

THE YOGA MAIL

The Industry Journal For Yoga & Human Potential

PP 15266/06/2013(033264)

Jul - Dec 2025 ISSUE

COMPLIMENTARY COPY

**The Journey to
Being in the
Present Moment**

**Awakening the
Body:**

The Importance of
Hatha Yoga's Joint
Exercises
(Pawanmuktasana)
and Present
-Moment A
wareness

**Kundalini Kriya
Yoga and
Hatha Yoga:**

A Complementary
Path to Health in the
Modern Age



Message from
Master Mani:
Yoga Community



Message from Master Mani

Yoga and the Value of the Present Moment

Yoga is, at its essence, an art — the art of graceful movements anchored in the timeless philosophy of *sthira* (steadiness) and *sukha* (comfort, ease).

This art becomes a science when breath awareness is woven into every movement. The conscious synchronisation of body and breath transforms simple motion into a rejuvenating process, nourishing the nervous system, harmonising physiological rhythms, and awakening the subtle energies of life.

When art and science unite, yoga becomes more than practice — it becomes meditation in motion. A living force begins to emerge: the awakening of *prana* (life force). This awakening is not abstract; it can be experienced as tangible, transformative, and profoundly real.

From this awakened state arises another power — the force of being in the present moment. I call it a force because it is not merely an idea or sentiment, but an energetic state governed by consciousness itself, made accessible through the sustained practice of yoga.

Is there truly a present moment?

When we say, "I am in the present moment," the very instant has already passed. Time, by its nature, flows forward. So how can one ever claim to be in the present?

Here lies the paradox — intellectually, the "present moment" seems elusive. Emotionally, the phrase is often used in motivational speeches, workshops, or conversations, where it serves more as inspiration than reality. But is the experience of the present moment genuinely possible?

Flow and the Present

In states of flow — those moments of deep absorption, whether in music, art, sport, or yoga — one is no longer divided by past or future. The self merges with the activity, and awareness becomes fully immersed in now. This, perhaps, is as close as language can take us to the present moment.

To merely say "I am in the present" is conceptual. But to experience it through flow is existential — it transcends thought and becomes embodied.

Yoga as a Gateway to the Present Moment

When yoga is practiced with steady attention, patience, and the right pace, moments of flow naturally arise. The classical interpretation of yoga emphasises *sthira* (steadiness) and *sukha* (comfort, adaptability to one's capacity). In such a state, practice feels effortless — the body stable yet relaxed, the breath smooth, the mind alert yet quiet.

Whether through *asana* (postures), *pranayama* (breathwork), *dhyana* (meditation), or the contemplation of yoga philosophy, the practitioner is led gradually into the present. Here the experience is total: body, breath, intellect, and emotions harmonise.

This integration blossoms like the lotus — rooted in the mud of everyday life (*samsara*), yet rising above it with grace and beauty. Is such a state truly possible? The yogic tradition answers with certainty: yes. Yogis across generations have lived in this state and sought to share it, through both oral teachings and sacred texts, as a way of showing humanity the path toward living fully in the present. **YM**

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

Published by:
Sumathi A/P Jeganathan,
The Yoga Franchise, No.3, Jalan Ang Seng 3,
50470 Brickfields KL

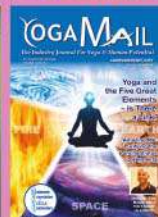
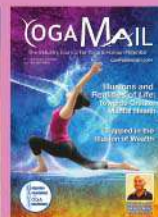


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The Journey to Being in the Present Moment

by Dr Chandra Nanthakumar

As mental health trajectories have become an issue for concern in the society, spiritual teachers, counsellors, and health care workers are doing their level best to come up with tools, techniques or skills to help helpless victims combat this disorder. This is imperative as early detection followed by timely intervention can alter the trajectory of these health issues and produce more favorable outcomes.

One of the most critical skills much needed today, which has been articulated by many spiritual teachers, is the ability to be in the present. Despite the fact that an idle mind can be a useful arena for problem-solving or developing creativity; on the contrary, it can also become a "devil's workshop". If the latter takes effect, the individual may begin to mull over the unpleasant past and/or worry incessantly about the future. Frequent episodes of these ruminations will render the mind cluttered bringing about negative consequences including impaired cognitive functions. Unhealthy habits will begin to take root, and eventually this leads to adverse health issues.

Hence, spiritual gurus like Robin Sharma (2018), Deepak Chopra (2006) and Eckhart Tolle (1999) have long propagated the idea of living in the present moment so as to enjoy not only a healthier, placid and happier life, but also to be more mindful. I believe the question that will arise now is - how does one actually live in the present moment. Are there formulas to apply or are there rules to follow?

Is there a ritual or a schedule one can follow to achieve this notion of living in the present? According to Tolle (1999), there is no boundary defining past or future points. All there is, is merely the present; the past and future are simply maya (illusions) created by the mind. As rudimentary as it sounds, it definitely requires some amount of effort to discipline the mind. Many struggle with this concept of being in the present, or bringing about stillness in the mind and body, and eventually transcending the ego, a trait which is an obstacle to spiritual development.

Amongst all the techniques or tools that are available today, one priceless practice that can undeniably lead the seeker to being in the present is none other than yoga. This ancient science, which originated in India, combines elements such as pranayama (expansion of life force), asanas (physical postures), dharana (contemplation) and dhyana (meditation) to help merge the individual's consciousness with the universal consciousness. The other elements like the yamas, niyamas and pratyahara are equally important, but they are usually entwined consciously or unconsciously in the practice. Contrary to popular belief, yoga is not about developing extreme flexibility or contorting the physical body into fancy shapes or positions, which may bring about more harm than good if done thoughtlessly.





prana (vital energy) flow in the body. Also, respecting the limits of the body is of utmost importance. Flexibility has to be cultivated progressively and not by force. The asanas, by itself, have lots to offer. If performed consciously and intently, they help increase endurance, flexibility and improve overall health physically, mentally and emotionally.

In the practice of yoga, the Law of Least Effort, which states that the intelligence of Mother Nature operates with effortless ease, is of immeasurable value (Chopra & Simon, 2006). For instance, when an individual moves into an asana (a pose), instead of muscling aggressively into the target position, they should find the sweet spot or simply put, the point of resistance, by breathing consciously and surrendering into it. All this can only be achieved if the individual is focused in the present moment.

The beauty about being in the present moment is that the individual will then be able to extend their reach and gradually but naturally enhance their flexibility. Achieving the target position may not happen in one session, but that is not imperative. Being in the perfect pose without *sthiram* (stillness) and *sukham* (happiness) is not the ultimate aim of yoga. As asserted by Chopra and Simon (2006), *asana*, at an advanced level, merely connotes the full expression of the amalgamation between the body and mind through *sthiram* and *sukham*. It is at this heightened state that the individual or the practitioner becomes willfully aware of the

Hence, if this practice is brought into one's daily life, the practitioner will begin to experience an inconceivable transformation of their day-to-day actions. Such is the potential of this powerful science.

Having said that, not only patience, but also consistency, is key in the practice of yoga – the more frequent the individual embraces the practice, the lesser will be the limitations and vulnerabilities. This, in turn, brings more balance and energy into their lives.

Similarly, the practice of the other rungs in *ashtanga* yoga, that is, *pranayama*, *dharana* and *dhyana* have nothing less to offer as these components can bring about a metamorphosis in the practitioner too. Patanjali, the father of yoga, states that the *prana* can be invigorated through conscious breathing techniques (i.e. *pranayama*). As we are already aware the mind is intimately connected to the breath; hence, when breath is smooth and regulated, the mind becomes tranquil. In this way, the practice of *pranayama* can lull the practitioner from a confined mundane state into a state of greater awareness of being in the present. This practice is so powerful that it boosts the

neuro-respiratory integration in a human being. Regular practitioners will be able to attest to this.

In the yogic literature, dharana and dhyana have been expressed in many ways - sometimes highly philosophical that it appears too challenging to fathom, at other times simplified for the ease of comprehension to the lay person. However, the underlying principle of both remains unchanged – dharana is the mastery of concentration (i.e. to bring attention unto something) and intention, while dhyana goes a step deeper from concentration to an uninterrupted flow of being in the present.

According to Chopra & Simon (2006), one must first learn to value their attention as a priceless commodity. Once something has been activated with the attention, the intentions will help with the manifestation. Based on yogic literature, intentions have infinite organising power. These intentions may be as simple as to radiate more love and happiness in one's life, or to even heal an illness which is much needed today. Once the

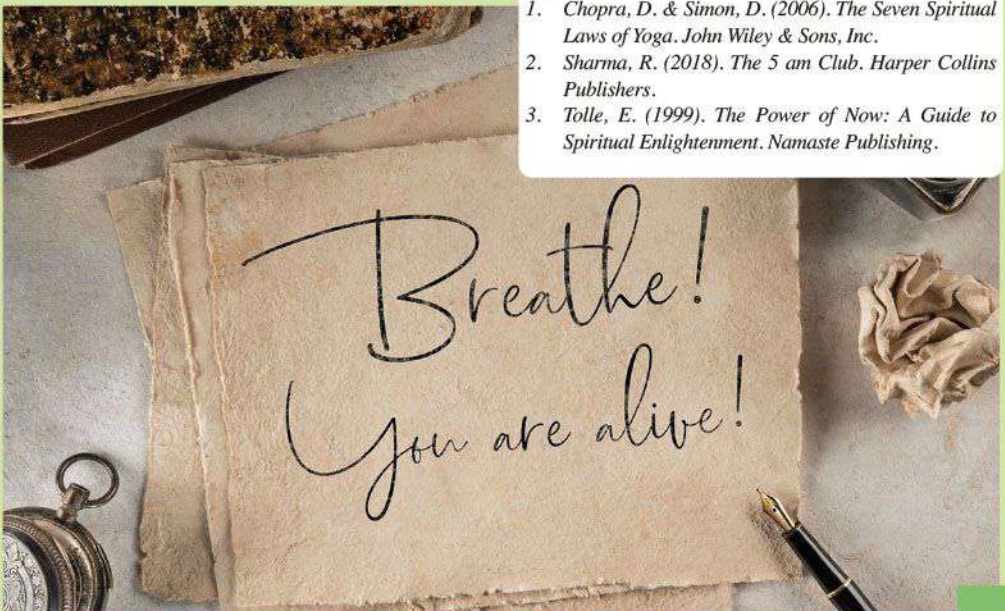
intentions are clearly defined, one may go into a state of dhyana. At this stage, one may simply observe the thoughts, feelings and sensations. There will come a time when one realizes there is no need to react to them. As the mind unwinds and quietens, the intentions are released to the Universe. The heightened awareness at this point allows one to appreciate being in the present moment and to also express gratitude.

It is evident that the practice of yoga, if done with love, joy, and consistency, endows the practitioner with copious benefits. By being more aware of the present moment and nurturing a healthy attitude of being non-critical towards thoughts or feelings that arise, dis – eases can be kept at bay. Besides, the practitioner will be relatively well-equipped to heal themselves judiciously and lead a healthier lifestyle. This ancient invaluable science has barely any requirements; only time has to be set aside for the practice in order to enjoy the rewards. Please get started if you have not done so.

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Awakening the Body:

The Importance of Hatha Yoga's Joint Exercises (Pawanmuktasana) and Present-Moment Awareness

In the fast-paced world we live in, the body is often neglected in favour of mental or emotional pursuits, until pain, stiffness, or injury reminds us of its importance. Hatha Yoga, one of the oldest and most comprehensive systems of holistic well-being, brings us back into our bodies through a systematic, mindful practice that begins with a series of joint exercises known as Pawanmuktasana (wind-releasing practices). These simple yet profound movements help activate and maintain the health of the joints, enhance circulation, release stagnant energy, and serve as a gateway to deeper body awareness and present-moment mindfulness.

What Is Pawanmuktasana?

Pawanmuktasana is a foundational group of practices in Hatha Yoga, often referred to as the "anti-rheumatic group" of asanas. This series includes gentle movements of all the major joints from the toes to the neck, typically practiced at the beginning of a yoga session to remove energy blockages and prepare the body for more intense asanas.

The practices include:

- Toe and ankle movements: *Padanguli Naman*, *Goolf Naman*, *Goolf Chakra*, *Goolf Ghoorman*
- Knee and hip movements: *Janu Naman*, *Janu Chakra*, *Janufalak Akarshan*, *Ardha Titali Asana*, *Poorna Titali Asana*, *Shroni Chakra*
- Hand and arm movements: *Mushtika Bandhana*, *Manibandha Naman*, *Manibandha Chakra*, *Kehuni Naman*, *Skandha Chakra*
- Neck movements: *Greeva Sanchalana*

These movements are generally performed slowly, with awareness of the breath and bodily sensations, making them ideal for practitioners of all ages and physical conditions.



The Importance of Joint Health

The joints are the body's pivots, enabling mobility and coordination. As people age or lead sedentary lives, joint flexibility, range of motion, and lubrication naturally decline. This can lead to stiffness, discomfort, and even degenerative conditions like osteoarthritis.

Joint issues are not just a matter of discomfort; they affect the quality of life, posture, mobility, and psychological well-being. According to the World Health Organization (2021), musculoskeletal conditions are the leading contributor to disability worldwide, with joint-related disorders being among the most common.

Maintaining joint health is not simply a mechanical concern - it is deeply tied to the fluid movement of prana (vital energy) in the body, a key principle in yoga philosophy. If joints are stiff or blocked, energy flow is interrupted, contributing to lethargy, poor mental clarity, and emotional stagnation.

How Joints Exercises Support Joint Health

1. Improved Synovial Fluid Circulation

The joints are surrounded by synovial membranes that secrete fluid to lubricate and nourish the cartilage. Regular, gentle movement such as that provided by *Pawanmuktasana* stimulates this fluid circulation. A study by Cavanaugh & Guilak (2005) highlights how cyclical loading of joints helps maintain cartilage health by

promoting nutrient diffusion in synovial fluid.

2.Reduced Inflammation and Stiffness

Joint mobility exercises can reduce low-grade inflammation associated with chronic joint conditions. According to a randomised controlled trial, joint-focused yoga therapy significantly reduced joint stiffness and pain in patients with osteoarthritis (Ebnezar et al., 2012).

3.Neuromuscular Re-education

Joint movements in yoga are performed slowly and mindfully, which enhances proprioception—the body's ability to sense its position in space. This kind of neuromuscular feedback improves coordination and balance, reducing the risk of falls and injuries (Goble et al., 2011).

4.Improved Circulation and Detoxification

Pawanmuktasana helps improve venous return and lymphatic drainage, especially in the extremities. These effects are amplified when the breath is synchronised with the movement, facilitating better oxygenation and toxin removal.



Enhancing Present-Moment Awareness through Joint Movements

One of the most powerful benefits of Pawanmuktasana is its capacity to anchor awareness in the body. The slow, repetitive nature of these movements invites practitioners to feel the texture of each motion—how the joints move, how the breath flows, and how the muscles respond.

This is what makes Pawanmuktasana a mindfulness practice in itself. The awareness developed through these joint exercises becomes the foundation for deeper yogic states such as Pratyahara (withdrawal of senses) and Dharana (concentration).

A study by Schmalzl et al. (2015) found that mindful movement practices, including yoga, enhanced interoceptive awareness, the internal sense of the body's physiological condition, which has been shown to improve emotional regulation and stress resilience.

A Closer Look at the Joint Exercises and Their Benefits

1.Padanguli Naman (Toe Bending)

Stimulates the nerve endings in the feet, encourages circulation to lower extremities, and improves foot arch integrity—crucial for posture and balance.

2.Goof Naman and Chakra (Ankle Bending and Rotation)

Mobilises ankle joints, preventing stiffness. This is especially beneficial for those who sit or stand for prolonged periods, promoting better lymphatic return.

3.Janu Naman and Chakra (Knee Bending and Rotation)

Restores the range of motion in the knees, strengthens supporting ligaments and muscles, and helps in early stages of osteoarthritis management (Ebnezar et al., 2012).

4.Ardha and Poorna Titali Asana (Half and Full Butterfly)

Loosens up the hip joints, groin, and inner thighs. Aids in releasing pelvic tension, especially useful for those with lower back issues or menstrual discomfort.

5.Shroni Chakra (Hip Rotation)

Improves hip mobility and enhances stability for walking and standing. It also supports the sacroiliac joint, essential for spinal alignment.

6.Mushtika Bandhana, Manibandha Naman & Chakra (Hand and Wrist Movements)

These exercises combat repetitive strain injuries, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, and increase circulation in the hands. Ideal for people who use keyboards or phones excessively.

7. Kehuni Naman (Elbow Bending) & Skandha Chakra (Shoulder Rotation)

Encourages better upper body mobility, releases shoulder and neck tension, and supports good posture, especially for those with sedentary jobs.

8. Greeva Sanchalana (Neck Movements)

Mobilises cervical spine, reduces neck stiffness and headaches, and supports nervous system balance by stimulating the vagal tone (Porges, 2007).

Therapeutic Applications of Pawanmuktasana

These exercises are widely used in yoga therapy, rehabilitation, and geriatric fitness. A clinical study conducted in 2011 showed that Pawanmuktasana practices reduced the severity of musculoskeletal complaints and improved general wellbeing in middle-aged women (Telles et al., 2011).

Moreover, these movements are accessible to individuals with limited mobility, making them ideal for seniors or individuals recovering from injuries.

Pawanmuktasana as a Meditative Practice

Unlike dynamic workouts or stretches, Pawanmuktasana is performed with slowness, breath coordination, and awareness, transforming them into meditative movements. This practice cultivates body mindfulness, essential for reducing stress and anxiety.

Research has shown that body-based mindfulness practices improve psychosomatic integration—the ability to understand and respond to internal bodily cues, which is often impaired in modern lifestyles (Farb et al., 2015).



Integration of Breath

One of the most transformative elements of Pawanmuktasana lies not only in its gentle, systematic movements but in the conscious integration of breath with each action. In yogic tradition, the breath—or prana, the vital life force—is the bridge between the body and the mind, and breathing techniques (*pranayama*) are essential to fully experiencing the benefits of yoga. When synchronised with Pawanmuktasana, proper breathing enhances physiological efficiency, mental focus, and energetic balance. Each movement becomes a breath-led experience, where inhalation often accompanies expansion or lifting, and exhalation supports contraction, release, or downward motion. This rhythm fosters a harmonious flow of energy and facilitates greater muscular relaxation, especially in stiff or immobile joints. Scientifically, synchronised breathing activates the parasympathetic nervous system, which helps reduce stress and inflammation—common contributors to joint pain and muscular tension (Brown & Gerbarg, 2005).

When practitioners consciously breathe through each movement, they not only supply more oxygen to the muscles and tissues but also enhance circulation to the joint capsules, helping to nourish and detoxify them more effectively. Furthermore, breathing awareness anchors the mind in the present moment, making the practice deeply meditative rather than mechanical.

This present-moment focus, supported by slow, diaphragmatic breathing, reduces mental distractions, improves proprioception, and strengthens mind-body coordination

(Saoji et al., 2019). For example, when performing *Greeva Sanchalana* (neck movements), a slow exhale while turning the head can release built-up tension more effectively than simply rotating without breath awareness. Likewise, during *Ardha Titili Asana* (half butterfly), exhaling while pressing the knee down promotes muscle relaxation and joint space awareness, allowing deeper, pain-free mobility over time.

From a subtle energy perspective, conscious breathing in Pawanmuktasana helps to unblock stagnant pranic flows, especially in the joints—considered minor *marma* (energy) points in Ayurveda. This aids in preventing energy congestion and associated stiffness. Regularly engaging in joint movements with mindful breath also trains the lungs to expand more fully, thereby increasing lung capacity and respiratory efficiency—a benefit particularly important for elderly or sedentary individuals. Research supports this; a study by Singh et al. (2022) found that breath-synchronised yoga movements improved ventilatory function and lowered stress levels in middle-aged adults. The breath, therefore, becomes both a tool and a teacher—guiding practitioners toward safe movement, deeper awareness, and inner calm.

Without conscious breathing, Pawanmuktasana risks becoming merely a set of repetitive exercises; with breath, it transforms into a holistic experience that nourishes the body, soothes the nervous system, and cultivates mindfulness. Integrating proper breathing not only augments the physical benefits of joint mobility but also opens a doorway to deeper emotional and energetic balance, aligning with the broader goals of yoga—to harmonise the body, mind, and breath.

The Body as a Gateway to Presence

In essence, the joint movements of Pawanmuktasana are not merely physical warm-ups, but invitations to awaken our connection with the body, fostering awareness, mobility, and health. They remind us that each joint is a living space, not to be overlooked until pain arises, but to be nurtured, moved, and explored daily.

Through the consistent and mindful practice of joint exercises, we reclaim our body as an instrument of awareness, deepen our ability to live in the present moment, and pave the way for more profound spiritual practices.

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Kundalini Kriya Yoga and Hatha Yoga:

A Complementary Path to Health in the Modern Age

In an era marked by increasing mental stress, sedentary habits, and lifestyle-related diseases, the search for sustainable methods of holistic well-being is more critical than ever. Among ancient systems of self-transformation, Kundalini Kriya Yoga, supported by the physical and energetic disciplines of Hatha Yoga, offers a profound and scientifically supported pathway for physical, mental, and spiritual health. These practices, when combined, form a complete system adaptable to modern needs, suitable for individuals of all ages and professions.

Historical Context and Foundations

Kundalini Kriya Yoga originates from the esoteric traditions of Indian Tantra and was later systematised by enlightened yogis such as Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswar, and Paramahansa Yogananda. It is designed to awaken the dormant energy (Kundalini Shakti) residing at the base of the spine and guide it upward through the chakras using specific techniques involving pranayama (breath control), mudra (gestures), bandha (locks), and dhyana (meditation) (Yogananda, 1946/2005). These techniques purify the energy channels and elevate the practitioner's awareness toward higher states of consciousness.

Hatha Yoga, on the other hand, provides the physical foundation necessary for the safe and effective practice of Kundalini Yoga. Dating back to the 11th century, Hatha Yoga was systematised by masters such as Gorakhnath and Swatmarama. Its primary goal is to harmonise the body and mind through asanas (postures), shatkarmas (cleansing practices), and pranayama, thereby preparing the practitioner for higher yogic practices such as Kriya (Singleton, 2010). In this light, Hatha Yoga becomes a crucial complementary practice, providing the physical stability and energy purification



required to manage the intense transformations brought on by Kundalini awakening.

Mental and Emotional Health Benefits

The modern lifestyle is rife with chronic stress, anxiety, and emotional dysregulation. Kundalini Kriya Yoga, with its dynamic breathwork and meditative focus, has been shown to significantly enhance emotional resilience and mental clarity. A study by Shannahoff-Khalsa (2004) demonstrates that Kundalini meditations and Kriyas are effective in managing psychiatric disorders, including anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder. The rhythmic breathing cycles and mantra repetition in Kriya Yoga stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system, creating a deep sense of inner calm and mental balance.

Research shows that eight-week Kundalini Yoga interventions lead to substantial improvements in anxiety, mood, and overall psychological well-being (Khalsa et al., 2009). These benefits are enhanced when the practitioner has an established Hatha Yoga routine, which helps ground the nervous system and prepares the body to withstand the heightened energetic flow induced by Kriya Yoga techniques.

In this synergy, Hatha Yoga offers stabilisation, while Kundalini Kriya Yoga facilitates elevation, making their integration particularly beneficial for individuals dealing with burnout, depression, or cognitive fatigue.



Physical Health and Vitality

While Kundalini Kriya Yoga predominantly focuses on energy movement and consciousness expansion, it also confers numerous physical health benefits. The practice of advanced pranayama techniques, such as *Kapalabhati*, *Bhastrika*, and *Kriya Pranayama*, has been associated with improved pulmonary function, cardiovascular regulation, and enhanced oxygenation (Sengupta, 2012). These results are particularly beneficial for working professionals and older adults coping with chronic diseases.

Hatha Yoga complements this by strengthening the musculoskeletal system, enhancing joint mobility, and improving spinal alignment—which is crucial for the safe flow of Kundalini energy. A systematic review found that Hatha Yoga enhances flexibility, muscle tone, and respiratory health, which are foundational for anyone beginning a Kundalini practice (Woodyard, 2011).

By integrating both practices, the practitioner develops a body that is resilient, an energy system that is cleansed, and a mind that is focused—a triad essential for optimal health.

Lifelong Applicability Across All Demographics

Another striking strength of Kundalini Kriya Yoga, supported by Hatha Yoga, lies in its adaptability. These practices are beneficial to a broad demographic spectrum—from children and adolescents to adults and seniors—making them particularly relevant in a multi-generational society.

Children and Adolescents

Young minds exposed to Kundalini breathing

techniques and Hatha Yoga postures show improved focus, emotional regulation, and stress management. A review by Kaley-Isley et al. (2010) found that yoga interventions improved behavioural and academic outcomes among school-aged children. Hatha Yoga's physical aspects keep children engaged, while Kundalini's breathing patterns enhance attention span and emotional resilience.

Working Professionals

With long hours, high stress, and minimal movement, modern office life erodes physical and mental well-being. Integrating brief Kundalini Kriyas along with a short Hatha Yoga sequence, can reduce stress hormones and increase mental performance (Hartfiel et al., 2011). Professionals report heightened clarity, energy, and emotional balance after consistent practice.

Seniors

Ageing often brings about physical decline and cognitive slowing. Studies show that gentle Kundalini Kriyas improve mood and memory in older adults (Oken et al., 2006). When supported by Hatha Yoga's joint-friendly movements and balance-enhancing poses, the combined practice helps seniors maintain mobility, independence, and mental acuity (Gothe & McAuley, 2015).

Self-Development and Inner Awareness

While many people turn to Kundalini Kriya Yoga and Hatha Yoga for health benefits, the inner and subtle dimension of these practices is equally transformative. Kundalini Yoga's primary aim is to unlock the full human potential through energy awakening and self-realisation. When Hatha Yoga is used to clear physical and energetic blockages, the journey of Kundalini becomes smoother and safer.

Scientific research links spiritual practices to increased life satisfaction, inner peace, and emotional resilience (Impett et al., 2006). In an era where material success often overshadows inner fulfilment, the integration

of spiritual techniques offers individuals a sense of purpose and connectedness that transcends everyday stress.

Global Reach and Modern Accessibility

Kundalini Kriya Yoga, once considered an esoteric discipline, has now entered the mainstream thanks to teachers like Yogananda, Yogi Bhañan, Swami Sivananda and especially Swami Satyananda Saraswathy. Prominent modern teachers including Master Mani from MAYI who is spearheading the revival of this unique self-development practice.

What makes this practice truly modern-friendly is its flexibility. Even short daily sessions of 11 to 30 minutes of Kundalini Kriyas, supported by 10–15 minutes of Hatha Yoga warm-up, have demonstrated remarkable improvements in emotional stability, physical strength, and spiritual clarity (Brisbon & Lowery, 2011).



Ancient Wisdom for Modern Life

Kundalini Kriya Yoga, with the supportive foundation of Hatha Yoga, offers a comprehensive, time-tested, and research-backed approach to health and self-mastery. In the face of rising stress, chronic illness, and spiritual disconnection, these practices provide a holistic solution that is both accessible and transformative.

By aligning body, breath, mind, and spirit, Kundalini Kriya Yoga empowers individuals

not just to heal, but to thrive. When integrated with the stabilising and preparatory power of Hatha Yoga, this ancient wisdom becomes a vital key to navigating the complexities of modern life with grace, strength, and awareness. **YM**

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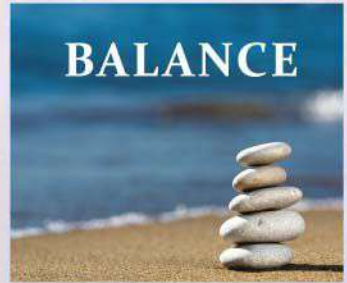
Are you ready to unlock your highest potential?

Join our **Kundalini Kriya Yoga Course** and experience the ancient science of breath, movement, and meditation that revitalises body, mind, and breath.

WHAT YOU'LL GAIN

- Deep stress relief and emotional balance.
- Greater focus, clarity, and creativity.
- Improved vitality, breath, and energy flow.
- A calm, centred mind in daily life.
- A safe path to self-development.

BALANCE



VITALITY



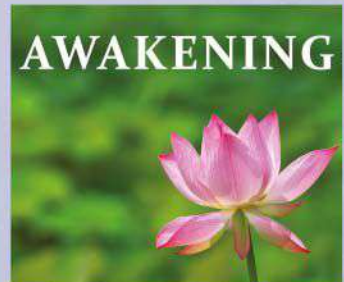
WHY KUNDALINI KRIYA YOGA?

- A time-tested practice passed down by enlightened masters.
- Complements modern lifestyles, suitable for all ages and professions.
- No prior yoga experience required — gentle yet powerful techniques.

COURSE HIGHLIGHTS

- Step-by-step guidance in Kundalini Kriyas and meditations.
- Understanding of yoga for safe practice.
- Breathwork and mindfulness techniques.
- Tools to integrate yoga into daily life.

AWAKENING



This journey begins with one conscious breath.

Contact MAYI to enroll in the upcoming intakes!

Urban Wellness Through Ayurveda:

Reclaiming Balance in the Modern World



In the midst of the hustle and noise of urban life — packed schedules, endless notifications, high-stress jobs, traffic jams, and irregular meals — the call for a grounded, wholesome lifestyle is louder than ever. Increasingly, many city dwellers are seeking more than just a quick fix for stress or fatigue. They are searching for a way to reconnect with themselves and the rhythm of life.

That's where Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of natural medicine and living, steps in — not as a trend, but as a timeless guide to balance, vitality, and presence.

Ayurveda in the Modern Urban World

Ayurveda, which means "the science of life," is more than a medical system. It is a lifestyle rooted in understanding your unique nature (dosha), living in harmony with your environment, and maintaining balance through daily habits, food, herbs, sleep, and mindful practices. Its wisdom, developed over thousands of years, is surprisingly relevant — perhaps more than ever — for today's urban population.

In urban life, we are often pulled away from the present moment — multitasking, rushing, constantly stimulated. Ayurveda reminds us to slow down, observe, and live consciously. It teaches us to notice the signs our body gives us and to respond with care, rather than wait for burnout to force a pause.

Why Ayurveda is Vital for Urban Men and Women

For Women: Nourishing the Mind-Body Connection

Modern women often juggle multiple roles — at work, at home, as caregivers, and beyond. This can lead to hormonal imbalances, emotional fatigue, digestive issues, and menstrual irregularities. Ayurveda offers deeply supportive practices for women's health across all life stages.

A study published in the *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine* (2011) found that Ayurvedic interventions helped reduce symptoms of premenstrual syndrome (PMS) and improved emotional well-being in women (Singh et al., 2011).

Some key Ayurvedic practices for urban women:

- Warm, cooked meals (easy on digestion and grounding).
- Abhyanga (self-massage with warm oils to calm

the nervous system).

- Ashoka and Shatavari herbs for reproductive balance.
- Daily routines (Dinacharya) to sync with natural rhythms.
- Emphasis on restorative yoga, meditation, and menstrual rest.

These help nourish energy reserves, regulate cycles, and offer emotional grounding in the face of daily demands.



For Men: Building Strength and Managing Stress

Men in urban settings often face chronic stress, sedentary habits, and overwork, which can lead to poor digestion, disturbed sleep, hypertension, or burnout. Ayurveda provides solutions that support physical strength, mental clarity, and vitality.

Key Ayurvedic strategies for men include:

- Adaptogenic herbs like Ashwagandha (for stress and stamina).
- Triphala for digestive health and detox.
- Nasya therapy (herbal oil drops in the nose) to enhance mental clarity.
- Evening wind-down routines to promote deep sleep.
- Tailored exercise and diet based on dosha (e.g., Pitta men may need cooling foods and calming practices).

According to research published in *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine* (2011), Ayurvedic herbs like Ashwagandha and Brahmi support adrenal health, cognitive function, and mood stability (Singh et al., 2011).



Ayurveda for the Professional World: Office to Outdoors

Whether you're a tech worker at a desk all day, a teacher juggling emotional labour, a construction worker enduring physical strain, or a creative entrepreneur glued to a screen, Ayurveda offers personalised, dosha-based support to help you stay resilient, focused, and balanced.

For Desk-Based Workers (e.g., IT professionals, accountants):

- Common issues: poor posture, eye strain, stress eating, back pain.
- Ayurveda recommends: regular eye washing with rose water, gentle daily movement, warm midday meals, herbal teas like Tulsi-Ginger, short pranayama breaks.

For Creatives and Entrepreneurs:

- Common issues: mental overstimulation, insomnia, anxiety.
- Ayurveda recommends: Brahmi and Jatamansi for focus and sleep, meditation twice daily, sound-based therapies (Nada Yoga), cooling foods to balance Pitta excess.

For Manual Workers and Active Professions:

- Common issues: fatigue, joint pain, muscle strain.
- Ayurveda recommends: Mahanarayan oil massage, anti-inflammatory herbs like Guggulu, adequate hydration with herbal infusions (e.g., cumin-coriander-fennel tea), early bedtime for full recovery.

Living in the Present: How Ayurveda Encourages Mindfulness

The Ayurvedic approach is inherently mindful. It encourages you to:

- Eat slowly and with awareness.
- Wake and sleep in rhythm with natural cycles.
- Observe how your environment and emotions affect your health.
- Make conscious choices, not compulsive ones.

This mindfulness extends into every action — cooking, walking, breathing, even speaking. Ayurveda invites you into the now, teaching that the present moment is where true healing happens.

A study published in the *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* (2014) found that Ayurvedic lifestyle interventions (including mindfulness, dietary adjustment, and daily routine) significantly improved perceived stress and quality of life among urban dwellers (Sengupta et al., 2014).

Ayurveda in Action: Daily Practices for Urban Balance

Here are simple ways to integrate Ayurveda into your urban life:

1. Start the Day Right (Dinacharya):

- Wake before sunrise (if possible).
- Scrape your tongue, rinse mouth, and drink warm water.
- Do 5–10 minutes of oil massage (Abhyanga).
- Practice a few yoga asanas or pranayama.

2. Eat with the Sun:

- Have your largest meal at lunchtime (when digestion is strongest).
- Avoid eating while distracted.
- Favor seasonal, fresh, and warm foods.

3. Balance Your Dosha:

- Take a dosha quiz to understand your constitution (Vata, Pitta, or Kapha).
- Adapt your food, work habits, and sleep based on your imbalances.

4. Night Time Rituals:

- Avoid screens an hour before bed.
- Drink warm turmeric or nutmeg milk.
- Massage feet with sesame or Brahmi oil.
- Sleep by 10 PM for deep rest.

5. Weekend Reset:

- Use weekends for gentle detox practices like kitchari fasting.
- Spend time in nature to reconnect with earth's rhythms.

Ayurveda isn't about overhauling your life overnight or giving up modern comforts. It's about living intentionally, in a way that supports your unique body, mind, and spirit. It reminds us that health is not the absence of disease, but a state of dynamic balance — in digestion, emotions, work, and relationships.

For men and women of the modern world, for the stressed and the striving, Ayurveda offers a quiet revolution: come back to yourself, to your breath, to your food, to the now. Because the greatest wealth is not stored in banks, but in balance, vitality, and inner peace — one moment, one mindful choice at a time.

YM

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Embracing the Present: The Power of Yoga for Children, Teenagers, and Families

In today's fast-paced, digitally driven world, it's becoming increasingly important to help children, teenagers, and families stay grounded and connected — not just to one another, but to the present moment. One timeless practice that has continued to offer profound benefits across all ages is yoga. Often associated with flexibility and fitness, yoga's real value extends far deeper. For young minds and growing bodies, it nurtures emotional balance, self-awareness, and inner calm. For families, it becomes a bonding experience rooted in shared wellness and mindful living.

Let's explore why yoga matters for different age groups and how it encourages a life lived with awareness — moment by moment.

Yoga for Children: Planting the Seeds of Mindfulness

Children are naturally active, curious, and present. Yet even at young ages, they face stresses — from school performance to social pressures. Introducing yoga early can help them develop healthy coping strategies while nurturing joy, focus, and self-confidence.

Studies have shown that yoga practices in schools improve attention, emotional regulation, and classroom behaviour. A 2016 study published in the *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics* found that children who participated in school-based yoga programs experienced lower levels of stress and improved psychosocial well-being (Butzer et al., 2016).

Yoga for children doesn't have to be complex. Through playful postures, breathing games, and storytelling, kids can explore body awareness, balance, and stillness in a fun, non-competitive way.

Tips for Kids' Yoga:

- Keep sessions short (10–20 minutes) and light-hearted.
- Use animal poses and nature themes to spark imagination (e.g., Downward Dog, Butterfly Pose).
- Include breathing games like "balloon breath" (deep belly breathing).

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- End with a short moment of quiet — a "magic minute" of peace.

These early experiences of mindful movement and stillness can support better sleep, reduce tantrums, and cultivate empathy.

Yoga for Teenagers: Navigating Change with Strength and Calm

Teenage years are marked by transformation — physically, emotionally, and socially. It's a time of identity formation, academic pressure, hormonal changes, and sometimes turbulence. Yoga can be a powerful ally for teens navigating this stage.

A 2012 study published in *The Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research* found that high school students who participated in yoga showed significant improvements in mood, anxiety, and resilience compared to those in physical education classes (Noggle et al., 2012). The emphasis on non-judgment, self-acceptance, and mindfulness makes yoga especially healing during a time often clouded by self-doubt and peer pressure.

Through regular practice, teens learn to listen inwardly — to understand their emotions, observe their thoughts, and respond instead of react.

Tips for Teen Yoga:

- Allow autonomy: Let them choose poses or create short sequences.
- Include breathing techniques for emotional balance (like alternate-nostril breathing or "box breathing").
- Focus on strength and grounding poses to build confidence.

- Offer guided meditations or journaling prompts after practice.

Yoga can help teens sleep better, manage screen fatigue, and even improve academic focus.

Yoga as a Family Practice: Building Bonds Through Presence

Practicing yoga as a family strengthens emotional connections and builds trust. It offers a shared space free from distractions, where everyone — from toddlers to grandparents — can slow down together.

In a world where families are often pulled in different directions, yoga becomes an anchor. A shared class or even a few evening stretches can be a grounding ritual, bringing everyone into sync through breath and movement.

Research in the *International Journal of Yoga* (2014) highlighted how family yoga practices can enhance emotional bonding and create a more positive home atmosphere, especially when integrated with mindfulness practices (Khalsa, 2014).

Family yoga is not about perfect poses but about mutual support, laughter, and togetherness.

Tips for Family Yoga:

- Schedule a weekly yoga night — even just 20–30 minutes.
- Use partner poses to build trust and communication (e.g., partner tree pose).
- Choose simple, accessible flows for all ages.
- Practice gratitude at the end — share one thing each person is thankful for.

When families practice together, children feel supported, teens feel heard, and adults feel renewed.

The Core Value: Presence in the Present

At its heart, yoga is not about touching your toes. It's about what you learn on the way down — awareness, compassion, and connection. Yoga teaches children, teens, and families how to anchor themselves in the now.

This mindfulness — the ability to stay present — has been shown to reduce anxiety, boost happiness, and improve emotional regulation. A 2011 review published in *Mindfulness* found that mindfulness interventions (including yoga) in children and adolescents improved attention, behavior, and mental health (Zoogman et al., 2011).

Incorporating yoga into daily routines — even for five minutes — helps train the mind to be here now. In a distracted world, that is a priceless gift.

Simple Daily Yoga Routine for All Ages

Here's a short, inclusive sequence that families or individuals can practice together:

1. Seated Breathing (2 minutes) – Sit cross-legged and place hands on the belly. Inhale deeply, exhale slowly. Feel the breath.
2. Cat-Cow Pose (1–2 minutes) – On hands and knees, alternate arching and rounding the spine.
3. Downward Dog (1 minute) – Stretch the body and notice the strength in arms and legs.
4. Tree Pose (1 minute per side) – Stand tall, place one foot on the inner leg. Balance. Smile.
5. Seated Forward Fold (2 minutes) – Fold gently over the legs. Let go.
6. Final Rest (3–5 minutes) – Lie back, close the eyes, and listen to your breath.

Finish with a group hug or a moment of shared gratitude.

Yoga: A Practice for Life

Yoga is not just a physical exercise — it's a way of being. It reminds us to pause, breathe, and be present. For children, it plants seeds of calm and confidence. For teenagers, it offers a safe harbour. For families, it weaves connection and peace into daily life.

In embracing yoga, we give ourselves — and our loved ones — the gift of presence, one breath at a time. **YM**

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SYK's Kids Yoga, Teens Yoga and Pregnancy Yoga are available at MAYI centres. For more information, visit www.superyogakids.com or email: superyogakids@gmail.com

Millet: A Smart Food Choice for Southeast Asia's Health and Future

In Southeast Asia, where diets are rapidly influenced by global food systems, local grains such as millets are being rediscovered as sustainable and highly nutritious options. Countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam are experiencing increasing rates of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and micronutrient deficiencies. At the same time, climate stress and soil degradation demand a shift towards more resilient crops.

Millets—including finger millet, pearl millet, foxtail millet, little millet, kodo millet, and barnyard millet—are poised to play a transformative role in both public health and sustainable agriculture in the region.

Why Millets Matter for Southeast Asia

Millets are gluten-free, nutrient-dense, and naturally resistant to pests and drought. They require less water than rice or wheat and thrive in poor soils, making them ideal for climate-smart agriculture (FAO, 2018). For Southeast Asia, millets offer dual benefits:

1. **Nutritional Security:** They address anaemia, calcium deficiency, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs).
2. **Food Sovereignty:** Local millet production supports small farmers, especially in rainfed areas of Myanmar, Laos, and eastern Indonesia.

According to ICRISAT (2020), millets are essential for combating the double burden of malnutrition—the coexistence of undernutrition and obesity—that increasingly affects both rural and urban populations in the region.

Millet Spotlights: Grain-by-Grain Guide

1. Finger Millet (Ragi) – The Bone Builder

Finger millet is an excellent source of **calcium** (344 mg/100g), making it vital for bone health. It also contains iron and polyphenols that provide antioxidant and anti-diabetic effects.

- **Best For:** Pregnant women, elderly, children, and those with osteoporosis or anaemia.
- **Clinical Insight:** Studies show that finger millet reduces oxidative stress and helps control blood glucose levels in people with type 2 diabetes (Devi et al., 2014).



2. Pearl Millet (Bajra) – The Stamina Enhancer

Pearl millet is high in **iron, magnesium, and protein**, and supports cardiovascular health. It is especially helpful for populations engaged in physical labour and those at risk of metabolic diseases.

- **Best For:** Labourers, athletes, and rural populations with high physical workloads.
- **Clinical Insight:** Pearl millet helps lower LDL cholesterol and shows hypoglycaemic activity, aiding diabetes management (Chandrasekara & Shahidi, 2011).

3. Foxtail Millet (Thinai) – The Sugar Stabiliser

Foxtail millet has a **low glycaemic index**, is rich in **zinc and magnesium**, and helps regulate blood sugar levels.

- **Best For:** Urban professionals, students, and diabetics.
- **Clinical Insight:** Foxtail millet improves insulin sensitivity and reduces triglyceride levels in type 2 diabetic patients (Latha et al., 2020).

4. Little Millet (Samai) – The Gut Healer

Little millet is a versatile, easily digestible grain rich in **B-vitamins and dietary fibre**. It is particularly suitable for children, elderly, and people with digestive issues.

- **Best For:** Homemakers, children, and individuals with gut sensitivity.
- **Clinical Insight:** Little millet improves digestion and has antioxidant activity that supports metabolic health (Saleh et al., 2013).

5. Kodo Millet (Varagu) – The Inflammation Fighter

Kodo millet contains significant levels of **polyphenols and lecithin**, compounds known for their anti-inflammatory and neuroprotective properties.



- **Best For:** People with cardiovascular disease, autoimmune conditions, or chronic inflammation.
- **Clinical Insight:** Kodo millet has demonstrated lipid-lowering effects and oxidative stress reduction in animal models (Hadimani & Malleshi, 1993).

6. Barnyard Millet (Sanwa) – The Detox Millet

Barnyard millet contains more **dietary fibre** than most cereals and is rich in **iron**. It also supports weight management and blood sugar control.

- **Best For:** Diabetics, individuals with gluten sensitivity, and elderly people.
- **Clinical Insight:** Clinical studies suggest barnyard millet improves glycaemic response and reduces cholesterol levels (Pattanayak et al., 2023).

Millets for Every Group in Southeast Asia Professionals and Students

Millets like foxtail and little millet enhance mental performance, reduce fatigue, and maintain energy throughout the day. B-complex vitamins and magnesium support brain function and stress regulation.

Labourers and Athletes

Pearl millet and barnyard millet provide essential nutrients for stamina, muscle recovery, and sustained energy—perfect for physically active jobs and sports.

Homemakers

Finger millet and little millet help regulate hormones, aid digestion, and maintain strong bones, making them ideal for women managing family responsibilities and long hours.

People with Medical Conditions

- **Diabetics** benefit from foxtail, barnyard, and kodo millets due to their low glycaemic response.
- **Heart patients** benefit from kodo and pearl millet, which reduce LDL cholesterol and support healthy blood pressure.
- **Anaemic populations** (common in rural parts of SEA) benefit from iron-rich millets like finger and barnyard millet.

Culinary Integration in Southeast Asia

Millets can be adapted into traditional Southeast Asian dishes:

- **Malaysia/Indonesia:** Millet nasi lemak, millet congee, or kuih made from millet flour.
- **Thailand:** Millet sticky rice, desserts, or soups.
- **Vietnam:** Millet pho noodles or spring roll wrappers.
- **Philippines:** Millet champorado or bibingka (rice cakes).

The mild taste of millets makes them easy to substitute for rice or wheat in daily meals.

Sustainable Agriculture and Local Economies

Millets are a lifeline for small-scale farmers and semi-arid regions. They require 30% less water than rice and have a shorter growing season. Countries with water stress like Vietnam's Central Highlands, Thailand's northeast, or eastern Indonesia can benefit significantly from millet-based agroecology (FAO, 2018).

By promoting millet cultivation, Southeast Asia can support:

- Soil regeneration.
- Lower carbon emissions.
- Diversified income for rural households.

Millet – the Future Food

As Southeast Asia confronts a new wave of nutrition-related health challenges, millets offer a time-tested, science-backed solution. They are not just “ancient grains” but future foods, capable of addressing diabetes, cardiovascular health, anaemia, and digestive disorders while strengthening local agriculture and resilience.

Reintroducing millets into daily diets—particularly finger millet, pearl millet, foxtail millet, little millet, kodo millet, and barnyard millet—can empower families, nourish communities, and regenerate the environment. **YM**

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International Yoga Day 2025 at Taman Rimba Kiara -Yoga for One Earth and One Health

by Shameny



On the serene morning of 22nd June 2025, the lush greens of Taman Rimba Kiara came alive with the spirit of unity, health, and mindfulness as around 100 participants gathered to celebrate International Yoga Day. Joined by enthusiastic members, dedicated yoga teachers, and well-wishers, the event marked another successful chapter in honouring the ancient practice of yoga in a modern and inclusive way. The spirit of the theme, Yoga for One Earth and One Health, felt present as we were surrounded by fresh, lush greens, chirping birds, morning mist and a calm lake right next to us.

Participants began arriving as early as 7:00 AM, registering their names and collecting the event's t-shirts. The cheerful exchanges and warm greetings set a vibrant tone as everyone headed toward the flat open ground, where yoga mats were neatly arranged. Anticipation filled the air as teachers—Priya, Jess, and Caryn, took their positions on the stage, ready to guide the community through a meaningful session.

The event commenced with gentle joint mobility exercises, awakening the body and mind for the deeper asana practice that followed. Participants gracefully flowed through a well-structured sequence that included balancing, twisting, standing, and seated postures, emphasising both strength and flexibility. Each posture was demonstrated and explained with care, allowing practitioners of all levels to feel included and supported.

One of the most memorable highlights of the morning was the partner yoga segment. This portion not only brought a fresh dynamic to the practice but also beautifully symbolised trust, cooperation, and community spirit. Total strangers paired up, offering each other support and encouragement, a living example of how yoga bridges human connection beyond the mat.

Around 9:15 AM, the instructors led everyone into Shavasana, the deep relaxation posture. As participants slowly emerged from this restful state, they were met with a pleasant surprise, the arrival of Master Manisekaran, who had just returned from India, where he was part of an important International Yoga Day celebration.

Despite his journey, Master graciously took the stage, sharing reflections from his experience in India. His heartfelt message emphasised how yoga, when practised with true purpose and passion, creates transformation. He then led a calming breathwork session followed by a short yet powerful meditation, leaving the crowd in a state of inner peace and clarity.

As the event concluded around 10.00 am, a joyful photoshoot took place to capture the smiles and energy of the morning. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive. One participant shared, "The environment, the teachings, and the energy, it was simply beautiful. I'm grateful to have been part of it." Another noted, "Practicing yoga in nature, especially with partner exercises, was a fulfilling experience. It made my Sunday feel longer and more meaningful."

Many highlighted Teacher Priya's impactful guidance, particularly her attention to specific areas of physical tension and healing. Master Manisekaran's presence was described as "divine timing," his speech inspiring all to pursue their passions with purpose.

Overall, the event was a resounding success: uplifting, unifying, and deeply enriching. **YM**

Inner Insights

A Shift in Lifestyle and Mindset - My Yoga Therapy Certification Course Journey

by Taffy Cheang

I am a yoga instructor who once worked in the corporate world. Since childhood, I had some awareness of yoga, but what I often saw was mainly focused on physical postures. Deep down, I knew yoga offered far more than just asanas.

During a period of emotional breakdown, I struggled to find the support I needed until I discovered integrative yoga. Through this practice, I learned to turn inward and align my body and mind. That was a turning point. From then on, I knew I wanted to walk this path sincerely—not just to heal myself, but also to help others. I later took a Teacher Training Course (TTC) and committed to yoga as my lifelong career. Yoga has transformed me physically, mentally, and emotionally. I believe it was truly a destined encounter.

I joined this course with one simple goal: to help people. I believe yogic management is for everyone, and that it can support both body and mind—including those who are unwell or living with physical or mental conditions.

What I Hoped to Gain

I wanted to understand how yoga therapy can support well-being through yogic management. I also hoped to deepen my knowledge of anatomy, body systems, and their connection to healing.

Course Experience Theory and Practice

This course gave me a solid foundation in both theory and practice. On the theoretical side, I studied anatomy and body functions in detail—covering the spine, muscles, cells,

nervous system, and other vital systems. I also learnt about the benefits of a yogic diet, pranayama, asana, and meditation. It was the first time I had focused so deeply on book-based learning, and I was surprised by how strongly I connected with the material.

Yoga therapy supports both physical and mental health conditions. This course taught me how to assess and support individuals based on their specific needs - techniques not covered in depth during the TTC course. The body may seem simple, but in truth, it is wonderfully complex—effective healing requires us to understand and respect this complexity.



I also realised how crucial proper breathing and deep relaxation are. When these are not functioning well, many other systems become disrupted. The course taught me which asanas are beneficial and which may not be suitable for certain conditions.

On the practical side, I learnt to design and adapt practices for individual needs. When someone faces a health challenge, we can tailor yoga to help rather than hinder. In general yoga classes, we may not always have this awareness, and sometimes unknowingly lead students into postures that aggravate their condition.

Challenges and How I Overcame Them

One of the biggest challenges was shifting my mindset from yoga instructor to yoga therapist. I had to keep asking myself: "How would a therapist approach this?" This helped me stay mindful and compassionate in every case.

Another challenge was language. As English isn't my strongest language, learning medical and anatomical terms felt overwhelming. In the first two classes, I felt discouraged. But I persevered. I spent extra time studying, translated difficult terms into Chinese, reviewed notes carefully, and gave my best to each assignment. It was tiring and stressful, but gradually I started enjoying the process. My progress was slow but steady—and I knew the effort would eventually bear fruit.

Insights from Assignments and Teaching Practice

Assignments, which I once disliked, became a valuable tool for learning. The case studies allowed me to apply theory to real-life scenarios, building confidence for working with actual clients.

During teaching practice, I had to adjust my mindset again. Teaching yoga therapy is very different to teaching a general class—every individual has unique needs, and even small movements can be challenging depending on their condition. It requires patience, compassion, listening, and observation. I realised it's not just about teaching postures; it's about supporting the person's overall well-being.

Transformation and Impact My Personal Growth

This course has transformed my perspective on yoga, healing, and myself. I've developed a deeper awareness of my body and a greater appreciation for good health. I'm now more mindful of my emotions, my reactions, and my overall state of well-being. I feel blessed to have gained knowledge that not only helps others, but also supports my personal growth.

I also became more aware of how easily I absorb emotions from others. For example, when I visited a sick friend in hospital and guided her through gentle stretches, I unknowingly absorbed her emotional energy and felt unwell afterward. Through this course, I learnt the importance of energetic boundaries and self-cleansing practices. Now, pranayama and meditation are essential for keeping myself balanced, especially in my role as a therapist.

I now firmly believe that physical and mental health are deeply connected. Pranayama and deep relaxation are not only techniques, but powerful tools for transformation and healing—often beyond what most people imagine.

A Shift in Lifestyle and Mindset

This journey has shaped my lifestyle, my mindset, and my approach to healing. I've become more mindful in everything I do—my eating habits, breathing patterns, movements, and even my interactions with others. I listen to my body more deeply and allow myself space for awareness and self-care.

As a yoga instructor, I've become gentler and more adaptable because I recognise how unique each body is. I encourage them to notice subtle signs of discomfort or imbalance—these are the body's way of asking for help. If ignored, they can turn into more serious health issues.

What I learnt applies not only to therapy, but also to my regular classes. Many of my students struggle with physical pain, stress, or tension. Now, I feel more capable of truly supporting them. This course also opened my eyes to how even serious conditions, such as cancer, can benefit from breathwork and deep relaxation.

I am grateful for this journey and for the seeds it has planted within me. It gives me joy to witness more people discovering the healing power of yoga.

Vision Forward

I've already started applying what I learnt, both in my own classes and when substituting for others. I notice my students feel more confident when I explain how pranayama or specific postures can support their personal needs.

Some students are shy about sharing their health issues openly, but I encourage private conversations to help them feel safe and understood. When introducing inversions or challenging poses, I always provide clear precautions and modifications. This therapist's perspective builds their trust in me.

Looking ahead, I hope to collaborate with wellness centres or rehabilitation facilities to support individuals with health challenges. I'm particularly passionate about helping the elderly maintain strength, balance, and vitality through yoga. I also love sharing posture and body awareness tips with children—planting seeds of health and mindfulness from an early age.

My dream is simple but strong: I want people to enjoy better health, live more mindfully, and feel connected with both body and mind. While yoga

therapy is my career, it is also my purpose—to help others heal and grow.

Conclusion

Our bodies are both beautifully simple and deeply complex. What matters most is nurturing a healthy lifestyle and balanced well-being. This course has been truly life-changing.

Yoga therapy offers so much more than physical exercise—it is a complete path of healing and transformation.

Through this journey, I have learnt to appreciate my struggles, my growth, and everything that has shaped me. Yoga therapy is a powerful tool, and I now feel both confident and inspired to share it with others.

A Closing Message

Appreciate your body and the well-being it gives you. Be kind and gentle—with yourself and with others. Never take health for granted. When challenges arise, meet them with courage. Don't fear ageing; instead, focus on staying strong in body and mind.

Namaste. **YM**

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The Global Water Crisis:

Causes, Consequences, and Solutions

Water is indispensable for life, yet the world faces an escalating crisis of water scarcity. Despite covering about 71% of the Earth's surface, only 2.5% of water is freshwater, and less than 1% is accessible for human use. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that approximately 2.2 billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water services, and over 4 billion experience severe water scarcity at least one month per year. This crisis, if left unaddressed, could have dire consequences for health, food security, and global stability.

Causes of Water Scarcity

1. Climate Change

Climate change disrupts precipitation patterns, intensifies droughts, and accelerates glacier melt, reducing freshwater availability. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that by 2050, over half the global population could face water stress due to climate-related impacts.

2. Population Growth and Urbanisation

The global population is projected to reach nearly 10 billion by 2050, increasing demand for water in agriculture, industry, and domestic use. Rapid urbanisation often outpaces infrastructure development, leading to over-extraction of groundwater and depletion of freshwater reserves.

3. Water Pollution

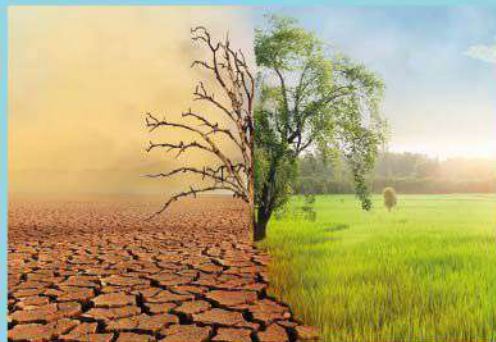
Industrial discharge, agricultural runoff, and inadequate sewage treatment contaminate freshwater sources. WHO estimates that at least 2 billion people use a drinking water source contaminated with faeces, leading to diseases like cholera and diarrhoea.

4. Inefficient Water Management

Agriculture accounts for approximately 70% of global freshwater use, often employing inefficient irrigation methods. Over-extraction of aquifers, particularly in regions like the Middle East and South Asia, has led to declining groundwater levels.

Expanding Dimensions of Water Insecurity

Beyond traditional causes, emerging socio-economic and geopolitical factors compound the global water crisis. Climate-induced migration and urban sprawl increase stress on already burdened water infrastructure. Moreover, unequal



water distribution and governance gaps lead to disparities in water access, particularly in developing countries. A study by Rasul and Sharma (2016) revealed that transboundary river basins, such as the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna system, face critical challenges due to lack of integrated water resource management and cooperation among riparian states. In sub-Saharan Africa, poor investment in water infrastructure exacerbates rural poverty and limits agricultural productivity (Hope et al., 2020).

Technological innovation alone cannot solve the crisis without inclusive policies that prioritise equitable access. Research by Zeitoun et al. (2020) underscores the role of "hydro-hegemony" — where powerful nations control upstream water — as a driver of water-related conflict and imbalance. Therefore, sustainable solutions must include not only infrastructure upgrades and conservation efforts but also governance reforms and regional cooperation mechanisms.

Consequences of Unchecked Water Scarcity

1. Public Health Risks

Lack of clean water leads to waterborne diseases. WHO reports that nearly 485,000 people die annually from diarrhoea-related illnesses due to unsafe drinking water and inadequate sanitation.

2. Food Insecurity

Persistent water shortages reduce crop yields, leading to food insecurity and increased food prices. In regions already facing hunger crises, prolonged droughts exacerbate the situation.

3. Economic Decline

Industries reliant on water, such as agriculture and energy production, suffer during water shortages, leading to job losses and economic downturns.



4. Social and Political Conflicts

Disputes over limited water resources can escalate tensions between communities and nations. Examples include conflicts over the Nile River and the Tigris-Euphrates region.

Solutions to Combat Water Scarcity

1. Improved Water Management

Implementing efficient irrigation systems, repairing leaky infrastructure, and promoting water recycling can significantly reduce water wastage.

2. Pollution Control

Enforcing regulations to control industrial discharge and agricultural runoff, along with proper sewage treatment, can protect water sources.

3. Climate Adaptation

Investing in climate-resilient infrastructure, such as reservoirs and drought-resistant crops, can help communities adapt to changing water availability.

4. Public Awareness

Educating communities about water conservation practices encourages responsible water use and supports long-term sustainability.



Atmospheric Water Generators: An Innovative Solution

How AWGs Work

Atmospheric Water Generators (AWGs) condense humidity in the air, similar to dehumidifiers, and purify the collected water for safe consumption. This technology is particularly beneficial in arid and drought-prone areas where traditional water sources are limited.

Benefits of AWGs

- **Sustainable Water Source:** Utilises atmospheric moisture, a renewable resource.
- **Independence:** Provides water in regions with limited or polluted supplies.
- **Scalability:** Suitable for various settings, from households to large communities.
- **Emergency Use:** Effective in disaster-stricken areas where infrastructure is compromised.

For instance, Florida deployed AWGs to supply hospitals with clean water during Hurricane Milton, ensuring uninterrupted access to potable water.

Clean Water for All

Water scarcity is a pressing global issue with far-reaching consequences. Addressing it requires a multifaceted approach, including improved water management, pollution control, climate adaptation, and public education. Innovative technologies like Atmospheric Water Generators offer promising solutions, especially for regions where traditional water sources are inadequate. By embracing such technologies and implementing sustainable practices, we can work towards a future where clean water is accessible to all. **YM**

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Featured Asana

Makarasana (Crocodile Pose)

STEP by STEP

1. Lie flat on the stomach.
2. Raise the head and shoulders and rest the chin in the palms of the hands with the elbows on the floor.
3. Keep the elbows together for a more pronounced arch to the spine. Separate the elbows slightly to relieve excess pressure on the neck.
4. In makarasana the effect is felt at two points: the neck and the lower back. If the elbows are too far in front, tension will be felt in the neck; if they are drawn too close to the chest, tension will be felt more in the lower back. Adjust the position of the elbows so that these two points are equally balanced. The ideal position is when the whole spine is equally relaxed.
5. Relax the whole body and close the eyes as you inhale and exhale rhythmically: inhale while moving the awareness up and along the spine from the tail bone to the neck, and exhaling, bringing the awareness back down from the neck to the tail bone.
6. You may maintain this posture for as long as is comfortable. After some time, again be aware of the body and surroundings, and gently and smoothly release the posture.



BENEFITS

1. Effective for people suffering from slipped disc, sciatica, and certain types of lower back pain. They should remain in this asana for extended periods of time as it encourages the vertebral column to resume its normal shape and releases compression of the spinal nerves.
2. Asthmatics and people who have other lung ailments should practice this simple asana regularly with breath awareness as it allows more air to enter the lungs.

CONTRA-INDICATIONS

1. Those with back conditions, such as exaggerated lumbar curve, should not practice this asana if any pain is experienced.

Ayurvedic Oat Khichdi Thali Set

by Nicole Yong

(Serve with warm water / Masala Golden Soy Milk)

1 serving:

Suitable For all dosha, complete meal

Benefits: Improve digestive system, anti-inflammation

1) Oat Khichdi:

Ingredients:

- 4 tablespoon instant oats/ rolled oat
- 2 tablespoon yellow moong dal
- 1 cup fine chopped tomato
- 1 tablespoon ghee
- ½ tablespoon of ginger mince
- ¼ teaspoon Salt
- 1 tablespoon coriander leaves
- 600 ml water

Directions:

1. Pre-soak the dal in 2 cups of warm water for 30 – 40 minutes.
2. Heat ghee in a rice cooker, add ginger mince and sauté for 2 – 3 minutes.
3. Then add tomato, the soaked dal (not the water), oat and water. Stir to mix.
4. Cover the rice cooker and cook till the water is absorbed (use the cook rice button cook till water boil, then convert to porridge button). Cooking time: approximately 20 - 25 minutes.
5. Once cooked, sprinkle salt and garnished with coriander leaves and lime juice.

2) Stir Fried Bok Choy with Tofu:

Ingredients:

- 1 cup bok choy, sliced
- 1 pc of extra firm tofu, small cubed
- 1 tablespoon carrot, small cubed
- 1 teaspoon ghee
- 1 teaspoon ginger mince
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- ½ teaspoon Garam masala

Directions:

1. To the pan, warm ghee and sauté ginger mince.
2. Add bok choy, tofu and carrot. Cook for 5 minutes or until tender. If slightly dry, add 1 tablespoon of water.
3. Serve warm.

3) Stir Fried Beetroot with Carrot

Ingredients:

- ½ cup beetroot, shredded
- ½ cup carrot, shredded
- 1 teaspoon ghee
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon Mixture of 5 spices: Fennel, Cumin, Mustard seeds, Fenugreek and Urad Dal

Directions:

1. To the pan, warm ghee, and sauté 5 spices.
2. Add beetroot and carrot. Add 1 tablespoon of water. Cook for 5 minutes.
3. Serve warm.



4) Cucumber Raita

Ingredients:

- ½ cup Cucumber, shredded
- 1 tablespoon plain yogurt
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ sugar (optional)

Instructions:

Combine all the ingredients above in a bowl, mix well. Then, it is ready to be enjoyed.

5) Masala Golden Soy Milk

Ingredients:

- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon powder
 - ¼ teaspoon dried ginger powder
 - ½ teaspoon turmeric powder
 - A pinch of ground nutmeg
 - A pinch of ground black pepper
 - One cup of hot soy milk
- (Preparation: 3 tablespoons Organic soy powder mix with 1 cup of hot water)

Directions:

Mix spices with hot soy milk. Serve when it is warm.

MYA Calendar: Nov - Dec 2025

NOVEMBER

02/11/2025	YogaAsana - the Handstand & Arm Balance Core Activation Series Workshop for Beginners
02/11/2025	Pregnancy Yoga Instructor Course
02/11/2025	Yoga at the Park - Bukit Jalil Park
08/11/2025	Ayurveda Massage Therapist Course (Female)
08/11/2025	Fundamentals of Pawanmuktasana and Surya Namaskar - Level 1
08/11/2025	Shatkarma - the 6 Cleansing and Detox Techniques Workshop
15/11/2025	Fundamentals of Breath and Mind - Level 1
16/11/2025	Ayurveda Massage Therapist Course Male
15/11/2025	Herbs that Heal - Natural Remedies at Your Fingertips Workshop
23/11/2025	International Yoga Instructor Course - Foundation
30/11/2025	Anatomy & Physiology - the Body from Within Workshop

DECEMBER

01/12/2025	Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course
07/12/2025	Ayurveda Massage Therapist Course (Male)
08/12/2025	International Yoga Instructor Course - Foundation
08/12/2025	Yoga Therapist Certification Course



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Black Gram
Green gram
Dried ginger



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Black chickpea
White chickpea

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