

How To Maximize The Power Of Yoga

# HOW TO MAXIMIZE THE POWER OF YOGA

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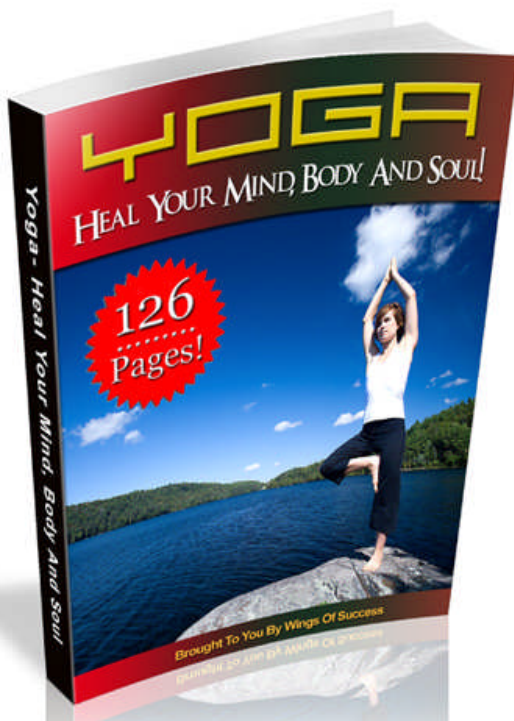
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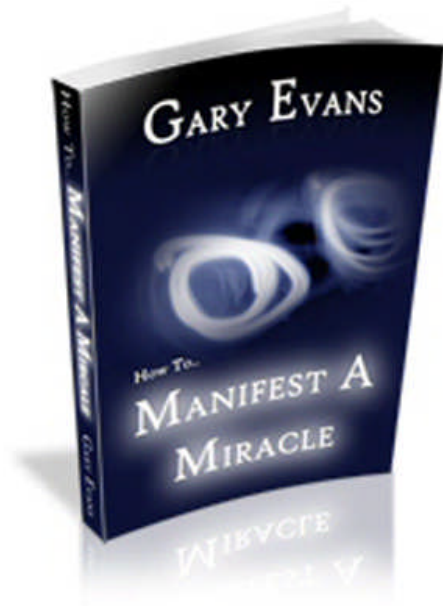


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## Yoga In The West

Yoga as a concept was introduced in the West a long time ago. It is only now that more and more Americans are taking it more seriously than they ever did before.

Yoga as a way of life is catching on fast with the Westerners as more and more people familiarize themselves with the truth behind this centuries-old Indian practice.

It was towards the end of the eighteenth century that Western scholars began to understand how closely related the Indian languages are with their European counterparts. The study of such an interconnectedness that ensued introduced them to the concept of yoga as it was present in the Indian sacred texts.

A breakthrough came when Englishman Charles Wilkins pioneered the translation of Sanskrit text of The Bhagvad Gita to English. It was also the efforts of American statesman Alexander Hamilton who closely studies the Indian culture, tradition, languages and even delivered a lecture in Paris about India in the year 1802-03.

By the nineteenth century, the knowledge of yoga was spreading among the Westerners who were involved closely with the study of Indian texts. They were able to trace the development of the concept from its source, now that English translations of the texts were available to them. Notable in this field and worthy of mention are the efforts of Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson who made the above mentioned possible. Also, during the same time, a strain of the thought processes behind yoga also began to be felt in the works of the American and European Romantics.

However, as is commonly known, and earlier mentioned, yoga has become a way of life with many Westerners. It has not only been incorporated in the daily lives of people, but also in their way of thinking.

This knowledge of yoga as a concept came into the popular consciousness of westerners through several instances of cross-fertilization due to close interaction between the two cultures.

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Swami Vivekananda, an Indian intellectual, contribution to making Indian culture familiar to the West is notable. His address at Chicago in 1893 to the World's Parliament of Religions is perhaps the most important event that helped India to reach out to the world. Indian guru Parmahansa Yogananda I another important figure who made yoga popular in the West, through his teachings, the Self-Realization Fellowship that he set up, and through his own autobiography.

Other figures worthy of mention are B.K.S. Iyengar (founder of Iyengar Yoga), Swami Rama (the Himalayan Institute), Swami Satchidananda (Integral Yoga), and Swami Vishnu-devananda (Sivananda Yoga).

## Yoga: The Six Branches

Yoga has been around in the eastern world for centuries, and the classical techniques of yoga go back to about five thousand years ago. If you are interested in going in for practicing yoga, you should have an overall idea about the various branches of yoga.

There are six branches of yoga, namely Hatha, Bhakti, Karma, Raja, Tantra and Jnana. Hatha, which is the most popular branch of yoga, is actually the physical part of yoga or the yoga which involves postures or asanas. The Hatha yoga is thus basically composed of 'asanas' are the physical postures which yoga practitioners have to do, 'pranayama' or breathing techniques, and meditation. Hatha joins the body and soul and make the body healthy, and helps to keep the mind free from stress and anxiety.

Bhakti is the yoga of devotion, involving the heart and faith. This branch of yoga permits the yogis to discern the actual humanity in all people and makes them able to see everything from all aspects, thus enabling them to endure, love and accept everything and everyone peacefully. Bhakti yoga teaches its practitioners how to devote themselves completely to god, and teaches them that all creatures are created by the Almighty and that appreciating other creatures and life itself is an act of devotion to god.

Karma yoga is the branch of yoga which considers that a person's current state is a result of his past state, i.e. whatever the person's situation is in this life is a consequence of his previous life, and whatever he will do in this life will determine his condition in his next life.

It deals with service and involves action's energy. Karma yoga teaches yogis that they should ignore all negative aspects of their life and focus on doing good things and thinking good thoughts. It teaches that if lead a virtuous life in this life, then you will have a happy life in the next life.

Raja is the 'king of yogas' as 'raja' means 'royal'. It's based on the eight limbs of yoga and involves meditation. It teaches that the universe exists for the self, and this leads to self-esteem and reverence for your fellow creatures.

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Tantra yoga is based on understanding of Mantra (mystic syllables) and Tattva (truth). Tantra yogis feel an increased awareness regardless of whether they're awake or asleep. However, only those who are chaste, brave, devoted, loyal to his guru, true, trusty, honest, and be humane and have love for the whole universe can be practitioners of Tantra yoga.

Jnana yoga involves the mind as it is concerned with knowledge and wisdom. It improves the yogi's cleverness and astuteness.

After reading about the six branches of yoga, you should be able to decide which yoga is suitable for you. You can sign up for a yoga class, or get a yoga DVD, a book, or a videotape and practice it at home. There are also yoga instructions available on the internet which you can search for.

### Yoga Accessories

Yoga accessories are extremely useful as they make practicing yoga safer and more relaxing, even though not too many yoga accessories are needed. There are some items you cannot do without such as a yoga mat, yoga socks and shoes, pants and upper body wear.

There are other additional yoga accessories such as a water bottle, a bag to carry the yoga mat, yoga props, and DVDs for practicing alone, but these are optional and whether you buy them is up to you.

The upper body wear is very important as it has to make you feel comfortable. There will be no way you can relax and do yoga if your clothes are ill-fitting and uncomfortable. The upper body wear should ideally be made of a combination of lycra and cotton as these fabrics help absorb sweat, fit well, and give pores for proper circulation. During cold weather, wear comfortable pants which will not get in the way of your exercises.

They should not be too loose, or of a very thick material, as it will make you feel very hot when you're exercising. Apart from your t-shirt and jeans/pants, leave your jewelry and watch outside, to prevent them from hampering your yoga.

A yoga mat is an absolutely necessary yoga accessory. It serves as a cushion protecting you from the hard floors, and it is also hygienic as it prevents contact with the floor. Make sure the yoga mat stays clean as your body and head will have contact with it. People living in cold climates should ensure that their yoga mat stays flexible after it's kept in the trunk of the car, or after it's been exposed to the cold air.

Usually, yoga is practiced barefoot or variably in a pair of cotton socks. But experts say that wearing yoga shoes makes it more relaxing and comfortable. Yoga shoes are not the same as exercise shoes. They have thinner soles and are lighter at the top to facilitate air circulation.

Additionally, yoga shoes prevent bacteria and germs from forming and are important when you need to share a yoga mat. Moreover, the yoga shoes help maintain certain yoga postures and prevent you from slipping.

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Some people prefer to wear yoga socks to yoga shoes because they are like gloves for the feet. Toe socks with non-slip rubber dots are also available and these give friction, and they're a good buy.

A bag for your yoga accessories which will hold your mat, change of clothes, keys and wallet will help carrying your stuff to and from yoga class. Yoga props can help you with certain postures, and yoga DVDs can help you practice certain moves which you learnt in class. Water bottles are helpful but not really necessary as you'll sweat out all the toxins during yoga class.

You can get all the yoga accessories you need at yoga specialty retailers because of the wide range of stuff and also the staff will be well-informed about your yoga needs.

## Yoga: Advantages

It is not the fact that people are not acquainted with the term 'yoga', but the actual scenario makes it clear that a large share of these people does not know too many things about it. It is at times thought to be a physical training for having a flexibility of limbs. But, yoga surpasses this narrow idea as it provides a through mental and physical fitness training. It is something that can help you in any aspects whatsoever of your life because, it is, after all, the mind and the body which stand as the backbones of a human being.

Due to its holistic approach, as mentioned earlier, yoga does not draw any demarcating line between the realm of mind and realm of body. Yoga does not make any distinction because, in the world of yoga, mind and body are the two integral parts of a whole, which cannot be separated.

'Asanas', a term, which we all are aware of, actually refers to those poses and postures through which an all-round training of mind and body are accomplished by yoga. This sort of training is something that can extend an aid as it exerts an improvement in your strength, stamina, flexibility, concentration and blood-circulation.

Not only that, it will also provide you with calmness and energy which would cut down your mental stress and help you doing your daily works with absolute ease.

Irrespective of the profession you are in- a housewife staying at home or a cashier in a grocery store or an athlete or office worker- yoga keeps helping you. It should not only be viewed as an end but it is to be treated as a means. Yoga can make you enabled to do, what you like to do, with much more perfection and contentment.

Yoga can be a good remedy in your injuries and illness but before starting up yoga or any exercise routine, you should consult with your doctor, especially, in case you do have any medical conditions.

In this regard, one thing can be assured that you should obviously try out yoga after making sure that you have consulted with your doctor. You should go for it because, at the worst, you

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may not like to continue and in that case you can put an end to it.

You will be getting a few options after you become well determined to start yoga. To contact with the local gym or yoga studio is the way that easily comes to one's mind but if you want to avail it more conveniently sitting at your home and spending less, the option of having a yoga DVD is always there to work as a guideline for you. It gives you the advantage of making your own routine. Notwithstanding this advantage, it has to be said that a gym or yoga studio is always a better option as it provides you with instant instruction.



## Yoga: Tips On Position

Yoga has been in practice since a long time, and followers of yoga positions and continuous practitioner benefit by it through their mind, muscles and even the internal body systems. With time, its popularity has only shot up. But before one initializes it, one must have a fair idea of its impact to squeeze the most out of the yoga experience. So let's start with some tips before you begin with your mental and spiritual body set-up.

- **Continuous practice**

Yoga practice should be continuous, not only in the class under an expert teacher, but also at home, which will make the body and the mind feel at peace. For a newbie, regular practice will make the benefits more pronounced which will result in further involvement in yoga. In yoga, the number of times you practice your position is more important than the duration of each session that you enter into. A very minor part of your daily schedule, if devoted to yoga, can do you a world of good.

One important thing to remember while doing yoga is to get the positions right. Most of the TV shows and self-help books will suggest practicing yoga more often but what they skip to remind us is the right poses that one must strike while doing this exercise. Extending oneself more in each session will help, and one must not only practice the poses one is comfortable with, but also try to practice those with one he is struggling.

This will ensure that the practice session is more fertile and gives one the self-belief to do even better, and will make him realize that he's doing well.

- **Peaking your potential**

Getting rid you one's ego is one of the most important aspects for the novice. To give it the best shot to maximize the utility derived from the yoga exercise, one must not try to just make an impression on the teacher or the fellow learners. Self-study is the nucleus of yoga therapy. Instead of being an exact replica of the teacher or a good student, one must try to improvise and then maximize his own potential and benefits derived from the class.

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- **Who am I??**

One of the fundamental features of yoga is to remember oneself, remember who he is. Instead of going deep into his yoga poses, one must realize how deep he has actually evolved with the therapy, himself. Learning about one's inner attention is important in yoga. While practicing, with the aid of the guider, one must strive to use that attention and get most of his poses. It's only secondary if the physical position is not altogether perfect.

## Yoga And Physical Health

Yoga does not see a distinction between the body and the mind; and this is an understanding that western psychology has also concluded for many years now (the link between mental health and physical health, and vice versa).

If you've come to this book looking to understand yoga as a means to help your body heal or improve, then please don't worry; you've come to the right place!

Yoga is indeed a process that involves releasing blocked tension and energy in the body, and helping make the muscles, tendons, joints, ligaments, and all other components work to their utmost potential.

Yoga believes that human beings are optimally designed, by nature, to be flexible and agile; and stiffness and lack of mobility only arrive when the body is unhealthy or out of alignment.

Therefore, countless people have found themselves in a yoga class, or on a yoga mat at home in front of a Yoga video or DVD, in the hopes of improving their physical health; and perhaps you may be one of them. If that's the case, then keep reading!

There are proven physical benefits of yoga, which include:

- \* increased flexibility and range of motion
- \* reduced pain in joints and muscles
- \* stronger immune system
- \* stronger lung capacity and therefore higher quality respiration
- \* increased metabolism (which can lead to weight loss!)
- \* higher quality of sleep (especially due to improved breathing and a more oxygenated body)

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Given that certain yoga practices require postures to be mastered, yoga has always helped promote the body's flexibility; it also helps in lubricating the joints, ligaments and tendons. Yoga detoxifies by increasing the flow of blood to various parts of the body. It helps tone and invigorate muscles that have grown flaccid and weak.

So please do keep in mind that, while yoga is often discussed in terms of its mental approach, there are clear and proven physical benefits that are a part of this approach.

Therefore, if weight loss is your goal, or the ability to shovel the snow in winter without having your back ache for days, then yoga is as viable an option to you as it is for the stressed-out corporate executive who needs to find a strategy for coping with the craziness of her busy life!

## Why Is Yoga Beneficial?

As we've repeatedly pointed out in this book (and probably started to bore you with; sorry!), yoga is not a religion. It can be religious if one wants it to be, and it can co-exist with an existing religious belief. But yoga itself is not religious in the sense that it focuses on belief or faith.

Yoga is a science; and indeed, in many places in the world (such as India), it is referred to as a science. This is not mere playing with words; it truly is approached as a science, which means that it is understood in terms of the scientific method.

Yogic science seeks to verify cause and effect, and build principles based upon objective observations. Indeed, in many places in the world, to be a yogic master of any credibility, one must be highly educated in the sciences, including physics and the biological sciences.

This discussion on yoga as science is important for us to have here, because it allows us to sensibly ask the question: what are the benefits of yoga? After all, if yoga is a faith or a belief, then asking this question isn't fair; because it's one that yoga cannot answer in terms that we can objectively understand.

Yet (again...sorry!) yoga is a science; as empirical and pragmatic as kinesiology, or exercise science, which seeks to understand how the body acts and reacts to changes in the internal physical environment. And even more simply than any of this: each of us has a right to ask the basic question why should I bother doing this yoga thing? before we should be asked to consider experiencing it for ourselves.

Indeed, while the experience of yoga cannot be reduced to words – just as reading a book on preparing for a marathon isn't going to actually physically prepare you to run a marathon – the goals and principles of yoga can easily be discussed.

## Supporting A Healthy Lifestyle

There is some very interesting psychology behind this that students of western thinkers (e.g. Freud, Jung, Fromm, etc.) will find familiar and, indeed, quite rational.

When an individual decides to be happy, something within that person activates; a kind of will or awareness emerges. This awareness begins to observe the jungle of negative thoughts that are swimming constantly through the mind.

Rather than attacking each of these thoughts – because that would be an unending struggle! – yoga simply advises the individual to watch that struggle; and through that watching, the stress will diminish (because it becomes exposed and thus unfed by the unconscious, unobserving mind!).

At the same time, as an individual begins to reduce their level of internal negativity, subsequent external negative behaviors begin to fall of their own accord; habits such as excessive drinking, emotional overeating, and engaging in behaviors that, ultimately, lead to unhappiness and suffering.

With this being said, it would be an overstatement to imply that practicing yoga is the easy way to, say, quit smoking, or to start exercising regularly. If that were the case, yoga would be ideal! Yoga simply says that, based on rational and scientific cause and effect relationships that have been observed for centuries, that when a person begins to feel good inside, they naturally tend to behave in ways that enhance and promote this feeling of inner wellness.

As such, while smoking (for example) is an addiction and the body will react to the lessening of addictive ingredients such as tar and tobacco (just to name two of many!), yoga will help the process. It will help provide the individual with the strength and logic that they need in order to discover that smoking actually doesn't make them feel good.

In fact, once they start observing how they feel, they'll notice without doubt that instead of feeling good, smoking actually makes one feel quite bad inside; it's harder to breathe, for one.

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Now, this book isn't an anti-smoking book, and if you've struggled with quitting smoking then please don't be offended by any of this; there is no attempt here at all to imply that quitting smoking is easy, or just a matter of willpower.

Scientists have proven that there is a true physical addiction that is in place, alongside an emotional addiction that can be just as strong; perhaps even stronger.

## Different Kinds Of Yoga

It's funny to look at it this way, but one of the things that has promoted the spread of yoga in the west, is the same thing that can sometimes prevent someone from truly exploring it and therefore experiencing its health benefits. This thing is variety.

Sometimes when there is only one of something – such as one idea, or one language, or one anything – it's hard for that thing to spread outside of those who abide by it, agree with it, or simply want it to continue existing.

Yet when there are multiple ideas and concepts, the chances of it spreading increase; there are just more people out there who will be able to access it, talk about it, and indeed, make it a part of their lives.

What does this have to do with yoga? Well, there are many different types of yoga; and the reason for this, as we initially discussed, is that yoga isn't a religion; it's an approach to being alive. As such, it's very agile and flexible (no pun intended!) and carries well across cultural, country, and religious boundaries.

Thanks to its diversity and different facets and types, yoga has spread very swiftly through the western world over last 110 years or so; and is spreading faster now than ever before (many western companies will now pay for yoga classes as part of an enhanced health benefits program).

Yet this very diversity has led to some confusion; and people who have been exposed to one kind of yoga might accidentally think that they've seen it all. This is more worrisome, of course, when one has been exposed to a kind of yoga that – for whatever reason – they did not like, or perhaps, weren't quite ready for (just as how some people might turn away from a fitness program if they aren't in the right frame of mind to see it through).

So if you've experienced yoga, or seen it on television, read about it in a newspaper, or overheard a friend or colleague talk about it, then please be aware that there's a very good



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chance that you haven't been exposed to all that there is (which is wonderful, because it means that this next section will be very interesting and informative for you!).

### **Six Major Types**

Yogic scholars Feuerstein and Bodian note seven major types of yoga. In no particular order, they are:

- \* hatha yoga
- \* raja yoga
- \* karma yoga
- \* bhakti yoga
- \* jnana yoga
- \* tantra yoga

## Advice For Beginners

As you now know (if you didn't know it when you started reading, that is!), yoga is a very interesting and ancient approach of uniting the body and the mind. It has proven health benefits, including emotional and physical improvements.

The chances therefore are, if you're on the verge of starting a yoga program (perhaps at a local center or you've purchased a video or DVD and want to try it at home), you're excited, optimistic, and anxious to get going!

Yet it's wise to note that, before going into yoga practice, you should ask yourself some important questions. These questions don't have a right or wrong answer.

They are merely meant to stimulate your own thoughts and give you the mindset that you need in order to succeed as a student of yoga for the long term.

Here are the basic questions that you should ask before starting any yoga program:

- \* what are my reasons for starting a yoga program? Are they realistic?
- \* If my yoga program involves some degree of physical strain, such as certain postures in hatha yoga, have I received medical clearance from a qualified and certified health professional to ensure that I don't injure myself?
- \* Are my goals for pursuing a yoga program (or programs) clear and positive? Do I know what I want to achieve?
- \* Am I prepared to commit the time necessary to really get the most of out of my yoga experience?
- \* Are there people around me who might negatively try and talk me out (or mock me out) of pursuing this path of personal development? Should I either avoid such people, or ask them to respect what I'm choosing to do?

Please note that these are just basic questions; and this isn't an exhaustive list. The point here is really that you should be clear and confident about your choice of experiencing yoga.

## **Basic Sitting Postures With Benefits**

### **JANU SIRSASANA: Correct Foot Placement**

Sit up straight with legs evenly extended in front. Bend the right leg at the knee and place the foot so that the heel is in the right groin and the front of the foot touches the left thigh. Turn the foot so that the bottom of the foot is facing upward and press the knee back to form an obtuse angle with the body. This position will be difficult at first; don't force it. Put a folded blanket under the knee and also under the hips. Gradually the knee will move farther back. Just keep the foot correctly positioned.

### **JANU SIRSASANA: Correct, perfect posture**

Having positioned the foot and knee correctly, stretch the left leg out, keeping the leg firmly on the mat. Settle the heel firmly and stretch the toes up. (The heel should pull gently away from the ankle.) Now inhale and bend forward over the straight leg, catching the foot with both hands if possible. Beginners should bend only as far as they can without rounding the back. When this posture is done correctly and completely, the body will roll forward over the extended leg, absolutely flat from the tail bone to the head. Stay there breathing normally for as long as you can. Inhale, release the handhold, come up smoothly, straighten the bent leg and relax. Repeat on other side.

### **JANU SIRSASANA: Wrong posture**

The heel is not positioned against its own thigh. The knee has not been pushed back as far as possible to form an obtuse angle. The back is humped and curved because the pelvis is jammed and unable to lift properly. Instead of a smooth, complete stretching of the spine, the lumbar is over-stretched and the rest of the spine constricted. The left leg is not flat on the floor.

**TRIANG MUKHAIPADA PASCHIMOTTANASANA: Sitting, forward-bending pose over one leg**

This posture generally follows the previous one. Sit with your legs stretched in front. Bend the right leg so that the right foot is near the right hip. The toes should point back. The right calf presses against the right thigh. The body will tilt in this position so put a small folded towel under the left buttock to keep the hips level and the forward stretch even and extended. Hold the left foot with both hands, inhale and bend forward, keeping both knees together as you stretch forward over the straight leg. Many students will find it difficult in this position to even take hold of the foot of the outstretched leg. Do not despair. Just hold the knee, shin or ankle, and sit, breathing deeply, in whichever position represents your best extension. If the back is tight and the spine inflexible, this will take time. Release the hold and straighten the bent leg. Repeat on the other side.

## Got A Few Minutes

Ina Mirx is 68, looks 35, and can do things with her body that a 16-year-old farm hand can't do, but she wasn't always fit-as-a-fiddle.

At the age of 30, while pregnant, she was forced to jump from the third story of a burning hotel. She landed on concrete, fractured her spine and pelvis, broke several ribs -- and lost her child.

Over the next 10 years Marx tried nearly every kind of regimen to rescue herself from this state. Nothing worked, and she eventually reached such desperation that she attempted suicide, twice. Then she discovered yoga -- her salvation.

With new confidence and a new lease on life, she began teaching yoga and has also written two books, "Yoga and Common Sense" and "Fitness for the Unfit."

With her special yoga program, she combines the physical aspects of Hatha Yoga with Raja Yoga, the meditative side.

Her method is specially designed to reach out to all those who have been left in the dust of the high-energy, high-impact state of modern fitness programs, and those who need to relax and unwind in a short amount of time to relieve a lot of stress quickly.

What's more, the best thing about Marx's form of yoga is that a few stretches a day, for a few minutes a day -- at home or in the office -- can lead couch potatoes and grouches to a very bright light at the end of the tunnel.

Ina Mirx is 68, looks 35, and can do things with her body that a 16-year-old farm hand can't do, but she wasn't always fit-as-a-fiddle.

At the age of 30, while pregnant, she was forced to jump from the third story of a burning hotel. She landed on concrete, fractured her spine and pelvis, broke several ribs -- and lost her child.

## How To Maximize The Power Of Yoga

Over the next 10 years Marx tried nearly every kind of regimen to rescue herself from this state. Nothing worked, and she eventually reached such desperation that she attempted suicide, twice. Then she discovered yoga -- her salvation.

With new confidence and a new lease on life, she began teaching yoga and has also written two books, "Yoga and Common Sense" and "Fitness for the Unfit."

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## A Closer Look Into Yoga – Balance Between Relaxation And Body Control

The body's potential is never fully realized because the mind is treated separately from it. At present, you bear the fundamentals to consummate deep relaxation method, the succeeding phase is to study intense muscular contraction.

The 2 in collaboration enables you to best employ the complete possibilities of your physical structure and psyche gearing them to function for you. Esteem it as a fundamental discipline of all your attributes for nearing the more difficult bodily and mental procedures you will be attempting afterwards.

We, at present, acknowledge that relaxation method of yoga behaves nothing in relation to relaxation as they are interpreted by virtually every folks in the Western domain who compare them on slackening, recreation or encounter. Likewise, Deep muscle contraction do not render any form on various ways for "toning up" also "keeping fit" to which we are acquainted with. Nothing could be far-off in concept from Yoga exercise than letting the body go through physical routines. Intense knee bends, thrusts, free weight drills, every last routines mostly connected to physical and muscular refinement are the absolute antithesis of the element Yoga seeks to fulfill. Because when such exercises are okay for the adolescent cohorts and the sports minded, they boost muscular tissue tensely in the ordinary individual for whom stress is typically already an issue. Truthfully, as well, they take more than regular feat than anybody only an athlete is apt in consenting to work it. But above all they tend to disunite the physical from psyche, as the Yoga approach is forever to view the person's whole being, addressing it as inseparable.

The most distinguished of contemporary theatrical stage directors, Stanislavski, Constantin , whose formulas for acting character actors throughout the globe cite on reduced breath plainly as "The Method," counseled his pupils to discover from beasts how to begin loosening up, then "steer upwards" for pure body command. "See the tiger," he penned in one of his articles " An Actor Prepares". He cites how from a very dead-like state of repose can suddenly breaks through from it with a certain routine of continuous stretching and deep muscle contraction. Then, finally rises on its feet with every inch of muscle working for it. The unity of the body and mind of the tiger makes it possible to carry out such natural movements with grace and ease.

## How To Maximize The Power Of Yoga

The concept Stanislavski sought-after to exhibit was the enormous economy of vitality and motion which consecrates the feline its unmatched grace and might. Hence he lived competent to instruct his pupils how to actuate, tireless, by heavy emotive roles. Ways to breathe in order that their articulations projected, without always reaching, to all recesses of a large hall even if it is applied in a whisper. This is not unexpected to find out that Stanislavski had learned methods of an ancient art called Hatha Yoga.

Just about all of us shall never be rang upon to act as Hamlet or Sweeney Todd 8 times a workweek, to sing in aristocratic opera theater or to start barnstorming by the country as a presidential campaigner. Nor shall we endeavor to tally Olympiad records. Yet, we experience it within our grasp to study rapidly and almost effortlessly this sort of body mastery which even the pure athlete does not ever have because he also is probably to be drudging under a good deal of excess tension, not unless he is either by nature fortunate or features enlightenment of the secrets on counterchanging relaxation and muscle contraction.



## Arresting Truths How Yoga Meditation Can Help You

A headache suffered is an offshoot of the bottled-up anger while maintaining a guise of happiness on the surface. A Bad Case of ulcers perhaps signifies a person has allowed himself to be steered into an executive job he detests instead of adhering to a financially inferior profitable one, which is the more rewarding job he used to dreamed about. Ever wondered about those obscure anxieties, insomnia, unexpected tiredness most people go through. Or, why get that usual inability to complete the projects you start, or just to get cracking at all, since you just can't appear to get over a deep-rooted condemnation of inevitably failing, to which everything you do will never be potentially better or successful?

You hold to, beyond any doubt, realized yourself as one or some other of these self portrayal. Likewise, to recognize very well the only diagnosis is it's all in the mind. Same applies for a cardinal number of people faltering on the way to mortal happiness. Eventually, to give rise to change is the same as attempting to elevate yourself past your own ego effigy. The actual trouble evades you. It is on this degree that a lot of people set out to regard psychiatric help. This is for a fair price of around twenty bucks a fifty-minute time of day session.

And all the same it constitutes a truth which you alone can influence paradigm shift in your attitude and cure any corporal manifestations of negativism. This awful energy remains in the core of your being once you don't confront them. But rather delay your problems drawn-out enough to bury them in the subconscious deflecting disarrays. First of all, you essentially need to identify the real issues that consumes you to find out how you were able to reached a distorted self image. Succeeding you have to resolve, even as you do it with professional assistance, as you begin to pinpoint your troubles solutions seem to surface straightaway. You must discover to dwell on the more constructive light of affairs concerning reality. When you assimilate achieving a benevolent self cognition you will sense you intercept scrambling your brains on matters which you can't control. An innermost sense of tranquility will supersede meaningless agitation. The motivation to fortify complex mechanisms as for camouflaging resentment and denial shall slowly disappear leaving you liberated to direct your aspirations positively.

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At once, you are capable to readily visualize why genuine Meditation, the sort learned from Yoga, compels the preceding disciplines which will exclusively be conditioned by using Deep Concentration method. Simply when you are capable to stick on any single thought lengthy enough to analyze its every aspect and not advance to some other depicted object until you are prepared to manage sincerely by your personal will, you sustain sufficient willpower to go forward. In reality Meditation embodies less rigorous than concentration itself. Inward Meditation, besides staying on earnestly on a single charge, you are absolve to allow thoughts course through your psyche all the time. Provided they are relevant to the primary issue in you life. Naturally, appropriate to hold back from straying into purposeless time consuming daydreaming or even detached connection of thoughts The Yogi sets to commence, in concentration, through purposely centering the awareness on a specific, frequently a section of the physical structure. Therefore the common, crudely vulgarized by the Western idea of Meditation in Yoga as the effigy of a adult male wearing a turban posturing cross-legged in reflection of his bellybutton. Zilch of such characterization, goes without unfortunately saying, dismissed what real meditation is in truth.

## **Free Online Yoga – Is It Safe?**

The practice of Yoga at present is really coveted particularly the freshest free cyberspace yoga. All exercises and workouts can usually be memorized in school.

There are several schools for yoga everywhere in the globe. In the beginning, yoga was entirely implemented and rehearsed in India only nowadays, feels as if it has germinated. Nearly all the folks worldwide recognize the phrase yoga practice while there are a few who do not absorb a sorted out characterization of the concept. It is, for some folks, a workout and one way to center on the mind, body and soul.

There is an outstanding reward which complimentary cyberspace yoga was provided to the masses. They state that the internet is the most abundant means to derive, research and gain knowledge. Just about everything is discovered online. It is without a doubt why the folks stupefy and fastened on it.

Available internet yoga selects nobody particularly. Everyone is a prospect in discovering yoga. All you require to brawl is own your personal computer and obtain internet access.

Now, if you would like to study on the fundamentals, the internet features the sites on ways to discover it the easy style. As far as you recognize how to render and translate, you are adequate to picking up yoga postures.

It is an astonishing breakthrough for yoga, in which is tutored online. Costless cyberspace yoga spares you from attending a yoga session. Also preserves your time, budget and effort. In addition, you will be able to freely arrange it at your place with no one viewing you whenever that suits your preference.

If ever you prefer to experience the unrestricted online yoga, a few careful essentials you may need to possess.

## How To Maximize The Power Of Yoga

Immediately you will question if web free-based yoga is genuinely beneficial. Then if it is, how come many folks go into schools, taking their mats along in their knapsack when they could do it at their place.

Naturally not everyone owns a personal computer handy. That is why if you possess your own computer, effortless and as casual as linking to the net and surfing cyberspace for what you need.

There are several online sites which offers free web based yoga. You may lookup from different sites and make sure never to leave out some.

Unspecified web site that tender complimentary cyberspace yoga will simply needs your registration into their site. All that needs to be done is just to complete more or less important data such as local address, age , name and sex. These facts are significant in feeding you the data you ask for. The age bracket is one matter they require to study since not every practices are proper for each age groups. For instance for the elderly ones, they cannot execute numerous stretching and flexing. This is crucial why you had better fill out accurate facts.

In deciding the most proficient internet site to download your online costless yoga, you ought to make it a point that the affairs they instruct you are entirely precise since some yoga exercises may result to catastrophe and disarrays.

There are few web site which don't actually teach the proper and advocated yoga. They barely would like to participate in the hype which is reason for them to simulate the original web site. Actively doing the incorrect yoga positions and poses imply many hazard in your wellness. So this matter should be treated the right way.

While free cyberspace yoga is exhibited upon the internet, it does not entail you have got to believe it immediately.

## Hatha Yoga - An Idyllic Path To Strengthen The Weak Spirited

As the five-thousand ancient system, Hatha yoga is celebrated utilizing to increase the whole body, awareness and spirit. Folks who perform Hatha Yoga fuse together the stretching workouts of asana in their exercise. It lets in the psychic immersion and breathing methods.

The Indian lotus pose from Asana touches on following poses utilized in Hatha Yoga.

The aim of doing Hatha Yoga is exactly the similar of practicing different forms of Yoga. It aspires to fuse the mortal spirit on the tranquil spirit of the cosmos. On this exercise, the individual executing the Yoga workout gains their spiritual, genial, corporal and affection wellness and aspect.

Executing Hatha Yoga consecrates you peace of mind while celebrating your surroundings, and the cosmos every bit in unison. Successfully performing yoga, letting in every last cases of concentration in yoga is the origins or primary component for a productive yoga session.

Every last remaining types of meditational Yoga bears a few similarities in same manner or otherwise. The principal focal point of Hatha Yoga constitutes the training of the physical structure to yield itself in order for the disembodied spirit shall be competent to assimilate and fulfill its charge. The spirit is accountable in elevating and enlightening. As the spirit is disenchanted, the psyche is unbent and it casts off out every tension and hurting. The physical element acts as well.

Excessively a lot of masses become confused since they do not realize that whenever your organic structure is not in good shape and crippled; your inner core cannot successfully fulfill the chore. Indeed, the main end product of Hatha Yoga is idealized to practice whenever your emotional state is feeble.

Hatha Yoga will facilitate boost your body as it affects and encourages it positively as a result the spiritual aspect shall be competent to function the right way. Your emotional state and human anatomy needs to react positively in order for the mind to be able to maintain on an adept concentration.

## How To Maximize The Power Of Yoga

Once folks get word of the phrase Hatha Yoga, Yoga shall bear on their heads initially. Hatha Yoga is fashionable in that it is the best-selling aspect of Yoga. As a matter of fact, the some other methods of yoga specifically Power Yoga, Ashtanga, Kundalini and Bikram has started from none other than Hatha Yoga.

This ancient Yoga technique is recognized for being the deliverer for the mortal soul. It constitutes being accountable for getting the flesh and the soul into the cosmos. Merely, picture surging to the cosmos and experience zero gravity in the least bit. That is simply indeed unwinding and tantalizing.

Concentration matches something that is grueling to sustain and regain. Whenever you encounter yourself well disturbed from outside coerces, Hatha Yoga could function to oppose them.

The most effective thing in doing this type of Yoga is it aids you to discover for yourself that in that respect follows a ecclesiastic light which radiates in you. Not solely will it shed light on you but it could assist you to turn firmer, decompressed and limber.

The practice required in executing Hatha Yoga grants the spiritual vitality to stream by the exposed energy canals. This will be achievable whenever the psyche, physical and spirit is forging good and delivers harmony. Naturally upholding a fit body is the most valuable of all. Whenever your body is frail, your judgment and emotional state is moved as well

Once you do Hatha Yoga, you are able to easily manage ahead on tension and alleviate any annoyance and stress. Occasionally, employment leaves you haggard and depleted so you want to unwind now and again. Hatha Yoga is the most beneficial cure to let go of that pain in the neck and stress.

## Hot Yoga - Enlightening Truths About Yoga

There are several types of yoga. Among them comprises the celebrated hot yoga. The kind of yoga is defined through a series of poses, which are executed in a heated up room. Inside this warm place where you execute the exercise is maintained at a high temperature of about ninety-five to a hundred degrees. This sort of exercise emits more sweating during a session since you are enclosed a heated up place.

Hot yoga is beneficial as it cleanses your insides and eliminates the toxins deep down the flesh. Because it cooks your carnal system warm, the more pliable it becomes.

Once arranging to do hot yoga, you must own a few accessories such as yoga mat and a handy towel for your perspiration. For you will keep on perspiring hard, you should hold something to wipe away your sweat totally every time.

Anybody who do practice session of hot yoga manage not to wear really stocky apparels as it induces them to perspire to a greater extent.

Whenever you are attending practice sessions for hot yoga, bear in mind to be primed with your article of clothing. The garments you should have on had better be befitting. You will be able to put on shorts on the session.

Clothing into shorts tolerates your skin for respiring and generate off warmth. Students are those who generally use shorts. They are inclined to put on half-size clothes since they are nevertheless energetic and they perspire too often. Whenever you are conducting hot yoga, make certain that you booze many water supply to replenish loss bodily fluid. Whenever you are in attendance to the course, you will be able to likewise take along your personal bottle of H<sub>2</sub>O in order that you are able to swallow in your beverage whatever you need to. This is crucial to fetch along a water bottle in order for you not to acquire dehydrated and thus the skin shall give rise to many more perspiration. Prior to experiencing a hot yoga, always observe it is not wise to feed 2 hours earlier the course begins. It is due to your physic is preferring a grueling practice session.

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Bikram's technique is so much a dependable yoga manner. People who prefer to be thin may apply this kind of yoga since their fatty tissues and cholesterol allow them to be baked by sweat.

While it combusts your fatty tissue, you will not be incinerating every last of it as you even demand some. Yoga initiated nearly two thousand five hundred years ago which was established through Patanjali. Later on its breakthrough, it was used and then used and circulated just about everywhere in the world. Envision yourself executing Yoga while you are aching from sickness such as fever where your blood heat equals to one hundred five degrees Fahrenheit! I reckon you couldn't stand still this sort of high temperature. Whenever you will, you experience complete worn-out yourself.

At the compassion of the discrepancy is Choudhury's will to lay disconnected anyone instructing yoga in a stirred up room from anticipating their course "Bikram Yoga." He prefers to lay to a single position this style solely for those instructors who are certified through his Yoga Collegiate from India and who adhere to his formatted method incisively. This has been dealt upon for there are numerous folks who copy his instructions.

Instantly that you have acquired the divergence of hot yoga amidst every last different manner, consider once more if it meets your sought after to expel your perspiration and unneeded toxins. Think back that in performing hot yoga, every last of your vitality is chartered off. Whenever your physical structure sustains not a concentrated energy to scrap, and so hot yoga is not the exact yoga type for you.



## **Stretching To Fitness – Why Western Exercises Are Making Mistakes**

In the animal kingdom there is no such thing as obesity. It is instinctive for them, unlike men, to be in constant motion. This eliminates the necessity of an exercise regiment. In the simplest motion of a yawning cat, muscles contract intensely as the cat stretches its tiny body with an uncalculating plot in such hint of pleasure after a deep slumber. Arousing the muscles to perk up simultaneously, giving every known muscle group to jolt in preparation for its work load ahead. With one swift motion the cat then leaps on its feet and heads to play off in the fields. Never counting how many strides it takes to burn calories any type of being in the animal kingdom, excluding humans, are always moving for the love of it. They regard it as a natural way of living.

Animals know too well not to discriminate one muscle group from another. They know that their glutes are just as important as their biceps or abs in terms of function and development. This ultimately makes their body and metabolism in check for fat storage because there is minimal isolation of muscle groups that are at work. The more muscles working, the faster to burn those ugly bulges with ease achieving a more natural slender and firm body structure.

Comparatively, most western exercises deal with more focused and isolated muscle work-out. This in effect can show bulky and unevenly proportioned figure. Over doing these exercises can lead to stiffness and muscular cramps, which are treated by massages to relax the over worked muscles. "Over work" is indeed the operative word for it, because those work-outs are tedious and hard to maintain. Eventually people who do it tend to stop, failure to follow through with their regiments causes to seize the work-out. It needs extra effort to succeed. Downsides when stopping are stiffness, rheumatism, neuritis and rheumatoid arthritis due to lack of stretching. Synovial fluids are natural lubricants that are released by the body to flush out toxins in the joints. Stretching the muscles trigger these fluids to be released. Not only that, continuous blood circulation and better flow of lymph are also achieved when the body is in deep contraction. What do these mean? It simply signifies that you'll feel and look younger, about 10 years off your age. Cellular regeneration and lower stress levels, just by breathing properly, does the magic all thanks to deep contraction while you stretch those stiff muscles.

## How To Maximize The Power Of Yoga

People tend to look for answers in spas for their vanishing youth and form. They pay lots of money to have a little glimpse into their youth once again. Hoping massage tables and electronic contraptions will do the trick. As they allow their body and face to go through different varieties of kneading, beating, shaking and pummeling all in the name of youth. Yet the truth only lies in reaching their toes to stretch each morning or yawning sluggishly coupled by deep contraction of the muscles. These are simple ways that can ensure extensive results and never short-lived.

The basis of an ancient practice is founded on this simple principle. Yoga, since its introduction to the wellness community has made its mark among the world's most renowned alternatives to achieve a healthy body. This is not an easy way of working-out. In reality, yoga is fully concentrated on the technique of contracting the muscles deeply, which animals have mastered and humans forgot about of doing. It will be better to start the muscles early to make it almost effortless by the time any yoga session begins. The first essential requisite for all yoga enthusiasts to master is proper posture. This can sound easy, yet most people find it to be the hardest to master. Once the body immerses itself to this habit of proper posturing, it will be undemanding from there onwards. As the various postures, or as they call it asana, become more and more difficult, the limbs become stronger and flexibility comes naturally.

## Yoga videos - What All Practitioners For Yogis Need

Yoga is among the more famous sorts of practices which bears charm on millions of masses all over the world. Contrary to yoga courses it constitute timesaving for each of us who have a tight schedule. This is since you will be able to practice your yoga anytime you wish as opposed to being in a class, which features a decisive schedule.

This is likewise a great deal favorable as these videos are forever available if you're good to go. In these articulated video recordings of yoga we may too rehearse with famous instructors in yoga feeling the rush of exercising with them.

Among the finest power yoga teachers is named Bryan Kest. The fact is his studio is located in Golden State, California. And another good thing about it is even though living in far-off homes we may all the same practice next to him by employing his yoga videos.

We may likewise opt what particular practice we ought to take on and design them into the required workout presently significant to our lives.

It could center on stress reducing, one that services our upper torso, or one that assists shape our essence.

They could as well concentrate on what befits our physical state specifically yoga for pregnant women or yoga for elders.

And finally in that use videos of yoga we may alter the poses according to bodily conditions. As exemplar whenever we experience a hurt foot, as a result, we avoid putting any force on the foremost area of it. We had better then alter a couple of perplexes, just like the Plank Pose ( where we require to lay the knees downwards, so that we will not deliver the full weight of our physical structure upon our forefoot exclusively).

Occasionally it acquires several additional movements to sustain into the sought after poses because of our wounds particularly whenever we are with a steady class with some other

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individuals. Furthermore, Yoga videos provides diversity and assortment. One may develop apathy acting the duplicate patterns again and again for several sessions incessantly.

The involvement and exuberance is doomed once there is a deficiency of variety and assortment. On these Yoga video practices, anyone can select and option from a mixture of videos which would absolutely conform to one's mood or discipline. Subsequently every last, Yoga is a kind of mediation and relaxation, and not an annoying activity or pursuit.

Inside these videos, everyone may delight his or her personal preferred posture or workout. And you will be able to act them or exercise them as tenacious as you care without limitations and postponements.

You aim to discern when and where you would like to execute it. Apart from that, you begin to relish and sense as though you truly are decompressing and you, feel the heart and soul of Yoga. Many state it's comparable to being in nirvana in advance.

Every bit as an outcome, you will breakthrough solace and enthusiasm that in truth stimulates to be sensed during activities of Yoga . Apart from that, capturing and opting these Yoga video recording economize time and feats to attend sessions which needs preparing for.

A few folks may not possess plenty of time and undergo feverish schedules and so this videos are exactly a couple of gradations away from you. In addition, it is really handy to take just about anyplace where you may travel. Furthermore, belonging to a Yoga course sessions amounts to a couple of hours to get at that place and setting out in that location punctual is rather difficult.

Getting hold of a parking space, cross-filing and acquiring space in yoga session class is likewise difficult. Occasionally, you wind up squandering your time and attempts being at that place without very much gratification in the least bit.

## Yoga And Pranayama

Yogi pranayama is not physical breathing alone. Nor is prana to be confused with air. It is a far more subtle substance. Without going too deeply into Yogi metaphysical concepts, let us try to arrive at an understanding of it in terms acceptable to us Western materialists.

A century before the scientists Priestley and Lavoisier conducted their famous experiments isolating oxygen as the substance which made air all-important to life, a British chemist named Maynow ran a series of tests, revolutionary for his times, which convinced him that life was supported "not by air alone but by a more active and subtle part of it." He went so far as to suggest that the lungs were the organ which separated this substance from the atmosphere and passed it into the blood. This substance, or rather this hidden property in the atmosphere, he called spiritus igneoareus, and excitedly presented a paper on it to his fellow-members in the Royal Society. But because in mid-seventeenth century the accepted medical belief was that the purpose of breathing was "to cool the heart," Maynow's learned colleagues held him up to ridicule. His theory was most effectively buried.

The Hindu theory of prana goes much further than Maynow's intuitive reasoning. We might paraphrase it by saying that oxygen itself is the overall stream within which flows a far more subtle force about which we Occidentals know all too little; nor have we ever paid much attention to it inasmuch as no instruments have yet been invented with which to measure and define it. (No need here to dwell on how skeptical we in this part of the world tend to be of whatever cannot be explained away in purely materialistic terms!) Yet whether we like it or not this force seems to exist just the same--a latent vital power ready to be harnessed for our benefit if we so desire. In fact, the Hindus believe that all physical and mental manifestations are dependent upon prana. They call it the breath of life. Another definition of it is Absolute, or Cosmic, energy, and it may help your concept of it if you think of pranayama as the means for filling the physical body with this cosmic energy.

The Yogis say that prana circulates through the human body via a network of special channels called nadis, roughly equivalent to our network of nerves and blood vessels. The nadis, in turn, are governed by seven chakras, or wheels, which roughly are the astral counterparts of our anatomic plexuses (see pages 53-54). The three main nadis are called Ida, Pingala and

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Shushamna. Shushamna corresponds to the spinal cord, while Ida and Pingala are represented as two inter-circling snakes on either side of it and may be identified with the sympathetic nervous system.

## Pranayama And Its Benefits

Many years ago Yoga was defined as "the complete mastery of the mind and emotions." You can readily see how great a part concentration plays in reaching this mastery. For as man thinks, so he is. Thus, although we are always being told that it is impossible to change human nature, you, the individual, can indeed change yourself to a very great extent by determining what your thoughts will be. For the mind is wonderfully flexible and will respond to cultivation as fertile soil responds to it. Think peace, and gradually your entire outlook becomes one of serenity and inner calm. Empty your mind of anger, of resentment against your fellow-beings, substitute an attitude of live-and-let-live, and you will be rewarded by a sense of tolerance that will make living with others infinitely easier. Refuse to be ruffled by the thousand-and-one phenomena that yesterday distracted you from your chosen course, and a deep and genuine feeling of equanimity will soon make it easier for you to live with yourself and, of course, with others.

The Yogis go much further. They claim that the mind of each of us influences the minds of others by means of currents we set up. Therefore, they say, harsh and hostile thoughts spread harm and may actually do harm to those who come in contact with us while on the contrary calm and kindness contribute to their well-being. Be that as it may, we do know--and both medical men and psychologists are the first to agree with this--a hostile, negative attitude is invariably destructive both to ourselves and to our relationships with others. The only constructive approach is the positive one. Through practice of Yoga it is possible to achieve such an attitude without having recourse to such long, arduous processes of emotional re-education as people are given on the psychiatrist's couch. It would be the height of folly not to profit by what is at hand.

For the ordinary person, there is, of course, no such thing as complete detachment. The highly-trained Yoga on the other hand is able so completely to detach himself from the world around him that he achieves startling results. For instance, it is basically through intense concentration--through his single-minded refusal to permit any outside manifestation whatsoever to disrupt it--that the Indian fakir learns so completely to control his body as to perform the feats for which fakirs are famous. Suspending breath for days at a time, halting the beating of the heart, sitting on a bed of nails without any seeming ill-effects--all these are the more spectacular results of

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complete, intensive concentration combined with the exercise of highly-developed will power. We in the West aren't interested in such accomplishments. If the fakirs' feats are mentioned here at all, it is only to demonstrate to what extraordinary lengths it is possible to triumph over normal human limitations. Our immediate interest is to learn to benefit from concentration in practical ways.



## Work – Life Balance And Yoga

After a surge of interest during the consciousness-conscious '60s, yoga began to fall out of favor. Exercisers apparently lost patience with the activity, which offers slow but steady results, and turned to the fast pace and quick shape-up of aerobics. Now yoga is back-less mystical than in the past, less reminiscent of gurus in pretzel positions, and more attractive than ever to people who are interested in working out rather than working toward some spiritual goal.

Once you step out of the metaphysical atmosphere, yoga is a great stretch and flexibility program. Yoga is increasingly being used by those who are having a trouble in balancing their work and personal life. A stressful working environment and a hectic schedule has a telling impact on the personal lives of the modern day executives and so they are turning to yoga to bring about a peace of their mind and to adopt a perfect work-life balance.

Also, many disgruntled runners, weight trainers and aerobic dancers complain that instead of reducing the stress in their lives, their exercise regimes add more.

People rush to work out every day at lunch, force themselves to keep up and then rushed back to work. Surely, it does something good for them, but it is just another pressure. Yoga is less competitive, less stressful, and above all gives a wonderful feeling of being.

Indeed, the healing aspect of yoga is a key to its renewed popularity. The strained knees, aching backs and neck pains generated by the push for fitness and the stress of making it in a competitive world have inspired a packaged set of a book and audio cassettes. Some orthopedic surgeons, chiropractors and neurologists are now referring patients to specific yogis during treatment.

Growing interest in the mind-body connection is fueling a major comeback of the ancient practice, boosted by research suggesting it can reduce stress and blood pressure, improve work performance, even slow effects of aging.

Several techniques are now being taught in mainstream hospitals and businesses; books about them are brisk sellers and discussion groups have sprung up on the Internet.

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Even the Army is interested - it has asked the National Academy of Sciences to study meditation and other new age techniques that might enhance soldiers' performance.

Details differ, but a common theme is relaxing the body while keeping the mind alert and focused - on an object, sound, breath or body movement. If the mind wanders - and it always does - you gently bring it back and start again

Stress-related problems account for 60percent to 90percent of U.S. doctor visits, and mind-body approaches often are more effective, and cost-effective, than drugs or surgery. For example, 34percent of infertile patients get pregnant within six months, 70percent of insomniacs become regular sleepers and doctor visits for pain are reduced 36percent.

## Yoga: The True Meaning

If you enroll yourself for a modern yoga class, you will find that it has many similarities with ballet. Most people take up yoga due to the grace, poise and flexibility it promises, like ballet. However, whatever yoga has in common with other exercises does not last beyond the first look. Even though yoga is now touted as the modern chic way to achieve fitness and health benefits, yoga is a centuries old Eastern practice with deep spiritual roots, combining different cultures and traditions.

But because of the Anglicization of yoga, it has lost a great part of its spiritual aspect, and has become just a new form of exercise to the western world. The meaning of yoga has been lost though the ritual itself has been preserved unchanged. In the olden days, yoga was viewed only as a small part of a larger whole, such as the branch of a tree. But now, the West views yoga as the tree itself, the essential deeper meaning has been lost.

Even though the development of yoga cannot be traced to the exact moment in time, it is roughly taken to be at the time of the discovery of the seals of the Indus Valley civilization which depicts figures in the yoga posture (asana) of the lotus pose at about 3000 BCE. Around this time, the Vedas were also being written and these are the sources of the current yoga postures. The Vedas gave rise to Vedic yoga which created the old Indian obsession with ritual and sacrifice. The yogic corpse asana shows the importance given to sacrifice.

It involves lying as if placed in a coffin, signifying death, the greatest of sacrifices. This is deeply meaningful, even though it might seem morbid today. The corpse pose meant that one understood that according to the Veda's teachings, death leads to freedom.

Yoga means 'union' and sacrifice was seen as something which would join the physical and the spiritual. The Vedanta sutras (verses 4:4, 13-14) say that the free soul is not attracted to material possessions. By wanting us to liberate ourselves from being attracted to materiality, compassion wants us to be self-sacrificing. This spirit of unselfishness and giving must needs be compassionate.

Even today, modern yoga does make this possible. Through the medium of the asanas and

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stillness, we can change our awareness and thus, our outlook. We will feel ourselves to be part of the cosmic whole, and see how giving to others is also giving to ourselves, as we are all one.

Yoga, in the ancient days, was seen as a small part of a whole. Millennia ago, yoga focused on breath work and postures amid the betterment of the mind, body and spirit. But today, yoga concentrates more on postures and less on breathing. Yoga's postures and concentration on breathing do offer tremendous advantages. The medical benefits of yoga include increase in flexibility and energy, reduces stress, improves muscle strength and tone, reduces depression, and improves balance and coordination.

## Kundalini Yoga

The nuclear energy contained within a single atom is considered to be a source of great power. Tantric yogis firmly believe that the energy or the nuclear energy existing in the human psycho physical is actually comparable to that of atomic nuclear energy. As atomic energy is released through the bombardment of the atomic nucleus or the core with high voltage alpha particles similarly, the high pressure of the concentrated biological psychic energy if mobilized by methods like mental focusing can unleash the immense power of the psycho nuclear energy of man.

This pressure of bio-psychic energy if harnessed properly gives a great sideways push and produces quite a few beneficial effects on the body, like:

1. Helps control and channel the sexual libido( retas ) into the much more subtler and purer ego - transcending or trans personal Being-energy (ojas).
2. If the psycho nuclear energy is awakened in a proper manner, it will then automatically appropriate the valve energy or the ojas, which would then produce an upward movement along the central canal (sushumna) of the spinal cord.
3. Will help the overworked, external organs of the body to rest by withdrawing a notable amount of energy from the muscles, nerves etc of the external organs. Also helps in keeping stress out from the vital organs of the human body.
4. Helps in slowly opening or activating the numerous energy centers and associated glands of the body. Thus if the focused meditation is done through days on end, it will help the body and the mind to explore the higher levels of consciousness, which are normally unattainable.

Modern sciences of all sorts, uniformly agree that at the bottom of everything, all existence is energy. And the Indian Tantric system too agrees on this point by proclaiming the importance of energy and by focusing on ways of cultivating and harnessing, this driving force behind everything-energy. According to Tantric parlance, the primordial energy is termed the mahashakti.

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The Vedas tell us that the all pervading divine energy or the state of super consciousness and attainment of pure wisdom is experienced and attained by a person meditating at the absolute highest stage of cosmic consciousness.

Some believe that the primal energy or the kundalini is controlled by the right vagous nerve that controls the nerve phlex of the autonomic nervous system or the ANS. Therefore through mediation when the vital centre in the medulla oblongata is stimulated the functions of vital organs like the lung, heart and larynx are slightly inhibited while the functions of other organs like the stomach, intestine and digestive glands are increased.

The kundalini being the nuclear energy of the psycho physical system, when awakened stimulates the physical, vital, mental and spiritual senses of the human body. Some people call it the bio nuclear, others refer to it as the psycho nuclear energy, but it really encompasses all categories and attempts to name or classify it, for it is the most powerful nuclear energy governing man's existence.

## Yoga For Beginners

Yoga has been around for centuries, but it has become popular over the world only during the past five years. It offers tremendous health benefits if only yoga is done regularly. For a beginner, yoga holds the door open to many possibilities, as yoga can cure a lot of health problems, help one reduce weight, and also tone one's body.

### **Yoga: Types**

There are many types of yoga to choose from. Since you are a beginner, you should go through all the various types of yoga and choose one which suits your personality, condition of health and fitness level.

Understand what each kind of yoga offers and select the sort which you know you will be able to perform without straining your muscles.

### **Yoga: Instruction**

Since you are a beginner, you should definitely consult a yoga instructor. An experienced yoga teacher should supervise you while you do yoga. He or she will also help you select the type of yoga which is suited to your body's fitness and health. It is vital that you are able to maintain the correct body alignment. A yoga instructor will help you made adjustments so that you don't hurt yourself, and also offer changes to the posture if you have any physical limitations. A teacher will also be able to help you get the most out of every yoga pose so that your health problems are all targeted and solved in the shortest time.

Yoga classes are offered in many gyms and studios. Since is many of these places the first yoga class is free, you can try different places and see which one suits you the best.

### **Yoga: Attitude**

Your attitude is important during yoga lessons. You have to remember that yoga is absolutely non-competitive.

You only have to concentrate on your body and its responses to yoga. You might want to challenge your body and make it more flexible, but always listen to your body's complaints. If

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you feel the slightest pain, then come out of the yoga posture or ease up a bit. As a beginner, you do not have to do each yoga pose perfectly. It is normal for your body to protest a bit. Always listen to it.

### **Yoga: Breathing**

It is very important that you breathe properly during your yoga poses. Breathe in and out through your nose during yoga, and breathe deeply. Proper breathing will help you to feel more relaxed and also to do the yoga poses better. In case you feel a tense spot on your body, try and channel your breath to that area in order to relax it. Whenever you feel that you are not being able to breathe properly, immediately come out of the posture.

Get yourself a yoga beginner's kit which contains a sticky mat, a strap, and a couple of yoga blocks and maybe a yoga video. Yoga is best done on an empty stomach, but do drink a lot of water before and after yoga practice to prevent dehydration.



## Yoga For Relaxation

Yoga has now become extremely popular all over the western world even though it has been known to the eastern world for thousands of years. A lot of yoga asanas are named after and emulate the plant and animal world, such as the eagle pose, the tree pose, the cat pose, the frog pose, etc. The ancient Vedic seers must have been trying not only to imitate the postures and the character traits of these animals, but also to create compassion for them. By reading the old yogic texts, you can understand the connection compassion has with yoga and its aim of freedom from the earthly world.

You can understand the meaning of the Vedas only when you are deep in meditation, be it the Rig Veda (knowledge of praise), Yajur Veda (knowledge of sacrifice), Sama Veda (knowledge of chants), and Atharva Veda (knowledge of atharvan). When we can understand the teachings of the Vedas, we can experience an ecstasy which is beyond the material world.

When you have comprehended the Vedic sutras, then this humdrum everyday world recedes and you have a greater insight and more acute perception of things.

This feeling has been described by H. P. Blavatsky, who is an expert of Eastern sacred texts, in his *The Voice of Silence*. He says, 'Compassion is no attribute. IT is the LAW of LAWS—eternal Harmony, Alaya's SELF; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting Right, and fitness of all things, the law of love eternal.'

Yoga always instructs one not to strain oneself to do an asana properly, since straining causes discomfort and pain, which is opposed to compassion. This is because yoga believes that we are all part of the cosmic whole. If an individual hurts himself, then he causes pain to the entire world at large. Thus, strain should be avoided when doing yogic asanas.

There are many yogic postures meant to bring peace. Patanjali in the Yoga-Sutra says relaxation is the spirit of yoga, which shows itself in the asanas we practice today. Yoga demands that we respect our bodies and have compassion for its physical limitations. Yoga wants us to see our bodies as heavenly objects and requires us to foster health in this mortal temple. Yoga experts know that their bodies have flaws, even though they look toned. While

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yoga encourages us to preserve the body's health, it also reminds us that true freedom is achieved only when one is free from one's body, when one has escaped the incessant cycle of death and rebirth.

Yoga is different from the western concept of exercising. The physical outcome is the only goal of exercise, but yoga aims for the betterment of the soul, with the physical results being an offshoot. Since the ancient texts stress that the mind and spirit are more important than the body, yoga stands apart from modern notions of exercise. It aims for unification with the divine, and the feelings of compassion can be merged into each pose.

## Yoga: Different Types

Yoga is becoming extremely popular all over the world today, even though it had been in practice in the East for centuries. There are a lot of places offering yoga classes taught by trained and experienced instructors, and there is also a great number of types of yoga available. There are types such as Ashtanga Yoga, Iyengar Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Bikram Yoga, Vinyasa Yoga, Power Yoga, etc. So, if you don't take a well-informed person's opinion, you can easily get confused as to which type will suit you.

**Ashtanga Yoga:** In Sanskrit, 'ashtanga' means 'eight limbs'. This yoga is quite energetic and intense, and involves a set of asanas (poses) which is coordinated with breath. Ashtanga yoga can be quite exhausting as it requires you to shift quickly from one asana to the next. You have to be quite flexible to do this type of yoga, and it helps you to increase your body's flexibility, strength and stamina a lot since it is so demanding physically.

**Hatha Yoga:** 'Ha' means 'sun' and 'tha' means 'moon' in Sanskrit, which is an Indian ancient classical language. In contrast to Ashtanga yoga, the Hatha yoga is slow-paced and mild, and it is best for a beginner to yoga to start off with this yoga. Since it does not involve any difficult asanas, a beginner will be comfortable with this type of yoga. Like all other types of yoga, the Hatha yoga aspires to bring together the body, mind and spirit.

**Iyengar Yoga:** This yoga is founded on the teaching of B. S. Iyengar and focuses on the proper alignment and form of the body. While Ashtanga yoga involves moving fast from one asana to the next in the sequence, Iyengar yoga concentrates on holding one pose for a longer time before moving on to the next. For this type of yoga, you will need blocks and straps to help align the body into various poses.

**Power Yoga:** This type of yoga is based on the Western interpretation of the Ashtanga Yoga. It does not always stick to the correct sequence of asanas as prescribed by the Ashtanga yoga, but it does involve moving through various poses without stopping and starting again.

**Bikram Yoga:** The Bikram yoga is also known as the 'Hot Yoga'. This is because it is practiced in a room which is heated to 105 degrees and has a humidity of 40%. Usually, the Bikram Yoga involves a sequence of 26 different asanas, and the heated atmosphere helps to loosen

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muscles. The hot room temperature makes people perspire a lot, and this helps to wash toxins out of the body.

**Vinyasa Yoga:** 'Vinyasa' means a breath-coordinated movement and this is yet another rapid kind of yoga. It begins with salutations to the sun and continues to strong stretching. Each asana is balanced with a counter-asana.

There is no rule about you sticking to one kind of yoga. You can start with an easy one and proceed on to more difficult ones.

## Yoga And Spirituality

Yoga is primarily a practice comprising of a sequence of mild actions and stances that improve our body's flexibility, posture, blood circulation etc. Many who regularly engage in Yoga often relate how the practice has helped improve their physical and emotional well being.

What even many yoga enthusiasts do not know is that the practice can often help individuals cope up with tremendous emotional trauma or sorrow. Also, yoga has been known to have a particularly marvelous effect on older individuals. As many older individuals are likely to tell you this effect is not just physical but in many ways quite spiritual. People who are above a certain age have found that yoga greatly improves their life in a manner not usually associated with an exercise regime.

In Sanskrit 'Yoga' means to add together or unite. It is from this very word that the word 'Yoga' is derived. The practice of Yoga originated in ancient India thousands of years ago and has since then been recognized as a means of uniting the soul with the body and thereby finding one's true identity. Often the various Yogic postures are accompanied by the utterance of the 'OM' sound, but usually they are practiced in complete silence. Though here in the West yogic postures or asanas are what receive maximum attention Yoga in its original form also emphasized equally on practices such as breathing (by means of a special method called pranayama), meditation (or dhyana) and tremendous concentration (called dharana). As is obvious each of these practices have less to do with basic exercises and more to do with what can safely be termed 'spirituality'.

Hence, regular practice of yoga can open up a new doorway in our lives and lead us to a level of spiritual well-being where most of us have never been before.

Due to your unfamiliarity with the word you might be wondering what Spirituality actually means. Of course we tend to use the word Spirituality quite loosely in our everyday lives but originally Spirituality refers to the attainment of a certain form of wisdom that one seeks, willingly in order to achieve equilibrium in his/her life.

Spirituality is about transcending the confines of ones own self by means of an assisting force

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that is in many ways far more powerful than the self itself. It is the only means of finding the true reason for ones own life and thereby achieving a form of enlightenment that grants you unconditional tranquility and boundless joy.

Spirituality is your key to coping with the surprises life springs on you in a calm and collected manner.

To gain such composure we must enhance our spiritual capacities by means of methods such as Yoga and meditation. Meditation allows us to extend our inner tranquility to our outer space by forming a link between our mind and body. Meditation is not a religion bound practice rather it is a spiritual routine that may be carried out by one and all. Meditation may be accompanied by relaxing music or a spiritually stirring bit of reading for best results. Many also think that the best time for meditation is sometime early in the morning or even late in the evening.

## Yoga Teaching Tips

If you teach Yoga you have got to give out a prenatal warning to all your adult female students at the beginning of every class. Women have a habit of keeping matters such as this a secret and unless you explicitly spell it out they are most likely to NOT tell you about it. So prevent any such discrepancy and cover the prenatal warning everyday before you begin your class.

To make sure your students know all about the Prenatal Yoga warning include details regarding it in the handout or questionnaire you give out to your new students.

All prenatal yoga classes are directed at the well being of women who are pregnant. If you are trained to teach prenatal yoga only then should you go ahead and teach yoga to women who are pregnant. In case you are not trained for the same refer your pregnant students to some other yoga teacher who you know is qualified to teach prenatal yoga.

While teaching Forward bend make sure you ensure that none of your students are pregnant. Having taken care of that ask your students to fold their body by simply following their breath. The purpose of the posture would be to elongate the spine, as far as possible.

Once the elongation is complete the waist will be gently pulled into a point and the heart will be pulled towards the toes. While the instructions might sound easy but ultimately they are difficult to perform so make sure you guide your students correctly.

When you shift to the neck rolls remember to make sure that you exclude your older students out of the exercise.

The others (who are not so old) should also be performing the neck rolls only after a bit of isometric exercises for the neck. Merge Pranayama with the isometric exercises for best results.

When teaching Sun Salutations or Surya Namaskar make sure that your students' knees are right above their ankle during the lunges. If the knee is pushing forward, far from the ankle then the soft tissues in their knee joint can undergo untimely damage. This tip is of particular importance when dealing with students who already have a knee problem.

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Being a yoga teacher your postures and asanas are supposed to be no less than perfect. But remember your students are not as good as you and therefore require constant monitoring and guidance. Keep a good look to ensure that all their alignments are perfect at all times.

For instance, during the 2nd Warrior Pose many of your students will be required to be reminded about keeping the back arm at a certain specific level, lowering the arm will take away all the benefits of the posture.

Similarly, during the tree pose you will find many of your students forcefully pressing their foot against one side of their knee on the leg on which they are balancing themselves. Quickly help them relax their force on the knee to save the knee joint from untimely wear. Tell them to put their foot either above or even below the knee instead of pushing it directly on the side of the knee.



## Yoga Clothes

The practice of Yoga is directed at relaxing your mind and body. Hence, you must not wear something that is uncomfortable or non-functional or distracting during your yoga sessions. Make sure your yoga outfit feels good against your skin and allows you maximum mobility if you don't want to be constantly reminded about them during the course of the session.

If you have a choice in the matter go for absorbent materials that will easily soak up perspiration from your body. You don't want to feel clammy and smelly during your yoga session, no matter how much you might be exerting yourself.

In the following section we give you a list of the few essential details that you ought to keep in mind while selecting yoga outfits for yourself.

**1. The Yoga Pants** – Yoga pants are of various kinds. Some of them are long and extend up to the end of your ankles while others end above your knees. Most of them are clingy and fit your body snugly. Wearing such a form-fitting outfit has its advantages. For instance, many instructors claim that such closely fitted wear allows them to spy the exact alignment of their students' bodies and thereby allows them to make the necessary changes in their postures.

However, if you are personally not comfortable in such tight garments go for loose cotton trousers instead. No matter what sort of pants you choose for yourself make sure you are comfortable in them and that they allow you the freedom to bend and twist in an uninhibited manner.

Also, ensure that the waist area of the pants do not have any bulky tie which may bite into your skin and prove cumbersome after a while.

**2. Yoga Shorts** – Yoga shorts are your best choice in case you mean to do Bikram or hot yoga. This is because such yoga is practiced in a hot room, which can sweat you up a bit. Shorts are also a good choice during the summer months when the temperature is too high to allow long pants to remain comfortable.

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If you are choosing Yoga shorts for yourself make sure you ensure that they don't ride up your body during exercises. Form fitting shorts tend to stay put in their place and are perhaps the best choice you have.

**3. Yoga Tops** – No matter what sort of yoga tops you choose for yourself (and there really is a wide variety you can choose from) make sure that it doesn't fall all over your face when you do difficult asanas.

Pick up a few fitted tees or even a sports bra (in case you practice Bikram or hot yoga) for your yoga classes. These sort of outfits are both form fitting as well as revealing enough to show your alignment to your instructors.

However when choosing a sports bra make sure you don't end up choosing something you'd be too uncomfortable to wear in a class. Also, ensure nothing falls out of your top while exercising, you don't want to be concerned about what you might be revealing while concentrating on your asanas.

## Yoga Exercise Ball

The stability ball or what has now become popular as the exercise ball originated somewhere in Italy in the 1960's. Initially though most American Physical therapists (who happened to find the exercise ball in use amongst the Swiss) called the exercise ball the Swiss ball, under the impression that it was the Swiss who had come up with it.

Later they found that the balls being used by the Swiss physical therapists were in fact manufactured in Italy. Nonetheless they continued to refer to the exercise ball as the Swiss ball for a long period of time and it is only recently that the names Stability ball or Exercise ball has become popular.

The Aura Wellness Center in the USA was the first American fitness-training center to use the exercise ball.

The ball they procured for themselves came from the Italian manufacturers Gymnic Balls. Down the years many other companies have begun producing exercise balls but a number of loyal customers still swear by the Gymnic Ball tag.

No matter which manufacturing company your ball comes from you can use it for performing a variety of physical workouts, including Yoga and Pilates. A number of gyms, professionals and specialized athletes also use these balls in order to improve their coordination capacities.

The use of the exercise ball however is not confined to professional use alone and a number of beginners have also found them to be of particular help during their exercise sessions.

If you are a beginner at a Yoga class you can greatly benefit from the use of a Yoga exercise ball. Such a ball has been known to help various Yoga neophytes to keep themselves steady during many of the asanas. For instance new students performing the Wheel posture (or Chakrasana) often find the use of a Yoga exercise ball and a nearby wall particularly helpful.

This is because the Chakrasana involves an arched stretch of the body that not too many people can manage on their own right at the beginning.

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The Chakrasana is fantastic asana that helps enhance a person's spinal elasticity and thereby improves his/her posture. It is also known to stretch out important internal organs such as the kidneys, liver, pancreas and even the heart, improving blood circulation. Despite the usual profit it bears for students however people with high blood pressure are advised to refrain from practicing this posture. Also, students with a back or spine problem must take proper medical permission and the help of a qualified Yoga teacher to carry out this asana.

## Yoga For Mothers-To-Be

From the development of spirituality and using meditation to relieve the stress induced by daily life, to a simple weight loss strategy, yoga is practiced for all sorts of reasons. Not only is it an inexpensive form of exercise serving a multitude of purposes, it is also truly effective and has proven its ability to realize all the claims it makes. As a result of this the interest in yoga and the influence of the same has grown over the last twenty years or so.

Teenagers, corporate /working personnel, housewives, the elderly, expecting mothers, everyone can benefit from yoga especially the latter.

Many hold the belief that pregnant women should not exert themselves as both the mother and the child are in a very vulnerable state. Though excess activity or exertion in such condition is not advisable, it's exceedingly unhealthy to be cooped up in one place without any kind of activity at all.

Prenatal Yoga is specifically designed to cater to the needs of pregnant women and can be used to ensure physical and mental fitness during pregnancy. In this state the ligaments stretch and pull with the growth of the foetus, stressing the body. During labor the body tightens up further due to the added tension and excitement, intensifying the pain as it has already reached its maximum capacity.

Since it's a form of exercise that gently stretches the muscles without pulling them beyond their limits, yoga increases your core strength which helps in carrying the child. It relieves the pressure and tension associated with the weight of the baby, thus ensuring a relatively easy birth.

It also uses breathing exercises to relieve stress and tension which in turn, relaxes the body and increases circulation of oxygen. These techniques are well worth the effort as they increase flexibility and strength, which minimize the intense pain to mild controllable pain during labor.

A woman goes through a great deal of emotional turmoil during pregnancy and studies show that rising stress levels increase the risks at this time. Yoga encourages meditation which

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resolves these common fears and conflicts, inducing “yoga nidra” or yogic sleep which relaxes the mind and maintains a more positive outlook, thus ensuring a healthy pregnancy. The meditative state also brings about an incredible awareness which helps you to connect with your child.

Yoga is a very safe exercise and can be taken up in any phase of the pregnancy, even the last trimester and is recommended as it increases your chances of having a healthy pregnancy and a comparatively easy childbirth.

But don't drop the habit once the little one has arrived! Postnatal yoga can not only help you shed the extra weight, it can also give you the much needed relaxation.

Consult with a doctor before taking up any form of exercise and practice yoga before, during and after your pregnancy, to stay in the best of health and spirits during the most beautiful phase of your life.

The best possible position for Deep Relaxation, as you may have guessed, is the Savasana, the Death Pose. And the best place is the floor. Lie flat on your back, using a rug or folded blanket to protect yourself from the cold boards. If for some reason it is impossible for you to use the floor, then choose a hard bed, preferably one with a bed board. A soft bed will never be completely satisfactory, for as it sags under your weight, certain muscles will inevitably tense up. Moreover, a soft bed might lull you to sleep, and sleep is not what you are after at the moment.

You will probably not feel entirely comfortable when you first try lying like this: The floor will feel too hard, you will find yourself tempted to shift positions. But this you must not do, for in order to relax muscle by muscle it is important to lie quite still. Just remember that every body movement, every shift, however slight, means a tensing of one or another group of muscles. To avoid this, make sure that you are lying comfortably, with your weight fairly evenly distributed.

Once settled, take a few deep breaths from the diaphragm, as you have learned in the previous chapter; then allow yourself to breathe normally again. The next step is to get acquainted with the feel of your muscles so that you may better control them. Pretend you have just

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swallowed a tracer substance, and that your muscles are channels through which you are watching it flow.

Now send an order along one of these channels. Move an arm, stretch a leg. Stretch hard, making all the muscles along the way contract--and study what is happening. You will feel muscles quite far removed from the area with which you are experimenting contract in sympathy. If you clench your fist, for instance, you will feel contractions all the way up your arm and into your shoulder. If you flex your toes, ripples of movement will tense the muscles of your thigh.

Now hold the stretch a moment, while you trace your sensations in detail. Memorize them: next time you give your arm an order, you will be able to check whether or not it is being followed. And now let go. Repeat the process limb by limb, until you have a nodding acquaintance with the various groups of muscles through your body.

Now start the stretching all over again, but this time in slow motion. Build the stretch up, slowly, like a cat arching its back. In the meantime let that imaginary tracer substance show you, as clearly as possible, every muscle you have put into play. Observe and note your sensations for future reference. Hold the pose until you are thoroughly aware of what is happening. Then, once more in slow motion, let go.

It is this letting-go process that is the actual mechanism of true relaxation. Think of yourself as a puppet without any strings to hold it up any longer--could anything be more limp? That is the stage you are trying to reach--relaxation so complete that you lose all feeling of alertness. This is your goal.

As has already been said, you are not likely to achieve such a state on your first attempt, nor even the second. Most people make better progress in the end if, instead of trying to relax the entire body at once, they concentrate on some one part. Start, for instance, with an arm. Pretend it is a length of old rope. Let the shoulder fall inert, heavy, on the floor. Let the rest follow, all the way down the arm, until inertia has traveled through elbow, forearm, wrist and palm and the fingers feel like the rope's limp, raveled ends.

## Ashtanga Yoga – Is It Right For You?

Ashtanga Yoga is the type of yoga which was developed and founded by K. Pattabhi Jois. This type of yoga is known as the Eight Limb Yoga which has revolved in Pattanjali's enormous idea. It presented that the path of purification is made up of the eight spiritual practices.

The first four limbs that represent Ashtanga Yoga are – yama, niyama, Asana and the Pranayama. These are considered cleansing practices which are externally correctable. The other set of limbs which are the – pratyahara, dhyana, dharana are the internal practices.

These limbs can only be corrected by the proper application of the Ashtanga Yoga method. This type of yoga method is quite dangerous to the mind.

K. Pattabhi Jois said that practicing these Eight Limbs and also its sub-limbs of the external practices which include the niyama and yama is not possible. In doing so, the body should be strong so that it can perform the practices well enough. If the body is weak, and the sense organs are not functioning well, practicing will never be useful at all.

This is a philosophy that K. Pattabhi Jois has applied, this is important to understand so that in doing the practice, you are sure that the body will improve and the keep it stronger and healthier.

### **Vinsaya and Tristhana is practiced in Ashtanga Yoga**

The Vinsaya is a style that makes Ashtanga and its principles distinct from the others. Vinsaya means the movement and breathing which is used for the internal cleansing process. Each movement done is accompanied by only one breath. Sweat is the most important product of Vinsaya. When you produce sweat, it only means that you are successfully applying the practice. When you perform the Asanas, the body creates heat which causes your blood to boil and excrete the toxins outside of your body. The toxins are found in your sweat. So the more sweat you create, the more toxins are released.



## How To Maximize The Power Of Yoga

The poses are used to fully develop the strength and health of the body. The series of practices make this possible. There are three postures used in Ashtaga Yoga.

### **The three are classified on different levels.**

The first is the Primary Series which aims on aligning the body and also detoxifying it.

The second is the Intermediate Series opening and cleaning the energy channels which comes to the process of purifying the Nervous System.

The last series would be the Advanced Series from A to D. in this series, the grace and strength is measured.

The Tristhana is another yoga principle which represents the union of the three places of action and attention. First is the posture, second is the breathing technique and last is the Dristhi of the Looking Place. All these three should work altogether to perform a function.

Breathing techniques are simultaneous and synchronized. It is important to make a single breath for one movement. Ujjayi Breathing is the Yoga Breathing Technique used in the application of Ashtanga Yoga. Applying this technique must be prolonged after every practice. What you need to master is holding your pose longer at the same time hold your breath. This is an amazing breathing exercise that will increase your internal fire and will strengthen the Nervous System.

Both Ashtanga and Tristhana deal with the series of Dristhi. The Dristhi is described as the point on which you gain your focus or attention while doing the Asana. This enables your mind to be purified and stabilized clearly.

Setting the mind clear and cleansing it can only be done in the Eight-Limb Yoga or Ashtanga Yoga.

## Benefits Of Yoga

Yoga through meditation works remarkably to achieve harmony and helps the mind work in synchronization with the body. How often do we find that we are unable to perform our activities properly and in a satisfying manner because of the confusions and conflicts in our mind weigh down heavily upon us?

Stress is the number one suspect affecting all parts of our physical, endocrinal and emotional system. And with the help of yoga this things can be corrected.

At the physical level, yoga and its cleansing practices have proven to be extremely effective for various disorders.

Listed below are just some of the benefits of yoga that you can get.

**Benefits of Yoga 1:** Yoga is known to increase flexibility; yoga has postures that trigger the different joints of the body. Including those joints that are not acted upon with regular exercises routines.

**Benefits of Yoga 2:** Yoga also increases the lubrication of joints, ligament and tendons. The well-researched yoga positions exercise the different tendons and ligaments of the body.

It has also been found that the body which may have started doing yoga being a rigid one may experience a quite remarkable flexibility in the end on those parts of the body which have not been consciously worked upon.

**Benefits of Yoga 3:** yoga also massages all organs of the body. Yoga is perhaps the only exercise that can work on through your internal organs in a thorough manner, including those that hardly get externally stimulated during our entire lifetime.

**Benefits of Yoga 4:** Yoga acts in a wholesome manner on the various body parts. This stimulation and massage of the organs in turn benefits us by keeping away

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disease and providing a forewarning at the first possible instance of a likely onset of disease or disorder.

One of the far-reaching benefits of yoga is the uncanny sense of awareness that it develops in the practitioner of an impending health disorder or infection.

This in turn enables the person to take pre-emptive corrective action

**Benefits of Yoga 5:** yoga offers a complete detoxification of the body. It gently stretches the muscles and joints as well as massaging the various organs, yoga ensures the optimum blood supply to various parts of the body.

This helps in the flushing out of toxins from every nook and cranny of your body as well as providing nourishment up to the last point. This leads to benefits such as delayed ageing, energy and a remarkable zest for life.

**Benefits of Yoga 6:** yoga is also an excellent way to tone your muscles. Muscles which have been flaccid and weak are stimulated repeatedly to shed excess fats and flaccidity.

But these enormous physical benefits are just a “side effect” of this powerful practice. What yoga does is harmonize the mind with the body and these results in real quantum benefits.

It is now an open secret that the will of the mind has enabled people to achieve extraordinary physical feats, which proves beyond doubt the mind and body connection.

In fact yoga = meditation, because both work together in achieving the common goal of unity of mind, body and spirit which can lead to an experience of eternal bliss that you can only feel through yoga. The meditative practices through yoga help in achieving an emotional balance through detachment. This in turn creates a remarkable calmness and a positive outlook, which also has tremendous benefits on the physical health of the body.

## Need power? Try Core Power Yoga

Core power yoga is an energetic yoga exercise that physically and mentally challenges to help connect to inner power without stopping and accompanied by a heated, climate controlled Vinyasa. It heals, detoxifies and stimulates the body and mind through balance and intention.

Power yoga has created a dynamic, challenging program that combines strength, sweat and spirituality. It recognizes power in different levels; first is the physical power which develops the body's strength and improve health; second is the mental power or the will to concentrate on the practice; and last the spiritual power which is the power behind the physical and mental power.

Core power yoga is the Western version of the Indian Ashtanga Yoga. The term was given by Beryl Bender Birch, an Ashtanga Yoga teacher. It has been brought to the west by followers of Sri K. Pattabhi Jois, a renowned Sanskrit scholar who inspired Western Yogis with his Ashtanga Yoga Style and philosophies.

There are three programs in power yoga. "Core Power" is designed to strengthen abdominals and back and includes both abs-focused Vinyasa power yoga poses and variations of muscle-toning moves. "Unlocking Athletic Power" will develop flexible strength with an emphasis on abs, back, hips and pelvis. "Soul of Strength" on the other hand is a fast-moving power yoga program with a distinct "mid-body" emphasis and some very challenging moves.

Yoga sessions are done in a heated room and composed of different cardiovascular exercises intended to develop strength and flexibility, increase stamina, improves the ability to focus, release tensions and remove toxins through sweating.

Core power yoga practice also requires the execution of yoga poses. Poses are done in a fast pace, some poses are even held longer than the required five breaths. This practice can increase physical endurance and ability to focus on any task for a long time without breaking the concentration.

What is the difference between core power yoga and other exercises?

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Core power yoga is a vinyasa style that has a unique program offering and focuses on core strength, balance and flow to build a solid practice based on strength and spirit. It offers diverse classes like Hot Yoga, Yoga Sculpt, Bootcamps, Teacher Trainings and Mat Pilates. Moreover, it provides better instructors that are personally involved in students' progress, strong and forceful leaders who pays more attention to the students needs. Also the teachers of this exercise work with the students to personalize their programs and creating a sense of belonging and community. And lastly, it provides quality facilities equipped with a unique top tier amenities and a balance aura.

This exercise also offers great health benefits; this lengthens and stretches the muscles and at the same time it builds stamina, strength and lean muscle and mass. It also increases body heat that kills some bacteria and creates a finely tuned state of consciousness of the workings of the body. The focus of core power yoga is on the coordination of the breath movement, connecting the body, mind and spirit to the warmest level.

Core power yoga is best to those who want to improve their performance in their chosen sports like cycling, football, swimming, skiing, surfing, running/athlete, martial arts and other team sports. Some training grounds in sports practice this exercise in transition for aerobics.

Core power yoga can reshape your body and mind!

## Tracing The History Of Yoga

The History of Yoga has a lot to do with the present times. The earliest Yoga started some 5000 years ago since human civilization has begun. The scholars have believed that Yoga was originated out of Stone Age Shamanism.

This is because there were some cultural similarities between Mehrgarh which was a Neolithic settlement and the Modern Hinduism. The shamanistic culture of Mergarh was in fact influenced by Hindu ideals, symbols and rituals of the present. The ancient shamanism and early Yoga had so much similarity for the reason both wanted to go beyond the human condition.

Shamanism's primary goal was to heal the members who were in their community and at the same time act as the religious mediators.

Archaic Yoga also had the same objectives as they were community oriented and they aimed to determine the enormous order through senses and inner vision which then can be applied to our daily lives.

As time went on, Yoga has progressed and has regarded the inmost experience. Yogis then have focused on how to improve the individual enlightenment, recovery and salvation.

Yoga's evidences were first tracked in the archeological evidence which was found in stone seals exhumed from the Indus valley. Yoga postures were traced and seen fro the figures which were illustrated in the stone seals. the artifacts were placed on History books circa 3000 B.C., which was linked to the great Indus-Sarasvati Civilization which was known to be the largest civilization that exist in the ancient world. The Indus-Sarasvati, being a maritime society, exported goods all over Africa and the Middle East. They build up sewage systems and put up geometrical brick roads and constructed multistory buildings.

The Vedas are known as the oldest scripture in the world which were the ancient texts, was brought by the Indus-Sarasvati civilization. It was a compilation of hymns that commends a high power which included the oldest recorded teachings in Yoga. They have considered this the divine revelation. The intelligence of the Vedas was known as the Pre-classical Yoga or the

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Vedic. This was described by the ritualistic ceremonies that the Yoga practitioners have been required in order to go beyond the limitations of the mind.

The history of yoga would not have been completed in the classical stage of yoga. After the time and turn of the millennium, yoga and its spread in different forms have come up with the need for standardization. This is important so that the people will be aware with it and it can be applied by them. Due to this, during the second century, C.E., Patanjali has composed and collected seminal text which was the Yoga-Sutra which had defined the Classical Yoga.

At the age of Postclassical Yoga in the enormous history of Yoga, it gave rise to some productive literature which has included the Tantra and the Hatha which is famously known nowadays. These were taught in schools for Yoga and practiced by many. Therefore, post classical Yoga is described to the adaptation of our present state. It is the time when yoga has evolved greatly and introduced to people. It has then been applied in the United States in the 1800's.

Now in the recent decades, yoga has greatly and swiftly evolved. Swami Sivananda was one of the prominent gurus ever to master yoga. He has served as a doctor and he has generously opened up schools in Europe and America.

Now as we move on with the yoga practices that we have today, it is much helpful and easier to understand if we looked back on the history of yoga.

## The Evolution Of Kriya Yoga

Kriya Yoga is a process of mental purification that teaches meditation through techniques.

The fundamental belief of Kriya Yoga is that all of us are miniature version of the whole cosmos, a microcosm or an evolution of a new world within the microcosmic world.

The followers of Kriya yoga also believes that the most holy supreme creator is a part of us hiding beneath our body, and activating every action through the breath.

The name Kriya is meant as any work “kri” is being done by the power of the in dwelling soul “ya”.

The different cosmic forces controlling, air, fire, water and earth also controls the different activities that we do, namely, religious activities, relationship with everyone and everything, food, pregnancy, and everything performed by the human body.

Yoga on the other hand is the conjoining of these correspondences between microcosms and macrocosms. It is the full acceptance and belief behind the union and interaction of the individual self and the supreme self.

The study and science of Kriya yoga has a divine origin and was not created by human means and intellect.

The modernization for this ancient yoga meditation method has begun in the 1860's with Babaji and has been handed down to the present Kriya yoga lineage of masters directly through the Master to disciple method of teaching.

The disciplined path of Kriya Yoga consists of many different kinds of teaching with different angles to it. One looks at it as a process of beginning with self introspection through breathing controls.



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It is also believed in Kriya yoga that that by enlightening the three qualities of light, vibration and sound simultaneously with proper concentration, posture and breathing through application of a series of techniques, a Kriya yoga disciple is able to penetrate the deepest levels of the unconscious mind.

Through this they can communicate with their inner gods and obtain a fulfilling calmness within them.

The process of purification is attained through diligent practice. The first thing to do is have the mind calmed and freed from any internal chatter by developing the practice of feeble breathing.

Then secondly the very process of observation of pulse rhythm and vibrations in the body enables the seeker to extract the bondage of subtle desires

A deeper understanding of the triple divine qualities leads to a chiseled concentration or a focused mind, therefore preparing the seeker to explore thoughtlessness and inner truth.

All people are mired in the delusion and illusion due to the duality of creation. We are seeking liberation from the phenomenal suffering due to the miseries from ignorance, desire and faulty actions. One should be able to realize that the supreme creator is hiding within and as a self of all beings.

Kriya Yoga provides us with the easiest ways to unfold this lurking truth and unravel the deepest mysteries of godhood from within us.

Kriya yoga teaches breath control and calmness and it aims for well self realization within one lifetime.

Kriya yoga is a non-sectarian group and teaches that work is worship and whatever you do is from and for the Supreme Being and creator. It teaches about the different beliefs of the origin, destiny and evolution of souls.

A Kriya Yoga disciple believes in direct and immediate spiritual experience and is only taught through direct contact with the teacher.

## Another Relaxation Technique

Another excellent preliminary relaxation routine is stretching on waking up. Make it a habit never to jump out of bed in the morning. Instead, give yourself a minute or two to wake your body thoroughly. Lie flat on your back, preferably without a pillow. Breathing deeply but easily, start by consciously stretching one leg from the hip down, toes pointing so that you can feel the muscles of the calf, and the leg itself feels about an inch longer than the other. Relax, then repeat with the other leg. Now stretch your arms hard sideways, then over your head, tensing shoulder and neck and muscles, and arching your back like a cat. Now get up \_slowly, \_avoiding jerky motions. You have never seen a dog or cat jump up from a nap, unless it has been startled and alerted as if to danger, in which case its adrenaline is probably pouring through its body. It is precisely such harmful purposeless over-stimulation that you must teach yourself to avoid. Incidentally, this getting-up routine is worth an extra half hour's sleep.

We have already mentioned that the ancient Yogis developed their exercise techniques from observing animal life. Not only did they appreciate the genius for relaxation all animals possess. They realized that animals, utilizing their energies properly, sleeping at intervals around the clock, eating only according to need, live to five times their maturity and keep their full vigor five-sixths of their life, while men and women live to only twice their maturity and begin to lose their vitality half-way through. Carrying their emulation of beasts and birds to a logical conclusion the Yogis became the exception to the rule. Highly cultivated, highly civilized as they are, they know enough to turn to the simple and the primitive in order to re-discover natural living and nature's laws.

Obviously the pursuit of the an of relaxation isn't a matter of physical positions alone. Since relaxation is a matter for the mind and spirit as well as for the body, other factors too are involved and they will be discussed at the proper time. But while we are still on the physiological aspects, it should be pointed out that, like proper breathing, correct posture sets up the ideal conditions for the mental and spiritual side of Yoga, since in a relaxed body the blood, stimulated by greater amounts of oxygen, flushes poisons out of every cell. This results in a greater sense of well-being, the body becoming alert, magnificently responsive to the dictates of mind and of will. Thus the Yogi may then be likened to a consummate artist capable of drawing the best out of a perfect, responsive instrument.

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The more completely you learn to control the body the more of its various functions become controllable. For instance, with the mind at peace the great Western bugaboo of insomnia quickly vanishes. Not only does sleep begin to come easily to the person who practices Yoga-- its very quality is different--sleep that is deep, calm, profoundly dreamless and restful.

As the tone of the body improves and rest becomes more thorough, metabolism too begins to improve. There is less need for food, since whatever food is taken in is digested and utilized to the last molecule. Hence weight problems begin to disappear. The overweight see their fat burn away while the underweight begin to gain as food begins to do them some good. Next the body, physiologically on its toes, is able to throw off infection, sore throats, migraine and the many ailments of creeping middle age. Specifically the whole gamut of joint diseases such as arthritis, rheumatism and neuritis recede under the double offensive of improved circulation and gently-limbering exercise.

In India it is not at all uncommon to meet Yogis a hundred years old and older. These men, after years of study and concentration, often are capable of amazing feats. It is not rare to hear of long fasts, of breathing so controlled it approaches what in the animal world is called a state of hibernation. Yogis often also develop total indifference to pain. The men who lie on beds of nails, who allow themselves to be buried alive for days on end, may be fakirs but not necessarily fakers. It has been done, and will be done many times again. For what they have developed is the ability to exist in a state of suspended animation.

## Deep Breathing Exercise

The following deep-breathing exercises are most effective if done upon arising. They are best performed before an open window but may also be practiced before going to bed or even sometime during the day.

Stand erect and at ease. Place the hands on the hips, elbows well out and never forced backward. Draw the chest straight upward, then press the hip bones with the hands in a downward direction. By this means a vacuum will be formed and air will rush into the lungs of its own accord. Remember to keep the nostrils wide open so that the nose may serve as a passive channel for inhaling and exhaling. The breathing should be noiseless. Remember to stretch the upper part of the trunk. The chest must never be cramped, the abdomen should be naturally relaxed, the spine and neck straight. Remember not to draw the abdomen inward; lift the shoulders up, never force them back.

To exhale, allow the ribs of the upper part of the trunk to sink down gradually. Then lift the lower ribs and abdomen slowly. Again, care must be taken not to bend the body or arch the chest. Exhale silently through the mouth. At first do not retain the breath after inhalation. Start with three or four rounds a day; increase by one each week.

An excellent way to practice pranayama is lying down. Lie flat on a hard surface--preferably on the floor, using a mat or rug. Let your arms rest by your sides, parallel to the body. Keep the legs straight but not stiff. Relax muscles and mind, step by step, as in Savasana, the exercise for complete relaxation (Chapter VI). Breathe deeply and noiselessly from the diaphragm. Start with three or four rounds a day, increasing by one round each week. This exercise may be done in conjunction with complete relaxation, but do not substitute one for the other. Also, do not try to use a bed unless it is an exceptionally hard one, since relaxing on a hard surface is by far the most effective method.

Persons engaged in sedentary occupations will derive great benefit from practicing pranayama while sitting comfortably upright in an easy chair. For this exercise, inhale through both nostrils, then hold the breath for a short time before exhaling effortlessly. No strict ratio need be established between inhalation, retention and exhalation so long as the process is deep and

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natural. The important thing is that rhythm be established in the entire being, so that the nerves are toned and the mind calmed. You will be astonished how much easier your next task of studying or working will become, how unrest and disturbing elements will vanish from your consciousness. Fatigue will disappear and you will feel deeply refreshed. However, in order to get the full benefit of this exercise you must remember to keep not only your body but your mind passive. Try to blank out all conscious thought, concentrating --as you breathe--on some bland, pleasing object directly before your eyes.

Controlling mental images during the practice of prana-yama is a conscious discipline which must be learned. The average person's mind, left to itself, dances like a flame in the wind. It flits from image to image, free-associating, as the psychiatrists call it, allowing full play to the imagination, to day-dreaming, to wishful thinking. With the mind racing this way, no true relaxation or meditation is possible. The Yogis devised the following exercise to counteract this tendency to wool-gather:

Stare steadily and without blinking at some small object directly in your line of vision. Continue until tears begin to form in your eyes. You need not be alarmed at the slight stinging sensation you will have--there is nothing harmful to the sight here; on the contrary, your eyes will be strengthened. At the same time you will be developing will power. (The Yogis claim this exercise is an early step to clairvoyance, but of course this is not an area we propose to explore in this book.) If your sight is poor or your eyes tire easily, try the following routine after the concentration routine: While breathing slowly inward, roll the eyes with a circular motion outward; then exhale, rolling the eyes inward. Repeat three times, then reverse, and rest.

## Tantra Yoga For The New Generation

Yoga is very popular nowadays. With its various benefits, many are influenced to engage in this form of exercise and meditation. There are so many kinds of Yoga that are known and practiced by many as of today. One if this is Tantra Yoga.

Tantra yoga is more concentrated on the spiritual healing and most of all the integration f the body, mind, and spirit. In India, it is an ancient tradition that sexuality is an important and significant phase to be able to achieve a certain degree of enlightenment.

In Western religious norms, sexual pleasures and desires are not inclined or associated with spirituality. With these differences in traditions, there exists a fine line between their feelings and attitude towards sexuality along with spirituality.

However, in Eastern philosophy, they celebrate and rejoice on the splendor and glory of creation. And later on, they have developed a study or science for understanding how to get most of this therapeutic and wonderful experience. Energy is known and considered to be the source of life in Tantra.

Furthermore, they consider the sexual energy and urge as great and sacred energy. There exists a few of the many exercises that help in the performance on the sexual aspect as well as some dietary adjustments. Some of these physical exercises include contractions, breathing and holding certain positions.

There are so many benefits that can be obtained by performing these various physical exercises. Some of these include improved prostate functioning and enhanced and improved sexual performance. Another benefit is improved sexual stamina when engaging in sexual intercourse.

There are also different kinds of exercises. Aside from the physical exercises, there are psycho-spiritual exercises. These exercises are ways to develop mediation on unconditional love and desire. As a result, this can make sexual activities less anxious and awkward, aside from that, the pressure to perform and move is minimized.

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It is said that the most fascinating sexual experience is giving in completely to your partner or lover what he or she really wants. Expectations may be high so one must perform and must do something about it.

Through mediation and proper exercises, one can think of the various ways which he can satisfy his lover. When one is focused and concentrated on giving what your lover really wants is an experience which can strengthen your relationship with each other, moreover, you will receive the satisfaction you had always wanted. There are few exercises which can help you a lot focusing on your sexual performance.

By repeating some mantras and chants together with breathing exercises and proper meditation, one can achieve these benefits.

There are also numerous ways to take your foreplay to the highest level. With healing massages and gentle stroking, one can receive a rewarding experience that can stimulate both physical and spiritual and healing in different ways.

Reiki or energy channeling healing is practiced before engaging in a sexual activity. This is known to heighten the sexual pleasure in an intercourse. It is an Eastern healing art where-by one partner channels his energy to the other.

Through tactile stimulation, healing is achieved and both the physical and spiritual aspect is enhanced. In this manner, both of you can achieve a deeper state of relaxation and meditation which is very helpful to couples and partnerships.

## The Most Common Types Of Yoga

There are so many different types of yoga today, with this a problematic situation for beginners, it is best to choose a form of yoga that is appropriate for each individual's level of fitness, physical and spiritual goals and health condition.

Some of the most common types of yoga are listed below and briefly explained to guide you in choosing the best type of yoga that you can start with.

Iyengar Yoga: these types of yoga are solely focused on the alignment and precise movements. Yoga props such as blocks and straps are usually used as part of this type of yoga for those beginners who are not as flexible as the experts as to compensate for injuries.

These Yoga props help assist all sorts of people to be able to do the poses comfortably.

Because of its attention to details and the flexible modification of poses, these types of yoga is often a good form of exercise for people with back pain or neck pain, as they are likely to benefit from the random alteration to the poses.

Practicing these types of yoga will give you a good knowledge on the classics in yoga poses so that whatever other style you practice, you will have the basic fundamentals on how to do each position.

In Iyengar yoga the teacher focuses more on alignment and inner awareness. This awareness starts with the body and expands to other parts of the self as one continues with the regularity of practice.

**Ashtanga Yoga:** These types of yoga are commonly called "power yoga" because it is focused on a powerful flowing movement.

Such movements include pushups and lunges, which deals with strength and stamina. These types of yoga are best for people who have successfully overcome



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back injuries and are looking for more challenging practice.

People who are already athletic such as runners, gymnasts and cyclists who want to add more balance and concentration to their routines are also utilizing these types of yoga.

**Bikram Yoga:** These types of yoga are also known as the “hot yoga” for this is done in a very warm room. These types of yoga are excellent tools for increasing flexibility because the heat helps tissue to stretch.

But keep in mind that these types of yoga are not applicable to those that have developed cardio vascular diseases due to the strain placed on the body when vigorously exercising in the heat.

**Viniyoga:** These types of yoga links breathe and movement in flowing exercises that are adapted to each individual. These are often a good form of yoga for those with back problems or neck injuries because it can be easily adapted by anyone.

**Raja Yoga:** These types of yoga aims for liberation through meditation. These types of yoga are only for those people who are capable of intense concentration.

**Bhakti yoga:** Commonly known as devotional yoga, these types of yoga focus on self surrender in the face of the divine.

**Mantra yoga:** Much more know as the "yoga of potent sound," these types of yoga aims at liberation through the verbal or mental repetition of empowered sounds, such as "om," "hum," or "ram."

There are so many yoga institutions to choose from. It is also a good idea that before going into a class, discuss with the teacher first regarding hi or her philosophy and beliefs in order to find the most appropriate and personally appealing form of yoga for you.

## The Physiology Of Breathing

The purpose of breathing, as everyone knows, is to supply the body with oxygen and cleanse it of carbon dioxide. Cut off the oxygen, retain the poisonous waste gas, and death will follow in a matter of minutes. This is elementary. What is not so clear is that an \_inadequate \_supply of oxygen--that is, improper waste disposal--results in half living. The body functions are slowed, the tissues fail to renew themselves. Yet this unsatisfactory state of affairs is so common that we actually take it for granted. In fact, leading chest specialists say that the average person today utilizes only about one-eighth of his lung capacity, a capacity which was right for him back in the days when he lived in caves and spent all his waking hours actively engaged in the business of surviving.

Even when we are not living at par, the heart does a prodigious job. Every hour it pumps some 800 quarts of blood through the lungs which, in turn, eliminate some 30 quarts of carbon acid during that time. The heart beats 100,000 times a day, which means it generates enough energy to lift a weight of 130 tons a foot high. It pumps enough blood in a lifetime to float the largest ocean liner. Imagine what power our heart might have, what energy it could generate, if only its supply of oxygen were increased eight times!

As the freshly-oxygenated blood travels from the lungs to the heart and is pumped on, via arteries and blood vessels, via tiny capillaries, it reaches every cell in our organism. It makes possible the utilization of our food intake for the body's various needs, rebuilding tissues, supplying energy. It stimulates the functioning of the endocrine glands so that their secretions may be better absorbed. It feeds the nerves. It feeds the brain. Then, through a second set of capillaries, dark red now instead of bright, for it is loaded with waste, it travels back through the veins to be cleansed once more. All of the blood in the body makes this trip to the heart every three minutes.

Now what of the lungs? Why is it that most of us do not use our respiratory system properly? Partly the answer is, again, that we have grown effete with civilization. The physiology of the human body remains geared to that primitive state when man hunted, climbed trees, split rocks, and there is little we can do to change this. In a sense we now have too much equipment for our needs, and we are letting it grow weak and flabby with disuse. This imbalance, by the way, has

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been largely responsible for the prevalence of tuberculosis and our susceptibility to it until the development of wonder drugs changed the picture.

But the anachronistic way we are built is not the only reason for our being oxygen-starved, nor for the various respiratory ailments and infection from which so many of us suffer. The fact is, few of us breathe properly.

Look around you. You will be astonished to notice how many people breathe through the mouth instead of through the nose. This means they inhale directly through the pharynx and the larynx (roughly, together, the throat) allowing air to reach the bronchial tubes without being properly filtered and warmed. In order to be cleansed of dust and bacteria air should be drawn in through the nasal passages where the mucus membranes with their secretions filter it. Moreover, as that air then travels a considerably longer road it is warmed to body temperature instead of being allowed to hit vital organs with chilly shock. Breathing through the mouth, then, is an invitation to colds and infections of all sorts.

One final aspect, too often disregarded, of proper breathing is that it must be done from the diaphragm. Women especially, because of tight clothing and girdles, tend to breathe by lifting the chest, consciously drawing the air in. This is less than half-effective, both because the upper lobes of the lungs are the smallest and because the upper part of the rib cage is relatively rigid. The correct way to breathe is to expand the muscles of the diaphragm down and out, then push in and up. In this way the lungs expand to full capacity, air rushes into them, then is vigorously expelled. If you try it, you will quickly see how even a minute or two of such breathing can be enormously exhilarating. But very few of us breathe this way naturally. It is something which must be learned by practice.

Yoga deep-breathing exercises, as you will see shortly, give the body this exhilaration. Some you will find extremely simple--so simple you will wonder why they should be dignified by such formal attention. The answer is that because of this very simplicity they can, if done regularly, soon become automatic, a fine new habit. Moreover, like the more complicated ones, they are a most important adjunct of the practice of relaxation and concentration. Bear in mind always that one cannot be achieved without the other, and neither can be reached without an understanding of the purpose of both.

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Try this first experiment in Dynamic Breathing: Stand straight but relaxed. Breathing as smoothly and rhythmically as possible, with the mouth closed, inhale slowly and deeply while expanding the diaphragm, then exhale by pushing the diaphragm in and up. Take as long to inhale as to exhale, although normally inhalation involves a shorter movement than exhalation. While striving to equalize and slow down your normal tempo, visualize your limbs as hollow tubes through which the life-giving prana is being drawn into your body. Picture this energy flowing into your organs, bathing your entire body and cleansing it. As you exhale, visualize fatigue and exhaustion passing out of your system along with the poisonous wastes you breathe out. Finish with what we call the "Cleansing Breath:" Inhale deeply, then, when your lungs are fully extended, expel the breath suddenly and energetically, using a quick inward jerk of the abdomen to drain the lungs of all air. Repeat the cleansing breath two or three times, and you will be amazed at its bracing effect. After you have become expert at Dynamic Breathing, you can practice it at odd times during the day.

## How To Find The Right Yoga Bolsters

Yoga has been part of our lives when it comes to tension and stress relief. Through yoga we gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of oneself. It also serves as a great tool to stay healthy and prevent certain diseases.

Yoga through the years of repeatedly usage has become a popular alternative medicine. Today it is now used to cure chronic diseases and ailments in the different body systems. It includes the nervous, circulatory, endocrine, respiratory, digestive, reproductive and the musculoskeletal system.

Yoga can be practiced by anyone, including the elderly and those that have or suffers from certain injuries. The use of specific yoga equipments can help people who are not perfectly capable of doing yoga. The use of yoga Equipment can help you achieve the maximum physical and mental results of your practice.

One of the best examples of yoga equipments is the Yoga bolsters.

Yoga bolsters are being used in various styles of yoga like the Bikram, Ananda and Kripalu yoga. These are yoga form that needs much of your yoga bolsters for they instill more use of extensive yoga poses.

Yoga bolsters provide support for the back, abdomen and legs. Yoga bolsters also aids in the proper alignment of the body and the stack of spinal vertebrae.

It is also an effective way to cushion and relieve tension in your lower body and upper body, the neck and the abdomen when doing your poses.

It aids yoga master in doing supine and passive yoga positions. Putting your yoga bolsters on top of your mat provides added cushioning and support to your lower body and makes your yoga session more comfortable.

Yoga bolsters are light and can be easily carried and stored at the corner of your

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room. It can easily fit in to your drawer or a closet without taking much space.

Yoga bolsters also comes in a variety of size, shapes, colors and materials which is designed to fit your need and preference.

Different sellers offer cylindrical, rectangular, Zafu, and a lot of other types of Yoga Bolsters.

Sometime people buying yoga bolsters are quite confused on whether to buy cylindrical or rectangular yoga bolsters.

So here are some brief discussions on the difference between this two. But if you are into yoga class and like the yoga bolsters that you are using then you can buy the type you use.

Cylindrical bolsters are a larger and much more firm that the rectangular yoga bolsters.

Cylindrical yoga bolsters are heavier than the rectangular ones, owing the fact that they have different respective filling materials with different weights.

You can do most things equally well with either kind of Bolster, but the different shapes do have marginal advantages for certain poses.

Yoga Bolsters are used for comfort in different positions, and come in a variety of shapes and sizes to provide that extra level of comfort and support. Placed under knees, ankles, or neck, these Bolsters help to relieve muscle strain during difficult poses.

The round bolsters and Rectangle Bolster props, supports and encourages your body to stretch, relax and open the areas that need it most.

What ever kind of bolsters that you need, I am sure that you will be able to find one that will suit your needs. If ever nothing would fit you in yoga store, make one of your own or find somebody who can make them, giving you a much more flexibility and customization in getting the yoga bolsters that you like.

## Your Basic Yoga Equipment

One good thing about yoga is that it can be practiced almost anywhere, without all those yoga equipments, and by all people of all ages.

When doing yoga it is best to wear loose and comfortable clothing. Yoga is traditionally done and practiced barefoot, but if this does not suit you, you can just wear socks or soft-shoes.

It is also best to practice yoga on an empty stomach. Empty your stomach, clean your nostril and throat, and consume a glass of warm water 15 minutes before you start.

You may drill on energy bars, fruits or drink a glass of water an hour before class to avoid getting hungry or dehydrated during yoga sessions.

It is said earlier that you basically don't need anything in order to practice yoga. All you need is the desire and the attitude to really be into yoga and expand your self awareness.

But this does not completely eliminate the need for different yoga equipment. This yoga equipment helps you do your postures properly.

It helps you achieve the proper alignment, balance and makes the pose a little bit easier to do. The use of Yoga equipments also lessen out the stress and strain from doing your yoga positions.

Yoga equipments help you support your muscles and refrains you from any muscle injuries. Yoga equipment also helps to save energy by exerting less effort on a pose.

After a thousand of years in existence, Yoga has already been part of everybody's lifestyle from any part of the world. From India, yoga has evolved through the years and reaches the United States and other countries extending a different yet proven effective form of achieving self balance that results to utmost health be it physical,

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mental or spiritual.

Now millions of people around the world practice Yoga to cope with stress, feel renewed and energized, release tension, achieve a healthier and fitter body and gain a deep sense of self-knowledge.

Doing yoga is not just about postures, there is also one vital part of yoga that we can never live without, and these are yoga equipments.

When starting out yoga you should know the basic yoga equipments that you will need.

**Yoga Mats:** these yoga equipment provides cushioning on a hard floor, this specially needed if your yoga studio floor is made up of cement or hard wood floor.

This yoga equipment is also provide traction for your hand and feet thus prevents you from slipping or sliding on a wrong position when your doing your yoga postures

**Yoga Bolsters:** This yoga equipment provides support for your spine, abdomen and legs in a number of different poses.

Yoga bolsters helps you achieve the utmost result of your practice.

**Yoga Blankets:** this yoga equipment helps you feel relaxed and comfortable which is essential in the practice of yoga.

Yoga Mats also provides added warmth and softness to your yoga mat, making you feel more relaxed and comfortable.

**Yoga Straps:** this yoga equipment is either made out of cotton or nylon. This allows you to grasp your body part which you cannot.

Yoga straps give you added flexibility and holds your pose a little bit much longer. Yoga equipment may not be a requirement for doing yoga but through times they have been proven to be helpful in their own simple ways.



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They have been useful to yoga practitioners especially to those who are suffering from ailments and the elderly. Most yoga equipments are made to provide support to help you feel relaxed and feel deeper into the pose or do the pose better.

## **A Review On Yoga Poses Galleries On The Internet**

With numerous resources that you can find from the internet, it may be a difficult task for you to find a good yoga postures that will fit in your needs.

And people being more adapt to visual learning, it is much better for us to see the actual pose than to read out the complicated instructions on how to do this properly.

So we have searched through the World Wide Web and compiled all the best yoga poses galleries that can surely help you in your yoga needs.

### **YOGAGALLERY.NET**

**<http://www.yogagallery.net>**

This website has good resource of yoga poses galleries. They provide yoga classes and workshops designed to increase employee productivity.

They are much more into mental and physical well being and the interests for optimal workforce performance.

They believe that yoga is a scientific discipline of removing or eradicating stress and tension and its source.

They're yoga poses galleries exudes the belief that all tension both physical and mental, is stored somewhere in the body and true stress reduction is a matter of discovering how to release that tension on both levels.

They're Yoga programs directly addresses tension in both the body and the mind. Our classes remove stress from both sources since tension in one area has a direct effect on the other.

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### **SHIVJAG.CO.NZ**

**<http://www.shivjag.co.nz>**

This website introduces you to the practice of Yoga, and to the Sunrise Yoga or much more known as the HATHA YOGA all of their classes are provided in Christchurch, New Zealand.

They also supply a range of Yoga products. They also have a lot of photos available on their yoga poses galleries which can really help you in your yoga posture needs.

This site's yoga page provides information about sunrise yoga and Neti Pot for nasal cleansing.

The site provides general information about Yoga including coming events, and they also have a page offering books related to Yoga.

### **YOGAATWORK.CO.UK**

**<http://www.yogaatwork.co.uk>**

This yoga site was founded by Phil Aston, a specialist in yoga which specializes in stress management and development.

They offer a good size of yoga poses galleries complete with instructions on how to do them correctly.

They offer a full holistic approach to mind and body health. Their proven record in helping people overcome stress and enjoy their lives is paramount in this approach.

Their yoga school is located 25 meters from the sea with views over Mount Bay and Saint Michaels Mount in United Kingdom.

Their Yoga poses galleries include pictures and instruction of some basic and expert's yoga poses. They have in their Yoga poses galleries the following poses; The Triangle pose, the wheel pose, the side plank pose, lunging salute, the tree, cobra, the crane pose, the downward facing dog and other yoga poses.

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For additional details just visit their site and see for yourself the other available yoga poses.

**NOWANDZENYOGA.COM**

**<http://www.nowandzenyoga.com>**

This site also offers an extensive list of photos on their yoga poses galleries. Their studio is located on the 4th floor of D tower in Cabotville, Chicoppe Center.

It has 1,200 square feet of space that is big enough for you to roll around. They have polished hardwood floors, large traditional south facing windows and big bathrooms.

They also have ample space for parking and the studio is accessible by stairs or elevator.

This are just a few list of yoga poses galleries available online, there are so many other sites that may offer a better list of yoga poses galleries compared to this site.

So don't limit yourself to this list. If you haven't found what you need on the listed sites above, just go around the net and search them on your own.

## Tips And Steps To Beat Up A Good Yoga Posture

Keeping up a good yoga posture is all it takes for you to be able to keep up with a good yoga practice.

Yoga's not only fine for achieving balance, developing calm, and making you elastic enough to make your body move to its utmost. A yoga posture can also build the inner strength.

### **Fighting the Cobra**

This relieves slight pain in your back and tones abs

**First step:** Stretch out on your stomach with legs and feet joined in together. Plant palms on the floor below shoulders with fingers facing onward.

**Second step:** Next is to lift the upper body by gradually lifting the head and chest, just make sure that you keep your shoulders down. (Pelvis and thighs shouldn't leave the yoga mat.)

**The last step:** Hold your pose for about twenty to thirty seconds as you breathe in even breaths all the way through your nose. Go back to your preliminary location and do it all over again.

### **Strengthens your abs**

**First:** In the first yoga posture, you should situate yourself in a standing position with legs hip width separately, holding arms directly ahead with palms facing down.

**Second:** Twist your knees and squat if you want as if you're about to sit in a chair in your classroom. Make sure to center weight in your heels, lock it and don't bring hips lower than the level of your knees.

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**Third:** Allow yourself to reach forward, and center your eyes in a straight line ahead while breathing in and breathing out all the way through the nose. Hold this yoga posture for about 20 seconds. Gradually go back to standing position, and then you can release your arms.

### The Wind-Relieving Posture

This yoga posture stretches your spine and helps in the digestion of your stomach. It's a good thing to have a good running stomach so that you will always feel fresh.

**First:** Recline on your rear or back. As you breathe in, drag your right knee near to your chest. Keep your left leg in a straight line and on the ground.

**Second:** push your shoulders and the rear side of your neck into the ground at the same time as firmly holding your knee. You can breathe for ten seconds only. This might be quick but seems longer when you execute it.

**Third:** Change the sides, while holding the left knee to your chest for about ten seconds. Complete this set by hugging both of your knees to your chest and holding it for another ten seconds. Do the set again.

### The Upward Boat Posture

This strengthens your abs, improves your balancing ability, and also helps in digestion.

**First:** Sit down on the floor. Bend your knees and place feet flat on the floor.

**Second:** breathe in, bend back and raise heels off the ground, straightening your legs as possible as you can. Expand your arms with palms facing downward. If you find it difficult to perform, you can rest your hands beneath your knees for support. This may be a difficult yoga posture to perform but after a few practices, you will never have that difficulty again.

**Third:** while you hold the pose for thirty seconds, you should keep your back in a straight line, and make sure your abs are doing the work.

## How To Maximize The Power Of Yoga

Practice this yoga posture all over again when you have time and you will find it easy to execute after you have continuously repeated it. A yoga posture can save your health, your digestion and your backbone so better keep it up.



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