

Balancing Body, Mind, and Spirit with Yoga

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Yoga has hit the West with such momentum it seems you can find a studio in almost every neighbourhood. It is a reflection of how we, as a collective, really are becoming more mindful of how to take care of our bodies. And this is a wonderful thing!

The next step is the realization that Yoga is much more than another form of fitness or stress relief. It's true that regular yoga practice will most likely result in staying in better physical shape and reducing your stress levels, but there is more layers to Yoga that are worth exploring.

The second Yoga Sutra, '*Yogas Chitta Vritti Nirodha*', is a very simple way of understanding Yoga's deeper meaning. It is translated as 'Yoga is the removing of the fluctuations of the mind'. Broken down further,

-Yoga refers to Union (of Body, Mind, and Spirit)

-Chitta refers to the Mind or Consciousness

-Vritti refers to the fluctuations of our thoughts

-and Nirodha refers to removing or quieting.

This is why the ancient yogis developed the Yoga practices of asana, pranayama, and meditation. They were each methods, or steps, to quiet their minds. And in this state of stillness they were able to experience true Yoga, the Union and Oneness with All that is.

Of course this takes devotion, practice, and perseverance to achieve. Along the way you will continue to have an active mind, jumping from one thought to another; our thoughts mostly consisting of our desires, attachments, aversions, and beliefs. So, step one is to begin to observe the thoughts and their fleeting nature and step two is to choose not to identify with those thoughts, just allow them to drift by.

Choosing to stay in the present moment and witnessing what is happening in your mind, without identification and attachment, allows you to remain in a state of peace.

"To make the right choices in life, you have to get in touch with your soul. To do this, you need to experience solitude, which most people are afraid of, because in the silence you hear the truth and know the solutions." – Deepak Chopra

Namaste