

THE YOGA MAIL

The Industry Journal For Yoga & Human Potential

PP 15266/06/2013(033264)

Jan - Jun 2026 ISSUE

COMPLIMENTARY COPY

**Common Sense
and Yoga:**
Is There A Link?

**Embracing the
Yamas and Niyamas**
with Common Sense
and Good Judgement



Message from
Master Mani:
*Common Sense and Simple Judgement:
The Forgotten Intelligence*



Message from Master Mani

Common Sense and Simple Judgement: The Forgotten Intelligence

Why clarity of mind and practical wisdom may be more important than intellectual brilliance

Modern society often celebrates extraordinary mental abilities. We admire the idea of a “sixth sense,” remarkable intuition, exceptional intellect, and extraordinary analytical powers. Such abilities are often presented as the highest forms of intelligence.

Yet careful observation of human behaviour reveals a paradox: individuals who are intellectually sophisticated sometimes struggle with something far more fundamental—common sense.

In this reflection, simple judgement refers to the ability to make decisions that are timely, fair, and practical, allowing life to move forward. Life unfolds continuously, and each moment demands choices. When individuals over analyse situations excessively, decisions become delayed or avoided. The result is stagnation—both for the individual and for those around them.

Psychology recognises this tendency. The Nobel Prize-winning psychologist Daniel Kahneman explains in *Thinking, Fast and Slow* that the human mind operates through two modes of thinking. One system is intuitive, fast, and practical. The other is slow, analytical, and deliberate. Effective judgement depends on balance between the two. When analytical thinking dominates excessively, individuals may become trapped in endless evaluation and lose the ability to act.

Similarly, the economist and cognitive scientist Herbert A. Simon introduced the concept of bounded rationality, explaining that human beings cannot process unlimited information when making decisions. Instead of searching endlessly for perfect answers, people often make decisions that are “good enough” to move forward.

The psychologist Barry Schwartz explored a related phenomenon in *The Paradox of Choice*. Schwartz shows that excessive options can overwhelm the mind and produce decision paralysis rather than

freedom. When people attempt to evaluate every possible outcome, they often become unable to decide at all.

Interestingly, indecision is sometimes accompanied by stubbornness. Individuals who struggle to make simple judgements may resist listening to others who offer practical solutions. In psychology this tendency is often associated with cognitive rigidity, a pattern in which individuals remain attached to certain ways of thinking even when simpler alternatives exist. Such rigidity may arise from fear of error, attachment to intellectual identity, or deeply conditioned beliefs.



Long before modern psychology studied these patterns, ancient philosophical traditions emphasized the importance of simplicity of mind.

The Chinese sage Lao Tzu, associated with the Tao Te Ching, taught that wisdom arises not from accumulating complexity but from removing unnecessary mental burdens. One well-known Taoist insight states:

"In the pursuit of learning, every day something is acquired.

In the pursuit of the Tao, every day something is dropped."

Knowledge may increase complexity, but wisdom often emerges when unnecessary thoughts, assumptions, and intellectual clutter are removed. When the mind becomes overloaded with concepts and arguments, clarity of judgement disappears.

Indian philosophical traditions echo the same insight. In the Bhagavad Gita, the warrior prince Arjuna becomes psychologically paralyzed before a great battle, overwhelmed by moral dilemmas and emotional conflict. His teacher Krishna explains that clarity of intellect is essential for right action.

The Gita teaches:

"When your intellect crosses beyond the maze of delusion, you shall become indifferent to what has been heard and what is yet to be heard."
— *Bhagavad Gita 2:52*

Confusion of mind, the text warns, ultimately destroys judgement.

The same principle appears in classical yoga philosophy. In the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, the sage Patanjali defines yoga with a profound statement:

"Yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations of the mind."
— *Yoga Sutra 1.2*

When the mind is excessively agitated by thoughts and conditioning, perception becomes distorted. When mental disturbances quieten, clarity and sound judgement arise naturally. Human judgement is also shaped by social and cultural conditioning. Cultural expectations, ideological systems, and rigid doctrines can influence how individuals perceive reality. The social psychologist Erich Fromm argued in *Escape from Freedom* that individuals sometimes surrender independent thinking because freedom itself can produce psychological anxiety.

Modern society introduces another complexity. The sociologist Zygmunt Bauman described contemporary culture as "liquid modernity," where traditional structures such as community, family roles, and stable identities have become increasingly fluid. While this creates freedom, it may also produce uncertainty about values and personal direction.

Another factor weakening judgement is the culture of distraction. Many individuals fill their lives with social engagements, entertainment, and digital stimulation, leaving little time for introspection. The philosopher Blaise Pascal once observed that many of humanity's problems arise from the inability to sit quietly in solitude.

Material prosperity itself is not inherently harmful. Economic stability can create opportunity and comfort. However, when material pursuits evolve

into excessive indulgence—combined with lifestyles dominated by alcohol, drugs, and constant pleasure-seeking—the deeper purpose of life may be forgotten.

The psychiatrist Viktor Frankl observed in *Man's Search for Meaning* that human beings require meaning beyond pleasure or consumption. Without meaning, individuals often experience what he called the existential vacuum, attempting to fill it with distraction or indulgence.

Similarly, Mahatma Gandhi emphasised the principle of "simple living and high thinking." Gandhi believed that moderation, reflection, and service cultivate moral clarity and responsible judgement.

In an age characterised by overwhelming information, rapid social change, and constant stimulation, perhaps the most valuable intellectual faculty is not extraordinary brilliance but clear and grounded common sense.

Common sense grows through introspection, simplicity of thought, openness to wisdom, and the courage to make decisions—even imperfect ones. When individuals rediscover the ability to think clearly and act decisively, they reclaim a form of intelligence that is both ancient and urgently relevant for the modern world. **YM**

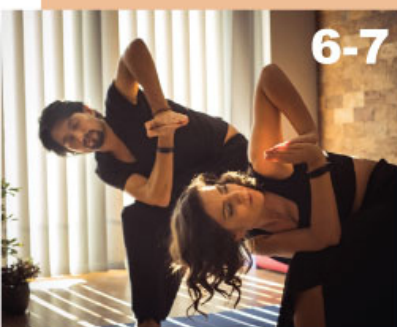
References

- Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
Simon, H. A. (1957). *Administrative Behavior*. Free Press.
Schwartz, B. (2004). *The Paradox of Choice: Why More Is Less*. HarperCollins.
Lao Tzu. *Tao Te Ching*.
Bhagavad Gita. Various translations.
Patanjali. *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*.
Fromm, E. (1941). *Escape from Freedom*. Farrar & Rinehart.
Bauman, Z. (2000). *Liquid Modernity*. Polity Press.
Frankl, V. (1946). *Man's Search for Meaning*. Beacon Press.
Gandhi, M. K. *Selected writings and speeches*.



Author
Master Mani Sekaran is President of the Malaysian Association of Yoga Instructors and the Malaysian Yoga Society. He teaches yoga, pranayama, and philosophy, and writes on the relevance of classical wisdom traditions for modern life.

Content



- 2-3 Message from Master Mani
- 4 Content
- 6-7 Common Sense and Yoga: Is There A Link?
- 8-9 Embracing the Yamas and Niyamas with Common Sense and Good Judgement
- 10-11 Articles by Practitioners
Journey Within When Travel Becomes Sadhana: A Royal Belum Reflection
- 12-13 Dance Yoga
Beyond the Pose: Why Everyone is Talking About the "New Flow" in Yoga
- 14-15 MYS Fundraising
Rebuilding Hope, Restoring Lives
- 16-18 Adapting Ayurvedic Principles to Modern Urban Life:
Practical, Evidence-based Steps for Clear Judgement and Daily Wellbeing
- 19-21 Super Yoga Kids Corner
Teaching Common Sense and Simple Judgement to Pre-teens and Teens Through Yoga
- 22-25 Natural Living
What's Really in Your Cosmetics — And How to Choose Safer, Natural Alternatives
Event
- 26 Clean Up Day 2025
– Serving the Community by MYS
- 27 MAYI Graduation Celebrates the Class of 2024 and 2025 in a Joyous Milestone Event
- 28 Featured Asana
Utthanasana (Squat and Rise Pose)
- 29 Chef Yogi's: *Millet Pudding (1 serving)*
- 30 MYA Calendar Apr - July 2026

Editors

Advisor:
Manisekaran

Editor:
Meiwan

Editorial (Writers and Contributors)
Dr. Chandra Nanthakumar, Manisekaran,
Meiwan, Muhundhan, Priya, Shameny, Sumi

Advertising & Circulation:
Kasturi

Graphic Designer & Cover Designed by:
Danny Kwok

Printed by:
E-print Solutions Sdn. Bhd.
No.3, Lorong Brunei 3, Off Jalan Pudu,
55100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

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



Guided by one of the world's leading yoga exponent
Manisekaran



Complimentary copies of the YogaMail are available at
MAYI Yoga Academy and affiliated studios,
and e-copies are available at www.mayi.org.my

The YogaMail is published every 6 months. Distributed for free, this health journal aims to share a selection of articles which focus on well-being and sustainable living. Garnering an impressive readership of 20,000, we welcome any parties who are interested to distribute and advertise with the YogaMail.



Contact us for bulk purchase of yoga mats, yoga blocks and yoga belts

Contact: 03-2260 5322

Visit our websites: www.mayi.org.my /
www.malaysianyogasociety.org

Fully sponsored by:

MAYI
YOGA ACADEMY
MindBody • Authentic • Yoga • Inspiration

- | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
| • Brickfields | +603 2260 5322 | • Selayang | +603 6127 5693 |
| • Bangsar | +603 2282 4980 | • Subang | +603 8021 7980 |
| • Damansara | +603 7726 6682 | • Klang | +6012-210 9110 |

Common Sense and Yoga:

Is There A Link?

by Dr Chandra Nanthakumar

As known to all, the gross body in the human anatomy contains, amongst other components, the five sense organs (organs of perception) that is the eyes, nose, ears, skin and the tongue. While each of the sense organs exhibit a specific role in detecting stimuli from the surrounding and conveying signals to the brain for interpretation, the "common sense" is a far cry from that. To begin with, it is not a physical structure per se in the human body. Based on Oxford Learner's dictionaries, "common sense" refers to one's ability to think in a practical way and make sensible decisions. Past definitions have it as one's innate capability to recognise and judge situations based on conventional dogmas and commonly shared experiences. As I see it, there appears to be an overlap in meaning between these two definitions. Nonetheless, Daitzman (2021) claims that common sense is no longer considered one's innate ability but simply a true understanding of cause and effect. This definitely calls for some amount of reflection as this two-word term is used in everyday life by all and sundry.

As I kneel down, with Daitzman's definition in mind, and sit comfortably on the mat to commence a yoga practice, the meaning begins to unravel at the intellect level. As a typical human being equipped with a mediocre level of intelligence, I can safely conclude that the definition sounds rational. As far as the practice of yoga is concerned, it definitely makes sense!

For those who are not so familiar with the practice of yoga and what it entails, this mind-body science involves several components such as mindfulness, pranayama (breathing techniques to expand

life force), the journey in and out of asanas (physical postures), prathyahara (withdrawal of senses), dharana (concentration) and dhyana (contemplation).



For a regular mindful practitioner, the sequence will flow quite smoothly from one component to the other. Awareness is brought to different parts of the body not only at the gross but also at the subtle level. Using all the tools mentioned above, through constant practice, the practitioner gracefully drifts beyond the physical self and develops an awareness of the pranamaya kosha (i.e. the vital air sheath) and the manomaya kosha (i.e. the mental sheath) at the subtle body level. This happens because the practitioner has allowed it to effortlessly materialise at its own cause. There was no deliberate abuse of the body neither was there any rush into the practice. The practitioner pretty much used their common sense to weigh in on the pros of being steady and happy (sthiram and sukham) in the practice. Let me dive deeper for ease of understanding. For example, if the practitioner is unable to do 120 exhalations per minute in Kapalabhati pranayama (deep exhalations) due to a pre-existing health condition, the body will alert them to pause at a lower number. The fundamental rule in the practice of yoga is that the practice is pain-free and there should be no suffering.



However, if the practitioner chooses to force the exhalations incessantly at the expense of the body's incapability, the unpleasant effects of that violent action will surface and not augur well for them. Instead of feeling energised and joyful after the 120 exhalations per minute, they end up feeling restless, agitated and depleted of energy. Hence, the lack of common sense in the yogic practice can be detrimental to one's health.

Similarly, a novice yoga practitioner needs to engage common sense at all times. They must have a sound understanding of what their body is capable of at the point of practice. They need to understand the consequence (i.e. effect) of forcing the body when doing a particular asana (i.e. cause). Most of the time, novice practitioners are enthusiastic about performing challenging asanas like the meditating crane pose (i.e. baka dhyanasana) or the double-handed cobra pose (i.e. dwihasta bujangasana). While enthusiasm is taken very positively in yogic science, some amount of common sense is needed to weigh in on the mechanics of getting into a pose. If each knee is not able to rest firmly on the upper arms respectively, the practitioner can always resort to a regressed version (i.e. attempting with one knee at a time or keeping both the feet grounded while having the knees firmly on the upper arms) of the pose at the initial stages. Secondly, the practitioner must understand that by merely knowing the mechanics, it may

not necessarily get them into the full pose in the first few attempts. More often than not, consistent practice is needed depending on the state of the mind and body of the practitioner. Hence, it is evident that common sense and yoga go hand in hand.

However, when the desire of wanting to achieve the full pose is overwhelming despite possessing physical limitations, some practitioners end up hurting themselves. They may have forced the body relentlessly while adding excessive pressure to certain limbs (cause) and in that process brought upon injury to the self. Hence, it is important to understand the potential danger (i.e. the effect) of applying force when doing an asana (i.e. the cause). If one deeply comprehends the principle of cause and effect as set forth by Daitzman (2021), it is beyond doubt that they will exhibit some amount of common sense in the practice.

All in all, it is evident that a yoga practitioner has to exercise common sense in the practice of yoga in order to reap the benefits of the ancient-old science. Hence, is there a link between yoga and common sense? The answer is obvious, isn't it? **YM**

References

Reid J. Daitzman (2021). *Why "common Sense" is not so common. Personal Perspective: Common sense confuses reality with truth. Psychology today.*

Embracing the Yamas and Niyamas

with Common Sense and Good Judgement

In an increasingly complex world, many people wish to “do the right thing” yet find themselves confused, conflicted, or even exhausted by moral decision-making. Social expectations, workplace demands, family responsibilities, and constant digital exposure often pull individuals in opposing directions. In this context, the ancient yogic principles of the **yamas** and **niyamas** offer a timeless ethical framework. However, when applied rigidly or without discernment, these principles may feel unrealistic or even counterproductive. True wisdom lies not in blind adherence, but in embracing the yamas and niyamas with **common sense and good judgement**.

Understanding the Yamas and Niyamas

The yamas and niyamas form the first two limbs of the classical eightfold path of yoga. The **yamas** guide how we relate to others and the world, while the **niyamas** focus on personal discipline and inner conduct.

The five yamas are:

1. **Ahimsa** – non-violence
2. **Satya** – truthfulness
3. **Asteya** – non-stealing
4. **Brahmacharya** – moderation
5. **Aparigraha** – non-possessiveness

The five niyamas are:

1. **Saucha** – cleanliness
2. **Santosha** – contentment
3. **Tapas** – disciplined effort
4. **Svadyaya** – self-study
5. **Ishvara pranidhana** – surrender to a higher principle or purpose

While these principles are profound, modern life presents dilemmas that are far removed from the ashram setting in which they were originally taught.

The Modern Dilemma: Wanting to Be Ethical, Yet Feeling Trapped

Many people experience tension when attempting to practise ethical living. Common dilemmas include:

- **Truth versus kindness:** Should one always speak the truth, even if it may hurt someone?



- **Non-violence versus self-protection:** Is it wrong to assert oneself firmly when boundaries are crossed?
- **Contentment versus ambition:** Can one be content while still striving for growth and success?
- **Moderation versus societal pressure:** How does one practise restraint in a culture of excess?
- **Non-attachment versus responsibility:** Is letting go the same as not caring?

These conflicts often arise because the yamas and niyamas are misunderstood as strict moral rules rather than **living principles** that require situational awareness.

Applying Ahimsa with Intelligence

Ahimsa is often interpreted as never causing harm, but life inevitably involves difficult choices. Avoiding all conflict may result in passive harm, such as enabling injustice or neglecting one's own well-being. A practical approach to ahimsa asks:

- What action causes the **least harm overall**?
- Does my silence protect peace, or does it allow harm to continue?

For example, calmly confronting unfair behaviour at work may feel uncomfortable, but it can prevent ongoing harm. Ahimsa practised with good judgement includes compassion for oneself, not just others.

Satya: Truth Anchored in Sensitivity

Truthfulness does not require blunt honesty. Speaking the truth without awareness of timing, intention, and tone can become another form of harm. Practising satya with common sense means:



- Speaking truth **when it serves clarity and growth.**
- Choosing silence or gentler words when truth would only inflame emotions.

Truth should be aligned with ahimsa. When both principles support each other, communication becomes wise rather than reactive.

Santosha in a World of Comparison

One of the greatest struggles today is contentment amid constant comparison. Social media and consumer culture encourage perpetual dissatisfaction. Santosha does not mean resignation or lack of ambition. Rather, it is the ability to:

- Appreciate what is present while still working towards improvement.
- Act from sufficiency instead of scarcity.

When contentment becomes the foundation, ambition is guided by purpose rather than insecurity.

Tapas without Burnout

Tapas is disciplined effort, yet many people equate discipline with harsh self-control. This often leads to burnout, guilt, or self-criticism when expectations are not met. A balanced tapas involves:

- Consistency over intensity.
- Adjusting effort according to life stages and capacity.

For example, maintaining a short daily practice during a demanding period may be more sustainable than abandoning discipline altogether due to unrealistic standards.

Aparigraha and Healthy Boundaries

Non-possessiveness is frequently misunderstood as detachment from all material or emotional ties. In reality, aparigraha invites us to examine **clinging**, not connection. In daily life, this means:

- Letting go of the need to control outcomes.
- Releasing identities, roles, or expectations that no longer serve growth.

This principle helps individuals navigate relationships with clarity, allowing care without dependency.

Svadhyaya: Learning from Daily Life

Self-study is not limited to reading sacred texts. Every emotional reaction, repeated conflict, or inner resistance becomes material for learning. Practising svadhyaya with good judgement includes:

- Reflecting without excessive self-blame.
- Observing patterns with curiosity rather than judgement.

Through self-awareness, ethical living becomes intuitive rather than forced.

Integrating the Principles with Practical Wisdom

The yamas and niyamas are not moral absolutes imposed from outside; they are guides that mature with experience. When applied rigidly, they can feel restrictive. When adapted with discernment, they become tools for clarity. A useful question to ask in any dilemma is:

"Does this action reduce suffering, increase awareness, and support long-term well-being?"

If the answer is yes, the spirit of the yamas and niyamas is being honoured.

Ethics as a Living Practice

Embracing the yamas and niyamas with common sense allows ethical living to be humane, flexible, and sustainable. Life rarely presents perfect choices, but it always offers opportunities for conscious response. Through discernment, self-reflection, and compassion, these ancient principles can be adapted to modern realities without losing their depth.

When practised with good judgement, the yamas and niyamas do not burden life with rules; they illuminate it with wisdom.

As we step into the first quarter of this new year, we are offered a gentle yet powerful invitation to begin again—more consciously, more wisely, and with greater kindness towards ourselves and others. The yamas and niyamas remind us that ethical living is not about perfection, but about intention and awareness in everyday choices. Each new day becomes an opportunity to respond rather than react, to choose understanding over judgement, and to act with clarity rather than impulse. In embracing these principles, we need not transform our lives overnight; small, sincere efforts carried out consistently are enough to create meaningful change. Let this year be one where ahimsa begins with self-compassion, satya is expressed with sensitivity, and santosha grounds us even as we grow. May tapas inspire steady effort without strain, and svadhyaya encourage honest reflection without self-criticism. Above all, may the practice of the yamas and niyamas support a life lived with balance, discernment, and purpose. As we move forward into the months ahead, may these timeless principles serve not as rigid rules, but as trusted companions—guiding us to live more thoughtfully, relate more authentically, and walk the path of yoga with wisdom, humility, and grace. **YM**

Article by Practitioner

Journey Within When Travel Becomes Sadhana: A Royal Belum Reflection

by Muhundhan

My recent trip to the Royal Belum Forest with my wife was far more than a nature escape. It became a deeply personal and spiritual journey that reminded me that travel, when approached with awareness, can itself become sadhana (a personal spiritual practice or disciplined effort to grow in awareness and inner balance).

The Journey Within: A Royal Belum Retreat, held from December 26 to 28, brought together 25 of us from different walks of life, ages, and backgrounds, united by a shared intention to step away from noise and reconnect with what truly matters.

Royal Belum has a way of slowing you down without effort. The ancient rainforest, still waters, and quiet mornings create an atmosphere where reflection feels natural. The retreat was thoughtfully designed as a self sadhana and digital detox, blending inner practices with immersive nature experiences including dhyana, yogasana, jungle trekking, boat cruises, traditional rafting, wildlife introduction, waterfalls, and a visit to a Kampung Orang Asli village.

Life on the Houseboat: Simplicity and Presence

Our home during the retreat was a houseboat, simple, functional, and surprisingly grounding. We stayed in shared dorms of four, with common bathroom facilities, an arrangement that gently nudged us away from personal comfort zones and into shared living. There was something quietly powerful about this simplicity. It stripped away excess and reminded us how little we actually need to feel content.



Meals became moments of nourishment and connection. We were blessed with a royal chef who prepared wholesome, delicious vegetarian food throughout the retreat. Each meal felt intentional, not indulgent, but deeply satisfying, aligning beautifully with the spirit of the journey.

Beyond the setting itself, the entire crew supporting the retreat was outstanding, calm, attentive, and deeply professional. From logistics to safety, everything flowed smoothly, allowing us to fully immerse ourselves in the experience. A special mention goes to Pak Long, our guide. At 70 years old, he moved through the forest with a calmness and confidence that only comes from a lifetime of deep connection with nature. Watching him was a lesson in itself, unhurried, grounded, and deeply attuned to the land.

Travel as Sadhana Taking Up and Letting Go

During the retreat, Master Mani, my yoga master shared a perspective that stayed with me. When we travel consciously, it becomes sadhana, not because of where we go, but because of what we choose to take up and what we consciously drop.

For me, this became the heart of the journey.

What I chose to take up:

I committed to starting each day with yoga



and pranayama. Practising as the rainforest stirred around us was profoundly grounding. There was no rush, no agenda, just breath, movement, and presence. As always, spending time with my yoga master, Master Manisekaran, was deeply enriching. This time, he introduced us to an unexpectedly insightful practice, chair yoga. Simple, accessible, and effective, it was a gentle reminder that yoga adapts to life, not the other way around. I remain deeply grateful to him and the kind team from the Malaysian Association of Yoga Instructors, MAYI, for holding the space with such sincerity and care throughout the journey.

What I chose to drop:

I became more aware of how reflexively the phone enters our lives, especially during moments meant for rest. So I made a simple but deliberate commitment. I would not touch my phone when I am in bed.

No scrolling. No checking. No distractions.

In the quiet of Royal Belum, this small discipline felt powerful. It reclaimed rest as something sacred, not something to be filled.

The People Who Made the Journey Whole

One of the most beautiful aspects of this retreat was the people. The 25 of us journeyed together not as strangers for long. There were mutual care, encouragement, laughter, and respect.

What stayed with me most was the range of ages, from a three-year-old little girl to a 69-year-old remarkable auntie. Both participated fully in every experience, including the challenging hikes to the waterfalls. These were not easy trails, yet they moved through them with resilience, joy, and quiet determination. Watching this reminded me that limitations are often stories we tell ourselves.

Our journey together began even before the forest welcomed us, at 4am on a bus, moving through the early morning darkness, half asleep

yet already stepping into something intentional.

Nature as the Silent Teacher

Trekking to the Sungai Kooi waterfall demanded presence with every step. Visiting the Orang Asli village was humbling, offering lessons in simplicity, continuity, and respect for the land. Exploring the salt lick at Sungai Papan reminded us that humans are visitors here, not owners. A dip at the Sungai Ruok waterfall became an expression of pure, uncomplicated joy.

Between boat cruises on still waters and walks through dense jungle, the forest quietly worked on us. There were no instructions, only space. And in that space, clarity surfaced effortlessly.

A Journey Shared with My Wife

Sharing this experience with my wife, Sham, added a deeper layer to the journey. It went beyond being a couple on a trip. It became a shared spiritual experience, moving, reflecting, and growing together, often in silence. There was a sense of alignment that emerged, one that words struggle to describe but presence makes unmistakably clear.

Carrying the Sadhana Home

I returned without grand resolutions. Instead, I carried back two simple, grounded commitments.

Begin my days with yoga and pranayama
Respect rest by keeping my phone out of the bed

I am thankful to everyone who made this journey possible, Master, the MAYI team, the houseboat crew, Pak Long, our bus driver who brought us safely to and fro, and every individual who played a role, seen and unseen.

Royal Belum was the setting, but the real journey happened within. And that journey continues well beyond the forest.

Namaskar. **YM**

Dance Yoga

Beyond the Pose: Why Everyone is Talking About the "New Flow" in Yoga

by Priya

We've all seen the images: a yoga practitioner sitting perfectly still, twisted into a pretzel, or standing like a statue. While traditional yoga is beautiful, there is a new movement taking over the wellness world in 2026 that feels less like a "workout" and more like a "recharge."

It's called **Dance Yoga**. If you've been feeling stiff, stressed, or just "stuck" in your daily routine, this might be the most important shift in your practice this year.

The Modern Problem: The "Boxed" Human

Look at your day. You sit in a square chair, look at a rectangular screen, and walk on flat, hard floors. In the gym, you move forward and back on a treadmill or lift weights in straight lines. Biologically, humans weren't meant to live in boxes. This "linear" lifestyle is why we feel old before our time. It's why our lower backs ache, our necks feel like stone, and our minds feel foggy.

Dance Yoga is the "Un-boxing" of the human body. It is a professional system that merges the strength of Hatha Yoga with the fluid, rhythmic science of human movement.

It's Not a Dance Class—It's a "System Reset"

In this practice, the focus is not on performance, but on using rhythm to unlock the joints. While traditional yoga focuses on the destination (the pose), Dance Yoga focuses on the transition.

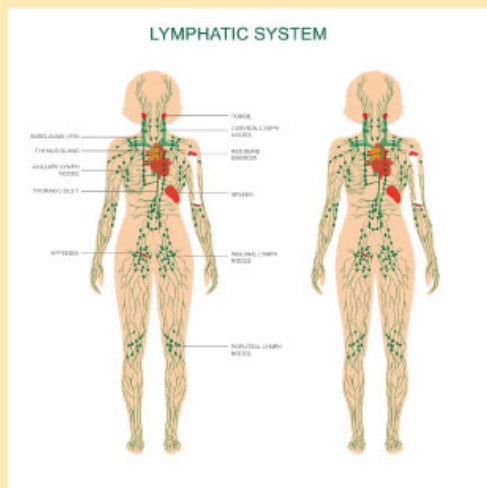
Think of it this way: Traditional yoga is like a beautiful photograph. Dance Yoga is the movie. It's the art of moving from one position to the next with zero effort, zero friction, and maximum grace. This encourages a "Flow State"—that neurological zone where time disappears and the analytical mind quiets.

The Science: Why Your Body Requires This

- **Hydrating the Fascia:** Static stretching is beneficial, but rhythmic pulsing is more effective for the connective tissue (fascia). It acts like a pump, forcing hydration back into the tissues,

which maintains muscle elasticity and prevents that "stiff" morning feeling.

- **The Brain-Body Upgrade:** Moving in circles and spirals (multi-planar movement) forces the brain to create new neural pathways. It improves coordination, balance, and mental "sharpness" by challenging the brain's spatial processing.
- **The Lymphatic Flush:** The body's waste disposal system (the lymph) doesn't have a pump; it only moves when you move. The sweeping, "wavy" movements of Dance Yoga act as a manual flush, cleaning the system and boosting energy levels.



Deep Dive: Fascial Memory and Emotional Release

One of the most interesting aspects of this practice is the study of **Fascial Memory**. Science now shows that fascia is not just "wrapping" for our muscles; it is a sensory organ that stores the chemical signatures of stress.

When we experience a "fright" or a period of high stress, our fascia tightens and "binds." If we only move in straight lines, those binds stay locked. By using the **spirals and ripples** found in Dance Yoga, we create a multi-directional shearing force. This "unsticks" the fascial layers, allowing for a profound sense of emotional lightness. You aren't just stretching a muscle; you are



The Architecture of Flow: Studying the "Why"

Deepening one's understanding of Dance Yoga requires a shift in how we view human anatomy. Instead of seeing the body as a collection of separate parts, we explore it through the lens of **Tensegrity** (Tension + Integrity).

- **The Science of Tensegrity:** This is the study of how the body maintains its shape through a continuous web of tension. When we move in Multi-Planar ripples, we are training the body to function as a unified, resilient structure.
- **Symphonic Sequencing:** Movement is much like music. Understanding the "Why" behind a ripple or a spiral allows for the study of Kinetic Chains—how a movement in the ankle, for example, can influence the release of tension in the neck.
- **The Logic of Grace:** Mastering these transitions involves a 30-hour deep dive into Bio-Mechanics. It is a journey for anyone interested in the logic of movement—learning how to bypass friction in the joints to achieve maximum efficiency in every breath and motion.

Home Practice: From Stillness to Flow

To experience the science yourself, try these three "Transitions" at home:

1. **The Spinal Ripple:** From a standing position, soften your knees. Imagine a wave starting at your tailbone and moving up your spine like a string of pearls moving underwater.
2. **The Floating Warrior:** In a Warrior II pose, inhale to slightly straighten your front leg; exhale to sink back down. Imagine moving through warm honey.
3. **The Circular Cobra:** While lying on your belly in a low Cobra, draw small circles with your nose, letting the movement ripple into your shoulders to release the fascia around the heart.

Stop Moving Like a Robot. Start Moving Like You. Your body was born to ripple. It was born to wave. It was born to dance.

Knowledge Recap: What We Learned

- **Tensegrity:** Your body is one connected web; moving the hips can heal the neck.
- **Vagal Tone:** Rhythmic movement "massages" your nervous system for better sleep.
- **Fascial Memory:** Spirals help release the chemical signatures of old stress.
- **Entrainment:** Your heart rate naturally syncs to the BPM of the music to lower cortisol. **YM**

literally "clearing the files" of old stress from your physical architecture.

The Bio-Physics of Rhythm: Why BPM Matters

In Dance Yoga, music is a functional tool used to influence the **Autonomic Nervous System** through **Entrainment**—the tendency for your heart rate and brainwaves to "lock in" to an external pulse.

- **Resting Sync (60–80 BPM):** This mimics a resting heart rate, signaling the brain that there is no "emergency." It lowers cortisol and allows muscles to move from "guarding" (stiffness) to "gliding" (fluidity).
- **The Creative Peak (90–120 BPM):** This increases blood flow without triggering "fight or flight." It creates "**Vagal Tone**," training your nervous system to stay calm even when the heart rate is elevated.

The Vagus Nerve: The Secret to High-Performance Calm

At the heart of Dance Yoga is the stimulation of the **Vagus Nerve**—the longest nerve in the body and the "commander-in-chief" of your relaxation response.

Traditional yoga stimulates the Vagus nerve through breath, but Dance Yoga adds the element of **Rhythmic Vibration**. By undulating the spine and moving the neck in soft circles, we gently "massage" the path of the Vagus nerve. This improves what scientists call **Heart Rate Variability (HRV)**. A high HRV is the gold standard for health in 2026; it means your body can switch from "work mode" to "rest mode" with total ease.

MAYI's Dance Yoga Course is coming up in July 2026. To find out more, contact 03-2282 4980 or 012-633 9144.

Rebuilding Hope, Restoring Lives

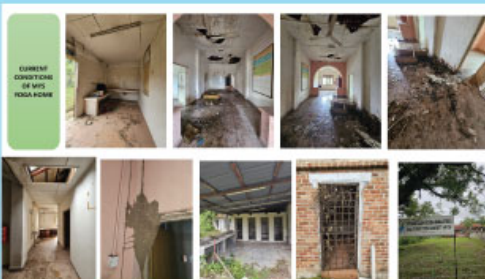
Reviving the MYS Yoga Home

There are places that exist not merely as buildings, but as **spaces of healing, connection, and transformation**. The MYS Yoga Home is one such place.



For many years, the Malaysian Yoga Society (MYS) envisioned this home as a sanctuary where individuals could gather to practice yoga, cultivate inner peace, and experience the profound benefits of holistic wellness. It was meant to be a nurturing space where communities could come together to grow, heal, and support one another.

Unfortunately, time and neglect have taken a toll on this property. Today, the house suffers from **structural damage, termite infestation, broken fixtures, and severe interior decay**. The gates, windows, and doors require urgent repairs, the roof is leaking, and many parts of the home are no longer safe or functional.



Yet despite its current condition, the vision for the MYS Yoga Home remains **alive and powerful**. We believe this space can once again become a beacon of healing and service for the community.

A Sanctuary for Community and Well-Being

The restoration of the MYS Yoga Home is not simply a renovation project. It is a **mission to create a sanctuary that serves humanity**.

Once restored, the home will become a vibrant center dedicated to wellness, education, and compassion.

The space will support several important initiatives:

B40 Community Outreach

The home will serve as a wellness hub offering yoga practices, emotional support, and self-care programs to underserved communities who often lack access to holistic health resources.

Capacity Building & Education

Scholarships and training programs will be offered to individuals from underprivileged backgrounds who wish to become yoga teachers or wellness practitioners.

Emergency Refuge

During times of crisis such as floods or natural disasters, the MYS Yoga Home can provide temporary shelter, food, and comfort for families in need.

Wellness Retreat & Community Hub

The restored home will also function as a peaceful retreat space where practitioners, volunteers, and wellness seekers can reconnect with themselves through yoga, meditation, and spiritual practices.

In essence, this home will become a place where healing begins and hope is restored.

Our Goal: RM200,000

To bring this vision to life, we are raising **RM200,000** to fully restore and transform the property into a safe and welcoming sanctuary. The funds will be used for essential renovation works including:

- Repairing the roof and damaged structures
- Replacing broken windows, doors, and gates
- Eliminating termite infestations and repairing wooden structures
- Restoring the kitchen, hallways, and living spaces
- Creating functional areas for yoga practice, accommodation, and community activities

Your Contribution Becomes a Legacy

When you support this project, you are not simply making a donation. You are **becoming part of a legacy that will touch lives for generations.**

As a token of appreciation, contributors will also receive recognition and meaningful benefits:

- **RM600 and above** – Enjoy time-sharing accommodation privileges at the restored Yoga Home.
- **RM2,000 and above** – Your name will be placed on an acrylic recognition board within the home.
- **RM10,000 – RM20,000 contributions** – Special naming opportunities within rooms and key spaces of the Yoga Home.

More importantly, your generosity will help create a space where **healing, learning, and community support can flourish.**

A Collective Movement

The MYS Yoga Home restoration is not just about repairing a building. It is about **rebuilding hope, restoring dignity, and strengthening our community.**

When individuals come together with a shared purpose, extraordinary things happen. A single act of generosity can ripple outward, transforming lives far beyond what we can see.

Today, we invite you to be part of this meaningful journey. **YM**

Let us rebuild this sanctuary together.
Support the MYS Yoga Home Restoration
 Your contribution will directly support the rebuilding of this community sanctuary.
Maybank – Malaysian Yoga Society
Account Number: 5142 5341 1300
 For inquiries, please contact:
016-277 0974

Envisioning Our Renewed Sanctuary



Every contribution—no matter the amount—brings us one step closer to rebuilding this sacred space.

Serene Community Space & Wellness Retreat



Adapting Ayurvedic Principles to Modern Urban Life:

Practical, Evidence-based Steps for Clear Judgement and Daily Wellbeing

Modern urban life offers convenience, speed, and access to technology, yet it often brings stress, irregular eating habits, and a disconnection from natural rhythms. Many city dwellers experience fatigue, digestive disorders, anxiety, and lifestyle-related diseases that stem from imbalance. In such an environment, the ancient wisdom of **Ayurveda**, the traditional Indian system of medicine, provides valuable, evidence-based insights for restoring equilibrium through daily routines, diet, and mindfulness. Far from being outdated, Ayurveda's personalised and preventive approach can be adapted seamlessly to modern living, provided it is understood rationally and not followed as a fleeting trend.

Understanding Ayurveda in the Modern Context

Ayurveda views health as a state of dynamic balance between body, mind, and environment (Patwardhan, 2014). Each individual possesses a unique constitution, or *prakriti*, composed of three doshas — *vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha* — that determine physiological and psychological traits. Rather than prescribing one-size-fits-all remedies, Ayurveda emphasises *dinacharya* (daily routine), *ritucharya* (seasonal routine), and mindful living as foundations for health maintenance and disease prevention.

Modern research increasingly supports this holistic, personalised orientation. Patwardhan (2014) highlights that integrating Ayurveda's whole-systems model with contemporary science offers a structured approach for chronic disease prevention. Similarly, Verma (2024) found that the adaptability of Ayurvedic principles, when combined with evidence-based practice, enhances public health strategies, particularly in addressing metabolic and stress-related disorders common in urban populations.

Practical Daily Routines for Urban Citizens

1. Morning Rhythms

Ayurveda encourages waking at sunrise to align with circadian rhythms, performing simple cleansing rituals such as tongue scraping and nasal

cleansing. Light stretching or breathing exercises (*pranayama*) help prepare the body and mind for the day ahead. Jayanna et al. (2023) reported that consistent daily routines, including early rising and brief morning physical activity, significantly improved stress levels and sleep quality among working adults. These routines, though ancient in origin, align closely with findings in chronobiology regarding the importance of regularity for hormonal balance and mental health.

2. Mindful Eating and Digestive Awareness

One of Ayurveda's core teachings is the maintenance of *agni*, or digestive fire, which governs metabolism and nutrient assimilation. City living often promotes hurried meals, processed food, and late-night eating — habits that weaken digestion and disturb sleep. Sharma et al. (2019) demonstrated that combining Ayurvedic dietary guidance with lifestyle modifications significantly improved glycaemic control and body weight in individuals with type 2 diabetes. For urban citizens, practical applications include eating freshly prepared meals, avoiding multitasking while eating, and consuming the largest meal during midday when digestion is strongest. Such mindful eating practices not only enhance digestion but also foster present-moment awareness and better food choices.



3. Movement and Restorative Practices

Ayurveda recommends moderate, regular exercise suited to one's constitution — often in the form of yoga, walking, or swimming. Bhardwaj (2021) found that integrating yoga and Ayurvedic routines improved flexibility, emotional wellbeing, and cognitive performance in older adults. Similarly, Rioux et al. (2019) reported that a combined Ayurvedic and yoga intervention led to weight loss and greater self-regulation among participants. For the urban dweller, a brief 20–30-minute session of yoga or mindful movement daily can balance sedentary lifestyles and enhance resilience against stress.

Avoiding Trends and Peer Pressure: The Role of Judgement

Ayurveda promotes *viveka*, or discernment — the ability to distinguish between what supports health and what does not. In the modern wellness marketplace, people are often tempted by social media trends promoting extreme detoxes, expensive supplements, or restrictive diets. However, true Ayurvedic practice requires understanding one's own body and adopting gradual, sensible changes. As Patwardhan (2014) cautions, blind adherence to traditional claims without scientific validation may undermine both safety and credibility. Instead, individuals should rely on credible sources, observe their own responses, and consult qualified practitioners when necessary.

Exercising clear judgement involves resisting peer pressure to conform to transient health fads and instead embracing self-awareness. Urban citizens, constantly exposed to advertising and influencer marketing, must rely on *common sense* and balanced reasoning. Integrative studies by Jayanna et al. (2023) show that individuals who personalise their wellness routines based on self-observation achieve better long-term adherence and health outcomes than those who follow trends.

Integrating Ayurveda Safely in an Urban Context

Ayurveda's value lies not only in its ancient roots but in its adaptability. For busy urban residents, the following guidelines allow safe and sustainable integration:

1. **Personalise your approach.** No single diet or lifestyle suits everyone. Observe your sleep, appetite, and energy to identify imbalances before making changes (Verma, 2024).

2. **Prioritise routine over complexity.** Simple practices such as fixed meal times, digital detox before bed, and regular movement can restore balance more effectively than sporadic, elaborate treatments (Jayanna et al., 2023).
3. **Integrate, not replace.** Ayurveda should complement, not substitute, conventional medical care. Studies have shown that integrated models combining Ayurvedic advice with standard treatment improve chronic disease management (Sharma et al., 2019).
4. **Seek credible guidance.** Consult certified Ayurvedic physicians or practitioners who use evidence-based methods. Rioux et al. (2019) emphasised the need for professional supervision in applying Ayurvedic interventions to ensure safety and effectiveness.

By applying these principles with awareness, individuals can enjoy the benefits of this ancient wisdom while maintaining rational judgement and scientific literacy.

Ayurveda in Workplaces and Urban Public Health

Workplaces and public health initiatives can also adopt Ayurvedic-inspired routines without significant cost or disruption. Examples include scheduling regular breaks, providing herbal teas, improving natural lighting, and encouraging mindful eating. Integrative wellness programmes that include yoga and Ayurvedic dietary education have been shown to reduce employee stress and absenteeism (Jayanna et al., 2023). Public health experts increasingly view such approaches as scalable solutions for preventing non-communicable diseases, which are prevalent in cities due to sedentary lifestyles and poor diet (Verma, 2024).



These practices, when introduced gradually, help restore rhythm and coherence to the urban day, encouraging employees and residents alike to live with awareness rather than automation.

Parting Words

Ayurveda offers far more than ancient prescriptions — it provides a coherent, evidence-supported framework for living with awareness, balance, and self-understanding. For urban citizens navigating the pressures of speed, technology, and social conformity, these principles can be transformative. The wisdom of regular routines, mindful eating, adequate rest, and self-reflection holds scientific validity and practical value.

Importantly, the adoption of Ayurveda should not stem from trend-following or peer influence but from **clear judgement and personal experience**. By merging timeless insight with modern evidence, individuals can cultivate resilience, clarity, and harmony within the complexities of city life — proving that ancient wisdom, when applied with reason, remains profoundly relevant in the modern age. **YM**

References

Bhardwaj, P. (2021). Evidence-based yoga and Ayurveda lifestyle practices for older adults. *Journal of Perioperative Practice*, 31(7–8), 271–278.

Jayanna, K., Nagesh, P., & Ramesh, C. (2023). Integrative approach to lifestyle management for urban health: A pragmatic framework. *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care*, 12(5), 785–791.

Patwardhan, B. (2014). Bridging Ayurveda with evidence-based scientific approaches. *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine*, 5(1), 1–8.

Rioux, J., Thomson, C., & Hunter, J. (2019). Outcomes from a whole-systems Ayurvedic medicine and yoga intervention for weight loss: Feasibility and acceptability study. *Global Advances in Health and Medicine*, 8, 2164956119847693.

Sharma, R., Kumar, V., & Singh, B. (2019). Effect of Ayurveda intervention, lifestyle modification and yoga in management of type 2 diabetes: A clinical study. *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine*, 10(4), 258–264.

Verma, S. K. (2024). Exploring Ayurveda: Principles and their application in modern healthcare. *Beni-Suef University Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, 13(1), 45–52.



**Malaysian
Yoga
Society**

VEGETARIAN & VEGAN FOOD FAIR



**SELECTION OF
GOODIES**



**VEGETARIAN &
VEGAN FOOD**



**FUN
ACTIVITIES**

Join us in this fund raising event!

14 JUNE 2026



BRICKFIELDS

Interested in becoming a vendor? Contact us for booking!



malaysianyogasociety.org



+603-2282 4980 / +6012 633 9144

Teaching Common Sense and Simple Judgement to Pre-teens and Teens Through Yoga

Adolescence is a time of fast brain development, stronger emotions and expanding independence. Pre-teens and teenagers are learning to judge risk, manage impulses and make everyday decisions — from homework and friendships to online behaviour and substance experimentation. When these capacities lag, small problems (skipping homework, risky posts, short tempers) can escalate into serious outcomes such as academic failure, self-harm, substance misuse or legal trouble. A growing body of research shows that well-designed yoga and mindfulness programmes can strengthen the very mental skills — attention, impulse control, emotional regulation and self-awareness — that underpin practical judgement and “common sense” in young people (Purohit & Pradhan, 2017; Vhavle, Rao, & Manjunath, 2019; Bazzano et al., 2022).

Why Yoga Helps Judgement and “Common Sense”

Judgement and simple, everyday common sense depend on executive functions (working memory, inhibitory control, flexible thinking) and regulated emotion. Yoga is a mind–body practice that combines movement, breath control (pranayama) and attentional training; research suggests these components affect stress physiology and cortical networks involved in self-control and decision making (Kerekes et al., 2021). Randomised and quasi-experimental studies with adolescents report improvements in executive function, attention and inhibitory control after yoga programmes, and reductions in anxiety and depressive symptoms that otherwise cloud decision making (Purohit & Pradhan, 2017; Vhavle et al., 2019; Bazzano et al., 2022).

Common Problems In This Age Group (And the Dangers If Unmanaged)

1. **Impulsivity and peer pressure:** impulsive choices (dangerous dares, risky social posts) can produce immediate physical or social harm. Poor impulse control is linked to later substance misuse and aggression. Yoga programmes in institutional and school settings have shown reductions in impulsive and antisocial behaviours, suggesting a protective effect (Kerekes et al., 2021).
2. **Anxiety and poor stress coping:** anxious teens may avoid decisions or make rash choices to relieve discomfort (e.g., self-medicating or

SuperYogaKids
CORNER



avoidance). School-based yoga and mindfulness trials report reductions in anxiety symptoms and improved coping, which support clearer decision making (Bazzano et al., 2022; White, 2012).

3. **Inattention and poor planning:** children who struggle to focus are more likely to miss social cues and make avoidable errors (e.g., unsafe crossing of roads, forgetting deadlines). Studies show yoga can improve attention and working memory — cognitive tools crucial for weighing options and consequences (Vhavle et al., 2019; Purohit & Pradhan, 2017).
4. **Emotional reactivity:** when anger or sadness hijacks thinking, practical judgement suffers. Regular mindfulness and yoga practice builds emotion-regulation capacity, reducing reactive decision making (Bazzano et al., 2022; Kerekes et al., 2021).

Common Adult Misunderstandings — And Better Responses

Many adults treat school yoga as mere physical exercise or a “luxury” add-on, or they expect instant behaviour change. Two misunderstandings are especially common:

- **“It’s only stretching”** — When adults assume yoga is only physical, they may miss the breathing and attention elements that strengthen cognitive control. The evidence shows that the breath-and-attention components drive many of the gains in self-regulation (Kerekes et al., 2021).
- **“If it doesn’t fix things fast, it isn’t working”** — Behavioural and cognitive changes require repeated practice. Short, consistent sessions over weeks produce measurable improvements (Purohit & Pradhan, 2017; Vhavle et al., 2019). Expect gradual gains and celebrate small changes (better pause before replying, fewer detentions, improved concentration).

Adults can support teens by treating yoga as training in self-management rather than as punishment or performance sport. Practical steps adults can take are below.

Simple Yoga Techniques and Routines to Teach Judgement and Common Sense

Below are short, research-aligned practices that can be taught in schools, clinics or at home. They are brief, practical and suitable for pre-teens and teens.

1. **Grounding posture + 3-part breath (5 minutes)**
 - Stand in Tadasana (mountain pose) or sit upright. Instruct 3-part breath: belly → ribs → chest on inhale; reverse on exhale.
 - Purpose: calms the nervous system, improves the ability to pause before reacting. Regular practice is associated with reduced anxiety and better decision making (Bazzano et al., 2022).
2. **Short attention practice (2–5 minutes)**
 - Simple focused-attention: choose the breath or a neutral sound; when mind wanders, note “thinking” and return.
 - Purpose: builds sustained attention and working memory capacity necessary for weighing options (Quach et al., 2016; in adolescent mindfulness RCT literature).
3. **Inhibitory control practice through slow flow (8–12 minutes)**
 - A short sequence of poses such as a slow Sun-Salutation variants with guided breath-counting. Hold poses for a few breath cycles.

- Purpose: holding balance while breathing slowly trains inhibitory control and persistence (Purohit & Pradhan, 2017; Vhavle et al., 2019).
4. **A two-minute “humming breath” for crisis moments**
 - Relax your body: Take a slow deep breath in and make a steady humming sound as you breathe out slowly.
 - Purpose: a simple breathing technique that translates breath regulation into self-calming moment during real world choices.
 5. **Guided body-scan relaxation (5–8 minutes)**
 - Lying down or seated, guide attention through the body to release tension.
 - Purpose: reduces physiological arousal so clearer judgement is possible; used in many school programmes that report mental-health benefits (White, 2012; Bazzano et al., 2022).



Case Evidence (Research Examples)

- **Orphanage RCT:** Purohit and Pradhan (2017) reported that a three-month yoga programme significantly improved executive functions (inhibitory control and working memory) in adolescents living in an orphan home. Those cognitive gains map directly to better judgement and planning.
- **School RCTs and pragmatic trials:** Vhavle et al. (2019) found yoga produced similar or better gains in executive function, attention and working memory compared with physical exercise in large school samples. Bazzano et al. (2022) conducted a pragmatic school-based cluster RCT and reported reductions in anxiety and trends towards better depressive symptoms after an 8-week programme.

- **Institutional settings:** Kerekes et al. (2021) describe research and protocols showing yoga can reduce impulsive, aggressive and self-harm behaviours in institutionalised youth — populations with high risk for poor decision making and dangerous outcomes.

Practical Guidance for Adults

1. **Use short, regular practices:** evidence supports repeated brief sessions (weekly or several times per week) rather than one-off workshops (Purohit & Pradhan, 2017; Vhavle et al., 2019).
2. **Choose trauma-informed and age-appropriate teachers:** avoid pressured or shaming approaches; trauma-informed delivery respects boundaries and consent (Kerekes et al., 2021).
3. **Model the habit:** adults who practise brief breath pauses and calm problem-solving make the approach socially acceptable.
4. **If severe problems exist, combine yoga with clinical care:** yoga is a helpful adjunct but not a substitute for therapy or medical treatment where required (Kerekes et al., 2021). **YM**

References

Bazzano, A. N., Sun, Y., Chavez-Gray, V., Akintimehin, T., Gustat, J., Barrera, D., & Roi, C. (2022). Effect of yoga and mindfulness intervention on symptoms of anxiety and depression in young adolescents attending middle school: A pragmatic community-based cluster randomised controlled trial in a racially diverse urban setting. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(19), Article 12076.

Kerekes, N., (lead author). (2021). Yoga as complementary care for young people placed in juvenile institutions—A study plan. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 12, Article 575147.

Purohit, S. P., & Pradhan, B. (2017). Effect of yoga program on executive functions of adolescents dwelling in an orphan home: A randomized controlled study. *Journal of Traditional and Complementary Medicine*, 7(1), 99–105.

Vhavle, S. P., Rao, R. M., & Manjunath, N. K. (2019). Comparison of yoga versus physical exercise on executive function, attention, and working memory in adolescent schoolchildren: A randomised controlled trial. *International Journal of Yoga*, 12(2), 172–173.

White, L. S. (2012). Reducing stress in school-age girls through mindful yoga. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*, 26(1), 45–56.

MAYI[®]
SuperYogaKids

SUPER YOGA KIDS INSTRUCTOR COURSE

Learn important techniques to get children to love yoga movements while benefiting from them!

The fun-filled practical sessions will have you equipped with teaching materials by the end of the course, leaving you all geared up to run your own kids yoga classes!

This course is registered with the Ministry of Education Malaysia



What's Really in Your Cosmetics — And How to Choose Safer, Natural Alternatives

We liberally apply creams, lotions, shampoos and lipsticks every day — and many of us assume the skin and mouth are perfect barriers to what's in them. The truth is more complex: modern cosmetics can contain chemicals that penetrate the body, accumulate over time, and—with chronic exposure—may affect health. This guide explains the major chemical concerns, how much our bodies actually absorb via skin and mouth, the possible long-term effects, five common complaints from cosmetic use, an illustrative harmful case, and practical steps for choosing safer, natural alternatives supported by science.

Common Problem Chemicals in Cosmetics

Many widely used ingredients serve valid functions (preservative, fragrance, texture), yet some raise health concerns:

- **Parabens** (methyl-, propyl-, butyl-paraben): inexpensive preservatives used widely in creams and makeup. They may act like weak estrogens in lab studies and are flagged for endocrine disruption. (Nowak et al., 2018)
- **Phthalates** (often hidden under “fragrance”): used to make plastics flexible and to stabilise scents; some phthalates are associated with reproductive and developmental effects. (Hlisníková et al., 2020)
- **Formaldehyde-releasers and formaldehyde** (in some nail/hair care): effective antimicrobials but classed as carcinogenic at certain exposures.
- **Triclosan and some antimicrobials**: linked to hormone changes and banned in some jurisdictions for hand wash use, but still appear in other cosmetics.
- **Heavy metals** (e.g., lead, cadmium, chromium) — often detected as trace contaminants in colour cosmetics such as lipsticks and eyeliners. Regular use of pigmented products means low-level cumulative exposure. (Arshad et al., 2020)
- **Persistent chemicals and PFAS** (in some waterproof cosmetics): emerging evidence indicates these can be absorbed and are persistent in body and environment.



How Much Gets In – Skin and Oral Absorption

Skin is not an impenetrable wall. Many cosmetic ingredients are formulated to deliver active molecules into or across skin (moisturiser actives, anti-age molecules, sunscreens). Laboratory and human studies show a range of absorption behaviours: small, lipophilic molecules have easier penetration; water-soluble may penetrate less, but formulation (cream, solvent, enhancer) matters. (Hewitt et al., 2019)

The oral mucosa (inside lips/mouth) is even more permeable than skin. Lipstick and lip balm are applied to tissue with higher blood flow and thinner epithelium; habitual licking, eating and accidental ingestion increase systemic intake. That is why trace metals and lipophilic contaminants in lip products are a special concern. (Arshad et al., 2020)

Long-Term Health Concerns from Chronic, Low-Level Exposure

Single short exposures are usually harmless — the worry is bioaccumulation and chronic exposure from daily use over years. Key suspected outcomes reported in human and animal studies include:

- **Endocrine disruption**: Chemicals that mimic or interfere with hormones (some parabens, phthalates, triclosan) have been associated with altered reproductive hormone levels, puberty timing changes and possible effects on fertility. (Nowak et al., 2018)



- **Reproductive and developmental effects:** Animal and some human epidemiology link certain phthalates and other plasticisers to reduced sperm quality, developmental changes in offspring, and other reproductive harms. (Hliseníková et al., 2020)
- **Cumulative toxic burden:** Heavy metals and persistent compounds (PFAS, certain organics) can accumulate and contribute to long-term risks such as cardiovascular, metabolic or carcinogenic outcomes — though for many chemicals the evidence is still evolving. (Arshad et al., 2020)

It is important to emphasise nuance: for many chemicals the risk depends on dose, frequency, route and vulnerability (pregnancy, infancy). Regulatory limits often target acute toxicity, but newer science focuses on long-term, low-dose effects — especially for endocrine disruptors — which is why many countries are periodically updating permitted lists.

Top 5 Complaints Due To Chemical-Based Cosmetics

From observational studies and consumer surveys, five of the most frequently reported complaints from use of chemical-based cosmetics are:

1. **Skin irritation and redness:** Many users report flushing, burning, or reddening of areas where cosmetics or skin-care products are used. For example, a study found red patches and burning sensations among users of chemical-based cosmetics. (Di Giovanni et al., cited in Basit et al., 2024)
2. **Acne, breakouts or “purging”:** New products may trigger pimples, clogged pores or acne-type reactions, especially when heavy creams, occlusive formulas or fragranced actives are used. (Basit et al., 2024)
3. **Pigmentation changes:** Both hypo- and hyper-pigmentation (i.e., skin darkening or lightening patches) can occur after chronic use

of some cosmetic actives or contaminants (for instance hydroquinone adulteration). (MOH Malaysia, 2019)

4. **Contact allergic reactions / urticaria:** Exposure to fragrance chemicals, preservatives or dyes can trigger hives, rash or dermatitis. The prevalence of cosmetic-induced urticaria is non-trivial (1–5% sensitised in some populations). (Gupta et al., 2022)
5. **Sensitisation or increased photosensitivity:** Some actives (e.g., retinoids, certain chemical sunscreens) may make skin more sensitive to UV, leading to more sunburn, peeling, or visible damage. (MOH Malaysia, 2018)

To give specific numbers: one cross-sectional Indian study found that among 791 women using cosmetics, 41.1% reported adverse effects (skincare products more often than others) and the face was the primary site. (Singh et al., 2025) Another Malaysian study found 69.5% of reported adverse events involved the facial area and most frequently from facial care products. (Faridah et al., 2020)

An Actual Case: Unsafe Cosmetic Product Use

A notable real-world case occurred in Malaysia. The National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA) under the Ministry of Health Malaysia revoked the notification of several cosmetic products after laboratory examinations found prohibited substances, including mercury, hydroquinone, tretinoin and betamethasone 17-valerate in creams marketed as cosmetics. (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2019)

For example, in March 2025 one product called “Molly Care Night Cream” was listed among five whose notifications were cancelled after confirmation of adulterants. (International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science [IJRISS], 2025) One social-media influencer marketing an un-registered mercury-based skincare product was reported to have linked serious health issues, including skin damage and alleged miscarriage among users. (IJRISS, 2025)

Here's a simplified timeline of that case:

- A product marketed as a “night cream” claimed skin-lightening / anti-age benefits.
- Lab tests revealed high levels of mercury and other prescription-only actives not permitted in cosmetics.
- The product's registration status was cancelled and public warning issued.

- Consumers using it reported irritation, pigmentation changes, potential systemic effects from mercury absorption (kidney and nervous system concerns).
- Regulatory action prompted recalls, fines and consumer advisories.

This case is representative of how “cosmetic” products can contain potent chemicals not intended for unsupervised (or unlabelled) use, illustrating the principle that what you put on your skin may reach deeper than you expect.

How Consumers Can Make Safer Choices (Practical, Everyday Steps)

You don't have to become a chemist overnight to improve your safety. Here are practical habits:

- Read the INCI list (ingredient list on packages). Learn a few common chemical names (e.g., butylparaben, dibutyl phthalate = DBP, dimethicone) and watch for vague “fragrance” entries which can hide many chemicals.
- Minimise lip product ingestion. Choose non-pigmented or certified low-contaminant lip balms and avoid constant reapplication during meals because of oral mucosa absorption risk.
- Patch test new products (inside forearm) rather than going straight to face or neck.
- Limit products with long lists of unrecognisable chemicals — simpler formulas can mean fewer exposure routes.
- Use reputable databases (your local official regulatory agency) if you want to check a specific product and its ingredient. The agency keeps a tight surveillance of marketed products to ensure safe usages.
- Store products as directed and discard old cosmetics; preservatives are present to control microbial growth, but degraded or contaminated products can be harmful.

Natural, Evidence-Based Herbal Alternatives

Several plant-derived ingredients have good scientific support for skin benefits and relatively good safety when properly formulated. Consider:

- **Green tea polyphenols (*Camellia sinensis*):** Potent antioxidants and photoprotective: clinical studies support their role in protecting skin from UV damage and improving some photo-ageing markers when used topically or orally. (Katiyar & Mukhtar, 2007)
- **Aloe vera (*Aloe barbadensis*):** Clinical trials and reviews show aloe vera gel can accelerate wound healing, soothe inflammation and support barrier repair in topical use. (Reynolds & Dweck, 1999)
- **Turmeric (curcumin):** Topical curcumin has demonstrated anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects in dermatology studies — although formulation (ensuring skin delivery) is key.
- **Rosehip oil and plant-derived oils (rosehip, jojoba, squalane from plants):** Shown in trials to improve skin hydration and reduce appearance of fine lines when used consistently; they are also good carriers for other botanicals.
- **Neem, chamomile, calendula:** Traditional botanicals with antimicrobial and soothing properties backed by in-vitro and some clinical data — useful in natural formulations for sensitive skin.

When choosing herbal products: check for standardised extracts (ensuring consistent active levels), avoid formulations that simply replace one synthetic preservative with another without transparency, and prefer brands with safety testing and transparency. Note that even natural ingredients can cause sensitisation (e.g., fragrance derived from plants) so patch-testing still applies.

Bottom Line

Everyday cosmetics bring benefits — from sun-protection to skin comfort — but they also introduce chemical exposures that we should not ignore. The science supports being thoughtful: read labels, prefer transparency and evidence, limit exposure to products you ingest (like lipsticks), and consider plant-based ingredients with clinical backing such as green tea and aloe vera. Small, consistent choices add up: fewer unknown chemicals today means lower cumulative risk tomorrow.





References

Arshad, H., et al. (2020). Evaluation of cosmetic products and heavy metals in cosmetics: A review. *Journal of Cosmetic Science & Technology*, ... [PMC article].

Basit, A., & colleagues. (2024). In-depth review on cosmetic adverse events in Indian women. *Journal of Cutaneous and Aesthetic Surgery*.

Faridah, A., et al. (2020). Cosmetic use-related adverse events: findings from the lay public in Malaysia. *Cosmetics*, 7(2), 41.

Gupta, V. K., et al. (2022). A review on cosmetics causing contact urticaria. *Indian Journal of Dermatology*, 67(1), 40.

Hewitt, N. J., et al. (2019). Dermal absorption of 56 cosmetic-relevant chemicals in human skin in vitro. *Toxicology In Vitro*, 60, 295-304.

Hlisková, H., et al. (2020). Effects and mechanisms of phthalates' action on reproductive systems. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(18), 6773.

Katihar, S. K., & Mukhtar, H. (2007). Green tea polyphenols in skin prevention and therapy. *Archives of Dermatology*, 143(12), 1584-1591.

Ministry of Health Malaysia. (2018, February). Cosmetic products found to contain scheduled poison [Press statement].

Ministry of Health Malaysia. (2019, May). Advisory on cosmetic products found to contain mercury/hydroquinone [Press statement].

Nowak, K., et al. (2018). Parabens and their effects on the endocrine system – a review. *Frontiers in Endocrinology*, 9, 830.

Reynolds, T., & Dweck, A. C. (1999). Aloe vera leaf gel: a review update. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*, 68(1-3), 3-37.

MAYI INFINITY

Give your health a chance - discover a world free from chemicals.

Personal
Care
Series



Oral
Care
Series



Health
Support
Series



Pet
Care
Series



Botanical
Beverages
Series



Clean Up Day 2025 – Serving the Community by MYS

by Shameny

In conjunction with **World Cleanup Day**, **Malaysian Yoga Society (MYS)** organised a meaningful **Clean Up Day** initiative in **Brickfields** on **28th September 2025**, bringing together members of the yoga community, families, and volunteers in a shared spirit of service. Held from **7:30 AM to 9:30 AM**, the programme saw the enthusiastic participation of **more than 30 volunteers**, including yoga instructors, members, and children.

The event was officiated by **Master Manisekaran**, who began the morning with a short **satsang** that reminded participants about the yogic value of **seva (selfless service)** and our responsibility to care for the environment. His inspiring words set a beautiful intention for the morning before volunteers were flagged off to begin the cleanup.

Participants worked together to clean the surrounding streets and public areas of Brickfields, collecting litter and helping restore the environment. The activity not only contributed to a cleaner neighbourhood but also created awareness about environmental responsibility and mindful living.

A generous gesture from one of the MYS members added a thoughtful touch to the event. **Fifty caps were sponsored and distributed to volunteers**, helping to protect them from the hot morning sun while they carried out the cleanup efforts.



The presence of families made the event even more heartwarming. Some members brought along their young children, whose cheerful participation added a joyful energy to the morning. Watching the little ones enthusiastically join in the activity was a wonderful reminder that values such as caring for the environment can be nurtured from a young age.

The Malaysian Yoga Society extends its **heartfelt gratitude to all volunteers, sponsors, and well-wishers** whose support made this initiative a success. Through initiatives like this, MYS continues to promote not only yoga practice but also **community service, environmental awareness, and conscious living**, reflecting the true spirit of yoga both on and off the mat. **YM**



MAYI Graduation Celebrates the Class of 2024 and 2025 in a Joyous Milestone Event

The MAYI Graduation Ceremony for the Class of 2024 and 2025 was held in a grand and memorable celebration at Institut Koperasi Malaysia on 13 December 2025, marking an important milestone for the graduating yoga students. The event brought together graduates, families, trainers, and distinguished guests in a heartfelt occasion dedicated to honouring their commitment, discipline, and personal growth through yoga.



The ceremony was graced by an inspiring speech from Master Mani, the master trainer of MAYI Yoga, whose words deeply resonated with the audience. In his address, he congratulated the graduates for their dedication and perseverance, reminding them that yoga is not merely a physical practice but a lifelong journey of wellness, balance, and inner transformation. His motivating message encouraged the graduates to continue sharing the values of health, mindfulness, and harmony within their communities.

One of the key highlights of the event was a captivating Yoga Dance Performance presented by the graduates. Combining grace, rhythm, and yogic discipline, the performance beautifully reflected the students' journey and training, earning warm applause from the audience.

Adding further joy and excitement to the celebration was a delightful performance by the Super Yoga Kids from all MAYI Yoga centres. The young students took to the stage with remarkable confidence and enthusiasm, impressing everyone with their poise and coordination. Proud parents watched with great admiration as the little ones showcased their talent and courage, making it one of the most heart-warming moments of the day.

Guests also enjoyed a lively photo booth and photo contest, where memorable moments of the celebration were captured and shared. The cheerful atmosphere allowed graduates, families, and friends to preserve the occasion through photographs and fun interactions.

During the event, Master Mani also introduced the wider wellness vision of the MAYI Group, highlighting its growing initiatives, including MAYI Waters, MAYI Infinity, and MAYI Global Wellness. These initiatives reflect the organisation's commitment to holistic well-being and community empowerment.

A particularly touching segment of the programme featured video messages from foreign graduates, who expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the guidance and knowledge they had received through MAYI Yoga. Their heartfelt words added an international spirit of unity and appreciation to the ceremony.

The MAYI Graduation 2024 and 2025 was truly a celebration of achievement, growth, and the continued journey towards wellness and excellence. **YM**

Featured Asana

Uththanasana (Squat and Rise Pose)

STEP by STEP

1. Stand erect with the feet about one metre apart.
2. Turn the toes out to the sides where they remain throughout the practice.
3. Interlock the fingers of both hands and let them hang loosely in front of the body.
4. Exhale as you slowly bend the knees and lower the buttocks about 20 cm. The knees should bend outward over the toes and the spine should be straight.
5. Inhale as you straighten the knees and return to the upright position.
6. Next, exhale as you bend the knees and descend about half a metre. Again, inhale as you return to the upright position.
7. Then, exhale as you bend the knees and lower the buttocks until the hands are about 30 cm above the floor and then inhale as you rise again.
8. Finally, exhale as you lower the buttocks until the hands rest on or as near as possible to the floor.
9. Keep the arms and shoulders loose and avoid bending forward.
10. Stay in the final position for a few seconds. Then, inhale as you return to the upright position and relax the body.

Note: Practise all stages one after the other only when there is no strain.

BENEFITS

1. Strengthens the muscles of the middle of the back, the pelvis, uterus, thighs, knees, and ankles.

CONTRA-INDICATIONS

1. Those with knee problems should practice only the initial stages. Do not strain.
2. Not to be practiced by women suffering from prolapse of the uterus.
3. During pregnancy practice only the first 2 stages.



Millet Pudding (1 serving)

by Sumi

Ingredients (yield: 16 pcs cookies):

- 2 full tablespoon of MAYI Grams and Millet powder
- ½ spoon brown sugar
- Mix of: Cranberries and raisins
- Crushed almonds and cashews
- Pumpkin and sunflower seeds
- Chopped dates
- ½ cup of hot water

Directions:

1. Combined chopped dates and 2 tablespoons of MAYI Grams and Millet powder with ½ cup of hot water. Stir until millet dissolves.
2. Pour into serving bowl and garnish with almonds, cashews, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds, raisins and cranberries.
3. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon of ghee or coconut oil (optional)



MYA Calendar: Apr - Jul 2026

APRIL

04/04/2026	Ayurvedic Bodyworks Therapist Course - Female
19/04/2026	Manipuraka Awakening & Universal Healing Energy Workshop
19/04/2026	Urdhva Retas & Anti-Ageing Workshop
19/04/2026	International Yoga Instructor Course - Foundation
19/04/2026	International Yoga Instructor Course - Foundation
25/04/2026	Pranayama (Breathing Technique) Instructor/Practitioner Course
26/04/2026	Overcoming Sciatica (Effective Techniques for Lasting Relief) Workshop

MAY

01/05/2026	Full Intestinal Cleansing Practical Session + Jala Neti
08/05/2026	Pregnancy Yoga Instructor Course
10/05/2026	Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course
16/05/2026	International Yoga Instructor Course - Foundation
16/05/2026	Metabolic: Digestion & Health Workshop
16/05/2026	Wellness Workshop
24/05/2026	Ayurvedic Bodyworks Therapist Course - Female
25/05/2026	Asthanga Yoga Certification Course - Intermediate

JUNE

07/06/2026	International Yoga Instructor Course - Foundation
09/06/2026	Ayurvedic Bodyworks Therapist Course - Female Intake
13/06/2026	International Yoga Instructor Course - Foundation
14/06/2026	Yoga Therapist Certification Course
14/06/2026	MYS Food Fair
15/06/2026	International Yoga Instructor Course - Foundation
20/06/2026	Chest & Shoulder Mobility Workshop
21/06/2026	International Day of Yoga
21/06/2026	YogaAsana - the Handstand & Arm Balance Core Activation Series Workshop for Beginners
27/06/2026	Wellness Yoga Workshop for Back Management

JULY

12/07/2026	International Yoga Instructor Course - Foundation
12/07/2026	Pranayama (Breathing Technique) Instructor/Practitioner Course
17/07/2026	Pregnancy Yoga Instructor Course
18/07/2026	Dhyana (Meditation) Instructor/Practitioner Course
18/07/2026	Mudra: Stress Management Workshop
19/07/2026	Dance Yoga Instructor Course
19/07/2026	Ayurvedic Bodyworks Therapist Course - Female Intake
25/07/2026	Kundalini Kriya Yoga Course

**Pranayama
(Breathing Techniques)
Instructor/Practitioner
Course**

**Learn the power of
breath and ways to
promote energy, vitality,
and overall well-being.**

- ✦ Learn foundational and advanced pranayama techniques.
- ✦ Understand breath awareness and energy flow.
- ✦ Improve stress management and emotional balance.



**Dhyana
(Meditation)
Instructor/Practitioner
Course**

**Learn meditation
techniques and explore
the world of calmness,
clarity, and inner peace.**

- ✦ Learn the principles of dhyana and meditation.
- ✦ Develop focus, stillness, and inner awareness.
- ✦ Master guided meditation techniques.
- ✦ Build confidence in leading meditation sessions.

These courses are registered with the Ministry of Education Malaysia

**Enrol today and inspire transformation through
the power of breath and meditation.**

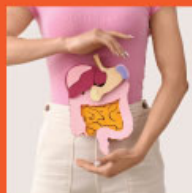
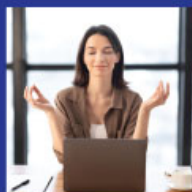


ALIGNMENT & SCOLIOSIS CARE

Learn practical techniques to support spinal alignment and manage scoliosis through mindful movement, posture awareness, and targeted strengthening exercises that promote balance, stability, and greater comfort in daily life.

MUDRA: STRESS MANAGEMENT

Discover powerful hand gestures that help calm the mind, regulate energy, and reduce stress. This workshop teaches essential mudras that you can easily integrate into your daily routine for greater mental clarity and emotional balance.

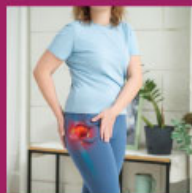


METABOLIC: DIGESTION & HEALTH

Support your digestive system and metabolic health through specific yoga practices, breathwork, and lifestyle insights. This workshop focuses on improving digestion, boosting energy, and promoting internal balance for better wellbeing.

CHEST & SHOULDER MOBILITY

Release tension and improve mobility in the chest and shoulders through guided stretches and strengthening exercises. This workshop helps enhance posture, breathing capacity, and upper body freedom of movement.



HIP LIBERATION

Unlock tension stored in the hips with targeted movements and deep stretches designed to improve flexibility, stability, and circulation. This workshop supports better mobility, emotional release, and ease of movement in daily activities.

Brickfields
Bangsar
Damansara Utama
Selayang
Subang
Klang

3, Jalan Ang Seng 3, Brickfields, 50470 Kuala Lumpur.
81A (1st Flr), Jalan Bangsar, 59200 Kuala Lumpur.
89B (2nd Flr), Jalan SS21/37, D'sara Utama, 47400 PJ, Selangor.
8-1 & 9-1, Jalan Paragon Utama, Selayang Utama, 68100 Bt. Caves, Selangor.
11(2nd Flr), Jalan USJ10/1A, 47620 Subang Jaya, Selangor.
18A, Jalan Sanggul 1, Bandar Puteri, 41200 Klang, Selangor.

+603 2260 5322
+603 2282 4980
+603 7726 6682
+603 6127 5693
+603 8021 7980
+6012 210 9110