



Yoga & the essence of BEAUTY

In a world obsessed with physical perfection and flawless facades, it's easy to forget that true beauty comes from within. Yoga teacher **EMMA PALMER** helps us connect to our inner light.

A few years ago I had a new student attend one of my yoga classes for the first time. At the end of the class, as I always do with new students, we discussed how she worked through the challenges, the heat, attempting new postures, the bliss from savasana, and the usual yogi highs that come from a first-time practice. She was remarkably open, sharing personal stories and challenges, and then suddenly, with an unexpectedly precipitous familiarity, said to me, "Emma, I'm just really surprised that as a yoga teacher you wear make-up." I'd like to say that she told me this while my kombucha was fermenting and my mung beans soaking, but alas, I can't, because that also does not a yogi make.

My instant reaction, of course, with its usual wry timing, came direct from the ego. It was telling me that wearing make-up was somehow wrong; that I wasn't being authentic in some way, that I didn't meet her expectations of a yoga teacher and that I hadn't measured up to her idea of what a yoga teacher should look like.

I was startled by how my appearance had somehow become the topic of conversation; there I was having a spiritual discussion at 9pm about a practice I love and

am passionate about, and the fact that I was wearing makeup applied at 6am seemed so irrelevant to me. It was in that moment my true inner voice blissfully, and welcomingly, made itself known and whispers of wisdom prevailed. It is irrelevant to me because the external part of who I am doesn't define who I am, nor does it have any bearing on my worth or skill as a yoga teacher.

The truth is, my morning makeup ritual is a habit from many moons ago when I was a qualified beauty therapist, where it was natural for us to be externally scrutinised before we entered the beauty salon to ensure physical perfection was the only order of the day. Not a hair was out of place and there were no unmanicured nails in sight. Bright red lips were applied within the fine lines of a perfected lip liner and finished with rouged cheekbones, lashings of mascara and impeccably pencilled brows. I cannot deny that being presented to the world in this way didn't impact how I felt on the inside, because it did. I felt it gave me confidence to face the world with 'my face on'. I also understood, almost paradoxically, that my connection with how I looked only brought me momentary, stilted happiness and I couldn't understand why.

This lesson was so significant for me because, in that moment, I realised lasting happiness could not be sustained if the search was on the outside. And so, in my late teens, I am eternally grateful that the exquisite path of yoga found me, and my journey to finding deeper meaning and purpose began through this ancient practice.

In Kahlil Gibran's famous book *The Prophet*, he writes, "beauty is not in the face, it is a light in the heart". The path of yoga is a blissful practice to not only reveal that inner light, but to gradually remove all the blocks we have created throughout our lives that prevent us from seeing all the magnificence within. Yoga guides us to our truest state, beyond the voice of the ego, beyond restriction and beyond the false illusion of the external. This is a challenging concept to come to terms with when our society is so invested in everything that is external and actively takes us away from the maps to go inward.

There is an evident glow that exists in students who practice yoga. You can see it and you can feel it; it's palpable and magnetic. This is not the goal, however, just a beautiful gift that comes from a dedicated yoga practice. This external vitality is a direct

reflection of the inner state, on both spiritual and cellular levels.

The teachings of yoga can only be lived by cultivating a healthy self-esteem, space for connection with the voice of inner guidance, and by the understanding that we are not separate but intrinsically linked to all the beauty that exists in the world and in all beings. In other words, it's the work we do on the inside that is ultimately reflected on the outside.

This doesn't mean that we should no longer care for the external (or feel that wearing makeup is wrong for that matter), but it does mean we can free ourselves from being attached to how we look, simply by accepting that the external is forever changing.

The leaf on a tree doesn't stay green forever, but it doesn't stress that it won't and nor is it meant to. The leaf lives to its fullest potential and magnificence. We too have the capacity to be the best versions of ourselves and let our inner lights shine. That is, after all, where true beauty resides. Life is a classroom and, if we allow it, our experiences and relationships can become our greatest teachers. True beauty is the capacity to live in a conscious space of aliveness, without attachment to the external. Our true beauty endures forever, as do you.

When you reach that state it's as if you've somehow found the DNA structure of the matrix and life appears as exquisite.

“The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of the depths. These persons have an appreciation, sensitivity, and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness, and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen.”

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross



Fears are replaced with knowing that challenges are life's signposts directing you towards the path of your true purpose. Old wounds that hold you back come screaming to the surface to be healed, and miracles in life start to unfold. The illusion that beauty equals happiness begins to dissolve, because beauty, in essence, is something you cannot see but can feel within your heart when illuminated by your soul. It is through establishing a dedicated *sadhana*, or spiritual practice, that you create space for personal transformation and spiritual growth.

Confucius said: "Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it." What really hinders us from seeing beauty in all things is a direct reflection on the person who is seeing. Renowned yogi Paramahansa Yogananda asks, "Is a diamond less valuable because it is covered

in mud?" Yoga is a practice that aims to clear the mud from the diamond so we can connect to that inner light of peace. In this way we become aware of the true self. The more we journey towards the true self, the more we realise that what we are searching for is also trying to find us.

So go find that light of yours. Find your path. Find that inner diamond and let it shine, because the world really needs that light right now. In the words of Marianne Williamson: "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be?" **NH**

Emma Palmer is an E-RYT-500, RPYT, L3 senior yoga teacher.



eco minerals

The only ECO makeup that is 100% COLOUR Match Guaranteed!

100% natural cosmetics from Byron Bay - sold globally in amazing health food stores, spas, salons and boutique pharmacies



Vegan, Cruelty Free and ECO friendly refills available!!

ECO minerals is Australia's ECO cosmetic - so beautiful it is **Colour Match Guaranteed** - or your perfect colour is free. ECO refills are available - these biodegradable sachets save our Planet from plastic waste and save you \$.

100% natural, safe, pure and gentle, ECO minerals suits all skin types giving a flawless finish whilst protecting your skin with all natural **SPF of 25**.

Free from fillers, nano particles, parabens - just pure minerals and plant extracts. Certified VEGAN and Cruelty Free.

Choose **Perfection Foundation** for normal to dry skin, or for a fresh, dewy finish.

Choose **Flawless Foundation** for skins with oiliness and to give a matte finish.



The ECO minerals range includes

- mineral foundation (matte or fresh finish)
- bronzer
- blush
- mascara
- concealer
- eyeshadow
- hi light & illuminate
- supersoft Kabuki brush

www.ecominerals.com.au Ph 02 8006 1180 info@ecominerals.com.au

Use our stockist locator to find your nearest stockist