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Benefits of the Pawanmuktasana Series – the Joint Exercise

**Ayurveda
– A Yogic Way to
Heal Body & Mind**

**Bringing the
Mind-Body
Connection into
Everyday Life**



Message from Master Mani



Mind Body Fitness

Yoga is the culmination of thousands of years of personal training by countless individuals who were smitten with the highest potential of their being.

Has it stopped after all these years, after the successes achieved by all those extraordinary practitioners?

Surely not, as the journey is one of infinite pathway, it continues perpetually and evolves all the time.

In the modern version, as we know yoga now, in its many names, forms and peculiar developments, is there a danger of the real meaning being lost?

Confusion persists perhaps as to the real meaning of mind-body fitness, basing one's ideals solely on external factors, but the truth is what one continues to discover, no matter in which century, in the deepest wealth of one's being — even as one continues to practise, continues to discover and continues to evolve.

The essence will never fade or be lost.

Through the practice of yoga, in its traditional form: postures, breath, diet, concentration, wisdom, discipline, patience and guided meditation, one can achieve one's highest potential, which is known as Moksha, or liberation.

No, we do not seek perfection, but only to realise our full potential in the form of self-realisation, or liberation. This is the ideal goal of mind-body fitness. This is the path, which is secure, and it is universal with specific technologies which are non-sectarian... guided always by teachers who are travelling in it.

Practise an integral path of yoga in freedom and learn that respecting our teachers need not be in the form of worship. Cultivate friendship rather than fear. In this manner, we would be able to help each other attain liberation.

Thank you.

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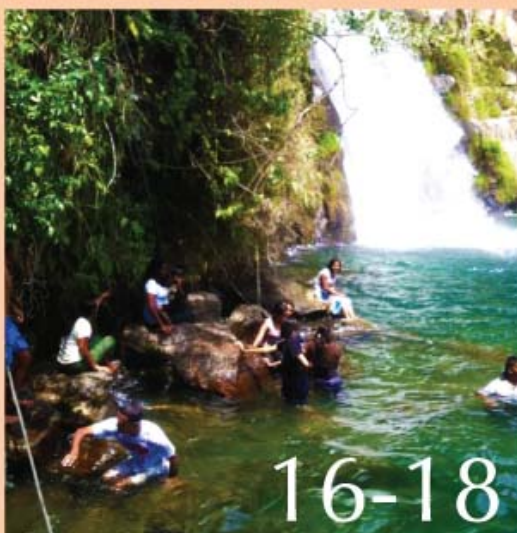


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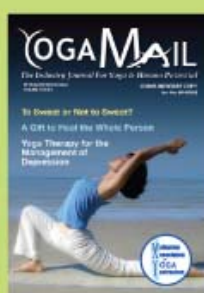
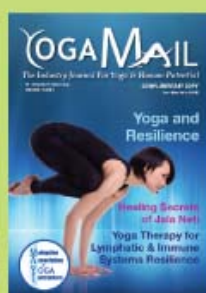
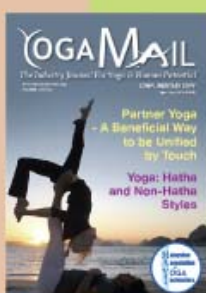
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Benefits of the Pawanmuktasana Series – the Joint Exercise

by Chandra Nanthakumar

Yoga is the science of right living and the practice of it has become prominent in this contemporary society so much so that the number of variations and styles that exist is unbelievable. Unlike many other types of sports, yoga works on the physical, mental, emotional and psyche of the person. However, beyond everything else for the yoga instructor or even the yoga practitioner is the yoga lesson plan.

The entire body must be mentally and physically prepared before one indulges in any type of asana be it a beginner, intermediate or advanced pose. Therefore, the preparation of the body and mind begins with the Pawanmuktasana series or simply known as joint exercises. This series consists of extremely non-challenging postures, but they should be respected due to the great value they bring. It is so crucial that the Pawanmuktasana series be done prior to any other challenging poses. Unknown to many modern day yoga practitioners, this series of asanas is so useful as it opens all the major joints and relaxes the muscles of the body (Stanfield, 2013). The beauty about this series is that it can be practised by anyone, young or old, beginner or advanced students.

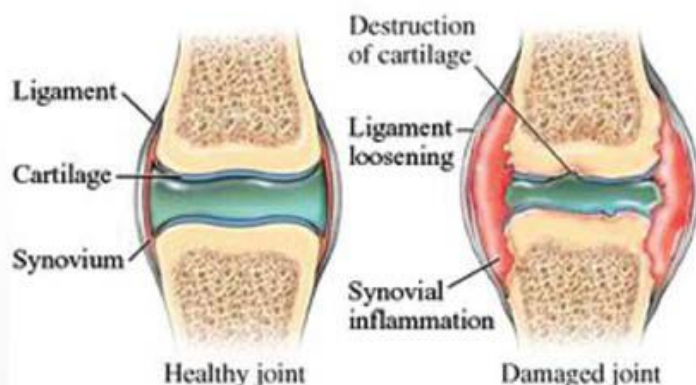
From the etymological point of view, the word - Pawanmuktasana signifies three aspects which are 'pawana' namely air, wind or the vital breath, 'mukta' which refers to being free or to release, and 'asana' which refers to the pose. Simply put, the Pawanmuktasana series connotes freeing of wind through a series of asanas. The freeing of the wind helps to remove any blockages preventing the free flow of energy in the body and mind. Swami Satyananda Saraswati from the Bihar School of Yoga classified the series into three distinct groups (Saraswati, 1969). The three groups of asanas are anti-rheumatic, digestive or abdominal and Shakti bandha. While the anti-rheumatic group of asanas help to loosen the joints of the body,

the digestive group and Shakti bandha groups of asana help in strengthening the digestive system and improving the energy flow within the body respectively. The profound benefits of the Pawanmuktasana series are discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.



First and foremost, the effect of the Pawanmuktasana series is seen in the synovial fluid. This fluid is found in the joints such as the knees, hips, and elbows. This fluid, together with the hyaline cartilage, allow smooth painless movement of the bones. However, this fluid is not found in between the discs in the vertebrae, neither is it found in the sacroiliac joints in the back of the pelvis (Stanfield, 2013). This explain why movement in these joints is more restricted compared to the others. The Pawanmuktasana series, if practised regularly, helps to promote the flow of the synovial fluid to the joints making them supple.

The Pawanmuktasana series also helps in strengthening the joint supporting muscles. In fact, it prepares the body for higher level asanas. If performed correctly, the series is of utmost importance in promoting flexibility in the joints and removing hardness of the muscles (Clark, 2012). Yoga practitioners should not forego this series as the subtle effect of this extremely easy practice affects the entire body and mind.



Lastly, the Pawanmuktasana series is also used as a tool in yogic management of various disorders (Saraswati, 1969). Many modern-day illnesses are psychosomatic in nature, and they can be treated with drugs. However, it may be wise to note that drug treatment of these illnesses is symptomatic. This means that the root of the disease is most of the time not treated. This explains why many patients keep going back to the hospital for more and more medication. According to Swami Satyananda Saraswati, the practice of the Pawanmuktasana series has a positive impact on disorders ranging from arthritis to heart ailments to even high blood pressure (Saraswati, 1969). This series, if done correctly, in a very relaxed manner, not only relaxes the muscles of the body, but also the impulses that travel back to the brain. By synchronising breath with the movement of the asanas in this series, and by incorporating awareness, the attentive faculty of the mind is made active and is not allowed to wander. The autonomic nerves will be normalised, and the hormonal functions and activities of internal organs will be regulated (Saraswati, 1969). Motoyama (2003) has also suggested that the Pawanmuktasana series be performed before any other asanas as they are preparatory work of awakening the chakras. He purported that the distribution of prana and heat is enhanced as a result of the joint exercise.

Therefore, in any yoga session, it is strongly recommended that the class begins with the Pawanmuktasana series. This series is of utmost importance for those who wish to move on to greater heights in the practice of yoga. It has been demonstrated that daily practice of the three groups of asanas in this series over a duration of a couple of months will bring about not only profound relaxation, but also toning of the entire psycho-physiological structure (Saraswati, 1969). While students work their way through these joint movements, it is advisable to remind them to slow down. It is so easy to move quickly because the asanas in this series are so simple. I reckon the most important aspect here is to move with one's breath, and breathe with awareness. Watching the breath will help one slow down. **YM**



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A

yurveda – A Yogic Way to Heal Body & Mind

by Suresh Paunrajan

As yoga practitioners, it is natural for most of us to follow naturalistic healing methods such as Ayurveda. Most people think of Ayurveda as just another stream of traditional medicine. In fact, Ayurveda is not just for medicinal purposes, where body and mind are given equal importance, it's indeed the way of life.

My interest in Ayurveda deepened after watching the documentary called "Ayurveda: The Art of Being", though it just touched the tip of the iceberg about the possibilities of cure. It's really unfortunate that so many people are suffering and they don't know about this science that can heal almost anything in a natural way. The documentary presents amazing personalities, advanced preparations, treatment of serious diseases, how this tradition is practiced and how it accumulated its wisdom over thousands of years. It also shows how vast this knowledge is. It doesn't just touch on mere herbs, metals and gems, it also displays the mastery of pressure points. I would really recommend the documentary to those who seek to understand more about this healing method.

Body:

Even if we are taking medicinal herbs to cure certain ailments, it is important to take healthy herbs like turmeric, ginger, neem, etc, on a daily basis to prevent diseases and for longevity. There are herbs such as Kaya Kalpa designed to promote anti-aging and rejuvenation. Indeed the Indian banana leaf rice system was traditionally engineered to have all the necessary herbs to be part of the food itself. Over the years, some of these have been modified and some taken out.

The practices in Ayurveda focus on various aspects. For example, Panchakarma focuses purely on detoxification and it is also believed that with detoxification healing is naturally amplified. There are advanced practices such as 'Kuti-pravesika' which requires a person to live in a dark cottage for 90 days and emerge completely transformed. The old grey hair falls out and is replaced by black hair. Old teeth fall out and are replaced by new teeth. Complexion



becomes fair, wrinkles smooth out and the skin's elasticity is restored. Eyesight and hearing drastically improve. Memory and concentration become sharp, and there is spiritual clarity.

Mind:

After I took up the Ayurvedic Massage Therapy Course at MAYI Yoga Academy, my understanding of such practices improved. Most of the massage techniques are oil based. How the skin is able to digest the oil and its healing effects on the mind were known during ancient times. In Sanskrit, the word "Sneha" means both oil and love. But the most important thing about the massage therapy is its effects on the emotional body. As how herbs have an effect on the physical body, this therapy is designed to heal the mind and emotional bodies. It is through mind the healing of physical body is accelerated.

For many, it is not possible to enter the meditative state of mind until the emotional body is cured. In practices such as Shirodhara, oil is dripped on the forehead, and it not only cures one physically, but also mentally. During this therapy, many also experience lucid dreaming. When I tried it, I found that time moved fast and there was a great feeling of being healed. It is said that one gets a crystal clear mind after the Shirodhara therapy.

The practice of yoga itself brings health, peace and balance to our life. By integrating Ayurveda into one's practice, balance becomes deeper and healing is accelerated. For example, after doing detox practices such as Shankaprakshalana, the body is at a more suitable condition to receive the herbs. If natural herbs are taken after the cleansing, the body's absorption rate is much higher, and healing is quickened. Massage therapy such as Abhyangam help in healing stiff muscles, which make the body more conducive for performing

the asanas. You will find that postures that were difficult to perform become much easier after such Ayurvedic therapies.

Indeed Ayurveda also takes yogic postures into the consideration as part of its healing therapy. Sometimes specific asanas are recommended for people with certain ailments for greater healing, and practices such as Shatkarma and Panchakarma complement one another.

Ayurveda blends well with our yogic practices as well as provides a unified solution for body-mind-and-soul. For those who are curious, I would recommend the TV series "Taking back the years". It is a journey of a person using Ayurveda to reverse the aging process. It is important to reintegrate Yoga and Ayurveda in order to bring out the full healing and spiritual potential of each. For a truly holistic and spiritual approach to medicine and healing, we need both Yoga and Ayurveda. This was the original Vedic scheme. **YM**



Bringing the Mind-Body Connection into Everyday Life *by Petra Gimbad*

Yoga as connection

Yoga is about connection. Widely translated as “to yoke”, yoga has the ability to bring a meditative quality into our awareness of and the way in which we interact with the world around us. We realise that our yoga practice is beneficial, when we translate the peace and calm found on the mat into our workplaces and our personal lives.

Rather than feeling separate from the world, we connect to it by relearning co-existence – in a manner that is peaceful, and with the necessary tools to practice grace under fire, when times get tough.

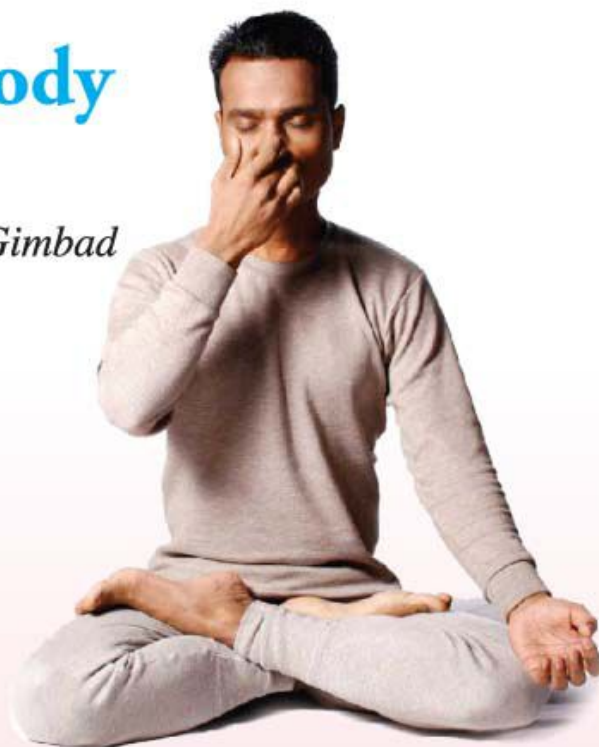
Part 1: The breath

It starts with the breath: a well-organised yoga class begins with a meditation to bring the student from the outside world into the world that lies within. By providing that sacred space, the student is guided to quieten the mind through becoming aware of the body.

A female mystic, Blessed Julian of Norwich, became an anchorite when she lived in an enclosed room in prayer, reading and reflection for the rest of her days. Schools where nuns are able to live secludedly from the rest of the world, still exist. While these practices are not for everyone, such schools contain lessons to understand the average yoga class. The practice of holy enclosure focuses the soul, similar to how a fire enclosed in a kiln burns, hotter than a fire left out in the open.

Calming the mind creates clarity and focus. Many new yoga students underestimate yoga's ability to do so, but this is what meditation does: by turning within, we become aware of what is distracting us, and are better able to listen to the wisdom of what our bodies and minds are trying to say. This clarity is comforting in the face of turmoil, because we can then trust our internal wisdom and judgment to set us on the right path.

The ability to listen to one's heart, can eventually translate into compassion off the



mat, should the student desire to learn how to do so. Providing a meditative space to compassionately listen to our bodies and minds, develops our capacity to eventually listen compassionately to the people around us, if we are ready.

Part 2: Meditation in movement

Many of us would have experienced emerging from a place of worship – a church, mosque or temple – and then losing our tempers at a family member or some errant road driver, before getting angry at ourselves at our inability to hold our tempers in check.

To be fair, it is extremely difficult to bring the peace and tranquility found in spiritual practices and prayer, into our everyday lives. It is challenging to accept others for being human and even harder to accept ourselves for our frailties. While we realise in theory the need to practice compassion and non-judgment, practicing them daily is another thing altogether.

This is where the second part of the yoga class comes in: movement. Through asana, students learn to observe the breath and to 'yoke' the movement of the body to the movement of the breath. The benefits are physiological: the relaxation of the muscles reduces stress hormones, by creating space in the mind. For those of us who find meditation difficult, asana is a form of movement meditation: by focusing on the alignment of breath and movement, the student is able to create space in the mind and bodily ease.

Depending on whether the class is a faster paced class (such as hatha yoga flow) or slower paced (such as breath and mind yoga), asana is good for the heart and to detoxify the body. Faster paced classes build cardiovascular strength by getting the heart pumping, and circulate the blood: many students break a sweat before the class is over. Slower paced classes de-stress the heart and detoxify the inner organs through asanas that involve bends and twists. Both classes prepare the mind for meditation and the body for rest, but in different ways.

For some, asana is a mind practice for compassion and non-judgment. When we perform an asana that challenges us, we can ask ourselves - "How do I observe my body compassionately, rather than criticising it so much?" Without trying to gloss over stiffness in the body or injuries, we can thank our bodies for serving us so well and for doing the best it could, allowing ourselves to trust that it is not about performing an image of the asana, but being the best version of the asana through being ourselves. Our flaws, as well our strengths, have much to teach us – if we let them.

Part 3: The breath, again

Hatha (often translated as "sun- moon") yoga intersperses periods of activity with periods of rest, to balance the masculine and feminine energies that are present in the body and mind. Active asanas are followed with restful asanas, to avoid heart overexertion and mind competitiveness that can lead to bodily injury.

Within the wider framework of the yoga class, we balance the active asana portion with a restful meditation to close the class. Students may have felt in hatha yoga class that the meditation that takes place at the end of the class, is much longer than the meditation that takes place at the start of the class. They are correct.

The meditation that we practice at the end of the hatha yoga class is known as yoga nidra, which can extend to half an hour. Out of consideration to our students' needs, the yoga nidra practice is usually 10 to 15 minutes.

The meditation at the start of the class brings the student from the outside environment into the internal word of the mind and the body within. Yoga nidra, the meditation at the end of the class, synthesises the earlier benefits of the class by bringing awareness to the body in minutiae detail. Students are guided through a bodily scan to notice any tensions that they may not have noticed before and to relax the muscles.

This can be an extremely self-compassionate and self-healing practice, when students are provided the space to just focus on themselves and acknowledge any bodily tensions that arise. Instructors may rest assured that providing the opportunity is already healing for many of us who seek respite, but are unable to find quiet or self-care in our daily lives. As the student learns to relax the muscles to release pain from the body, this builds self-confidence for student who have lost their faith in their ability to heal. I have a particular affection for this practice as it also builds independence in students who require a sustainable practice to identify tensions as and when they arise, and to heal themselves to the best of their abilities if they are unable to access professional help at that point of time.

Seeking a mind-body practice

Much of the work that is done by the student in yoga happens within, and it can be extremely confusing without the guidance of a proper instructor as not all instructors are equal. Without trying to underestimate the benefits of a capable instructor, I believe that yoga can provide tools to students who seek a practice that provides physical benefits as well as calm for the mind. It may take a while to locate a class style or instructor who fits our mind-body needs, but it is well worth the search. **YM**



EVENTS

Yoga Camp in SRK (T) Ladang Rini, Skudai, Johor

By K. Saravana Sealan

I was seated behind the classroom, where the two-day Yoga Camp in SRK (T) Ladang Rini, Skudai, Johor organised by the Malaysian Yoga Society, on March 28 and 29 2014 was taking place, while our dear Master Mani was conducting the Yoga Session. The graduates from the MYS National Yoga Camp who attended last year, were invited to be the monitors to these group of children attending the session.

Being in the facilitating team of the MYS National Yoga camp for two consecutive years, I was wondering what really makes these children tick and was busy looking out for cues and clues to piece them together. And while observing the whims and fancies of the children, one thing became glaringly evident, it was as though the children were saying "Teach us your technology, with Compassion and give us an Honest Shot. We will Rock the World!" I realised that it was the same emotion that ran in everyone's heart as I collected the testimonials this article.

Shanti Thinschmidt, a MYS Volunteer

I have had the great pleasure of having the Karma Yoga Team contribute their utmost compact knowledge and great techniques of Yoga which was delivered to the students of SJK(T) Ladang Rini, Skudai, Johor. The school has provided a tremendous safe and clean environment for the children during the two-day yoga camp. Our Karma Yoga teachers and the volunteers have shown excellent co-operation to the students and making them comfortable and feel at home. I did not expect such an event, which turned out to be such a fantastic event which was full of excitement and fun.

The students have shown great commitment in absorbing the knowledge and have shown a great interest in learning and practicing yoga with full commitment. Inspired by the children's enthusiasm, the team members and I are motivated to conduct the similar trainings in future. As a trainer, I felt that the commitment of the team members are commendable and beyond my expectations. The children were really enjoying themselves and not even a minute was left unattended without supervision by the teachers and volunteers.

The co-operation between the school teachers and parents (PIBG) was remarkable. They were very polite, friendly, kind and appreciative. I also experienced a great tolerance and team work among them in organising this event. One of the many notable messages during this short but compact two-day camp has given to the students was the deeper awareness about the benefits of consuming healthy diet (food and drink). At the end of programme, many of the students were very inspired and vowed to continue this healthy eating habit.

The credit goes to the Karma Yoga teachers who were friendly and patient towards the students and able to explain the values of Yama and Niyama in very simple and effective ways, which in return the young children showed great interest to the event. I am very proud to be part of this team as am thankful to be given the opportunity to contribute positively towards good deeds. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the wonderful team members and volunteers for their priceless contribution towards spending their precious time and great efforts in moulding these innocent children. Last but not least, my utmost appreciation and thanks to our Master Manisekaran for accepting my brother, Kalai's invitation and in making this event a wonderful and successful one.

Thanks ~ Om

Kartick – a Volunteer and MYS National Yoga Camp Dec 2013, graduate

My expectation of the Camp was that the students could learn Yoga techniques as much as possible and apply it to their daily life. I observed that all the children managed to try out all the Yoga Asana, Pranayama, etc. I noted their perseverance to keep trying to complete all the Yoga Asana, which was commendable.

The students now know more about Yoga and they can apply it for their daily life to improve their health, studies and much more. All the participants enjoyed the camp. Most of them commented that they will recommend Yoga and encourage their friends to attend such camps.

As a volunteer to this camp, it gave me an opportunity to improve the Yoga techniques that I learned whilst at the MYS National Yoga Camp held last December in Kuala Lumpur. I will strongly recommend this Yoga camp to other schools and encourage more students to participate.



M.Mohaneiswaran, Student and Participant (Age : 12 years)

I never had a chance to attend any yoga camp or yoga practice before. Initially, I thought the yoga training and practice was very difficult. But after joining the camp, I felt very happy and understood the importance of practicing yoga. I learnt the meaning and importance of Yama, Niyama, Asanas, Pranayama and many more. I also learnt about the benefits of eating vegetable and fruits, and the down side of eating fast food and processed food.

I understand that by continuing the practice of yoga it will make me healthier and feel more energetic and that regular practice will keep us healthy. I would like to thank the organising team and the Yoga teachers for such a wonderful camp. I will recommend this to my friends and advise them to participate. This will help them to be healthy too!



We organised a motivation camp in school on the week prior to the Yoga Camp. No doubt it also played a role in our students' attitude, but most students enjoyed the Yoga Camp and they wanted us to organise it again. As promised I will work closely with Mr Kalai and we will definitely organise a Southern Yoga Camp by the end of this year, as I believe that I have to share this wonderful experience and knowledge to our community as a whole. My heartiest gratitude to all the exceptional trainers who made us all feel more like a family rather than trainer/trainee. It takes a lot to do what you guys did. You will always have us for support when you are in Johor!

Mr.Kalai, Organiser of the Camp along with the School Teachers & Parents Teachers Association

I have to thank my sister, Shanti, for helping me organise this camp. I am a true believer of Yoga.

It has helped me in many ways. I personally conduct Yoga lessons in this school and I have a good bonding with the school. Through this Yoga Camp, I noticed most of the students are now able to concentrate and pay attention.

As we are having our weekly yoga session in the school, the teachers are really happy to see many students having a big change in their character. We should not stop here, more camps must be conducted, and I am planning to have a bigger camp organised by end of this year with the help of our school and other friends.

Mr.Selvanathan Ponan, PIBG Chairman

Organising this Yoga camp in our school was a good idea by Mr Kalai. Our school has had many disciplinary problems and many our students were very weak. Teachers had a tough time with some students. I noticed positive changes, especially with my daughter, who attended this Yoga Camp. She seems to be very active, lately. While continuing to be a bright student, she now seems to perform even better in other school activities, too. I have promised Mr. Kalai, that we will organise an Annual Yoga Camp in our school. Many parents have personally called me to thank our Yoga Camp Trainers, for conducting such a wonderful camp in our school.

Mr.Rajkumar Palmanaphan, Discipline Teacher / Parents Teachers Assoc. Secretary.

Yoga was indeed a new thing to me and my students, although we have heard and have seen it many times, this camp was an eye opener for all of us. Being a discipline teacher in school, I often had hard times with some of my students who often refused to change for their betterment. Various methods have been implied to gain the students' attention and also to keep them focussed. I believe after this camp we have got a clearer set of students, they are more focussed and now they seem to practice yoga during school time. Some even taught me some easy lessons on Yoga! A few did their own research and gave us tremendous and remarkable results in a very short time span. Many are still surprised and refuted that the YOGA CAMP triggered the students, but being the coordinator of the programme, I personally knew it the moment I went to class the following day.





Featured Asana

Gomukhasana (Cow's Face Pose)

Step by Step:

1. Sit with both legs straight in front of the body with knees slightly bent.
2. Bend the left leg underneath the right leg so that the left heel is touching the right buttock.
3. Bring the right leg over the top of the bent left leg so that the right heel touches the left buttock.
4. Adjust the right knee so that it is above the left knee.
5. Stretch the left arm up above the head, then fold it over the left shoulder.
6. Stretch the right arm to the side and then fold it behind the back.
7. The back of the right hand should lie in contact with the spine while the palm of the left hand rests against the spine.
8. Try to clasp the fingers of both hands behind the back.
9. Bring the raised elbow behind the head so that the head presses against the inside of the raised arm.
10. The spine should be erect and the head back. Close the eyes.
11. Stay in this position for a comfortable duration or up to two minutes.
12. Unclass the hands, straighten the legs and repeat with the left knee uppermost and the right arm over the right shoulder.

Benefits:

- Excellent for inducing relaxation. If practised for 10 minutes or more, it will alleviate tiredness, tension and anxiety.
- Relieves backache, sciatica, rheumatism and general stiffness in the shoulders and neck.
- Improves posture by increasing energy, awareness, and generally opening the chest area.
- Alleviates cramp in the legs and makes the leg muscles supple.





Articles by Practitioners

OPENING MY MIND WITH YOGA

by Susan Tam

My journey with yoga began with a gym membership, often like other practitioners. Curious about the discipline, I enrolled in a discotheque-like gym to get fit and try out new exercises. I found yoga being taught in a quiet part of the large facility away from the disco ball and loud music. Finding peace in that space, enjoying its pace and teachings, I was drawn to it.

But it wasn't until three years later that I felt yoga made a real impact in my life. After years of bad decisions in personal relationships, particularly one involving an abusive partner, I decided that one year, I would have to accept myself for whoever I am and not seek assurances (particularly from the opposite sex) to feel better about myself, find ways to make peace with my emotions and simply, find solutions to get a good night's sleep. It was that year I decided to explore my pursuits, one was to volunteer at a turtle conservation programme, spending nights awake patrolling beaches for poachers and the other, was taking part in a yoga retreat. After spending long hours reflecting, learning how to achieve meditative states, doing yoga at sunrise and sunset on Langkawi Island, and most importantly meeting like minded yogis, the retreat changed my perception of the discipline. It was no longer a physical discipline, yoga taught me techniques to calm the mind and helped me sleep, teaching me to let go of the heaviness that often drag us down in life.

As a practitioner for several years, there was a hunger to better myself and challenge my physique to do the amazing poses that I read about and watch on the many yoga channels

on YouTube. I wanted to 'be' like the strong yogis in those magazines and books. Seeking answers and after much procrastination, I enrolled in MAYI's International Yoga Instructors Course (IYIC). It was all and more than I thought it would be. I was ready for its teachings about Yoga's history, philosophy and teaching techniques, but I was surprised and pleased to understand that Yoga goes beyond the mat, and can be applied to our daily lives.

When I started the IYIC course, I had quit a high-paying job in international television as well as project management to live a simpler but high quality life. A surgery in 2010 woke me up to the state of my health, reminding me that stresses of daily commuting to work, office politics, unhealthy work ambitions and smoking (naturally) was hell for my body. I quit smoking in the same year (yes, I was still a 'smoking' yogi at the retreat) and quit living a typical city life. My partner and I made the decision to earn significantly less and try to reap the rewards of life – time, happiness, friends and family.

We began growing our own vegetables, taking more walks and embarking on meaningful projects that brought us less money but more satisfaction. I had time to practice yoga, run two community vegetable gardens (one is TTDI Edible Project) and manage a volunteer portal called Hati.my. But most of our social circles, except our friends who adopted similar 'career' paths, were skeptical and sometimes negative about our choices in life. And often I felt, 'Are we alone here, do we have to sacrifice modern conveniences to be happy?'

So here is where IYIC's teachings struck a chord in me. Learning from Master Manisekaran and the team, Priya, Surya and Vijaya, all share a common theme. Accept yourself for who you are, let go of the burdens and be light and happy. I find that by learning how to do that, you will be able to make space in your life (or heart) for people, pursuits and choices that bring you a better quality of life and happiness.

What stuck to me most were the techniques of being mindful and aware about our breathing and physical bodies. Learning from the Master and instructors about applying that to real life has made an impact within me. Using the breathing techniques and being aware when I'm driving, writing my project papers, cooking and even listening to my family, raises the quality of what I do by 100-fold. This is because I'm focused and my mind is not distracted and as a result I am able to complete the task successfully. That was my epiphany – a light bulb going off in my head!

Using these same techniques, I applied them to my April trip to Nepal, when trekking up

steep ascents to 3,500 metres above sea level on the Lantang trail, northwest of Kathmandu. It was probably one of the toughest things I have done in my life. Nearly wanting to give up on the first day, I was in tears over the extreme exhaustion I felt. After a first night's rest, I decided to use the same techniques I learnt in yoga about breath and mind and applied them to my climb. Being mindful of each precarious step and breathing deeply, I broke down the climb in several small targets and before you know it, I was at my destination in a shorter time than I first expected to be. I've realised that how negativity can weigh our minds, chip at our spirits and eventually turning into a block, some of the times a physical one, preventing us from achieving what we set out to do.

IYIC has been one of the best decisions I've made in this chapter of my life, and I urge others out there to do the same, if there is an inclination to pursue this path. Decisions do not have to be permanent, have an open heart and mind, and believe me, you will be blown away by the extraordinary things that life has to offer you. **YM**



A

rticles by Practitioners

The Enchanting Lake Toba *by Nemala*

The trip to the largest volcano tectonic lake in the world was beyond enchanting.

For starters, let me blow your mind away on how huge this lake is. The lake is 87km long, 27km wide and has the maximum depth of 505m, situated at 904m above sea level. This magnificent lake looked more of an ocean to me! In the middle of it lies an island, sized one and half times larger than the entire Republic of Singapore! Amazing isn't it? And that island was the Samosir Island where we spent our 3 night with utmost beauty of nature.

The excitement began the moment we gathered at the LCCT airport and the journey brought us to Lake Toba via a combination of six hours bus drive from Medan to Parapat followed by a 30 minutes ferry ride to the Samosir Island.

The bus ride journey was truly captivating! Throughout the journey we could see the greenery and the village lifestyle of the farmers dominating the land. There was one pit stop before reaching Parapat that I must share. Imagine that you are standing at an edge of a cliff that is facing the view of the huge lake (the biggest you have ever seen), with beautiful shades of green hills surrounding the blue waters and you are able to see a spectacular view of about a 30-storey height waterfall drop situated just across the cliff where you are standing. Not to mention the cool rainy breeze



and mist surrounding you. Oh my, that was a moment to be engraved in mind!

It was almost dark by the time we arrived at Parapat as the sun was nearly settled beneath the lake, revealing a few shades of its lovely orange shine. Though it was late by the time we reached the hotel, the sight of it gave such a welcoming feel. The rooms were spacious, with minimal items and most of all, the rooms felt very comfortable. The night ended soon as many were eager to get up the next day to for an early morning Yoga session.

Many got up to a beautiful surprise the next morning. From my room, there was a large window by it, which showed a fascinating view of the lake with its beautiful sunrise colouring the lake and sky. I was completely mesmerised that I couldn't take my eyes away! But I quickly got ready for the Yoga session.

The yoga sessions were led by our dear Master himself, Master Manisekaran. As I entered the big hall on the first day, many participants were already set to start their day. Yoga itself being an art of rejuvenation and tranquillity with which further enhanced by the serene nature that was surrounding the lake, it almost felt like we were in heaven! The relaxing Yoga session gave everyone who attended it the licence to clear their mind and indulge in complete relaxation. Our yoga sessions took place twice every day; in the mornings at 6am and evenings at 5.30pm. Eventually I learnt that everyone who came for



the trip participated in the yoga session. There were many beginners too and they were truly amazed by how Yoga made them feel, both physically and emotionally. Some decided there and then to take up Yoga and make it as part of their lifestyle henceforth. Kudos to them all! It was also truly inspiring to see many of them coming out of the shell to try out something new with such open mind.

Following that session, we had a hearty breakfast, which gave the aspiration to explore the beautiful lake. The group of 40 was split in two, with one group using the vans and the other half riding scooters as a way to go around the island. I was with the scooter team. Believe or not, half of us in the scooter team had their very first scooter ride there on that day! Our first visit was to the Batak Museum. Many architectural views of the traditional Batak houses could be seen here. There was also a demonstration on weaving the traditional Batak cloth called the Ulos. The museum also displayed a courtyard with apparently ancient stone furniture where in the old days convicts were tried and beheaded.

Another place visited was Simanindo. This is where traditional Batak ritual dances and music were performed upon request for the visiting tourist. Besides that, more discovery of the unique and ancient Toba culture was available. However the scooter team had to miss out this spot as we took the opportunity to visit the lake shore. The view by the shore was as if we were by the beach, the only difference was there were no large waves. Upon arriving, some decided to unwind by the lake while others took the chance to wet their feet in the volcanic crater lake.

Final stop before heading back to the hotel was a place called the Buddha's café that served vegan food. It is located next to the lake view and has a beautiful garden with Buddhist statues – which in my view was a rare site. The food served was mouth wateringly delicious such as vegan versions of Indonesian specialties and homemade vegan coconut ice cream that can last you forever!

By end of the scooter trip I couldn't help but to take a few mental-notes:

- How enthusiastically everyone gave the new challenge a try (riding a scooter).
- Working diligently as a team. The convoy and the pair on the scooters constantly keeping a look out for all and guiding each other.

The nights gave us the best time to just sit back, enjoy chatting and getting to know each other better with a tinge of fun mixed in it. While some ended the night early or headed back to their rooms to just absorb the calm vibes of the lake, there was a handful or more that ended up spending the last two nights with singing as a session and as a game. It took place at the 'tree house'. That was the name given by some, simply for the similarity of having stairs to climb upon and was made from wood. The night view too was astounding. The clear sky shared with us the vision of millions sparkling stars. It was so beautifully especially with bright moon by the side that many were awestruck by the sight.

The third day was a day of exploring the lake on ferry with few stops planned. First stop was a visit to a village located at the other end of the island where we visited a local school. The



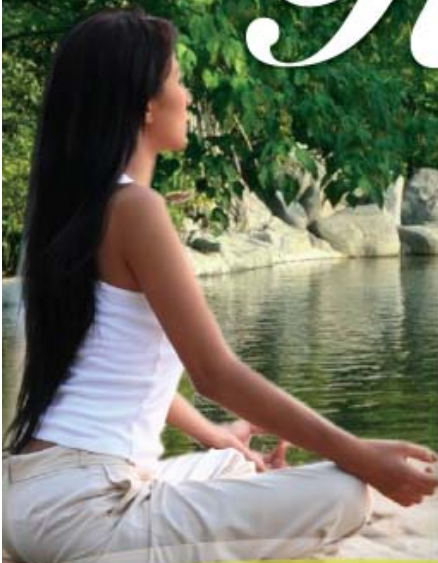


children and the teachers welcomed us and treated us with several songs. Most locals staying in the islands are of Batak origin and they are well known for their ability to sing well

and boy, the children could really sing! They had amazing control and a strong voice. Everyone was truly impressed by how well the children sang that day.

One last stop was made before heading back to the hotel. This time it was to a waterfall by the lake. Immediately upon arriving, many took the opportunity to plunge into the deep blue lake whereas a few just seated by the rocks next to the waterfall and the rest decided to simply enjoy the view from the ferry.

In all honesty, being at Lake Toba itself was incredible; everything else was just a bonus! At the end of the trip, Lake Toba became one of the awesome natural wonders of the world while the memories there became an invaluable treasure. Our heartfelt thank you to all who came and to MAYI Yoga Academy, especially to the wonderful person named Sumathi who made the trip possible. **YM**



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Yogic Wisdom For Daily Living

*II.41 sattvasuddhi saumanasya aikagrya
indriyajaya atmadarsana yogyatvani ca*

by Jamie Spatafore

When the body is cleansed, the mind purified, and the senses controlled, joyful awareness needed to realise the Self comes.

Sri Patanjali always guides us step by step. First the body must be cleansed. What does that mean? Does Patanjali want us to take a bath? If that is all we need to do then all of us are ready for realisation right this instant. Good.

Perhaps, however, Patanjali's definition of cleansing goes deeper. Literally. Perhaps he is alluding to the internal cleansing of the body. If we contemplate this sutra it makes sense right? It dawns on us that this sutra is giving us the order in which we proceed. After all, it is awfully hard to have a mind without distraction if we are having a stomach ache. What if I've got a terminal illness? How can I have a still mind then? Virtually impossible. Now the finer points that we previously overlooked are making themselves clearer. While doing all sorts of exercises and practices to cleanse the body will not give me liberation, it will make it easier for the mind to obtain a state of stillness. If I have eaten too much I can't concentrate. If I haven't eaten for days I can't concentrate. This is the fine line that has to be walked. It has been said if one is seeking liberation, he/she can't eat too much or too little, talk too much or too little, and sleep too much or too little. There must be moderation in everything. At that point at least our body can't distract us from the state of mind we seek.

What's next? Next we have to cultivate that type of mind and its ability to maintain stillness. It takes a bit of practice. The habit of letting our thoughts control our emotions and actions has been with us since the beginning. Rome wasn't built in a day. It takes time. It takes effort. Most of all, it takes perseverance. Every time we get distracted we have to gently bring it back to its centre. How do we do it? You have to answer that question for yourself. I or anyone else cannot tell you what to do. Sure they can show you some options and give you some practices you may enjoy but ultimately you have to make it on your own. That is the only way you will stick with it. Someone once

told me, and I believe them, that any arrangement of sound can become a mantra to you. All it takes is the ability to do it with all of your heart and soul. So it seems that whatever the practice, the key is the approach. Find it, practice it and let it take its own course.

The "purified" mind will then be able to watch itself. It will be able to see how the senses act and play a part in our feeling of separateness. It will also be able to control them if necessary. After all, it doesn't matter if the mind is quiet and the senses are still moving outward among everything and everybody. There has to be a type of inversion that happens. It has been said that even though the eyes are open, the mind is focused inward. A popular symbol is the charioteer and his horses. The charioteer knows when to pull the reins tight. He also knows when to let the horses have a bit of freedom. We are just apprentice charioteers here but that is what our aim should be.

Then what happens? Patanjali says that when those conditions are set, a spontaneous awareness full of joy will arise. Have we felt this? Think about the time you were doing something you love. Maybe it was gardening or maybe it was reading a great book. Perhaps it was being alone or perhaps it was during your morning meditation. It does not matter what you were doing, the point was that you lost yourself doing it. You lost track of time. You had abundant energy. You were blissful. It felt good didn't it? Great but we're not done yet. That is just the type of awareness that is needed to realise the Self. Oh no. You thought you were done just because you were feeling blissful? There is nothing wrong with that feeling but Patanjali wants us to move on. We are destined to move on. We must go through the gates that only swing one way. Through those gates there's no turning back. That is what we are here for whether we realise it or not. It is better we are told this now so we can get moving on the path. However, we must crawl before we walk. We must walk before we run. It all starts with physical fitness and mental fitness. Then we are ready to travel. Peace. **YM**

A

At Your Fingertips: Herbs Important for Women *by Lee Yan*

TULASI

Tulasi, also known as 'The Holy Basil', is an aromatic plant that is cultivated for medicinal purposes and for its essential oils. It has been used in Ayurveda for thousands of years for its diverse healing and medicinal properties. The Tulasi plant is widely used for medical purposes, in herbal cosmetics and skin preparations. The leaves can sharpen memory and are good nerve tonics. Its seeds are nourishing and have a soothing effect on the skin and mucous membranes. This herb has a strong aroma and astringent taste and is regarded in Ayurveda to promote longevity. Traditionally, Tulasi is taken in forms of herbal teas, dried powder and fresh leaf. Tulasi has got a special significance in relation to girls, traditionally in India. It is simple, because Tulasi have the properties that controls the hormonal cycle of women. This is the reason girls are asked to worship this plant in the olden days.

Tulasi as stress reducer

Tulasi is considered to be an adaptogen, balancing different processes in the body and is helpful for women adapting to stress. It is one of

the most effective adaptogens ever known because it reduces the intensity and negative effects of stress caused by mental tension, emotional difficulties and poor lifestyle habits. Tulasi powder, made from the leaves, can help in supporting women's overall well-being.

One of nature's most powerful herbs

The goodness of Tulasi for women goes beyond being an effective adaptogen. This herb has anti-aging properties that prevents the emergence of wrinkles and fine lines on our skin. It can neutralise dangerous biochemicals that contribute to premature aging and reduces the damages done to our cells and tissues by sun rays and radiation.

Tulasi supports the women's immune system, promotes healthy metabolism and helps with digestion and gastrointestinal problems. It also provides relieve from inflammation caused by arthritis and other diseases. This powerful herb is beneficial in the treatment of common sicknesses such as colds and headaches. It is also commonly used to treat constipation, dryness, bloatedness, insomnia, pain and spasms.

Shatavari

Shatavari, a famous versatile plant, is a unique plant with many roots. It is truly nature's gift to women. It can be used by women of any age from the young to those who are approaching menopause, due to its unique properties as a women's tonic. In Ayurveda, Shatavari has been categorised as a type of herb that is beneficial in promoting strength and as a rejuvenating tonic. It strengthens and provides energy and vitality to all tissues in the body especially the blood and reproductive tissues. Laboratory studies have suggested that Shatavari also helps in protecting the brain and nervous system from nerve cell damage.



How can Shatavari improve our health especially for women?

In our fast-paced society, most women are either working hard or multi-tasking at home and at work. A lot of women are slowly ignoring their body's natural rhythm without even realising it. If you pay close attention to our body, you will realise that your menstrual cycles reflect your internal balance and is a good measure of whether the body is imbalanced. These imbalances are usually caused by excessive stress, overworking, consuming stimulants and malnutrition.

Improving women's reproductive health

Many types of herbs are used to help women maintain their menstrual and reproductive health. Most are specific to a particular age or the type of imbalance. Shatavari, however, is one of the very few herbs that can be safely used by most women to maintain good reproductive health. It nourishes and cleanses the blood of the female reproductive organs, enhancing female fertility. It also nourishes the womb and ovum and helps to prepare the female organs for pregnancy.

For menstruating women, Shatavari helps to regulate monthly cycles and ovulation. It is used to soothe PMS cramps, bloating, and irritability. It is also high in Folic Acid and so it helps to prevent anaemia. The Shatavari herb provides great support in regeneration, thus is especially useful for reproductive problems due to weakness, poor nutrition and aging.

It is also useful for postpartum mother in rebuilding and strengthening their body after childbirth and also helps those who are breastfeeding their baby.

For women to start feeling more relaxed, energised and experience improvement in overall health, consider including this two wonderful herbs as part of your daily lifestyle. NSR Centre's herbs comes in a glass bottle and can be shipped to all states in Malaysia. If you would like to know more or purchase this herb, do contact us at NSR Centre Damansara Utama : 03-7724 1072. **YM**



Disclaimer: This information is meant to supplement, not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease and not replace advice from your doctor or healthcare provider. This information may not fit your specific health circumstances. You should always speak with your healthcare professional before you start, stop, or change any prescribed part of your healthcare plan or treatment.



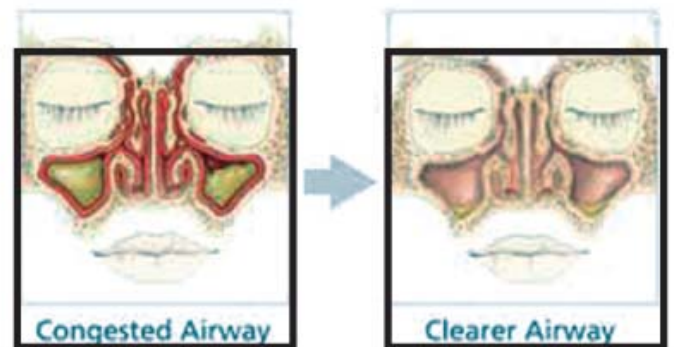


Yoga Therapy to Relieve Sinus Pressure and Nasal Congestion

by Surya Tay

Regular yoga practice improves the immune system to prevent the underlying causes of nasal congestion such as a cold, flu or allergies.

During a cold, flu or allergy, the membrane lining our nasal passages become inflamed and irritated, excess mucus is produced and sinus pressure occurs when the passages swell, blocking the natural flow of air and mucus. Trapped mucus can result in an uncomfortable internal pressure, and at times pain across the face and headaches. If this is not relieved over time it can lead to a chronic sinus pressure condition.



Recommended practices:

Pranayama (breathing techniques): Kapalabhati, Nadi Shodana

Shatkarma (cleansing techniques): Jala Neti - Nasal Cleansing

To relieve nasal congestion and sinus pressure, the following yoga therapy is recommended:



Apply firm pressure under armpits
acupressure points
to unblock both nostrils



Uttanasana

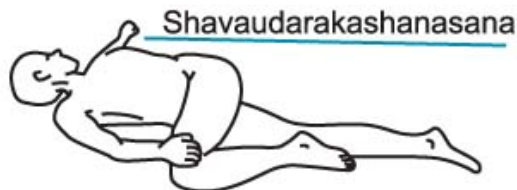
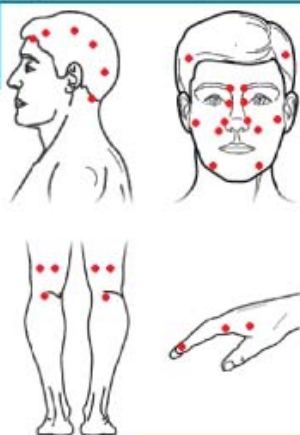


Ustrasana



Vipareeta Karani

Apply gradual, steady,
stationary pressure with
fingers on acupressure points



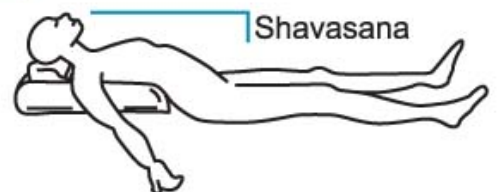
Shavaudarakashanasana



Kandasana



Upavishta Konasana



Shavasana

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Eco's Echoes:

Everything Is Connected To Everything Else! (Part 2)

by Ravin.S

In 1986, the United States Air Force replicated the Michelson Morley experiment and proved that there is a field of energy that underlies all physical reality. The field is known by names that range from simply as "Field", "Nature's Mind" and even "Mind of God". The physical world we know is made of two fields of energy: an electrical field and a magnetic field of energy. Human bodies are also made of the same field of energy. As understood from our physics books, when we change either the magnetic field or electrical field of an atom, we are literally changing the behaviour of the atom. Now the question is, which organ creates the strongest electrical and magnetic field in our body?

Over 20 years of research on the effect of human emotions directly on the world, Institute of Heart Math states, there is a measurable electrical and magnetic field of energy around every human heart. The brain does produce the same electrical and magnetic field, however, the heart generates 100 times stronger electrically and 5,000 times stronger magnetically than the brain. When we have a feeling in our hearts, then we are creating electromagnetic waves from inside our body that extends to the outer world.

This came into focus during the event of World Trade Centre attacks. The United States has two satellites called Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES). One is positioned in the northern hemisphere and another is positioned in the southern hemisphere. The role of these satellites is to measure the magnetic fields of the earth, and send the readings back at 30 minutes interval. On 11th September 2001, the scientists saw some readings from satellites that were off its usual scale map – big spikes of signals were captured. They were unable to determine the factor that influenced the magnetic fields of the entire planet at such a degree. The scientists overlaid the data from satellites onto a counter of months and days and found that the spikes occurred precisely on 11th September 2001 with the first spike documented 15 minutes after the

plane hit the first tower of the World Trade Centre. This shows that the space between us and the stars is not an empty space. It appears that there is an Intelligent Field of energy which unites the universe, and this is shown when the magnetic fields of the Earth spiked precisely the moment human emotion of the planet is focused on a disaster. It is the resonance of the mass human feelings produced and extending far beyond our bodies into the physical world which was picked up by the GEOS which is hundreds of miles above the surface.

Now that we know that our inner experiences such as thought, emotion and belief have a direct effect on the outer world, it makes perfect sense that when a group of people get together to create one precise feeling in their hearts, that feeling can literally influence the field that sustain the life on planet earth. The feelings that we choose to experience in our life are creating the pattern in the magnetic and electrical field in our heart and simultaneously rearranging the particles of quantum essence. This seeming miracle is the will of our internal technology. We can see how much we are connected to everything else in the nature. This is the grand design.

The motive of an earlier raised question is now populating our focus on the solutions. There is no alternate way for us to move forward without first restoring the damage we inflicted upon Earth. It can be mended through the unity of all nations, leaders, consumers, profit makers, law enforcers, and each one of us by creating the first change in our heart. Millions of people spoke about love, care and compassion towards animals and nature. Love and compassion is a feeling beyond words. When we are connected to the Earth's vibration, we can feel, sense, admire, and be fascinated by the wonders of Earth. Our heart will strive to make the change even for infinitesimal wrongdoings. All we have to do is to stop causing further harm to Earth. What is done is done, and our responsibility now lies for what remains. The intensity of pure and positive human emotion that builds the bridge of love and trust IS the power that makes the change.

YM

Inner Insights: Clarity through Kriya Yoga....

by Munis

Mei Wan called me two weeks ago and asked me to share my thoughts about Hatha Yoga, my Kriya practices as well as how these practices and the new person that I have now become can be something that will showcase the beauty and splendour of the art called KRIYA YOGA. I was humbled by the request and immediately said yes. Then, the next daunting task was, how do I really write this experience of mine, do I make it colourful and eye catching or say it as it is. I decided to go with the latter. So, here it is.

My journey started nearly eight years ago in 2006, when Master Mani was beginning to set up MAYI and was looking for suitable locations in Bangsar. At the same time, I was reading the Autobiography of a Yogi and was first introduced to the word Kriya. It got me all interested and I spoke to a mutual friend about this. It became much more interesting when my friend arranged for lunch with Master Mani and I readily joined. I had many questions on religious, spiritual as well as Kriya Yoga practices itself and Master Mani was there to answer all my questions. And during that meeting, I was truly amazed with the clarity and simplicity in which I was getting the answers from. I was however, still unconvinced though about joining Yoga classes.

About six months later, with my friend's insistence I decided to join the Kriya class, albeit half-heartedly. So, I was readily looking for excuses to miss the first few classes and then I remember sending a text to Master, "Master, apologies, I don't think I can come for class today. I think perhaps the time is not right coz no matter how hard I try, I get so many obstacles, and maybe this is not the time yet. Thank you" And this is the answer that changed my path in life, "Dearest Munis, Edison tried 10,000 times before he succeeded, and you give up after a few tries?" and followed by another message "Perhaps, the question you should ask yourself is, how committed are you in waking up from your slumber"? Oh boy, that really woke me up!

I joined the Kriya class there and then and was completely devoted to finding clarity within myself. And the journey continues till this very day. So, here I am ready to share some experiences that I have had since becoming a Kriya student. The first and foremost is the ability to see the world with new eyes and experiencing events with the heart instead of the mind. It's not a case of becoming more emotional but

rather becoming more emotionally tuned to the experiences which in turn creates new possibilities for new actions and new results. I have had experienced countless events where things could have gone disappointingly wrong before but because of the clarity I had developed through the Kriya practices, I had managed the events successfully. To list them all down here would mean not keeping within the 600 words I promised Mei Wan. But I would be glad to share them on an individual basis with anyone.

Having seen the clarity and positive changes in me, my wife Roopini along with my three gorgeous children also decided to join Hatha Yoga classes since the beginning of this year. I wouldn't say it is something that my three angels looked forward to attending at the beginning but slowly but surely, I see them enjoying the practices in their class. And that's how the practices are, it subtly integrates into you and your life and you would only notice the changes when you spend time reflecting on the new all empowering and positive person you have now created in yourself. Your life changes for the better.

So my dear friends, when we have clarity in what we say and do, we tend to inspire people around us and that is very important in this day and age, where most of us do not know where we are really heading. And, I truly believe Kriya gives us that and that's what I am experiencing in my life right now - greater clarity. With clarity, we can make good decisions that leads to amazing outcomes and create the life we say we want. Aum. **YM**



Inner Insights:

The One Week that Changed My Life

by Kisheaan Santhanasamy

First of all, I would like to take this great opportunity to thank Master Mani for conducting such an awesome camp that I would never forget in my entire life and I would also like to thank Mr. Sealán for making a big change in my life. I am filled with gratitude for having benefitted in many ways by attending the Yoga Camp organised by Malaysian Yoga Society in 2013.

Firstly, how did I get to know about the Camp? I still remember the first time I met Master Mani. I saw him on television on a show called Vizhuthugal broadcasted by Astro. After the programme, my parents insisted that I must go for the camp. Well, to be honest at the beginning I was thinking that my parents will just simply say and will not enrol me so I just took things lightly. The following day, I still remember that moment, it was in the morning and my dad was not at home. So, I went to my Mom and asked her where Dad is and she told me that he went to Brickfields to enrol me for the camp and my reaction was, "WHAAATTT?!" Then, my dad called me to tell me, "Son, I have already enrolled you for the camp so make sure you get yourself prepared," and I said, "Okaaaay, Pa". In my 16 years of life, the longest that I have been away from my family was about two to three days.

Attending the Yoga Camp was the first time in my life being away from my family. A week was a very long time for me but to be honest I have no regrets because I really did have a good time and thinking back, I really miss those days as well :). Then the most pressured day in my life came upon - it's time that I had to be away from my family for a week. I still remember, it was Sunday, 8th of December 2013. Staying at the Saraswathy Tamil School in Sungai Buloh was a bit difficult and challenging for me as I need to adapt to a new environment and the people around me. I felt like I would never like the Yoga Camp because I thought it would be really hard to make friends and get to know people. But everyone was kind and inclusive. It's almost like I have a second family at the camp, waiting for me. For the first one to two days I was still feeling a bit awkward and missed my family but I soon got used to the environment.

Attending the camp has changed me in so many ways. Frankly speaking, I am a very hot tempered guy and I do have problems managing it because I do not know how to control my temper well but after attending the camp, the word 'anger' didn't even pop up in my mind even once because that one whole week was filled with fun and joy. The environment was simply awesome where everyone was laughing around and it was so stress-free. I am also the type where I think about too many things (even unnecessary things as well), which bothered my studies a lot but after attending the camp and making many new friends, learning new things and

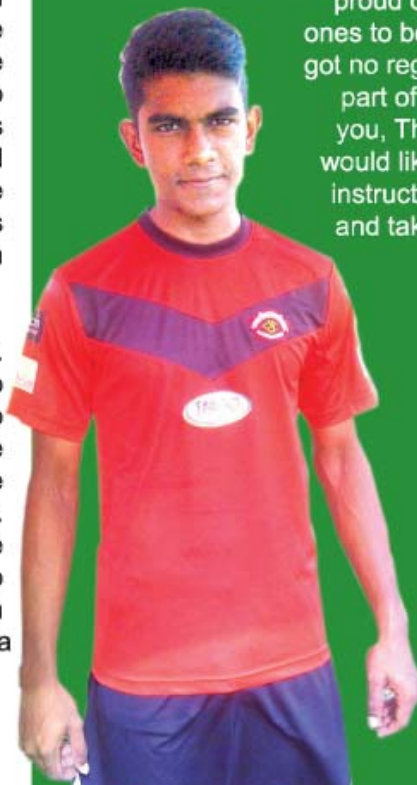
doing many cool activities, it made me feel so calm and nice.

I feel that I am now a more responsible and humble person, and am pleasant to everyone I meet. I will never forget the line that Madam Iswari always used to tell all the students 'GIVE RESPECT AND DON'T EXPECT RESPECT'. This line has become my pillar of strength. I am applying it in my life and it makes me feel good. The camp has also made me into a friendlier person. Now, I tend to smile to all the people I meet and I am so glad that I have changed a lot in many ways - the credit definitely goes to the camp! When I returned to school, I was elected as the school's Head Prefect. The first time I was ever chosen as a leader was at the Yoga Camp. The experience played a huge part to my transformation. I still remember one night where there few students including me were not sleeping and making a lot noise, at that time Mr. Sealán called all of us out and we were so excited about the whole thing but after going out we realised that he wanted to send a message to every one of us. A few of us were not happy about being called out but I took it positively.

I was a very naughty and playful 16-year old without any proper plan for the future but after attending the Yoga Camp I felt that I have got a bright future ahead. My thinking level now is totally different. I am able to solve any problems by myself and I do not need to depend on others - the camp has made me independent! In my life, I have never washed my own clothes, the camp was the first place where I did everything myself. I am really very

proud of being one of the chosen ones to be part of the camp. I have got no regrets allowing myself to be part of my second family. Thank you, Thank you and Thank you! I would like to thank all of my loving instructors for being there for me, and taking very good care of me.

I would also like to apologise if I was a burden to anyone. Everybody was so loving and caring towards me. From a person who lacked confidence, I now feel empowered and it's because of the Yoga camp. Thanks for everything! **YM**



The recipe to a child's healthy development and successful learning lies in the health and integration of the child's mental and physical development. This overall fitness plays a prime role in the child's building blocks, influencing their behaviour, social and cognitive developments. Children naturally and instinctively learn from experiences. Among many valuable life lessons, these experiences teach them to care for themselves and communicate with others.

Early lessons begin in learning about the essentials, such as the daily routine of washing, dressing, and feeding themselves, and proceed to complex activities such as communicating and caring for others. The simple practice of caring for their own body builds their respect, understanding and awareness of how all parts of their body work together intrinsically for daily performances. The realisation of the different functions of the body and how they brilliantly interweave to build a full functioning system is perhaps the most cherished lesson a person can ever have.

As the developing body and mind is integrated and is fit to function, this complete unit never ceases learning. Every movement of the physical body sends a signal to the brain and every experience, big or small, is accounted for. All the experiences are stored in the 'memory bank' and are summoned when necessary. In order to support the body system to learn and function effectively, a strong and healthy foundation is important. Let's look at some of the essentials that support healthy development.

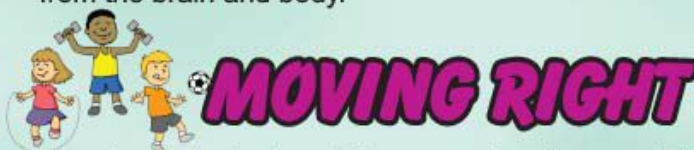


- Omega-3 Fatty Acids – Crucial for brain and eye development, and improves cognitive functions. Can be found in flaxseed, walnuts, avocado, almond, and more.
- Choline – A nutrient that is essential for brain development and memory function, and helps the brain communicate with the rest of the body. Can be found in spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, wheat germ, and more.
- Antioxidant – Healthy chemicals that can clean the brain from free radicals that cause cell deterioration. It protects children's brain from wear and tear. It is also known to enhance memory, restore motor coordination and balance. Can be found in prunes, raisins, blueberries, cranberries, and more.
- Complex carbohydrates – These fibre-rich whole grains are important for the brain's functions because they fuel the brain and the body. The fibre ensures that the brain gets a steady stream of energy. Can be found in potatoes, lentils, barley, oats, and more.

Other than food, our bodies and brain needs to be properly hydrated to function optimally. Water helps to keep the brain signals going and promotes mental alertness. Dehydration is a factor of mental fatigue and it can impair the recollection of short-term and long-term memory, and decrease other cognitive functions. Water is also important to eliminate toxins from the brain and body.



The food that we prepare for our children plays a vital role for the development of their physical and mental health, helping to promote the growth of the brain and the body. Our children will follow healthy eating habits right up to adulthood if developed from young. Apart from building their health, good eating habits and the understanding of proper nutrition will help them to learn, be more aware and feel better about themselves. Some of the food that help improve the health of the body and brain:



The body is designed to support autonomy. The skeletal frame holds up the body, the muscles provide mass and support movement, and the joints provide autonomy. Physical movement is

an important ingredient for a child's healthy development. It not only builds motor skills, but also offers opportunities for social and emotional growths, and builds agility, confidence, and brain power! With each movements of the body, signals are being sent to the brain seamlessly, assuring learning. An active body sends messages to the brain that stimulates synaptic growth, further strengthening brain power.

Yoga is a good avenue to support this growth. Children are constantly being exposed to Yoga poses which they playfully see as 'challenges' for their bodies to overcome. As the body learns and attempts these poses - be it twisting, balancing, strengthening or lengthening, or inverted, the integration of the body system is activated.

One example is the practice of the Surya Namaskar. The performance of this sequence requires the child to co-ordinate his physical movement with his breath all the while engaging the muscles, joints, and subtly massaging the major internal organs. Bear in mind that inactivity in children may lead to sedentary habits as adults. So, if your child has limited time to practice, it is recommended to at least practice the Surya Namaskar.



Just as food is important to fuel the body, a child's need for rest is also important. A child's ability to learn is increased when he has sufficient rest. A proper rest provides opportunities for the body and brain to rejuvenate and process the day's activities, further re-energising and fuelling the system for the day ahead. We can witness an increase of creativity and learning capacity when the child is most relaxed. Exhausted children tend to have trouble concentrating in class.

Yoga Nidra takes centre stage when it comes to relaxation. When guided by a trained teacher, Yoga Nidra not only provide sufficient rest to children by releasing muscular, emotional and mental tensions, but can also provide subconscious learning, and instil good habits. The Yoga Nidra practice can also restore health and increase memory functions while integrating both hemispheres of the brain.



Deep and proper breathing is closely linked with the performance of the brain. Shallow breathing deprives the body and brain of oxygen. Apart from improving circulation, deep breathing helps relieve stress and regulate moods, giving children an opportunity to calm down. Although our brain only makes up roughly 3% of our total body mass, it consumes more than 20% of the total oxygen used by our body. And during mental activities, it consumes even more! In other words, oxygen is like food for the brain! Children whose brain are not getting enough oxygen display signs such as poor memory, lack of concentration, and impaired sense of balance.



Parents, educators and caregivers are prime contributors to children's overall healthy development. Engaging children with various activities are valuable especially if they are appropriate and are in line with the child's interest. Parents who engage children in their decision making and daily activities often see a display of their children's positive social development. It strengthens the family as a unit by establishing trust, and it builds the child's confidence. These healthy and homely experiences encourage children to transfer these pleasant experiences to their friends and social circles.

Through our efforts to focus on well-being of the child and the family, children will love the endless experience of learning about being healthy. These pleasant early childhood experiences they have in keeping their body healthy, fit and harmonious will be their building blocks of positive and healthy attitudes that will last a lifetime.

SYK classes include Yoga Kids Class, Teens Yoga Class, Family Yoga Class and Pregnancy Yoga Class. For more information about Super Yoga Kids, log on to www.superyogakids.com or find us at Facebook: SYK Superyogakids **YM**

Super Yoga Kids is now available in Selayang!
Log on to www.superyogakids.com to view schedule



Chef Yogi's Food Notes!

Mater Cheese Baked Rice



Ingredients

- Rice: 2 cups
- Mozzarella cheese: 1 cup
- Ginger
- Carrots
- Potato
- Tofu
- French beans
- Cauliflower
- Button or fresh mushroom (any type of vegetable or mixed nuts can be used)

Preparation:

- Cook the rice
- Chop the ginger
- Cut the carrots, potatoes, tofu, French beans, cauliflower and mushrooms into small pieces

Directions:

1. In a wok, add just a little oil, add ginger and sauté.
2. Add all the vegetables above and sauté.
3. Add salt for seasoning and remove from stove half cooked.
4. Mix in the vegetables with the cooked rice.
5. In a baking pan add the mixed rice and sprinkle mozzarella cheese on top of the rice and bake for 20 minutes or until cheese melts.
6. Serve hot.

SCHEDULE OF COURSES: JUL - NOV 2014

JULY 2014

5/7/2014	BSR	Partner Yoga Instructor Course
6/7/2014	DU	Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course
7-11/7/2014	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
8/7/2014	SLYG	Ayurveda Massage Therapist Course
13/7/2014	BSR	Yoga Therapist Certification Course
13/7/2014	BSR	Jala Neti Workshop
23-27/7/2014	Sungkai Hot Spring, Perak	Kundalini Kriya Yoga Retreat
25-27/7/2014	Sungkai Hot Spring, Perak	Yogic Detox Retreat
30/7/2014	DU	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course

AUGUST 2014

2/8/2014	BSR	Dhyana (Meditation) Instructor Course
3/8/2014	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Course - Intermediate
3/8/2014	DU	Herbs that Heal Workshop
4/8/2014	SLYG	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
9/8/2014	SLYG	Ayurveda Massage Therapist Course
17/8/2014	DU	Pregnancy Yoga Instructor Course
30/8/2014	Kandiah Hall, Brickfields	Malaysian International Yoga Competition (MIYC) 2014

SEPTEMBER 2014

7/9/2014	DU	Manipuraka Workshop
7/9/2014	DU	Urdhva Retas Workshop
27/9/2014	BSR	Pranayama (Breathing Technique) Instructor Course
28/9/2014	BFS	Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course
13-21/8/2014		Trip to Dunagiri, India

OCTOBER 2014

12/10/2014	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Course - Advance
27/10/2014	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
29/10/2014	DU	International Yoga Instructor Course - Intermediate

NOVEMBER 2014

2/11/2014	BSR	Anatomy & Physiology workshop
2/11/2014	DU	Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course
3/11/2014	DU	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
22/11/2014	BSR	Kundalini Kriya Yoga Course
28/11/2014	TBA	International Yoga Instructor Course - Residential Programme
30/11/2014	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course

MANIPURAKA AWAKENING & UNIVERSAL HEALING ENERGY

(Spontaneous Physical Movements)



Manipura Chakra:

Located in the area of the solar plexus, navel, and the digestive system, the fiery third chakra is called Manipura, the "lustrous gem." Associated with the color yellow, this chakra is involved in self-esteem, warrior energy, and the power of transformation; it also governs digestion and metabolism. A healthy, spirited third chakra supports us in overcoming inertia, jump-starting our "get-up-and-go" attitude so that we can take risks, assert our will, and assume responsibility for our life. This chakra is also the place of our deep belly laughter, warmth, ease, and the vitality we receive from performing selfless service.

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The energy which is normally dissipated in the lower chakras can be re channelled to the upper chakras, not being released outward from those chakras, and brought further up the Sushumna nadi towards the upper chakras. This allows the lower energy (retas) to move upward and become transformed into a higher energy (ojas), sometimes called effulgent, vital, creative, or spiritual energy that is used for higher realization.
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Date: 7th September 2014 Venue: Damansara Utama
Manipuraka: 10am - 2pm ; Urdhva Retas: 4.00pm - 6.30pm

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(MIYC) 2014

Date : 30th August 2014 Time : 9am – 6pm

Venue : Kandiah Hall, SJK(T) Vivekananda, Brickfields, KL

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Display and share your Yoga skills on stage with your top 5 favourite asanas. Unlock your innate potential as you showcase your skills and be an inspiration to the hundreds who are present.



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Contact us to register yourself for the above.
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