

Dr Lionel Coudron, yogi, doctor and yogatherapist

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By Pauline Lorenceau



He seems to be an example of what he does, with a keen eye and a generous smile. Above all a yogi, he trained from a very young age with Claude Guetta, Sri Mahesh, Roger Clerc and Claude Pelletier, teacher at the FNEY. He founded the Institut de Yogathérapie (IDYT) in 1993.

JdY Are you a doctor and a yogi or the other way around?

Dr Lionel Coudron It's yoga that brought me to medicine. As a teenager, I was interested in everything that had to do with philosophy and the mechanisms of human functioning. When I was 14, during the holidays, I had the chance to meet Jean-Claude Larousse. He introduced me to yoga and it was a revelation. When I got home I looked for a class and met Claude Guetta, with whom I became friends. At the time he was working with Shri Mahesh. I invested myself and very quickly I started to practice every day. After 9 months, my younger brother of 18 months, Olivier joined me.

At the same time I had also started a psychoanalysis. After a year and a half, Claude, my teacher, asked me to choose between yoga and psychoanalysis. I chose yoga, and continued my yogic apprenticeship by moving up a gear. I became Claude Guetta's disciple. He chaperoned me and motivated me to study medicine. "Yoga teacher, that's great, but be a doctor, you'll be fine." I'm very grateful to him.

JdY Did you already have this therapeutic question in mind?

Dr. L.C. No, it was yoga for self-development! Yoga was not conceptualized and identified as a healing tool. That's probably why it took me so long to get to yoga therapy. I became interested in acupuncture and homeopathy. I completed my training with studies in nutrition, biology and sports medicine, with the idea of better understanding yoga.

In my third year of medical school, around 1977, I met a pharmacology teacher, Tymant, who confirmed the interest of acupuncture and advised me to give up homeopathy. The first European certificate of acupuncture has just been created in Henri Mondor (*French university hospital*), by Jean-Claude Darras, the famous French acupuncturist, and I rush to it. I parasite his hospital consultations, and when I finish my studies in 1985, I establish myself with him.

JdY What did you find in acupuncture?

Dr. L.C. The main interest was to train me to a synthetic and global vision of the human body. It expresses man's relationship with the universe, through his philosophy but above all through his energetic vision, as found in yoga. It completes the anapathological understanding of allopathic medicine, and speaks of the dimension of what is living and acting in the body. We cannot see that the eye, the foot, the hand, the heart, we are one.

The energy passes through the body in a way that we do not understand but that one day we will be able to explain. Today when we talk about telepathy, we don't have the scientific explanation, but there is a phenomenon that happens.

JdY Should we drop the scientific explanations?

Dr. L.C. It's interesting to have the mechanisms and understanding to get to the core subject. If we end up understanding what energy is, we'll be able to use it even better. For me, these pathways can correspond to the nervous system, which is connected to the brain and spinal cord, which sends and receives information and is connected to the emotional system. It is the body's communication system that passes through pathways, such as the fascia, which are involved in proprioception¹ and nociception².

JdY Can we see the meridians or the nadi?

Dr. L.C. Until today, in spite of research by Darras and Vernejou, professor of neurology at Necker, the paths of the meridian could not be highlighted. I quickly abandoned the esoteric idea that one can have of these structures. On the other hand, I rely on a feeling and an experience, which varies according to the context and the person. I am looking for the modeling of a lived experience, rather than a physical reality, as when the yogis talk about chakra. They are explained more by other knowledge, such as the psychology of emotions, the understanding of what happens in the body. Sooner or later the explanations will come.

JdY Why are you talking about feeling modeling?

Dr. L.C. For example, if I am angry, there is a postural movement that takes place in the body. A posterior muscular assembly will be put in action, I will straighten up by contracting the buttocks, by tucking in the stomach, to face the situation, but I will also tighten the jaws, all this corresponds to a functional synergy. If I am sad I will fold up, and the anterior face will be more active. In a sense I am internalized and in the other I am open, like Yin and Yang, Ha and Tha. By gradually refining this, we can descend into the different types of emotions, of which there are 5, as the 5 elements... Acupuncture, by acting on a specific point, allows me to understand that there are patterns of connections in the body on which we can act.

JdY What is the effect of belief for healing?

Dr. L.C. The "placebo" effect is extraordinary, and deserves even more of our attention. It's not: "I'm going to heal, even if I don't do anything". It is: "I'm healing because I believe in my healing." At that moment, something is set in place.

JdY What made you decide to take up yogatherapy?

Dr. L.C. In yoga, what we want is to develop our resources. We want to be in a state of calmness, control, letting go, in short, to feel good. Whatever words we use, "Yoga citta nirodah" stops the mind's whirlwind, getting out of the feeling of uneasiness. Meditation is ultimately working on our inner state: being at peace, fully conscious, developing inner joy. This is the objective of yogatherapy. When a person comes to see me, I evaluate if his/her suffering is physical or psychological? But also

¹ Proprioception refers to the perception, conscious or unconscious, of the position of different parts of the body.

² Nociception is the alarm function that allows us to perceive a painful stimulus.

what is the part of his disorder, linked to an emotional dimension? Yogatherapy is therefore about taking care of the person as a whole: thoughts of the mind, body and emotions.

This path has been very progressive: it began in 1986 with the association *Médecine et Yoga* whose object was yoga and health. In 1993, the Institut de Yogathérapie (IDYT) was born with a complete, but still fragmented, training. How does yoga work? We give information about the body. It is later around 2005 that I came to the notion of individualized session, where the care will be for a person with a specifically adapted practice.

JdY Who are your students in yogatherapy training?

Dr L.C. Mainly doctors and paramedical trainers who come to learn the tools of yoga, and yoga teachers, who are helpless when faced with the individual accompaniment of a suffering person. There is a meeting of two worlds which is very interesting. What neither of them are prepared for is taking care of people's feelings. "How do you feel? What's going on in your body?" This approach is particular to yogatherapists.

JdY Is that the same as making a diagnosis?

Dr. L.C. No, people coming for yogatherapy must come with their medical diagnosis. If they don't have one, the yogatherapist refers them to their doctor, who is the only one authorized to provide a diagnosis. But often people turn to yogatherapy after a long series of consultations, in desperation of finding an effective treatment... and therefore have their diagnosis. Our great strength as yogatherapists is to connect the emotions and the body, in order to bring the suffering person back to a state of well-being. We will help the person to change, to fluidify the body sensations, like the knot in the throat, the ball in the stomach ... We are looking at the intimate feelings. Thus we join the notions of energy which, when they circulate freely, are the sign of well-being: peace, consciousness and inner joy.

Contact

- **Institut de Yogathérapie (IDYT)** - Professional training organism. Tel: 01 47 23 35 54
Contact@idy.com / www.idyt.com
- **Traditional yoga classes with Dr Lionel Coudron** - In Saint Maur, 8 Bis av. de la Révolution Française, 94210 Saint Maur. Tel: 01 47 23 35 54
- **Traditional yoga classes and Master Class with Lionel Coudron and Corinne Miévielle in Lausanne.**

Reading Dr Lionel Coudron's works

- *La Yoga-Thérapie*, Ed. Odile Jacob (not yet translated in English)
- *Le yoga: bien vivre ses émotions*, Ed. Odile Jacob (not yet translated in English)
- *Mieux vivre par le yoga*, Ed. J'ai Lu (not yet translated in English)
- 6 books in the collection "*Yogathérapie*", by Dr. Lionel Coudron and Corinne Miévielle, Ed. Odile Jacob (not yet translated in English)