

Journey to Wellness with Yoga



Yoga teacher, Kalikamurti Suich

IT HAS been my honour to teach yoga this year with a number of MHACA clients and staff on Wednesday evenings. Each week when I have taught yoga I have seen the different photos going up charting peoples growth to wellness and this progress has also been mirrored in the yoga class.

Yoga is a science of health and also a systemic process that enables each person to progress along a path of fulfilment. The classes have started with energisers and activators, movements designed to get the prana or vital energy moving.

When we are unwell, energy can tend to stagnate at the point of illness—such as the mind. The activators and energisers assist the energy to flow through out the whole body; they help to counter the negative effects of the medication such as stiffening and sleepiness.

Postures

Once we have the energy moving we have gone on to 'asanas'—postures—that are designed to enable the body to remember being flexible and well. Each class has been designed so that all members are able to perform all the postures.

In any one posture some people might be doing it physically, while some might be imagining the movement. The brain does not know the difference between the imagining of

doing something and the actual doing it. In this way we have used our creative powers to gain a picture in our minds of how we want to be—then we can follow it like a map.

Breathing

After doing postures/asanas we practice some breathing exercises. When people are unwell they often shorten their breathing—meaning the breath rate gets quicker and only the top of the chest is used. In the breathing practices, we remind the body of a true resting rhythm and how to breath in and out deeply and slowly, therefore emptying the lungs of stale air and allowing the body to release toxins and negative memories and behaviors.

Releasing tension

Each class ends with a gentle relaxation—or 'yoga nidra'. This practice is extremely helpful for releasing tension in the body as well as in the mind.

Slowly we learn how to become the witness of our mind—to learn the skill of watching our thoughts instead of them taking over.

The body rests—which is important as illness is very tiring, dealing with the effects of medication is very tiring, and sometimes continuing day by day can be exhausting. Twenty minutes of yoga nidra practice is equivalent to 80 minutes of sleep. It is useful for assisting with the management of all pain, physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. Last term MHACA purchased some relaxation CDs which are now available for a low cost.

Everyone is welcome

If you haven't tried yoga and would like to give it ago please drop in to MHACA on Wednesday evenings at 6.00pm.

In the class we laugh and have fun. We discuss healing and wellness and create a space in our lives to visualise the way we want to be and continue on our journey to wellness. I look forward to seeing many more people come. ✕

No previous experience necessary.

In peace, Kalikamurti
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Kalikamurti Suich

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- Taking charge of life**

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Yoga for your Mental Health

YOGA is a 5000-year-old science of physical, emotional, mental and physical health. Hence there is has been an enormous amount of research and application in using yoga when suffering from a mental illness. Yoga serves to provide practical strategies that work on all aspects of the body and assist with a general improvement in wellbeing.

postures

Asanas or postures are used to stimulate the physical body, which can often become lethargic. They assist the person to stay in touch with their physical body and therefore the physical world around them.

Asanas assist in redirecting the energy of the mind, often so busy in illnesses such as schizophrenia and OCD as well as depression, when the thinking becomes negative and on a downward spiral. The mind, when it is overworking, uses up a great deal of energy, and so the asanas help to redirect the energy back into the body.

Emotionally-specific asanas are designed to make some emotions more calm, such as anger, and some emotions more energetic, such as feelings of hopelessness and helplessness.

Mentally, asanas help the mind to become more flexible again as we get used to putting our body into different poses; the mind learns to accept new ways of being and let go of old mental habits.

Spiritually the asanas work to revitalise our 'get up and go' our desire to be an active part of the world.

breathing

Pranayama - our breathing - always changes when we suffer any form of illness. We tend to change the way we breathe and become shallow breathers when we suffer any long-term illness. This means the body's system is continually being compromised and we feel out of breath with life.

Beginning with gentle and easy practices that are not hard to learn, illnesses such as anxiety phobias and depression can be assisted by learning to return to

our full spontaneous rhythm, as well as learning specific practices that assist the body to let go of trauma.

Breathing practices can be very easy to learn and provide a gentle way to make changes in ones mental health.

relaxation

Relaxation is now recommended for a wide range of illnesses, for example anxiety and panic attacks, OCD and so on. Many people can do with being more relaxed and long-term illness is extremely tiring.

Relaxation in the classical yoga tradition allows the body and mind to rest. It also helps the mind to let go of old negative thought patterns and habits of thinking. It is an easy practice as it can be done by simply lying down or sitting up and listening to the appropriate practice on a CD or tape.

meditation

Meditation has a significant amount of skills to offer people suffering some form of mental illness. With the help of a teacher to guide you in using the correct practice, there are specific techniques that assist to calm the mind, to reduce reactions to symptoms and over a period of time may reduce the mental illness itself.

benefits for the family

All family members can significantly benefit from attending yoga classes or learning some yoga skills.

Living with someone with any form of long-term or permanent illness is extremely exhausting. *It is said that if one person practices yoga in the family the whole family benefits.*

Attending a yoga class can often provide a welcome respite for carers or family members and the bonuses are that people walk away feeling more energised and having learnt new skills on how to stay centred, even when there is extreme external stress.

Yoga can be taught alongside western medical treatment and specifically in consultation with your doctor.

yoga services in town

There is quite a large range of yoga styles, classes and resources available in Alice Springs. Like any other service you use, it is important to enjoy the yoga. Keep searching until you find the type of yoga that seems appropriate to you.

A range of classes is taught at Beyond Breathing Space, and yoga therapy is also available from a couple of people in town. For more details please call Kalika on 8952 3638. Kalika also works as a counsellor and combines her expertise in counselling and yoga to assist you to be as well as you can be.

Specific classes can be taught for people with specific needs. If you have a group of 6 or more people that would like to attend their own yoga class, this can be arranged. We are also happy to come out and teach at your work place and can focus on the specific needs of participants. ✕

Please contact Kalikamurti Suich at Beyond Breathing Space on 8952 3638. For more details on the 6-week Yoga for Women classes see page 11.

