

YOGA MAIL

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Ayurveda
- Science Of Life

Manipuraka
- A lightning-quick yoga,
with tremendous benefits



The Yoga Of Emotions

I have been planning to bring this science to my students and others who have been having a tough time understanding why this most fundamental mental state is so difficult to understand and almost impossible to manage.

I have been having mixed emotions (ha ha) about this subject. Every day in my teaching career and life I see unemotional faces and personalities, and if there is any common emotion that I see all the time it is irritation, anger, sadness, short-tempereness, impatience, irrationality, gloom, and childish outbursts (seen daily from politicians in the media). Very rarely do I see joy, smiles, patience, care, compassion, sincerity, generosity, cheerfulness, and maturity – it seems to be very rare indeed.

A child spoke to me a couple of weeks ago during a workshop, lamenting her mother's lack of awareness. She said that her mother always seems angry and gloomy, never smiles, and shouts at her. What caught my attention most was when she said, "I spoke to her last night when I saw that her mood was good". Let me ask you who is acting childish and who is acting mature? In class I see unhappy faces coming from homes and offices, some very tired obviously but doesn't a nice soft smile ease the burden a little? I always attempt to create a happier atmosphere during meetings and gatherings, and once I was asked whether something was wrong when I placed a happy smile on my face - don't you think this was a very interesting response?

I have seen some very talented people very gloomy. If they were old beaten people I would understand but these are young individuals! What has happened to their spirit? It's like soulless living. The key to this is very simple - just learn to smile, that's all one needs to do, smile, smile and keep on smiling.

The other crisis facing humanity right now (this has to be termed a crisis, in fact it is the one that is creating most of the other crises in the world), is unhappiness. Unhappiness begets unhappiness and isn't this the cause of all activities that trigger more unhappiness? War, rape, corruption, human trafficking, bigotry, selective prosecution, selective privileges, apartheid policies (and those are hidden under different names), planned annihilation of certain groups throughout the

world, drugs, gangsterism, forced prostitution, forced labour, child labour, and so many more. It's a sad world due to the sadness that we get ourselves influenced by. The crisis is this: we let our happiness be influenced by outside forces. That's the crisis! Why should we be influenced to be sad? Why don't we continue to smile and be happy in all circumstances and situations (maybe inappropriate at a funeral! But 99% of the time we are in places and circumstances where we could be smiling)? There are many ways to smile, and we should use our common sense as to when to smile, when to grin, when to smile through our eyes, when to have a soft laughter with a smile, when

Master Manickaran

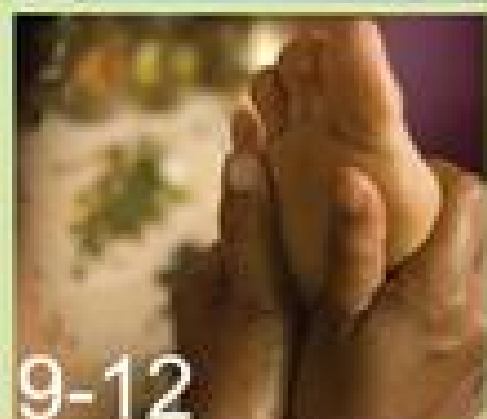


to smile discreetly (I have come across some situations where when it is was not appropriate to smile accompanied with a laughter, but yet it was done, another situation is not to laugh out loud when someone makes a mistake, here one should have a compassionate soft smile to reassure the affected person that "I understand" and "you go ahead and try one more time and I will stand by you")...this is what I mean by common sense, and unfortunately this seems to be a very rare commodity in the world today! So am I right in thinking that the yoga this world really needs is the yoga of emotions? The yoga that can help everyone understand their emotions, facial expression, practices to enhance different positive emotions and change negative emotions to positive ones spontaneously... I am working on this, so do keep in touch with us with regard to the progress. Take care and stay happy with a smile on your face...

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

yogamail@malaysianyogasociety.org

attention to **THE EDITOR**



Guided by one of
the world's leading
yoga experts
MANI SEKARAN

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

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Asana Of The Month



Tiryaka Tadasana (Swaying Palm Tree Pose)

How To Do It:

1. Stand with legs apart.
2. Interlock fingers and turn palms outwards.
3. Inhale, raise hands over the head.
4. Exhale, bend to the left from the waist.
5. Inhale, come up, then exhale to the right.

Left and right is 1 round.
Perform 5 rounds.

Benefits:

Loosens and stretches the entire spine, helping to clear up congestion of the spinal nerves at the point where they emerge from the spinal column. It stretches and massages the rectus abdominal muscles and the intestines, especially the sides of waist.



Chef **Yogi's** **Food Notes!**

Chick Peas n Mint

150 g mint leaves
10g chick peas – soaked overnight
4 cm ginger – shredded finely
2 tablespoons sesame oil
Salt to taste

Method:
Boil chick peas in salt water till softened,
drain & keep aside.
Heat sesame oil in wok, sauté ginger until
fragrant.
Add in mint leaves & stir fry until just wilted.
Add in chick peas, tossing until combined,
season to taste with salt.
Stir well. Serve hot with rice.





YOGA RETREAT 2009 GENTING PERMAI RESORT

Events

Testimonials by practitioners:

"It is a wonderful and value-for-money thing; a very basic and very traditional method of cleansing introduced to all with some modernity and very affordable and extremely effective gift that MMY has brought to KL."

"... (On Yoga Master Mani at the Yoga Detox Retreat(S)) To hear him talk is the most precious part of the programme as that's spiritual healing!"

"I have a good time trying out this economic and effective Detox method. Will definitely try again in 6 months time... Any one volunteer to be my detox partner for moral support?"

"For those of you still on Kickstart diet (special diet recommended to detox participants), hope you have a fun time and you need to believe that Kickstart diet is still the best...."

"Really learned a lot from this retreat.... Thank you Yoga Association. I also shared this amazing experience with all my friends and colleagues...they are very interested to do the detox too....."

"I am so glad that I had met you guys, so nice and cheerful person. Bunch of thanks to who have given me good advice and support during the retreat."

"I plan to continue Kickstart diet as already after 1 week, I feel so much improvement in my health. No more migraines since the detox. Am able to sleep soundly every night and wake up, amazingly without the alarm clock these days and yet feel fresh with energy."

"My lips used to be cracked and dry all the time, but after the detox and recommended diet it has a healthy tint, feels soft and moisturized."

"Since the detox, my knee joints no longer hurt and I notice I am much more flexible while practicing yoga postures. I have also lost 4.5kg two weeks after sticking to the diet recommendations and am happy to follow through."

"My skin is softer and glowing, I lost 10kg in the first week after the detox, yet feel so fresh and alive. By following the simple diet, I have also found a new sense of awareness to appreciate all that we have no matter how basic it may be."

On 29th August, 50 participants prepared themselves for a 3-day 2-night relaxing and rejuvenating yoga retreat at Genting Permai Resort. The day started with participants gathering at Brickfields to carpool their way to the resort. Everyone arrived by 1pm for a simple yet delicious vegetarian nasi lemak lunch. This was followed by some yoga ice-breaking games and later a simple yoga class with light meditation. The night ended with a briefing specifically for those who had opted for the detoxification retreat.

The next day, everyone was separated according to their different programmes. The Detox group mainly remained in their apartments, resting after completing their programme while others participated in some yoga exercises, followed by a mooncake-making session and a free demonstration of an ayurvedic facial massage and shampoo-making.



The retreat ended on the third day with a light yoga class, group photo shoot, question-and-answer session and lunch before checking out and heading back to KL with much lighter hearts and promises to keep in touch!

SUMMIT CAR BOOTH CHARITY SALE 2009

On 19TH July, ten eager International Yoga Instructor Course (IYIC) students set up stall at the Summit Car Boot Sale in Subang Jaya selling very delectable vegetarian dishes, biscuits, pastries and 'kuih'. This was a karma yoga project decided by the team to raise funds for the Batu Arang Yoga Home. The sale started at 9am and by 6pm everything was sold. The students raised a total of RM1500 for that day. Well done IYIC students 2009!



Self Mastery Course Testimonials



Practising the Self Mastery techniques has definitely boosted my immune system and I find myself less susceptible to infections compared with the past.

Lai Mei Wan

I feel a calming effect of peace and harmony throughout the session; rejuvenating my soul at all levels. Master Mani is a great teacher and has in-depth knowledge of the subject. He ensures the students are able to rise up to higher level of consciousness and attain great achievements. This is what I call Harmonic Wealth.

CK Teng

"I have been a seeker for a long time – of true health, peace and happiness. Through the Self Mastery practices, I feel that I'm finally becoming a Finder!"

Andrea Sankar

"Whether you believe it or not the practice of Self Mastery Kriya Yoga technique has made all my wishes come true in life!"

Uma Marina Borodina

"The Self Mastery Course has brought me positive transformations so subtly that I didn't notice them at first. Dentistry is a stressful job and being able to multitask helps a lot, especially when family life awaits me after work. The practices learnt have enhanced my concentration and brought agility back to my mind to deal with daily demands."



"There is a unique sense of calm and steadiness that I feel these days. Even when problems arise, I am able to think out of the box and steer smoothly through situations without the usual worries that tend to bog us down in our dull conditioned state."

"I have also recently completed all 3 levels of the International Yoga Instructor Course out of pure interest, without disrupting my work or personal routine."

Dr. Girish Chandra

All through the Self Mastery Course 6-day Intensive Programme, I was surprised that I felt fully refreshed at the end of each full day of coaching despite the learning of new techniques without many breaks. I am deeply impressed by how effectively it was conducted. My memory has improved a lot and I feel more patient when dealing with people nowadays.

Nicole Chin Pee Leng

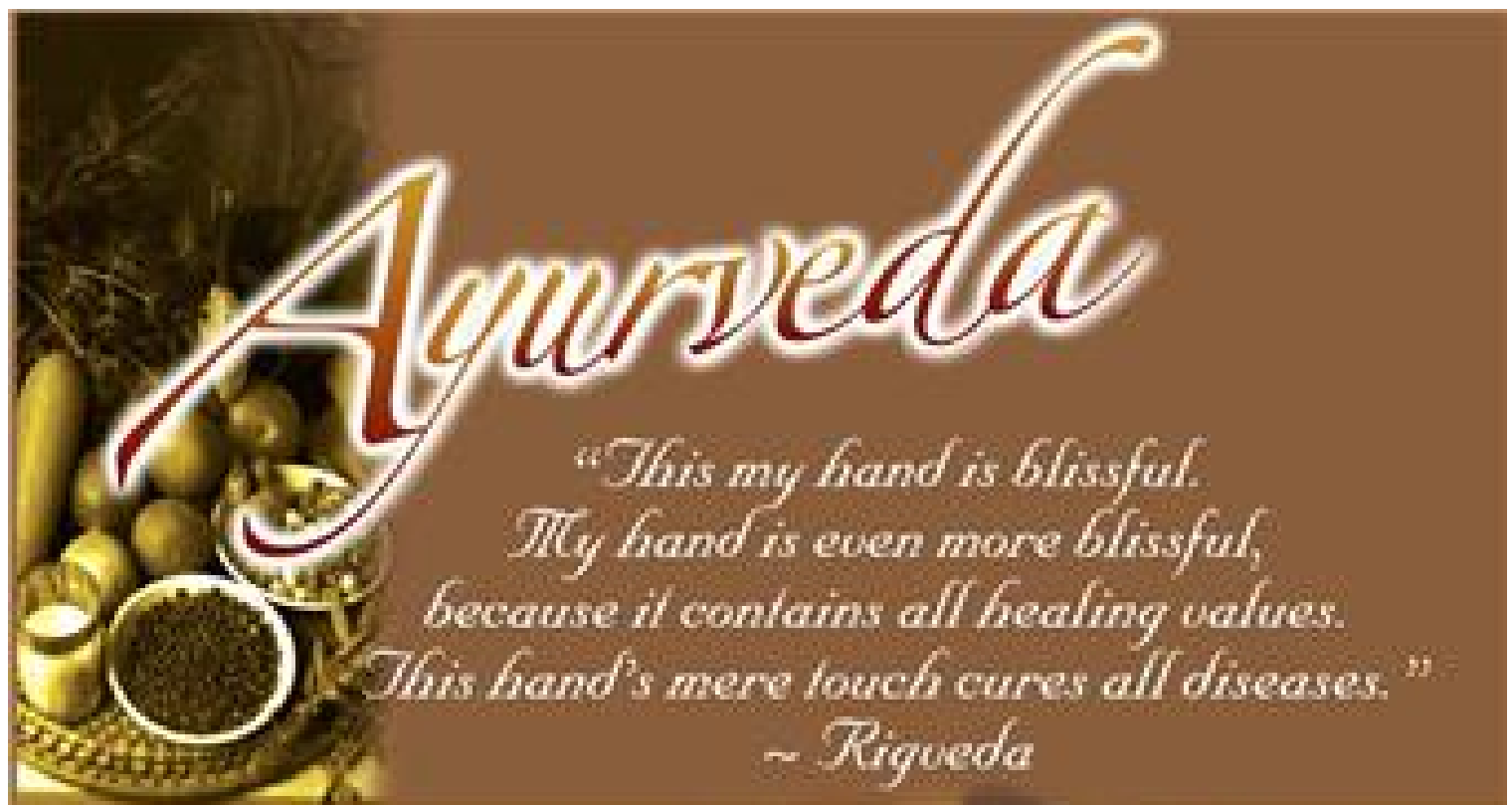
I used to be a very inactive person. Now after IYC and continuing my training in Self Mastery-Kriya Yoga, I am alive with energy and require minimal sleep. I have also become more calm, focused and able to make right decisions.

Yoeni



"The combination of techniques taught in Self Mastery Course (SMC) is unique. The positive changes that took place in me are definitely due to the system of practices which complement each other. With consistent practice, I just found myself naturally dropping my smoking habit one day. There was no struggle at all. It just happened!"

Deni Leon



*"This my hand is blissful.
My hand is even more blissful,
because it contains all healing values.
This hand's mere touch cures all diseases."
~ Rigveda*

What is Ayurveda?

Ayurveda is the traditional medicine of India. It is a powerful natural healing system for body, mind and soul with a history and depth parallel to the Yoga tradition. It's a herbal gateway to good health and understands the human body, its particular nature and individual mixture of elements at a deep physical, mental and emotional level.

Dictionary: 'Ayur' means 'Life' and 'Veda' means 'Science'. Thus Ayurveda is the 'Science of Life'.



What are the benefits of Ayurveda?

- Instils new energy, releases tensions to provide total relaxation
- Beautifies the skin, hair and body (including reducing weight) using natural herbal extracts and oils
- Relaxes the muscles, nerves, bones and the whole body
- Induces restful sleep
- Aids digestion and improves appetite

What does Ayurveda have to do with Yoga?

Like yoga, ayurvedic principles of health practices include diet, herbs, exercise, bodyworks, detoxification programmes and life style management for holistic living, and all of it considers our unique individual constitution and environmental impacts. Both have long been linked together as sister systems of human development with a common ancient vedic roots.

Yoga is the ideal ayurvedic exercise, because it rejuvenates the body, improves digestion, and removes stress which is essential for the ayurvedic routine.

In return, yoga practitioners also benefit from the ayurvedic daily routine as part of their yoga practice. For example, abhyanga (ayurvedic massage) helps remove toxins from the body and relaxes the muscles for more effective yoga practice.



Top five Ayurvedic Bodyworks treatments at a glance:

Shirodhara – Oil Pouring on the Third Eye

A steady stream of warm ayurvedic oil flows continuously on to the forehead in the region between the eyes from a special pot to melt away stresses from the mind and nervous system. The effect is sheer bliss, complete rest & relaxation, healing for sinusitis, chronic colds and insomnia.

Kati Vasti – Herbal Oil Treatment for Lower Back

A unique method of soaking the treatment area in warm herbal oil following a back rub. Extremely beneficial for lower back pain or sciatica.

Podi Kizhi – Herbal Powder Massage using a Bolus

A bolus made from medicated powder bundled in muslin cloth which is dipped into warm

medicated oil and applied all over the body to reduce pains of the joints and muscles soreness. Brings relieve for arthritis, stiff and inflamed joints.

Udwarthanam – Slimming Therapy

Special concoction of herbal powders soothingly rubbed over the body to reduce subcutaneous fats & remove dead skin cells

Panchakarma – Ultimate Detoxification

5 holistic detoxification approaches to remove impurities from the physical body (bloodstream, intestinal system) and restore the balance internally

These techniques plus another four are taught in Ayurveda Bodyworks Course (ABW). For further information please call The Yoga Franchise : 03-22605322

Some Ayurvedic herbs and their uses at a glance:

Neem

- Anti-bacterial - a natural alternative to antibiotics which doesn't promote resistance in bacteria. Also anti-viral, anti-fungal and anti-septic
- Improves general skin health (combating acne, boils and ulcers) and soothes itchiness, redness or irritation
- It boosts the immune system
- Generally promotes a healthy circulative, respiratory and digestive system.
- For blood purification and improves liver function
- Anti-diabetic



Turmeric

- Detoxify the liver
- Balance cholesterol levels
- Fight allergies
- Stimulate digestion
- Boost immunity
- Enhance the complexion



Fenugreek - 'Greek Hay'

- Helps to expel toxic waste via the lymphatic system
- Well-known for its benefit of increasing lactation when consumed by lactating mothers

Shikakai - The Fruit for Hair

- Traditionally used as a natural shampoo in India for centuries
- Has a natural low pH, is extremely mild and doesn't strip hair of natural oils which makes it a very good chemical free cleanser
- Strengthening & conditioning properties on the hair
- When mixed with specific herbs will promote hair growth and prevent dandruff
- Extracts of the ground pods have been used for various skin diseases
- Contains some lecithin, which helps to reduce cholesterol, dissolve fatty accumulation and relieve water retention
- Blood sugar lowering agent, diabetes controller, and has heart-friendly properties
- Can be used as a complimentary therapy in treating cancer patients
- A useful rejuvenating herb
- Alleviate bronchial, digestive problems, inflammation, allergies and gout

Amla Berry - Amalaki

- Excellent source of Vitamin C and is an antioxidant
- Enhances food absorption, strengthens digestion and improves assimilation of iron for healthy blood
- Balances stomach acids and improves digestion but does not heat the body
- Nourishes the brain, supports the nervous system and strengthens the senses
- Nurtures the heart, blood and circulation
- Tonic for strengthening the lungs and the entire respiratory tract
- Regulates elimination, eases constipation and helps the urinary system
- Good for the skin, moisturizes, cleanses and increases immunity against bacterial infection while enhancing glow and lustre
- Retards premature graying and reduces hair thinning



Tulsi - Holy Basil

- A nerve tonic which also sharpens memory
- Prevention against fever and common cold
- Relieving for coughs and sore throat
- Strengthening effect on the kidney and is used in treatment for kidney stone
- Anti-stress agent
- Soothing for insect or leech bites and used in the treatment of skin diseases
- Good for dental health and counteracting bad breath
- applications to relief headache, has cooling effect and for eye disorders



Comments from students who attended ABW Course:

"Unconventional... we get to learn massage techniques on so many different levels including self massage. Before attending ABW, I never knew we could use easily available household items for treatment and it was a lot of fun making herbal concoctions with fresh fruits, herbs and spices. The different types of oil massages taught were most detailed down to the marmar (acupressure) points. And I felt immediate relief after applying the technique for joints pain."

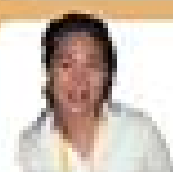
**Professor from a local institution
(name withheld for privacy)**

After the first day of Ayurvedic Bodyworks:



I enjoyed the course so much and couldn't wait to apply the massage techniques learned the moment I got home on myself and my family members. It was the best sleep I have had in a long time after the self massage. I strongly feel everyone should attend this course to understand your self better, self-preservation, maintain youthfulness and to help others. The best investment one can do for oneself and to achieve the best degree of health. Now I can see how yoga and ayurveda go hand in hand especially in terms of therapeutic benefits.

Yoga Acharya Mane Cheong



Ayurveda has always been my interest and I have read about it extensively before attending this course. This time it was the real thing and the hands on practical session was very involving for me. I couldn't help but test out the methods immediately and gave my mum a leg massage which she loved! I can't wait for the next lesson, to master more exciting new techniques and share with my loved ones.

Alice Lee



After attending Ayurveda Bodyworks, I know now that there is a systematic way of massaging, the different strokes and how to apply the techniques for self massage and for others. This makes it also more enjoyable and not so tiring for me, yet still as effective when I give others a massage. I look forward to learning more secrets in the next lesson.

Nur Azah

How to make natural ayurvedic shampoo

What you need:

- 4 finger length shikakai pods (Soap Nut Fruit for hair)
- 1 measuring tablespoon fenugreek (biji halba)
- 110ml (full measuring 1/2 cup) water

STEP 1:

Rinse shikakai and fenugreek. Soak in water overnight

STEP 2:

Remove seeds and hard fibres from the softened Shikakai pods



Seeds & hard fibres are removed

STEP 3:

Bring the seeded shikakai, fenugreek & soaking water to a quick boil in a pot. Leave to cool.



Blend the mixture

STEP 4:

Blend the mixture till frothy like a thick milkshake



Lather with shampoo

STEP 5:

Just wet hair and lather with your new shampoo formula!

Now used to have frizzy, dryness and excessive hair falling problem in the past. But after consistently using this homemade herbal shampoo, look how thick, silky and shiny her tresses are now!



Manipuraka

A lightning-quick yoga, with tremendous benefits

by Wajeeh

There must be something seriously amiss in people who seem to be beset by endless ailments, ranging from headaches, body aches, flu, sinusitis and migraines to other stress-related and muscle-related pains. As Oscar Wilde says, "Illness of any kind is hardly a thing to be encouraged."

But sometimes people want to be sick because they like the attention and they want to be pampered or felt sorry for.

This is not good because some ailments could lead to dangerous diseases, while others might simply sap the life out of the sufferer and make him dull, dependent and without energy, life or will.

I'm talking about people who have it in their power to turn things around. Because according to spiritual masters, 'willpower' creates tremendous energy in a person. Where there's a will there's a way, they say.

So, when my colleague, yet again, turns up at the office feeling irritable and annoyed at everyone and everything else but himself, and full of complaints flowing like a waterfall, at the very beginning of the day... no, I don't get affected. I watch, and prepare myself to get amused yet again. That is until he starts banging things around, of course.

Then I ask him, "Why don't you do something about that weight over your shoulder?"

"What?" he asks, quite surprised.

"Are you analyzing yourself? You are always frustrated and irritated about everything. You're carrying a sack of health problems on your back. Poor health makes you edgy and edginess adds to your poor health. It's a vicious circle. Why don't you do something about it?"

"I've already checked. Doctor gave me Nolgesic to relax my muscles, and Ponstan and Sinflex to release pain. I'm also taking a host of diabetic and pressure-related pills. Since he's my family doctor, he has also sold me a slimming product to reduce my weight."

"You don't want to try alternative ways?"

"Like what? Your yoga? I don't have the time."



"You know how to make money, but you don't know how to be healthy? No time?!"

Does this sound familiar? Lots of people put themselves into compromising positions where health is concerned and drag through life by blaming their ill health on others. They rely completely on modern medicine and doctors, hoping to buy health through external means. Modern medicine does give temporary relief, but in my friend's case I noticed that the ailments recur at very frequent intervals. So, hardly a day that he feels really well.

To me, the solution came in the form of Manipuraka - a sort of 'lightning quick' yoga. Manipuraka, simply put, is allowing the cosmic energy to heal oneself. "Once started, it rapidly unfolds on its own and begins to heal you, almost in spite of yourself". Sounds magical doesn't it? But nothing comes easy.

Master Mani says the richest of people emotionally are those who have the most time for themselves. You only need to spend a little time doing Manipuraka to save yourself a lot more time from being ill, and be filled with lots of energy as well.

I decided to give manipuraka my trust. I was sceptical at first and let my thoughts interfere with the process, but as soon as I relaxed, I could feel a slight pressure that made my body sway. It was totally within my control but when I let it, the body started swaying and later spinning as well, first clockwise and then anti-clockwise.

The experience was amazing because it was not a magic show but, according to my guru, a pure biomagnetic reaction produced by the cosmic energy entering the body, via shaktipat, and working through the subtle nadis to produce the involuntary movements.

Some of the other students, I noticed, got carried away. Their movements were so intense that they almost fell down, but the energy was working with everyone in an individual manner, depending on the type of cleansing that was happening in each one, whether a past trauma, some illness or emotional and mental-related problems.

Shaktipat refers to the act of the guru, in whom the spiritual energy of Kundalini is already active, in conferring it to his students.

This energy works through the anamaya kosha (physical body) and the subtler bodies of pranamaya kosha (energy body) and manomaya kosha (mental body) to completely cleanse the practitioner.

According to tantra, diseases arise when a person is not in a position to distribute the energy properly through the centres or the chakras. The seven main ones are Mooladhara (base of spine), Swadhistana (two inches below navel), Manipura (navel centre), Anahata (heart), Vishuddhi (throat), Ajna (between the eyebrows) and the Sahasrara (top of the head). These centres are said to be located in the subtler energy body.

Through shaktipat, the spiritual energy enters these chakras and is distributed throughout the body via the thousands of nadis in the body. This distribution of energy cleanses the centres and brings health. For example, when the energy enters the manipura chakra, the problem of poor digestion, which is considered the root of all diseases, may be fixed.

Like making money, health too involves putting in proper effort on a continuous basis. Constant practice will bring about a wholesome transformation in the psychic self of the practitioner and also extend it to family members and others around him as well, making him more optimistic and lively as a result of better health physically, emotionally and mentally.

If you ask any doctor, he'll say 'prevention is better than cure'. So, even if we don't have any annoying health problems, why not prevent them now. Manipuraka is for anyone with the will to change their mind-body conditions. An additional plus point is the ability to share the healing energy with family members, friends or anyone who needs it. It can also be offered to those it need as a form of karma yoga.

MANIPURA CHAKRA

- *Situated in the spine behind the navel*
- *The word of 'mani' means gem and 'pura' means city; so manipura is the city of jewel.*
- *Manipura chakra is the fire centre; it is lustrous like jewel and radiant with vitality and energy.*
- *Physically, manipura is associated with the middle part of the trunk, especially the thoraco lumbar area. It governs the function of the gastric gland, the pancreas, the gall bladder which produce and secrete enzymes, acid, and juices necessary for digestion and absorption of nutrients.*
- *The endocrine organs that are related to manipura chakra are the pancreas and the adrenals. The adrenals are primarily energy glands. They release hormones that affect a variety of metabolic and regulatory functions in nearly of all the body's cells.*
- *The adrenal cortex regulates our ability to store and utilize (glucose) energy. The adrenal medulla secretes hormones into the blood in response to stimulation by sympathetic nerves during an emergency situation, which speeds up the physiology process and making the mind sharp and alert, increasing the heart beat, thus causing "adrenaline rush".*
- *Concentration of the chakras while performing yogic practices stimulates the flow of energy through the chakras and helps to activate them. Yoga asana such as Vajrasana, Setussana, Yogamudrasana will influence and stimulate the solar plexus. Pranayama like Bhastrika will help to stimulate the manipura chakra.*
- *Psychologically, this chakra is the centre of dynamism, personal power control centre and self esteem. It is associated with vision, sense of sight and action.*

Yoga Therapist Certification Course

Become a Certified Yoga Therapist and Heal Others Through Yoga Therapy

What is Yoga Therapy

Yoga therapy is the adaptation of yoga practices for people with health problems. Although general yoga classes can improve general health and resolve mild complaints, they may be ineffective - or even harmful - for serious conditions. In such cases yoga therapy can help people by tailoring yoga to their individual needs, taking into account their health problems, constitution and circumstances.

Yoga therapy is beginning to take a place in complementary and alternative medicine, as one of the most effective methods for managing a wide range of conditions. Malaysian Association of Yoga Instructors (MAYI) is working to establish standards for this new profession, and research is being carried out to demonstrate and extend its range of effective applications. We believe yoga therapy will come to play an important role in health care over the coming years.

What will you learn in YTCC?

Therapeutic yoga applications with comprehensive illustrations, how to identify root cause of problem and step by step yoga treatment as well as management for common ailments such as:

- Depression, migraines & other stress related ailments
- Common endocrine related health conditions such as diabetes, thyroid problem etc
- High Blood Pressure, Cardiovascular Disorders & Potential Stroke
- Asthma & other respiratory problems
- Cancer & other Autoimmune System Disease
- Problems in the Neck/ Shoulder/ Spinal/ Lower Back Problems/ Knee
- Arthritis/ Rheumatism (related to joints)
- Reproductive system health
- Elimination system health



Benefits:

- Help others improve on specific health conditions
- Learn anger management through yoga
- Equipped to guide adult & children with medical conditions in a yoga class
- Boosts confidence in teaching yoga
- Gain the confidence of yoga class students
- Specialisation as a yoga instructor/ practitioner
- Opportunity to provide yoga as a therapy (social service or to reach a largely untapped market)
- Develop the therapeutic aspects of teaching yoga
- Can be taken as a stand-alone training by teachers who wish to improve their skills to work therapeutically with students in general classes

Each 2.5hr module will be 90% practical, structured with theory and role play applications:

- Basics on common medical conditions - the yogic physiology and perspective of root causes and risks (eg. High Blood Pressure due to frequent uncontrollable emotional reactions like anger)
- Yogic management of disorders - with dozens of non invasive natural therapeutic secrets
- Using yoga therapy techniques
- Diet, food types and its relation to diseases
- How to modify asanas to students with limitations
- Restorative postures and their use in therapeutic work
- The basic mechanics of breathing and incorrect / correct breathing patterns
- Breath coordinated movements and some simple joint warm-up exercises
- Pranayama techniques that can be used safely with most students
- An intuitive approach to body reading and how to look at a person "as a whole"
- The energetic body and the koshas
- Relaxation techniques, including an introduction to the practice of yoga nidra
- Emotion culturing and anger management
- The use of language and visualisation techniques



1. Module A: The Communication Body

Covers the nervous, endocrine and reproductive systems of the body. The conditions that will be addressed include stress, anxiety, depression, headaches, migraine, insomnia, chronic fatigue/ fibromyalgia, addictions, pain, MS, Parkinson's, diabetes, thyroid malfunctions, prostate problems, menstrual problems, menopausal problems.



2. Module B: The Inner Body

Covers the cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive, urinary and immune systems. The conditions that will be addressed include arteriosclerosis, angina and other heart conditions, bypass surgery, pacemakers, hypertension, hypotension, hay fever, asthma, COPD, cystic fibrosis, autoimmune conditions, cancer, hiatal hernia, IBS, inflammatory bowel disease, colostomy.

3. Module C: The Moving Body

Covers the musculoskeletal system. The conditions that will be addressed include back and neck pain (with a special focus on low back pain), osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, joint injuries, joint replacements, frozen shoulder and osteoporosis.

WELCOME

to SUPER YOGA KIDS corner



Do you know...

YOGA is not only about stretching and breathing. It consists of other aspects too. Yoga has eight limbs (branches). Let us begin with the 1st limb of yoga, Yama. Yama is a combination of 5 aspects of universal ethics. They are

AHIMSA, SATYA, ASTEYA, BRAHMACHARYA, APARIGRAHA

Now let us see the 2nd aspect of Yama, SATYA or Being Truthful.
Why do we need to be truthful?

Here is a story on Being Truthful or (In Sanskrit) "SATYA".

Being truthful all the time

Once there was a shepherd boy who had to look after a flock of sheep. One day, having much time on his hands, he decided to play a trick on the villagers. He shouted, "Help! Wolf! Wolf!" The villagers heard his cries and rushed out of the village to help the shepherd boy. When they reached him, they asked, "Where is the wolf?" The shepherd boy laughed loudly, "Ha, ha, ha! I fooled you all. I was only playing a trick on you."

A few days later, the shepherd boy played the same trick. Again he cried, "Help! Help! Wolf! Wolf!" Again, the villagers rushed up the hill to help him and again they found that the boy had tricked them. They were very angry with him for being so naughty.

Then, one night he dreamt a wolf had gone into the field. The wolf attacked one sheep, then another and another. The shepherd boy ran towards the village shouting, "Help! Help! Wolf! Help, somebody!" The villagers heard his cries but they laughed because they thought it was another trick. He woke up from his sleep and first thing in the morning he went to ask for forgiveness from the villagers for being untruthful to them and tell them that he regretted his actions. He promised them he would never lie again. All the villagers forgave him and were proud of him for admitting his mistakes.

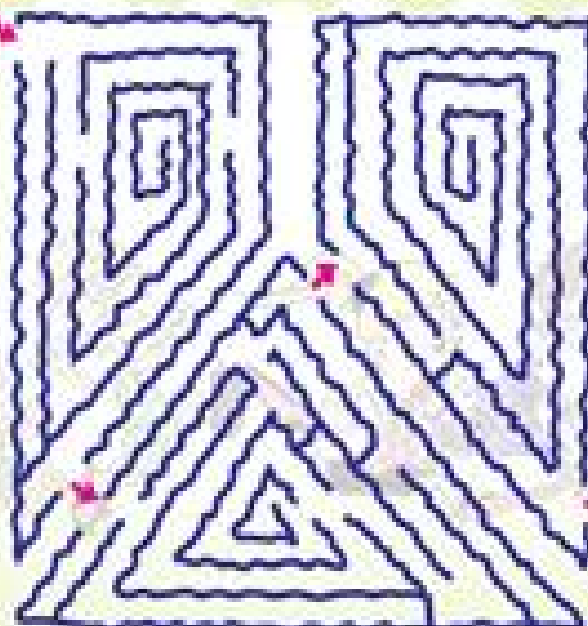
After some time a wolf went into the field and started to attack the sheep. The shepherd boy shouted, "Help! Wolf! Wolf!" The villagers heard his cries and rushed out to help. They managed to chase the wolf and saved all his sheep. The shepherd boy was very happy that his sheep were saved because of his truthfulness.

The moral of the story is:

Thus you see, there is great harm by being untruthful. We have to admit our faults so that we become bold, and have a pure and clear heart. All will admire and love us. Always speak the truth in words and thoughts. Saying what is beneficial with sincerity and honesty in a pleasant way is truthfulness.



KIDS



MAZE



Articles by Practitioners

Personal Yoga Experience

by Tishul Adel Adel

I was surprised at the subtle change in my lifestyle after completion of Level 1 of the IYIC. What prompted me to take up the course was my passion for yoga, which I have since discovered was the passion I had been searching for throughout my life. In my logical mind, I thought to myself, "What better way to earn a living than to be teaching something I am passionate about." I started the IYIC with the intention of finishing up all three levels as soon as possible and to start carving a yoga teaching career for myself.

My friends were curious, asking me if studying yoga for 10 hours each weekend for 3 weekends was too tiring. My reply to them was that it was a very refreshing experience, which didn't feel at all like studying or working. I have at last understood how some people are able to persist seemingly laboriously over work/studies/projects. It's all a labor of love; in fact it's exactly because of that that you never find it hard work.

The change I did not expect to uncover about myself was not to be found in the notes passed around during the course. The change was of a more personal nature, one which I have been told of by friends who have undergone similar courses.

Before I started the course, I was already very actively involved in yogasana. I prefer to refer to that period of my life as that of a yogasana practitioner as I had not had a personal experience with yoga as a whole but only the asana part of the practice. Whilst I was heavily involved in yogasana, I was also enjoying a very active social life which included lots of nightlife, drinking and smoking. To me, my yogasana practice was more about damage control and to counterbalance the other part of my unhealthy

lifestyle. Prior to undergoing the course, I had on more than a few occasions realized that there needed to be a lifestyle overhaul in my life. As there was no catalyst for such a change, I continued to be buffeted along by the waves of my active social life and my constant supply of social friends.

Even during the course of Level 1, I was still leading an active social life during the week as my course was conducted on weekends. However, I could feel an inner stirring to change myself in the duration of the course. As I have formed social habits like drinking and smoking when I'm out with my friends, I discovered that I was hanging onto those habits because they had become part of my identity. Having to give them up would mean I would have lost a part of something which made me who I am, to my friends.

During the course, I was wrestling between the logical side of me which said that giving up bad habits is a good thing and the illogical part of me which fought against the idea. I continued with the rest of the course thinking that I would just go with the flow and see what the result would be at the end of my journey.

After finishing Level 1, I decided to continue with Level 2. In this level, I was taught about the sattvic diet and because I had the same course instructor, who was also my instructor for Level 1, I felt more at ease about being open about my personal life. I was so inspired that after the 3 intensive days with the trainer, I made up my mind to try and be a weekend warrior vegetarian, i.e. that I would try to maintain a vegetarian (though not necessarily a sattvic vegetarian) diet during the weekdays and during the weekends I would eat everything.

From Page 18

In conjunction with starting my new weekend warrior lifestyle, I also made up my mind that I would stop smoking from that Monday onwards, which I have maintained since then. I have also not been tempted or even felt like going out clubbing with my friends, in fact I have turned them down. I still enjoy a few drinks at the end of my day, a luxury which I allow myself in the comfort of my own home. I no longer yearn to be in noisy, smoky places where I have to yell at the top of my voice to be heard.

Since I started the IYIC to date, I have woken up at 6.30am and more recently at 6am for my cleansing and personal practice. Although such self-discipline is not a course requirement, I find that I love having that quiet time before I start my day and before everyone is up, where I can quietly do my personal yoga practice. I have found that the precious time before the break of dawn has very much enriched my day in more ways than I can describe. I silently resolve each night before I go to sleep to continue allowing myself to enjoy perfect physical, emotional and mental health through my personal practice of yoga.

Namaste.

Articles by Practitioners

Yoga Therapy for Scoliosis

Valerie (not her real name due to privacy), was diagnosed with a spinal condition known as scoliosis or "S" spine when she was a teenager. To prevent this condition from advancing to further complications at this growth spurt age, she was fortunate that her mother had enrolled her for therapy sessions in her home country which involved specific positions and movements to counteract the abnormal curvature growth of her spine. She recalled attending the sessions at least 3 times a week and looking back now, she can really appreciate the benefits and see clearly how it has helped her. What she realised is also that many of the positions used in the sessions were actually yoga postures.

Scoliosis' effect on posture can cause muscular tensions and compressions in the lungs, affecting the breathing process, making a person feel low in energy. The regular therapy sessions had prevented the "S" curve from becoming more severe and Valerie always recalled how good she felt after each session... more energised, happy and confident. Now as a working adult she continues to take weekly personal yoga sessions to maintain the positive effects. She feels she is able to sleep better and reduce work stress levels when she practises yoga regularly.

"I highly recommend that all mothers with children of this condition to seek therapy as soon as possible, especially before the age of 18. Chances of a total cure for scoliosis are slim but early prevention from the spinal curvature worsening is very important," she advised.

You may contact the author of this article for further sharing of her experience and advice through The Yoga Franchise: 03-22605322 or email to: theyogafranchise@yahoo.com

Teenage Scoliosis



1st Treatment
11/01/2009



Latest Treatment
21/09/2009

A true case study of a teenager from Perlis diagnosed with scoliosis at the age of 12 years. Her doctor had proposed an operation to correct the condition without guarantee and the cost of the operation was estimated at RM20,000. As her family could not afford this, they sought alternative solution and was eventually recommended by a friend to try yoga therapy treatment. This young girl then underwent personal yoga therapy sessions conducted by MA'YI Yoga Archarya Mona Cheong.

Gender: Female

Age: 14 years (This is within the typical age range of detection of scoliosis- abnormal "S" or "C" shape spine growth, which is found more frequently in girls)

The treatments included specific yoga asana (postures), yogic breathing, shatkarma (internal cleansing). To enhance the progress of her treatment she was encouraged to add recommended yogic foods to her normal diet. Also complemented by Universal Yoga Energy Healing (Manipuraka) and massages.

Commitment



or excuses?

by Jaspwan Singh

According to Steven Covey in his work *First Things First*, he said that in time management, we have to constantly juggle between things that are Important and Urgent. Juggling both of these together or on its own sometimes creates an imbalance in our lives. Normally what happens is that we tend to compromise what's important in order to handle what's urgent.

Let's just put this to the test. You are in a dilemma of having to choose between your yoga session or a meeting with someone important. Which will you choose? How will you make your decision? Will your decision be a good one? Or will you regret the outcome?

Well, some of the reasoning could be that the meeting is important therefore you cannot miss it. You don't get to meet the people you want to meet very often and it could probably be that you might miss something very important to talk about. However on the other hand, you also need to achieve your health goals. You probably want to lose weight or improve your flexibility. Or even look young and stay fit. So, what do you do? Do you go for the meeting or for your yoga session?

Well, honestly I don't have the answer. I don't know what the outcome will be but what I know is, if you are clear with your goals and objective then you will have an answer.

According to Mahatma Gandhi "One cannot do right in one area of life while is occupied in doing wrong in another area of life, because life is one indivisible whole".

A simple example to explain this would be that you can't be spending all your time earning money while neglecting your health. One fine day, your health is going to turn around and bite you where you least expected it! Meaning to say, that we have to balance the time spent in all areas of life because life is so much more than just earning money.

Sometimes we could spend time in something urgent, for example attending to someone sick. Sometimes we could spend time in development work, say... building our career. I've come to understand that true fulfillment in life is when we strike a balance between what's important and what's urgent. That's right, a balance between something that is important with something that is urgent. Well, the whole idea here is about allocating time! Really... it's that simple.

So, if your yoga practice requires your true time and effort, then I would suggest you focus on it seriously. Let me tell you about a friend of mine, Tina. I remember her as someone who never skips her personal yoga classes. She is very dedicated to it. I was surprise to know that she spends about 14 - 15 hours a week practising yoga on her own. The maximum time I've spent has been about only 7 hours a week. From my little experience, those 7 hours alone felt like I've put in a lot of time and effort already. However after meeting Tina, I guess my efforts could be better.

I realised that she has found her true passion in life. To her, yoga is life. She is totally one with herself when practising yoga asanas and it gets her in zest mode. She is fully immersed like being completely One! Therefore, nothing else matters to her. So, if you want to meet her, the meeting time must be when she has the time, otherwise you can be sure it will be rescheduled. Well, that's Tina.

Now, let me tell you about Sheila an old friend of mine, who is the opposite of Tina. When we met at a gathering, she told me that she had to skip her yoga class in order to make it. She has been attending yoga for about a year now and she felt she had been making good progress. She enthusiastically explained to me how she had reduced her waistline by 3 inches since attending classes. To experience success, at times she would reward herself. It could be an occasional ice cream or even a bar of chocolate. Basically, it's to physically manifest a deep desire to convince her that she is on the right track. And one of those manifestations is the gathering that both of us attended. This self reward keeps her motivated.

I asked her how often she skips classes. She told me it's just occasionally. Then slowly, she confessed to me that she thinks her progress could be better. And when I asked her what she could do differently to witness something more significant, it struck her that by being consistent and more disciplined with her yoga classes, she would really see meaningful results.

Later, I told her about Tina (Sheila knows Tina) who is seeing results from spending time consistently on yoga. By the way, I told her I didn't expect her to be like Tina but if she is not happy with her results, she has to reconsider her efforts. You see, Tina knows that in order to see results she has to put in time and effort. She has discovered that yoga is something important to her and therefore the urgent matters can wait.

Achieving good health in life is real development work. It is something that's truly important. And something truly important requires our consistent time and effort. Along the way, there is bound to be urgent matters that require our attention too. Here, allocating the necessary time, getting to the details of how long and with whom it is required, then the development work will carry on while the urgent matters can be resolved.

So, stay committed and GET MOVING!

The writer is a Wellness Consultant with Learning Edge Consultants. Learning Edge Consultants provides results driven corporate wellness solutions to organizations in order to boost productivity and increase health care status. YM

Poem

Forgiveness

*I sit still
For once, waited, long enough
for her to find me*

*she said she has been waiting
for eternity
she has been longing to greet me
she said she has been lonely
and that, has been her destiny*

*She said not to be afraid
to sit a while with her
and to breathe her in...
She said she wants to be free
from the pain of wiping my tears
when I pretend to be happy
and from carrying my weary soul
when I run too hard from fear*

*Then she told me her name
that it is FORGIVENESS -
the grace of love
of true endurance of the broken-hearted
and she is the darkness
that gives birth to the light of life*

*and she whispers softly
to never be afraid
to come visit
to take her hands
to sit with her
just for a little while.*



Yogic Scripture

Hatha Yoga Pradipika
Chapter 1, Verse 58

Mithara is defined as agreeable and sweet food, leaving one fourth of the stomach free, and eaten as an offering

'Sweet food' means fresh, pleasant tasting food, not particularly that which has extra sugar. Food which is disagreeable means that it is either bad tasting, poisonous to the system or not agreeable to one's metabolism. The stomach should never be overloaded; it should be half filled with food. One quarter with water and one quarter with air. Eating 'as offering' means that when taking food the yogi should not feel that he is eating himself. He should cultivate the attitude that he is nourishing the body for its maintenance so his consciousness can continue its process of unfoldment and evolution.

Food is not taken for sense gratification but to sustain the vehicle of the indweller. Therefore, eating should be considered as part of one's sadhana. Life itself is a sadhana.

Many people indulge in food as a means of escape for the mind. When they are tense, frustrated or insecure they eat to relieve the problem. A yogi should always regard food as a medicine which will purify and fuel the body and mind for the maintenance of life and progress in sadhana. Thus at all times he will eat cautiously, with awareness and with a higher purpose than sensual pleasure.

Mithara means 'sattvic food', light food which is easy to digest. As Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh points out, "Heavy food leads to a tamasic state and induces sleep only. There is general misapprehension that a large quantity of food is necessary for health and strength. Much depends upon the power of assimilation and absorption. Generally, in the vast majority of cases, most of the food passes away undigested along with faeces. Almost all diseases are due to irregularity of meals, overeating and unwholesome food." His maxim is that through overeating you become a rogi, through sattvic diet a yogi. YM



When wandering by the paradise beaches of Perhentian Island at night, you may be lucky enough to encounter a female Green Turtle nesting under some trees. Their grace and tranquility in the water cannot however be mirrored on land as the mother struggles up the beach and can be seen shedding a tear while she lays her eggs. She is crying not because she doesn't want to say goodbye to her kids but to keep her eyes moist while on land. In fact she will not come back to check on these eggs ever again, but continue to lay more batches of 100+ eggs throughout the nesting season. Her efforts may seem a little unmotherly but it is what is needed to ensure some of her little ones make it to adulthood. Scientists have recently estimated that only 1 hatching in 10,000 will make it to adulthood, so you can see their chances of survival are rather slim. So the mother's tireless laying of batches of 100+ eggs every two weeks is her own way of being a good mother and ensuring she can become a grandmother in the future.

This has been going on in the tropics for the past 200 million years even alongside their larger land relatives, the dinosaurs. The turtles must have been doing something right for them to be able to outlive the dinosaurs. But you may have heard recently that sea turtle numbers have rapidly declined and none more so than in Malaysia.

We in Malaysia are so privileged to be able see these incredible creatures on our beaches and around the reefs and sea grass beds off our coastline that we take them for granted. You may of heard of the story of the huge leatherback turtles in Rantau Abang, but very few know that pre-1960's Rantau Abang had the highest density of leatherback turtle nests (10,000 nests per year) in the world. Something to be very proud of, don't you think? But if you go to Rantau Abang now you will be extremely lucky to see any leatherback turtles nesting in a year, let alone in the duration of your holiday. In 2008, only 9 nests from 2 individual female turtles were laid. Even more worrying is that from these 9 nests no eggs hatched as the eggs were all infertile.

I hear you say 'But turtles must be fine as I see green and hawksbill turtles quite often when I go to Perhentian or Redang Islands, so they must be safe'. However these two species are both highly endangered with the hawksbill being critically endangered in Malaysia. And did you know Malaysia used to have Olive Ridley turtles nesting here? Olive Ridley turtles used to be the most abundant turtles in the world with over 10million in the Pacific Ocean alone, but recent estimates of population are now down to tens of thousands. The decline has happened to two species; it is just a matter of time before the Green and Hawksbill turtles follow.

So what is going wrong? Why were these creatures able to outlive the dinosaurs but are now on the brink of extinction?

There are four main reasons for these great creatures to be at death's door: turtle egg consumption, land development (mainland and islands), fishing nets and tourists.

Turtle eggs are eaten throughout Malaysia. How can a species survive when a large proportion of its eggs are eaten by humans? When you consider that only 1 in 10,000 eggs make it to be an adult turtle, you see why every egg is important for the survival of the species. It is just unfortunate that sharks, barracuda and sea birds also think they are tasty!

Female turtles are very shy animals when they are on land, and don't like going to areas with bright lights or loud noises when they nest. Therefore developments on their nesting beaches will prevent the turtles from nesting. But there are plenty of dark quiet beaches still around, so why don't they go and nest on these beaches? Well, turtles go back to the beach they were laid on. This means when they climb up through the sand as a hatchling and burst upon a new alien world, they remember where they are and if they make it to the grand age of 25 (age of sexual maturity for green turtles) they make their way back to the same beach to lay their eggs! Amazing aren't they?



FLORISSOLA

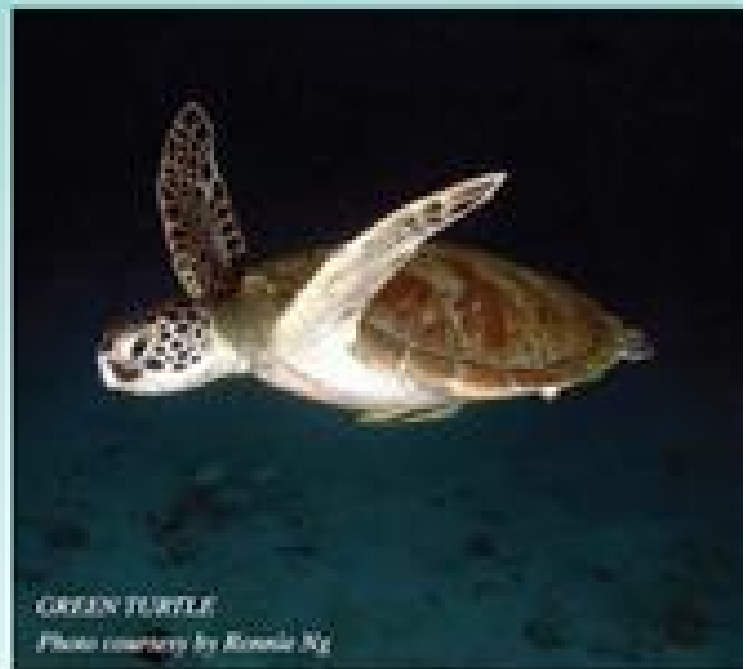
Photo courtesy of Emma Ng



Do you want to know how they do it? Well they may seem old and wrinkly but they actually have something modern – an inbuilt GPS system! So when they develop inside their egg as an embryo they set that location as point 0.0 in their GPS. They then use the GPS to find their birth place.

So if a beach is a turtle nesting beach then it has to remain quiet and dark, otherwise the turtles will not lay their eggs on the beach but in the sea instead. If they do decide to risk going onto a beach where tourists happen to be, they then need to watch out for tourists taking photos and touching them as they lay eggs. Giving birth or laying eggs is not an easy task but 100+ in 10 minutes is impressive by any standards. People watching and flashing lights and cameras in her face is only going to make matters worse for the poor turtle mum. If you are lucky enough to see a turtle on a beach, respect her as a mother giving birth and stand back and watch her from afar. Ensure you are behind her line of sight and you can sit about 10m from her without any negative effects. Then you will be rewarded with a 3 hour struggle for existence that not many can say they have seen!

Pulau Perhentian Marine Park is one of the best places to see nesting turtles in West Malaysia, with approximately 500 nests per year. The Department of Fisheries is running a turtle hatchery on Besar Island at Tiga Ruang and collects all eggs from around the islands before the poachers take them to be eaten or sold. The Bubbles Dive Resort conducts turtle-watching opportunities for their guests. Bubbles



GREEN TURTLE

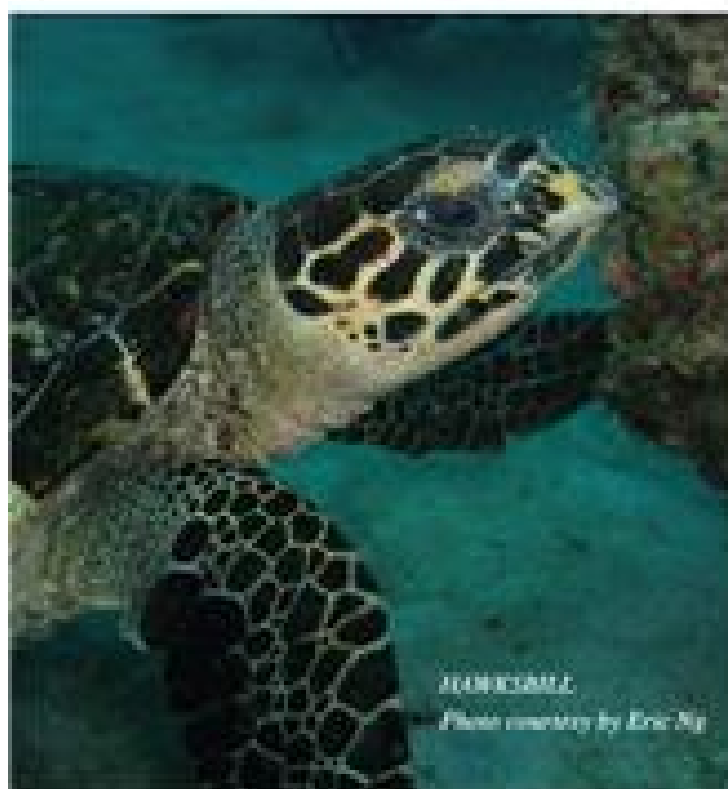
Photo courtesy by Eneida Ng

ensures the nesting turtles are not disturbed by using an infra-red camera which allows tourists a good view of the turtles from 10m away, even in complete darkness. Additionally the resort staff stay up all through the night to deter poachers from taking the eggs. This has stopped all poaching from the beach. Turtle education doesn't stop with turtle-watching as tourists are given a nightly turtle talk and snorkelers are told why they shouldn't touch turtles whilst snorkeling – because it causes them stress and makes them more prone to disease. A type of herpes spread by touch is killing a high number of green turtles in the Pacific and Indian ocean, so lets keep it away from our turtles.

Sea turtles can survive in Malaysia IF we all do our bit and do it now! Here is a list of what we all can do:

1. Not eat turtle eggs
2. Never touch a sea turtle in the water or on the land
3. When watching a turtle nest, ensure you are silent, no closer than 10m, behind her line of sight and not using a bright light or camera
4. Pick up your rubbish – 80% of sea turtles have cigarette butts or plastic inside of them!!
5. Donate to a turtle charity or join a turtle conservation volunteer programme.

Lets save our turtles and be proud of them once again, and ultimately make the State of Terengganu change their emblem back to a sea turtle like it once was! YM



JAWA TURTLE

Photo courtesy by Eric Ng

Food For Thought

No Meat ≠ Unhealthy

By Sun Lim

When we talk about Sattvic foods, we know that it is a category of high-energy foods which can purify and calm the mind, and improve the energy of our body. The components of this kind of diet mainly come from the plant kingdom and include such foods as vegetables, nuts, beans, legumes etc. but excluding garlic, onion and mushrooms. When we practice this high-energy eating method, we open the door to vibrant health and happiness. Meat, processed and/or refined foods are not to be found in Sattvic diets. This does seem to go against the common view.

In this century, many people still think that vegetarians are a group of people who have pale faces and lips, feeble voices and low spirits. This is in fact a mistaken perception. Many vegetarians may become unhealthy if they do not have a balanced diet and/or eat too much artificial meat. But if they consume at least five different-coloured vegetables per meal, at least two servings of fruit per day plus a variety of whole grains, nuts, seeds and beans, vegans can live 15 years longer than meat-eaters, according to research done by Loma Linda University, Los Angeles. These findings are backed up by the China Health Project, the largest population study on diet and health to date.

Some argue that humans are born to be omnivorous, therefore we must eat meat. Actually there is greater evidence that humans are not intended to be meat-eaters. Our teeth are mainly designed for chewing vegetables and 5 whole grains. Humans do not have sharp front teeth for tearing meat as carnivores do. Human stomachs produce acid less than one-twentieth the strength of that found in carnivores. In addition, as human intestinal tracts are as long as twelve times the body length, meat is retained in the body for a long time and this can produce a lot of toxins. In contrast, the carnivore's intestinal tract is only three times the length of their bodies.

Protein is one of the most important nutrients in the body for growth and repair, and many people think that meats are the best source of protein for the human body. This is not true; we can get protein from plant sources. For example, a piece of tofu combined with a bowl of brown rice provides the body with a complete protein. This kind of protein is also easier to digest than animal protein.

Some people even think that they may not gain adequate energy to perform daily activities if they do not consume meat. In fact, this is not true. Carbohydrate is the best source of energy. Meat is not a good energy source because it needs several enzymatic processes to metabolise. During this process, it will produce a lot of waste products such as urea, nitrogen and uric acid. Waste products from the metabolism of carbohydrates break down easily with water and are eliminated through perspiration. But waste from protein metabolism is very difficult to eliminate. Protein waste can only be eliminated through the kidneys. As an example, moderate meat-eaters need three times more labour from their kidneys than do vegetarians. When the kidney is overloaded, waste products will be stored in the body, and this can cause several kinds of disease such as kidney failure.

No meat does not equal unhealthy. On the contrary, eliminating meat products step by step from your daily diet will bring you optimum health. YM



Spread The...

By Fabulous Emissary



Laughter

Last year, when completing an assignment for a psychology subject, I remembered reading about employees in one of the states in India practising an exercise regime called laughing yoga. Apparently, that exercise was their daily morning routine before beginning work, with the belief that a jolly start to the day would trigger a fresher and brighter mind and body which are vital in working effectively.

From my further readings, research has also shown prominent health benefits of laughter such as strengthening the immune system, working like a natural and free Vitamin C, reducing food cravings which meant fewer visits to slimming workshops, lowering stress levels and helping in the healing process.

Recently, I actually got the golden opportunity to experience 'learning to laugh heartily' at my weekly yoga class. It was not easy to laugh my heart out. Just as we adults forget how to play once we grow up and

embark on the job journey, we forget how to let go of our inner selves and just be silly once in a while.

I make it a point to watch comedy series like 'Friends', 'Two and A Half Men' and 'Mr. Bean' at least once a week, especially when I am left on my own. There is no need for another person to sit next to you to start laughing. It would be nice to have a friend to be there for you whenever you are feeling down. However, don't feel sorry for yourself if you are alone. Grab a DVD, video or go to the cinema and watch something that will make your hands flail madly in the air and your shoulders shudder with glee.

Returning to my weekly yoga practice at Brickfields, all the yogis in the classroom were required to laugh our hearts out before Yoga Nidra/deep meditation, with the purpose of throwing one's worries, tensions and heartaches away. I found it difficult in the beginning to giggle without a purpose. How to induce humour without any images flashing in front my eyes?

So, I started to fake it. I forced my mouth to gape widely and my jaw opened and closed a few times until the instructor stopped laughing. When I had to do it again, I tried hard to ape her action of a witch doctor in trance, seated cross-legged on the floor, bending forward from the waist and as if drawing a semicircle with my head from right to left and left to right, again and again. Honestly, if I was watching the students from the front of the class, I would be pretty sure this group of people was preparing to be the next batch of patients to enter a psychiatric ward.

Laughing is certainly contagious. As the number of laughing exercises increased, I could hear our laughter getting louder and louder, with each trying to outdo the other just like when practising asanas. Faking laughter in the beginning certainly eventually brought out the genuine joy in me. I breathed deeply, gathering the air from my stomach and throat and heaved up a loud cackle. Instantly I felt a lightness and sensation of relief coming out from within my heart, or even my soul, to the outside world. My cheek and facial muscles which were tensed immediately felt loosened and relaxed. In fact, I started to make silly faces to my neighbour, and rejoiced in the lightness of the atmosphere in the classroom. I was cleansed internally, detoxified psychologically and released from an invisible and indescribable prison. For a minute, I was free!

And now that I am on cloud nine just reminiscing about the laughing experience, I would love to share with you one of my favourite comic snippets which also features the king of all asanas, and I hope to spread my chortle to you. HAHAAHAHAHAHA!

YM

“EVEN IF THERE IS
NOTHING TO LAUGH ABOUT,
LAUGH ON CREDIT.
– AUTHOR UNKNOWN”

“A MAN ISN'T POOR
IF HE CAN STILL LAUGH.
– RAYMOND HITCHCOCK”

“SEVEN DAYS
WITHOUT LAUGHTER
MAKES ONE WEAK.
– MORT WALKER”

“LAUGHTER IS A
TRANQUILIZER WITH
NO SIDE EFFECTS.
– ARNOLD GLASOW”



A Conversation With Fruit

by Pn Farhana Asmatary

In a family, parents are encouraged to have an informal talk with their children for at least half an hour a day. Having a meal at the table at least once a day is mandatory in some households to foster better kinship among family members. Even in the working environment, informal and formal conversations are supposed to be held every now and then between employers and employees to cultivate a healthier working spirit in offices or factories.

In accordance with the 'chatty' theme here, another kind of conversation between the fleshy, edible part of some plants and the miniature version of an adult must begin to take place in the community. I am talking about children being able to focus and meditate on the benefits of eating fruits every day for a healthier lifestyle.

The benefits of consuming fruits from any part of the world are well known even amongst kindergarteners. However, putting this knowledge into practice could be a tear-inducing, hair-pulling job for children and parents as well as other grown-ups, what more transforming it into a permanent and independent habit.

In a yoga class, students are encouraged to visualize before warm ups, to see ourselves bathed in glorious sunshine before performing the Sun Salutation, concentrate wholeheartedly during all the other lying, sitting and standing postures, slip into deep sleep during Yoga Nidra/deep meditation and visualize our healthy mind, body and soul facing challenges outside the classroom.

One way of enchanting, or rather enticing children to cultivate the habit of eating fruits is by bringing the fruit into the classroom (be it a kindergarten, school, yoga centre or any other setting) and applying the visualization method here. This is so that children whose concentration techniques are still under basic construction can at least focus on an object and prevent their mind from wandering.

Put a vertically-cut papaya half on a platter in the middle of the circle of children. Invite each child to describe the object. As usual the adult should start the activity, so that the children know what to do. The description can be a word, a phrase, a sentence or a chain of words which may lead to a never-ending discussion. Let me give you my version:

"The black shiny tiny round balls stick together like siblings, never separating from each other, clinging and hanging on so that they don't roll out from the orange bowl. The bright orange flesh looks succulent and I think it will taste as sweet as the candy my mum gave me yesterday."

When all the children have contributed the discussion, invite them to pose like the papaya they see in the classroom, in a group or on their own. This visualization exercise should be demonstrated at the end of the yoga exercise session. After the fruit posing exercise, share the fruit with the children in a circle and talk about the benefits of papaya to the human body.

The 'Conversation with a Papaya' is just one of the many activities to remind children, even ourselves, how fruits complement our daily diet which is usually full of meaty, oily and other unhealthy chemical substances. Knowing Malaysia as a country having an abundant array of fruits, I couldn't just stop at discussing papaya. Hence, I have decided to include my description of a well-cut mango, this time in the form of a poem. YM

*"Yellow boxes in tidy lines,
Like tender thorns on porcupines,
Peel one cube and pop it in to your mouth,
Oh delicious I cried aloud!"*

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