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Oct-Dec 2017 ISSUE

**Beat Stress Before
You Get Beaten**

Hello Self!

**Individuality in the
Path of Yoga**



**Message from
Master Mani:
*The Solo Path
of Yoga***



Message from Master Mani

The Solo Path of Yoga

Yoga is and always will be individualistic.

Any effort to contain it like a dogma or fanaticism will fade away as eventually some practitioners will have that creative awakening within and find the truth.

Their discovery will inspire others naturally and the true essence of yoga will awaken again. This happens in every era — in different environments, settings and locations. Like a cycle it propels when the time comes.

When the true teachings are forgotten and the practitioners become ignorant, thinking it's the body that needs to be glorified, led by the motivation for superficial gains, then the essence will make its presence felt somewhere through some genuine, fearless seekers, and the uniqueness of yoga can be experienced again.

One finds oneself, and this can only be a solo, unique inner journey, or experience. **YM**



*Master
Manisekaran*



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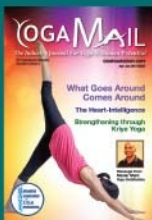
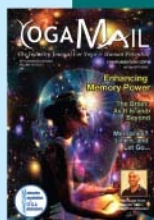
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Beat Stress Before You Get Beaten

by Dr Chandra Nanthakumar

The advancement of technology has burgeoned over the past decade so much so that both adults and children are constantly being exposed to the state-of-the-art machinery. Even though media technologies such as the computers and cell phones are knowledge resources for all, their intense use has become worrying as there appears to be a regression in physical activities amongst the users, and this lack of mobility has been associated with various kinds of health issues [1].

On the contrary, expectations set by the learning institutions are higher. Today, learning and teaching do not only happen during school hours but continue after school hours. Teachers no longer relish lengthy school holiday breaks while students, on the other hand, are constantly surfing the web to look for current information for their assignments, reports... and the list goes on.

In the homefront, parents unwittingly exert pressure on their children to excel in their studies. However, when children do not perform well, to some extent their level of confidence is affected, and this in turn, can bring about unnecessary worry and distress in them.

In the mean time, parents and teachers may choose to ignore tell-tale signs of mental stress in the children and continue to add pressure in the hope of making them competitive. Sleep is often compromised when children are unable to meet deadlines set by the authorities in schools or other learning institutions. Research has shown that when teens are deprived of sleep, they get anxious or stressed.[1]

According to the Ministry of Health in Malaysia, mental health problems are on the rise amongst Malaysian students. It used to be one in 10 individuals in 2011, but it has increased to one in five in 2016 [2]. It has been revealed that anxiety and depression are the main causes of mental health problems amongst students.

Amongst the many types of mental health issues, anxiety disorder appears to be a common mental health condition. One of the main reasons why so many are inflicted with these ailments is because the body has succumbed to it.

It is imperative that not only teenagers but also adults be made aware of ways of beating stress and overcoming anxiety, and not allow these disorders to rule and wreck their lives. Research has revealed that mind-body cognitive therapy, mindful awareness and mind-body movements like yoga are effective in reducing cortisol concentrations, hence enhancing one's mood and well-being [3, 4, 5, 6].



Yoga, which is an ancient practice, is one of the most popular mind-body disciplines. Pragmatic in its approach, yoga allows individuals to concentrate on the rungs that are beneficial to them and pay less attention to the others. These rungs, according to Patanjali's classification, are yama (universal ethics), niyama (individual ethics), asana (postures), pranayama (expansion of life force), pratyahara (withdrawal of senses), dharana (concentration), dhyana (meditation) and Samadhi (state of bliss).

Yoga has been used as a complementary therapy for various physiological diseases and psychological disorders. Research does seem

to indicate that it brings about multiple benefits in terms of improving flexibility and losing weight, but more importantly, enhancing one's emotional and psychosocial health. Studies have revealed that stress reactivity is related to blood pressure readings, levels of adiposity and negative behaviours [7, 8, 9]. Children and adults not only face intellectual challenges at schools and workplace, respectively, but also interpersonal demands which may entail highly-developed self-regulation skills such as mindfulness, resilience and anger control. While there may be other solutions, the practice of yoga undeniably affords the opportunity to develop these skills.

Evidence from research maintains that a variety of yoga techniques can result in positive effects in an individual's physical and also mental health through the down-regulation of the hypo-thalamo pituitary adrenal axis and sympathetic nervous system [10, 11]. Woodyard [12] reported that yogic practices encompassing asanas, pranayama and mindfulness/meditation sessions bring about a calming effect to the mind, thus diminishing stress and anxiety levels. The restorative postures, shavasana (corpse pose), and pranayama lull one into a state of pratyahara, which enables downtime for the nervous system. Hence, it is clear that the practice of yoga brings about mind-body awareness, self-regulation and physical fitness, which in turn leads to improved behaviour, and mental, physical and emotional health.

As I see it, practising yoga is a cost-effective way in dealing with stress and its related disorders.

All of us would be able to keep stress out of the way and doctors at bay if we include yoga in our daily schedule.

Quote of the day: Beat stress before it beats you! **YM**

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ello Self!

by Vijaya



Does God walk into one's life and make His presence known? Would He start revealing in the most subtle way possible that even one single thought is actually too loud? Does he show that he's so intertwined with the entire being that He is in fact not separate from one?

Does it happen?

Yogis have said it does, hence "Yoga" — A state of being at one with the Higher Self." What then is the "Self"?

.....
Last year, I had the privilege of covering the Isvara Pranidhana (surrender to God) topic with the Malaysian Yoga Society's National Yoga Camp 2016 students. As we went deeper into the subject, it naturally got side-tracked into the topic of ghosts.

"Teacher, if God exists, then surely ghosts do too," said one teenager.

My predicament was to explain non-duality and delusion to him. When a ghost is sighted, it is real, but only to the person who's seeing it. It's not necessarily true to others. He who doesn't believe in ghosts will not experience it in his entire lifetime, for sure.

There was a heated debate among the participants. Some students swore on the existence of ghosts while others dismissed it completely. In the end, one smart boy summed it up by giving a detailed account of how the mind creates ghosts — with appropriate references and examples. Not all agreed with him, but it didn't matter. It was a strong conclusion to our ghost venture.

Hello Ghost!

Remember the days when ghosts used to haunt our school toilets, especially the ones right at the end? Usually, we deny the existence of ghosts because we don't want to face them. I

did too, but the idea was already deep-rooted within.

There came a time when I had to face them. The Kriya Yoga practices enhanced them to a point where they could not be denied anymore.

My contact with ghosts became very real, like every other person's ever is. I saw them, heard them and experienced them first hand. For a few months after starting on the Kriya practices, the ghosts went wild, creating havoc in my life.

I was very afraid to go to sleep because every time I did, it felt like someone was there, touching me. I'd wake up in the middle of the night, completely shaken. Sometimes I saw images, and I always heard the dragging sounds of feet outside the house.

I'm naturally a very strong person, so my reactions didn't go out of bounds; they were always controlled; but nonetheless, my world of peace turned upside down.

Then, one day, I confronted Master Manisakaran about this, and his simple, unassuming statement was: "Cleansing is happening".

Sometime later, one beautiful day, it all dawned on me: the entire experience of how the mind freezes into reality whatever it believes in. It never was an external experience. It was and always is an experience from within, which is merely projected outside... into what we call life/reality. And I don't just mean ghosts, but

everything. Period. The within is projected out to the space without and we practically face our very own Self out there.

There's no ghost, and if you understand what I mean, there's nothing outside there but what the mind projects. And the consciousness experiences it as reality.

Everything there is, is a reflection by the Self, but it's not the Self.

The next question is then: what is the Self? That is something for every person to ask and discover... within. That is the reason why there's life, birth and death, etc... to allow a person to discover his true Self.

The entire process of discovery starts with understanding and complete absorption of the Yama (Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya, Aparigraha) and Niyama (Saucha, Santosha, Tapas, Swadhyaya, Isvara Pranidhana) values in one's life. From there, the journey begins naturally.

The Ultimate Knowledge

About 2 years ago, Master asked me if the world is ready for this knowledge. I said, "No, sir".

But now, I feel things are changing. People from different parts of the world... everywhere... are slowly getting ready for this knowledge.

What knowledge? The knowledge of "the supreme state of the Self". They understand to a certain degree and express it in many ways.

It's an awakening to the true nature of the Self. There's a connection between all those who are a part of this awakening. We are part of the same process of enhancement in consciousness.

"Once you have an insight into it, instead of running away to the jungle or some remote ashram run by some guru," said Master, "live

here amongst the people of the world, meet the challenges, give yourself the opportunity to grow to the highest possibility there is — moksha, or liberation" — and beyond.

This journey is not easy, but this is where we learn everything about ourselves and meet face to face with the truth of who we really are within. There's the lure of delusion everywhere, especially if the people around us are living in the midst of it. They are super deluded and their "super mind" makes everything on earth possible — whether right or wrong. So, as genuine practitioners, what do we do?

There's a way to approach this situation and that was our previous lesson with Master. He said: "Be neutral, steady, centred, strong and unaffected... so that you can help."

The Possibilities

I have been learning Kriya Yoga with Master Manisekaran for many years now. With every class I've watched myself transform. Everything about my life has changed and I can see how fast I'm growing within and without. I noticed this in the other students as well. Life has become crystal clear due to the many lessons, queries, answers and clarifications we always get from Master.

Many of us here have the mind-blowing experience of hitting unbelievable heights in our lives — personally, professionally and spiritually. We have literally discovered wonders within ourselves which might not have been possible without the constant guidance from our Guru. Now, the inadequacies of earlier years are changing to efficient works, we are finding our voices and we feel very strong, brave and in total control of ourselves and our lives.

Kriya Yoga gives the awareness and super clarity to walk on a path that is laden with inexhaustible possibilities and opportunities. This is due to the contact with the creative energy within.

What people may deem as supernatural or extraordinary has become a part of natural living and experience. We are growing, blooming and blossoming while experiencing tremendous transformations every step of the way — whether in waking or sleeping hours.

Kriya Yoga deepens the perception and leads one deeper within to touch base with one's essential nature. The intuition is so strong that one can practically tell what is right, what is wrong, what is going to happen and what is not.

What one calls future can be sensed, felt and known. Things can be changed for the better, conditions can be broken and situations can be reversed. The outcome of an action can be managed. All these, concerning one's own self/life, that is.

Every single person on earth is born to discover himself. Hence, the journey of Kriya Yoga is a journey of Self-Realisation.

Isvara Pranidhana

Once, long ago, I was sitting in front of Master. There were tears flowing from my eyes as I was looking deep into his own ocean-like eyes... asking for truth. But, his answer was unassumingly simple: "Surrender, Vijaya".

The process is long (not in terms of time, but in terms of inner growth) before it reaches here, but only because of Isvara Pranidhana. Not unless and not until.

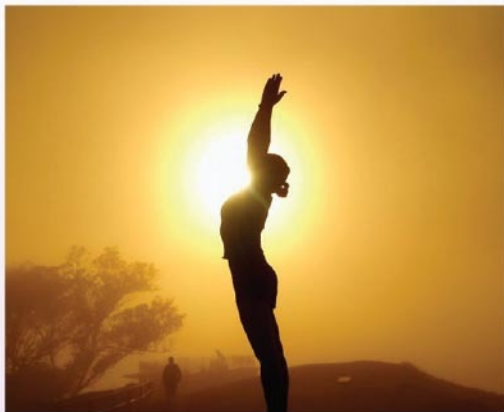
How to Know the Self?

How is one ever going to realise the Self unless the search is turned inwards? How can it be possible if the senses are always engaged on all the things on the outside? This will only further delude people into not realising what is truth and what is not, and what is right knowledge and what is false. All information in the media and social networks like Whatsapp and Facebook and the search engines like Google, etc – the entire influx of it all – is not going to give it – the realisation of the Self, I mean. Not in this lifetime, not in any lifetime.



Perhaps it's wiser to turn off the flood of daily messages/information/inspirations/motivations, etc. and start the search where it should — within!

The only time it happens from outside to inside is when it's coming from an enlightened being, a Self-Realised person, I mean. Only a spark can ignite a fire and Guru is the spark. And yes, even via all these mediums, but it has to come from the Guru.



For those who are serious about Self-Realisation and the essence of the Supreme Self, for what it really is, here's your

answer: the 8 limbs of Yoga as propagated by sage Patanjali — Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

Swadyaya (self-study) is of utmost importance.

The shortest way to it is through Kriya Yoga, with the blessings of the Guru... for those on this path, I mean.

There are other paths like Bakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, etc., but one thing is for sure... none of these paths are going to lead to Self-discovery if the heart and mind are kept centred on the many lures of the outside world.

In the world of duality, perhaps delusion is the other side of knowledge. Even as one knows — more and more — one is deluded further into the most extreme form of delusion. What one needs is awareness.

I mean, how can people watch priests doing 'pooja' (prayers) on TV and feel that they are in fact, praying? How can they watch the highly-dramatised Mahabharata on the screen and think that they're being blessed with the very "truth" Sri Krishna (the Supreme Self) was bestowing on Arjuna (the personification of Jiwa, or Self)? (It can happen, of course, if life itself is the Guru and there is a trigger to connect with that which is within.)

There are people who seriously believe themselves to be cartoon characters like Frozen or the human Ken Doll, and they spend millions of dollars doing multiple plastic surgeries in order to look like one. But for how long? Is that the Self?

Now, we choose — whether to be a part of delusion, or be a part of truth. Everyone has a right to his/her life and how he/she lives it.

Self-Realisation is a journey within the journey of life. This is where we explore the deepest truth that resides within.

.....
Minus the sense impressions (all forms of knowledge), images, thoughts, conversations, colours, plans, modifications, fancies, imaginations, dreams, memories, words whatever the mind entertains in every waking or sleeping hours... minus feelings and tendency to think of the self as the self; minus all these... when there is complete withdrawal of the self into itself, what does one experience?

That's Kriya number 18: Svaroopā Dharsan (Vision of the Self). It's a real, tangible experience one has here in the Kriya Yoga classes conducted by Master Manisekaran.

Thank you Master... Ji. **YM**

Individuality in the path of Yoga

by Ratish Murali

What is individuality?

It's a quality that makes one different from others. If we look closer, we will realise that each one of us, from different walks of life, share an independent opinion about a subject matter. This is hugely influenced by our individual experiences, conditions, upbringings, exposures, natural tendencies, genetics, and most importantly intentions.

The same individuality plays a role in the choices of life we make each day. When one explores the art of yoga, one can easily get overwhelmed by the different paths and styles that have mushroomed in recent times. As for me, I started off in the path of Bakti Yoga, or devotion, which was the closest to my heart. It is one of the most ancient paths of yoga. It developed a great deal of emotional stability in me. I was constantly curious about life as I grew up and naturally was drawn to spiritual books, which eventually led to yoga.

Finally, after much introspection, I started on the journey of yoga. For a newbie, yoga can create excitement, especially if one is exposed to the benefits mentioned in the scriptures. The thrilling prospects of discovering inner powers, mental strength, expansion of energy and awakening of brain capacities may pull people to the path of yoga, while others may be fascinated with the poses a human body could actually move into. But yoga not only works on the physical level, it works deeper in the mental, emotional and energy fields as well.

Just like how we have preference towards the food we like, the clothes we wear and the things we do, in yoga an individual can choose the practice that suits him or her the best. Therefore we realise that each practice is unique in its own way and shouldn't be compared with other practices.

One will be rewarded abundantly when there's sincere effort in the path of yoga. I realised this when I explored the world of pranayama (breath control techniques). It was mind-blowing! Every time I held the breath in a specific technique, the world disappeared, my mind disappeared and so did my body! Yet at the same time, I felt this sense of expanded awareness, which I had never experienced before. I realised this was only the tip of the iceberg of what the sages and rishis were exploring — the power that can be attained in shutting out the senses, or in Pratyahara.

As how I see it, if one has a tendency to engage the mind and intellect, then the path of Jnana Yoga would lead them. If serving mankind brings the greatest joy, then Karma Yoga will be the fastest way to bring one closer to truth. In conclusion, I feel that the path we choose is unique for each one of us, and that is what individuality is all about. What is important is to continuously direct oneself towards the path of self-realisation, which in itself is the greatest service to mankind. **YM**



EVENTS

MYS Yoga Clinic 2017

by Chandramalar.K

The MYS Yoga Clinic 2017, initiated on the 4th June at three specific locations; Desa Mentari, San Peng and Sentul Pasar, drew to a close on the 17th September. The programme was funded by SEDIC, and organised by the Malaysian Yoga Society (MYS) for the Malaysian Indian community.

The overall programme was spearheaded by Ravin.S, for 14 consecutive week's at all three locations, simultaneously. The programme was guided by MYS founder, Master Manisekaran, and supported by MYS instructors and volunteers. This young dynamic devout leader, Ravin.S, who is always dapper in appearance, definitely has a story to tell.

"The work involved in this divine project is almost 7 times challenging than the earlier Karma Yoga work conducted for children in National Yoga Camp 2016. Sharing one of the initial work: We tried reaching out to the community via various sort of social media but to no avail. I decided to go and meet them directly. Believe it or not, I formed a special team and we went to the locations, from house to house, knocking on their doors and by the grace of the almighty universe, we met our target. I am so thankful to my MYS comrades. I could not have done it without their support. Via unity, anything is possible"

The Ministry in the Prime Minister's office requested for a minimum of 30 participants at each location, but we had exceeded their targets beyond with average participant of 40 at each location. Unbelievable but true, the participant's attendance and punctuality throughout the programme at all three locations was extremely encouraging. That was the drive in them to acquire this new yogic science and its philosophy.

The weekly 'clinics' were prudently tailor-made in such a way that there were not only practical

sessions but also theory. A typical 3 hours session would kick off with 'Hatha Yoga' (asana, yoganidra, pranayama, and dhyana), which is a practical class, followed by the 'Health Awareness of Yoga (HAY)' and conclude with a 'Yoga Talk'. In the initial stages, the hatha yoga session incorporated the practice of awareness followed by the pawanmuktanasana series (joint exercise) and basic pranayama techniques. By the third week, the sun salutation was incorporated and as time went by, a variety of basic to intermediate asanas and more advanced pranayama techniques were taught. Amazingly, some of the participants were already seeing changes in their biological system within the first 2 weeks. These transformations motivated them to practice what they learn every week diligently. Before we knew it, testimonials kept pouring in incessantly. Hatha Yoga instructors; Master Manisekaran at Sentul Pasar, Ms.Saandhi at San Peng and Ms.Kavi Vitya at Desa Mentari, were simply awestruck by the participant's progress and determination to learn. "Some of the eager participants even stayed back after the session for clarification", said Ms. Saandhi, one of the senior instructor in MYS.

Likewise, the HAY sessions definitely did not fail to enthuse the participants, with 14 topics related to health matters. Many, who have been so dependent on modern medicine, were ignorant about the effectiveness of this ancient mind-body science. Little did they realise how specific asanas, when coordinated with breath, if practiced diligently, would be able to either manage ailments or reduce the severity of whatever diseases they were suffering from. Some were ecstatic when they realised that yoga can help them lose weight. The HAY wellness consultants; Master Manisekaran, Ms.Chandra and Ms.Vasugi were equally overwhelmed by the participant's interests in the human anatomy and related diseases. "I am truly so grateful to Ms.Nithya for assisting me in my



sessions as a translator,” confessed Ms. Chandra, who is not proficient in Tamil.

The ‘Yoga Talks’ on the other hand addressed great messages especially the topics on “Spontaneous Healing of Belief” and “The Heart-Intelligence in Mapping Life Success” by Ravin.S. These talks had extremely inspired and uplifted the participants, that all are pervaded with the power to translate the possibilities of our mind into the reality world. Participants were deeply seeded with scientifically proven truth that, there are no challenges that can’t be overcome, no ailment that can’t be cured, and no situation that can’t be enhanced. Other strong talks like “Yama’s and Niyama’s incorporated with Mahabharatha roles”, “Neuroplasticity and Yoga”, and “The Complete Ashtanga Yoga” by Ravin.S, “Asana” by Mr.Durai and Ms.Anuradha, Sadhana by Ms.Anuradha and Mr. Karthigeyan, “Financial Peace” by Ms.Mona and “Ayurvedic Natural Beauty Care” by Ms.Saandhi, brought greater awareness within the participants. Our renowned speakers like Master Manisekaran and Ravin.S were able to engage with the participants at greater depth. It was truly an eye-opener for instructors and volunteers, who were there throughout the sessions witnessing the radical transformations in these participants. It is obvious that their yogic practices have transmuted them to a different level altogether.

Before participants went home every week, they were fed with a sumptuous brunch. Not only did they have thosai, idly or string-hoppers, but they were also served a variety of local cuisines such as curry-puffs and pancakes, including fruits in addition to healthy beverages such as barley or herbal drinks. The menu was concise but varied every week. Thanks to Ravin.S as F&B manager for putting his heart and soul into planning the meal for our dear participants.

Before we knew it, we were nearing week 14 – the final week of the MYS Yoga Clinic. Wanting the finale to be a special day for the participants, Ravin.S went the extra mile to plan, organise and execute an extraordinary closing ceremony. With sheer determination and conscientiousness, he and his team stayed up till the wee hours of the morning to get the Kandiah hall in Brickfields, decorated for the event.

The closing was truly spectacular in its own way. Upon arrival at 7am, the 120 participants were presented with a t-shirt each, and asked to change. Ravin.S said, he wanted to see everything in unified, as one. It was really a sight to behold as they sauntered into the hall, all the 120 participants in a uniform! All credit again goes to this young man, Ravin.S, who apparently designed the t-shirt in 15 minutes! I am literally dumbfounded - never have I met anyone like him in my entire life.

The ceremony kicked off with a hatha yoga session conducted by our renowned guru, Master Manisekaran. Then, there was an experience sharing session by participants, conducted by Ravin.S. Everyone were really touched by the heartfelt statements made by the participants. Just before the participants were treated to a scrumptious brunch, all and sundry was presented with a certificate of attendance. That was not all! They also received a yoga mat and invaluable yoga notes for their practices at home.

While the participants were so grateful to MYS for conducting the clinic for them, we, the MYS instructors and volunteers are so grateful for the teachings we have received from our benevolent Guru. Every lesson in Master Manisekaran’s class is a constant reminder of who we are, what we are and the purpose of our lives on Mother Earth. **YM**



Effective Sleep

All of us love our rests. Mention 'rest' or 'sleep' and most of us would have the image of our bed and soft pillows pop up in our minds before we can even bat an eyelid. To some, sleep seems like the ultimate passive activity. But just the opposite is true.

Sleep, particularly effective sleep, is remarkably essential to our lives, health and well-being. Getting enough quality sleep at the right times can help protect our mental health, physical health, quality of life, and safety. Sleep helps both the brain and the body rejuvenate, keep the body's immune system strong, and can also help regulate moods and reduce stress.

Sleep helps our brain to function properly. While we're sleeping, our brain is preparing for the next day, forming new pathways to help us learn and remember information. Studies show that a good night's sleep improves learning, helps us pay attention, make decisions, and be creative!

When our body is sleep deficient, it goes into a state of stress. The body's functions are put on high alert which causes an increase in blood pressure and a production of stress hormones. Higher blood pressure increases our risk for heart attacks and strokes. The stress hormones also, unfortunately, make it harder for us to sleep.

In this workshop, learn about:

- Popular myths about sleep
 - Sleep mechanics
 - The circadian rhythm
 - Techniques to sleep less and increase sleep quality
 - Power naps
 - Methods to battle insomnia
- ...and much more!

EFFECTIVE SLEEP FOR GREATER HEALTH
19TH NOV 2017 AT BANGSAR / DAMANSARA

Namaskaaram

"Listen to advice but follow your heart". The quote holds a new meaning for an Indian classical vocal teacher like me. 'I teach music for a living, hence music has been a way of life; like the saying 'eat, breathe and live music' – that's me!' 'Follow your heart', means the very beat of the heart, has a rhythm and that is the world's best music. It is important too, because if it's not beating you are in trouble!

When I joined yoga about five years ago, I didn't really know the importance of 'Prana'. With Master Mani's guidance, I was open to a new world called 'awareness'. Practicing 'Pranayama' at the end of the class, was an eye-opener.

That is when I realised that I was missing something so important in my teaching. I started a journey of seeking the connection between music and 'Prana'. I read that every fibre and 'Pranic Nadi' in the body has its own tune. Even each 'Chakras' has its own sound. These sounds are the core of our emotions that can be triggered. For example, have you ever listen to a piece of music and felt overwhelmed or sad? Well, that's the sound from within that changes the very chemistry of your system. So be careful what kind of music you are exposed to!

During one of my yoga classes, a sudden realisation occurred. I had an idea of combining music and Pranayama, as it would benefit my students tremendously. With this realisation, I started to search for techniques to widen the knowledge of awareness and 'pranayama' and pass it to my students. On a mission, I met Master Mani to seek his guidance on the correct methods, and was delighted to have identified a technique to teach 'Pranayama' through music.

The outcome was amazing! After three months of trial with my students, I realised they were

more receptive and were learning the lessons much faster. They were calmer and more centred which made their presentations better (and they didn't get me into my whining rituals!).



For me, it was like killing two birds with one stone. I got my students to listen to the 'Swaras' (notes) with more focus and hence breathe correctly. This in return allowed them to have a good ear for the most important notes to help with pitch while singing. In addition, my students were able to strengthen their lungs and improve their breathing capacity: not to forget, in a right way! YES! Mission Accomplished. When words fail, music speaks! Namaskaaram. **YM**

Articles by Practitioners

Benefiting from Different Styles of Yoga

by Ing Jo-Ann

When I first started out on Yoga, I was clueless on where I should kick it off. I was spoilt for choice when it came to places to practise. So I decided to go to a respectable Yoga studio for a start. It was an eye opener and I was exposed to both spiritual and physical aspects of Yoga. There is so much to learn from this ancient practice — the philosophy, Pranayama (breathing techniques), meditations, words of wisdom, and of course, the Yoga asanas (postures).

And somewhere down the road, I had a thirst for more exposure in this world of Yoga. And I did more research on the prices, locations, teaching styles and the different schools of Yoga. There are so many out there: Hatha, Vinyasa, Iyengar, Bikram, Kundalini, Yin and Ashtanga just to name a few. Before you opt for a particular style of Yoga, you should consider what you're looking for. Do you want strenuous Yoga workout or do you want a relaxing workout? I did my Yoga in many styles and I loved every part of it.

Here are some pointers that I would like to share.

Non-strenuous and strenuous yoga practices have many similarities and differences. The similarities lie in their roots, which is Hatha Yoga. Basically, all disciplines of yoga focus on the development of the mind, body, and emotions through the practice of Yoga itself. In a Yoga session, there will be a heart-warming message, a passage from a spiritual yoga text, breathing practice and of course, Shavasana to end it all. How they are practiced or performed, on the other hand, is significantly different in terms of difficulty, intensity, incorporation of the poses, breathing, and the pace of the asanas (postures). Different yoga disciplines and formats provide different goals, but the destination remains the same.



Non-strenuous yoga practices such as Gentle Yoga, Restorative Yoga, and Yin Yoga employ a combination of meditation, deep-breathing and stationary Yoga poses. Many students opt for classes that focus on breathing and they find it super helpful in managing stress and achieving mental clarity. For beginners, these Yoga styles are a good way to kick-start the Yoga journey as the asanas are performed at a slower and nurturing pace. The session is generally easier to follow, meditative and restorative in nature.

The asanas are performed step-by-step with clear instructions so that it will be simple for students to do, follow and remember — with plenty of time to focus on breathing. A gentle Yoga style encourages ongoing encouragement to make moment-to-moment adjustments between the instructor and the student. On the other hand, gentle and non-strenuous Yoga classes are also beneficial to a variety of distinct needs such as individuals with movement limitations, disabilities and illnesses, especially

those who are recovering from surgery, senior citizens, pregnant and expecting women, newbies and those seeking stress-reduction or weight management. This gentle Yoga approach is also beneficial to individuals who are suffering from chronic fatigue and mood disorders such as anxiety, depression, chronic stress and insomnia.

Seasoned or advanced Yoga students and fitness enthusiasts prefer hardcore or strenuous Yoga workouts. They may opt for other schools of Yoga such as Ashtanga Yoga, Hot Yoga or Bikram Yoga, Iyengar Yoga and Power Yoga. Many gyms and Yoga classes do teach these schools of Yoga. Strenuous as they may seem to be, they too are founded in traditional Hatha Yoga. These disciplines have expanded the boundaries of Yoga and have created more rigorous Yoga workouts and routines for serious or seasoned Yoga students and gym-goers.

The key motivator is the determination for weight-loss, getting in shape and achieving a fit physique, and at the same time, students are exposed to spiritual enlightenment while their muscles and flexibility are challenged. Since the flows are performed in a high-intensity way, you can expect your heart rate rising as though you are doing cardio, and you will be sweating profusely in no time. Yes, high-intensity yoga is considered more like an exercise. These contemporary styles of Yoga follow a flowing Yoga sequence, with the instructor moving in a fast-paced and vigorous choreography, which will have you sweating profusely in no time. These strenuous Yoga workouts are perfectly beneficial for those seeking weight loss and body-toning.

While on the mat, your physical endurance, flexibility, strength and stamina will be tested, and as a result, you will have improved blood circulation, a fit and supple body, along with inner peace. It is important to note that there will be risks of injury by doing prolonged and strenuous stretches too often, so the key here is to practise with much caution and care. Should you feel any pain or discomfort while doing Yoga, always remember that it is okay to pause for a moment,

rest in child's pose or any other restorative pose, catch your breath, and you will be ready to resume your Yoga workout again. Other than that, you have nothing to worry.



Many Yoga studios, fitness centres, and gyms now offer a wide variety of Yoga classes and we will be spoilt for choice. Take some time to pick a school which is suited to your "taste buds". There is no right or wrong. The question is: "Is strenuous yoga workout beneficial to you?" No style is better than or worse than the other. But one thing is for sure, after each session of Yoga, whether it is in a Yoga house or a fitness centre, one will be sure to leave the mat feeling refreshed and more alive. We all have our preferences, but one thing is for sure; you have to go with what feels right to you for your Yoga practices. Learn from every teacher and every fellow yogi. Stay true to your main intention of practising Yoga. Find your own way to enjoy the Yoga journey. Practise Yoga at least once a week so that you will always be healthy and happy.

Namaste. **YM**

M

odern Yogi in the Kitchen:

Eat to Support Your Practices

by Nicole Yong

Are you only aware of the physical side of Yoga — the asanas, or postures, only?

Yoga is much more than that. It is a way of life. It guides us towards healthy living, right ethics and practices, and to realise our higher potential. Hence, the food we consume cannot be overlooked.

According to Ayurveda, suppleness encourages the Prana (life force) to circulate smoothly throughout the body via the Nadis (energy channels) and promotes longevity. So, we practise Yoga asana with the objective of developing strength and flexibility. It also improves the circulatory, respiratory, digestive and excretory systems in the body.

Ayurveda, considered a sister science to Yoga, suggests a “Sattvic” diet to support the practice. We call it the “Yogic Diet”. Sattvic food is health-promoting natural food such as multi grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds, and kitchen herbs.

In fact, Sattvic food is easy to digest. Some have anti-inflammation properties, which quickly turn into nutritional fluids that are absorbed by the body; assist in dissolving accumulated “Ama” (toxins) and help to conserve energy level and increase “Ojas”, the vital nectar of life. This group of food has the essence to promote better flexibility and lubricate our joints, muscles, ligaments and tendons. Most importantly, it calms our central nervous system and balances up the secretion of hormones.

Sattvic diet, which is a pure vegetarian diet, promotes the attitude of ahimsa (non-violence). It avoids foods that involve harming of animals. Hence, this diet develops the quality of love, harmony and peace.

It can be called lacto-vegetarian, which excludes meat, fish, poultry and eggs, but includes dairy products such as milk, cheese and yogurt; and also honey. From the nutritional perspective, vegetarian diets are lower in saturated fats, cholesterol and animal protein, and higher in fibre, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants compared with non-vegetarian diets. Therefore, vegetarian diets tend to significantly help promote healthy colons, reduced risk of constipation, reduced risk of obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol level, heart disease and diabetes.

Some people ask me: “Since you are practising Yoga, are you a vegetarian?”

My answer: “Before 2013, I was not a vegetarian. After learning to develop healthy eating habits and Yoga practices, now I am a pescatarian — I occasionally add fish to my diet.”

In the beginning, I did not put any restriction on myself, but later I learnt to have a more balanced diet. I eat mostly natural food, in moderation. Though I prepare vegetarian meals more often now, I also listen to my cravings and my body responses to food.

Sometimes, I completely follow the Yogic diet. When practising Yoga asana, I feel my body is more flexible, there is no heaviness and the mind is clear. To me, it is a positive experience; a positive change.

We have learnt that changes in eating habits ought to be developed gradually. So we can start with a semi-vegetarian diet first. It is primarily a plant-based diet, but includes meat, dairy products, eggs, poultry and fish on occasion or in small quantities. Gradually, we can change to lacto-ovo vegetarian diet — which excludes meat, fish and poultry, but allows dairy products and eggs.

Practising intuitive eating is a journey.

Here's a simple guideline on how to follow a yogic diet:

- 1) Consume a balanced combination of the following natural, unprocessed and low-fat food groups:
 - I. Fruits
 - II. All vegetables — except onion and garlic
 - III. Whole grains
 - IV. Legumes
 - V. Plant-based oils, such as sesame, sunflower, grape seed and olive oil
 - VI. Nuts and seeds, but not overly salted or overly roasted
 - VII. Natural raw sugar and molasses
 - VIII. Herbal tea, ginger tea and water with lemon or lime — except coffee and iced beverage
 - IX. Some kitchen spices added to meals, but not too much, such as cinnamon, cardamom, black pepper, turmeric, ginger and cumin
- 2) Be mindful and listen to your body. Think of what the body needs today. Do not overeat. Think of foods that make us strong and keep us balanced and happy.
- 3) If can, cook your own food at home as often as possible with a feeling of love and gratitude. Let it be a gift to you and your family.
- 4) When you have cravings for meat, processed food, junk food, over-spiced food, garlic, onion and stimulants like alcohol, tea and coffee for a few days; and by the end of the week you feel heavy and unpleasant during the practices, it is alright. Perhaps you may eat more natural food such as grains, vegetable and fruits in the following week and encourage yourself to do better. At the same time, observe how the diet makes you feel. Do you feel any changes when you practice Yoga asana? Notice the patterns in your digestion, sleep pattern and energy level.

Yes, we live according to “our truth”. We learn to extend the practice of awareness into our daily life.

Some people may say vegetarian food is tasteless. This may be due to a lack of knowledge in food preparation. We know that our body needs all nutrition such as carbohydrates, fats, protein, vitamins and minerals from different groups of natural foods in order to function well, hence we should learn how to cook these groups of foods and turn them into delicious dishes for ourselves and our beloved family members. There are a variety of vegetarian cookbooks available in the book shops. We can also attend vegetarian cooking classes, or courses. Believe it or not, vegetarian dishes can be very tasty indeed.

Recipe for Busy working Yogi/ Mama: One Pot Fusion Warm Macaroni Vegan Soup

Let me share a simple recipe — One Pot Fusion Warm Macaroni Vegan Soup — a stomach-friendly comfort food. One pot meals are my favourite. It saves time and easy to clean up. Hopefully, it will be an inspiration to keep you making healthy meals for yourself and your loved ones. Just sit back and relax.



**Version 1:
Warm Macaroni Vegan Soup with Sweet Potato**

by Nicole Yong

WARM
MACARONI
VEGAN
SOUP



Version 2:
Warm Macaroni Soup with Potato

One Pot Warm Macaroni Vegan Soup:

Ingredients:

Cooked macaroni for 2 person
1 bowl Purple Sweet Potato cut in cube
½ bowl Red Lentils (Soaked advance 30 minutes)
4 large tomatoes – roughly chopped
1 White Onion – cut in cube (Optional)
½ bowl sweet corn
½ bowl carrot cut in cube
½ teaspoon Turmeric
1 tablespoon Ginger mince
½ teaspoon Cumin
½ teaspoon Garam Masala
½ teaspoon Cayenne Pepper
½ teaspoon black pepper
½ tablespoon Cold press Grape Seed oil
Sea Salt to taste

Notes:

Aside from the veggies listed in the recipe, you may substitute and use a variety of other vegetables like potatoes, broccoli or cabbage.

Preparation:

1. Heat the pot/ big pan and add in grapeseed oil. Put in ginger mince, cumin, onion, turmeric, garam masala, cayenne pepper and cook for 3 minutes.
2. Pour in 600ml water, red lentils, purple sweet potato, tomatoes and carrot into the pot/big pan. Simmer for 20 minutes in medium-low flame.
3. Add the cooked macaroni, sweet corn, black pepper and sea salt.
4. Remove from the heat. You may add some parsley on top. Serve while the food is warm.

Sattvic diet gradually becomes our natural choice:

With continued awareness about the body through Yoga practices, we may find that the Sattvic diet gradually becomes a natural choice. In fact, even applying a few of these Yogic diet suggestions will enhance our well-being and reduce the risk of getting chronic diseases. We do not need to be a “Yogi” to switch to a Yogic diet. As we adopt a Yogic diet, we indirectly become a role model to family members and the children on how to eat well. Everyone deserves a healthy, happy, long life. **YM**





Yogic Wisdom For Daily Living

1.10 abhava pratyaya alambana vrttih nidra

by Jamie Spatafore

Sleep is the non-deliberate absence of thought-waves or knowledge

It is important to realise that the sleep being discussed here is dreamless sleep. We wake up in the morning and think we have slept, but for most of the night we have been in a light sleep phase where dreams and other thoughts had occurred.

Sri Patanjali is not referring to that state here. He is referring to the deep sleep that leaves you feeling refreshed when you wake up. To me this is an interesting sutra, for there are different philosophies on dreamless sleep. Patanjali says that sleep is itself a vritti. That means that it is a modification or movement of consciousness. If sleep is a vritti then, according to Patanjali, it needs to be overcome to achieve samadhi.

Then you have another sage, Sri Ramana, who always used dreamless sleep as an example of the pure state of being. When followers come to him with complaints or problems he would ask them if these so-called problems existed in the deep sleep state. In fact, he would take it a step further. He would ask them if they even existed in deep sleep.

We do not have the time, nor is there any need to go into all of the various arguments on whether one does or does not exist in the deep sleep state. We will take the sage at his word when he says we do. Since we do exist in both states (deep sleep and wakefulness) then what is the difference between the two, Ramana would ask. The difference is the mind is not active in the former and fully active in the latter. Then let's go a step deeper. Where do we obtain more happiness? Do we obtain it in the deep sleep state or in the wakeful state? For no one

has ever felt sad that they slept well. In fact, we enjoy sleep so much we actually desire it. Could it be because that is the only place we achieve real peace?

So, how do we reconcile the two well-known sages who seem to be at odds? Ramana says sleep is the pure state of being and Patanjali says that sleep is a vritti that needs to be overcome. As usual with these things there is no real difference at all. It is only the point of view. Patanjali, at least in the Yoga Sutras, does not deny that the dreamless sleep state is the state of pure being. Nor does Ramana say that dreamless sleep is not a vritti. Since Ramana lived relatively in recent times, we have access to more of his advice. The sheer movement of time has not been able to erase most of what he has said, unlike Patanjali.

Many practitioners of meditation would come to Ramana in an excited state exclaiming their progress for they have experienced a void-like sensation in which they themselves did not seem to exist. It should be noted that when they say they didn't exist it was the personality, name, body identification and cultural association that did not exist. That falling away of mind movement provided them with a sensation of bliss. Anyway, Ramana would say that is all very good, but you must go beyond that state. You must reach the state of unconscious consciousness. What he was saying is that mental play of the mind must cease, just like in deep sleep, but we must be conscious to view it. If not, then all of us have achieved enlightenment with general anaesthesia. And that is very similar to Patanjali's point of view. Because there is no consciousness in deep sleep, it is a modification, it is not the absolute. Peace. **YM**



Inner Insights: My Journey With Yoga Through Mind, Body And Soul

by Amanda Low

People often shy away from yoga because they think of themselves as not flexible or that yoga is just too easy. I remember attending my first yoga class when I was 18. I joined a gym at that time and I was also at my heaviest weight. With my self-confidence constantly deteriorating and I no longer love my body or how I look, I decided that it's time for a change. A healthier change. At first, I started off with attending their cardio classes but then I was curious about yoga and I decided to try out one of their yoga classes which seemed to be quite a popular class for the gym members. I fell in love almost immediately with yoga, especially after a practice. I am quite flexible because I was a gymnast and took up ballet when I was younger. During high-school, I joined the cheerleading team as well which helped a lot with my flexibility and strength. Therefore, I thought yoga was going to be easy for me. However, I was wrong. Every time during a class, I would just focus on getting to the end pose instead of focusing on the beautiful transition of each asana. Although I never thought of anyone around me as a competition, I was however constantly competing with myself. I always told myself that I have to try the hardest and most advanced variation and get to the end pose as what the instructor was doing. However, whenever I reach home, I completely forgot about what happened during the practice and at what state my mind was in. I felt lost and unsure every time I try to practice on my own because the classes held by that specific instructor only happens once a week. Since then, I wanted to explore more about yoga and



learn how to practice on my own without depending on the instructors from the gym. I then discovered MAYI by searching through the web for instructor courses. The first ever event I joined with MAYI was during the International Day of Yoga at Kiara Park. Without any hesitation I signed myself up for the International Yoga Instructor Course (IYIC). The classes they offer at the gym was completely different from what I learned through the IYIC. They were rather more intensive instead of helping me to find myself within.

Everyone in MAYI was extremely supportive and they made me feel at home. I went through my first level of IYIC without any complications and I got my certificate. Since then, I've incorporated yoga into my everyday lifestyle. I've always thought that if I just lose weight through dieting and cardio I would be happy. However, that wasn't the case. I didn't feel either healthy

or happy. Yoga has taught me to understand my body and not just about how it looks like physically. Yes, it is important to keep fit and healthy but understanding your body is on a whole other level. Yoga combines both breath and consciousness through physical stretching which I have never experienced before while doing any other sort of exercise. In yoga, I focus a lot on my breath during the transition of an asana, through that, I came to a better understanding of my body and mind. Setting aside an hour per day to practice yoga is like having a short break from my busy thoughts throughout the day especially the ones that make me question my choices in life and lowers my confidence. Yoga helps me escape these thoughts for an hour, guiding me back to my conscious, my breath, my body, and my practice.

Although the stillness did not last long, it definitely made a difference for the day. The postures and flow of a practice always seemed to express freedom and peace. I still have yet to master more intermediate and advanced postures but I know that if I follow this path, this journey, and through ahimsa (non-violence), one day I would be able to reach my goals. What matters is not about where we'll end up, what truly matters is where we are now. As a university student, tempting approaches like clubbing, drinking, smoking and eating unhealthily often arises. Yoga has helped me realise how important health is and how these approaches will jeopardize my healthy lifestyle.

I practice strength training for about three to four times a week which helps a lot in toning my physique. However, strength training often leaves my body feeling tensed and tight due to the resistance. With the amount of responsibilities that life throws at me (uni work, family issues, social issues), and my training routine, the tension can sometimes be overwhelming.

Everyone carries stress in our bodies from duties and obligations, hectic lifestyles and other issues which many people suggest to just keep it all together, instead of just letting go. Through practicing yoga, I have been able to escape the tension of life and just redirect my attention to myself and the energy within. Yoga has helped me tremendously in my hectic lifestyle. I combine what I learn on the mat to my daily activities. For instance, whenever I feel overwhelmed by emotions, I just pause a minute to stabilise my breathing and remind myself that there's a place inside me that's grounded and strong. I am then reminded of who I am, and that to every problem, there will be a solution.

Through yoga, I found the most important conversation a person can have, a conversation with myself, my body and my mind. I thank the universe for leading me to this path and helping me discover the beauty of yoga. Oh, such wonders it has brought to my life. Because yoga has made me more aware and present with my surroundings, I realise that human nature, we are constantly evolving which is just downright extraordinary. **YM**

Ayur Yoga: Shirodhara

by Saandhi

What is Shirodhara?

Shirodhara is an ancient technique, a union of two words: 'shir' meaning head, and 'dhara' meaning pouring "in a stream" or "sprinkling". Thus, Shirodhara means the pouring of a liquid "in a stream" over the forehead maintaining a certain rhythmic speed for a stipulated amount of time.

Warm oil, usually gingelly oil, is poured in a continuous stream over the forehead or 'ajna marma', an area where nerves are highly concentrated. The gentle pressure of the oil flow onto the forehead creates a vibration, and this soothes the nervous system to experience a deep state of rest, which is similar to meditation. Shirodhara is one of the most powerful treatments to relieve Vata (wind) in the mind. Preoccupied with swarming thoughts, the mind has a difficult time slowing down. This can lead to inability to handle stress, creating nervousness, anxiety, depression, insomnia, fatigue, psychological disorders and more. Shirodhara induces a relaxed state of awareness that results in a dynamic psychosomatic balance.

How Does Shirodhara Work?

The Shirodhara procedure creates a particular pressure and vibration on the forehead. The vibration is amplified by the hollow sinus present in the frontal bone. The vibration is then transmitted inwards through the fluid medium of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). This vibration, along with a little temperature, may activate the functions of thalamus and the basal fore brain, which then brings the amount of serotonin and catecholamine to the normal stage, inducing sleep. So, in Shirodhara therapy, prolonged and continuous gentle pressure due to pouring of the liquid may cause tranquillity of mind and induce natural sleep.



Who Benefits from Shirodhara?

Shirodhara is a great treatment for a compromised nervous system. It can help relieve symptoms of anxiety, stress, fatigue and hypertension. It relieves tension, worry, fear and headache as well as depression. It regulates mood and gives feelings of pleasure and relaxation. Shirodhara treatment is advised for the prevention of many psychosomatic disorders. In a healthy individual, prevention of diseases pertaining to the body, mind and sense organs is the foremost indication.

Shirodhara can also assist with the following conditions:

- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**
It reduces excess vata dosha, which is the primary dosha out of balance in PTSD.
- **Insomnia, Shift Work Sleep Disorder and Jet Lag**
Shirodhara stimulates the pineal gland, which produces melatonin, the regulator of the wake-sleep cycle. It calms an unquiet mind and induces rest. If insomnia stems from working the night shift and wake-sleep cycle is out of sync with the natural rhythms of the sun, Shirodhara can assist in removing fatigue, restoring energy and re-establishing harmony in the doshas or constitution.
- **Hypertension**
An imbalance of vata dosha may be correlated with hypertension. Shirodhara has proven to be effective in lowering blood pressure.

Generally, it is also a great treatment for a healthy individual looking to maintain health and enhance well-being, clarity and calmness. Shirodhara reinvigorates the body and mind, increases immunity, gives deep rest and renewed energy, producing an ageless and youthful countenance. Shirodhara relieves stress, worry and excessive thoughts. This naturally relaxes and rejuvenates the face and softens worry lines.

Research Reference:

Shirodhara has shown its anti-anxiety, anti-hypertensive and sleep-inducing effects in a few studies (Vinjamury et al., 2014; Nakanekar et al., 2015; Sriranjini, 2009). Physiological responses of Shirodhara procedure are found to reduce the sympathetic tone, thereby decreasing the cardiac activity and increasing α and θ wave activities in the brain (Uebaba et al., 2008; Xu et al., 2008). It is postulated that this may cause a relaxing effect upon the recipient, terminating into the induction of sleep during the treatment session (Tokinobu et al., 2015).

Shirodhara treatment is available at all MAYI centres. Please call for appointments at 0322605322/ 0361275693.

RETRACTABLE AND PORTABLE STAINLESS STEEL SHIRODHARA STAND AND POT AVAILABLE NOW!



Retractable and portable stainless steel Shirodhara stand and pot are now available for your home use. It's adjustable to 3 different heights and is suitable for therapists who offer home treatments. Instructions for assembly will be provided. Call or message 0162124046 to place your orders today!

Different Strokes for Yoga Folks

"Yikes, I've been doing yoga for the past one year now, Anjalika. Why don't I still get the lithe, limber body of Tara Stiles?" quipped one of my students, Rita. She is eighteen years old and an ardent fan of yoga — having discovered this ancient art while vacationing in India nearly 2 years ago.

Anyway, this is not the first time I'm faced with such questions and I very well know it is not going to be the last.

I have always had the same answer for students, friends and acquaintances with somewhat similar concerns, and usually my explanation would be at length.

Whether they are aiming for a calmer mind or eyeing the flexibility of a ballerina, yoga has a whole smorgasbord of benefits — for kids and adults alike.

At the physical level, yoga has been shown to improve one's posture, balance and flexibility. It also helps to strengthen the bones and increase the muscle strength; and this is truly imperative, especially in the growing years of a child.

On the health front, yoga offers tonnes of perks like decreased inflammation and improved symptoms associated with chronic health conditions, and much more — that is also the reason one can achieve one's fullest health potential when yoga is practised from a young age.

Of course, my personal favourite would be the mental benefits of yoga, which do wonders for our total well-being. After all, there is indeed a saying: "to be healthy as a whole, mental wellness plays a role". Yoga helps eliminate stress, anxiety, and also depression. In the current world situation, where stress has become part and parcel of life, yoga is indeed



something that needs to be incorporated into our daily lives.

With all these being said, it is not a wonder why yoga is an essential part of many people's lives. The number of people taking up this beautiful art is rising from year to year and growing from strength to strength. MAYI Yoga Academy's Super Yoga Kids has gained so much recognition for the last 5 years, with an increased number of kids every year. Parents everywhere have started to understand the benefits of holistic living and importance of starting young.

However, there is something all yoga enthusiasts should be aware of — yoga affects people in different ways most often than not. No two persons will have similar results from practising yoga.

Let us take the case of six-year-old twins, Felie and Felix. Both have been practising yoga for the last 8 months. When I first knew them, I could not figure out who was who. They were very similar in many ways — active, friendly and bright. They could not be 'twin-ier' than what they already were. However, these days, there is something about these two boys that sets them apart in more ways than one. While Felix develops an amazing new flexibility, Felie develops other skills like a mental capacity that is becoming so amazing. Previously, he had problems memorising his two times table, but now Felie breezes through it with no problem whatsoever — and he is into his five times table now!

Another example would be Trisha and Mylie, who are friends. Both started doing yoga with the hope of having tight and taut bodies. They both attend classes three times a week. While Trisha is tall and lanky, Mylie is petite and voluptuous. Two years down the road, while Trisha manages to be what she wanted, Mylie still remains the same physically, but of course with an amazing new energy and flexibility.

In terms of benefits, yoga does not have a one-size-fits-all solution. Individuals will see a variety of benefits within themselves. It is truly important to never compare ourselves with others. We are all different in sizes, shapes, energies, and of course, as we go deeper,... genetic levels. While yoga does help to elongate and tone the muscles, a person of a round physical make should not expect to achieve a lean and lithe body in no time; or if she should even at all.

Personally, I love all the mental benefits I have reaped from yoga. Learning and memorising has become a lot easier. My mind is calmer and clearer, especially when making decisions.

Physically, I am much more flexible and my arms are way more toned than what they used to be. Many have sworn that yoga helps in the tightening of their tummy. In all honesty, my tummy is still somewhat jiggy, however, I can testify to the added core strength. These days, my posture is way better and have long said goodbye to backaches and back sores.

Just last week, I met up with a couple whom I have not met for about two years. They picked up yoga together before getting married, for more holistic living. They have been practising for the last 5 years. Upon meeting up, she excitedly told me about a new lease of energy she discovered within herself. She now sleeps eight hours a day, runs a successful bakery, manages two kids under five years old, runs her home and on top of all that, sneaks in an hour of yoga routine daily — seven days a week. He, on the other hand, enjoys his calmer mind and clearer thoughts, of which he is extremely grateful for, which is necessary when you are running an internationally-acclaimed advertising

agency. Well, theirs is definitely yoga-matrimony made in heaven. Can't ask for a better complement.

Even between my two sons, Magnus and Eirik, I can see that both benefit from yoga differently. While my younger one, Eirik, five, becomes lots more flexible than his already-pretty-flexible self, six-year-old Magnus' memory and mental capacity seems to be increasing well. They both do yoga three times a week — a combination of both hatha and mind yoga.

I can go on and on about how yoga affects people differently, but my point is really not to go around comparing. Just concentrate on your own little and big evolvments. Go deeper and seek what has indeed shifted in your emotional and physical being.

The next time you catch yourself comparing, just quietly tell yourself: "Different Strokes for Yoga Folks!" **YM**



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 Brickfields (03.2260 5322), Bangsar (03.2282 4980), Damansara Utama (03.7726 6682), Selayang Utama (03.6127 5693), Puchong (03.8080 4742) and Subang: (03.8021 7980)
Facebook: SYK Superyogakids

Padotthanasana (Raised Legs Pose)

Step by Step:

1. Lie down in Shavasana with the palms flat on the floor.
2. Inhale and raise the right leg as high as high as is comfortable, keeping it straight and the foot relaxed.
3. The left leg should remain straight and in contact with the floor.
4. Hold the posture for 3 to 5 seconds while retaining the breath.
5. Exhale and slowly lower the right leg to the floor.
6. Repeat on the other side.

Variation:

This asana may be repeated raising both legs together. Be aware that this is a more strenuous practice. Do not lift the buttocks off the floor.

Benefits:

- Strengthens the abdominal muscles and massages the organs.
- Strengthens the digestive system, lower back, pelvic and perineal muscles.
- Helps correct prolapse.

Contra-indications:

- People suffering from high blood pressure or serious back conditions such as sciatica and slipped disc.



Chef Yogi's Food Notes!

Mixed Fruit Salad (with Chia Seed)

by Sumathi



Ingredients

- Guava
- Persimmons
- Green apple
- Red apple
- 1 cup fresh orange juice
- 1 tbsp pure honey
- 1 tsp chia seed



Method:

1. Dice all fruits into small cubes (quantity: approximately 1 cup of each fruit).
2. Mix all ingredients together and refrigerate for 2 hours or until chia seed expands.
3. Serve cold.



SCHEDULE OF COURSES: OCT 2017 - FEB 2018

OCT

01/10/2017	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
02/10/2017	SLG	Ayurveda Massage Therapist Course
07/10/2017	BFS	Ayurveda Massage Therapist Course
08/10/2017	PCH/USJ	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
08/10/2017	BSR	Pranayama (Breathing Technique) Instructor/Practitioner Course
14/10/2017	DU	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
15/10/2017	DU	Anatomy & Physiology - the Body from Within Workshop
26/10/2017	DU	Kundalini Kriya Yoga Course
29/10/2017	BSR	International Yoga Instructors Course - Advanced

NOV

05/11/2017	BSR/DU	Diabetes Awareness Programme
06/11/2017	BSR/DU	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
12/11/2017	Wisma Sejarah, KL	MAYI Graduation 2017
12/11/2017	USJ	Pregnancy Yoga Instructor Course
13/11/2017	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Course - Intermediate
13/11/2017	SLG	International Yoga Instructors Foundation Course
18/11/2017	USJ	Cardiac Health Awareness Programme
19/11/2017	USJ	Short Course on Effective Sleep
19/11/2017	PCH	Jala Neti Workshop
20/11/2017	BSR	International Yoga Instructors Course - Advanced
25/11/2017	BSR	Ayurveda Massage Therapist Course (Male intake)
27-29/11/2017	BFS/DU/USJ	SYK School Holiday Programme
27/11/2017	USJ	Ayurveda Massage Therapist Course

JAN DEC

03/12/2017	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
03/12/2017	USJ	Mini Detox Workshop
18/12/2017	BSR	Yoga Therapist Certification Course
18/12/2017	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course

FEB

07/01/2018	SLG	Ayurveda Massage Therapist Course
15/01/2018	USJ	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
20/01/2018	DU	MAYI Open Day
21/01/2018	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
28/01/2018	PCH	Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course
28/01/2018	USJ	Jala Neti Workshop
28/01/2018	DU	The Natural Beauty Workshop
04/02/2018	USJ	Kundalini Kriya Yoga Course
04/02/2018	SLG	International Yoga Instructors Course Foundation Course
12/02/2018	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
17/02/2018	BFS	Ayurveda Massage Therapist Course
18/02/2018	PCH	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
16/02/2018	BSR/PCH	Full Intestinal Cleansing Practical Session
23/02/2018	PCH/BSR	Pregnancy Yoga Instructor Course
25/02/2018	USJ	Urdhva Retas & Anti-Aging Workshop
25/02/2018	USJ	Manipuraka Awakening & Universal Healing Energy Workshop



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2ND OCT 2017 AT SELAYANG
7TH OCT 2017 AT BRICKFIELDS
25TH NOV 2017 AT BRICKFIELDS
27TH NOV 2017 AT SUBANG
7TH JAN 2018 AT SELAYANG

NEXT INTAKE:

18TH DEC 2017 AT BANGSAR

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89A&B (1st & 2nd Flr), Jalan SS21/37, D'sara Utama, PJ.
8-1 & 9-1, Jalan Paragon Utama, Selayang Utama, Bt. Caves.
11B, Jalan Kenari 22, Bandar Puchong Jaya, Puchong, Selangor.
11(2nd Flr), Jalan USJ10/1A, Subang Jaya, Selangor.

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