

September Wellness: 7 Things You Didn't Know About Yoga and Meditation



What a year 2020 has been so far! As the summer winds down, this could be the perfect time to decompress from all of the unfamiliar stressors we've had over the past several months. Are you looking for a way to clear your mind and hit the restart button? Yoga and meditation are fantastic ways to do just that. **September is National Yoga Awareness Month which serves a goal to educate the public about the health benefits of yoga.**

Yoga is a way for people to focus in on and blend the concepts of mind, body, and spirit. In fact, the etymology of the word yoga is "unite". Meditation is a way to pay close attention to the present moment, to not think or worry about the past or the future; focus on the now, to be aware and centered.

Namaste. I think we've all heard this word before. But what does it mean? This word is derived from Sanskrit, an ancient Indo-European language of India from thousands of years ago. It is used as a greeting and leave-taking and translates to, "I bow to the divine in you". It is typically said with hands pressed together and a slight bow. Today, many use this word as a simple "hello" or "fair well".

According to Dr. Kathleen Hall, a lifestyle expert in stress, work-life balance, and mindful living, **"Ten million American adults now say they practice some form of meditation regularly. This is twice as many as a decade ago."** With clinical diagnoses of anxiety on the rise, those of us who are open to practicing meditation on a regular basis could be on the right path to calmness.

Did you know that there are several different limbs of yoga all with their own "paths" or end goals? Some examples are: yama (abstinences), asana (yoga postures), pranayama (breath control), pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses), dharana (concentration), and dhyana (meditation). You could really get lost in how much there is to learn about all of it.

Experts credit yoga's meditative elements as the key for stabilizing the lining of blood vessels. Yoga has been shown to raise levels of GABA (a brain neurotransmitter), helping to improve mood and alleviating symptoms of depression and anxiety.

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But why is that? Does our health really improve by a simple act of movement? Research suggests, practicing gratitude literally heals your physical body. So it makes sense that yoga, a combination or “union” of physical movement and mindfulness, can do the same. Best results will be achieved if your practice is made into a daily habit over the course of several months. To fully gain its benefits, essentially, it should become a lifestyle.

Yoga helps foster creative energy. Yoga and meditation can teach us to be free and let go. As it relates to art, it can teach us to allow the piece to become what it becomes. A great article posted on Yoga International states, “As we become more perceptive in our yoga practice—by examining our thoughts, movements, and breath—we become more perceptive in other areas of life, including creating art... yoga practices can teach us as artists to bypass the judge and just make the thing and let the chips fall as they may”.

Let’s challenge ourselves to let go, to be aware and centered, and to treat our bodies well by focusing on unionizing our mind, body, and spirit. Tycor’s challenge is to practice simple stretches and quiet time for a period of 15 minutes every day, or longer if you choose. So many things happen that are outside of our control. Let’s let go and “let the chips fall as they may”.

Namaste.

Sources

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