

## Wizard of Oz as illustration of 4 Paths of Yoga

We are all Dorothy, on our own road.

First, we meet Scarecrow, symbolic of our jhana practice - trying to gain knowledge (brain)

Then, we meet Tinman, symbolic of our bhakti practice - trying to get heart (love)

Then, we meet Lion, symbolic of karma practice - trying to get courage to be of service

We face our shadow in the process - our ego -- wicked witch of the west

Glenda is our best self/ higher power - she shows up, unannounced, when we meet her, to remind us to stay on our own road and not divert....to keep going. when we are ready, she reminds us we had the answers all along to our questions, deep inside.

Raja path is TOTO - he is the silent witness/man's best friend/nonjudging voice to everything. The only person he doesn't like in the play, is the wicked witch of the west (ego - notice it is "Western" mind :) Toto is originally why Dorothy leaves the farm (she goes after him because the witch/neighbor 'steals' him because Toto bit her and everyone thinks that Toto is 'out of control.' Raja sometimes makes us feel out of control in our lives (causes chaos / tornados) because it asks us to examine our thinking and develop deep awareness and self-perception. Dorothy knows better (that Toto is not 'out of control but instead just acting on instinct to protect Dorothy), and she leaves the farm (takes her next step) when she decides she can't live without him.

Oz is symbolic of worldly pursuits -- we try to do what we think is pleasing to the world (all of the 'challenges' that oz gives to the four characters) but then when we do this (forgo our Selves and please the world, we are left empty - nothing but a man behind the curtain...) When we unveil this mask/curtain, we can give it up, and 'rise up' (Oz floats off in a balloon at the end of the play, and then, and only then, does Dorothy find she can go home. She has literally given up her 'worldly pursuits' so that she can find her true home/Truth)

At end of day we end up back home, like Dorothy (after three clicks - mind/body/spirit) with our best selves, all integrated, learning knowledge, love, courage and service from each other (back on farm..homeland) in our daily lives. She ends up back where she started with new eyes...she 'sees' the farmhands...the true heart of all who surround her with love (their best selves)

Once we are on the yogic path of awareness (raja), we can't really 'live' without it just like Dorothy cant live without Toto. Sometimes our ego will try to get us to ignore our path, but once we have a raja path we cannot live without the ability to see ourselves/watch our own thoughts and feelings. Most of the time, we can watch ourselves with compassion, and at times there is conflict with this awareness and our ego (witch) :)

Said another way, the raja path may push us into chaos (tornado) but we will always find ourselves 'somewhere over the rainbow (chakras illumined) :)