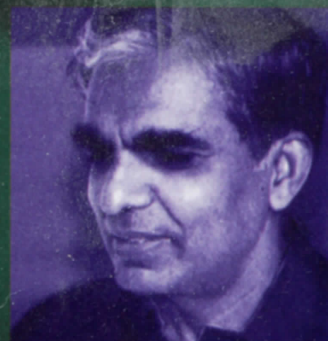


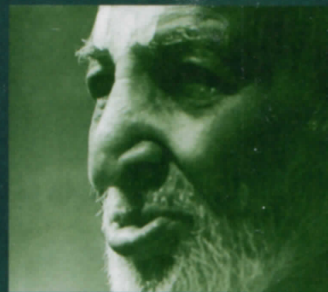
T. K. V. D E S I K A C H A R



The Heart of Yoga

D E V E L O P I N G

A P E R S O N A L



P R A C T I C E

THE HEART OF YOGA

DEVELOPING A PERSONAL PRACTICE

Sri Tirumalai Krishnamacharya, who lived to be over 100 years old, was one of the greatest yogis of the modern era. Elements of Krishnamacharya's teaching have become well known around the world through the work of B.K.S. Iyengar, Pattabhi Jois, and Indra Ādevī, who studied with Krishnamacharya in their early years. Krishnamacharya's son T.K.V. Desikachar lived and studied with his father all his life and now teaches the full spectrum of Krishnamacharya's yoga. Desikachar has based his method on Krishnamacharya's fundamental principle: the practices must be continually adapted to the individual's changing needs in order to achieve the maximum therapeutic value. This is *vinīyoga*—yoga adapted to the needs of the individual.

In *The Heart of Yoga*, T. K. V. Desikachar offers a distillation of his father's system as well as the essence of his own practical approach, which he describes as "basically a program for the spine at every level—physical, mental, and spiritual." This is the first yoga text that outlines a step-by-step sequence for developing a complete practice according to the age-old principles of yoga. Desikachar discusses all the elements of yoga—poses and counterposes, conscious breathing, meditation, and philosophy—and shows how the yoga student may develop a practice tailored to his or her current state of health, age, occupation, and lifestyle.

Krishnamacharya based his teachings on a number of scriptural sources, but he placed the highest value on Patañjali's *Yoga Sutra*. Part three of *The Heart of Yoga* includes the complete text of the *Sutra*—including the Sanskrit—with a translation and commentary by Desikachar that includes the insights and tradition passed to him by his father. Combining a clear, logical presentation of practical yoga techniques with a profound exposition of the roots of yoga philosophy, this book is sure to be a milestone in the transmission of yoga from the ancient masters to the modern world, the path to what Patañjali called *kaivalya*—freedom. Accompanying the text are more than ninety photos—many never before published—of Krishnamacharya and his family and students that provide an extraordinary glimpse into authentic yoga practice.

In addition to years of yoga training from his father, T. K. V. Desikachar holds a degree in structural engineering. Since the 1960s he has devoted himself to yoga instruction for people from all walks of life and with all kinds of abilities; among his students was the renowned philosopher J. Krishnamurthi. Desikachar continued to live and study with his father until Krishnamacharya's death in 1989. One of the world's foremost teachers of yoga, Desikachar currently teaches at the school founded in his father's memory in Madras, as well as in Europe, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand.

This book is an invaluable source of information regarding the theory and practice of yoga. It is a "must" for students and teachers alike.

Indra Devi, author of
Yoga for You

Desikachar . . . has great respect for the subject he is teaching and for the person to whom he is conveying his knowledge. He . . . very gently leads you to the door that eventually, unexpectedly, may open to let you in.

From the foreword by
Vanda Scaravelli, author of
Awakening the Spine



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The Heart of YOGA



DEVELOPING A PERSONAL PRACTICE

by T. K. V. Desikachar

I dedicate *The Heart of Yoga* to J. Krishnamurthi, who taught me how to be a good yoga student.

I am very grateful to my many friends who helped create *The Heart of Yoga*, especially to Indra Devi, Vanda Scaravelli, and Mark Whitwell.