Yogic Visions Mold San Diego Skyline
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Webster defines yoga as "a mystic and ascetic discipline by which one seeks to achieve liberation of the self and union with the supreme spirit or universal soul through intense concentration and deep meditation."

In 1978 for hours a day just outside Bombay, Dan Pearson was doing just such a mystic discipline when suddenly, after 18 months, he found himself vividly emersed in a unique and life-altering inner vision. A blinding white light? No - San Diego, California. Although his rigorous yogic sadhana had prepared him to expect almost anything, even he had to admit that this was a bit unusual. But the next day it happened again. Each day for about a week he found himself traveling down a street, turning a corner and coming to a house - in San Diego. Each day the street was different, but the house was the same.

Yoga had put Dan acutely in tune with his hunches, which he had learned to trust like a mother. As he himself puts it: "It all boils down to having the courage to rely upon your instincts. You have to realize that life is not designed to be as hard as you want to make it." Within two weeks, he was gone from Bombay and in San Diego looking for that house. As soon as he found it, he made it his home. A new life - divinely ordained - had begun.

Following another series of intuitive flashes, Pearson bought three old hotels - San Diego's last original remnants of a 1880's land boom. He moved two of the three, brick by brick, so that they all stood, side by side, in San Diego's fame-gaining Gaslamp Quarter. With as little renovation as possible, the three became one in a Victorian show place of romantic revivalism called the Horton Grand Saddlery Hotel. The innovation is touted as one of several ingenious and creative moves instigated by inventive San Diego entrepreneurs interested in reincarnating the city's shabby downtown warehouse district from rags into riches.

Almost overnight, San Diego has grown into the nation's eighth most populous city, and the future looks even more promising. According to Pearson, "It might one day be the entertainment capital of the world with all of its gorgeous waterfrontage begging to be developed."

Pearson works 55-hour weeks at a modest $129 desk in a less-than-modest office with a support pillar at its dead center. He has always been a hard worker, but the school of hard knocks has made him wise and humble.

Before his flight into the skys of yoga, he was a high achiever in school, in Viet Nam and finally in business as a high-rolling financier making - and then losing - millions of dollars in the cattle-feed business. The trauma of his financial rise and fall sent him on a trip around the world, eventually landing him in India where he met his guru.

Yoga prepared him for a second go at life. And what a life it is becoming. Now, all the wiser from past experience, he is philosophical and mystical about his experiences.

"You know," he says in one of his rare leisurely moments, "in the monastery it was evens and lows, evens and lows, evens and lows. The peace was the even. Now, I'm back to highs and lows. Actually, I'm trying to go from high to even, high to even - chop off those lows at the knees."