

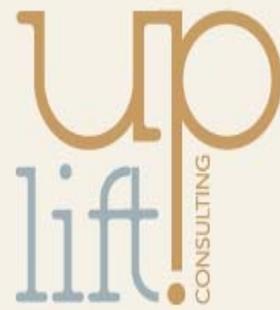
Hatha Yoga An E-book with a Daily Uplift! Practice

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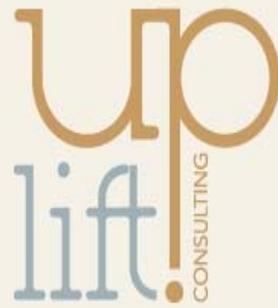
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It was through my yoga practice that I originally conceived of the idea for Uplift! Consulting. I knew on a deep level that the integration of yoga and meditation had the ability to transform having its place within business - integral to the health and well-being of people, fueling positive mindful growth.

This e-book is partially excerpted from Hatha Yoga: Student/Teacher, A Year in Review and Beyond, drafted for my Yoga Teacher Training Certification in June 2011. It is my hope to share some of this learning and wisdom with you.

May the learning continue to unfold into infinity and may we continue to receive the gifts of such a fruitful and joyous path.

May all beings be at peace. -Paula Pyne

*“A certain day became a presence to me:
there it was, confronting me - a sky, air, light:
a being. And before it started to descend
from the height of noon, it leaned over
and struck my shoulder as if with
the flat of a sword, granting me
honor and a task. The day’s blow
rang out, metallic – or it was I, a bell awakened,
and what I heard as my whole self
saying and singing what it knew: I can.”*

*~Denise Levertov
variation on a theme by Rilke*

An Introduction to Yoga

An Introduction to Yoga

What does Yoga mean to a student and teacher of Yoga? The word "yoga" has many meanings and is derived from the Sanskrit root "yuj" meaning "to control", "to yoke", or "to unite." Translations include "joining", "uniting", "union", "conjunction", and "means". From my own experience, Yoga is a process of Self-Inquiry. It is a lifestyle, a discipline, a service, a commitment, and a breath-body-mind connection. It's physical, freeing, strengthening, balancing, and humbling. It cultivates non-attachment, nurtures a universal oneness, and raises collective consciousness. It moves emotions, invigorates the mind, and stimulates the senses. It's a wake call to experience and remember your true self — shedding old habits to create space in your body and mind for the soul to expand and be heard; a vehicle to maximize our present existence and our utmost potential.

Experiencing the practice and teachings of Yoga is much like the feeling of "Coming Home". It's a process that is continuously changing and evolving, naturally unfolding, just as it should. The driver is not the ego but the breath that allows one to move into stillness; the result of which is equanimity, happiness, and freedom.

A recent quote by Julia Butterfly Hill, sums up a yoga experience nicely, "What is it that calls you to stretch beyond what is comfortable into places that are uncomfortable, and to realize that you are more powerful and more magical than your mind could have believed?" Donna Farhi explains that, "yoga is a technology for arriving in the present moment. It is a means of waking up from our spiritual amnesia, so that we can remember all that we already know."

Lastly, to experience the teachings of Yoga is a privilege, blessing, and honour not to go unnoticed.

Why is It Important?

For those who are seeking balance, greater purpose, grounding, health, happiness, and joy – it's a tried and tested way to help you get there. What is experienced on the Yoga mat has a direct relationship with our experience in life — the power of the practice has a ripple effect to everyone who comes in contact.

"We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience."

~ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Paths of Yoga



Before embarking on the path of Yoga it's important to understand the various types and influences that have evolved over thousands of years. The following chart highlights the influences, styles, and progression of Hatha Yoga, as well as the various other paths of Yoga. Each style of Hatha has influences from the other paths, depending on the teacher. A Yoga teacher interested in experiencing an in-depth and holistic practice will find appeal in elements of each of the original six paths across the pillars of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual growth. See snapshot below. Many Hatha teachers draw from the remaining five paths as a way of deepening the practice. A description of each can be found in the Appendix

PATHS OF YOGA					
HATHA YOGA (Classical, Advaita Vedanta, Tantra)	RAJA YOGA (meditation-dualistic, Pantanjali)	BHAKTI YOGA (devotion, Gita, non-dualistic)	KARMA YOGA (action/offering/laws of dharma)	JNANA YOGA (wisdom/non-dualistic)	MANTRA YOGA (sound – mind saving, OM)
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 25%;"> <p>Vinyasa (power, contemporary Kundalini Ashtanga (Pattabhi Jois) Hot Yin Yoga Restorative Moshka Bikram Iyengar Sivananda Integral Jivamukti Kripalu Kriya Viniyoga Power</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> <p>It's an exploration & integration of the various paths where one finds the heart of Yoga and Shines. It's all good!</p> </div> </div>					

Patanjali – The Yoga Sutras & The Eight Limb Path

There are many branches of Yoga, from devotional to intellectual, philosophical, Patanjali, the author of the Yoga Sutras, clearly lays out an 'eight limb path' which is called ashtanga. In Sanskrit "Ashta + anga" is Ashtanga. "Ashta" means Eight and "Anga" is limbs hence, Eight Limb path. It's a foundation and acts as an extension to the body of Yoga. Often practicing one limb, leads to other experiences with other limbs and it begins to build from the core.

My experience on the path: I was originally drawn to the physical practice, but as time went on, experiencing other elements, I gravitated to a softer and quieter side, complimenting my constitution, seeking meditation, as well as restorative practices. Delving into my practice deeper, I have learned that by going inside, my body knows best - checking in with the Kosha's enables a supportive practice which seems to continue to evolve and change – just like life as we know it. Each limb is important to maximize mind body and spirit, every limb is equally as important. Continuing to grow from this foundation is desirable, but needs to come from a sincere and authentic place.

The Eight Limb Path

The Eight Limb path is made up of ten ethical precepts which allow us to be at **peace and balance** within our self, and others – all things really.

Yamas (wisdom – ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacharya, aparigraha)

Niyamas (soulfully – shaucha, santosha, tapasswadhya, ishvarapranidhana)

Asanas – dynamic physical postures that help one to keep the body strong, in balance, flexible and relaxed. It strengthens the central nervous system as well as the endocrine system. It allows one to focus on the internal, increasing awareness of tapping into mind body connection, which creates space for yoga to permeate every cell the of the body.

Pranayama – prana means life force. It involves breathing practices that help to develop and facilitate the movement of prana throughout the body which detoxifies the body and clarifies the mind.

Pratyahara – this is purposely paying attention toward silence rather than towards things.

Dharana – this is involves focusing attention in on one direction only – cultivating inner perceptual awareness.

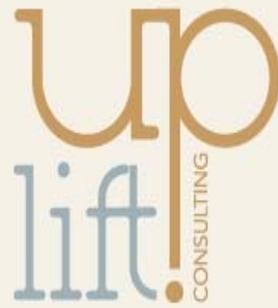
Dhyana – this follows dharana and it's sustaining awareness under all conditions. It's a state of meditation.

Samadhi – this is a state of the mind into silence – where the breath, body, mind become One. This is followed by Dhyana.

All of the above can be introduced into classes, at various points, either covertly or overtly. Not only will classes be taught foundational asanas, but it's so beneficial to integrate the yamas and niyamas simply by speaking about its application. For example, in each posture that is being taught focus on one yamas throughout the class: ahimsa – in today's class, we're focusing on kindness and the intention is to observe and to take a peek inside our body with a sense of curiosity, ease and kindness, to observe thoughts in each posture, focusing on internal awareness and bathing every cell of the body with kindness. After the class you can talk about how this can potentially translate to 'off the mat' – let kindness radiate: being kind at work, as you make dinner etc. It's the sharing of this wisdom that helps others to realize the benefits of the practice – it's just not about the physical posture; there's so much more!



Patanjali – The Yoga Sutras & The Eight Limb Path



Patanjali speaks of the Balance of Opposition – On and off the mat, we find ourselves in a constant dance of ‘balance of opposition’. On the mat, it’s the play of strength, balance and flexibility – creating space and mental focus for all three to align perfectly by way of the breath. And, having the courage to let go of what doesn’t serve you. It’s not just about the physical posture, this also includes the marriage of the mind, emotions and spirit as well as the play of the Gunas. To find joy in where we are right now, whatever the circumstance may be – it doesn’t get any better than this, right here and now. Taking these moments to express gratitude and to be in a position to practice such a wonderful art.

Two Sutras on Asana by Patanjali

2.47 – prayatna (effort)-saithilya (relaxation)-ananta (endless) – samapatti (coincidence). It is accompanied by the relaxation of tension and the coincidence with the infinite. Thoughts on this aphorism as it’s laid out by Georg Feuerstein: It’s cultivating a sense of relaxation through the use of the breath to get inside, explore internally to expand the posture infinitely – a loosening up and widening into space, fluidity with movement. Often times, we approach the mat with the tension of life, past and future, it is here where the balance of effort to control our mind with letting things unfold, naturally as they should facilitated by deep relaxation, transpires.

2.48 – tatas (thence)-dvandva (pair of opposites)-anabhighata (unassailability). Thence results unassailability by the pairs- of -opposites. This focuses on the balancing of opposites and it’s with everything in life – on and off the mat, that we are faced with opposites – in relationships, action in inaction/inaction in action, hot/cold, pain/pleasure which are experienced through the senses – this is what we are all too familiar, our subconscious has been programmed with external events and environmental factors (good and bad) that have caused an imbalance in thought and action. One can balance thoughts and actions through posture, moving into a more mindful state on the mat, ripples out to day to day living – this is the beauty of Yoga.

Every asana is a learning journey and requires a balance of the opposites – the mind and breath focus on one area of the posture and then inevitably give up another area of the posture that requires attention. It’s a dance and balancing act to **‘find your fit’** in each asana, balancing “effort and surrender” into “*Joyous Effort*”. Then it breaks down and you go back to the beginning, as is life.



Yoga and Nutrition



The traditional Yogic diet is vegetarian. Yogis practice non-violence and respect for all living things and try to maximize their full potential by increasing positive flow and energy. What we eat has huge impact on our energy levels. A yogic diet should include foods that are easy to digest, clean, come from a good energy source and fuel overall good health. Diet is key to individual practice – it sustains energy levels, mental clarity, and the ability to focus. A Yogini is concerned with foods that have an effect on the mind-body connection — foods that are *sattvic* (greens, whole foods-nuts, seeds, fruits, grains, honey), instead of *rajastic* (tea, coffee, eggs, garlic, onion) or *tamasic* (overeating, alcohol, over-ripened foods).

Whole and or raw foods are recommended whenever possible. Whole foods are foods that are in a natural state. At their most basic, whole foods are “fresh, local food grown without toxic chemicals an processed without harmful additives.” A balanced diet should include foods low in cholesterol and high in complex carbohydrates as well as fruits and vegetables rich in minerals and vitamins.

How and when to eat is also important. One should not eat too late at night and food should be freshly prepared and eaten with attention, respect and gratitude. The attitude of the person preparing the food is important as well, as the mood of the cook permeates the food. It’s also important to identify with foods that fit your Ayurvedic constitution or Dosha — Pitta, Vata, and Kapha. Some foods which are recommended for a ayurvedic constitutions may not be suitable for others; for example, milk, a sattvic food, is generally good for a Pitta constitution, it may not suit someone with a Kapha constitution.

***“When the breath is unsteady, the mind is unsteady.
When the breath is steady, the mind is steady, and
the yogi becomes steady.”***

Pranayama is a Sanskrit word meaning "restraint of the prana or breath". The word is composed of two Sanskrit words, Prāna, life force or vital energy, and āyāma, to suspend or restrain. This tool involves breathing practices that help to develop and facilitate the movement of prana throughout the body to detoxify and clarify the mind. Pranyama is directly linked to the spiritual body – it's the Life Force — and the practice of breath control is a spiritual cleansing the mind and body.

Breathing is an autonomic function of the body. The process is performed even without concentrating on it. It is a normal part of our life, though many at times we fail to pay attention to it. Here are some reasons why it's important to pay attention:

Benefits of Pranayama

Pranayama reduces toxins in our bodies

It plays a vital role in maintaining and assisting the digestive system

Breath control improves metabolism and general health

Pranayama develops and improves the ability to concentrate, focus, and handle difficult situations

It banishes stress and relaxes the body increasing tranquility, calm, and peace of mind

Pranayama offers a better self-control that also involves control over one's physical body

Pranayama leads to a spiritual journey through a relaxed body and mind

Mantras and Meditation

Mantras

A mantra uses the power and vibration of speech to create a sacred sound. They are ancient and they work. Mantras are another tool to be used on the road to enlightenment to raise one's level of consciousness. The Yogi B.K.S. Iyengar defines 'mantra' as a sacred thought or prayer.

OM is the most common mantra. OM is eternal. When chanted its pronounced *aaauuuuuuummm* and closed with *Shanti* three times. I introduce this mantra to beginners as an opportunity to use their voices in a healing and restorative way and to allow a connection with the mind and body. It can be uncomfortable at first but when you connect with the sound, it can be used as a powerful tool to help calm the mind. By incorporating *Shanti*, one is chanting for eternal peace. First *Shanti* – peace to yourself, second *Shanti* – peace to the group, third *Shanti* – peace to those who need it. Try it ☺

Even for advanced groups, I think it's important to go back to the beginning as we often lose sight of "why we do what we do". Explaining the significance and importance behind the mantra allows us to use it as a tool to build self-awareness.

Our breath, like our heartbeat, is the most reliable rhythm in our lives. When we become attuned to this constant rhythm, our breath can gradually teach us to come back to the original silence of the mind."

~ Donna Farhi

Meditation

There are many different types and methods of meditation. The one I gravitate to and teach is mindfulness meditation facilitated by breath – paying purposeful, non-judgmental attention to things just as they are, moment by moment. This is facilitated by following the breath on the inhale and the exhale. Listening to the sound of the breath as it enters the body (*So — I am*) then the sound of the breath leaving the body (*Hum — That I Am*). As thoughts enter the mind, kindly acknowledge them and allow the thoughts to exit as you re-focus on the breath and repeat the dance. This is how I have explained mindfulness meditation to beginners and it's been well received. To an advanced group, I share the same knowledge but deepen the level of awareness, allowing the body and mind to lead inward and open to receiving moments of stillness, contentment, and bliss — ultimately leading to a greater awareness of the Self.

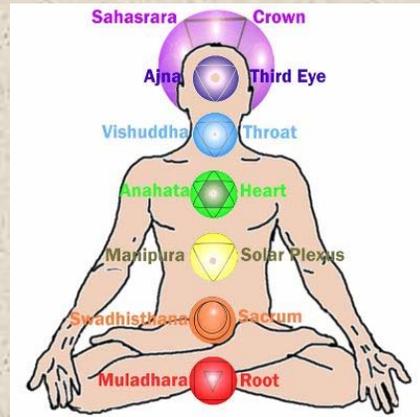
Mantras can be used as a meditative tool — repeat the mantra aloud until the mantra starts repeating itself. It's a concentrative discipline that focuses the mind to access a deeper form of meditation that leads to *Samadhi*, or the ultimate level of meditative awareness. You can also use *Malas* (prayer beads) as a tool to stay focused.

The repetition of mantra is sometimes referred to as *japa* meditation and is a very powerful technique that reminds us how the power of words can influence and reprogram our subconscious mind.

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Chakras

Chakra comes from the Sanskrit word meaning "spinning wheel" or wheel of energy spinning inward. Chakras are energy centres located in the subtle body — the practice of yoga asanas can allow one to tap into the various centres in order to balance and create harmony. The following chart explains:



	Sanskrit Name	Location	Color	Central Issue	Mantra	Goals	Element
Root (1)	Muladhara (root/support)	Base of spine	red	survival, grounding	Lam	Stability, grounding, physical health, prosperity, trust	Earth
Sacral (2)	Svadhithana (sweetness)	Abdomen, Genitals, lower back, hips	orange	Sexuality, emotions, desire	Vam	Fluidity, pleasure, healthy sexuality, feeling	Water
Solar Plexus (3)	Manipura (lustrous Jewel)	Solar Plexus	yellow	Power, will	Ram	Vitality, spontaneity, strength of will, purpose, self-esteem	Fire
Heart (4)	Anahata (unstruck)	Heart "area"	green	Love, relationships	Yam	Balance, compassion, self-acceptance, good relationships	Air
Throat (5)	Vishudha (purification)	Throat	blue	Communication	Ham	Clear communication, creativity, resonance	Sound
Brow (6)	Ajna (to perceive)	Brow	indigo	Intuition, imagination	Om	Psychic perception, accurate interpretation, imagination, clear seeing	Light
Crown (7)	Sahasrara (thousandfold)	Top of head, cerebral cortex	violet	Awareness	AUM	Wisdom, knowledge, consciousness	Information

Asanas — The Fundamentals

Asana	Sanskrit Name	Family	Counter	Drishti	Movement of Spine	Benefits	Cautions	Checkpoints/Teaching Points
Downward Dog	Adho Mukha Svanasana	Partial Inversion, Balancing and Restorative Pose (supported by strap w/ or w/out partner)	Childs Pose (Balasana)	Between feet	Flexion/Dorsi Flexion	stretching, strengthening, focus, willpower, relieves stress, energizes the body, relieves low back pain, insomnia, reduces thoracic kyphosis (exaggerated curvature of upper back), releases deeply held tension in spine	Carpal tunnel syndrome, high blood pressure, headache	Spread to the fingers, anchoring hands, palms lay flat-pushing away from the mat, spread to the shoulders, creating space between the ears, shoulders moving down the back, forearms rotating in, spread of sitting bones/rising, heals reaching for the ground w/o locking the knee, engaging the quads moving femur back into the hamstring, elongating the spine - balancing the weight and force between the hands and the heels. Ease of Breathing
Triangle	Utthita Trikonasana	Standing Pose	Standing Forward Bend	Upward, forward or downward - stick with one spot	Lateral Flexion	Improve digestion, circulation, relieves menopausal discomfort, signs of sciatica, stretches the arches, calves, hamstrings and groin, opens the throat, chest, shoulders and hips, lengthens spine, stabilizes and strengthens legs and torso, increases muscular endurance, builds focus, willpower, stimulates the mind, relieves stress	Neck injury – don't look up, low blood pressure, congestive heart disorders	Align one foot with the arch of other foot. Width of stance – ankles in line with wrists, ideally. Look for length in spine and spinal alignment vs touching mat. Chin tuck-in slightly. Arm in-line – not waving back or forward. Ensure strong and stable – weight evenly distributed – don't collapse all of weight into the front foot or compromise the length of torso. Ease of Breathing - Keep back of neck long.
Revolved Triangle	Purvitta Trikonasana	Standing Pose	Standing Forward Bend	Upward, forward or downward - stick with one spot	Flexion/Rotation	Improves digestion and circulation, tones and stretches the calf, thigh, hamstring, abdominal muscles, lengthens spine, opens the throat, chest and shoulders, opens hips/groin and hamstrings. Builds focus.	Migraine, acute back pain	Hips squared in-line – drawing one hip forward and the other back (Right hip in the line with right heel - don't veer off). Stance is a bit shorter and feet are line with the back foot turned out on a slight angle. Keep the spine long and evenly distributed weight from back to front foot. Keep back of neck long; elongate spine. Ease of Breathing - free rhythmic breath connecting with the core, from your tail thru to top of your head - then begin to open arms - naturally will extend and rotate
Wide Angle	Prasarita Padottanasana	Standing Pose/Gentle Inversion	Standing Forward Bend	At the floor, tip of nose or eyes closed	Abduction/Flexion	Strengthens feet, ankles, knees, inner thighs, releases hamstrings, lower back, improves digestion, circulation, tones abdominal cavity, reduces backache, relieves headache, calming.	Low back injury	Take a wide stance – ankles in line with wrist. Feet slightly turned in, length in the spine – keep straight, engage hamstrings but don't lock the knee, ground the feet, spread sitting bones, fingertips in line with your toes, bent elbows, and crown of head on a block or hands on block or to the mat - shoulders away from ears. Hinging from hip joints. Keep back of neck long. Ease of Breathing
Shoulder Stand	Sarvangasana	Inversion	Headstand/Rest on your back or hug your knees	At the toes	flexion (chest to chin)	stretches, strengthens the neck, shoulders, rhomboids, relieves sinus pressure, stimulates thyroid, parathyroid and prostate function, reduces varicose veins, relieves stress, calming, stimulates nervous system - balances nourishes endocrine system/metabolic functions, heats the body	Neck or disc injury, menses, first tri-pregnancy, high blood pressure	Feel grounded through the shoulders - energetically, maintain natural curve in c-spine, weight of hips slightly into back of hands, rotate thighs inward, lengthen tailbone and keep the feet relaxed, jaw relaxed and facilitate deep breathing with ease and awareness. Arms can be also on the mat lengthwise. Ease of breathing
Plow	Halasana	Inversion	Rest on your back/hug your knees	At the top of the thighs	Hip and Spinal Flexion	Assists in relieving back aches, stimulates thyroid and parathyroid (endocrine system), stretches shoulders, calms the mind, reduces stress, improves digestion	Menses, neck injury, asthma, pregnancy, high blood pressure	Feel grounded in your shoulders, lower legs from shoulder stand, move the chest toward the chin, ensure length in the torso/vertical, keep your hips above your shoulders using your hands to support, adjust feet, ease of breathing
Crow	Bakasana	Semi-Inversion	Childs Pose (Balasana)	Forward and down	Flexion	Improves balance, coordination, improves digestion, strengthens abs - builds core, opens hips and back, strengthens arms and wrists, improves concentration and focus	Carpal tunnel, pregnancy, wrist or shoulder injury	Standing with feet hip-width apart bend knees place hands flat on floor - wide spread; bring knees to back of your upper arms - lifting one leg at a time. Don't place the weight into the arm or you will bruise - shift the weight upwards - engage the core in order to maintain height and length in torso. Keep a steady gaze, ease of breathing.
Headstand	Sirasana	Inversion	Childs Pose (Balasana)	Tip of Nose	Extension	Improves digestion, strengthens spinal muscles, strengthens arms, legs, and abdomen, improves circulation, reduces varicose veins, calms the mind, relieves stress	Pregnancy: If you are experienced with this pose, you can continue to practice it late into pregnancy.	Fingers interlocked - emphasis on index and middle fingers-forming a cup shape - for your head to be supported. Anchor forearms, keeping wrists in line/perpendicular to floor. Keep elbows same width as shoulders. Bend knees use core strength to lift off and keep shoulder blades engaged and keep spine long and straight, press forearms down.
Bow	Dhanurasana	Backbend	Downward Dog or Childs Pose or Lying on Belly	Forward or under nose	Extension/Hyperextension	Strengthens the back and thighs. Opens and releases the chest, heart, and lungs.	Neck or back injuries - but could probably do modified versions	Lie on your belly - breath mindfully for a good 3 breaths to promote ease. Hold onto your heels, keeping thighs parallel. Extend from your pelvis through to crown - lengthening spine. Only belly stays on the floor. Recommended to do in steps before promoting whole posture. Ease of breathing.
Wheel	Urdva Dhanurasana	Backbend	Standing Forward Bend/Hug knees	Forward	Extension/Hyperextension	Strengthens the shoulders, back and legs, invigorates the lungs, increases stamina and stimulates kidneys	Neck, back or knee injury, carpal tunnel	Ensure preparatory poses and shoulder/hips are open first. Press your hands downward. Bending knees, feet hip-width apart/parallel. Fingers pointed toward feet. Lift torso first, come to head. Chest rises. Straighten your arms. Press down inner edges of feet. Ease of breathing.

Balancing Postures & Koshas

Balancing postures have a myriad of benefits. They assist with quieting the mind/mental chatter, increasing focus and energy and building stamina, strength, flexibility and will power — physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Equally important, balancing postures help facilitate ‘centering’, grounding, and rootedness by establishing a firm foundation from the earth.

Like the majority of postures, they are symbolically linked to nature by receiving the energy and nourishment from the Earth, just like firm rooted trees. Making this connection with the earth creates a wonderful extension and elongation in the spine inspiring feelings of rootedness, a softness within it, and an allowance for all movement to flow through the body, just like the branches of tree — strong, yet soft and fluid.

We can bring this quality to all our asanas by asking: Where is my grounding and connection with the Earth? How can I allow for more growth, more strength, more balance?

The Koshas are like levels of a human being, forming a road map that allows for self-discovery and health that comes from an ancient spiritual science called Vedanta – it’s imperative to gain an understanding of how Yoga postures unfold- as it’s within this process that one receives cues, hints and a more comprehensive picture about the Self.

As one continues to identify and check in with what’s happening within all areas of the body, we learn a greater deal about how the practice can better support our over-all constitution and physical make-up. Each kosha has a direct impact to a posture – as self inquiry continues it’s important to get curious as to what the body needs prior to beginning a practice, questions like: 1) How’s my physical body today? 2) What’s my energy – prana like today – is it high, lo, 3) How am I feeling emotionally –up or down, just right 4) What is the quality of my mental thought patterns? 5) What’s happening on a spiritual level? As one begins to perform this type of check in, we can then begin to build and fine tune our practice that best supports, where we might be on any particular day, in any moment.

An inspirational poem, that was shared in The Pedagogic Model for Teaching, talk by Donna Farhi, called The Wisdom in the Closet, by Heather Sellers (June 2007, Sun Magazine). Her words as she speaks about and reflects on her writing teacher. Wonderful reminders on how we can aspire to be and act as [Yoga] Teachers.

“I was a C student, not much of a reader, this is what we forget as teachers, how close the poor student often is to doing good work and how great the distance feels to her between who she is and who she could be.

We forget how painful it is to be between Self, how all of us always are between Self’s and that it’s in that desolate gap that everything true and useful is happening.

The trick for the writer and the teacher and the person in the making is to stay aware of the gap and to write from and teach from, to be from the other side, the better side.

We teachers forget that we are intimidating to our students. We forget to invite them into the room with us, into the process of authoring everything because they dare not come in without an invitation.

We forget to send them on errands, it’s easier to do things ourselves. We forget to ask them again and again. What happened? What did you notice? What did you see that was new? We forget teaching is the process of showing others how to shape chaos into something that you can carry around, a story you can tell, a thing that makes sense.

The art of teaching involves staying curious, darting about the edges of your students sentences and waiting for an opening, a sign of vulnerable aliveness, it’s hard to remain patient, as Jerry always was waiting for a glimpse of that Self, that wants to burst out, it’s so easy to go on and on and on, telling them everything that you know, it feels like teaching, but it’s not.

Teaching is giving errands, teaching is letting the student write the story, and teaching is asking questions that surprise both of you.”

Uplift! - A Daily Yoga Practice

10-30mins Practice– (depending on how much time you have)

As you gently rise in the morning, before entering into your mental patterns, take note of your breath and your surroundings. Tune into your body by taking three deep inhales and exhales. How do you feel? What are your thoughts like? How are you feeling emotionally? What's arising or coming to the surface? How are you feeling physically — stiff, awake, sluggish? **(3-5 min)**

Over morning coffee or tea, begin to take note of what you are grateful for and note your intention for the day. This note-taking could lead to a self-reflection journal, a powerful tool I recommend. **(5-10 min)**

Clear a spot in your home where you can practice both meditation and asanas.

Breathing and Meditation (5 to 15 min)

Begin in a cross-legged position (*Sukasana*) and close your eyes, signaling a 'going inside'. Tune into your breath and follow your inhale and exhale without trying to control them.

Do one full round of *Nadi Shodhan Pranayama* (see Appendix). For each full breath visualize and move through the chakras.

Go back to the breath and repeat the mantra: I am Balance or "*Aham Samatva*". *Aham* means, "the essence of who I am beyond the concepts of who I think I am". *Samatva* means, "balance". In short, *Aham Samatva* means, "balance is my true nature".

Asana Sequence (5 to 15 mins)

Stand in Mountain Pose or *Tadasana*— feel grounded and rooted into the Earth.

Spinal Rolls – three times

Cat/Cow

Child's Pose

Downward Dog or *Adho Mukha Svanasana* — relax and enjoy this pose. Walk the dog to lengthen and loosen the legs.

Return to Child's Pose or Forward Fold — hang out for a bit to let your tension unravel

Feet up the wall

Corpse Pose or *Savasana* — the longer you can stay in this pose the better

Return to a seated position, hands into prayer pose, and send out positive vibes to all beings or *Om, Shanti* — may all beings be at Peace

Glossary

Hatha

The word *Hatha* is a compound of the words *ha* and *tha* meaning "sun" and "moon". According to the Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dictionary, the word "*hatha*" means, "forceful". According to B.K.S. Iyengar, the word, *hatha*, is used adverbially in the sense of "against one's will". Hatha yoga is so called because it prescribes rigorous discipline in order to find union with The Supreme. It's a balance between the sun and moon – strength and flexibility – feminine and masculine. The goal of hatha yoga is to bring the body into a perfect state of health so that the soul can come into full expression.

Raja Yoga

The yoga path concerned principally with the cultivation of the mind using meditation (*dhyana*).

Bhakti Yoga

The yoga path of love and devotion. The principles are to learn the various emotions and feelings of the human mind. Let the mind not manage, but the Yogi to supervise the thoughts and the mind – so our thoughts aren't who we are. Keeping the body clean with *sattvic* food and practicing devotion are key elements.

Karma Yoga

The yoga path of selfless work, without any expectations in return. Laws of *dharmic* action and living with true purpose.

Jnana Yoga

The yoga path of knowledge and intellect through the teachings of the Vedas, Upanishads, and the Bhagavad Gita. The student seeks out a Guru or Teacher and practices *Dhayana* – meditation.

Mantra Yoga

A mantra is a sound or word used to help focus the mind and is used as a tool to achieve stillness, or until the mantra repeats itself. The word Mantra is related to *manas* (the mind); Yoga means, "to unite with our Origin". Mantra Yoga would then mean to unite using the tool of mantra.

Vinyasa

Vinyasa means "flow" of movement connected with the breath. Vinyasa is a vehicle that is used to allow a posture to unfold — also referred to as a 'mini-vinyasa' — as well as the vehicle to connect one posture to the next through a natural flow, all of which is connected to the breath. Vinyasa Yoga is also referred to power yoga and, more traditionally, ashtanga yoga.

Breathing Exercises For Balancing and Grounding

Nadi Shodhan Pranayama

Balancing the *Ida* (left nostril) and *Pingala* (right nostril) can awaken the *Sushumna nadi* (the channel carrying kundalini). Nadi is a passage (little river) in which the breath/energy flows which has healing/cleansing qualities. Nadi Shodhan Pranayama is best performed after Neti first thing in the morning while repeating, "*I am in balance — aham, samatva*". It's calming, soothing, and increases focus and mental clarity. It nourishes the soul and brings a feeling of overall wellbeing and balance to the mind, body, and spirit. Use your thumb to close the right nostril, place your index and middle finger on your third eye, alternating thumb and third finger to open and close channels. Inhale through one nostril, close the channel, exhale through the other, then inhale and close the channel to exhale through the first nostril. This is one round. Retention can be added as one advances in the practice.

Surya Bhedi

Surya is sun in the body. *Pingala nadi* represents energy of Sun or vital energy. *Surya Bhedi Pranayama* increases vital energy in the body and it is a revitalizing Pranayama. It is practiced by inhaling with right nostril, then performing *kumbhaka* with *bandhas* (Jalandhar Bandha or Chin Lock, Moola Bandha and Uddiyan Bandha or Abdominal Lock) and exhaling through left nostril. This Pranayama stimulates the sympathetic nervous system and left part of the brain.

Ujjayi (Victorious breath)

During inhalation and exhalation a typical sound (*Ujjayi Sound*) should be created by compressing the epiglottis in the throat. Ujjayi breath is often referred to as an ocean sound. Ujjayi sound can be combined with *So-Hum* (I am that I am). Ujjayi Pranayama is therapeutic and especially useful for insomnia, tension, and heart disease. It is also particularly useful when the asana practice is physically challenging as it heats up the body.

The Hatha Yoga Pradipika. Sage Swatmarama. 14th century. Known as the classic manual on Hatha Yoga which includes 389 stanzas or grouping of text and is organized into four chapters: asanas, pranayama, Kundalini, and raja yoga.

The Gheranda-Samhita. A late 17th century text considered to be the most encyclopaedic of the three classic texts on hatha yoga. Gheranda Samhita is a manual of yoga taught by Gheranda to Chanda Kapali. Unlike other hatha yoga texts, the Gheranda Samhita speaks of a sevenfold yoga: Shatkarma for purification, Asana for strengthening, Mudra for steadying, Pratyahara for calming, Pranayama for lightness, Dhyana for perception, Samadhi for isolation. The text itself follows this division in seven chapters, and has a focus upon the shatkarmas, thus this text is sometimes said to describe ghatastha yoga. For instance, the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali describes an eightfold path (yama and niyama instead of shatkarma and mudra, and addition of dharana). The closing stanzas on samadhi teach different methods than those described by Patanjali.”

The Shiva Samhita. The Shiva Samhita is considered the most comprehensive and the most democratic treatise on hatha yoga. Possibly written in 17th or 18th century. Shiva Samhita talks about the complex physiology, names 84 different asanas (only four of which are described in detail), describes five specific types of prana and provides techniques to regulate them. It also deals with abstract yogic philosophy, mudras, tantric practices, and meditation. There is Buddhist influence throughout the text.

Bhagavad Gītā. Also considered among the most important texts in the history of literature and philosophy. The teacher of the Bhagavad Gita is Lord Krishna, who is revered by Hindus as a manifestation of God (Parabrahman) Himself, and is referred to within as Bhagavan, the Divine One. The context of the Gita is a conversation between Lord Krishna and the Pandava prince Arjuna taking place on the battlefield before the start of the Kurukshetra War. Responding to Arjuna's confusion and moral dilemma about fighting his own cousins who command a tyranny imposed on a captured State, Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna his duties as a warrior and prince, and elaborates on different Yogic and Vedantic philosophies, with examples and analogies. This has led to the Gita often being described as a concise guide to Hindu theology and also as a practical, self-contained guide to life.

Other Personal Favourites

Yoga, Mind, Body and Spirit, A Return to Wholeness. Donna Farhi.

Bringing Yoga to Life. Donna Farhi.

The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali. Georg Feuerstein.

Living Your Yoga. Judith Lasater.

The House of Belonging. David Whyte.

Yoga, The Spirit and Practice of Moving into Stillness. Erich Schiffmann.

Yoga Teachers Toolbox, A Powerful Tool for Healing. Joseph and Lilian LePage.



I beg you....to have patience with everything unresolved in you and try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers which could not be given you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without ever noticing it, live your way into the answer.....

~ Rainer Maria Rilke

Love and Light.



“Smile, breathe and go
slowly”

~Thich Nhat Hanh