, yeah the whole thing just makes sense”* (Poivey O. , 2013)

By following the above traveler's discourse, yoga travel influences the individuals to question their materialistic lives, and they start comparing the simplicity of nature and luxury of their modern lifestyle in Denmark, they might realize nature to be more realistic than luxury in their modern life, as per Poivey O. (2013) above statement. But it is important to state here that he still lives in a nice luxury apartment with all modern facilities and he is the owner of a marketing company, therefore yoga travel affected his thoughts at that time, but he continues to live his materialistic life afterwards. This example indicates the experience of existential authenticity during his yoga travel, he realizes that his life in the modern society is inauthentic and authenticity is just there (at his yoga travel destination); the traveler continues to live his life after returning home, even though he finds the experience close to nature as more authentic than his everyday life (see Wang, 1999).

Another informant says how he starts his day after being on yoga travel:

*"I like to go out and see the animals and birds, I like to greet them in the morning. They must have something to eat, so when they wake up in the morning and I want to contact them, then I come home and make some tea, drink tea and eat food, and everyday starts so fantastic because this is an element that there are lovely things around us, the place that we live is lovely place, everything is lovely in Denmark"* (Fehler, 2013).

The above quote represents that yoga travel has the tendency to affect the human's relation to nature; after coming back home from yoga travel, the traveler continues to donate some time of the day to nature. This also brings positivity in himself about his place of residence and his country; as he is not complaining about bad weather and cold of Denmark, unlike other informants, like Poivey (2013); Poivey O. (2013) and Poulsen(2013). Therefore realization of connectedness to nature during yoga travel brings in positivity in the traveler's life, as nature around self becomes a part of everyday life in case of Fehler (2013). Therefore yoga travelers have constructed their own meanings of nature and decided to give importance to nature in their lives as per their personal preferences.

### **Sub Conclusion**

According to the traveler's discourse, yoga holiday has a tendency to stimulate the thoughts of the travelers, where they start to think more about their bond with nature and may start to question about the need of materialistic things in their lives; then start considering being ecology friendly by using buying ecological goods up to the level they can easily afford, or some

miss nature around in the beginning but lately continue to live the previous life. Some realize that the simplicity and nature at their travel destination is more real than their luxury life in Denmark; but continue to live the same way after coming home in Denmark. Some adds up nature in their everyday life, by devoting some time to nature around their place of residence, and appreciate own home and country because of nature.

The travelers have different meanings of connection to nature, some only keeps their connection to nature in their thoughts, and some try to take some actions to be eco friendly sometimes, depending upon their economy. Some just move from urban area to outer regions, where there is more nature around, some even present the stories of their pleasant lives in their residence close to nature. Therefore meaning of connection to nature depends upon the personal knowledge and priorities of the travelers. Therefore Danish yoga travelers think that yoga travel affects their relation with nature. They start considering the importance of nature. But no active actions are taken by all of them, and the actions taken by some of the travelers are diverse and depending upon their personal meanings of nature.

#### **4.6 Nature in yoga tourism and traveler's own discourse of nature**

All my informants bought their yoga holiday on internet, they gather information about the yoga tours from websites, when I study some of yoga selling websites, I found out that the websites are showing the scenic nature at the yoga travel destination, most of the yoga places are close to the beach; the websites are presented with pictures of nice sunny weather, people doing yoga on the beaches, and a lot of pictures with a lot of greenery and trees (Folferie.dk-ferie med mere mening, 2013; Om yoga ferie på Lesbos, 2013) some websites, even present the statements of the realizations of the previous yoga travelers (see Yogaferie Oplevelser, 2013); the details are illustrated in appendix 3.



(Folferie.dk-ferie med mere mening, 2013)



(Om yoga ferie på Lesbos, 2013)

Therefore ‘nature’ can be termed as an important selling preposition in yoga tourism in Danish market, the simple reason might be related to cold weather of Denmark, and modernization of lifestyle of Danish society, which makes Danes attracted towards sunny beaches and greenery. This selling preposition might be entering into the traveler’s own discourse of nature, and hence for travelers the definition of nature becomes the greenery, beaches and trees, etc. Because traveler’s own knowledge and his past might add up in his narratives of present and desires for future (Gaviria & Bluemelhuber, 2010). Similarly the actions of the yoga travelers taken for nature care might be the result of the examples of environment friendliness during governmental and non- governmental organizations acting for environment care. Therefore the traveler’s imaginary about the relationship to nature and care about nature is limited to his/her own knowledge, instead of new realization of connectedness to nature, resulting in nature care. Because they are going on yoga holiday by using so many natural resources and creating pollution via several actions like air travel, car travel, etc.; and they all



want to travel again for yoga; this does not show any example of environment care. On the other hand, this shows an example of selfishness of the human mind, as they want to enjoy the nature by making so much pollution on the way to reach at that point of nature.

**Sub-conclusion:** The meaning of nature and relationship to nature for the Danish yoga travelers seems to be the reflection of their own knowledge gathered from yoga selling websites; the meaning of nature care is limited to ideal actions marketed by various governmental and non-governmental organizations for nature care. Therefore I am quite critical about the realization of transcendental connectedness with nature after yoga travel.

#### **4.7 Identifying self, becoming more spiritual or getting wiser**

Self identification is similar to the concept of new connection to self, but new connection to self is more related to transcendental relationship with inner being, whereas the concept of self identification more related to identify the inner qualities of self, about which the travelers were not aware before. There are several examples in the data, where informants talk about their self identification. Some of the travelers want to do yoga travelling for the sake of self identification; others believe that they have identified self after yoga travelling. The details are discussed by using the examples from collected information.

Before presenting traveler's discourse, I want to shed light on an important issue of self identification that yoga selling websites informs the travelers that they will know about self after yoga travelling. Below statement is taken from yoga travel website:

*"(...) A week of yoga and meditation gives you a greater insight into your nature, your feet on the ground and mind more open as sky, yoga starts where you are, so anyone can take part regardless of the actual age and experience of yoga (...)"* (Yogaferie i Provence og Portugal, 2013).

This information indicates that all of the yoga travelers of any age group including amateurs and expert yoga practitioners are offered with an opportunity to know themselves by going on a yoga tour. This type of information might attract the Danish yoga traveler to go on yoga tour with the intention of knowing themselves and their nature, because there can be feeling of loss of self in the boredom of everyday life in the modern society of Denmark (see Wang, 1999).

As stated in the theory that yoga tourism has the tendency to lead the traveler towards unification of self (see Holladay, 2012); the informants have many different ways of unification of self as per below example:

*“ (...)I wanted to get away from problems and work and everything, so it was to get away from all this life to explore my inner self, because it is hard to get time to do yoga everyday and meditation everyday, while you cook food and you work and training and shopping and all these things, so you have to do yoga holiday to find my inner Malene and to have time to do that and without anyone wanting me to do differently” (Kristoffersen, 2013).*

This example shows the feeling of in-authenticity and loss of real self in the society and everyday life, and the informant expects to find herself during her yoga travel, this expectation might be the result of the previously discussed selling proposition of yoga selling websites, in which yoga travel promises the traveler to give an opportunity to learn something about themselves, and open up their mind.

When she I asked her further that has she found herself now, then she says:

*“It’s partly and this helped a lot (....)I met a lot of people that I have some things common with these people, so I was not shy to be myself (....)here I found that I am actually a social person. So that was also a part of it” (Kristoffersen, 2013).*

The traveler perceives that she has learned something new about herself and her nature, but this might be the result of her own desire of learning something about herself, as she went on yoga holiday to know more about self. Therefore yoga travelers think that they have explored something about their nature by yoga tourism, but that might be the result of their own desire and their expectations from the yoga tour, as yoga tour selling propositions promise the travelers to help them to recognize themselves. Therefore traveler’s own wish to get out of mundane life and desire to know self, lead him/her on the way of self identification through yoga tourism.

But it is also important to consider here that she might find herself social only with the people with whom she has something in common with, as she says she was not shy to be herself there. She also informs during the interview that she is on the way to find her inner self; she is a regular yoga practitioner, therefore yoga travel for her is special interest travel; hence all this process of self identification is also related to her own identity creation process as a serious yoga practitioner, and her career development of identity creation is related to finding her inner self, she thinks that she is on the way to identify self after her first yoga travel and may find progress

during her next yoga travel, as she has strong desire to travel for yoga again (see Hannam & Knox. 2010).

There are also some informants, who did not have any expectations from their yoga holiday, but they discover their natural self during their yoga holiday. The informant for the below quote went on his first yoga travel to accompany his wife, and he shares his realization as below:

*“I have spent so much time in study, working-working and having good jobs and all this, and I realize that it’s not exactly what I needed and I could live very simply and being more happier that this, that was a part of my own experience of first time, it was more clear to me that what I needed or what I wanted was also important, and it was not something like prestige, it was not something that come externally to me but it was something that was coming from me”* (Poivey O. , 2013).

The above quote represents that the informant identifies about himself after being on yoga holiday that his prestige is not the most important thing in his life because it is external thing, and he could be happier by just living simply. This might be the result of spiritual realizations after leaving his mundane life, because as people move out of the concerns about basic needs (food, water, shelter,sex, etc.) then they find these things temporarily satisfying and they seek to quench the desire of being human to determine who they are, and their purpose and ultimate meaning in life (Willson, 2010). But this might also be the result of existential authenticity (Wang, 1999), which makes him think that the real life is just at destination, and the traveler might have realized his everyday life less authentic in comparison to life at his place of visit. If I compare the informant’s above statement with his way of living at present (as I interview him at his apartment in Amager, where there is no nature closeby) he continue to live in his modern society with all luxury facilities, being owner of a marketing company; so the affect of his described realizations cannot be seen in his lifestyle afterwards.

Another informant says:

*“ I just got much out of it, it was a lot of relief and this is inner spiritual journey (...).also came home being very happy, (....) it has may be turned my life into a direction a bit earlier than it would have otherwise, because I got my mind on some things that I would have not before.( ....) It was also like what I wanted to do with rest of my life”* (Poulsen, 2013).

Poulsen (2013) thinks that she has gained more rationality from her yoga travel, which has affected her upcoming life. When I asked her about what changed afterwards (to get clear examples of how she want to live rest of her life); then she says that she does not want to share that, so I assume it to be very personal and I respect that. But the important part here is that she felt mature as she says that it turn her life into a direction a bit earlier than otherwise, and she claims that she has become more clear about what she wants to do in her life. By looking at other perspectives of her life, she has two teenager daughters, and she was suffering from winter depression before going to yoga holiday, this was her first travel without family; and she claim that she spent her winter happily because of her yoga travel in autumn. She discusses a lot about beautiful beach and warm weather at her destination, and also discuss a lot (positive) about her relationship with other group members during the travel. This information shows the life story of the informant that the happiness felt by her after yoga travel might be the result of changes in her life, for example she travelled alone for the first time, she enjoyed a lot of sun and beach just before upcoming winter, which makes her feel depressed. She spent a lot of quality time with the other group members without worrying about routine life and care of home and children. This might also have given her a lot of time to make strategy for her upcoming life, because during her yoga travel the traveler do not have to worry about anything, for example, food, residence and everyday routine; everything is planned for them, therefore they get more and more time to reflect upon their lives and themselves as a person, which might eventually result in changes in their life afterwards, therefore the transformations in their lives after yoga travel are the effects of their own desires, expectations and their knowledge instead of only spiritual self transformations. Hence yoga travel carries the capacity to affect the individuals so much that they want to keep up what they have actually learned at the yoga holiday. Perhaps it is the complex combination of spirituality realized during yoga holiday; and the realization of spirituality during yoga holiday becomes more real, because the travelers are out of their inauthentic everyday boredom of life. Or they the transformations in their lives might just be the result of getting opportunity to think more about self and to get wise about future strategy for life.

An important transformation noted in the lives of the Danish yoga travelers is that yoga become part of their everyday lives. Those who practiced very little yoga started practicing more yoga after yoga travel, those who did not practice any yoga started to practice some yoga in their lives and those who were regularly practicing yoga, decides to choose yoga as their career choice,

the reason of inclusion of more yoga in their lives, might be because they find yoga to be satisfying the transcendental needs of the individuals in the modern western society, which answers the loss of life essence, life purpose by becoming a peaceful practice of self discovery (see Lalonde, 2012). Or yoga practice might help the travelers to bring nostalgia in their modern mundane lives; or their knowledge about benefits of yoga might be motivating them to practice more and more yoga. The reason might be diverse for every traveler, because the meanings of yoga can be constructed individually (the details are discussed in upcoming sections).

### **Sub-conclusion**

By following the traveler's discourse, yoga tour helps the Danish yoga travelers to find the hidden perspectives of their own nature, for example an informant finds herself being more social during yoga holiday before travel she was thinking herself to be shy person. Yoga travel might also make traveler feel that the actual life is in nature at the place of visit (yoga travel destination); rather than their own urban life with all facilities. They might start to think that the facilities that they have in their everyday life are less important than simplicity and nature at visited place; but this realization does not help the traveler to take actions in their luxury modern life. Some yoga travelers may find themselves more rational after coming home and they think that yoga travel affects their way of living after coming back. Yoga travel has also the tendency to bring more happiness for the travelers as the traveler gets rid of her winter depression. Yoga takes more place in every traveler's life after they have returned from yoga travel.

One of the reason for finding more about self during yoga holiday could be their own expectations from the tour, and they might put their own efforts to define their nature because of their own expectations from the tour. The travelers think they have realizations of importance of nature and simplicity and find the importance of internal satisfaction in comparison to external prestige issues, but this transformation seems to create no transformation in their lives, as they continue to live luxury life with high prestige; this can be due to the realization of reality at visited yoga place is more related to traveler's own existential authenticity, which does not have the tendency to come home with the traveler (see Wang,1999). The reason of happiness might be change in their everyday life, and quality time spent with the other members of the travelling group. The travelers get a lot of time to reflect upon their own lives and discuss their situations with other members, and the input from other members may also make the traveler feel wiser, after coming home. Yoga travelers get an opportunity to distant self from everyday life, and

reflect upon their own life, which might result in new resolutions for life after coming home. The reason of including more yoga in everyday life after coming back from yoga holiday might be related to the feeling of nostalgia gained by practicing yoga in their modern lives, or the travelers might find yoga to be satisfying their transcendental needs; or their own believes of benefits of yoga practice motivate them to practice more and more yoga.

#### **4.8 Self status ambiguity, social status ambiguity, social stigma or social status**

As per discussions in theory, Social structure and the economic recession of the current western societies bring in social status ambiguity.(Wood, 2007, Lalonde, 2012). Therefore the citizens of Denmark, being a modern country has the tendency of social status ambiguity and yoga travel has the tendency to avoid the mundane problems and bring the travelers to different level of thinking where self is more important. Following are the examples from the data, which shows that yoga tourism has helped the traveler to think differently and avoid the social status confusion.

*“The difference is that now I have found out that it is ok, and I also have right to be on this earth, this is also my earth. I do not only have to do what others say and not just to please others, but I have to find out myself and this also my earth, that I had never experienced before. (....)”* (Jensen,2013).

The above informant thinks that she has found more place for herself in her life after being on yoga travel, she does not seems to be suffering from social status ambiguity, but it seems that she has self status ambiguity, because she think that she was living according to others, and hence she might have felt that her own status is lost. Yoga travel selling websites offer a holiday or retreat with focus on self, for example:

*“(...) yoga retreat and yoga holiday are relaxing yet active holidays with yourself in focus, (...)”* (Yogaferie, 2013).

Therefore Danish yoga traveler’s strive for self status in own life, might attract them towards yoga travel, because yoga selling websites offer a holiday with focus on self; which gives hope and desire to the yoga traveler to find own place in their lives and they travel to achieve the same from their yoga holiday, and after coming back they might feel transformed as they think they have found their own place in their lives.

By taking Jensen(2013)'s example further, when I asked about what this feeling has changed in her life, then she again come back with the same examples, that she is happier, peaceful and she has set the limits for what she can and can't do, and she also says that she has the courage to say her boss that she does not want to overwork, as she also needs time for herself. This example shows that the self status ambiguity in the lives of the Danish yoga travelers might be experienced because of the stress situation at work or more work is expected from them during their working hours due to economic recession, as many companies have fired a lot of staff, which also brings more work for the rest of the staff. But yoga travel seems to be help the individuals to deal with this situation and focus on self as an individual rather than just an employee.

The another example is the ambiguity of a working woman about her motherhood, she brings her daughters on her yoga holiday, and she talks a lot about her improved relationship with her daughters after their yoga holiday, she says:

*"you sit there for 4 hours and going into yourself and there were a lot of things, the relationships with my family and some of the fears I had, that I never done anything about. You know some of the ideas about yourself gave me more comfort in myself, I am not as bad as I thought I was I also think that may be I was not a good mother, since I was always very interested in a career and so my kids are grown up with me, but I have been working, and I found out that I was good mother after all , and my kids also see me as good mother, that was a big thing."* (Dente, 2013).

The above quote represents that Dente(2013) has self status ambiguity of being a mother because she finds herself more focused on work; and she is scared that her career might have dominated her motherhood; and she seeks answer for her status from her yoga travel, she also bring her daughters with. She expects to get an answer for this ambiguity during her yoga travel. She thinks that yoga tour helps her to clear up her status of being a mother. Therefore Danish yoga travelers think that they achieve self status in their own life after being on yoga holiday.

One of the informants (Helsted J.B.,2013) says that he does not like to share with his friends and colleagues that he has been on a yoga holiday, because he may be seen as someone odd in his society; on the other hand, many of the informants say that they love to talk about their yoga holiday to their friends, family and work colleagues, because they become so happy afterwards, they have a lot of benefits from that holiday and they also suggest others to go on yoga tours. It

exemplifies showing off in the society, because being on yoga holiday is quite expensive and it is quite trendy in the Danish society now days, as one of the informant says, *“since that is so hit in the Danish culture right now”*(Kristoffersen,2013). Therefore this might be a way of Danish yoga travelers to deal with social status ambiguity, where they want to be known as trendy, special and spiritual persons to make their own identity in the society, as discussed in theory. At the same time, some of the Danish yoga travelers keep their yoga holiday information only with them and their family, because they do not want become special in the society.

### **Sub Conclusion**

By following the traveler’s discourse, yoga travelling helps Danish yoga travelers to recognize their own status in their lives, status of being an individual person rather than doing what others want them to do, and existing status of their ideal roles (for example role of mother for a career woman) in their lives. Travelers get more confidence to make their decisions, expressing the decisions to others and setting limits for their workload. The travelers also get rid of their ambiguity due to the domination of their work life on their personal relationships, for example an informant gets answers from her daughters during the yoga tour about her motherhood.

Some of the Danish yoga travelers do not want to share their information of being on a yoga holiday, because they think that their existing social status might be affected by doing so. On the other hand, most of the Danish yoga travelers inform everybody about their yoga holiday to keep up their social status of being a trendy, spiritual person. There can be different scenarios to understand these affects on the lives of Danish yoga travelers. Some of them have insecurity about their own status in their lives; this self status ambiguity is observed in female travelers. For others the ambiguity is due to work as they think that they lost their own place in life, because they find themselves doing what others say them to do. Some working women could not find their status as a mother in their children’s lives, because of importance of career in their own lives. Therefore ‘self status’ for Women yoga traveler is an achievement from the yoga travel. Some travelers hide the information about their yoga travel, reasons of hiding their yoga holiday, might be related to the fact that some of the societies (groups of people) in Denmark, still look at yoga travel as a social stigma; while the others think it as trendy and elite mode of travel and becomes a status for them.



## 4.9 Personal secularization and yoga travel

All of the informants have been baptized and confirmed, but they all deny that they believe in Christianity, this can lead the informants towards personal secularization; because rejection of formative religious authority leads the individuals towards revitalization of religious authorities instead of secularization, Wood (2007) calls it ‘personal secularization’ where religious authority becomes weakened, while still remains individually active (Wood,2007). Baptism and confirmation are more like cultural practices for the Danish yoga travelers, rather than being religious practices, as most of my informants deny that they practice Christianity. But they all say that they believe that there is a higher power in the universe, or something more than just life and death on this earth. Hence their religious beliefs are personally active and they present these beliefs in their own ways, according to their personal secularization in their non-religious society. Below examples is further explaining this:

*“No I am not practicing religion. As like most Danish we are member of the church and go to church for things like Baptism and all that , and for Christmas ,and that’s all”* (Poulsen,2013).

By following the above example, it is tradition in Danish society to not believe in religion but to carry on some religious practices like Baptism, Christmas, etc. Some people claim clearly that they are not Catholic anymore:

*“(...) I do not feel like I am catholic any more, but I believe in God”* (Poivey O., 2013).

This means that Danish society is not supporting religion believers to openly declare and practice their religion and their religious believes, therefore transcendental needs of people being members of the modern society seems to be leading them towards personal secularization.

*“Here in Denmark we are members of the church, but nobody knows anything about it, (...) you really do not learn to take a stand to it because it’s not part of your daily life.(...)I am a yogic person (...) I believe there is something higher powers and higher consciousness in the universe, and there we all kind of connected and I experience that more and more like, we are energy and like the view of the body from the yoga and from eastern tradition is that we are with this energy body and I feel this more and more and I believe in more and more. and I believe that there is higher, I do not know if its this God, or this God or this God, for me it does not mean (...) but there is something like higher consciousness”* (Poivey, 2013).

Based upon the above quote, yoga travelling seems to be compensating the transcendental needs of Danish yoga practitioners, as they do not know much about their religion. This makes them believe more in philosophy they learn from yoga (either holiday or classes or by reading), hence they get a way to represent their personal secularization as yogic person, and make it as a part of their identity.

Travelers are left alone with their beliefs to construct their own religious reality, the below quote represents this:

*“on this camp they never tell us what we are singing about they sing the mantra and we repeat it, and then at some point we all start singing together, but she never told us about what Mantras were we singing, last time when I went to hear her, when she was some place in Copenhagen, when I went there she said, Mantra can mean anything or different things to you, so she is not going to tell what it’s about I think its better that we find our own meaning in the mantras.”* (Kristoffersen, 2013).

Therefore yoga holiday gives Danish yoga travelers a chance to construct their meanings of religion/spirituality by using their personal secularization and culture. They think this process as their internal transformation; they do not have to negotiate their culture to adapt yogic philosophy, therefore they live comfortably with this internal transformation. On the other hand, yoga is also an external spiritual entity for them, because none of my informant says anything about any religion but they talk more about spirituality in yoga, which can be more related to external spiritual entity of being in the non religious society like Denmark.

The above examples from the data represents that Danish yoga travelers have their personal secularizations, which are influenced by yoga travelling and people start to believe spiritual philosophy of yoga by using their own meanings (personal secularization); this seems to satisfy their transcendental needs, at same time not make them able to think that they are bound to any religion and be comfortable in their society. But the western societies have trend of non religious spirituality (see Lalonde,2012); which might also play a role in this spiritual meaning making process by Danish yoga travelers.

### **Sub Conclusion**

Religious practices related to Christianity have become cultural practices in Denmark, like baptism and confirmation. People do these practices, but do not believe in religion. This brings in personal secularization amongst the Danes, and when they travel for yoga, then this

personal secularization is left open with themselves, by giving them spiritual philosophy of yoga; and spirituality of yoga is designed in such way that leaves open space for every individual to construct their won meanings of spirituality, and they are in a way following the yogic religion, because they all discuss about same spiritual philosophy of higher power, supreme power or consciousness, or God but without any name, etc. Therefore yoga holiday is affecting their personal secularization, by bringing them towards spiritual believes, which is also a trend in the Western societies. Is that yoga, who brings spiritual philosophy in them or is that trends of the western society, which makes them talk more about spirituality – difficult to say, as stated in limitations, it is difficult to analyze exactly, what affects or both affect together.

#### **4.10 Psychological and physical enhancements**

In this section, I have included the examples of self enhancement of the Danish yoga travelers, which they claim to be achieved by their yoga travel.

As per discussions in the theory, some people find spiritual strength in stepping out of their comfort zone (Willson, 2010). Some informants give various examples of spiritual enhancements, and strength felt during the yoga holidays:

*“I felt that it was important to make the change and I felt that it was possible to change. I felt strong in myself. Even though I was about 45 at that time, but still I have a great part of life left on this earth and it is possible to make some changes in my life So that was the feeling that I got.(....) I feel stronger than ever before”* (Jensen, 2013).

Therefore the traveler think that she has become stronger after yoga travel, but as discussed previously that this informant also said that she went on yoga holiday for a desire of change in her life, this realization of strength might be the result of her own desire. Moreover, her own knowledge about the power of yoga and meditation might have increased her spiritual strength. Therefore yoga travel has tendency to make travelers feel that they are stronger after being on yoga holiday.

As discussed previously stated some informants (Poulsen,2013; Jensen,2013) say that this was the first time for them to travel without family, and get exposed to so much yoga and meditation; this information shows that the informants have tried to step outside their comfort zone of not only lifestyle but also the comfort zone of their usual travel style (travelling with the family), and these informants then afterwards talk about changes in their life, as below quote also represents an example of spiritual strength:

*“we said that we felt inner strength when we came home, feeling much more competent and I am so sure somehow. I mean competent of being alone, competent of living, that sounds strange as that was just a week” ( Poulsen, 2013).*

This informant claim that she has gained inner strength and competence for living, which might not only be the result of yoga during her holiday, but many other factors can play important role in this transformation felt by the traveler, for example a challenge to travel without family, and previously discussed elements like they get more time to think about self during yoga travel, they get chance to analyze their own mind via meditation; so they find their strengths and weaknesses during the tour and this might make feel them more strong and competent. The above informant use ‘we’ two times in the above phrase, which makes me think that the sharing of their experience and knowledge with the other group members during the tour, also might have a great influence, which increases the traveler’s knowledge, and that eventually gives them more confidence.

Some of the travelers also give examples of increased physical energy:

*“(...) even though the yoga practice that we did was not Astanga yoga, its Hatha yoga, so it’s not very powerful, but there were a lot of things that happened in my body that makes me stronger. For example, when I left (...) I did pushups on my knees, and I went there I tried to do pushups on my toes and I could do 5 pushups on my toes and which I was not able to do before. (...)So something happens some energy and I think I lost some weight when I was there also because of the intestinal cleansing (...)” (Kritoffersen, 2013).*

Therefore yoga travelers also see physical changes in self after yoga travel, like weight loss and more energy in body. This realization may be the result of changed schedule and eating plan, during the yoga travel; because the travelers have to live according to strict plan during their yoga travel, an example of a day at yoga retreat holiday is given below:

5.15		AM	Waking up.
5.15	-	5.50	Bathroom, nose cleansing
5.50	-	6.00	Silent meditation, without a teacher.
6.00	-	6.30	Concentration techniques.

6.30	-	8.00	Yoga and breathing exercises.
8.15	-	8.45	Dalia; dinkel/rice/barley tea.
8.45	-	10.15	Karma Yoga.
10.15	-	10.25	Silent meditation, "tuning in".
10.25	-	10.50	Meditative Deep Relaxation: Yoga Nidra.
10.50	-	11.50	Meditation: Ajapa Japa.
12.00		PM	Lunch.
12.00	-	4.00	Free time. Walks, riding, sauna etc.
4.00	-	5.00	Yoga and breathing exercises etc.
5.00	-	6.00	Meditation: Antar Mauna.
6.00			Dinner.
8.00	-	10.00	Lectures, meditation or music and dance.
approx.		10.00	Bedtime.

(Body,mind, energy and cosciousness, 2013)

All yoga holidays are not following the same day plan, but they also follow a certain way for spending a day. Hence, if our body follows strict rules for eating and exercise, physical changes can be expected, therefore there can be physical transformations in the Danish yoga travelers after they have been on yoga holiday, the effects can be weight loss and more physical strength, but the effects are not only limited to these effects, as many other informants give information about end of their joint pain, headaches, etc.

But the travelers see these effects as power of spiritual realizations, because one of the informant (Fehler,2013) says that he lost his back pain during the fourth breath of his breathing exercise during his first yoga holiday; which he finds amazing and very transcendental. Therefore the traveler's discourse of physical transformations after yoga travel is more spiritual than scientific.

As per discussions in theory, the concept of challenging self is related to the realization of experience loss of self-consciousness and time, where people feel challenged (Willson, 2010).

The practice of meditation is related to this type of challenge. During the yoga travel, all the informants say that they have been meditating, and they give different examples of their feelings during and after meditation, some really feel nice and enjoy the transcendental feeling and others also feel scary in the beginning when they have to face negative part of their own thoughts (as discussed previously); and eventually they also talk about changes in their lives due to meditation. The changes felt afterwards might be the result of being challenged by loss of consciousness about place and time, rather than only transcendental realization during the tour.

Another way to make informants challenged is stated in the below example:

*“we had two days of silence, which I thought was nice I forgot it sometimes and start asking people sometimes that hey what time is it for example, and they were like shhhhhh and I was like oh sorry silence but I think (...) now its about your inner self, and you have to find your inner peace because people walking around in silence (...) I think its more what people find on their own, and what they are interested in”* (Kristoffersen,2013).

The above way of creating deeper change in the people is challenge them by making simple exercise like, keeping them quite for 2 days in a row, is very challenging to a person who is used to live in a society, but this exercise stops the individuals to communicate to the outer world, but it opens up a way to find the inner being. This might be one of the reasons to affect the individuals so deeply that they are left alone to explore themselves instead of telling them what to do and in which way to think. Moreover, giving mantras to the people in yoga camp but without giving the meaning of the mantras is also another way of challenging them, as the informants says:

*“I do get something out of the mantras even though sometimes I do not and sometimes I do so its both ways, whereas I guess. if they told me that this and this mantra is for that, then I would be bound to that specific thing whereas I am free otherwise”* (Kristoffersen,2013).

The above quote shows that the travelers are left alone with the mantras, they have to find out their own meanings of the given mantras. This gives a chance to the travelers to use their past knowledge and imagination, to create the narratives, which fits in their lives. These narratives might be related to resolutions of living after going home, realization of life essence or purpose (which might be anything according to traveler's own imagination), or just the curiosity to know more about these mantras, it depends upon the traveler as an individual. In this way the traveler

swim in own thoughts, this can also be a reason of so diverse effects of yoga travel on the lives of Danish yoga travelers.

Experience of different kind of life during yoga holiday may also open up new ways of thinking for the yoga travelers, for example:

*“morphologically I am not flexible and I knew doing yoga would be a challenge for me, and specially when I had not tried, (...) I really got a lot out of it. First time I had the experience of feeling so great, I mean something that I can remember, (...) I started having my practice, so it also changed me that way. and also we became aware. somehow of what we can gain from there, that I did not know, because I was so much more into my career, my job and focus and performance and all this, it sort of opened up to new perspectives, then I have been obviously working more on it afterwards, but it’s been a sort of first step”* (Poivey O.,2013).

The informant tried yoga for the first time on his first yoga holiday, which he thinks opened up new perspectives for him; he felt challenged because he tried yoga first time. It seems for the first time he felt challenged, where he did not have to worry about his performance; and he could relate this experience to his knowledge, because yoga is not restricting the thoughts of the traveler in one box of meanings as discussed in theory; in this way, he thinks he found something important in his life, that he never thought of before. He continued practicing yoga after coming home. Hence yoga holiday brings more yoga in Danish yoga traveler’s life, as discussed previously.

Therefore one of the reasons of more yoga in the travelers life after yoga holiday is that, yoga traveler feel attracted towards more yoga because they get a way in which they do not have to be performative and their own knowledge is not considered wrong, but they are left alone with their knowledge to create their own meanings, this makes them think that yoga fits perfectly in their lives, by giving them a chance of self fulfillment by self mastery, reciprocity and support at the same time (see theory; Lalonde,2012). By following the traveler’s discourse, yoga holiday itself is a challenge for Danish yoga travelers because they are used to live their life in a materialistic career focused society, they start to see other perspectives of their life than just focusing on career and performances. This leaves deeper transformations in their life, which they carry home with them.

## **Sub Conclusion**

According to Danish yoga travelers, their spiritual strength and physical strength got increased after having yoga travel. Some of the travelers succeed in getting rid of their chronic pains like backache, headache, etc. All Danish yoga practitioners start to practice more yoga after coming back from yoga travel. They find it amazing and transcendental realization, because they get these transformational benefits in such a small period of time.

The reasons of spiritual strengths might be related to challenging self by travelling alone for the first time and meditational experience of coming out of consciousness of space and time. The physical benefits are more likely to happen because of the strict diet and exercise plan during yoga retreats. The travelers are challenged in many ways during their yoga tours, for example, some yoga camps ask them to be quite for certain periods of time, so that the travelers get chance to spend time with inner being and making self analysis, rather than communicating to others; some give mantras to the travelers but without telling them the meanings of the mantras so that travelers struggle to make their own meanings of mantras and relate them to their life purpose, and feel the reciprocity or belongingness by relating the mantras to their own existing knowledge. Moreover, they get a chance to do something where they feel challenged but without being performative, their existing knowledge about yoga is increased during the yoga travel by practice and yoga classes, and they related this increased knowledge to their existing knowledge in their own ways, to make meanings of their lives to achieve self fulfillment to get self mastery, reciprocity and support. Challenging various senses of the yoga travelers seems to affect them deeply and they carry the learnt lifestyle home with them.

### **4.11 Felt Betterments and future desires**

People give different reasons for being on yoga holiday, like some go for a change, some to manage the stress, some to deal with winter depression, some to deal with physical problems like informants give example of spinal cord problems and pain in different parts of their body, some to get rid of family problems, etc. but when I asked all of them, if yoga has helped them to be better to deal with these problems, then all shows excitement by saying that they are amazed by the results, they did not expect that it will be that effective. Therefore by following the traveler's discourse, yoga travel brings both physical and psychological betterment in the lives of travelers. Some examples are given below, where informants used the word better to say describe the changes in their lives after yoga travel.



*“(...) I have become better to say, what I want and what I do not want. It is quite busy at my work, and I had some times of stress before and that was quite normal for me to adjust that and work it out by extra efforts. But now I am better to say that I am not going to use my life for that. That does not mean, I mean I would like to be at my work but they have to divide the assignments to others, I cannot do it all alone, because I also have my life. A life that is free from work and not just coming from work and so tired that I fall sleep after work. I became better for setting the limits (...).” (Jensen,2013).*

The informant thinks that she has become better to express her thoughts and to set limits for her work. Which is also a kind of freedom from keeping the thoughts to self, this betterment has a tendency to effect her relationships and her work life, because she will be expressing her thoughts to people around her, including her boss. Setting of limits for work would help her to get more time for self. Another informant says:

*“(...) I opened up a lot more to myself, about what I can and what I can't. I always had this feeling and I should be able to do everything, and I was very hard on myself, (...) and now I just feel much more relax about, much more forgiving towards myself, and you seeing things like – what is important in your life and is not. (...) I become much better in picking my battles, like seeing which things are important to battle for and which things are not” (Dente, 2013).*

The above quote represents that yoga travel has the tendency to help travelers to organize their work afterwards, it is similar to previous example like setting limits by choosing the work that they want to do. Dente (2013) also says that it is easier for her to express herself in-front of others. Another:

*“you find out that you cannot change the other people, but you change about the way you think about them and that is quite amazing, like really how it can change your life then (...)” (Helsted, 2013).*

Above realization shows that the informant has learned to accept the others as they are, and think that improvement in own thoughts can be done and changes her life afterwards. This realization brings transformations in the lives of the Danish yoga travelers, as this informant says later during the interview that she is more calm, relaxed, satisfied and happy.

The above examples of betterments might be the result of traveler's own expectations from their yoga tours, as yoga travel websites sell these expectations to the travelers, for example:

*“yoga holiday gives you contemplation, tranquility and well-being and opens strength and joy of body and mind(...)”* (Yogaferie i Provence og Portugal, 2013).

Therefore yoga travelers go on yoga tours with the expectations of betterment, and they work on it during their holiday, and come back home with some resolutions including their lifestyle, attitude and thinking, which can be referred as transformations. The betterments felt by Danish yoga travelers during yoga travel experience is like gain in their knowledge by teaching from yoga holiday and their own experience by doing it. This gain in their knowledge reflects that there can be further transformations in their lives, because their increased knowledge has the tendency to set their future desires, for example:

*“It’s the best thing I have done ever, both for myself and my daughters I felt, I can better next time, when I am going just me, but I know I will also miss them, it has made a big difference in the way, that I know I can work with myself, I can keep on working myself, because I am getting older does not mean that I am finished, you know I can still keep on until I die, there will always be developments in my life, and I can become a better person (...)”* (Dente,2013).

Danish yoga travelers feel like yoga travel has opened new ways for their self improvement, and they also get a hope to become even (more) better from their next yoga holiday, and to ignore their worry of increasing age. The reason might be very much related to get chance to do self analysis during their yoga holiday, as discussed previously.

### **Sub-conclusion**

Danish yoga travelers think that they become better in many ways after coming back from yoga holiday, they give examples of both physical and psychological betterment. They think that they become better in expressing their thoughts, and setting limits for self, some also note physical improvements like relief from pain, weight loss and more strength in the body. They start to avoid worrying about their increasing age, and want to carry on the efforts of self improvement.

During yoga tours, the travelers live a disciplined life, they eat, drink, exercise and sleep, according to their schedule, which might be a reason of their improved physical conditions. The psychological improvements might be the result of lessons during yoga tour, and the use of the opportunity to analyze self by using own knowledge and knowledge of others in their travel group, which might also create desire for resolutions after coming home, after coming home the

travelers might realize the betterments in self, which might be a motivator for more yoga travelling and future desires.

#### **4.12 Betterment or Carelessness**

Travelers think that they get better in many ways as presented in the previous section, one of the ways is ‘giving more importance to the present rather than future or past’(as discussed by various informants). Danish yoga travelers claim that they are acting upon this philosophy, for example:

*“(...) there is a saying in yoga that, the path is the goal (...) to take every day as one day at a time and to know that even though you want something in your life but it is not necessary that it is going to happen, and that changes just comes your way and you can’t really do anything about it and sometimes just happen good things and bad things but as long as you are happy about it on the path you are walking, going in the right direction but not specifically stuck to one goal, more like the path is the goal” (Kristoffersen,2013).*

Hence Danish travelers think that they consider present time to be most important, and they accept all good and bad situations of life, without worrying about future. This attitude seems to be more relaxing, one critic to follow this philosophy is, how much an individual in Danish society in the modern competitive world can follow it, because people have career and family desires, which they want to achieve. How simple it could be to forget their career, desires, etc and enjoy one day at a time? Another important issue could be that if people stop thinking about their goals and desired achievements, then they are probably not going to do anything, which can actually make people careless, as they will stop caring about anything that can happen tomorrow. Below example clarifies this more precisely:

*“(...)its good to understand your potential, but that’s not living, living is now, its no use of worrying about things that are going to happen tomorrow, will it happen, would not it happen, it’s no use been pre occupied about something that happened yesterday” (Fehler,2013).*

This quote also represents that worrying about future and past is no use, but this philosophy can be understood in many different ways, for example, one may start to take the problems easy, and therefore be relaxed but continue his/her work, study, etc. but this can also make people careless, if everyone thinks about today only, then the thoughts about environment care and future generations, care about larger human reality, etc. all seem to be conflicting to this philosophy.

The travelers claim to follow this philosophy, but they are living there life in the goal oriented society, in which performance is expected and they might have to ignore this philosophy at some point of time to be an active member of their society. As Kristoffersen(2013), also say later in interview that we still plan the things a head in Denmark, which proves that she is not completely following this philosophy. In this way, this philosophy also seems to be ready made presentation of the knowledge gained from the yoga lessons.

### **Sub- conclusion**

By following the traveler's discourse, yoga travel has given them a tendency to be in their present and take one day at a time, rather than thinking about future and past. They think that they have learned to accept the situations of life, instead of worrying about them. But this thinking can make them careless about future and larger human reality, which does not fit with the other yogic philosophies discussed previously like feeling of being connected to everyone, and care about others, including future generations. This is assumed to be relaxing tool to develop relaxing attitude, but this attitude can be a challenge for them to live in the goal oriented society like Denmark; which leaves the possibility to change their attitude back towards following their life goal or they might negotiate this philosophy, being a member of their own society.

## **5. Conclusion**

This chapter presents the main findings of the research process and suggestions for further research.

Danish yoga travelers are noted to see the affects of yoga travel due to spiritual and transcendental experiences during the travel, but this project considers many other perspectives of yoga travelling and critically analyzes the possible reasons of these affects; but the effects and reasons of affects are not limited to the findings of this research only. Hence this research project is suggestive rather than conclusive.

This research suggests that lives of Danish yoga practitioners present diversely transformations in their lives after yoga travel. They give examples of transformation in attitude (more happiness, satisfaction, more consciousness about self, others and nature, etc); transformation in lifestyle (becoming vegetarian, or reduced consumption of meat and alcohol, waking up early in the morning, including more yoga in everyday life, etc.); transformation in

preferences (different rationality about body and mind, new career choices, changed place of residence, care and/or importance of nature, etc. ); transformation in relationships (changes in existing relationships, development of new relationships and sometimes breaking the older relationships, etc.); more awareness about self (organizing own thoughts, and looking at good and bad sides of self during meditation, getting rid of self status and social status ambiguities, recognizing inner desire and not only doing what others want them to do); various physical and psychological enhancements (increased physical strength, getting rid of chronic pains, becoming better to express self, setting limits for work and everyday activities, etc.); developing self identity of being spiritual (identify and present self as spiritual and not religious being); being more nature friendly (this thought seems to be conflicting the lifestyle of the informants in some cases) and being more present oriented rather than worrying about future (this presents more carelessness about progress in life and goal of life, which is not relevant to goal oriented Danish society).

As per findings from this research, after coming back from yoga travel, yoga practitioners start to question their own attitude, lifestyle and even their own rationality, they start to compare their lives with their own knowledge about yoga and start to transform themselves to become 'other'. This 'other' seems to be an ideal person constructed in the mind of the travelers with not only their (spiritual and practical) realizations during their yoga travel experience; but also by their own knowledge about yoga and yogic philosophy. The travels can achieve knowledge about yoga in various ways like by reading about yoga, attending yoga schools, gathering information about yoga travel from yoga selling websites, yoga holiday meetings, etc. This knowledge seems to be helping their life narratives of past and their desires for future transformations. Therefore the travelers seems to be putting their own efforts to transform self to an 'ideal other', which can also be termed a 'yogic other'. The definition of 'yogic other' can be different for each individual according to his/her own knowledge and preferences. The realizations at yoga tour might also be the result of their own knowledge. Several other aspects are also noticed to be playing a role in the process of becoming 'yogic other'; for example cultural encounters with 'local others' at the travel destination make them to think that local people are their 'ideal yogic others', which can cause the traveler to adopt local cultural practices in their lives afterwards and they think that they are in the process of becoming yogic other. The affects of yoga travel might also be the result of individual's own efforts of identity creation process; moreover quality time

spent with peer group, distancing self from everyday routine life to reflect upon own life and the disciplined lifestyle during the yoga tour, might give the traveler some new resolutions about their life after coming back home, the discipline of sleeping, eating and exercising may also cause the traveler to feel physical and psychological betterments.

Travelers are most affected immediately after coming back home and the affects are also noted to be reducing with the span of time in some cases; as the individuals do not want to be strange in their own society. Therefore the transformations can be expected after coming back from yoga holiday, but these transformations are diverse, as some yoga travelers can be lightly affected while others can be severely affected. The process of transformation continue in the lives of the Danish yoga travelers, Danish yoga travelers can re-transform again after some time and according to their personal preferences. An important reason of the noted diversity in the transformations is due to open-endedness offered in yoga, where travelers are encouraged to relate themselves to their life purpose, and feel the reciprocity or belongingness by relating the mantras or taught philosophy to their own existing knowledge; this can also be the reason that Danish yoga traveler's feel happy, satisfied and positive about themselves after yoga travel. All and all, Danish yoga practitioners perceive self to be in the process of becoming 'ideal yogic other', but there is no absolute or final goal to be reached, the process is always progressive.

Theoretically, this thesis suggests that it is too simplistic to compare transformations in relation to yoga travel with only non – religious spirituality in the western societies, as so far considered in the tourism literature. There are several other theoretical aspects connected to yoga travel, for example, relation between self and society, knowledge about yoga, existential authenticity, identity creation for special interest tourism, active holiday, cultural encounters in tourism, sales and business strategies in yoga travel, traveler's own desires for change, travel's personal preferences in relation to changes, etc. Hence further researches can be made about yoga travel, in relation to other theories of travel and tourism including above stated suggestions.

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## Appendix 1: Interview Guide

1. Please introduce yourself (age, education, profession, family (marital status/relationship status, children, etc.))
2. How many times have you been travelling for yoga? Where did you go and for how long did you stay there?
3. Why did you go on a yoga tour/holiday?
4. Would you explain your experience of that tour?
5. Do you think you tried to achieve something from the tour? What was that? Did you achieve it? Or you achieve something else?
6. Have you felt different or changed after the tour?
7. Can you differentiate your everyday life from yoga tour? (if yes) In which ways?
8. Do you personally believe in religion?
9. (if no) Have you been through baptism/confirmation?
10. How do you relate yoga tours to everyday life? Do you like to talk about yoga with your friends and relatives?
11. How do think you are known amongst them?
12. Have you experienced something about yourself during the yoga tour?  
(If yes) what was that?
13. Do you feel some change in yourself after that experience?
14. How long did you meditate every day, during your yoga tour?
15. What do you realize after meditation?
16. How does that affect you? (self and life)
17. Have you felt any personal improvements after yoga tour/s? Would you like to explain?
18. Have you felt any personal changes? If yes, please explain.
19. Have seen any change in your relationship with others? If yes, please explain.
20. Summing up - What would you like to say about your yoga tour in general? How has it changed your life?

## Appendix 2: Transcripts

**Informant:** Laila Jensen

Date: 24 march 2013 at 10:52

Place: Valby

You can speak whatever you are comfortable with, either English or Danish.

1. Please introduce yourself, your name, age, work place etc.

*My Name is Laila Jensen, I am 46 and going to 47 in October. I am a secretary and work in KL. That is actually all what I work.*

2. Your marital status and family.

*I have two boys, Thomas whom I have known for 30 years. We do not live together anymore but we are still together. We have lived together for 25 years, I think. And boys are 19 years and 22 years.*

3. How many times you have been on yoga holiday?

*I have been on yoga tour for 2 times.*

4. How long did you stay there?

*That was about a week, between 7 to 10 days.*

5. Where was it?

*In Greece, both times.*

6. Why did you go on that yoga holidays?

*That is quite exciting, this is because I could feel that there was something wrong in my life, boys grew up, and I had desire for a change, but I did not know what is wrong and what can be better. I was sitting with my hair dresser, and was waiting and reading newspaper, and then I read about yoga holiday for women, that was Karina who arranged that tour, Karina Helsted. I read about it and thought I should go (laughs). And send a message to myself to remember Karina's name and contact information.*

7. When was it ?

*2011. January I think.*

8. So that was because your boys were getting older and you wanted a change?

*Yes that is right, and me and my husband got agreed on we need change because we would like to have everything good, but when we were together, then it was not good (laughs). We just talked about what that change could be.*

8. So you thought yoga holiday can help you to create a change?

*I did not know exactly, but I read about it. I had an idea about that it could be perfect, but when I had on yoga tour, then I could feel that it made me strong. And I can be alone, and I am myself even though I was with my husband for so many years.*

9. Before you saw advertisement about yoga tour, were you doing some yoga before?

*Just a little, I was participating in yoga classes in DGI byen. I had a punch card. So I have tried yoga but not so much. But every time I was there, I was so happy.*

10. So had tried yoga before going for yoga holiday.

*Yes, a bit but not much. But I has an understanding that if I would be on yoga holiday, but then thought no I cannot make it. But then read an article from Karina that one does not have to be an expert (yoga)for taking a yoga holiday.*

11. Can you explain your experience, like how did you find it personally?

*First experience was that it was a beautiful place, where we were. There was so much peace at living there. We are 14 together. They were all very nice people and that was a really true experience and I all in the group changed places and told each other about their life stories, and I wrote a diary in the evening, and wrote about everyday's experience and wrote a lot of stories about other people's life, which I can use all my life. We understood each other so much and our stories were very similar. We were many but a lot of us from the same age group.*

12. So the people were your own age group?

*Yes, like people with grown up children, and a pair. The lady was student in Psychotherapy and she was there due to her study, her husband was accompanying her. There had 3 kids, and they were very happy together, because they somebody could take care of their kids. So it was a great experience for others and me. And I hope I could go again.*

13. When you planned to go there, and when you come back from yoga holiday; did you feel that you got something out of it for yourself?

*I felt stronger, in a good way. Stronger in love terms (Kærlighedsmæssigt), I think I felt inside and think feel like the world is good. And I experienced many things in my life that made me feel sad so that was not much place left for that. I felt that there was something that has started to get place, and felt like I have my own place in myself or there was something that became mature, and there was something that I had to give more space. It was important to think that I need to have more place for myself. I came back and could feel that world has moved forward my husband was the same pattern.*

(Phone call from her mother)

*So I felt that it was important to make the change and I felt that it was possible to change. I felt strong in myself. Even though I was about 45 at that time, but still I have a great part of life left on this earth and it is possible to make some changes in my life So that was the feeling that I got.*

20. That means you felt a change in yourself, and found more space for yourself and possible changes in your life? So can you see some difference in your life before and after yoga holiday?

*Yes, that is I have become better to say that what I want and what I do not want. It is quite busy at my work, and I had some times of stress before and that was quite normal for me to adjust that and work it out by extra efforts. But now I am better to say that I am not going to use my life for that. That does not mean I mean I would like to be at my work but they have to divide the assignments to others, I cannot do it all alone, because I also have my life. A life that is free from work and not just coming from work and so tired that I fall sleep after work. I became better for setting the limits. I could set limits and do something else. Sometimes they just thought that I could take extra works but then I said no, I cannot say do this, which I did not say before.*

21. Do you believe in religion?

*Not so much but I have been grown in Christianity, not so much from my parents but I went to a club for the youngsters, where YMCA in English – KFUKUM in Denmark, Christsian forening for unge kvinder, unge men. That was where I went after school, I heard a lot about God, Christianity and Jesus, etc. many stories the time I spent in Faroe Islands, until 9<sup>th</sup> Class, that was much religious than main Denmark. That was more I felt in the culture where I grew up. But I did believe about people born in Christianity and any other religion, but there can be some love but today I think God means God. If one wants to have God, there is God in self. There is nothing external like that. But I believe in some things that exists but cannot really prove that scientifically.*

22. So you were grown in Christianity, but now you believe that God in yourself.

*Hmmm (nodding to be yes).*

23. Have you been baptized and confirmed?

Yes.

24. Can you relate your yoga tour to your religion or spirituality?

*In that way, I felt it is same group, there is a connection. You feel like all the people are the same and they are connected, and there is love.*

25. What is that love you talk about?

*It is difficult to explain but loves is taking care, send positive energy to each other and know nature and each other good. I think performance of this love could be, if there many people groups together like our little group on yoga tour all over the world and we share everything in a great way.*

26. So is it that similar to Christianity?

*Yes, and I think it is same for many religions*

27. As you explained something about yourself that your relationship with your boss was affected after this yoga holiday like you could speak up and set limits for your assignment. Would you like to say something to say about your general relationships with your friend and family, how has this tour affected your relationships?

*That is not only tour which has done everything, because at the same time I was having some changes in my life, me and my husband moved out and children became older. I do not know if it has changed a lot, but I give more time to others like diff. friend groups like school friends, working group, meeting them sometimes, I think contact to other people has become stronger that I can see clearly. I have come to realize that I should not be afraid because I am not alone, even though I am alone if children and husband have moved out. I feel that I am very rich because I have so many people. So I feel more rich in that way and very much grateful, really grateful. In that way, my feelings have grown up.*

28. Greatful to what?

*To be me, I do not know how to say it I am not missing anything. I have all that I need in my life.*

29. So you mean satisfaction?

*Yes, that makes me more peaceful on holiday we also had some breathing practices, and that can I see that It meant a lot. Take breath deep adown and feel the energy.*

30. How do your friends think about you now?

*Many have said that they find me stronger, I have a sister who lives in Fyn, her name is Karina, and she has said to me that you travel in the world alone! how do you think that, this is possible. People think that many things that I do now have become possible, As I have started to travel on my own for example I was in Spain to learn Spanish. I have found out that it is ok, so I feel stronger than ever before. The difference is that now I have found out that it is ok and I also have right to be on this earth, this is also my earth. I do not only have to do what others say and not just to please others, but I have to find out myself and this also my earth, that I had never experienced before. The difference is that when people say something, it means to me, not like before as people talked about health, sickness etc. and I just talked but not felt that. But now I*

*feel that they mean it, which makes me feel like that I am ok person and I listen the other more, such that never before.*

31. So you have become stronger not only inside but others can also see that , and you have learned to take of not only yourself but also for others, and have listen to them more effectively ?

*Yes.*

32. Do you practice yoga every day?

*No I would like to but cannot got it done. I think there is no need to set a system for yoga, I can do it whenever I take break by focusing on my breath, or when I walk on the street, then waiting for bus I listen to the birds and feel the nature around me, and feel happy about it.*

33. Does that mean meditation to you?

*Yes, I think that there should not be hard rules, as far as people do things that do not harm others, so do not do it on hard rules. But try to be ecology friendly but not 100 percent.*

34. This gained capacity of focusing on meditation and thinking of not harming others, affects your life?

*Yes, that is the feeling of happiness, and feeling of the connectedness, to earth and other people.*

35. Is there any other change you have felt from this?

*No, I cannot think about it now, I meet people, whom I know and come to know more and more people and it think it I great to know so many people, as I have more time now and children have moved out. But maybe all ladies in the age of 45 is same, discussion out of the subject. But the difference I can feel now is that , there was so much in my head before like I have to vacuum the apartment, pack food for children, and now I have opened up and feel my body, like if people asked me 4 years ago I could say them fine, but I could not feel it like feel, but there I started to feel myself and my body.*

36. In the end, would you like to sum up your yoga holiday and its effect on you?

*I could see that it has given the desire to practice more yoga and meditation, more than I did before and I would like to do more. And I think it will great to do more yoga and may be great to present others about the greatness of yoga holiday and yoga, fantastic world and maybe I would like to use my life in my own direction. My dilemma is that I have an apartment, my work, my work does not make me happy, I will be even more happy if I would do more yoga. And travel and show others that how better one can do. Breathing exercises and do more yoga. (critiques, idealization, betterment, social life, etc.)*

37. Does that mean that you find yourself more in doing yoga than the materialistic things like your apartment?

*Yes, so system of the society is not easy, and to keep the apartment one has to earn money, and I think my work has always been a limit for me to doing anything. There are so many assignments that I have solve, if my children gets settled then I would sell my apartment and start living in a little room, that would be ok for me. But now one of my sons is living with me, and another son is shortly going to finish education and coming home again. They two are going to find an*

*apartment together, so that I have to take about as well, that is not only me my children are also very important.*

Thanks a lot for sharing all your experience.

**Informant: Malene Kristoffersen**

Date: 24 March 2013 at 16:55.

Place: Hvidovre

1. Please introduce yourself, age, work profession, family etc.

*My name is Malene, and I am 32 years old. And I work as a receptionist at Dan hostel and also studying to become a physiotherapist, I just started have started.*

2. Your family?

*I am married and living with my husband and have no kids.*

3. How many times have you been on a yoga tour?

*Only one, and it was in Sweden and I stayed there for 2 weeks.*

4. Why did you decide to go on that tour?

*Well, I decided to go because it was summer in may and about 8 month ago. And a year ago I started doing yoga, just once a week. I thought it gave me some calmness and I think there has been a lot of Kaos in my life, for the past year so when I went on a yoga holiday, it was to maybe to find some solutions in my life and may be to find more peace inside myself. And also to, because I thought yoga and meditation is just a good way to go on holiday, because of course I am doing it for myself but I am also doing it to meet other people, to whom that I have something in common with. So I met a lot of people with whom I have a lot of things in common with.*

5. How would you describe this commonness?

*When I first came there I did not think much about it but when I have been there and talked to the people and thought that no ok we have something in common, one simple thing for example not having TV is very common to have TV in Denmark but I find as me they did not have a TV. And all these people were interested in alternative lifestyles.*

6. What kind of alternative lifestyles?

*Of how to like to solve problems yourself may be or to not to use the common medicine but to find the ways to be healthier for yourself or just alternative ways, like I remember the girl in my room, she was looking into what is called NLP, a psychological way of thinking I believe, did not read anything about that but I remember what I heard from her a lot of other went to different methods on pain relief and you know there are so many different perspectives on life, interesting.*

7. You mean most of the people in there did not want to follow the general ideas of life, they wanted to explore something or try out something themselves. Anything else you could see that was common?

*They all seem to enjoy nature, we were in the middle of the forest in Sweden, and there is we just went for long walks, they seem to enjoy themselves and enjoy simple lifestyle, where you do*



*not need flashy clothes, big cars and money does not matter, you are just in your jim pants and whatever you feel like wearing, you are very relaxed.*

8. Can you describe your experience during your tour? What did you feel?

*Well, I guess I have compare it with something that is how I feel when I am at home, because I remember when I was leaving from there, I heard a lot of noise at the train station and at the moment when you are here, the train coming like full speed passed you was so much noise that I almost had to put my hands on my ears. And when I came back to Copenhagen, I almost felt like this apartment and everything was a mess and just thought I can't be in Copenhagen, I just went to my mom, in Helsingør. Because I thought I will be close to nature again, because there is a forest close to the place - where she lives and at least it's more cool, it's more calm aaaa. So I think that I reached another level of calmness and like. We did an intestinal cleansing when we were there, so we followed a certain diet that I also had to follow when I came home and they told us that we should not eat meat for example. Did not drink alcohol and stay away from eggs and certain things and so far I have managed to stay away from meat, basically a vegetarian since then and I am keeping myself away from alcohol and sometimes it's difficult in our society in Demark, so sometimes now in past few months I have enjoyed alcohol but not up to the standard that I become drunk. I had few drinks and that's enough. So there are a lot of changes that happens actually after I came home, that is when I felt the changes more then when I was there. When I was there I felt a lot of I think that my body became stronger and I think that I became stronger as well.*

9. Stronger physically?

*Well both actually, because even though the yoga practice that we did was not Astanga yoga, its Hatha yoga, so it's not very powerful, but there were a lot of things that happened in my body that makes me stronger for example, when I left, I could not do I mean I did pushups on my knees, and I went there I tried to do pushups on my toes and I could do 5 pushups on my toes and which I was not able to do before. And when I came back now again after 8 months I came back to do on my knees because I can't do it on my toes anymore. So something happens some energy and I think I lost some weight when I was there also because of the intestinal cleansing, ja so that just some of the things that happened but there's a lot more, like reaching another level inside, more meditations and singing mantras, and that is something difficult to explain because that happens inside but all and all it was good.*

10. Before going there, did you think that you will achieve something?

*Just to get away on your own.*

11. Why a yoga tour to get away, it could be another kind of tour as well?

*But in other forms like backpacking, you are exploring on the outer, but with the yoga holiday you are exploring on the inner.*

12. So you wanted to get away from ...

*I wanted to get away from problems and work and everything, so it was to get away from all this life to explore my inner self, because it is hard to get time to do yoga everyday and meditation every day, while you cook food and you work and training and shopping and all these*

*things, so you have to do yoga holiday to find my inner Malene and to have time to do that and without anyone wanting me to differently.*

13. But after the tour do you think you have succeeded your inner Malene?

*No I am not done yet, I am on the path. Ja.*

14. Did you feel a little better to find yourself?

*It's partly and this helped a lot, I mean there are also a lot of things that I am not a shy person and I am also a social person, but when I went on this yoga holiday, I found it even more...like I met a lot of people that I has some things common with these people, so I was not shy to be myself and I found that I am very social, because when you are with some people, whom you have something in common, it is easier to be social with them because sometimes, if you want to socialize, but the people you are around you do not have anything in common with them you feel like nah may be I am just not a social person. But here I found that I am actually a social person. So that was also a part of it.*

15. How long did you stay there?

*Only 2 weeks.*

16. So, if you compare your everyday life and your life during that tour, do you see any difference in your everyday life?

*Yes, A huge difference.*

17. What kind of difference in your routine life?

*....no answer.*

18. Do you believe in religion?

*Me, I do not know.*

19. Have you been Baptized?

*Oh yes, Baptized and confirmed and everything, but I do believe in the Christian GOD, I think I believe that as we say more in Denmark that there is more between heaven and earth but you asked me do I believe in religion, I do not actually what to answer because I believe that there is more than just our human bodies and but a religion is also a very complex thing.*

20. Can you relate your yoga experience with religion?

*Before I went there I started to read a lot about Buddhism, because I found it very interesting but I think Buddhism is very far from the way we think in Western societies, maybe that's why I find it more interesting, but there is some part of it that I think could look as if you are standing on the outside, for example we were singing the mantras, and some of the people are dancing, some are drumming and some people are just sitting closed eyes and singing the mantras, and when you I was thinking like if you are standing outside and looking upon these people, you would see to it like may be more religious gathering that's what how it could look from outside. But when I was there, I could not feel religious, but I think there is some I think this is the spiritual way of life that comes in.*

21. What kind of mantras were you singing?

*Do not know what we were singing, the thing is that the on this camp they never tell us what we are singing about they sing the mantra and we repeat it, and then at some point we all start singing together, but she never told us about what Mantras were we singing, last time when I went to hear her, when she was some place in Copenhagen, when I went there she said, Mantra can mean anything or different things to you, so she is not going to tell what it's about I think its better that we find our own meaning in the mantras.*

22. Does that mean that they do not want to bind you in one believe?

*May be just find your own way, I think this can't be small as I know that you stay there for 3 months course for example and in three months course you have 30 days of Silence, we had two days of silence, which I thought was nice I forgot it sometimes and start asking people sometimes that hey what time is it. For example, and they were like shhhhhh and I was like oh sorry silence but I think, you have 30 days and I think for me it would be great challenge for me and one day I will go on three months course. I think that 30 days of silence when you tell that to people, now you have to be silent for 30 days, and its also a way to that now its about your inner self, and you have to find your inner peace because people walking around in silence for 30 days is a long time, ya so I think its more what people find their own what they are interested in. and I do get something out of the mantras even though sometimes I do not and sometimes I do so its both ways, whereas I guess. if they told me that this and this mantra is for that, then I would be bound to that specific thing ...whereas I am free otherwise.*

23. can you relate your yoga tour to your life now?

*Ja, when I came back specially I guess specially in the lifestyle that has changed as I said I have became a vegetarian, I go to bed earlier than before and I get up earlier in the morning, which was also part of the program, I still do not enjoy getting up 6:00 O'clock in the morning still I think this is very early but going to bed around 10:00 – 11:00 and getting up early, I try to do yoga every morning, so ja for sure I have taken a lot of it, and a lot of, at the beginning I was, I thought I could practice the meditation but I find it difficult. So but otherwise the yoga practice is ok.*

23. How about your friend circle, do you like to talk about your yoga tour to your friends?

*Ya ya I have told everyone, I think that's funny especially about intestinal cleansing, they think its so gross and but when you are there and 30 people are there running to the toilet all the time, we are all in the same boat so there is no difference you know and it felt so good afterwards and I felt so healthy afterwards, so I enjoy telling these stories because also I think if I also tell these stories to other people they might also go or at least do yoga once a week somewhere and they will find something for themselves, may be exercise at least since that is so hit in the Danish culture right now.*

24. And how do you think your friends know you? What kind of Malene?

*One of my friend at my work, said that there is a change in me.*

25. What kind of change?

*I am more calm, calmness and I felt that myself as well.*

26. Do you want to add something about your experience?

*what I am thinking is that there is a saying in yoga that the path is the goal I think that living each day and taking one day at a time is something that I have always wanted to do but may be had a hard time to doing because I am brought up in Denmark. But to take every day as one day at a time and to know that even though you want something in your life but it is not necessary that it is going to happen, and that changes just comes your way and you can't really do anything about it and sometimes just happen, good things and bad things but as long as you are happy about it on the path you are walking, going in the right direction but not specifically stuck to one goal, more like the path is the goal.*

27. Two things you said, that 'because you are brought up in Denmark' can you explain a little bit about it?

*It is difficult because Denmark is a place where the way that I am brought up is the way we have to have a goal in life that you have chains saws on your elbows, that is an expression in Danish that 'man skal have Rønsase på elbowen' move forward that you will get forward its actually a very I do not even like saying it, but it is like that to have chain saws in your elbows so that you can move forward, and not caring so much about who is hurting on the way – as long as you move forward, its ahh its not very caring and loving attitude, and so I am the way like we talk forward like we make plans a head, and ja you need to think ahead in Denmark you just need to think more about tomorrow you are more thinking a head thinking of the past what happened, like it very difficult for us to think about today and what is happening right now, that's one of the parts of doing yoga and also the calmness to.*

28. And other thing you said is 'right direction', you said that you are just moving but may be not on the right direction but afterwards you find out that your journey like your path is your goal, if you can remember did you mean by right direction.

*Now its going to be very personal, like when I got married I was very sure that this was the man in my life and nothing ever could change that and I think that I wanted it so much that I was looking at this goal so much that I did not enjoy the path or I was blind folded to the path to get there and now I know that I should have been more open minded or seen more instead of just blind folded to the goal that this is the man I want no matter what I just want him and get him and there are so many things that have happened to our relationship that I just have to think now that may be he is not the man of my life. May be I could have made one day at a time to know whether he is the right one, instead of just been focused on the marriage as one goal, instead of just taking one day at a time. And thinking I am open like if it happens it happens, and if it does not it does not. You know to be more open for changes as well.*

29. Do you meditate everyday?

*No I do not, I practice hatha yoga or sometimes yoga nidra.*

30. But during your holiday tour, did you meditate?

*Oh yes every day, yoga and meditation every day.*

31. Did you realize something after meditation?

*There was I do not know sometimes it felt like falling asleep, but not really but the state in between where you are about to fall asleep but your mind just wanders off, but we did this one*

*practice called 'ajabajab' where its with mala. I found it a little stressful actually because you have breath a certain way and of course you have to sit in the meditation pose and you have to do different things, think of different chakras and it was very difficult for me and I remember the last day, we had to do it in a sort of on our own when we did not have the teacher to guide us, and I felt so stressed doing it, so it was not necessarily only the meditation, I think it was very difficult and it was a bad experience with that because I find it difficult. So but I do not remember.*

32. You talked about Chakras, did you realize any chakra in yourself?

*Well I tried to feel them but again its very difficult.*

33. Do you think that meditation has effected you in some way?

*Yes of course, the yoga is the asana it's the way of being active and whereas the meditation is the really where you calm down and I said that being within yourself that's the time when you can say when you are alone with yourself. And I think that scares it's a little bit scary to be alone with yourself.*

33. Why?

*Well because there are so many thoughts and that is what the meditation is good for that is just because when I have a lot of crazy thoughts the meditation tells me that its ok they are just thoughts and sometimes, we just allow them to flow by. we understand them but do not really react on them, and do not really take too much notice of them because they are just there so of course the meditation has helped me afterwards, when my mind is stressed and I am thinking too much about a certain thing and then I think now it's enough and now I need to give myself a break, and that's where the breathing comes in, I try to do I do not know if you call it a breathing exercise, but I try to keep notice of my breath specially when I go to sleep and sometimes when I get in the morning, and also during the day, if feel stressed I breath all the way to my stomach and ya or if I am upset, you know you can take breaths or ya maybe that's not specifically meditation but it's like that.*

34. Have you felt some personal changes and your relationships with others, after yoga tour?

*I feel like I am more calm now, as again the calmness just comes in. I do not and especially now that I have started my study I don't feel nervous about meeting new people and spending time with new people. I fell more like I am just me and they are who they are and we just talk with them. And I try not make things stressful and not to stress about meeting new people and starting a new study, and no panic....more like one day at a time and ya not being nervous about meeting new people.*

35. What about your existing relationships, have you felt any change with that?

*That's good questions, its better to ask from the people around me as I said that there was one girl from my work that told me that she noticed that I was more calm and she felted that in me. But I think with the people that I know already it might be difficult because they also knew me before but I think they see a change but sometimes when you know people, when you see them more or less everyday that you do not see the change, if for example you know me now and then you meet me in two years time, then you see a noticeable change because we have not been*

*speaking to each other, but when you see your friends everyday or every week, then they sort of follow the process.*

36. How will you sum up your yoga holiday experience and its effect on my life?

*The food issue, the breakfast was horrible, so when we reached lunch I think everybody was just so hungry that they just filled themselves until your stomach is about to burst, because you know in the breakfast the food was less, and that's very difficult because living on your own and being brought up in a society where food is available all the time, I am just speaking about me, so I can eat whenever I feel like it. That was very difficult and I think also again going on these yoga holidays is about getting rid of all your habits and getting new and better habits, and some of them I tried to adapt but regarding the food for example, that's very difficult especially in a society where of course you work or in your school you can take breaks, but its not I do not know its difficult. Like for example may be living in Italy or Spain, you have plan like this your break time, and then you start work again and in Denmark, there is no problem like that is something where you fit into your life and some people are very bad at taking these breaks, and that's when they get stressed whereas I think I take small breaks all the time and eat too much probably and may be do not get the proper meals and for example on this yoga camp the breakfast was very small and only like some corn or some rice boiled in water or some seeds boiled in water or things like that, and its very small breakfast for me because my breakfast usually fill up my stomach, and I know that the point of this was to be able to not fall asleep on meditation for example, or ya that's probably the main purpose so that you go on and you could have your lunch and you could have some hours , where you are off and you could digest. But otherwise I said everything but you said that you want to ask me something later on.*

37. So these were changes in your everyday life and you have answered it, do you want to add something?

*I think no.*

Then that will be it, thank you so much for the given information.

**Informant: Judi Poulsen**

Date: 27 March at 11:11

Place: Ålborg University Sydhavnen Campus

1. Please introduce yourself?

*I am Judi Poulsen, I am 48, and I work at Ålborg University Copenhagen as study Secretary.*

2. About your family

*I am married and have two teen age daughters, 17 and 15.*

3. And living in.

*I live in ballerup.*

4. How many times have you been on yoga holiday?

*I have only been on yoga holiday for once.*

5. when was it?

*That was in October 2012.*

6. Where did you go?

*I went to Greece, and Island called Lesbos, a Danish yoga woman was arranging that for us.*

7. Was that with Karina?

*Yes, it was.*

8. Why did you decide to go on that holiday?

*I have been thinking about for quite a long time, but I have been busy with my family life and then I did go for years on holiday and I was with my family of course. Then last spring I was researching for holiday, it was Island and I would really love to see Island, but also knew it would be quite cold and I like the south, and I said to myself that if my family go to Island for summer holiday, then I have to go to south before the winter - because I suffer from winter depression, seasonal disorders its called. And I said I will have to go to south, I have been doing some yoga for years as well, and then I combine two things, the sun and the yoga and I found this place.*

9. How would you explain your experience of that tour?

*I came as I said only to you know to get some new energy and to be able to relax by the beach and then have some yoga exercises. And not for the first time I was travelling alone otherwise I have been travelling with someone or my family. So just .go in somewhere alone was a big decision for me, so its quite nice to go with the group, but I did not think so much before going I thought I will do some yoga in the morning and evening and in the middle of the day, I can have some time for my own and that will be like that. That was only expectations I had actually. So i did not expect that much as I came home with.*

10. So you were just looking to achieve time for yourself, and do some yoga ... did you achieve it?

*Yes because Karina was a very excellent teacher, and she has this background as Pschotherapist, and she did not I mean it sounded like some physical yoga and exercise and that, but she also had to focus on some breathing and on why like in our mind why we have some restrictions in our body and some other things, it was quite a inner travel as well. It was not just a yoga travel I think.*

11. You said, it turned out to be something else could you explain that?

*Not really, because I just got much out of it, it was a lot of relief and this is inner spiritual journey as well as it was just a week, and it was quite amazing that the first days and I another woman were sitting on the beach because Karina was talking about all your experience so much and then next day you have 4 hrs of yoga and what can we get out of that come on. So we were quite skeptical as well. But she was right that was an experience.*

12. You said, you got some relief, what kind of relief?

*Not relief but inner strength I would rather say.*

13. Inner strength to?

*To be able to be so difficult to explain, I think that many of us, when we talk together , we said that we felt inner strength when we came home, feeling much more competent and so sure somehow. I mean competent of being alone, competent of living that sounds strange as that was just a week.*

14. It was quite meaningful to you then?

*Yes, it was quite meaningful.*

15. So if you look on your everyday life, did you notice any changes?

*Well I came home and started practice yoga every day, I did not do that before. That's been a good thing for me I mean I am not that good in getting out running and physical exercises, but now I make to get every morning at 6:00, and 1 hour of yoga before going here (at work). That really help me for the winter because I said I suffer from winter as I been quite depressed during the winter months. And I get some exercise in the morning and sort of waking up my stiff body and all that so that's good and also it has I also came home being very happy, I think this is because of this gorgeous woman, and we were 14 I think – it was really nice who were quite same, I do not know we were quite different, still it was nice.*

16. So you were comfortable with your company.

*Yes, we had a really good team spirit, we did not know each other before, and youngest one was 19 or something she was with her mom and sister, and eldest one was 64 and like that it was quite wide age group a lot of them had I mean some were in the life period like they had small children, they were quite stressed some of them and they really felt. I mean the response we got that we all got so relaxed after this week a lot of them had some tensions, like really some tensions I mean they were being house wife, wife, working mother and that's really hard, and I quite envy them that they managed to do this during this time of their lives. I would really have benefitted from that when I had small children. I could see that now I do not know again its quite wide ...some women like me...who are in this stage of life that their children are getting older they were doing it now, and that was also quite nice meeting those women. We also have some talks of life and the meaning of it to all.*

17. You still think that, as you already said that yoga tour has affected your life right?

*Yeah, it has may be put in turn it my life into a direction a bit earlier than it would have otherwise, because I got my mind on some things that I would have before.*

18. Would you like to share those things?

*No I do not like to.*

19. Do you personally believe in religion?

*Yes, I am not an atheist, so I do I am of course I do.*

20. How will you compare like do you go to church every week or so?

*No no.*

21. That means you believe in religion but you are not practicing it?



*No I am not practicing no. as like most Danish we are member of the church and go to church for things like Baptism and all that for Christmas and that's all.*

22. And you have been baptized?

*Yes, I am and my daughters have been baptized as well but that's about it we do not. Its what it is yeah but my eldest daughter is 17 and she is so negative, she does not really she says there is nothing between earth and life and she is so much into science and wants a proof of everything but I am like what about this, what about this, may be.*

23. Do you like to talk about your yoga tour to your friends,

*Yes, I came home and of course talked to my colleagues, well here I am again, I am 2 inches taller and I am very happy, ok You do look happy. I felt so happy that way. And I recommend to quite many I know quite many people, I think they would benefit from it as well.*

24. So you recommend to your friends?

*Yes I do.*

25. How do you think you are known amongst your friends after that tour?

*Nothing special, no difference No I am not a yogi freak no.*

26. Did you find out something about yourself, as you said 'I had time with myself only' So did you realize something that you could not realize it before?

*Ya I did as I tried to say it before in my age, you spend a week by yourself I mean without family, and there are other inputs, when you get all this spiritual guidance inputs as we did as well. So there was a great experience in that way.*

27. Can you relate this spiritual guidance to your inner believes of religion, somehow?

*No it has nothing to do with religion.*

28. So you find it more spiritual and scientific may be?

*No not scientific, but its nothing to do with religion, its nothing to do with GOD or anything, its not like Indian yoga, where you sit in front of a guru, it's nothing like that. its more like finding your inner strength. Again and again, and that's what it's all about.*

29. do you meditate everyday?

*No I do not but I do yoga, I try to meditate, but I cannot get the hang of it.*

30. Did you meditate, at your tour?

*Yes, we did.*

31. Did you realize something after meditation?

*No, it was just peaceful and nice afterwards.*

32. How did that peace affect on you?

*I think it was a general notion among us, that all sort of grew a bit with all that peace and warmth, with all that group as well.*

33. You also said that you felt that you could see the things in your life like some years ahead?  
*yes, exactly.*

34. And was that related to spirituality?  
*Ya, It was also like what I wanted to do with rest of my life.*

35. What about your relationships with your family and friends, has it been affected somehow?  
*No.*

36. so it's the same?  
*yes.*

37. So in the end, how would you summarize your experience and its affect on your life?  
*Because it was just a yoga holiday and it was just a week. and it does not make a big change in someone's life but it for many of us, it's the first step in doing your daily yoga practices and starting to meditate and starting to find yourself and find inner peace, I guess. of course you can go on a yoga holiday and just say, ok that's the sun and the beach and some exercises and nothing changed, and I think there were some who did not really appreciate the holiday as well, its possible.*

Thanks a lot for the information about your yoga holiday experience.

*Yes you are welcome, but I think it's a really growing industry, I mean this yoga business, there are so many yoga vacations being offered, when you go through them, they are so different as well, because you can clearly see that there are some yoga holidays, they are just for exercises and beach and there are some other ones, who are really into growth and spiritual development and self development and all that, so its difficult to choose the right one I think. I was not much aware of that before I went on yoga holiday, so actually I was just looking at the dates. what I could do then I ended up with two choices, one of them I could see that was in a hotel in Corsica, and quite nice there, but I doubted that she was did a daily yoga classes or anything , maybe I thought it was not good enough and then I saw Karina, and she was really working with yoga and things like that and spiritual things as well, and living in eco village yeah and something that attracts and pictures of the place, in Greece was so nice and you could see that it was a special place, and others were just hotel room and hotel. you want to make sure that you go to a right place.*

38. Do you think you want to go again?  
*Yes, I would, but now I am much more anxious about where, which, trip to choose, because I have experienced something really good. now I would be really sad if I choose somewhere else and its not the same that same when I had to go to Danish høje school and I has wonderful week and working with some creative stuff, and then a year after I went to another school, but it was so depressing because it was not like that at all.*

39. So your expectations for the next tour are much higher?

*Much much higher.*

40. What would you look for?

*A great place, great teacher and where you can work with yourself, do some self development definitely and so I am looking at a place may be with Karina, but she has some crazy I mean in may and April, and I mean its quite difficult for me to go in this time.*

(General discussion about yoga tourism)

*one of the last days, breathing exercises well Karina took us through this breathing exercise, where we should find our inner child and all those, and there was such a lot of crying, people lying down crying, you know and saying all those things in their lives, that was an experience and then afterwards, talking to other people about this was really great. I mean we did not know each other a week ago, and just after one week, we just talking from depth of our heart I mean nothing restricted and was so nice. it does not happen that often.*

**Informant: Christina Poivey**

Date: 28 March 2013 at 09:36

Place: Amager

1. Please introduce yourself, your name, age, profession and family.

*My name is Christina, and I am 41 years old. and I am married and have 3 kids and my original background was studying from Copenhagen Business School, where I studied languages, then economics and then specialized in human resource management. But in 2004, I decided to become a yoga teacher, so I have been teaching yoga ever since, and that was actually I was on a yoga holiday in 2004 in feb. and that time I was not I got stressed, when I was carrying my first child and that was in 2002, and that was quite chock for me that I could oversee, my body's reactions like this, I was about to give birth too early and came into hospital, and they stopped the birth and I gave him the birth as normal, and then everything was fine, and then for a year I was on maternity leave, I was thinking a lot, and I did not want o go back to this school career that I got, so I was starting to look jobs like which were kind of below my educational level, and it was like it was not really it. my husband and I and Lukas who was at that time, close to 1½ year old, went on a holiday in Thailand. I was practicing yoga on and off, since 98 but not really like that much into it and then I was like wow this is really nice, I mean this doing me good, I mean there are so many things into it. And then I started practicing more and more yoga and then I applied for a program and came in, and took my education in yoga Thailand.*

2. Would you like to say something about your yoga education in Thailand?

*My education was, its Ashtanga yoga, so it was one of the classical yoga styles directly coming from India and we had a lot of both chanting and philosophy, and asana practice and pranayama practice was a huge part of it. Indian masters were coming to teach us pranayama and we were really positive and making our pranayama program, so I mean it was very intense program, It was 10 hours a day, but life changing experience to try that.*

3. How many times have you been on a yoga tour?

*Well I have been 2 times , when it was yoga holiday and then I have been sometimes, where it was teacher trainings like 2 times in Thailand and 1 time in France, where it was like a retreat set up, like while you are there, you have all food and practicing and all in the same place.*

4. Why did you decide to go on yoga holiday?

*Yeah what originally made us do that a I mean it was just the combination of getting into the warmth in winter time at that time, and this of having doing something with your body, because both my husband and I are quite fond of doing something with our body because we feel good using our body, so it was combination of also been able to do something with our body, in a nice set up, where also there was some healthy food. so we felt like having this like ok its not just go and visit a lot of stuff, but more feeling really good. it was a lot of years ago, but I think that was the kind of the headlines, because we were like my husband had never tried doing yoga, when we were there first time and I was quite somehow new to hit like I was not so much into it. And it was quite an adventure for us to do this kind of holidays.*

5. Would you say something about your experience?

*But I think it was , we just loved it... and I think it was very healthy for us because we have been quite busy, and also busy in your thinking like both long studies and used to analyze and be critical, you know all these kind of things, so that was in the retreat setup when you do not do so many things, it was really nice, while everything was quite simple, you know we got up quite early in the morning and we practice, and then we had nice breakfast, and then we had some time to chill out, where it was not about visit around and see a lot of stuff, we were really it was planned to take it easy and the food was provided as well and the food was healthy, and I was I mean for these two weeks, we really felt healthy and great inside. Everything was just like peaceful and we really, it was enjoyable.*

6. You felt that because of the relaxation, you got or combination of everything?

*It was more combination as I said, I was a combination of being the retreat center close to the sea, nice experiencing the sea and having the warmth and being in this set up, where people were focused on yoga, and we were doing Ashtanga yoga, so its physical form of yoga, and then we could get a message and we get nice food, I mean this package was really nice, I mean this you do not I mean sometimes when you go you, I mean could have a list of so many things they want to see and its constantly to say like where we go to dinner, what are we going today, you are ....constantly need to make decisions, and on this kind of holiday, you do not need to make decisions, someone is cooking your food, its certain and at certain time, everything is set for you. I mean it was a treat to experience that.*

7. Before going to that tour, were you trying to achieve something from the tour?

*Peacefulness I think, the thing you know you are having studies for so long time and you are so used to you know performance, and exams and you need to do well and also in the jobs, the labour market and you are trying to get a job, I means its constantly something about that I need to perform, I need to be better than what you did last time and this is just like enjoying life and connecting with yourself in a different way. and also because I do not remember how I felt about that at that time, because I did not know all about this that I know now, like this performing is not part of yoga and the culture what did it think about it at that time, I thought it was this wellness, and feeling good, and healthy part of it, it was the combination of the more relaxation but also doing something active with your body every day.*

8. What do you mean by new connection with yourself? Would you elaborate that?

*I do not know, if I had it back then, I do not remember it because it was so many years ago and I was with that so much since then, but I think it was the main thing was going from my head into my body. so kind of being connected to my body and it was not the head that was controlling everything, you know what happens is the sensation of being a whole person with the body and the head also. I think that was the main thing I felt on my first yoga holiday. Later on with the development of yoga has been its getting more spiritual I mean its more like being connected to your inner essence. also this feeling of being connected to what surrounds you and how important it is to be in your body and to connect to whole you can not only being up here (pointing towards head) because that how I was educated, to this one ( )pointing towards head)to use my head , all the time.*

9. You said inner essence, can you elaborate that?

*Like what is the core of your soul, I mean your spirit, I mean going in being what's all surface, and ego and I mean to go in and fell inner source inside. but that came not from the first yoga holiday, that's been coming for many years of studying and I am still working on it and practicing and its long process, that's what you start to discover I means for me it started as more physical but later like how like something happening when I do yoga, compare to when I sports for instance, but first it was physical and it was nice sensation in the body and it was relaxation and more relaxing in my head, I could feel more ground for myself, I could feel more balance afterwards. so it was started as a physical practice and then I discovered ooo..it has some other benefits as well. And then it's a long process of getting into that to the more spiritual aspects getting there and that's life journey I think.*

10. Did you feel any difference, when you came back home?

*Well I decided to, like at that time I was looking for a job so I was not really working, and then I decided I will stop looking for job, now I want to become a yoga teacher, so I started practicing a lot and studying a lot, and I started to change the way I was eating also, because I was into this program, where you have to prepare yourself, you needed to write a diary about your practice and what you were thinking and feeling and write about what you were eating and I started to be more conscious about all these things, like what time I was going to bed and how did I feel, did I feel a lot of thoughts, or was I more peaceful, or what did I eat and put into my body. So its was a long process. half a year of doing this, and doing some exercises and doing this, starting to get into this yoga work, I mean taking some yoga workshops, and then I left and that was a life changing experience for me to do that.*

11. Can you differentiate your everyday like from your yoga holiday?

*yeah my god, yes, here its different, I mean that's a big challenge, I mean when you go on along retreat like also my teacher training, it was many weeks and practicing like this Thailand, where the climate is warm, and you do not have your other duties o do, I mean that's one thing and the other thing is trying to find and keep your practice, when you are at home, you have your kids, its cold outside, you have to groceries, work and duties, and stuff like this. that's also been taking many years in order to learn to adapt and how to incorporate in my life, also because I was educated in Ashtanaga yoga, which is very physical and demanding practice, where you are supposed to do it one and half hour serious and 6 times and week, this is very demanding and I think they loosened up during the later years, but that was the tradition what you do and that was not possible, when you live in the west, where you have another climate and another duties,*

*I could do that when I was living there but I could not when I was coming back. so in the beginning, it was kind of creating frustrations in me because how can I here practice and I have been so tired with the kids, and getting up early in the morning, because you are supposed to do it, if you are right at sunrise and sunset, and sunset is quite early I mean in the winter time, it's quite dark in here. so its been a long process of how to incorporate and find my own style and find how much is ok, and it has been challenge of course with three kids, but it was also educational in the sense like what you can make in your daily life, and also for me the yoga practice is both pranmayam and meditation, so for long periods, I did not do so many asanas for instance, but sometimes it was more meditation and other times it was more Asanas and pranayamas and not so much other things, and constantly trying to find seeking to find out a good balance of what I learned and what I use the most and also it can be like this morning I has 10- 15 minutes on my yoga mat and that's it and sometimes it's one and half hour, so it's not as formalized as I was educated to do, because that was long practice.*

12. Do you personally believe in religion?

*In religion for me yoga and religion has nothing to do with one another, for me yoga can be considered more as spiritual practice and also because religion is for me is like there is a God and some kind of prescriptions and rules, you have to strict to and for me yoga is everything which is spiritual, its different from that and yes, I believe I mean I believe there is something higher powers and higher consciousness in the universe, and there we all kind of connected and I experience that more and more like, we are energy and like the view of the body from the yoga and from eastern tradition is that we are with this energy body and I feel this more and more and I believe in more and more and I believe that there is higher I do not know I its, this God, or this God or this God, for me it does not mean but there is something like higher consciousness.*

13. Have you been baptized?

*Ya I have been baptized and also confirmed when I was 14, but it did not I mean for me, it was very too early. too take this confirmation when I was 13 – 14 years old because I you know here in Denmark we are members of the church, but nobody knows anything about it, and its not really, you really do not learn to take a stand to it because its not part of your daily life.*

14. So religiousness and spirituality are different for you?

*ya, ya.*

15. Do you like to talk about yoga tour to your friends?

*Ya, we have some friend that since the first time, I went, it's quite many years, it's about 10 years ago, so a lot happened in those 10 years, people were just like so you did not drink coffee, you did not drink alcohol, you did not drink sugar. I mean is that holiday? it was just like yes it was but I think its changed during the year, and people are much more open now, and becoming more and more common to go on yoga holiday and I think there is a big change in those 10 years.*

16. How do you think your friends know you?

*Good question, but I do not, they know I am into yoga and I am not eating meat, for instance I eat fish but I do not eat meat and I eat quite like for many years I have been into what I am eating, I know it effects me so much, and eating quite healthy food, and biological food and stuff like this, so that's part of my lifestyle, but I still like a glass of wine or beer, sometimes and I am not I do not think I am perceived a saint or someone, totally weird I mean I am quite integrated*

*into the society but my family is saying that I some specific requirements for food for instance, but otherwise its quite ok.*

17. Why did you stop eating meat?

*Since I was a teenager, I was not eating quite a lot of meat, but I was eating meat, but more probably after I met my husband in 97 because French people are eating lot of meat. and then I had a lot of problems digesting, and then I went on this teacher training, where I did not have meat and I felt so great and I ate no meat since then, because I could just feel that I feel much more light and connected somehow... then I am also fond of like they are treating all those animals that are getting slaughtered and stuff like this and I mean quality of meat and I am quite happy not to eat meat actually.*

18. During your everyday life can you see any change after yoga holiday?

*Yeah but that has been frustrating a bit according to the number of kids I have so in the beginning right after first holiday and teacher training, I was more strict on myself on some areas about what I was eating and getting up early in the morning to do my practice, and that I have been losing a bit over the years, now its so integrated for me to eat a lot of vegetables and not eat a lot of meat for instance so that's quite easy, and I do not keep this strict resume on my practice to get up, also because I am doing for quite for many years also with small babies. and now its a little bit more flexible I would say. Still right now I think I have been too flexible, so it's a balance of being having kind of routine but not be too rigid.*

19. How long did you meditate, during your holiday?

*On the holiday, the first was there was no meditation, it was half an hour on my yoga holidays, I think it was not so much of meditation, it was more physical and then because we were having a kid, either one or two kids with us. so were prioritizing also being with the family, in the afternoon, the rest of the group would meet, to do some talking and restoratives, and stuff like this and where we would often prioritize to be with the family, so were more into the asanas and may a little bit of pranyama also in the morning, and that was what we were prioritizing.*

20. Did you feel that meditation affected you in any way?

*I felt that later on, I mean not because they were not a part of my yoga holidays, I felt that later on that is, ya that its needed. I mean as a person I had so much energy up here (point towards head), I mean for so many years, I used my head and all the energy goes up here (pointing toward head), and I mean in order to just to feel this being present and not having to do something all the time is quite good thing for me to meditate, but I think that later on and not on my yoga holiday. but I would say, I mean I think it would be good for people, I realize from my husband because he has never been doing yoga, it was good for him to start, because he got into it and he was doing everyday for 14 days, and he felt effect of it, so do not know if he had started here like going every Wednesday night in the cold, if he felt the same, I mean he took up yoga after that himself, and that was due to the yoga holiday.*

21. Did that holiday, effect any of your relationships?

*I think in the beginning, when I came back I was a little bit obnoxious in the way that I became very strict what I was eating, like I started like no I cannot have onions, I cannot have garliac and stuff like this, and I kind of say ok I need a kind of balance, because otherwise I*

*could be very yogic but I cannot be very social, and it did not took that long time for me, one year or 1½ year maximum, and then I realized ok I need to adapt the society, you are living in. relationships yeah during the years, definitely had an influence about I mean I still see some people, from when I was studying in CBS, but I also have many more new friends, who are into other things, who have a different attitude towards life, ya I think it is unavoidable somehow, because I have another interest in order to pursue with materialistic things and not because not because I am a saint, because I still like nice clothes and so, but still some of those deeper conversations, and this spiritual interest is not everybody likes this.*

22. What about your relationship your husband?

*He is a businessman, he has been doing business studies as well, but he is always been very open and very interested in this, he loves when I come come up or bring in something that I learn or heard, he is very very interested, I think he is will do something different at a certain point because it's a part of his interest, so he is very interested in that.*

23. How would you sum up your yoga holiday experience in your life in the end and its' effect on you?

*For me it has been transforming because that made me to take the decision that I wanted to become a yoga teacher, and I think it's a fantastic way to go on holiday for many many people, and I would like to do offer holidays myself actually, when my kids are growing up a little bit, because people need that, as we are so busy on the run here in the west, you feel so good after yoga holiday, and this retreat idea – I like it a lot. I have been doing teacher training which were in a retreat set and which were not in a retreat set up, you go much deeper when you are on a retreat set up because you do not have all those distractions from outer side, and you can just focus on your practice and getting more inside and going deeper because you do not have to answer all those questions about where to sleep and where to get food, or what to eat and these kind of things. so sometimes you have this refuge of going into a place, because everybody needs to take decisions all the time, but sometimes once in a while to give you some opportunity to have this and just enjoy being and take this healthy food and the sun, or message or yoga of course. and I just totally recommend it.*

Thank you so much for sharing information about your experience.

**Informant: Olivier Poivey**

Date: 28 March 2013 at 10:18

Place: Amager

1. Would you like to introduce yourself, your name, age, education, profession and family.

*My name is Olivier Poivey, I am a French citizen, I am 39 and I have a long education within business administration, from France, I am running my own business with 20 people, and it is within marketing. Where we are handling everything in system and data support for marketing and have that in eight years.*

2. How many times you have been on yoga holiday?

*That's been twice in Thailand, and it was in 2004 and second time in 2007.*

3. Why did you decide to go on yoga holiday?



*The first time was not my side but from my wife side, because she was into yoga and I was just open minded so I thought why not, I did not have much expectations, I knew that I would not be very familiar with yoga and I would go with some people that are familiar with yoga but I did not mind and I mean that's about the first time really, and I also thought that would be once in a lifetime thing for me, we were first time there with the family in Asia, and this type of vacation, and professionally it was a very very bad timing for me and it was more than two weeks, so I thought anyway we do it because that's something for us and something we can get in there.*

4. Did you feel challenged?

*Yes, because I am more I mean morphologically I am not flexible and I knew doing yoga would be a challenge for me, and specially when I had not tried, so it was like hopeless carta – the one who is just so much not flexible and so hopeless to do some things. I mean again I did not mind, and I really got a lot out of it. but that what was important for me.*

5. Would you like explain your experience on your first yoga holiday?

*Yes, my first yoga holiday was very nice because it was a very simple place, very close to nature, a bit in the jungle and at the sea, so it very simple and at the same time very much full of life, and being there was like we were just wandering for hours, and thinking why do I have a house and why I do have a car, and why do I have a job, like these things. just super flowers , whereas the core that is just needed was just there, just been able to have time and just to enjoy; to eat very healthy food and practicing yoga every morning, where its just a blessing in itself, I did not eat anything else. and sometimes I think about it when I am here, and I think about the accumulation of the goods, and all this what we have thrown into here and then wondering, what is the point really. the good thing was that there was a rhythm in this yoga holiday, and you could wake up early morning and feel the morning spirit in the place and start the day being active, while you finish the yoga practice, there was actual day starting but you had the impression that you already had had a good day, still the day was starting, so you had the two good days, so it was a really good combination, the fact that we had to go out and could stand this period was also that we could take some taxis and go around, but when we go to this place, it was like sacred place, like I have also done some yoga in large hotels for example, its completely different here, yah the whole thing just makes sense.*

6. After that holiday, did you feel any change in yourself?

*Ya I mean I think so, I mean for the first time, yes because first time I had the experience of feeling so great, I mean something that I can remember, when its dark here in winter time and its boring, I mean just think about that light that experience, how I felt this relaxing after yoga and hearing the noise of the beach and all this, so I had this sort of connection to something nice and something I can remember, that I can relate to me, and then I started, yoga practice feel that it was something that was needed, something was really good to me, even though I was tough or challenging for me as a person. So I started having my practice so it also changed me that way. And also we became aware. somehow of what we can gain from there, that I did not know, because I was so much more into my career, my job and focus and performance and all this, it sort of open up to new perspectives, then I have been obviously working more on it afterwards, but it's been a sort of first step.*

7. Before going there, you never tried yoga, right?

*I tried once, it was a company event that I had organized with my team, to get 30 people doing yoga.*

8. Why did you arrange that event?

*I thought it would be fun, and my wife was into yoga and it was a way for us to be fun and to be challenged. and I had some sort of feeling that it would be something nice and good, something that I would like to do more about, but the same time it was fun, so 30 people who were absolutely not prepared for yoga together, so it was challenging for the two teachers.*

9. How did it end up?

*It's been very varied, I mean there were some people who took it very seriously, boys and girls, some were really good at it and some was have no intention to try to do it really, so it was very polarized between some people, who were really into it and some people really rejecting, so it was also my experience that there are some rejecters.*

10. What is the name of your company?

*'one marketing'.*

11. Would you explain about it ?

*It's like, if all large companies, who have large customer base like insurance company or like pension company yes, they know a lot about their customers, they have all sorts of data, so they can use this data in order to be more relevant in the marketing, this is what our company has been doing, so working with large Nordic companies, who have large customer base, and many opportunities to and relevant information to the client. So supporting, their strategies, their data analysis and ya.*

12. How do your differentiate, your everyday life from your yoga holiday?

*It's not the same, I mean yoga holiday was about having time in and enjoy and be in the present and not needing anything else, whereas daily day is more like completing things all the time and rushing through the day. And then living in Denmark, does not make that easier, this is cold and dark in winter time, so it's tricky but any way I try to practice and I still practice yoga and mindfulness and focusing on myself and being in the present and theses things, so but I wish was I mean yoga holiday was very nice as compare to daily life.*

13. Do you believe in religion?

*you mean God?*

14. Yes, I mean that, and have you been baptized?

*Yes I am baptized and I am Catholic, and I believe in God but more in God than in religion, because I mean it's not like I do not feel like I am catholic any more, but I believe in God.*

15. So its more like spiritual than religious?

*yes, exactly.*

16. For religious people, God is like Jesus and for spiritual people, God is more like super power or nature.

*Yes I am the second one, spiritual absolutely yes.*

17. Can you relate yoga to your spirituality or general spirituality of the world?

*Yes, I can its my experience that yoga has helped me to be more aware, and be better at feeling things and going further on my path, so definitely it's not like yoga itself but it does to me more like experience and more vision and I get more clear ideas, and I was more aware and I would more feel things, so yes definitely, so when I am practicing I have impression to be be rusty a little bit, not on practice yoga, its like I need this now to stimulate my feelings.*

18. How do your friends know you?

*Well I am quite open about that so I am talking about it, so again some people think that I am crazy or some people do like me. bit practice and we have interests its again, it's a wide spectrum, but I am rather open about it, I am talking to my clients about that as well, not everyone, because I know some people may be are a much business like, straight Danish thinking and these things may be a bit weird and do not want these discussions, and I have some clients that are open about that, so even though it's a professional relation and I need to be representative I need to stand for my company, but still I feel like I can be open for theses sort of things, I know that like I can feel the person have an interest and I know I mean I am trying to get into this, I mean I try to use it I mean its interesting and its lifting our relation to something more interesting and more spiritual rather than just speaking about I do not know like inflation and economic things and so whatever topic is just down there.*

19. Did you find out something about yourself after that yoga holiday?

*ya I mean I turned 30 at first vacation at that winter, and I just realized what I basically needed I was not much to do where I was spending all my time in doing, because I have spent so much time in study, working working and having good jobs and all this, and I realize that it not exactly what I needed and I could live very simply and being more happier that this, that was a part of my own experience of first time.*

20. Did you notice change in your daily life?

*I started practicing yoga, and it was the moment where I changed job, I went from a large company an executive job in the large company, to a small company with less prestige I was just at the moment I started my own company.*

21. why you did that?

*May be actually leaving has helped me just accepting this, and then because it was more clear to me that what I needed or what I wanted was also important, and it was not something like prestige, it was not something that come externally to me but it was something that was coming from me. so the timing was interesting, it was just the moment where I could not do my job and so I do not know, if its just your know random or insensately that two things happen at the same time, but may be actually, I realize now, we talk about it may be it helped me, I had this experience of this simplicity and simple life and back to something real and something from the mind may be helped in taking the right decisions also for me. which was just withdraw the prestige thing and doing for other executives and all these things, but more focusing on what I bring and that makes me happy as well.*

22. During your yoga tour, did you meditate?

*No I did not, I had not learned. I would have done it, I mean I did some, for example, when you watch your candle light, you watch it for minutes and then you have to close your eyes and then it's like its rinsing, it's not meditation it's like rinsing but I have learned a bit more. it was not part of the program but I would have loved to do that.*

23. you tried it afterwards?

*Yes, I did.*

24. Ok did you feel any personal improvements?

*I think its difficult to relate it to exactly to this, but it can play role, that show you some things, that opens up other horizons, that means afterwards you can choose to go further in that direction. so I would say it has not been the change that was so redical that like I did everything, but its part, may be one of the first elements in path that I have taken since, and that I am not planning to drop ever, which is my own spiritual path towards I do not how much I can reach, but towards enlightenment or opportunities, or whatever because what I was experiencing some results, I have seen that I felt good, felt right for me I took a lot from it so, having understood this also an incentive for me to continue and to experience all things and feel good about that.*

25. You said, 'right to me', what do you mean by that?

*It was physical, it was how I felt physically but also in my mind, how relaxed, and how happy it could make me, but I think I was not thinking in the spiritual terms, at that time yoga was something physical, and I had no knowledge about it, I did not know the relation between spirituality, yoga I have learned all that late on so it was not something I experienced at that time, it was not spiritual experience, it was more like a physical experience and that was stimulating my curiosity more than spiritual experience, I was not so much into it, I was totally like take someone from the street who know nothing about yoga, I had been to Thailand... so I heard about it but you know take someone who has no knowledge of spirituality or anything, I did not believe in God at that time or anything, so Ya.*

26. So you started believing in God afterwards, so you realize something in the holiday?

*No it was later on, there was more reason in that.*

27. Did the process started?

*I do not say that because of the holiday I later on believe in God, I have experienced something that I felt experiencing again and know more about it, and that lead me to further, further, further; now six years ago I was on yoga holiday and definitely I feel more open towards spirituality than ya.*

28. Do you want to on a yoga holiday again?

*Definitely.*

29. Do you recommend yoga holiday to others?

*Ya definitely, there are so many beautiful places also where yoga holidays are organized; it's a great way to experience a place.*

30. Have you seen any changes within your relationships with your friend and family afterwards?

*No maybe I took myself less seriously, because I was trying to do the things that I was good at and now I am doing some things that I am definitely not good at. so it was also an experience of humility, so may I am taking myself so seriously.*

31. How will you sum your yoga holiday experience and its effect on your life?

*It's been the best vacation ever, and it opened up towards new possibilities, new horizons, new ways, I mean so I am a member of something I mean now after almost 10 years ago, and I remember it so well as it happened yesterday, I think I am very grateful that I have had this experience. so its been more than vacation definitely, that was something more than being on vacation.*

Thanks a lot for sharing your experience.

**Informant: Karina Helsted**

Date: 03 April 2013 at 16:26

Place: Dissekylde

1. Please introduce yourself, your name, age, profession, family, etc.

*Karina Hlested Moe, and I am 38 years old, and educated as Physiotherapist, psychotherapist and yoga teacher; and I have been doing this for last almost 8 years I mean yoga and psychotherapy. I have 2 children 10 and 8 years and husband in the family.*

2. Why did you decide to become a yoga teacher?

*I started yoga when I was 15 years old, so that was I think I always wanted to know, if there was more to life than we know about and also the unknown about our consciousness, and what kind of possibilities do we have and what's the meaning of our lives, all those questions I had when I was little, so that was why I joined yoga.*

3. And you thought yoga could answer these questions?

*Yeah.*

4. Did you find answers to these questions?

*yeah a lot of them, yeah I actually felt very much like coming home, when I went to yoga first time, it was amazing and specially I went to Thailand once, that was many years ago and I find the special system, where every day we had a lesson about yoga philosophy and we practice and then I find its such a deep knowledge, I was amazed and also a little bit blown away and also skeptical, is this really true all the things they talk about. But it was quite amazing for me to hear I was more curious about that and I definitely wanted to learn more about that. It was so interesting.*

5. So you decided to continue your education in yoga?

*Ya after a long time of going to classes, I thought ok this is really my way, actually I never took at that time I never took any education as a yoga teacher, I just did it for many many years and took al this lessons, so it was almost 5 years of yoga education, as there was a lesson each time and lot of practical homework and then afterwards I certainly just started teaching the*

*things, and then later on .that's many years late I took yoga teacher education. it's a month study and you become a yoga teacher.*

6. Have you been travelling for yoga?  
*Yoga holiday ?*

7. Yes it could be a holiday or retreat visit, or you were travelling outside to do yoga ?

*Ya I have done that a lot, and actually first time I did that was I was 19, (do you remember the year?); it was 1997, I was back packing and went to retreat place, where we did a lot of meditation and yoga every morning. and lot it was very Budddhist the way the religion was Buddhist. but that was actually my first holiday, you could call it where I was doing yoga. quite amazing to go away and livein...it was on a monastery area, where they lives in other culture.*

8. Where was it?

*It was in Thailand, and also stayed at a yoga place in Indonesia as well, in that travel, and that was quite amazing. I was travelling for 6 months, and staying at places where I could meditate, but it was very nice to feel that I little bit like I was travelling in a yoga country, it was very the way they were living it was very yogic, also the place in Thailand, the food they eat – it was very yogic food and like vegetarian food, very like brown rice, very healthy, the way they talk about in yoga how to eat food, whole grain food. and also the way they lived life was much more in their intuition it was also very like they were not living so much in their head that I find in the western culture- they were more intuitive, more in contact with themselves I felt, so they were very yogic, even though they did not do any yoga but the whole culture was yogic.*

9. Can you remember some examples, about the differences amongst the people living in the west and people living in there?

*Yes one thing was we went to take a train and it did not came, so we were waiting and waiting and waiting for many hours, and people – they just sat down, and they were just having a nice time, they were just sitting and talking and just enjoying ok, so now we were there for a lot of hours and there was no stress and that you could never find that in a western country, that's impossible. that was very yogic and that's really yogic way of living that was amazing, I loved that that was one example, of the things, there was so many things like that.*

10. Would you like to share something else, that you think was quite interesting in that tour and you still remember that?

*My first experience is, they were very open minded people, when we sat in the buses and the trains, we were speaking with each other, everyone was speaking with each other, also the way they touching each other, this was much more even though the pictures you saw there are two policeman sitting arm in arm, in India that's they were not afraid of the body, that was also very yogic, they sit very close and talk with each other, even though they do not know each other, that was I like that very much, and they just invite you in, they invite you to a funeral, also the way the funeral was that was also very yogic because yogic people think that there is no death or the life after death, so when you went to a funeral it was not sad, it was more like a celebration, when you came into you were invited for dinner and have a nice little party that was nice, that was the whole, I mean the yogic philosophy was influence the whole way of being, out there, that was quite amazing, I like that.*

11. Did you feel some difference in yourself, after experiencing that?

*It changed a lot to my life, I was going back to Denmark with new eyes on everything, what we did and also was like there was like fired up so I felt that I have to learn more about it and that was so, ja was also about like what I was eating and was conscious about, not eating meat and the yogic ways change a lot about me as well. think about what consciousness do you kill, eat pigs like pigs, they have really huge consciousness, they are more clever than dogs, we do not eat we do not kill dogs, but we kill pigs and we treat them really not really so nice so all theses things I got more conscious about all these things. and also the ways how you do with the earth, how you treat the planet and also much more conscious about not to make too big foot steps on the planet earth that's why actually we live in the village like this like in echo village.*

12. Can you say that you were in a new relationship with your earth?

*Ya, I felt more connection, what you do spread out to all the things around you.*

13. So you became more careful, and you start thinking about what you are doing and how it is affecting others?

*Ya I have always been thinking a lot about these things, but yoga put it put words to it another ways, that was things that I thought about so much, that was nice to have someone telling you and it was written down the philosophy was so deep, it was so amazing to hear about it.*

14. When you went there, were you thinking to get something out of it?

*I was thinking that it might would happen, because I knew it was out there, and the eastern I was very attracted towards the Eastern philosophy, so thought that I would get that out of it.*

15. Can you differentiate your everyday life from your yoga tour?

*I think the way I live here is very similar to the way when we are on a yoga tour, we live very close to nature, we eat very much similar food.*

16. Are you vegetarian?

*The children, they love meat and man he is also getting more and more conscious about it so her mostly buy fish, but not much meat any more, but he still does, when he serve it, I would eat it so I am not vegetarian, but I only buy vegetarian food and fish.*

17. You said you are living in a similar way?

*We do yoga, I do meditation every day, I do a lot of yoga so also try to live not a stressful life, just you have a real day as it was the last one, so I try to make every day balanced, that's very much the way the yogic people live.*

18. Any other relation in your life and yoga? Like how did you decide to live in echo village?

*Afterwards that travel, I went on another travel, where I found the yoga system that was the time, that was in 2004, that changed a lot in my life, that was in Thailand, I did yoga for 14 days for morning and evening.*

19. Why did you mean by yoga system?

*That was my, the way I teach today, that was that time I found, a yoga system that I found wow this is so deep, this I was totally blown away that time. ya I guess that was also the time... when I was coming back home, I was living in Copenhagen, I knew that I have to find a place to live it was maybe not so common, it was a little bit more caring about surroundings and also having some spirituality in it.*

20. So chose the place to live by considering the values you got from your yoga travel?

*Ya I guess so, ya.*

21. Do you personally believe in religion?

*I have always been a agnostic, like I was always in doubt I am brought up very much in a nature science way, in my family like they are no God and then when I went to those yoga places, I actually, got very much in doubt, if there was something more and much more than I know about. and then I was actually, then I knew for sure there are so many things that we human did not know about, so I started to search a little in it, to go even deeper into my body and to go into my heart, so I did a lot of breath work, which opens very deep and I saw all the time that I went deeper into myself I found out that the things that yoga people said was true, about the heart and how everything works. that was quite amazing and some of things some of my yoga teachers have told me like travelling out of my body like those things, I have a hard time to find out – how can they exist, if there isn't any soul, how can they leave their physical body with your consciousness, I find that very interesting, but I still think that we cannot know so much what is after death so I am just very curious about it and open minded.*

22. Ya, because our imagination is limited to our Physical body, right?

*Ya so true, that's it ya.*

23. Have you been baptized and confirmed?

*Yes but I am much more into Buddhism and spirituality than Christianity.*

24. So do you take Buddhism as religion or a spiritual practice?

*I mean you believe in a figure of god or unseen power, Ya I do not believe that there is a figure, or man up there that is much more like there is a power, we all connected in one.*

25. So you relate your life with yoga tour?

*Ya the way like my friends, that are changed like the friends I got now, they are very yogic people and they are much more, like they do not have any mask, like we are so real and that has actually influenced a lot on my friendships. That's very nice.*

26. At that time, you did not have any yogic friends?

*no not at all actually.*

27. But you have lot of yogic friends, but do you have other friends also that do not practice yoga?

*Yes I do but they are actually friends after coming up here, lots of old friends I do not have them anymore. but some of the friends do not do yoga.*



28. Do you like to talk about yoga?

*Very much about spirituality and I have also a group of women, where we meet and practice meditation, once a month and do a of spirituality things that's very special group, so I love to talk about it, I have a lot of influence in my life its hard to live a materialistic life after experiencing yoga, that's just not very important.*

29. How do you think your friends know you?

*They know me actually I think they know me, actually they think I am very spiritual, but sometimes I see myself a little bit more skeptical than they think I am but they but in the high school I was also like, known as the one who did yoga, but actually I did not do it at that time but still the yoga Karina that's so funny to think about but that's been a little bit like that I guess. a little bit strange, a little bit strange clothes, a little bit did not care about what other people was thinking.*

30. Did you experience something about yourself, when you were yoga travelling in Thailand?

*Ya I did find some new consciousness, some new forms of consciousness that I never felt before, or an deeper connection to myself and I felt another energy in my body, that I did not know about ja I felt a lot of different things.*

31. You said, consciousness, is it possible for you to explain a little bit more about that consciousness?

*Ya it was, sometimes it was very very deep feeling of connection, deep feeling of love, felling that I was expanding, lots of different things.*

32. Feeling of connection to what?

*Sometimes its like a connection to something higher, like self and higher being: also a connection to everyone around me, and the planet.*

33. Felling of love for?

*Love to the earth, and also gratefulness.*

34. Feeling of energy like?

*It feels like in the evening you feel like you are very much down in energy like, this kind of energy wakes you up it feels like you are its like a higher energy, its like you feel very much awakened, its very nice.*

35. Can you say that you feel any change in yourself after coming back?

*Ya I did, I found back home it was just, it was big change, may be the biggest change in my life, what yoga did to me definitely.*

36. So change in the way of thinking?

*Ya the change in the way of thinking and the way of connecting to other people, my behavior towards many things, many things was pretty much about those things before yoga pit word to it, but it was much easier to do it and do some changes, when I had words from yoga philosophy.*

37. You said your behavior towards many things, like?

*Ya like towards, eating meat, towards the way I watch other people, I was more honest, more myself because also but also another thing changes, like when I was in high school I had a lot of back problems and headache, and its like it get away so I have like I could use the physical system that could heal my body. it was really amazing and as a physiotherapist, you never felt those string exercises. It was something much deeper than my physiotherapy school and also much more about the breathing, that's quite interesting.*

38. Can you relate your education of physiotherapy and psychotherapy to yoga?

*Ya I used all the time in yoga and I mix it very much, the good thing about yoga is it's a whole system, so in a way it's much more easy to give people some tools, as psychotherapy is very - when you come to me, I give you some program – you write down and something to meditate on, so it becomes much more concrete, tangible- like you can feel it. and also it worked much faster than psychotherapy like really it does, because you work so much with it like breathing, you work with your physical body and you loosen up to your mind as well, so quite interesting.*

39. Were you meditating, before yoga traveling?

*No.*

40. So you started to meditate, during your yoga travelling?

*Yes.*

41. What was that you realize after your meditations in your yoga travelling?

*It was very much that I could change my mind very fast instead of being drawn down into a special feeling, I could sit down and go inside and I could change the way totally that I was thinking and feeling.*

42. How did it affect you as a person?

*That time, I did not take so much meditation into my mind, that came later on like it was a hard struggle but after many many years, I find that its huge huge impact it can really affect you and they way you think about thing like, you find out that you cannot change the other people, but you change about the way you think about them and that is quite amazing, like really how it can change your life then.*

43. Did you see any changes in your relationships with other people, like family or friends, or colleagues?

*yes, after I got back, my boy friend, he was little bit afraid of me to change too much, like now you are really changing, hope we can be together means you are into this big change. then I said to him that one ball is moving and it will also take the other one with it, but if we stick to that picture, his ball was still there for a long long time and I was moving moving moving, but then after long time he actually moved and now he is a yoga teacher as well, but it took him 10 years to even try it.*

44. Any other changes in your relationships?

*Ya actually the friend I got now are new.*

45. How would you summarize your yoga tour experience and its effect on your life?

*It's a physical tool to change my body, it's a psychological tool to change my mind, and its philosophical tool to how to behave and to understand the world, so its all the things that I could imagine as important in your life actually affecting those all the things in your life.*

Thanks a lot for sharing your experience.

**Informant: Lili Dente**

Date: 6 April 2013, at 10:37

Place: Frederiksberg

1. Can you please introduce yourself, name, age family profession, etc?

*My name is Lile Dente, I am 56 and I have family, husband 4 children, my mother is still alive, my father has died. I have my own company doing sourcing textiles, work mainly with India, my husband is a journalist, working for Danish broadcasting.*

2. How many times have been travelling for yoga?

*For yoga, I have only done that once, and that was in sept. last year, I have been wanting to do it for many years, but did not materialize. but then when I was India, I think it was in January last year, I was just thinking it could be really nice, because I did a yoga course in India, just 1 day where I has very spiritual you know all of a sudden I had an idea that I should go on a trip with my daughters; so I invited my daughters and then we went in went to Greece, Lesbos with Karina. and I found her on the internet, I did not know anything about her, I just started communicating with her and she seemed very nice person, and I did not even take her classes before I went I had no idea what we were going into. I do yoga in that place where we were in yogacentralen; and I like the way because you can take different courses and you can just do with a punch card. I think that's really nice way of doing yoga so invited my daughters and went on this trip in September and we discussed and we decided to be completely open about it and not have any I mean nay ambitions or s just to be who we were, it was ok if we cried, it was ok you know we could tell each other anything, and that's the most amazing experience I have ever had. to go on this yoga trip with my daughters.*

3. You said that you were thinking from a long time, to go and why were you thinking that you should go on a yoga tour?

*Because I have always loved yoga, I always feel that I have a very stressful work, I have my own business, sometimes I work 12 – 14 hours a day and it's a bit too much sometimes, but I always enjoy the feeling I have when I do yoga, its like I just feel calmness and you know I do not feel this stress, I walk out from the class feeling 5cm taller you know, so I just decided that it could be really nice to try and do it 4 hours every day and to see how I would respond to that because I have had periods of my life where I had a lot of stress, where I was gone down by stress. I do not know what to do, I just keep on working, I know its not good for me I have had high blood pressure, and my heart you know sometimes heart conditions, it was not good for me to work like this, so this was also a way to find out, weather I could get into you know a different state and also learn how to meditate properly and so that's why I did it and*

*also that it would be nice to share this experience and give this experience to my daughters as well.*

4. Were your daughters doing yoga before?

*Just a little bit, not a lot both of them have done yoga, but not like every week or anything like that. and actually youngest daughter she was extremely good at it, I mean whole body is just made for yoga and she decided that she wants to be a yoga teacher, so and we had some really crazy experiences, where we kind of had some you know it was not just yoga, it was also going into yourself and analyzing what things have had any meaning to you like in your childhood and all this. and I have never cried so much and at the same time I have never been so happy, I mean in a spiritual way. And it was like with my daughters, we have never been so closer like today, I mean we have always been close but there is something that we opened our doors to each other and that goes deeper than just a mother and daughter I think.*

5. Ok, anything else about your experience during your yoga holiday?

*It was also the way all the women, they you know you go with a lot of people, you do not know at all, and everybody is open to each other also so I felt really really warm, feelings for all the women there you know we were just so happy together, we could also go on some different tours, you know because we also had some free time and it would be different girls and women and we would go bicycling and we would go downtown and we would go out for dinners and its amazing, how close you can get to a person, you have never known, and just a few hours like just by doing yoga together in a room for few hours, even not talking to each other or anything. we just become one somehow . its an amazing feeling and you know you look at them, you do not see their faults. or anything, like you usually have tendency to look on people oh she looks like...o... you do not see it you only see the beautiful things, when you are on a trip like that.*

6. Were you trying to achieve anything before going there?

*I would like to achieve I went also because I wanted to see, if I could do yoga 4 hrs a day and not get restless, because I am a very restless person, and I need to slow down so my intention was open but also to learn, how to relax more. I just feel that I am getting more spiritual with my age, the older I get I wanted to know with myself, if It was real or it was not something, that I wanted to keep on doing.*

7. You said you become more spiritual? Would you like to explain this?

*Ja, I feel more that there is more between life and death, than just being, its also like I feel when I say spiritual, there is also feeling of calmness, that is bigger than just calmness. I do not know if its God or anything like that but that's to me spirituality is also something that you can just, be and be happy just by being I went to a trip to Kerala on a boat, with another friend and that week no it was not week, it was three days, we just sat on the boat, meditating listening to the water go by you know that is what I got out of this trip that I can relax, and to me it is spirituality that I can just sit and just enjoy being, and enjoy whatever is happening around me without thinking what to do next, you plan this and that and you know we need to clean this all these things. so I learned to being present where I am, and feeling that life is bigger than me you know, somehow.*

8. And in this way problems become smaller?

*Exactly and your stress level also lower down, so to me that is also spirituality.*

9. Do you experience a change in yourself during and after the yoga holiday?

*Ja, I felt a lot of changes, I opened up a lot more to myself, about what I can and what I can't. I always had this feeling and I should be able to do everything, and I was very hard on myself, because I how come you cannot manage this, you could do that before, why do you get stress now, and now I just feel much more relax about, much more forgiving towards myself, and you seeing things like – what is important in your life and is not. and you know.... I become much better in picking my battles, like seeing which things are important to battle for and which things are not.*

10. Can you differentiate your everyday life from your yoga holiday experience?

*Like your life style, what did you keep with yourself from your holiday?*

*I kept a lot with me but not 100 %, because your days are stressful, I mean when there it was just that, and when we only had that and each other, and now you are back in your every day like and I can feel I made some huge changes in my work life, for example I hired a girl to do some of the things I had I thought I need somebody to do the things that I found a little bit difficult. so I am only things now that I am good at and I like it and I do not get stressed out. so in that way It made a huge difference, and to me if I do not go to yoga once a week, I can feel it in my whole body. its like medicine, and its because you know when you get older, you start little paid here and a little pain there, and for me when I do yoga I also feel pain, but its different kind of pain like because of stretching and exercise, but I stop having all these other travels like neck ache and because I get to use whole my body in a different way. and stretch out a lot more, that I can feel so that's a physical thing, so its both the physical and the mental thing.*

11. Do you personally believe in religion?

*I am a Christian, well I can be a Buddhist I mean I believe that there is something, I do not have a specific religion, I believe in that there is something and to me its not important, as long as I feel I just feel good about it that there is something I do not need to know what it is.*

12. Have you been baptized and confirmed?

*Yes, and also my kids. I married in a church, but I have to say, when I got married.. it was important for both me and my husband that we said yes in front of God, it does not matter if we say in front of one God or another but we said yes to each other in front of something that is bigger than us, and that was important.*

13. Can you find a relationship in your everyday life and yoga holiday?

*Its two different things but I must have needed it to even think about it somehow, you know I do not what to answer but I long for it , that's why I am going again, and I think this Is a kind of refuge thing, once a year I would like to go on a yoga trip. it does not have to be the same every year, but it gives you kind of a kick to remember because things, of course when you come home, you are full of ideas what you want to do, and slowly you went to your own life once again, but if every time I just can make few changes I did last time, then I think I am pretty good to follow.*

14. You said, its like refuge things, what did you mean by that ?

*It means getting away from work, getting away from everything, getting away from stress, getting away from people that expect a lot of things from you, its doing something just for you, I think that's what I mean. you know it has been very modern to tell people that they should care about everybody else and you should not care about yourself but now its becoming more expectable that you do things for yourself, because then you become a happy person yourself, and be a better person to others.*

15. Do you talk about yoga to your friends?

*Yes, I do also at work, everybody is very interested in it, and actually now I am started doing a yoga collection of clothing, since I am working with textiles.*

16. Are you selling it ?

*We are just starting, it will be launched in two weeks, and then we will sell it to yoga places, so if they want to put their own logo on it like say, if it is Karina, she would put Disskylde yoga center on it and then people would think, as it their own brand.*

17. So it is business to business

*Something like an agent, like a partner in the middle, like we get percentage from the factory in India and then we find customers in Denmark and then they pay us 5% of everything what we sell to these customers.*

18. So the customers are other businesses?

*Yes, like Danish children brand and we have about 25 different brands.*

19. How are you known amongst others, like your friends, family, colleagues, etc.

*Actually its funny, because I made, this is not my friends – this is my colleagues though, because when I had to hire somebody to do some of the things that I do, I made kind of inquiry you know they had to write down, how they saw me and there were a lot of words, so they just had to say – this relates to you and this does not and I had to sum it all up, and they see me as very trustworthy person, its funny one thing that really surprise me is that they comfortable, and secure around me and with the things we do I do not do until it's a right thing, I was really surprised and then they could trust me, I am a likable person, but also I am also sometimes too nice that is in a business relation, I am not tuff I think I am sometimes, but they do not see it that way.*

20. Why did you want to know about yourself?

*It was because I read some books, and those books, I one of the things was they suggested the people that they want to ground you, what kind of person are you so you can may be work with the things that you are may be not good at, and to me after this yoga trip I thought I need to know what they think about me, maybe I have an idea about me and then they have completely different idea about myself. I made it and in a way that I did not know who answered what, so maybe they knew that I knew, so they would probably not answer it correctly. so I just made an anonymous and gathered all the information and specially it was to choose which things I should continue doing and which things I need to stop. so that's what I use it for.*

21. Did you find something about yourself during that tour?

*Ja, you always find some things, because we have been very you sit there for 4 hours and going into yourself you know and there were a lot of things, the relationships with my family and some of the fears I had, that I never done anything about you know some of the ideas about yourself, you know it gave me more comfort in myself, I am not as bad as I thought I was I really I also think that maybe I was not a good mother, since I was always very interested in a career and so my kids are grown up with me, but I have been working, and I found out that I was good mother after all , and my kids also see me as good mother, that was a big thing.*

22. Ja you bring your kids with also?

*Yes, I thought I will bring them with and it will be a good experience for them as well, but it brought up our relationship in a different way, and I never thought that it will work out that way, its best thing I have ever done, and today if we talk about it is the best experience for any of us. we talk about it as the most amazing thing we did, they are very happy about it the funny thing was that all the people we travelled with, they kept telling us oh its so nice that you are together, you are so cute together.*

23. Any other changes, which you have seen in yourself after that experience?

*I am more relaxed, person and I hope to stay that way, I could get stressed for like to an appointment 5 minutes late or something like this but now I am much more relaxed.*

24. Would you like to share, if you realize anything after meditation?

*I have not meditated so much since, when I really feel like it then I do it, and I do not if I do it right, but it does not matter as long as you know I am getting something out of it, because I do not know sometimes, I am still very restless, so I do it when I really feel that I can and when I feel I should, like I sometimes its just relaxing, se it a little bit as meditation but I do not do it on daily bases.*

25. But what about during the tour?

*Oh yes, we did it every day, but people could meditate, and I stayed like 10- 20 minutes and sometimes I just left, and then we went to the beach in the evenings, sitting in front of the beach, just meditating, I loved it but yoga gives me more and then mix of the two is important to me, I find it difficult to either do just one thing I need to do both, you know yoga and end up with meditation, and that what I am best like I really feel like I get something out of it.*

26. Was there any special realization after that meditation during the tour?

*Just that it felt really good, that I mean the whole experience was realization, was an experience that was so amazing that I just hope like I feel like all others, but did not give me a specific realization, but I have been doing yoga and meditation for many many years, so it was not something that I just started when I went on this trip. it was kind of going further and you know bringing in a little bit further, which now means that it has become an important part of my life. before it was just a part of my life and I also find that people are much more respectful towards yoga than they were in the old days, like in the old days, yoga was something like you said the yogi's only down by the Ganges; and now it has become very*

*excepted and very you can see the good things, and now a lot of people are practicing even men a lot more men are coming into it.*

27. Did you experience any change in your relationships?

*Yeah, a lot more openness, I feel that I can talk much more open to people in general, like talking to you now as well, I would probably not say so many things to you as I am saying now. And it's also because I am feeling them, before may be I did not feel them the same way.*

28. So in the end, how will you sum your experience of the yoga holiday, and its effect on your life?

*Like, as I said before, it's the best thing I have done ever, both for myself and my daughters I felt, I can better next time, when I am going just me, but I know I will also miss them, it has made a big difference in the way, that I know I can work with myself, I can keep on working myself, because I am getting older does not mean that I am finished, you know I can still keep on until I die, there will always be developments in my life, and I can become a better person, I am much more honest, I do not keep everything inside, it just comes out, I mean it does not come out in a bad way, it just comes out before I was may be waiting a little bit too long before I reacted, now am getting much better at reacting. I do not even know if this is due to this yoga trip but it opens something that has made it possible.*

Thank you so much sharing your experience.

*But one thing I noticed when I was there, that like many of the women were there before as well, and they found that amazing every time, so that's also what gave me the feeling of I should go once more and I should go on my own, and see how would be, so that's why I am going again because on the other hand I also thought, it was such an amazing experience may be it will never be the same again, so I am little bit curious, if it will just as good every time I hope it will be.*

*yes, sure I mean there are many differences, you are alone this time, and you are one year mature so it would be but thanks a lot for sharing this experience with me.*

**Informant: Jeff Fehler**

Date: 06 April 2013 at 12:08

Place: Copenhagen K

1. Would you like to introduce yourself, like your name, age, work, family, etc.

*My name is Jeff Fehler and I am 60 years old, I have 3 children and my partner has 2 children, and they have their partners and together, we have got 8 grand children, and all our children live in Copenhagen and we live out in the country from here. we live down in area called Stevs. and at the moment I manage the technical and maintenance side of the new museum called cold war museum, that started 5 years back. but prior to that I work with social psychiatry and then I started with two other people in Denmark, I started that up in 1977 – 78, I worked for that for about 30 years and then I stopped; which was good now I really enjoy what I do, it's down at the – its Stevns fort but it is museum today.*

*Discussion about cold war museum and its history.*

2. Have you been travelling for yoga?



*Ya, yoga I have travelled, with yoga and for yoga, because my partner – she is a yoga teacher and she has been teaching yoga for past 9 years, past 4 years full time. She has been teaching here in Denmark, and she has also been teaching outside of Denmark. when my partner and I, we got together we, I had not done yoga before, we went on a holiday together, we were newly fallen in love and we went on a holiday together, where we did yoga together, that was fun - I really liked.*

3. Where was it?

*We were in Tarifa, we were first time out of Denmark together, it was nice during march moth, not so many tourist down there, and we were staying up in the mountains, it was lovely weather, and doing yoga outside it was great.*

4. When did it happen?

*That was in 2006.*

5. How long did you stay there?

*We were just there for a week, and when we came back and then I said it could be nice and then I started some yoga exercises, sort of daily because it helped my back. because when I was young I had a bad accident with my Back, so I could not walk for 2 years, when I started doing these exercises, it really helped my back and today its part of my life, that is something I do. That's how it started and it helped me.*

6. Then, did you also go on some other yoga tours?

*Ya then I had been in India, and my partner said he there is yoga holiday, going on in Vakana in Kerala, it could be fun, and I went down there and that was intensive yoga, which we were doing about twice a day 3 hours at a time and I like that, I really like that and it worked my out.*

7. Why did you like it?

*I have always been when I was younger I am very sporty, and I used to run for the Danish national team , I used to run Marathons and alter marathons, so I have always been interested in using my body in sports and I could not run any more after my accident, and then I started to cycle, which I still do today, and when you do this, you know you are always aware of the body and yoga all of a sudden came in, I mean I really used my body a lot but I never found something that has been – it rejuvenates my body really in, and also I meditate a lot, specially with yoga because yoga you can do straight hatha yoga or you can also do a lot spiritual side of the yoga. and I like the spiritual side of the things, meditation and I got a very different spiritual stand for yoga for years, I really enjoy it – it stills my mind. and towards my body with the mind together, I think yoga ahs done a lot for me, even though sport also does that but it has not got such deep reaching, because with yoga you do not have to it's not that you have to its not presentation all the time. Where you have to get certain results, it is something that is in with. I like the philosophy, where they say in yoga, the aim of the yoga is not the goal, the goal of yoga is the way to the goal. and I like that a lot, I like the process of the yoga. so that's what made me more to do yoga and that's why It became more part of my everyday life and also living with a yoga teacher, it helps me a lot. because she does not teach me, but I have my program with , then I say ahhh I have this problem,*

*then she says let's look at it. Then she give me things that help me all along. it's part of our life.*

8. On your first yoga tour, you said went there with your partner, why did you decide to go, did you have any goals or something in mind that you want to achieve?

*No nothing, she just came. aa that could be fun to do, even though I have been doing some yoga exercises, I mean I was not really you know I want to come yoga in India, I said that could be fun, I have never been India before so I would like to see India, its been one of my dreams to go to India, and I just never had a possibility to go there before, ah India that's goanna be a new adventure, well yoga, I will take as part of the deal, and you know I did not have any thoughts about it and I was rather may be a little bit arrogant.*

9. So you were more into destination than yoga?

*The first time, yes it was more the excitement of going to India, rather than doing yoga.*

10. How do you explain your experience of that tour?

*I remember it very distinctly, if I explain, you probably read, I written something about it, if I have to explain it, then it would be this type of explanation, when I went down there the first day we had yoga, we started with we had to do this there was a certain exercise, that loosens the back and the core muscles, of the body and I mean I have done a lot of really strenuous exercises, we sat down to do this, I just could not do, that was really hard, and I thought – if this what this yoga thing is goanna be about, I am there is no way, I am goanna do this, it was really hard, it and the teacher that we had say that do not when things are hurting, you breath in – breath in into the area, where the pain is and then release the pain, and I said that's really very for you to say – you know the practices, what do I know about this and then she guided, she said she put her hand, where I was feeling pain and then she said feel my hand, and just concentrate into your breath and feel that your breath is going into my hand, and started doing that and after 3-4 breaths, inhaling and releasing and all of a sudden, it worked, I thought this is strange, how it could work so easy, and then I started doing it, the more I did it the easier the yoga became and then after the first 3 hours they went like that (pinch noise). after 3 hours, I had a lot of energy and I thought this is rather crazy, I think I could do this again tomorrow morning, and then next morning you start doing yoga in the morning you do yoga before you eat or anything, that was so good because the sun was coming up, and the setting that we were doing the yoga it was amongst the coconut trees on a roof top of a building and looking over the Indian Ocean, and you had this coconut grow, because in Kerala, you had a lot of coconuts. so that was the most beautiful setting, with the sun coming up and when you do the breathing, there is all different types of breathing, but when so the breathing exercises were great, suddenly the colours became clearer for me and then you start doing exercises and the yoga practices, and more I did the yoga exercises, the more present I became ,where I was you know all these things they start changing, and these experiences was like my partner had been doing yoga t that stage for 30 years and I started telling her have you experience this, have you experience that she was very entertained by this, because she find very funny to listen to when I wanted to say. but that was also because my experience was very different than how she started out, and because of that it became very fascinating for the people around me to listen to because I could not stop so I was the only one who had not done the yoga before, so all the other*

*people who had been doing it for years, and a lot of them did not have this kind of experiences, so this was fun, and then all the day, like you had 3 hours, and then you had your day and whatever you did but I could not wait when getting to run for where you do the next set of yoga because inside I started to become really happy, and when you start I mean when you start things like that you do not go back, it becomes part of you.*

11. So achieved a lot from that holiday?

*That holiday opened up a whole new bowl game in my life, it really did, prior to that we go a spiritual center, where I have been going to for some years, with my partner also, but when this happened, it just lifted my experience up after my spiritual center part and our angle of going into things became very very different and wide and so yeah.*

12. Did you feel any change in yourself afterwards?

*Oh yes, I mean it changed my life a lot because prior to doing all this with yoga, there were two things they were really two very hard points in life, the one had been that I was married with a woman who was mentally disturbed, and it was very very difficult, we had three children together, she was very very ill, I was carrying the whole family, our relationship was very it was resigned relationship, It was something like I was there because of our children, we did not have anything together, we could not speak together, and I was in the field of psychiatry, so it was kind of my inside would not allow me to stop something that was not good for me. and then I did stop, where it was actually either I stop, or I was killing myself, so I chose to stop and then I met another partner I had, we lived together for about 5 years, and then after 1½ year, she got resistant cancer, I was at home with her for 3½ years while she was dying, and its not easy to through something like that and because of these two areas, the one was watching someone who you love die before your eyes and the other was coming something through which was nearly put me out. these experiences they were hard, they were harsh so inside you know I was traumatized, I was not very much happy and because of this trauma, when we started doing yoga and when things started happening from being traumatized, the trauma started to release and today I do have any word, what happen but all I know is doing yoga, being together with Marette, these two elements, the one was loving someone who was not really wanted to be with me and did not have to look after her, that was the one side and the other side was definitely the more spiritual and yoga side of it, that released all this trauma and then I started becoming really happy and yeah it had really great impact on my life, so it made me a lot happier and my children to be with me now, and my grand children also love to be with us now. so these two things have been the major things.*

13. Can you relate or differentiate your everyday life to your yoga tour?

*I think in my everyday life, it has always been the job I have today, I really like than the last job I had, that came the Job came at the same time, when I met Mrethe, so its difficult to say. so what I used to say was to have my fruity in the morning and go to work, and then sometimes I drive for home, because where I work is about 65 kms away, and that's like when I ride and home and then I come home and feel good and have a talk and you know do something around the house, watch television news and then that's it. I always use my hands something around the place, and then with yoga, we were meditating and in our meditation, both of us said we goanna build on the house in here because that is something most*

*important, and we did that we were both on to our house together, which was really manifestation of the love we have together, and that simply came because of the yoga so , its difficult to differentiate before I did yoga – it was easy, but now yoga is so much part of our life. so much part of spiritual way of living, not the actual philosophies but it also opens up for our own spiritual well being, the incarnation the way we see our incarnations.*

14. Would you like to share that?

*No , the way I look at it is you know we live in our spirituality is based on the tantric way, but when I say the tantric way, there are a lot different ways of understanding that but we talked about is our spirituality, our sexuality, and our love is all incorporated in one thing, which means that you are part of the society and it also means that the society, there is a collective karma in the society, you have your own karma, and there is a spiritual karma, which is you know there is different dimensions, so if you look at where you take it from the yoga spiritual society or chakra system, so if you look at the chakra system, we are working at the advanced meditational system, the neck Chakra, we are looking at it as advanced meditation, like what does that mean, while it lifts higher perspectives, before we were more in the heart chakra, where we were more, in the advanced meditation of the heart chakra going from the plexus to the heart, now we are working on going from the heart to the neck, but its not only us, it's the collected in the society in the world today because its lifting the perspective of spirituality, I mean why is it that there are so many new – there is a thirst of spirituality in the western world, where the difference is why I love to going to India, spirituality is part of living, its not something new, its not something different, its not something as you say aa special its just part of life, and that's where we want to get there spirituality is part of life, where here I see there is a longing of something, and without doing something physically I find it very very difficult to be able to go into my spiritual space, to understand my karma, where was my karma before and lives before, what happened, why my karma is the way in this life, what is my progressive karma today, how can I what kind of potentials are there and you cant when you start understanding karma, you start understand its good to understand what you have with you, its good to understand your potential, but that's not living living is now, its no use of worrying about things, that are gonna happen tomorrow, will it happen ...would not it happen, its no use been pre occupied about something that happened yesterday, because that's what happen yesterday is not gonna change, that what is happening right now, just use fugamental energy, so the fewtyle energy, its not necessarily deals energy on it, its worthless so where are you gonna use your energy, I mean you got energy, what are you goanna use it on, we use it being present at where you are now that's one of the most important meditative practices, is to get to be present, to be right now it does not mean you do not plan the things because we live in a society, where we have to plan in the things, we do not live in glass house, we have to be part of what we are ... so we can plan things also, but when you are doing these, you have to be present, what's happening, like now while I am talk to you it does not help while I am starting to think about oh this afternoon, I have an agreement that my one grandchild is coming down, and we just bought her a racing bicycle and we go on ride together, that's goanna happen when it comes, but if I think about it now then I lose the presence of talking to you now, which can be very inspiring, so that's the most important practice and yoga teachers teach that both physically and mentally, they you cannot do yoga, if you are thinking about something else. you cannot feel your body, its impossible I can see that it can be difficult with the way the society is but*

*even though you can still be present and you can still have your work done, and then when the clock goes, you suddenly realize that oh I have done a lot, rather than thinking something else, like this one is a nasty person, that one is talking badly to me and this person did it my way so better. you know if you do not have those thoughts and you love people for what they are everybody is doing something, they are doing the best they can, and if you have that confidence, then you have more confidence with everybody, because everybody is doing their best, so what are you going to ask the people, people do not do their best, when they start fighting.*

15. Do you believe in religion?

*I believe in spirituality, I believe in that religion is necessity for large groups of people, who need something to identify with Christianity for example here in Denmark, there is a culture .. I think one can say, culture and religion are closely intimate to each other . I believe religion have something testing philosophies, and testing goals, that really help people. but I also believe that religion suppresses people, I believe that it does not give people, an openness, that I think is important because you have a look, one of the big issue today is xenophobia problems, why should that exist both from the people who are not Islamic and the people who are Islamic. why they people practice, If you practice spirituality, spirituality does not matter, where you come from, it only goes as first dimension, and then it goes down, then have different interpretations, because understand things differently, but the interpretation is not the important thing, the important thing is being able to be in the spirituality, so I think that sometimes, we find religion being used to as a tool to say I am right, you are wrong, or of you do not do this way, you are going to hell, now what do we know about that quite honestly you know we really do not know much about that. we can find though meditation, the if all, every religion talks about love, I mean whats important there is no compromise in spirituality, spirituality does not mean that its all easier, lovely, its sometimes its not so nice, why was there second world war, where so many people were killed. What was that good for I do not know. but spirituality also means suffering is a also a part and path of life, suffering is not something that people can go away, its there where people have been, suffering can be during your body, minds, I mean my wife who died, its traumatizing, but its part of being people. if we look at animals, animals suffer also, some animals are in a wild natural state, they do not kill other animals to eat, they die, they starve so its part, so why should people be different, we are not so I think the suffering is a learning process for us all, it does not mean to say that I think thing is a good thing, but spirituality is not only a good thing, spirituality is life.*

16. What did you mean by modernizing the religion?

*If you look at religion, the catholic is a good example, if you look at this today, the catholic priests, they live in syllabic right, and you see in the catholic church, that there have been a lot of pedal file issues, like they have had that's one thing, but you also see that there is sexuality amongst, the priests, so if you say now, I wonder what would happen, the catholic were allowed to merry, were allowed to have their sexuality, then it was not something, that they have keep in a dark room away from everybody, I wonder what would happen, I am sure that they solve a lot of problems that they have today, may be they will have other problems, that's one thing they will solve, I think also if you look at Vatican, if we keep on Catholics, it s a very powerful money organization, and because of that there is lot of corruption that*

*comes because of it, and what happens if you say, hey the Vatican, if you say the money is not for the Vatican and the pope and everything will do it another way, let's get all the priests to say – right it was Vatican's end of story, the pope is only gonna be there as spiritual leader, like dalai lama, Dalai lama to me is a leader but he does not owe anything, and all the money that they get is used for Tibetans and used for the well being for the people who need it. I think you know it's, important that things like that . another one is Judaism, the Judaism is there is a lot tradition bounds then, because tradition is fun, good and a lots of good aspects, but why that can be against the for example, it goes the same with mosques, men and women – when they pray, must not pray together, why, women cannot go into mosques, and women and men are in sunngah are separated, why you know this evidence all over the place in Judaism has been strong women, and in the Muslim society, I am sure there has been also fantastically strong women.*

17. So it's the combination of the culture and religion?

*I think, one has to start modernizing to say, you know we got to stop all this nonsense, why cannot be woman be an Imam, a Mullah, why not its not like she is less than a man, its all because religion from a time, that was long ago, where men had higher status, because of the family and life in that stage – it was a patrioc system. and women has always been suppressed because of it, who were the ones out tilling with fields out, were women not doing this, were women and children not part of it, of course they were one of the biggest backbones, so why do not you respect and say, stop all this.*

18. Do you share your yoga experiences with your friends and family?

*Oh ya we do, my one daughter practices yoga every morning and also go to yoga classes with my partner, so that's the one, my daughter in law, she also goes to the same classes with my partner, and they all three of them have a relationship besides me, that s good because they can have a friendship that I why must I been involved in that, its their friendship and I am happy, because they are friends, and they like to be together with each other, it does not mean to say because they are my daughters and family, that's no difference, I am really happy . so that their freedom my friends I have two friends, the one unfortunately, he has a tumor in the brain, and he does yoga and my partner has given exercises, he lives in Jutland, and we go there every eight weeks or so, because him and I are very close, so when we go there my partner gives him a new program, the pain that he experiences that is less, because that I have seen worked and a lot of people, who have seen him and see him now, says it works. so a lot of my friends are being taught by my partner.  
(talks about his partner)*

19. So how do your friends know you?

*When they knew me before, before everything happened, they knew me as someone who was out training for marathons, for cycling, when my training was finished and we went to party, the party started like Jeff came 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and Jeff was gone at 7. Because Jeff have to go home to sleep, because he has to train 5'oclock in the morning. When I was with them I was smiling and all that, but all knew that I have deep trauma inside, they all knew I was unhappy – but I was happy being with them, so that how they knew me. Today they see me as someone who is very active, with children and very open, they see me being very warm, and everybody come down and we have good time, and we do this they also see*

*me as someone who is with spiritual being, they see me as meditating, they do not see me as phonetic, they see me as funny, because when I am together with my friends, I am always loving funny things to say, because what really motivates me is to sit and we speak, there is love going, there is human love, I mean we have conversation between us, there is an element of human love, because otherwise I could not talk. And if I do not respond to that then I am sitting in a corner and look pretty sad. so people know me today, as being very happy. and inquisitive.*

20. Did you experience any difference in yourself?

*As I told before, it changed me completely as a person, in myself yes it allowed me to start to find the inner self, and start saying my partner said to me that the biggest gift was that I found out that I have enormous warm heart, she says when you found that in yourself, you became a totally different person, but for everybody, so that's most important thing.*

21. So you found your enormous warm heart in yourself?

*And I became a piece with myself, today I do not have to have a wonderful motor car and for me today is like the things do not work and something broken, and then like today I need transport, I have a car, if the car breaks down, then it breaks down, today we got mobile telephones and I can call on the telephones, all things like that I find life so easy and so funny, as I say its not things without suffering, the things happen my one daughter had a head injury, and you know when that happens, it makes me feel sad because I wish she could not have that injury, but today if I am sad right now, I cannot change, I cannot do anything about it. but the situation makes me really sad. And once if I have said to myself it releases because I say, it will have its process. So what now . I am a stand as a solid pillar, so when my daughter need me, I am there, everything that I can give that can hold her. so I am more present to life now. I do not really worry about what's gonna happen tomorrow, so the best example is the rain, when you know if you think about, if you wake up in the morning and got to take your bike to the university, and it's raining and its cold and it's not nice weather, and your bicycle is punctured, and then you got an appointment, and then you get damn angry, why my bicycle is punctured now, and it's raining and its bloody that's way of looking at it, and another way of looking at it is to hell with all this, just take a taxi, but that's a third way of looking at it, which is I think the funny way, oh God, in the rain on the bike, ok my bike is punctured, I have just got to fix it, I am going to be late, I do not know when I will be there, carry on doing ok then you pick up the phone, you start fixing the bike and then your clothes get wet and everything, and then you fix the bike, and you say how lucky I am, I had necessary tools to use my clothes got wet, I am at home, I change them into dry clothes, now may be I am lucky, when I go out the rain stops and I am on my bicycle, what a satisfactory, I am sitting on my bike, I fix it myself and I am riding. Can things be better, so it's a third way that I think is important. If you go that way, then I think the process become a lot more interesting, and a lot more fun and that's what yoga teaches.*

22. What did you realize after meditation in your yoga holiday?

*Meditation is where you get in contact with your authentic being, when I say that the process of everyday are changing, because we are dynamic, what was important yesterday, may be not important today. But what does meditation does meditation teaches us what is important*

*and cuts off all that stuff that is nonsense. so at that stage, when we were meditating, Meditation also helps me to find, my incarnations before that the karma that I had before could be understood as I am today. meditation helps me take that Karma find or may be understand a lot better and relate where I am today, and you the thing is with Karma, it is interesting because you will never be able to understand the progressive karma, and the potential of your progressive karma, if you do not have some understating of what you being through to get to that position, it does not mean that what you are been through stops you to going forward, it denote mean that's you say like before in my life I was a bad warrior, doesn't mean that I must be nasty person in this life as well, because I was a nasty person in my karma before makes me like I am goanna be a priest in this life, it does not mean that but it means that in your deep inside, changes you can change, the path of your Karma and that's what important, to be able to change it into a higher perspective and that different for everybody, and what's a higher perspective for me does not mean that is the higher perspective for you, because its different, people have different, and because of that people my meditation also shows me the path or the process, not necessarily the goal, and then you asked me that does that mean you do that with yoga, oh yeah because when you are sitting in yoga, it freezes the body with its strengthens and it clears you, so the energy that is clear to be able to meditate, and when you got to a lot of things going on in your head and you want to start doing yoga, when you meditate, all these things that going on to your head, you get released, so that you are able to focus on the muscle exercise in a different way, so that's what I use meditation, I never used to meditate, before I start doing yoga, I never knew what it was, . But I can see the more I meditate, the more meditation becomes important, and so.*

23. Did you feel any improvements in yourself as a person?

*Yeah I mean I feel a lot of improvements in myself as person, but I think the another thing, you got to look at is that its interesting in Denmark, how come more and more people, are going on yoga holiday, it's interesting, what is the reason behind that and I think that there are a of things, but Denmark, economic crises, whatever going on, we have stressed system, where it comes from, it comes from all of us we live here, but our systems are stressed, our society is point things upon us, which are really stressful. Because there is not so much money, we got to do this, we go to that. To up right all the people can live in it. to be more social standard and to be freely, you the effort to be made is more, but in all this... we have not taken the aspects, which are most important, and some of these aspects are spiritual way of being, spiritual way of and also yoga is important today, because our health system, our funding from the health system is not as before, people have to take of their health, they have got to be more responsible, so how do you become more responsible to your health today, people have to do something and that's where I see that a lot of people are able to do yoga than , out running or ride a bike or something, because yoga is I mean yoga is not easy, to do but yoga with these exercises, definitely helps to maintain health, it's not a guarantee, but it certainly helps, and as I have given the examples, you know my back, my friend with a tumor in the back, all these things, I think people today here in Denmark are finding out they really need those things, it's something that they missed through generations and generations, I can see that they be going on that way, I think there is something new emerging, in the collective society around me, I do not know what is and how is that, but I can see energy, and will may be find you are not strange today, if you do yoga, 10 years ago, it was a little bit, like he is not one of those. today its more acceptable, today you can talk about meditation, we got a*



*new term mindfulness, ok, that's a trendy word, but basically we are talking about the same things today its more open about it, because it's a necessity, it's a longing of the people, and its necessary. and why do we go to India, to know these kind of things, I have not known for myself, why do I go India, I would replace with places here where they do yoga. Why do I go to India, is also like the spiritual aspects of India is happening in daily life, its not something, that we have to look for it. Here what is the church we have lots of churches, but people do not talk about it in daily lives you know, we talk about 10 commandments, but every country have it like you do not so this, you do not do that. but actual spirituality, and that's makes a sense that why do I go to India, that I want to do yoga in my daily life, and I do not know how it's done, but I want to learn it and where do I go, the place I can find – I also find certain places in Africa where they also do, so these places suits for me and that's why I go there. And why do yoga, I say why not.*

24. How does yoga travel in these countries effect on your life style?

*Yes it has, when you say food, the first think I think how does that effect, but first of all I found out that I do not have to eat as much, it also taught me like when I eat, eat slowly, taste your food. that's one thing I definitely notice about it, another thing that I have noticed, food was, is – I do not like a lot of heavy food, a lot of meat, but we are used to eat meat like huu. but now I and Karen, we basically eat vegetarian food at home, and so that's also changed, that's not something I wanted to change, I never ever thought about to become a vegetarian, but it just happened because I just started tasting food and that food good digesting in my stomach, and also I believe now with yoga, there is a lot about cleaning your system out, so that's also happen once every half year, certain diet and all this stuff and the food with the ayurvedic medicines, its interesting why do we, I mean cloves, oil, why can you use that to stop pain, what is that clove, why do not we use cloves to control pain in place of paracetamol. So that type of stuff, if you have pain, use clove, if you got headache, cardamom, it's something that has been known in Kerala 6, 7, 8 thousands of years back. nobody is complaining that cost people's and their problems and hospitals, but they use it. Oil for example ayurvedic message, why do not we use it! message is becoming more and more common in Denmark, but when you have ayurvedic treatment and ayurvedic message, you go through, you do not feel it like after 1, 2 or 3 treatments, but when you are gone through 10, then wow.*

25. How about other aspects for your lifestyle? like getting up early in the morning?

*Yes, there me and my partner, we are people – we get up early in the morning, because I like to get up when the sun comes up and you hear the birds and so in summer times, we get up like, I do not know why but now when the light is coming, we are up, now 5 o'clock we are up. And then we do yoga practice, sometimes that could be the greeting the sun or like this. Here it's different every day; it feels what I want to do. and we do that for an hour and my partner does that for 2 hours because I have a feeling that I want to do that in the morning, you know I like to go out and see the animals and birds, I like to greet them in the morning. They must have something to eat, so they wake up in the morning and I want to contact them. then I come home and make some tea, drink tea and eat food, and every day starts so fantastic because this is an element that there are lovely things around us, the place that we live is lovely place, everything is lovely in Denmark.*

26. How about your relationships, do you see any change in your relationships?

*I think that changes happen in me, and because of that you know you feel more happy, more open, there is a lot more energy; then people around you they get affected and all of a sudden, everybody they got more energy and happy around you, so one thing is that if we do go on yoga tour for our inside learning and also for a wider field like for my partner, because she also go to learn new techniques, which are important for her- and that I do not, I mean I am not a teacher, so she does things a little bit more intensively because there are certain aspects, she experiences with her body and when she comes back, she can teach in better way, so that's what she gets a lot out of that and me I grow out a lot on the spiritual side of the things, and then I come back, but I am no missionary, I do tell the people, like now listen and so. I just do, what I have learned and try to keep up with it.*

27. In the end, how will you conclude your yoga holiday's effect on your life?

*If I would relate with society of Denmark, I would say a lot of people, could really change a lot of harsh things in their daily life, if they went on a holiday with a plenty of time to learn these practices, it will change a lot, I am sure that it will put them in a position to be a lot more easy with their life and probably, the content of their life will be a lot more closer, like life will not be as serious as they make it, it will be a lot more easier, and a lot of more laughing, and I think the longing of something spiritual will be more satisfied. (Spirituality as an essence) I do not think a lot of Danish people would be feeling that they are longing for something spiritual, and its not being prejudice but it is something I think I have experienced through the years that I cannot change it but I think they use that longing, and I think that people will probably be closer to spirituality which for me is important. and the society, I think also, you know if you go out on a holiday instead of like everybody going to an Island or a charter holiday, you go down and you get cheap alcohol, and you come back and say hey we were on a holiday, where you were not drunk everyday; I do not know how that is for people, I know that people speak about it but I think a lot things could be done on a yoga holiday to be active, instead of just getting fat because a lot of people are just getting junk food, and we all do that, but it is excessive and when things become excessive people do not progress, they regress. it will also help people to may be a little more aware of their own health.*

Thank you so much for sharing your experience.

**Informant: Jacob Berner Moe Helsted**

Date: 12 April, at 12:00 o'clock

Place: Gammeltorv

1. Can you please introduce yourself?

*My name is Jacob Berenr Moe Helsted, I am 39 years old. I am Married to Carina, and we have two boys 8 and 11 years. I am working part at Ambudsmand institution as a communication advisor and I study at a university literature and reading and I write books, I am a writer that's it.*

2. What kind of books do you write?

*Novels.*

3. What kind of novels?

*Well, not in specific shang but like fiction, pure fiction, and I write in Danish.*

4. How many times, have you been travelling for yoga?

*Well, its probably 3 travels with Karina, that's I week travels, 1 in Greek, Lesbos and 1 in Anolosia. Then last winter I was in Bahamas to take my own yoga education, so it was not like a retreat but it was still a travel. And then again I was in India for 3 weeks, where we did a lot of yoga but it was not a yoga tour. and the same with other journeys, where we have been doing a lot of yoga research tours in Thailand, and Spain trying to find good yoga retreats.*

5. If you go back, when you started going on yoga tours, why do you decide to do that?

*Well I followed Karina, I might say, she was teaching yoga, so was with her.*

6. Why did you decide to follow her?

*I am just not the follow kind of persons, so I just did it because I wanted to support her and I was attracted by the ideas of doing yoga for one week, you know the idea of unplug for one week and having time, that's pretty much, and also the physical focus. in your everyday life, I do yoga 2-3 times a week, and that's nice but you always have the feeling that you would have more benefit of it, if you give it more time.*

7. Were you practicing yoga before yoga travel?

*Yes, a little bit.*

8. Would you like to share your experience of your first yoga travel?

*That must be the one in Greek, well its like its special because I was like part student and one part assistant for Carina, so that was quite difficult.*

9. Why?

*Well the others did not know, if I was one of them or if I was a teacher, or assistant and I was not joining all those lessons because sometimes I was also, so I was not all in, that was bad, so that's my first experience. I think its, you know for me the spiritual lesson that yoga gave me a frame for me in this week, which I consider as vacation. if you have one week of vacation, its just like the full schedule, like of what can we do and where can we do that, where to go, which actually can be stress factor but when you go on a yoga vacation, you have like a daily schedule, which is like 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours in the afternoon, so this is the nice time and plus the best thing is the time in between, if you have this two hours time in between, you can allows yourself to whatever you want to. you do not have to go and experience anything, you do not have to go for walk or anything, and I think that is the protastic way of looking at it. that you should pay something to do something, like you have gained allowance to relax, so you are cheating yourself your consciousness.*

10. Before going that, did you think that you will achieve something from that tour?

*I do not remember, not from the first tour.*

11. May be the next time?

*If I take the tour to Bahamas last year, this was very clear to me, but that is related with yoga tour, and it was 5 years, and I was sure and thinking of achieving some abilities to both the physical and mentally, because I was going to be a yoga teacher. it was yoga teacher education, so it was something different from other yoga travelling, you cannot mix the two because it very much a education and not vacation.*

12. You said physically and mentally?

*Physically, I mean yoga for me like physically I did not gain anything, physical education was very poor and then there was mentally, like meditation, which I gained a lot, that was very interesting for me because I am not used to meditate a lot, so I was forced to sit until it was very painful in my hips, and I learned some new techniques, and then I was introduced to some of spiritual stuff, which I usually would not have gone into, unless it was like a package, like satsang and dBhagwant Gita.*

13. ‘Satsang’ how would you explain that ?

*Satsang, is a way of praising different Goddesses in Songs.*

14. How about Bhagwat Gita?

*There were some lessons about Bhagwat Gita, actually it was quite interesting, our teacher she was very poor, she was very old fashioned but I really like the idea of being taught about Bhagwat Gita because it's just like, it's a story, I mean I know its just one out of a lot of holy books, but it's the major. it's also a cultural meeting, you can also have cultural meeting on literary plan. I mean the story is so easy to grasp, so actually I like that part.*

15. Have you felt any change after yoga travelling?

*It's quite difficult to conclude because I am also, I mean if I say I have felt any change doing yoga and meditate, I mean I would definitely say yes, but yoga is,*

*(Phone ring) my son's football call, I know he has been a little stressed, he told me like in secret and I send him like a packet, DVD and one of Karina's CD as a gift, now he is calling me, I am curious about if I am too much.*

*So that's what I learned from yoga, more physical and psychological strength and balance, and all that. also ability to be able to shut down – I become very too absurd, when I am stressed, I do not feel well, my heart is beating too much, there is a wrong feeling in my chest and I am better to deal with it quite simply.*

16. Does that mean yoga in life or yoga holiday?

*You might say that this is the lessons that I have learned teachings I have achieved. You might say that I am pretty sure I have gained from yoga vacation that's like an intensive way of learning these tours no doubt about it. But also like, I would say I more better to observe if something is wrong and better to chase and deal with it. And what I am doing is actually I aiming for the feeling which I have achieved for example in yoga vacation. Its not very often that you totally in bounce, Its not stubborn you rested enough and you feel comfortable in your body and in your mind, Its like its state of mind. yoga vacations is times in your life where you experience that state of your physical state and state of mind its its good. And this*

*is a that to experience that is very very important for your outer balance, Because you want to able to aim for, Right? And you never have really a strong memory for service and aim for it. So I think its its to give yourself a chance to experience like balance just not for one second or thirty minutes or something but for longer period of time. That's what you would work on it like one week or two week.*

17. As you said you have been practicing yoga but can you relate or differentiate your everyday life to yoga holiday?

*I would say like that just I mentioned I think that's a way I relate to it and something I can aim for, Ja ok, that's it.*

18. Do you personally believe in religion?

*Its is a very difficult question ha ha ha. I would like to answer and I am very fond about religion and philosophy, But there are things that we are not capable of understand but I am not like religious that normal sentence or term.*

19. Are you baptized or confirmed?

*No, I have not been baptized. My mom and dad, they are not the member of Danish state church. But I don't think it makes so much difference for Danish that are you baptized or not? Ja, I was taking classes when I was 13 years of age. And after I have to make my own mind that if I would like to be confirmed, So I didn't go to the church.*

20. Do you like to talk to you your friends about yoga holidays?

*No.*

21. Why?

*Because there are lot of predijuce about it. So I I really don't like to be put in a box in the same box with to be like very spiritual purple dressed hippy. So if I began to talk about it they would heard it as I am preaching trying to put forced them into. But if people are asking me questions then I am very much in explaining about yoga. But besides from that I am very careful about not being so pushy.*

22. How would your friends consider you as a person?

*That's a very good question. Healthy, Quiet disciplined, Quiet thoughtful, good and loyal friend.*

23. Did you find out something about yourself after yoga holiday?

*Ja, I think your personal limits are been pushed in heavens world because it's very spiritual. And it was personal test that it could change my life or not.*

(discussions about yoga in general and not yoga holiday)

*I am more interested into yoga, but yoga is also an important part of the process of improvement. I am always interested to more and yoga in my life.*

*Thank you for sharing your experience.*

## Appendix 3: Illustrations and selling prepositions

### 3.1 [www.yogaferie.dk](http://www.yogaferie.dk)

(Link: <http://yogaferie.dk/index.html> )

Naruren is the area where yoga holidays observed in Provence and Portugal are ideal for walks. The body is engaged in the physical activity, the joy of simple known movements, senses open to what you encounter in the landscape and the mind rests in itself.



Contemplation and inner peace, joy and intimacy are at the center of the Yoga holidays in Provence and Portugal. In yoga holiday courses we offer day welcomed with yoga in the morning and late in the day's yoga again - 6 days of yoga that can inspire you to your yoga practice at home and go deeper with the training you already have. Asanas, pranayama, deep relaxation and meditation along with hiking, relaxing by the pool and inspiring interaction with peers - are some of the ingredients on your Yoga Holidays in Provence and Portugal!

It gives you contemplation, tranquility and well-being and opens strength and joy of body and mind. Your guide on this journey is one of Denmark's most experienced yoga teachers, Pia Due, who has studied and practiced yoga since 1969. With you home from a week of yoga and meditation gives you a greater insight into your nature, your feet on the ground and sky mind more open! Yoga starts, where you ARE, so anyone can take part regardless of the actual age and experience of yoga.

### 3.2 [www.yogaferie.net](http://www.yogaferie.net)

(Link: <http://www.yogaferie.net/>)

Retreats and yoga holiday is relaxing yet active holiday with yourself in focus, a break in your everyday life with peace and contemplation of silence and relaxation in beautiful countryside.



see more about each destination here, read more here about how yoga holidays have made a difference; yoga holiday: an outer as well as inner journey where you will be able to return to your everyday life with a greater awareness.

### **3.3 [www.balancen.net](http://www.balancen.net)**

(link: [http://balancen.net/udtalelser\\_yogaferier.htm](http://balancen.net/udtalelser_yogaferier.htm))

"The best thing I ever did for myself was the time to take on yoga holiday with you to India and I have definitely deserved such a trip again. It gives the endless amounts of energy both to look forward to such a quality of life depot in the future and then look back at the amazing experience!

"writes Mette Andreasen, December 2009, are hoping to be able to participate in yoga round trip to Mexico and Guatemala, November 2010

Finn, who had never grown yoga before, wrote:

"... So I went on the first morning on the roof of the hotel, you could always try! 48 hours of yoga later, I can only say it's the best thing I've done - I feel so much better after taking part in yoga classes, my body which has been a bit stiff, was smooth again and you get another outlook on life – you take it all more quiet, it is highly recommended.

### **3.4 [www.yogameditation.com](http://www.yogameditation.com)**

(Link: <http://www.yogameditation.com/Haa-International-Course-Center/Retreats/Body-Mind-Energy-and-Consciousness>)

Body, Mind, Energy and Consciousness

#### **The content of a 10 & 14-day yoga- and meditation retreat**

*"The flow of energy through a system acts to organise that system."*

(H. J. Morowitz: Energy Flow in Biology)

#### **Hatha Yoga and Meditation**

On the course, you will find that we teach from a rich tradition. Based on a thorough knowledge of body and mind, the yogis have developed the hatha yoga system to achieve physical health and wellbeing. Hatha yoga is the practical part of yoga as distinct from yoga philosophy. Above all hatha yoga serves as a preparation for meditation. Yoga and meditation are learned in steps. First, simple poses; later the methods become finer, the effects more subtle, the meditation alive and creative. You can choose from the many different methods of yoga we teach and use them as you wish. The learning process can be experienced as a development. It is not a question of who is the most supple or whether you have interesting experiences. Rather, it is about attaining harmony and becoming one with yourself.

#### **Muscles and organs**

The first purpose of *the yoga poses* (asana) is to remove disturbances in the body, that stand in the way of wellbeing and concentration. You start by experiencing the body and making it supple with easy movements. After that we move on. Every morning you learn to hold the body in different yoga poses. When the body is still and the muscles are stretched for a while, tensions cannot be maintained - a method that is unique to classical yoga itself. By regular use of the poses, the body grows used to being relaxed. The blood circulation is increased in the inner organs and their functions are regulated. Some exercises touch upon specific areas in the body (eg. eye exercises and back exercises). Others influence the body as a whole.

## **Breath and Energy**

By using *breathing exercises* (pranayama) precisely and regularly, the nervous system can be strengthened, tension and depression can be removed - along with bringing the two brain halves into a better balance.

German doctors from Hanover and Colonge have conducted laboratory studies on teachers and students. They concluded that there is no method or medication as effective in normalising the blood pressure as the breathing exercises in yoga.

Through breathing exercises, you get to know your energy and, with a new sensitivity, you can begin to control it. This way the yogi can regulate the functions in the nervous system which are normally outside the influence of the will.

The effects of this show in daily life as increased creativity and concentration. When the energy flows are purified, it's hard to block mentally and give up.

The use of *attitudes* (Mudra) and *locks* (Bandha) relaxes and increases awareness in certain areas of the body - the so called *Chakras*. These have a special importance for the harmonic unity between body, mind and energy.

Through the Mudras, you also become aware of the relationship between your state and the energy field of your body. If worries or sickness have limited your energy field, the Mudras can bring it back to its full and natural form.

## **Relaxation**

### **Meditative Deep Relaxation - Yoga Nidra**

*“Yoga Nidra consists of techniques that trigger a state where your whole being is vitalised - the result is a stable and lasting relaxation of the whole body and all of the brain (to quite a different degree than those relaxations that are based on suggestion).*

*During Yoga Nidra, you develop the capacity to be fully aware, even in very deep states.”*

(Swami Janakananda)

Yoga Nidra plays an important part in the healing process, eg. by building up and maintaining a strong immune system. Many students find that Yoga Nidra is helpful for insomnia. They regularly use the CD “Experience Yoga Nidra” at home.



To be able to concentrate, to let go and experience for instance a yoga pose, you must be able to relax. Therefore it is important to combine Yoga Nidra with the other exercises we use during the daily program on a course.

But Yoga Nidra is not just relaxation. It is a method of building a bridge between the inner and outer consciousness. What use is there in making a resolution if the subconscious mind resists? The purpose of Yoga Nidra is to reach a true state of being, therefore the name: *Conscious* (yoga) *sleep* (nidra).

(Read more in the booklet included with the Yoga Nidra CD and tape. Also found on our website, Bindu #11 contains in-depth articles on Yoga Nidra and Tantra, as well as a scientific study of Yoga Nidra made at *The State University Hospital* in Copenhagen).

With Yoga Nidra, the deepening process begins.

### **Concentration**

With yoga, you relax and remove what is standing in the way of your concentration. The mind, however, should also be trained to use the new openness and focus itself on one thing at a time. Here we use different techniques; *Tratak* where we look at outer and inner objects and *Nada Yoga* where we discover the inner sounds and listen to them.

### **Meditation**

To be able to meditate, means in the beginning that you let go of mental tension and worries. In our teaching, we move through the different levels of the mind, reaching what we can call real meditation. This is fundamentally different from trance, ‘positive thinking’ or hypnosis (often called ‘healing’ or ‘mental training’), where you manipulate the mind and limit it to your own or other’s conceptions. Real meditation is founded on clarity, expanded awareness and increased energy. In addition to the simple meditation techniques that we encounter in theory and practice, the course includes the following deep-reaching tantric meditations:

With *Inner Silence (Antar Mauna)*, you fundamentally train your awareness. The meditation starts in the world you perceive through your senses, in the place and in the surroundings where you are meditating at that moment, and your ability to experience is enhanced. From the senses you gradually and inevitably move through the states, habits, thoughts and emotions that normally comprise your personality. You learn to experience the personality without immediately having to criticise or analyse it, without trying to inhibit or change it. You get to know it. Then you go deeper, through different dimensions of your inner universe, to the core of your being from where you experience.

*“Good or bad, I am the seer; disturbance or one-pointedness, I am the seer. If I change my physical position, I am the seer. I am not the concentrator; I am not the meditator. No, I am just the seer of all that is taking place in me. I am impartial, detached and unrelated.”* (Swami Satyananda)

This meditation is best taught directly from teacher to student. You’re constantly led back to yourself, to the one experiencing behind it all. This kind of meditation follows laws and

tendencies of the mind that all people have in common. You return. This meditation is taught in two variations; The seven-step *Inner Silence* and *Returning*® which consists of four parts.

*“In meditation you undergo a process, not of self-analysis but self-perception. It is in this, that meditation goes beyond the psychoanalysis of modern psychology. You do not merely analyse yourself; you see yourself.”* (Swami Satyananda)

The knowledge or the insight which comes from this meditation influences everyday life. It represents the heart of Tantra, the tantric attitude:

*“You accept yourself as you are and the way you live. You need not be someone else to realise yourself - or to live. You need not change, you already are - yourself.”*  
(Swami Janakananda)

*“You are the one observer and, as such, you have indeed always been free. Your only bondage has been that you saw someone else as the observer.”* (Ashtavakra Gita)

*Ajapa Japa and Kriya Yoga.* As a true tantric meditation, *Ajapa Japa* builds on a sequence of methods which takes you to increasingly finer states: a special way of breathing, *the psychic breath*; a mantra; the chakras and other deeper methods.

However, we begin with a more simple version of *Ajapa Japa* (*Source of Energy*). Then we go on to the actual *Ajapa Japa*, which consists of nine steps; first you cleanse and strengthen your energy field, then your mind is focused and your state deepened.

In this way, the meditation builds a state where limiting ideas and influences cannot take hold, the result is stability and a real ability to take action. That is, if you know how to use this vigour in your daily life (see Karma Yoga).

## **Chakra**

Our present knowledge of the *Chakras* comes solely from the tradition of yoga. In earlier times in Europe, they were known to the alchemists and gnostics, in Israel to the kabalists and in North America to the Hopis. The yoga poses balance your chakras in a most essential way. Each classical pose relates to a chakra. When you reach a deep state lying or standing completely still in, say, the plow pose, you concentrate on a specific area of the body. Using Mudras and Bandhas, you influence these areas with your energy. In Yoga Nidra, they are reached through symbols and mantras. The chakras play a part in influencing the psychosomatic balance in the body and the control of functions normally outside conscious control (autonomous). The digestion can be consciously regulated. There are also numerous reports that tell of yogis capable of lowering the activity of the heart so that only sensitive instruments can measure that they are still actually alive. During meditation, insight gradually grows about the nature of the chakras, that is, whirls or *corridors* penetrating your being - where body, mind, energy, and the innermost part of you merge. (The word ‘chakra’ means circle, wheel or whirl, energy whirl).

Today the concept ‘chakra’ has been devalued and is used for various emotionally charged ideas, far from the knowledge contained within the yoga tradition.

*“When you get to know the chakras, you will discover that they function as ‘senses’ in the psychic dimensions, as eyes, ears and also the vocal cords perform that function in the physical dimension.”*

(Swami Janakananda)

In *Chakra Rohana & Avarohana*, the inner sensitivity is trained by singing, or concentrating on certain tones in the areas of the body connected to the various chakras.

## **Karma Yoga**

You learn a lot on the course - but not everything takes place in the meditation hall. Your body must be able to transform the energy you acquire from the practices. An important experience in the process is your participation in the tasks around the Course Center: in the garden; with the horses; in the woods and fields; preparing food; baking bread; dish washing and cleaning or perhaps doing repairs on a house. Socially speaking, Karma Yoga (as these activities are called) implies that you do things for others, together with others and that you don't expect to be waited on. After all, you have not come to a holiday resort, but to a retreat with people who want to work with themselves. Naturally you will want to be better able to deal with the tasks and challenges awaiting you at home. Activity creates stamina and drive.

*“When one is active, then one is stable. Stability can only be achieved through action. When happiness is achieved one is active. Someone who cannot find happiness is not active.”*

(Chandogya Upanishad).

Many have discovered this secret on our courses. Without Karma Yoga it would be impossible to run such comprehensive courses. The course offers many paths to reach deeper states. The expected results, however, would not be achieved in a harmonious way without outwardly directed activities and common tasks. When you let go of something and also give something, then you are more able to receive. The energy is transformed; it becomes available to you. Karma Yoga is an activity that balances the whole course and contributes to the increase in your wellbeing. Karma Yoga is part of the programme for 1½ hours a day. Also a few times a week each person helps in the kitchen in the afternoon or evening.

## **Cleansing of the Intestines**

Yoga begins with the *cleansing processes*: *Neti* (the nose cleansing, see photo), *Kunjal* and *Shankprakshalan* (intestinal cleansing), which we conduct one day early on in the course. The whole alimentary canal is cleansed when you drink warm saline water. A few exercises help to move the water from the stomach through the intestines and out of the anus; then the stomach is emptied of the remaining water and finally the nose is cleansed. After this you rest for an hour and then you eat a special meal and rest thoroughly. The following ten days you keep to a mild diet that is gentle for the intestines and preserves the harmony created in the body by the cleansing. If you smoke, it is easier to quit when doing these practices - don't let the habit make the decisions, but listen to your body and avoid smoking as long as the diet lasts. Yoga can give your nervous system a chance to manage on its own, without the guardianship of the nicotine. Shankprakshalan removes gross tensions in the body and helps you develop a greater sensitivity, and thus benefit more from the program (also read Bindu #8).

Neti, or nose cleansing, can be done daily on the course. It cleanses the air passages, relieves allergies and colds, and makes it easier to do the breathing exercises (see also Bindu #3).

### **Lectures and Discussion**

Various subjects are covered to further clarify the use of yoga and meditation: how one relates to influences and to pain; what the meditative state really can be used for; elementary and advanced meditations and techniques; applying the ability to experience as a healing and preventative factor in life.

### **Music and Dance**

To play music together, to sing Native American, Arabic or Indian meditative songs, to dance and express yourself in free movements or according to a tradition - from the Sufis, from Africa, but also from yourself - will, when you devote yourself, release energy and emotions. Through these different dances, you develop a capacity to communicate without words and you experience a feeling of fellowship with others.

*Experience unites judgement divides.*

### **Silence...**

Silence (Mauna) is part of the schedule, and we mean this literally. In this way you give the brain a rest; especially the left brain. There is no talking, writing or reading during the two and half days of silence (see also the Kriya Yoga course, 3-month courses and the Prana Vidya course.)

To most people the silence comes as a surprising relief. Silence increases inner awareness and openness towards your surroundings. The mind becomes finely tuned and the learning of yoga, and especially meditation, is enhanced. Silence over a longer period of time removes tensions particularly from the brain and face.

As well as the days when we are totally silent, we ask that you are *always silent in the yoga hall*, no matter when you enter it, and in the dining hall during the meals.

### **...and Individual Guidance**

For many, it is only in the very last days of a course that what we are actually doing and how it works become apparent. We then communicate about what you have learned and how to use it when you return home. There is also the opportunity for personal talks with the teachers.

During the course you may receive individual advice. However, don't expect any talk therapy; we let the possibilities remain open to be experienced.

Right from the start we ask you not to talk with your fellow students about what you experience in your meditation. Digest the experiences yourself and in this way get the most out of what you learn.

*When you are fully you whatever you do you can do*

### **Free Time**

In the forests and fields surrounding Haa, you can walk or ski. The Course Center has horses for riding. We also have a horse wagon and sleigh. The area is rich in wildlife. There are many deer, and if you are fortunate you may see moose or otter. In the spring and autumn, cranes, geese and swans visit. The different activities we offer during the free time are very much part of the course. As explained in the section on Karma Yoga, you will get the most out of the retreat if you are active - and that also applies to what you do in your free time. During the wintertime, you are welcome to use the school's skis and skates (or feel free to bring your own). You can learn to use one of our bio-feedback machines and measure different reactions in your body that are not normally perceived. Through signals from the apparatus, you can become conscious of when you tense or relax a muscle, or your brain, or when you increase or lower your skin resistance.

In "*the pyramid*", you can float in body-warm salt water where the lack of sense impressions calms the thoughts and relaxes the body. On some afternoons, you can enjoy our Finnish wood-fuelled sauna. Read more about >>> "The Pyramid and Pratyahara" in our magazine Bindu # 5.

You may want to bring a drawing pad, pencils and colours. It is a good idea to draw or paint, especially on the longer courses.

The Course Day may look like this:

5.15		AM	Waking up.
5.15	-	5.50	Bathroom, nose cleansing
5.50	-	6.00	Silent meditation, without a teacher.
6.00	-	6.30	Concentration techniques.
6.30	-	8.00	Yoga and breathing exercises.
8.15	-	8.45	Dalia; dinkel/rice/barley tea.
8.45	-	10.15	Karma Yoga.
10.15	-	10.25	Silent meditation, "tuning in".
10.25	-	10.50	Meditative Deep Relaxation: Yoga Nidra.
10.50	-	11.50	Meditation: Ajapa Japa.
12.00		PM	Lunch.
12.00	-	4.00	Free time. Walks, riding, sauna etc.
4.00	-	5.00	Yoga and breathing exercises etc.

5.00	-	6.00	Meditation: Antar Mauna.
6.00			Dinner.
8.00	-	10.00	Lectures, meditation or music and dance.
approx.		10.00	Bedtime.

### **Come Only For What We Teach**

Don't use any techniques (meditations, therapies, massage, astrology, tarot etc.) while you are here other than what you learn on the course - neither alone, nor together with others. And for the sake of your knees, do not jog during the retreat. Please, do not bring a lot of books or magazines along either. Then we, as your teachers, can ensure that you get the intended effect - and it will be easier for you to acquire what you came for.

### **3.5 [www.folkferie.dk](http://www.folkferie.dk)**

(Link: [http://www.folkferie.dk/Temarejser/Yoga-Rejse/?gclid=CKLUg8ydh7cCFUJa3godv2cAMA&utm\\_campaign=HL\\_Search%3a+Temarejser+--+Broad&utm\\_source=Google+Adwords&utm\\_medium=Google&utm\\_term=yoga+ferie](http://www.folkferie.dk/Temarejser/Yoga-Rejse/?gclid=CKLUg8ydh7cCFUJa3godv2cAMA&utm_campaign=HL_Search%3a+Temarejser+--+Broad&utm_source=Google+Adwords&utm_medium=Google&utm_term=yoga+ferie) )

### **Yoga Holidays in Malta**

"I've got more energy, pleasure and happiness ..." Pia, who has been in Malta on Yoga Travel. Would you also like to have it like Pia? Travel to Malta on Yoga Travel.

You live in a 70 m2 house in Mellieha Holiday Centre:

Mellieha Holiday Centre in Malta is located in one of Malta's most beautiful areas down to one of the island's best beaches. The large homes have particular fully equipped kitchens, Internet access, air-conditioning, TV with Danish channels, private courtyards and roof terraces with views. At Mellieha Holiday Centre also offers a delicious indoor pool with spa and a beautiful outdoor pool, Olympic size. In addition, restaurants, bar and pool bar, and a host of different facilities throughout the area. Mellieha Holiday Centre is short, the best starting point for your themed trip to Malta!

### **3.6 [www.triyoga.dk](http://www.triyoga.dk)**

(Link: [http://triyogakbh.dk/?page\\_id=108](http://triyogakbh.dk/?page_id=108))

Triyoga in charming Molyvos on Lesbos:

On the Greek island of Lesbos is a little corner of paradise called Molyvos.

Here we combine yoga training with Holidays and authentic Greek cuisine and tranquility.

For you both want a relaxing and active holiday



Yoga trips with Triyoga on Lesbos the ideal retreat. By moving training to new surroundings - away from everyday habits that create optimal conditions to move us. Gang related effect in two when the sun, the sea and the paradisiacal surroundings has had its effect on your body and your mind. Thus, you can expect breakthroughs in other circumstances would not be possible in a week.

The concept:

Students live around the city in a cozy family-run guesthouses or hotels.

2 times a day we meet in the Yoga Hall. The rest of 24 hours at leisure, but with ample opportunity and tradition of communal meals and excursions.

Thus, you control even balance between privacy and time to absorb the impact of training, and on the other hand social life ...

... Want to travel with the family's trip also suitable, whether they will participate in the course or not ...

#### **Appendix 4: Pictures from Laila Jensen.**





