

Recent Events in Research and Kundalini Yoga Meditation for Health Purposes, Bethesda, MD July 8 & 9, 2008

The Director of Research for the Kundalini Research Institute, Dr. Sat Bir Singh Khalsa, has just returned from a 2-day NIH-NCCAM (National Institutes of Health and National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine) workshop on research and meditation, where he presented *Yoga: A Meditative Discipline*. He discussed the fundamental components of yoga practice: meditation, posture and breath along with the history of yoga practice in the United States and its progress in mainstream culture as well as its growing interest within alternative and allopathic health care models. He posed some specific questions for researchers to focus future studies on and presented current research findings from studies as wide as breath observation and meditation in insomnia cases, to auditory response of musicians and yoga, to the effects on the frontal lobe and the use of japa (or repetition).

This was a remarkable and historic workshop in that a variety of researchers involved in meditation research disciplines were gathered together to discuss the future directions for meditation research. Attendance at the workshop was by invitation only, and many of the leading researchers were present, including:

Josephine Briggs, Director of NCCAM

Jack Killen, Deputy Director of NCCAM

Susan Folkman, Director of the UCSF Osher Research Center

Margaret Chesney, University of Maryland and former co-director of NCCAM

Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin, a leading mindfulness meditation researcher currently working with the Dalai Lama

This weekend Meditation Workshop followed closely on the heels of the recent NIH sponsored Yoga Week where September was recently named National Yoga Month, one of a select number of National Health Observances (NHO) as listed by Healthfinder.gov, a guide to health information, which is sponsored by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion within the Department of Health and Human Services.