

YOGA MAIL

The Industry Journal For Yoga & Human Potential

PP15266/06/2010(024716)
VOLUME 3 ISSUE 2

COMPLIMENTARY COPY

Apr - Jun 2010 ISSUE

*Can we be
stress free?*

Story of Kriya



Are you in CONTROL?

Message from Master Mani

In life there are many choices to make and we should learn to take control of the process of making them. The choices we make decide the state we exist in -- happiness or distress, master or slave. The question is, do we take the reins or succumb?

But what if we are not able to participate in the decision-making process that has landed us in the circumstances we find ourselves in? What choices do I have, for example, if I am in a war zone? Do I still have the opportunity to control the process of making a choice?

If you land in a place as a consequence of decisions already made and enforced, you will find that you have absolutely no control over what is happening around you. In such circumstances, you only have control over the inner processes, i.e. you can only make changes within by keeping your mind sane and emotions calm, and make the best out of an insane or chaotic situation.

I have read about civil wars, genocides and religious wars, and found that those who survived to tell the tale just barely did so -- the gruesome war experiences were too much to bear and they were absolutely shattered by the episodes they witnessed. Yes, there is absolutely no control over the external situation and yet, the greatest of the survivors were those who were able to maintain their inner centred-ness at all times.

(Let us all pray for peace in the short time we have on earth, because no one in the right frame of mind would ever want violence to descend into their homes).

Too many books and seminars are devoted to attracting and manifesting wealth, or unlocking the secrets of wealth -- how about health, peace and harmony? Why do we not focus on love, harmony and integration of humanity? Reading books about manifesting your desires and other positive stuff is good to remain centred and focused on goodness. But I would rather we manifest calmness and peace than just work on attracting wealth alone.

Wealth is not a guarantee to evolve humanity -- only love can save mankind. If we shower love where hatred is sown and understanding in place of intolerance, we will be able to control the outcome. We can find better solutions in peace. Hasn't history shown that a skilled negotiation process brings about greater productivity and solution rather than protest and debate? The most feared individuals in peace and war seem to be the best negotiators. Isn't it wise to negotiate before confrontation escalates to violence? Let's start with our family, friends, relatives, neighbourhood, state, country and then the whole world (not that difficult now with the Internet). Let's influence the world while we can still make choices and are still in control.

Remember that we can only be positive when circumstances around us are positive and peaceful, so let us choose love and harmony. Let us give love when hatred is shown, let us show peace when we are insulted, let us show joy even when we are isolated, and let us show that we choose to live with a feeling of brotherhood when we are discriminated upon.

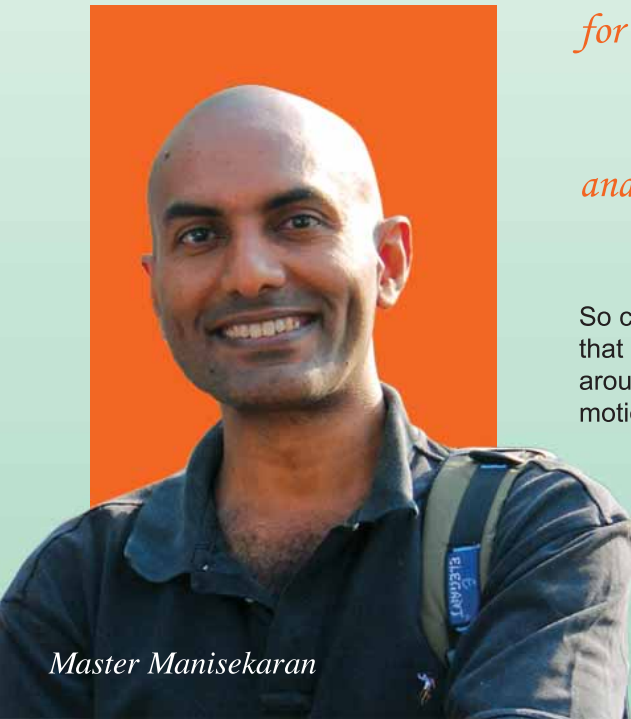
It is a choice we have, and choose wisely, we must. Is that not the beauty of life? That we can always choose? To live beautifully is to choose the best way to live under the external circumstances that might seem hostile and unforgiving. Like the fish in the stream, we can always choose to go upstream or get swept by the current into the sea.

In his own way, St. Francis of Assisi, a 13th century saint, prays for courage to make these choices:

*Lord, make me an instrument
of your peace;
where there is hatred,
let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon:
where there is doubt, faith ;
where there is despair, hope
where there is darkness, light
where there is sadness, joy
O divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood,
as to understand;
to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that
we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born
to Eternal Life.*

So change we must, and soon, we will see that these changes slowly get reflected around us, and we have in effect set off a motion to change our surroundings. **YM**

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Master Manisekaran

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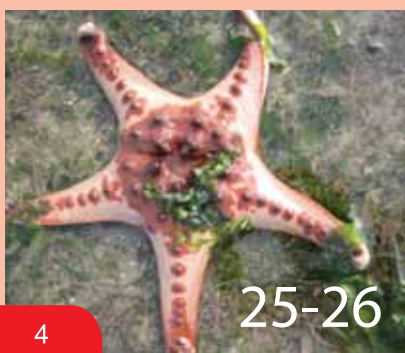
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Calling all yoga enthusiasts, we are currently seeking your contributions either written or photographs (with catchy captions) on anything and everything about yoga. Selected works will be published in our next issue. In every issue, there will be a lucky winner who will receive a whole month of free Hatha Yoga Classes worth RM90! So get those pens and cameras out and start snapping and writing. All works should be emailed to

yogamail@malaysianyogasociety.org

attention to **THE EDITOR**

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Yoga Mail is a quarterly publication of The Yoga Franchise and has a total of 10,000 copies printed each time. Copies are distributed all over the Klang Valley, Penang, Johor and East Malaysia. You can find a copy of Yoga Mail in restaurants, health centres and specific retail outlets, condominiums and apartments. We send copies directly to members of the Malaysian Yoga Society (MYS) & Malaysian Association of Yoga Instructors (MAYI). House to house delivery is also available in specific suburbs. Recent and past copies of Yoga Mail can be obtained via our website.

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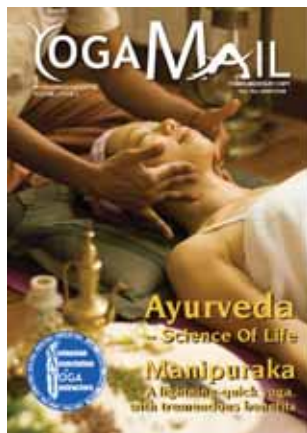
Bang Heng Lee Enterprise,
No.19, Jalan Ambong 3,
Kepong Baru,
52100 Kuala Lumpur

Published by:

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The Yoga Franchise,
No.3, Jalan Ang Seng 3,
50470 Brickfields KL



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Frequency	4 times / year
Publication Month	January, April, July & October
Circulation Method	Complimentary Basis

AD size : _____

Frequency (issues) : _____

Starting Date : _____

Business Name : _____

Contact Person : _____

Address : _____

Postcode : _____

Tel : _____ Fax : _____

Asana Of The Month

Jhulana Lurhakasana (Rocking and Rolling)

How To Do It:

- A**
1. Lie down on a mat.
 2. Bend both knees and hug them towards the chest with hands interlocked just below the knees (or alternatively under the knees).
 3. Exhale to roll the body to the right until resting fully on the side with arms and legs in contact with the floor.
 4. Inhale to return to centre.
 5. Exhale again to roll the body to the left until resting fully on the side with arms and legs in contact with the floor.
 6. Continue this rolling from side to side for 5 rounds then relax.
- B**
1. Bend both knees and hug them towards the chest with hands interlocked just below the knees (or alternatively under the knees).
 2. Exhale to roll backwards, with chin tucked-in to the chest to keep the back of the head from hitting the floor.
 3. Inhale with the momentum to rock forwards until the body is almost upright and balancing briefly on the buttocks before rolling backwards again.
 4. Continue this back and forth for 5 rounds then relax.

Consciousness:

- Synchronizing the breath with movement
- The feeling of the sides, back and buttocks against the floor

Benefits:

- Provides an excellent massage to the entire back, buttocks and both sides of the hips
- Trims away excess fat from around the waist and hip regions
- Energizing and refreshing when performed in the morning

Contraindications:

- Spinal problems
- Abdominal surgery or pain
- 2nd and 3rd trimester of pregnancy



Chef Yogi's Food Notes!

Sambal Potatoes



Ingredients

- 3 medium size Potatoes
 - cut into 1cm cubes
- 5 large Tomatoes
 - diced
- Thumb size Ginger piece - pounded
- 10 dried Chillies and 8 fresh red Chillies
 - blended
- Sugar and salt to taste

Method.

1. Fry potato cubes in a wok. Remove from oil and set aside. With the same oil, sauté ginger and blended chillies for 5-10 minutes.
2. Then add diced tomatoes and allow to simmer for 5-8 minutes.
3. Mix in well the potato cubes. Add some salt and sugar to taste.
4. Stir in some water to cook further until potatoes are just tender. The sambal potatoes are ready to be served!

EVENTS

It's Graduation Time Again!!!

At the Malaysian Association of Yoga Instructors, (MAYI), each year ends with a graduation ceremony for all students who successfully complete various certification courses throughout the year.

This event on the 20th of December 2009 was a blast and had an added twist to it, with a surprise performance treat by graduates of the Monday session IYIC (International Yoga Instructor Course).

A special tribute was also given to all the Karma Yogis who had dedicated their time and tireless efforts towards the organisation's charity events over the past few years.

The evening was made all the more memorable as it ended with an open dance floor and free flow of refreshments for all who attended.

This memorable event ended with a free flow dance floor and refreshments.

Some food for thought:

Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. You don't have to have college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.
~ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The future depends upon what we do in the present.
~ Mahatma Gandhi

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.
~ Eleanor Roosevelt



EVENTS

THAIPUSAM TRIP

Dawn broke as we alighted from the overnight coach upon arrival at the Thaipusam grounds of Penang. The air was cool and breezy. Our senses were immediately flooded with the riot of colours, smells and sounds, as we took in the throes of visitors and devotees who had already gathered there. Devotees all ready to fulfil their vows, surrounded us, carrying beautiful kavadis each individually and devoutly decorated. Adding to the festive atmosphere were cheerfully decorated booths along the road leading to the main temple, distributing free food and drinks.

We made our way past this plethora of colours to the two main temples before starting to ascend the stairs to the main temple on the hill. We paid our respects to Lord Muruga whose special day it was and then made our way down. At the base of the temple, a group of kavadi bearers were dancing in rhythm to the beat of the music blaring from loud speakers. Upon closer observation, we realised that they were playfully competing with each other before making their way up to the temple to offer their kavadis to Lord Muruga. Meanwhile, a free flow of food continued to be served to the hungry devotees after they returned from the temple.

We had a free and easy afternoon. Most of us took the chance to get some rest before getting ready to hit the town and witness more of the Thaipusam festivities. We were treated to more colours, music, and free food and drinks from the booths. The highlight of the evening was the Kavadi Dance Festival which was a larger scale event than the one witnessed earlier in the morning.



We took a break from the spiritual side of Penang and indulged ourselves by paying a visit to one of Penang's more decadent, but equally a must-see attraction – the Gurney Drive with its fabulous spread of Penang hawker. We worked our way happily along the drive savouring local delicacies such as the Penang Kueh Teow Goreng, Fruit Rojak, icy Air Batu Campur (ABC) and lots of refreshing coconut juice.

The next day was spent visiting the popularly frequented Kek Lok See Temple where a 30.2m towering statue of Kuan Yin (the Goddess of Mercy) is enshrined. The next few hours flew by easily at the temple market steps as we shopped for local souvenirs to bring home.

Though tired and weary by the time we pulled in to KL nearing midnight, we were still cheerful and mentally recharged from the Thaipusam excursion. A big THANK YOU to MYS/ MAYI for organising such a brilliant trip!

SAREE NIGHT



The Kepong MAYI affiliate “ZEN YOGA” Centre ushered the Chinese New Year in true 1Malaysia spirit with a “Saree” themed night event, organised by owner Vaishnavi Wong. Students and family members who attended the evening celebration, were stunningly draped in colourful silk saris and admiring each other's rare new look for the occasion. It was a night of fun and fashion for the guests, discovering that to walk gracefully in swathes of material does take some practice to perfect. Thank goodness for the yoga training! The night excitement came to a close with Master Manisekaran's presentation of a “Certificate of Appreciation” to Vaishnavi as an acknowledgement of her contributions made to society.



WE CAN BE STRESS FREE!

There comes a time in our lives when we are suffocating under heap loads of work, outstanding bills, family commitments, social demands and health issues, and we question ourselves, “Can we ever be completely free of stress?”. The answer is YES! And it is in our own hands.

While stress factors are often beyond our control, the stress we face can be under control. It is how we prepare ourselves to cope with or manage our reactions to stress factors that help keep it at a healthy and motivating level. Stress can even be a sort of turbo-charge for us to propel towards positive goals. But how can we tap this great potential energy so that it becomes an ally and not a foe?

In difficult situations we all like to grouse, make excuses and it's always easier to pin the blame on some external factors instead looking within ourselves for solutions. We procrastinate taking action and some of our thoughtless reactions lead to dramas that compound stress levels. This slowly chips us down over time to a fraction of the amazing individuals that we could be.

When experiencing stress, our body responds by secreting more than normal stress reaction hormones called cortisol. This can be useful in giving us that extra boost when we need it, like in an extreme situation of say, saving someone's life. But after the event has passed the excess cortisol takes time to subside and the best way to do this efficiently is to activate the body's relaxation response. If left unmanaged and we are constantly under duress then the elevated cortisol level becomes a permanent feature in our bodies, weakening us physically and mentally. In this case, it is toxic and the common first symptoms that arise can be anxiety, poor concentration, muddled thinking, depression and fatigue. This may continue to manifest physically into problems of blood pressure, blood sugar level, poor thyroid function, lowered immunity and excess fat in the body.

Just imagine tennis balls (stress factors) that are being served at you in a game. It makes the game (life) fun and exciting. There is an objective – to keep the ball within limits and off the ground so that the game can continue. The outcome (stress level) depends on how you

return the ball (reaction to stress). What is your strategy? Are you in for the fun or is the game just a competition for you? Will you play again if you lost in this game? Will you congratulate your opponent or are you going to hurl the racquet and be sour?

In order to make the right moves, we need training just like the tennis player and the outcome also depends much on our own view of the whole scenario, our perception.

Let's have a look at the outcome of the same situation if handled differently:

Scenario A

Mike a sales exec, finds a car double parked obstructing his way and is running late for an appointment. He does the first thing that comes to his mind. He opens the door of his car and starts to blare the horn continuously, expecting the culprit to appear soon and remove the obstruction. When there is no such result, his blood starts to boil and he gets furious, sounding the horn even louder and more persistently annoying everyone in the area. This draws attention to the unfolding drama. Some arguments ensue and Mike has earned himself and his company a poor image as he is wearing a company uniform. But beyond caring, he chooses to be carried away by the heat of the moment.

What does he get out of this?... He is still late for his appointment, people are annoyed with him for disrupting the peace and he feels drained of energy after the adrenaline pumping moment. Mike's next meeting does not go well at all as a result....This is what could easily happen to anyone of us who allow ourselves to just react blindly. On hindsight, Mike realises all these and feels regret.

And the double-parker? Well, she is a little red faced when she finally comes on the scene and quickly slips into her car and speeds away.

Scenario B

In the same situation, Mike decides to bring copies of his company brochures to go from door to door looking for the double-parker. In this more positive approach, he soon locates the culprit and has also made some new contacts for new opportunities. He saved a lot of energy (cortisol) while feeling good with the outcome (stress free).

What happened in the Scenario A is typical for many of us. We comfortably get drawn into our cycle of conditioning to react in some mindless ways that we have become used to. Perhaps it is also a misdirected outlet for expressing some excess lower energies accumulated from daily stress. Not knowing how to come out of the cycle we end up falling back into the old patterns that never get us anywhere and our energies get wasted.

We have heard or read all these before and yet with all our good intentions we still find it hard to change. This is where yoga training can play an important role in our daily lives for stress management. Through postures combined with breathing awareness and deep relaxation, we can first dislodge physical tension toxins that are trapped deep inside our muscle tissues, joints, organs, glands, joints and mind. Otherwise our affected bodies will soon trouble and bog us down even with all the strength of mind. Mental clarity practices of yoga can reinforce positive thinking by steadying our minds and emotions to calmly assess difficult situations and manage the outcomes better. With consistency, the holistic approach of yoga can help us recoup energy, strength and balance so we gain the power to break ourselves away from the from the orbit of stress and become stress free!

Simple SMART with Yoga Tips to Reducing Stress

A. Hands Stretching *(benefits: release tensions in the wrists, hands and between shoulder blades)*

1. With fingers interlaced, palms facing in at chest level, slowly breathe in to stretch the arms away from the chest while rotating the palms outwards. Hold 5 counts to deepen the stretching effect.
2. Slowly bend elbows to return the palms back towards the chest while breathing out, relaxing the arms.
3. Repeat 5-8 times. Emphasize synchronised breathing & movement.



B. Lateral Arc *(Benefits: stretches the sides of the body, expands both sides of the lungs and tones the intestines)*

1. Stand with feet apart at shoulder width, slowly lean over to the left side while breathing out (shoulders and arms relaxed). Hold the position and breathe 3-5 times to increase depth of the stretch on the right ribcage.
2. Slowly breathe in, to return to upright position and relax before repeating on the other side.
3. Repeat 3-5 sets (right & left side is 1 set).



C. Shoulder Blades Squeeze *(Benefits: relieves deep tensions between shoulder blades and the base of neck)*

1. Interlace fingers behind the head, elbows out to the sides. Raise the chin slightly, to extend the cervical spine upwards gently.
2. Let the elbows open further to squeeze shoulder blades together while pressing the back of the head against the hands further. Hold for 5 counts. Then relax.
3. Repeat 3-5 rounds.



D. Quick Power Recharge (3-5 mins):

Lean back in a chair with eyes closed and breathe normally. Tense and relax all the major parts of the body one by one (legs, arms, torso and face) for 2 rounds. Continue natural breathing and count the breath backwards from 10 to 1 slowly. Feel the freshness after completing.

E. For Your Personal and Work Space:

De-clutter - do a spring cleaning to create space and inner peace in the place where you spend the most time.

Eat healthy – reduce meat, spicy, oily and processed food, sugar, salt, coffee and tea.

The Story of KRIYA

Your head is spinning. You step into a room full of rubbish and shudder to find cockroaches everywhere. They make a dash at you and voluptuously devour your books and papers carelessly thrown around the sticky floor. You feel sick. You can't stand the 'nauseating' feeling in your stomach.

It's your room. So you very reluctantly pick the books up and place them carefully on the shelves. You change the paint to a fresh, new, soothing one. Pin up lovely wall papers and change the curtains. You proceed to decorate every inch with care.

There's an abrupt change in your perception. Suddenly, the room becomes an attraction.

You open the books and the mind unfolds. You let yourself sink into the knowledge, clarity, wisdom, peace and the purity it exudes.

Liken the earlier room to a head full of thoughts, of which some are useful and mostly not. In a day, the mind fluctuates through thousands of thoughts, many of which are damaging and powerful enough to block the natural energy flow in the body, and we find ourselves at a dead end. Over time, we find it impossible to relax, rejuvenate or retract into the kind of energetic, forceful, adamant, robust, dynamic mindset we enjoyed as children.

Soon illnesses, which are psychosomatic in nature, start showing in the body. Change becomes crucial for survival and we crave for a rebirth after letting the unwanted pieces in the mind patch themselves up into diseases that are projected directly unto the body.

World over, millions strive on antidepressants, and are practically hooked to multicoloured pills while habitually abusing their bodies and selves. In some cases, families get broken up. Mental disorder cases surge in tandem with so-called development and suicides or murders become part of the daily dosage of our readings in the newspapers.



We watch people fail around us — physically, mentally, emotionally, psychologically and even spiritually — and we yearn to 'metamorphize' into a new self.

According to some religions (like Buddhism and Hinduism), at a certain stage, the soul sheds the old, worn-out body and takes on a fresh one, but the glitch is to learn everything all over again, from day one — which is quite a cumbersome process.

So, being conscious here, now, is a gift in itself. What can we do about it, this very moment? And HOW?

Enter KRIYA YOGA.

We are lucky to have stumbled across this ancient technique. Thanks to the gurus who had taken them down from the hidden hills of Himalayas to our doorstep. Thanks to the Satyananda Saraswathi School of Yoga and philosophy, and thanks to gurus under the Kriya Babaji lineage. Thanks to Master Mani.

Compare the state of the room again. What Kriya Yoga does is absolutely existential.

After the practice of Kriya, the head becomes wonderfully clear and the thoughts orderly, structured and disciplined, inadvertently exuberating confidence, clarity and clairvoyance.



Compared to the wild, active, untamed monkey it was previously, the mind is almost a sage now, completely under control.

There's a sort of opening in the being, and we feel the energy throbbing within.

Clairvoyance? Is that too much to anticipate? No!

Stop. Watch. People are behaving in a routine manner, day in and day out. Their behaviour is predictive but your reaction is not. Even when provoked, you don't lose your cool. You find yourself capable of control as you settle into a more peaceful and harmonious inner space.

The brain is working better. Your memory power is improving and you are attracting the best possible things to yourself for the day... which can be positive or negative depending on what needs to be taken out and purged out.

If you're seeing miracles, you know where they are coming from and if you're seeing ghosts, you know who's creating them. The techniques are powerful enough not only to unleash the inner latent powers, but also to rid the sub-conscious mind of the negative qualities of envy, jealousy, low self-esteem, anger, hatred or phobias that may have been stored for God knows how many centuries.

There are no magical hands orchestrating these changes from behind the curtains. This is pure science. A clear-cut way to ... 'many a splendoured' experience.

The inner chatter has not been swept off the scene, it continues powerlessly without interfering with the happenings of the day.

Awareness seems to have dawned like a speck of light from above. Suddenly we are able to stand apart and watch, no, not the people around, but the non-stop conversation that's going on in the head. We realise that they are two separate entities. The self, and the mind and its workings are not one and the same. Voluntarily we become a witness to the mind's rampant, savage misadventures in the head.

Instead of curbing mental fluctuations, Kriya Yoga encourages activity and awakening in the consciousness. In this way, "all faculties become harmonised and flower into their fullest potential". In other words, even the negative energies are transformed into vital forces that contribute positively to the growth of the practitioner.

How can a set of movements that travel inward into the normally known and unknown parts (subtle bodies) of the body, work like magic? That is the story of Kriya.

Kriya Yoga or Kundalini Yoga is a gift to humanity.

Part of the tantric tradition of India, Kriya is a technique or a hands-on method to awaken the self and expand consciousness. Though it's as old as the Upanishads, it is as explicit as the formulas that work in modern school books.

To understand Kriya Yoga we must first understand the importance of yoga itself, the breathing techniques and the chakras or the energy points in the body. Every gesture has a meaning and every move has a purpose. Hatha yoga, pranayama and kriya yoga walk hand-in-hand, though they can function separately to stimulate the respective beneficial results.

As long as the mind is unsettled, it would not be easy to sit in meditation or experience the harmony that is already within. According to the sage Patanjali, touted to be the father of yoga, the mind can be settled and meditation achieved through Ashtanga Yoga (8-limb yoga) step by step - from yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana and dhyana to the state of samadhi.

Kriya yoga is also a progressive method to achieve the same results, but the yogis refer to it as a 'short-cut' or the 'express' way to the desired state of samadhi.

The sanskrit word Kriya simply means movement or action. The very word implies movements of the physical body (asanas) and breath (pranayama) obviously, and of awareness and also energy, to vital points in the gross and subtle bodies. Added to that are sound vibrations which are said to be directly connected to the chakras. When we utter certain sounds, they hit and open up the chakras.



The method works on multiple levels — directly on the body, mind and nadis and indirectly on consciousness.

In the journey of the 20 kriyas, the mind goes through the process of pratyahara (drawing back or retreating from the senses), which induces dharana (concentration) and naturally enters the state of dhyana (meditation).

The breath, awareness, sound and visualisation are skillfully managed to distribute energy and remove blocks within the body. When the blocks are removed, the path becomes clear, making it easier for energy to flow throughout the bodies completely and thoroughly, via the nadis. This is when healing of certain diseases happen. When the whole body vibrates with energy, we also enjoy emotional and psychological health.

When purification and transformation has happened at the conscious and sub-conscious levels, the mind becomes not only concentrated but a fountain of wisdom. It becomes fit for meditation, which is not so much an act, but a state.

The continuous state of meditation is liberation. Liberation from what? That is something the technique will tell. For example, in Kriyas 4 and 5, as we move into the sub-conscious region, the good or bad memories will arise. As we continue with the movements without paying attention to them, we are in fact training the mind to concentrate on the action in spite of the thoughts. In Kriyas 6 and 7, we direct energy to specific areas where the Kriya yogis have identified the main blockages to be, in order to uproot the problems completely. For example, the stomach area is significant because most diseases spring due to blockages here.

When the blocks or grantis are released, the mind naturally becomes free and concentrated. Only then energy is sent to the brain and the higher chakras of bindu and sahasrara. By then, if you notice, a sort of peace has already settled in, while thoughts have almost disappeared. That is dhyana, the state of no-thought. **YM**

To be continued in next issue

Brahmacharya

Brahmacharya is purity in thought, word and deed. Practice of Brahmacharya will give you good health, inner strength, peace of mind, happiness and success. The story below brings out the strength and power of this inner beauty...

HONESTY & PURITY

A king in ancient times, by the name of Mahendra, was famous for his wisdom and righteousness. People in his kingdom were very happy because their great king ruled justly, and looked after the needs of his subjects.

King Mahendra was also subject to the law of the opposites. The king had but one regret - He had no children. The question about the successor to the throne was worrying the king. His ministers were becoming anxious because the king was advancing into old age and his subjects were also becoming unsure about their own future.

To solve the question about the successor to the throne, King Mahendra thought of looking for a person with good character. He announced throughout his kingdom that people were invited to the palace grounds and from amongst the people present a successor to the throne may be chosen.

People flocked to the palace on the appointed day. King Mahendra addressed the people and told them that he would hand out seeds to each person present. The seeds were to be planted and whoever brought back the best-grown and most colourful flowers would be chosen as the crown prince. A person that can take care of plants and make them prosper can also make the kingdom prosper.

The people took the seeds and went back home.

Some weeks later, people started bringing flowerpots with some amazing results. There were happy plants all over the palace grounds and the plants were displaying their bright smiles through their colourful flowers of great variety. Each potted plant was bearing the name of the owner written in big bold letters on a tag that was attached to the plant. Some of the ministers even appointed a team of judges to help select the winner on the appointed day.

One man, however, had not succeeded in growing any plant in his flowerpot. There was just the soil and not even a tiny plant in his flowerpot. When he brought his empty flowerpot to the palace grounds, people stared at him in disbelief. Some even ridiculed him. His flowerpot with no plant in it was drowned in a sea of colourful flowers. There was no plant to which he can fasten his nametag. He simply attached the tag to the side of the flowerpot.





The king asked the ministers to brief him about the efforts of the people and the ministers told the king about the incredible variety of flowers that were brought back by the people. One minister announced to the people that his majesty had decided to walk amongst the plants to savour the wafting scents of the flowers and to behold the beauty of the colourful flowers.

The king started to address the people. In a sombre tone, King Mahendra enquired about one failed entry where the flowerpot had only soil in it and asked its owner to come forward and explain to him. A man right at the back of the huge crowd raised his hand and started making his way towards the royal pavilion. He could hear people making caustic remarks about him. His ears were getting full with sarcasm and stinging words that were being tossed about by the people. An expression of timidity began to creep upon his countenance as he came face to face with his majesty, king Mahendra.

The king requested an explanation as to why his flowerpot had no plant. The man answered that he had tried his best, even adding more fertilizer and carefully watering the seeds, but that he was disappointed and sorry that he could not grow anything. The king stood up and told the people present that he had chosen his successor. It was none else than the man whose effort at growing a flowering plant from the seeds that were given to him by the king was a total failure.

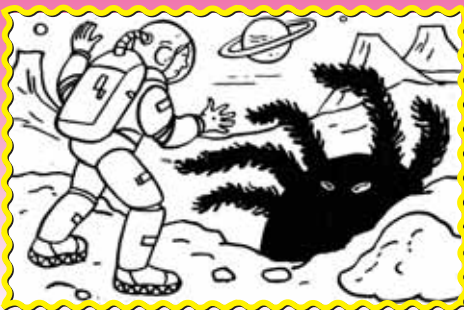
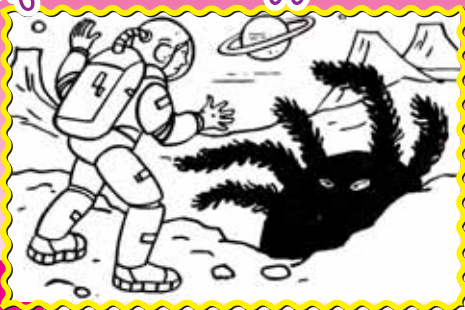
The people were incredulous and the ministers and the judges were dumbfounded. With a look full of puzzle on their faces, they awaited an explanation from the king. King Mahendra placed his hand upon the shoulder of the man that was chosen as his successor and spoke to the people.

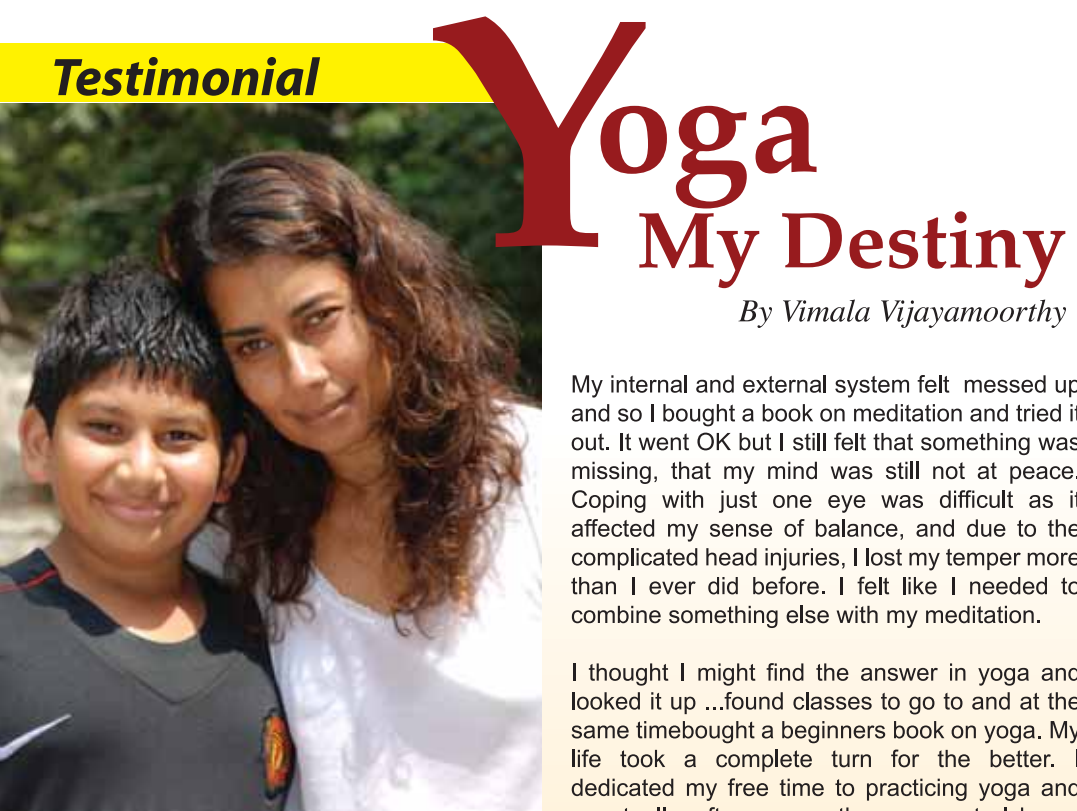
The king said: I was looking for a man with character and I have found him. I had all the seeds roasted before I gave them out. This fact was kept a secret. It was not possible for any seeds to germinate. People who received the seeds from me bought other seeds for their flowerpots when they did not see any plants growing in their flowerpots. I was on the lookout for that honest person who would produce the correct results and when I saw that one flowerpot without any plant, at that moment I knew that I had found that honest man. The man with the strength of character displaying purity of heart, fearlessness, straightforwardness, truthfulness, and absence of crookedness.

The king, who was learned and full of wisdom, concluded his address by saying that his search had ended, because he had found the successor who possessed the Divine Wealth of fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in knowledge and Yoga, almsgiving, control of the senses, sacrifice, study of scriptures, austerity and straightforwardness.

Spot The Difference

Can you find 3 differences between the 2 pictures?





Yoga My Destiny

By Vimala Vijayamoorthy

My internal and external system felt messed up and so I bought a book on meditation and tried it. It went OK but I still felt that something was missing, that my mind was still not at peace. Coping with just one eye was difficult as it affected my sense of balance, and due to the complicated head injuries, I lost my temper more than I ever did before. I felt like I needed to combine something else with my meditation.

I thought I might find the answer in yoga and looked it up ...found classes to go to and at the same time bought a beginners book on yoga. My life took a complete turn for the better. I dedicated my free time to practicing yoga and eventually, after a year, the comments I heard were, "Your entire physical body has changed for the better"; "You are looking better than before the accident", "Your skin has a glow to it"...and it went on and on with endless compliments.

I must also say that internally, I felt younger than ever, I was able to sail through the stress of being a single mother, cope with work pressure, with one eye and my sense of balance returned back to normal and most importantly, I seldom lost my temper.

Today, Yoga is part of my life, an addiction that I cannot do without. Why? Because it makes me feel free from all troubles, gives me a lift, puts a smile to on face and keeps my body fit and looking young. I cannot imagine my life without yoga and I cannot imagine your life without the practice of yoga! You should give it a try and experience all the goodness it will bring to you physically and mentally. **YM**

It all came to me while I was recovering from a tragic accident which caused severe head injuries, the loss of my right eye sight, knee injuries, among others. I was also into the 5th month of my pregnancy at that time and luckily my son who is now 12 is a perfectly normal child.

The reaction from the doctors were endless, to name a few, they were "it was a miracle that the child lived", "her face is so bashed up that she will never look the same", "the head injuries and internal bleeding will cause life long abnormality", "she will never be able to work as a normal person again, nor drive again, nor play sports again ". It was, in short, a steady stream of endless negative reports that came my way.

To top it all, I ended up going through a divorce when my son was one and a half years old. I nearly lost custody of the child - according to the doctors, I was also incapable of looking after a child. I fought with all my heart and managed to get joint custody.

SANKALPA

In Memory of Swami Satyananda Saraswati (26th July 1923 – 5th December 2009)

*I am an invisible child of a thousand faces of
love*

*That floats over the swirling sea of life,
Surrounded by the meadows of the winged
shepherds,*

*Where stillness of divine love and beauty
Rain in the spring and bloom in the midnight
Summer's warmth of softness.*

*Often I pass to the place
Where there is no separation of the sun and
moon,*

*But where eternal light spreads a carpet
Of sparkling reflections of itself
Within the hearts and eyes of all,
Even those who are blind to see.*

*Where sweetness has no taste,
For it is the essence of all beings,
And where teardrops water flowers of
happiness*

*And pass into brooklets of experience
And then to the open sea.*

*Life often cuts at my body and mind,
And though blood may be seen passing,
And a cry might be heard,*

*Do not be deceived that sorrow could dwell
within my being,*

Or suffering within my soul.

There shall never be a storm

That can wash the path from my feet,

The direction from my heart,

the light from my eyes,

Or the purpose from this life.

*I know that I am untouchable to the forces
As long as I have a direction, an aim, a goal:
To serve, to love, and to give.*

*Strength lies in the magnification
of the secret qualities*

*Of my own personality, my own character,
And though I am only a messenger, I am me.*

*Let me decorate many hearts
And paint a thousand faces
with colours of inspiration
And soft, silent sounds of value.*

*Let me be like a child,
Run barefoot through the forest
Of laughing and crying people,
Giving flowers of imagination and
wonder that God gives free.*

*Do I have time to ask whom I shall love,
From whom shall I ask for something more*

*Than all I have been given,
Or what is meant by the signs that
pass before my windows.*

*I learned to read half a century ago
but found it useful*

*Only for speaking to those who
continue to live by books.*

*I shall not pretend to understand
Nor shall I try to reason for the
satisfaction of rationalization.*

*Yesterday I sat in the park and shared an
orange*

And an afternoon with the divines and myself.

And who am I?

*Don't be deceived by my words,
my manner, my way,*

*Or by my friendliness, or by the image
of that of a man.*

*I sleep, eat, talk and play with you and others,
But remember that the gift of inspiration,
or perfection,*

*Is a priceless island of treasure,
Which that whom we call God placed
at the end of rainbows.*

*If I believe I have the strength
To hold back seas, to move mountains,
And the determination to live and love life,*

*It is because I have felt and
seen an image of inspiration
Visible to my unseeing eyes.*

*Yes, I cried yesterday when I read sorrow
In the heart of my love,*

*For I am more than human,
And I laughed from my belly*

*When I saw two camels playing in a sea of
yellow.*

*I am not insensitive, nor have I dulled my
senses,*

*But never shall I become submerged or lost
In the experience of these images,
Of these feelings, of these emotions.*

Don't think that as a child

*My heart cannot turn as hard as stone,
When the arrow of opposition to what I
believe in*

*Tries to pierce my centre of principle and
character.*

*I have a cause, a meaning,
a worth for individuality,*

*All as a means for living in this life,
For striding steps forward, for achieving a
mission.*

*Shall I fall on bended knees
And wait for someone to bless me
With happiness and a life of golden dreams?*

*No. I shall run into the desert of life
with my arms open,*

*Sometimes falling, sometimes stumbling,
But always picking myself up,
a thousand times if necessary,
Sometimes happy.*

*Often life will burn me,
Often life will caress me tenderly
And many of my days will be haunted
With complications and obstacles,
And there will be moments so beautiful
That my soul will weep in ecstasy.*

*I shall be a witness,
But never shall I run or turn from life, from
me.*

*Never shall I forsake myself
Or the timeless lessons I have taught myself,
Nor shall I let the value of divine inspiration
and being be lost.*

*My rainbow-coloured bubble
Will carry me further than beyond the
horizon's settings,
Forever to serve, to love, and to live as a
sannyasin.*

by Swami Satyananda Saraswati

The sushumna being completely filled at the rear (upper palate) is also kechari. The practice of kechari mudra is followed by the state of unmani (consciousness devoid of mind)

The method indicated here in the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, ie shatkarma, asanas, pranayamas are intended to energize sushumna nadi. By that time, everything is set properly, and meditation occurs spontaneously.

Even if you don't know how to meditate, or you do not have sufficient willpower, if you practice kechari mudra, after some time a 'serum' flows into the body. When it mixes with blood and other secretions, the state of mind and flow of prana changes. You begin to feel 'high', and the brain wave patterns alter. Even with your eyes open, you begin to have an altered experience. With the eyes closed you are able to have inner experience. You can hear music internally. You can see the beauty of flowers in any season, anywhere. You can see the moon even when there is none. It is not hallucination, it is real and conscious experience. The body becomes quiet and the mind steady.

Kechari mudra or nabho mudra can be practiced in two ways as has been described. Either the root of the tongue is cut, elongating the tongue which can be inserted into the epiglottis like a cork, or the tip of the tongue simply pressed the back of the upper palate.

Meditational effect on the body are definite and physiologically verified. Alpha waves become intense, respiration reduces to minimal, consumption of oxygen decreases, blood pressure and temperature drop. The rishis realized these effects and therefore instructed the use of specific asanas for meditation and also the use of mudras, especially kechari mudra. When sushumna is active, the heart rate and blood pressure drop, and at that time kechari must be employed. Mudras definitely affect the quality of meditation. You can verify this by experiment. Practice meditation of a passive type for six months. Then change your practice to an active type incorporating mudras like maha bedha and others, especially kechari mudra. The nature of your experience will definitely alter.

When meditation becomes deep and the mind is absorbed in the point of concentration, *unmani* (consciousness devoid of mind) occurs.



Is WORRY Normal?

By Sitpah Selvaratnam

I had not met them in a year. We had a splendid meal and plenty of laughs. Ah, it was good to be with old friends again. As the evening wore, the closeness of friendship settled, and the conversation deepened. Stories of anxieties emerged – being robbed, deteriorating health, work demands, marital insecurity, children's future. I fell silent. Was I feeling worried that I was not worried ...? I could have quipped, "Hey Gals, Chill!", but that would have sounded flippant. I wanted to say "Just stay at peace and all will be", but I did not dare. Instead, my

contribution was "Well Ladies, let's accept whatever life throws our way, with confidence that we will deal with it. Haven't we done that all these years, for better or worse?" Talk about killing a conversation!! I guess I will not be invited to dinner for another year. But, is worry normal?

Everyday we seem to have "millions" of things to worry about, and at the top of the Worry List is the worry that we have "million" of things to do, with the accompanying worry that we may fall short of the approval we seek from "millions" of people. We tend to focus on what is wrong in our lives, and to wait for the moment to spread



this "cheer"-lessness to whoever we meet. They in turn wait to unload their woes on to us! Minds just rest on worries.

The World Health Organization has become quite concerned about mental health. Depression is anticipated to be the Number 1 disease in the world in time to come. 30% of the population in Europe suffer from mental depression, and this is expected to rise to 48% in the coming decade. Are we displaying symptoms of mental imbalance by our constant pre-occupation with what is wrong in our lives?

I must add that I know this “phenomenon” well. I would cackle like a hen trying to lay just one egg over the things I had to do, only to be reminded repeatedly to emulate the turtle that creeps up to shore to lay hundreds of eggs, silently. It therefore, puzzled me that of late I feel so happy inside. Why is that? Is it some kind of denial or shirking of responsibility? Considering that this year has possibly been the most challenging of my 44 years, with multiple illness and deaths in the immediate family, and extraordinary demands at work, I do not think so. This happiness appears to be directly related to the state of my mind, and not to what is happening around me.

These days, my mind refuses to sit on a negative thought for long (to the point that I now run the risk of being a social outcast!) What is happening? Is this joyous state erupting from the blissful thrill of visualising my Chakras in Kriya? Does it stem from simply looking forward each week to my time with my whole self; body, mind and spirit, at Yoga? Is it emerging from renewed hope that my body is able to marginally flex more now than it did before? Or from the physiological calming of the mind through Pranayama?

It is possibly all of the above, and more. Is this not the promise of Patanjali? To unite body, mind and spirit with the Universal Spirit that is Constant Bliss. There is certainly a quiet confidence that grows from knowing that one is on a path that provides internal empowerment to deal with any situation, and to feel good no matter what. It has enabled “little” me to peak into the world of the wise, which dims the external and focuses within. It would seem that I have found my peace within (for now) and the world around me can stand on its head for all I care! (Although in Yoga, standing on the head is not such a bad thing...!). But what is truly amazing, is that the more I am at peace, the less topsy-turvy the world around me becomes. It is as if my peace within, is somehow replicated with peace outside. There is then less of a practical need to worry.

Do not get me wrong. I still have my ‘glorious’ moments of hysteria, but they seem fewer and further between, and are not followed by the usual “guilt” trips. I shall trust this beautiful process that is happening inside of me to take its natural course to eventually sort me out.

So, are we right to believe that worry is “normal”? And when (or if) I am next invited to dinner, dare I say “Just stay at peace and all will be”? **YM**



By Serina Rahman

It's not an ecosystem that is very well known, but seagrass habitats are as vital to the marine environment as a coral reef. It is in fact the bridge between coral reefs and mangrove forests – the link between shore and sea. Not only do they support a myriad of marine animals, plants and commercially important species, they also prevent erosion, sequester carbon and have great tourism potential. If only people knew more about them.

Malaysia has several seagrass beds. Not many are aware of their existence, let alone their importance, but they can be found on the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia, especially around the Johor islands of Sibu and Tinggi; in and around Sabah, such as in a lagoon on the island of Layang-Layang; and most importantly in the Tebrau Straits not far from the southern-most point of Peninsular Malaysia. And these are just a few of the sites that are known to science.

Many more possible seagrass meadows lurk in underwater areas that have yet to be explored, and within them lie countless species that have yet to be discovered. The variety of life in a seagrass meadow is astounding. The seagrass ecosystem behaves like a nursery and breeding ground – marine species gather there to repopulate and lay eggs while juveniles hide in and amongst the leaves.

On top of that, the habitat also supports large fauna such as the dugong and green turtle, both of which feed on the seagrass itself. Where there are little fish, large fish will wander – a seagrass bed is also frequently visited by pelagic species marauding for a meal. Endangered species such as the seahorse are one of several cryptic critters that inhabit these areas – but there are many other weird and wonderful creatures that await the observant visitor.

What is seagrass?

Seagrass itself is often a mysterious entity to the average landlubber. Not unlike grass that grows on land, seagrass has roots, flowers and fruits. The unique thing about this flora is that it lives entirely under saltwater. In one seagrass meadow in the Tebrau Straits, it is possible to find at least 7 species of seagrass packed densely together, yet in other areas in the same Straits, they may exist in singular populations – depending on tidal or water conditions and tolerance levels of individual species.

Often mistaken for seaweed, they are actually easy to tell apart because seaweeds only have holdfasts; anchor-like appendages that keep them fastened to the ground but do not facilitate nutritional intake. The root structure of seagrass functions in the same way as regular grass – they stretch out quite a distance underground, allowing the plant to attain nutrients from both the soil and the surrounding waters.



The biggest seagrass meadow in all of Peninsular Malaysia

Nestled in the Tebrau Straits, at the mouth of the Pulai River, lies the largest contiguous patch of seagrass in all of Peninsular Malaysia. Measuring almost 2km in length, this patch of green surprises you as you glide over the narrow strip of blue between South-West Johor and Singapore. Passing under the Second Link to get to this little recognized marine treasure, nothing can really prepare you for your very first sight of it. For out of the blue, there will suddenly be a patch of luxuriant green.

Long strands of eel grass (*Enhalus* sp.) are often the first to be seen. As you get closer, other species become visible, and as you get off the boat into knee deep waters, the inhabitants of this extraordinary environment begin to reveal themselves to you and the wonders never cease. A patient, observant eye will discern countless snails, crabs, shrimp, sea cucumbers, sea stars, tiny fish, sea slugs and much more taking shelter in pools of water left behind as the tide goes out.



This area is only accessible at the very lowest tide. At any other time, it can be hidden under up to 3m of water. As the waters recede, we are awarded with a brief glimpse of what lies beneath. Some animals follow the tide and lie in wait at the edges of the meadow, patiently hanging around until the waters rise again. The ever-popular seahorse is one of these, hiding in the roots of long seagrass, but a local boatman with an expert eye may be able to find one to show you.

Another tantalizing find is the feeding trail of the dugong. There is a small population of dugongs in this area, but very little is known about them. Local fishermen come across these large, gentle mammals every once in a while and occasionally they wash up dead onto the shore or into the mangrove roots. Local scientists are still scrambling to scientifically confirm their existence, numbers, habits and health – there is still so much to be discovered here. **YM**

Food For Thought

by Sun Lim

Living according to the biological clock brings you an energetic body and mind.

Time	Organ/Gland	Related Emotion	Commentary
5-7 am	Large Intestine	Guilt	Wake up. Drink Water and exercise. Triggers bowel movement to removes toxins from night's cleansing.
7-9 am	Stomach	Disgust	Stomach energies are the highest, so eat the most well-nourished meal of the day to optimize digestion.
9-11 am	Pancreas / Spleen	Worry / Jealousy Low Self Esteem	The pancreas continues the digestive process. Drink more warm water to activate the pancreas.
11 am – 1 pm	Heart	Joy	The heart pumps nutrients throughout the system. Have lunch, close eyes - rest or take a 30 minutes nap.
1-3 pm	Small Intestine	Insecurity Vulnerable / Gullible	Food requiring longer digestion times (proteins). Have lunch, close eyes - rest or take a 30 minutes nap.
3-5 pm	Bladder	Irritation	Bladder detoxification. Making room for the kidney's filtration . Drink more warm beverages.
5-7 pm	Kidney	Fear	Filters blood. Blood delivers useable nutrients to all tissues. Exercise to facilitate the detoxification of kidney.
7-9 pm	Pericardium Circulation	Unresponsive Hurt/Extreme Joy	Nutrients are carried to groups of cells (capillaries) and to each individual cell (lymphatics). Relax, walk, chat.
9-11 pm	Triple Warmer	Hopelessness Confusion/Paranoia	The endocrine system adjusts the homeostasis of the body. Relax, prepare to sleep. Do not use the computer or watch tv.
11 pm - 1 am	Gall Bladder	Bitterness Resentment	Initial cleansing of all tissues, processes. So go to sleep.
1-3 am	Liver	Anger / Frustration	Cleansing of blood. Processing wastes. Sleep.
3-5 am	Lungs	Grief	Respiration. Oxygenation. Expulsion of waste gasses. Sleep.

a) When you wake up in the morning, gargle and rinse your mouth with a tablespoon of cold pressed sunflower seed oil for 15 minutes before brushing the teeth or drink water for lung detoxification.

b) Exercise daily for at least 30 minutes. Walk while clapping the hands or do any other types of exercise.

c) Take a sun bath for 30 minutes daily to promote the absorption of calcium. Sunlight before 10am and within 4pm to 6pm is good for our health.

d) Go bare foot on the grass or walk on the sand for at least 20 minutes every day to release static energy.

e) Do abdominal breathing. Especially before sleeping.



f) Before sleeping, soak your feet in warm water for 20 minutes.

g) Spend time alone for at least 30 minutes every day, do some meditation, yoga, qigong or self-massage.

h) Brush your skin with a dry brush daily before bath for lymphatic detoxification.

i) Be thankful and bless people, learn to forget and forgive, do not gossip, let the other person make a mistake and learn.

j) Every morning and before sleep, tell yourself at least 3 times, everything will become better or any other positive sentences you may like. The sentence should be reinforced every day.

2010 Yoga Competition & Carnival

Date : 17th July 2010

Time : 9am - 6pm

Venue : Bangsar Sports Complex



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Stalls



Games

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SCHEDULE OF COURSES FOR 2010 (APR-JUNE)

APRIL

6/4/2010	Natural Slimming Rejuvenation (Tue & Thurs)
7/4/2010	Prana Vidya (Semi Intensive)
8/4/2010	Prana Vidya (Semi Intensive)
10-14/4/2010	Self Mastery (Intensive)
11/4/2010	Ayurvedic Bodyworks (Semi Intensive)
18/4/2010	Manipuraka Workshop
18/4/2010	Urdhva Retas Workshop
18/4/2010	Pregnancy Yoga Workshop
19/4/2010	Ayurvedic Bodyworks
21/4/2010	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course (Part Time)

MAY

1/5/2010	Full Intestinal Detox Practical
1/5/2010	Free Yoga Therapy Consultation Day
2/5/2010	Pregnancy Yoga Workshop
2/5/2010	Shatkarma Workshop (Theory)
3/5/2010	Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course (Semi-Intensive)
5/5/2010	Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course (Intensive)
5/5/2010	Ayurvedic Bodyworks
8/5/2010	Manipuraka Practice Session
8/5/2010	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course (semi intensive)
10-14/5/2010	Self Mastery (intensive)
15/5/2010	Self Massage Workshop
16 & 23/5/10	Dhyana/ Meditation Instructor Course
16,23/5 & 6/6/2010	Pregnancy Yoga Instructor Course
28/5/2010	Free Yoga Therapy Consultation Day

JUNE

4/6/2010	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course (Part Time)
5/6/2010	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course (Residential)
9-12/6/2010	Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course (Intensive)
12-15/6/2010	Self Mastery (Residential)
20/6/2010	Fine Art of Conversation
27/6/2010	Manipuraka & Urdhva Retas
28/6/2010	Yoga Sadhana Course (Part Time)

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Recommended for: Sheer bliss and relaxation, insomnia



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Through gently stroke, therapist massages the face, invigorating the tissues. This massage tones and refreshed the senses.

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Uniform (Top or pants)	RM45.00
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T-Shirts (MYS various design)	RM28.00 - RM35.00
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Mala (Rudrasa)	RM25.00 onwards
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Mala (Tulasi)	RM15.00 onwards
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Mala (Crystal)	RM45.00 onwards
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Neti Pot	RM10.00
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Chakra Picture Set (without frame)	RM25.00
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Chakra Picture (Framed)	RM80.00
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Yoga & Philosophy Books (Catalogue order basis/ during events promotions)	Subject to titles
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Ayurveda formulated natural skin
cleanser, toner, massage oils &
detoxification herbs available

Discounts only apply for yoga mats for minimum
purchase quantity of 20 units

Brickfields

3, Jalan Ang Seng 3,
Brickfields,
Kuala Lumpur.
+603 2260 5322
Meiwan:
012 323 9010

Bangsar Studio 1

81A, First Floor,
Jalan Bangsar,
Kuala Lumpur.
+603 2260 5322
Mona:
012 210 9110

Bangsar Studio 2

83M (Mezzanine Floor)
Jalan Bangsar,
Kuala Lumpur.
+603 2260 5322
Vivien:
012 655 5192

Damansara Uptown

89A, First Floor,
Jalan SS21/37,
Damansara Utama
+603 7726 6682
Manisha Teh:
012 313 3678

Natural Slimming & Rejuvenation Centre

39A-41A,
Jalan SS21/60,
Damansara Utama,
+603 7724 1072
Lee Yan:
012 643 2876