

Dog: Fidelity, Loyalty, Assistance, Intelligence, Obedience, Protection, Community, Cooperation, Resourcefulness, Communication, Sensory Perception

Practice: Downward Facing Dog

From a table position, walk the hands out in front of the shoulders and spread the fingers and palms wide. Gently lift the knees off the earth a couple of inches.



Keep the knees bent, press the chest back towards the thighs, draw the shoulder blades back and down the body and bring the belly button back towards the spine. Walk out the legs for a bit until the body is able to sink both heels down towards the earth. Breathe and hold 1-3 minutes. To release, drop the knees back into table or take a look between the hands and step the feet up to meet them, landing in a forward fold.

Elephant: Memory, Strength, Ancient Wisdom, Power, Connection to Earth, Prosperity



Practice: Elephant Tracks the Ants

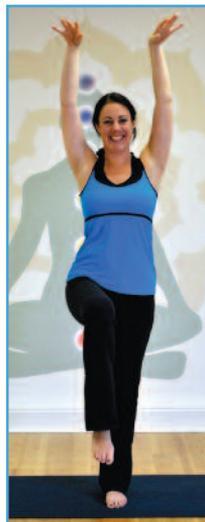
Start from a standing position, with the feet about mat distance apart. Inhale into a long back and exhale fold forward, hinging from the hips. Take a few breaths, and bend the knees if necessary to alleviate pressure in the low back or legs.

Let the head get heavy, the neck grow long and the arms dangle. When ready, start making figure eight or pendulum-like swaying movements with the torso. Allow the arms to come along for the ride, dragging the fingers on the earth if they are able to touch. Take the movements for 1-2 minutes before coming back to center and rounding up to standing

Crane: Solitude, Independence, Purity, Fluidity, Grace, Detachment

Practice: Flying Crane

From a standing position, bring the arms by the sides and the feet hip distance apart. With an inhalation lift the arms above the head, relax the hands. At the same time, bend the knee and lift the right foot off the ground as far as is comfortable and steady (note: some will barely lift the foot, others will bring the knee all the way up to hip height). With the exhalation, bring the arms down and right foot down, transferring the body weight over the left foot, lifting the right leg and the arms overhead. Continue moving side to side with the breath rhythm. Repeat 5-15 times, and notice how the movements mimic the silhouette of the crane in flight.



Lizard: Detachment from Ego, Regeneration, Facing Fear, Controlling Dreams, Moving in the Otherworld, Conservation, Agility



Practice: Lizard Lunge

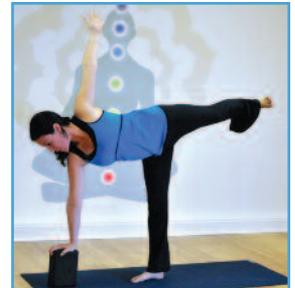
From a table position, step the right foot forward into a lunge. Walk the foot over to the right a couple of inches and bring the hands inside of the foot. With an exhalation, sink the pelvis forward and

down. Arms can stay long or the forearms can come down to the ground. Breathe and hold 1-3 minutes. Come out on an exhalation by taking the pelvis back and gently bringing the right knee back underneath the hip into table pose. Take a break in Child's Pose and repeat on the left side.

Moon: Receptivity, Femininity, Intuition, Illumination, Passivity, Influence, Cycles, Time, Fertility, Transition, Emotion, Perception, Progression, Mystery, Wonder, Discovery

Practice: Balancing Half Moon

Note: Practice with the back of the body against a wall to get a sense of the pose before trying it freestanding. A folding chair can replace the use of a block as a transitional support tool.



From a high lunge position with the left foot forward, inhale and lift the right leg to hip height.

Bring a block underneath the left shoulder and hold on with both hands while stabilizing and firming into the left leg. Rotate the right hip open and stack it over the left. Flex the right foot and send energy out through the heel. Once stable, keep left arm/hand directly under the left shoulder and use the block for support underneath. Inhale the right arm skyward and rotate the torso to bring it in line with the hip. Focus on one point on the floor with the eyes to help with balance. Over time, experiment with taking the gaze skyward towards the extended arm. Hold for 3-10 breaths. Release on an exhalation by bringing the extended arm back to the block, rotating the right hip back towards the earth and stepping back into the lunge. Repeat on the other side.

Butterfly: Metamorphosis, Transformation, Cycle of Life



Practice: Floating Butterfly into Butterfly Forward Fold

From a seated position, bring the soles of the feet together and draw them in towards the groin. Bring some length into the spine and energy up

through to the crown of the head. With the inhalation bring the knees up. With the exhalation bring the knees down. Repeat 5-10 times. When the movement is complete, with the knees down, fold forward with a long back on an exhalation. Find a natural stopping point in the fold and relax around it. Let the neck get long and the head get heavy. Give the body over to gravity and breathe. Hold for 1-3 minutes.

continued on page 20



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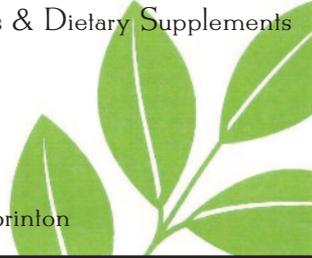
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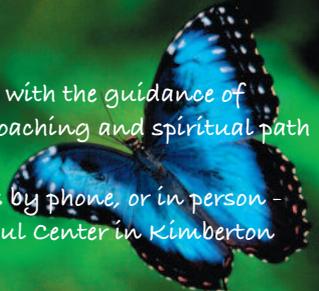
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Locust: *Travel, Progress, Faith, Overcoming Fear/Obstacles, Luck, Abundance, Trusting Instincts, Honoring Tradition*

Practice: Flying Locust

Start from a prone (belly down) position, with the feet mat distance apart the arms long by the sides. With the inhalation, lift the arms and legs bringing energy all the way into the fingers and toes. Breathe in the belly and explore side-to-side rolling like movements. Hold 1-2 minutes. At the end of the movement, bring the hands around, let one cheek rest and pause to notice the effects of the pose on the body.



Rabbit: *Magic, Good luck, Health, Alacrity, Agility, Fecundity, Abundance, Reproduction, Joy, Humility, Faithfulness, Conquering Fear, Selflessness*



Practice: Hare Pose

Note: Use a strap or tie to wrap around the heels and make up the difference in length if the hands cannot touch the feet.

From a table position, sit the buttocks back and reach the hands to grab onto the heels of both feet. With an inhalation, pick up the buttocks and lightly roll onto the forehead/crown of the head while rounding the spine. Stay grounded by firmly holding the heels and allowing the shoulders to relax with continued breath. Hold the pose for 5–10 breaths.

Pigeon: *Peace, Love, Gentleness, Messenger of Spirit, Communication, Maternity, Femininity, Prophecy*

Practice: Sleeping Pigeon

From a table position, slide the left knee in between the hands, finagle the left foot forward and lower the outer edge of the left hip and buttock to the earth. Take a look at the right leg behind you – there are 2 choices for the position of this leg – one is keep the knee bent, and the other is to extend it in order to bring the pelvis into a more of square position. Take a look at the left leg – there are 2 choices here as well – one is to keep the foot closer to the groin, and the other is take the foot away from the groin and create more of an L shape with the left leg. Experiment and choose the front/back leg combination that offers the best stretch for the IT band (outer edge of the left thigh, from the knee to buttock). With an exhalation, fold forward over the left leg and rest the forehead on the earth, or make a pillow for the forehead with stacked fists. Hold for 1-3 minutes and repeat on the right side.



Fish: *Fertility, Eternity, Creativity, Femininity, Good Luck, Happiness, Knowledge, Transformation*

Practice: Half Lord of the Fishes Pose

From seated, bring the legs long in front of the body. Bend the right knee and cross the right ankle over the left leg so that the right foot lands on the floor, outside of the left knee. Flex the left foot. With an inhalation, hug the knee with the left arm and lengthen through the spine. With an exhalation rotate the torso to the right, then the neck and head. Look over the right shoulder and take the gaze to the upper right corners of the eyes. Bring right hand behind the back, palm or fingertips to the ground, and the arm mirroring the spine. To gain more leverage to support the twist, place the left arm or elbow outside the right knee. Hold for 1-2 minutes while breathing deeply into the abdomen. When ready, slowly unwind the head, neck, shoulders and torso back to center. At center, straighten out the legs into staff pose. Bring the right leg long in front, flex the right foot, bend the left knee and cross the left leg over the right before twisting to the left.



Frog: *Luck, Purity, Renewal, Fertility, Healing, Metamorphosis, Transitions, Dreaming*

Practice: Wall Frog

Bring the narrow end of a yoga mat to a clutter free piece of wall space. With the arms behind the torso for support and the knees bent to the side, bring the buttocks about 12 inches away from the wall. Swing the legs around to face the wall and lower the torso into a reclined position. Bring the feet to the wall and rotate the hips, knees and feet out into a wide squat-like stance. If the position is too intense, hands can support the stretch by coming underneath the thighs. For more intensity, bring the hands to the inner thighs and encourage the rotation into the groin stretch, explore widening out the stance of the feet or bringing the buttocks closer to the wall. Hold for 1-3 minutes.



Bee: *Reincarnation, Communication, Concentration, Prosperity, Community, Celebration, Organization, Sweetness of Truth*

Practice: Bumble Bee Breath

Sit in a comfortable meditative seat. Bring some lift into the spine, relax the shoulders, soften the muscles of the face and bring the teeth slightly apart so that the jaw relaxes. Keep the lips together. Cover the ears with the thumbs and the eyes with the fingers, taking the elbows out to the sides. With an inhalation, slightly narrow the throat and listen to the sound of the breath as it enters the body. With the exhalation, breathe out slowly while making a long, low humming sound. With practice, both the inhalation and exhalation become long and smooth. Repeat 5-15 times. Then sit in silence for a couple of minutes to notice the after effects of practice. ▲





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Journey into the Labyrinth

ON A SCORCHING HOT SUMMER DAY AT A NEARBY PARK, an open patio umbrella rested on the sloping ground. It provided the only shade as I sat in the grass underneath it, sweat rolling off my body. Rubber mallet in one roughened hand and level in the other, I continued the arduous task of perfecting the curved lines of man-made blocks to create the labyrinth I had been contracted to design and lay out. While working, I reflected on my journey with the ancient and mysterious walking pattern called the labyrinth.

I was introduced to labyrinths several years ago when I spotted an article in *New Age Magazine* featuring a picture of Rev. Lauren Artress, then Canon of Grace Cathedral, seated within a labyrinth that had been woven into the Cathedral's carpet. The design was a replica of the one laid on the floor during the construction of the medieval Chartres Cathedral in France. The article was full of interesting information, and I put it into my "things I find fascinating" file.

A few years later, I rediscovered the labyrinth alongside the Tohickon Creek while on a wading expedition. My feet squishing in my water shoes, I stepped out of the swirling rapids of the creek to inspect a peaceful pond. On the ground nearby, I spotted a stone-lined circular trail that triggered a remembrance. The intriguing pattern looked like the labyrinth picture that I had filed away. I stepped onto its winding pathway and began a restorative meditative walk. I sensed the support of solid ground beneath me in contrast to the fluidity of the creek. Finishing my first labyrinth walk, somehow I knew that I was stepping onto an exciting new path.

Through Internet research, I found out that a labyrinth is designed by laying out concentric circles on a walking surface. The way the circles are connected makes it possible to enter the labyrinth, follow the path and reach a central goal. Unlike a maze, the labyrinth has no wrong turns or dead ends. Amazingly, the pattern itself is known to be over 3000 years old. It is non-denominational and cross-cultural, which makes it a universal symbol. By staying on the path, the walker is guided through an experiential journey often making discoveries along the way. Questions are answered; issues resolved; joyful or meditative states are reached while walking.

Soon after my findings, I set about creating a portable version of the Classical Seven Circuit labyrinth using rope to lay out the pattern and nails to anchor it to the ground. I became a self-invented itinerant labyrinth lady.



Toting my materials from place to place in a sturdy thrift shop suitcase, I attended conferences of interest to provide a space for participants to walk and process information.

During my Labyrinth Journey, I have delighted in synchronistic and often magical happenings - like the time a couple who had an anniversary walked onto one of my temporary labyrinths and shared with me their story of meeting on a labyrinth path, or when a musician carried his cello into the center of the labyrinth to play for the gathered crowd.

Later the same cellist contacted me to inform me of the existence of an International Labyrinth Society and the Annual Conference he planned to attend to recreate his musical walk. I immediately became a member and have enjoyed the conferences for the last 10 years.

Most recently, a special moment happened when I visited my son and his wife in their new home and they invited me on a surprise hike. After a long uphill climb in the Santa Monica Mountains, we reached the crest where they shared their find, a stone-lined labyrinth that had been mysteriously laid out on the mountaintop.

In its circular form, the labyrinth holds potential for creating connection and community. When we join to walk, our trek into the center often becomes a metaphorical spiritual pilgrimage. Staying on the path, though it sometimes takes us away from the center, we are led to our goal. In the center, we meet what is essential. Then we return, retracing our inward steps, reflecting on the discoveries to be shared while seated in our communal circle. The labyrinth has connected us. ▲

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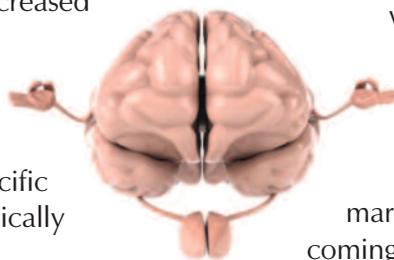
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The Science Behind 'Yoga Bliss'

SCIENCE IS CATCHING UP TO WHAT YOGIS ALREADY KNOW: yoga makes us feel better, and not just physically. Yoga has a significant, measurable impact on our mood and anxiety levels and even affects brain chemistry. In a study published in *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, a team led by researchers from Boston University reported the results of their study comparing yoga to walking. They measured mood and anxiety using paper-pencil assessments and used the brain-imaging technique Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy (MRS) to measure *Gamma-Amino Butyric Acid* (GABA), a neurotransmitter known to be a factor in anxiety and mood disorders.

Participants in the study engaged in either a yoga exercise program or a walking program for 60 minutes, three times a week, for 12 weeks. At the end of 12 weeks, the yoga participants had greater improvements in mood and anxiety compared to the walking group as well as increased GABA levels immediately after engaging in yoga practice.

Many studies have already shown a link between exercise and mood – in fact, exercise has been found to be as effective as anti-depressants in treating mild to moderate depression. Further studies have shown yoga to be effective in treating depression, anxiety, and even epilepsy, all of which are related to decreased GABA levels. The present researchers found in a previous study that a 60-minute yoga practice increased GABA levels by 27%. The new study was intended to find out if increases in GABA definitely correlate with changes in mood and anxiety, as well as to see if changes in GABA were specific to yoga or would occur in a metabolically similar walking exercise.



For the yoga-versus-walking study, participants were randomly assigned to either Iyengar-style yoga practice or a walking routine. All subjects were between 18-45 years old. They each had three MRS scans: one before the intervention, one just before the last exercise session, and one immediately after. In addition, they all took paper-pencil measures of mood and anxiety at baseline, and after exercising at weeks four, eight, and 12. A certified Iyengar yoga teacher taught the yoga participants a sequence of yoga postures. The walkers were assigned to metabolically similar walking, at a 2.5 mile-per-hour (mph) pace on flat ground that would mimic the metabolic impact of the specified Iyengar yoga practice. Thirty-four participants completed the study: 19 in the yoga group, and 15 in the walking group. There were no significant demographic differences between the groups, and the drop-out rates and participation rates were not statistically different, with each group participating in about two-thirds of sessions.

After 12 weeks, the yoga participants reported decreased anxiety and improved mood measures including positive engagement, tranquility, and revitalization. The walkers reported only increased revitalization and no change in anxiety, tranquility, or engagement. Moreover, GABA levels in both groups were statistically similar at baseline and just before engaging in exercise, but rose after exercise only in the yoga group. This finding suggests that yoga does indeed impact the body's production of the neurotransmitter GABA, while metabolically similar walking does not. However, the increase does not last, being apparent just immediately after engaging in yoga practice.

These findings point to a physiological marker for 'yoga bliss'-and a reason to keep coming back to your mat! ▲



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Penny Kulp grew up in Chester Springs, PA, in a caring family environment. After a short time in business, her concern for others led her into a career as a Massage Therapist.

A graduate of Episcopal Academy and Gettysburg College, Penny completed her professional training at the Pennsylvania School of Muscle Therapy in 1998. She started practicing at her current location in June of 1999, and has since gained the respect of many clients.

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An Interview with David Newman



What initially brought you to Yoga?

As a child, my parents introduced me to yoga through TM (Transcendental Meditation). Then later, in college, I learned about other aspects of Yoga and was naturally drawn to the practice as a whole. I do remember when I was quite

young reading the word Yoga on a sign and feeling moved by the sound of the word itself.

How has your practice evolved over the years?

My practice of Yoga is quite varied these days, including chanting, meditation, asana, self-inquiry, working on creative projects, responding consciously to life's joys and challenges, and now fatherhood! More and more, I see Yoga as an integrated way of life though making time to practice in whatever capacity is still important to me.

Tell us a little bit about the Kirtan Colleges that you teach. What's it all about?

Kirtan College is an opportunity for participants to steep themselves in the practice of Kirtan and Bhakti Yoga. The program ranges from three days to over a week and takes place at Kashi Ashram in Florida, Omega Institute in NY, and at Yogaville in Virginia. It's really an immersion experience, which includes Sanskrit and Bhakti Yoga teachings, chanting and musical guidance, storytelling of the ancient myths of India and their healing applications, and of course lots of Kirtan and an abundance of joy!

How did you get your spiritual name? What does it mean?

It was given to me by one of my teachers. Durga means Divine Mother and Das means servant. The name therefore means servant of the Divine Mother. Another way to translate it is *servant of love*.

Give us your take on Bhakti Yoga, what does it mean to you?

It's the practice of seeing the Divine in everything and therefore accepting and appreciating things as they are. Bhakti is the capacity to behold the innate beauty in ourselves, in others and in all that life brings forth.

What are some of your favorite chants & why?

They are all so wonderful that choosing favorites is difficult. However, some are certainly close to my heart. For instance, Sita Ram mantra is special to me since it was dear to my Guru Neem Karoli Baba and reflects the union of male and female. It brings great balance and harmony into my life. I also lean toward mantras that praise the Divine feminine such as Jai Ma.

Do you have a deity that you feel particularly connected to at this time of your life?

That's an easy one. My wife Mira and I just welcomed our daughter Tulsi (who is definitely a Deity to us). Tulsi is actually known as the Goddess of Devotion and honored as a Deity in the Vedic tradition. She dwells as a healing herb that brings strength, health, devotion and grace. In India, a Tulsi plant is kept in front of the home for prosperity and protection. It also makes a delicious healing tea for those who haven't had it!

What are some of your favorite books about Yoga and/or Spirituality?

Right now I am reading *I Am That* by Nisargadatta Maharaj. It is absolutely amazing and rooted in the Advaita Vedanta or Non Dualistic tradition. The book *Miracle of Love* is one of my favorites as well. It is stories about Neem Karoli Baba compiled by Ram Dass. I am also reading Ram Dass' new book *Be Love Now*, which is a great way to learn about the nuances of the Bhakti path. I recently read *The Forty Rules of Love* by Elif Shafak, which is a beautiful story about the famous devotional poet Rumi and his mentor Shams.

You recently brought together a wonderful group of Yogis & Kirtan artists for a project called Stay Strong! Can you tell us more about the purpose of this effort?

Last summer, I was touched by the devastation of the Gulf Coast Oil Spill and wanted to help those directly and indirectly affected by the calamity. Around that time, I was inspired to write a song entitled 'Stay Strong'. I invited my colleagues, both chant and yoga luminaries, to join my wife Mira and I on the recording and video. We modeled it after 'We are the World' and partnered with Global Green USA, a non-profit organization involved in the Gulf Coast recovery efforts and other important environmental issues. 100% of the proceeds have been donated to them.

How often do you travel? What are some of your favorite places to visit?

I am on the road about 70% of the time. What makes each place so special is the experience of sharing our hearts and expanding the global community. So in that sense, the place I'm at is truly my favorite.

What guidance or insight would you offer to those who are new to the practices of yoga and/or chanting?

Seek practices that speak to your heart and let your yoga be informed by joy rather than a sense of duty. Make yoga's ultimate aim as a path to Self discovery both your highest priority and most sacred aspiration. ▲

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Carol Bowman, MS, past life regression therapist for fifteen years, is the internationally-known lecturer and author of *Children's Past Lives* and *Return From Heaven*.

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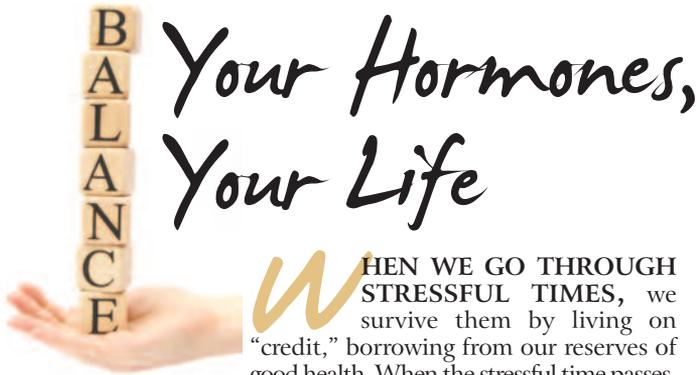
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WHEN WE GO THROUGH STRESSFUL TIMES, we survive them by living on “credit,” borrowing from our reserves of good health. When the stressful time passes, we regroup and rebuild. Trouble arises when stress is prolonged and our reserves become too depleted. We no longer have the resources to combat the effects of the excess stress hormones in our systems. An overabundance of stress hormones outweighs the nourishing effects of our sex hormones and leads to the breakdown of bones, skin, muscles, and brain tissue. This is when we start feeling seriously off-kilter and require serious repair. While there is always hope that we can regain our health, it will be an uphill climb. It is far easier to maintain our health than regain it.

Eastern medicine teaches us that humans are an aspect of nature and are governed by her laws. Our minds are individual mirrors of the cosmic consciousness and our bodies are microcosms that reflect the state of the world around us. What happens to the one is reflected in the other. For example, look at what happens in the macrocosm of the economic world. When we experience financial crisis, often borne of spending money we don’t have year after year, it becomes a sticky prospect to fully regain economic health.

In the microcosm of the world that is a woman’s body, it is not uncommon for her to outspend her energetic and nutritional resources. Between holding down a job, maintaining relationships, and caring for her family, a woman often blows through the energy she “earns” from sleep, good food, and good company. Her daily needs repeatedly outpace her daily intake of energy. The result? She has to dip into her reserves, which depletes her core nourishment. This is no more sustainable than spending money we don’t have. Just as there comes a time when we can no longer ignore financial debt, there comes a time when energy deficit becomes unsustainable. When that happens, it is not only economies that need bailouts. Our bodies and minds do, too.

How does hormonal imbalance come into this picture? When a woman is stressed, her body releases stress hormones. These hormones make her hypervigilant and they key up her nervous system until it is hypersensitive. In this state, she begins to experience even benign events as critical situations. This, in turn, stimulates the release of even more stress hormones. A vicious cycle begins. There is no easy resolution to the stress, because it is caused by not only external factors but ongoing internal factors, such as the woman’s desire to meet all of her family’s needs, her boss’s needs, her friends’ needs, and her own expectations.

The long-term oversaturation of a woman’s cells by stress hormones throws her hormonal balance out of whack and triggers a host of maladies. True, some stressors are beyond our control: the death of loved ones, natural disasters, or the loss of a job, for example. But others stressors are ours to relieve, such as the stress created by our worldviews and values, our choices about what we deem essential or desirable in our lives, and the efforts we make to achieve those things. Credit problems are initiated

in part by the belief that we need more than we can afford. To acquire or achieve those things, we put ourselves under stress so routinely that it becomes habitual. And as with all habits, we stop noticing we are doing it. We become so chronically stressed, we may not even realize it’s not our natural state.

Maybe we know intellectually that our lives are stressful and need changing. Maybe we know this physically, as our bodies send us distress signals like headaches, irritable bowels, sleeplessness, hot flashes, feelings of tightness in our throats or chests, or overwrought emotions. Maybe we hear these pleas from our bodies, but we don’t know how to stop running, pushing, overreaching ourselves. We are afraid that if we stop, something terrible will happen. We’ll lose our jobs. Our lovers will leave us. Our families will collapse. Our personal worlds will come crashing down around our ears. So we keep going, going, going. And our hormonal balance becomes the victim.

Are We Talking About You?

Try this little quiz. Check the things that apply to you.

- Do you jump when the phone rings?
- Do you feel anxiety about checking your mailbox?
- Do you dwell on the many things that could go wrong later today, later this week, month, or year?
- Do you commonly feel anxiety, stress, or worry for no particular reason?
- Do you commonly feel anxiety, stress, or worry for any reason?
- Do you commonly have anxiety about family members?
- Do you have panic attacks?
- Do you have depression?
- Are you exposed to any environmental pollutants or toxins, like smelly paints, plastics, industrial plants, city pollution, new construction, or renovation projects?
- Do you experience any of the following symptoms associated with your menstrual cycle: headaches, mood swings, acne, bloating, constipation, heavy or scanty bleeding, painful cramping, irregular periods, pain at ovulation, or bleeding between cycles?
- Do you use synthetic hormone therapy of any kind, like birth control pills, fertility drugs, or hormone replacement therapy for menopausal symptoms?
- Do you have hot flashes, insomnia, heart palpitations, accelerated heartbeat, thyroid trouble of any kind, low immunity, infertility, heart disease, osteoporosis, cancer, diabetes, adrenal burnout, or endocrine disorders?

If you answered yes to even one of these questions, it is likely your hormonal balance is affected.

To persevere on our busy course doesn’t usually require courage. It takes an overly developed sense of responsibility—or a tendency to hope that everything will get better even if we don’t do anything differently. What really takes courage is to stop—stop running, stop pushing, stop trying to please *everyone*, stop outspending our reserves. Just stop. Stop and begin to live the life we really want to be living.

When we do, I have found that our worlds do not come crashing down. On the contrary, if we take little steps to slow our pace and have more time, we find life becomes more enjoyable, even easier; and we begin to gain the confidence to slow things down further. The downward cycle becomes an upward spiral that gains momentum and delivers us into a life saturated with more joy than stress, more meaning than emptiness, and more health than disorder. ▲

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REVOLUTIONARY CONCEPTS AND TECHNOLOGIES IN HOLISTIC MEDICINE

IT TAKES 20 YEARS OR MORE FOR A NEW SCIENTIFIC CONCEPT TO “MAKE IT” INTO THE CONVENTIONAL WORLD.

Science, the search for objective truth, does not exist apart from economics and politics. Therefore, every new discovery that challenges the status quo and related industries goes through phases, beginning with rejection and ridicule and ending in acceptance with a new status quo (and new industries). Many of history’s greatest scientists and their discoveries, such as Galileo and Semmelweis¹, Darwin, and recently Marshall and Warren² had this experience.

As Dickens wrote, “It is the best of times; it is the worst of times”. What makes this time so full of potential is the role of the internet in communication and access to information, the power of computers to organize and process this information, and a growing awareness and willingness to change. Examples are the organic food movement, recycling programs, growing skepticism about vaccination and medications, and the spread of yoga.

Holistic practitioners are often at this leading edge of knowledge. Holistic patients (clients) fall into two camps: those who are seeking prevention; and those who have failed to be “cured”, or are getting worse in the face of conventional treatment. Once aware of new information, it is almost impossible to go backward to old ways³.

While we think of “technology” as involving machinery, it actually means “the application of science to practical issues”. This article offers leading-edge Holistic technologies that are proving more powerful than the newest drugs and machines, especially for the chronic diseases that afflict the vast majority of society:

NUTRITIONAL DEFICIENCY AND INSUFFICIENCY

There are four classes of nutrients. The macronutrients, discovered first, are proteins, carbohydrate and fat. Then came micronutrients—vitamins, minerals, and oils, needed in very small quantities, but essential for optimum health. We are still learning about tertiary nutrients, such as bioflavonoids in plants that can have critical roles in health and prevention, and are dependent upon how the plants are grown. The fourth category are nutrients which we don’t yet know, but can only be made if we raise and eat our food the way it was done 50-100,000 years ago.

Cases of pain, depression, migraine, acne, IBS, autism and even potentially fatal diseases such as cardiac arrhythmia, wounds and infection have been healed by measuring and correcting levels of Vitamins D and A, Magnesium, Zinc, and Omega-3 fatty acids. Since each nutrient is absorbed and processed by a different mechanism, such deficiencies and their correction are highly individual. While everyone can be guaranteed to be deficient in at least one critical nutrient, without testing and monitoring, it is virtually impossible to identify and treat.

Since each nutrient usually has a role in numerous processes, deficiency of one nutrient can negate the



effect of all others. For example, is it possible to build a house with all the materials—wood, cement, plumbing, etc., but without the nails? What if only one quarter of the necessary nails were available? What if you must build the house anyway? What then happens if there is a storm? This situation, where there is some, but not enough, is called “insufficiency”. It’s like giving a child or a plant the minimum amount of water, food, education and love. This growing creature would survive, but not thrive. We always want to have a few extra nails available when building. Here in America, the land of excess, we have this paradox of hidden starvation even in the most affluent.

Toxicity

Toxins can be generated from within our body, called endo-toxins, or come from the outside, called exo-toxins. For example, when the liver is preparing certain molecules to be eliminated, such as alcohol, it generates toxic intermediate compounds that must be rapidly de-toxified. If the liver is lacking certain critical nutrients (such as Selenium), is poisoned by certain compounds (such as Tylenol), or is overwhelmed by the sheer load of toxins (i.e. junk food, medications, etc.), these endotoxins can accumulate in specific tissues and cause or perpetuate illness.

Exo-toxins such as lead and mercury, while naturally occurring, are released in un-natural quantities and forms by industry every year, as well as billions of pounds of man-made toxic waste such as pesticides and plastics, representing thousands of chemicals. Many cannot be degraded by nature and endure for thousands of years. “Xeno-biotics” refers to chemicals that mimic biological molecules, and therefore can alter a biologic process. “Xeno-estrogens” mimic estrogen. The rise in breast, ovarian, uterine and prostate cancer, as well as the earlier and earlier menarche of young girls, from 17 years old 100 years ago to as early as age 7 today, is a result of exposure to these chemicals in dairy, pesticides, and industrial waste^{3,4,5,11}. Testing for many of these compounds in the body is difficult and expensive.

Food from Genetically Modified Organisms is toxic since it contains man-made molecules, has been shown to cause illness in many species, and has been inadequately tested. It may be related to increasing food allergies.

When a chemical is evaluated for safety, it is studied in a lab, in isolation. However, over our lives, even before we are born, we are exposed to and accumulate hundreds of toxins^{3,4,5}. The cumulative impact of this toxic load, called “The Cocktail Effect”, is virtually immeasurable.

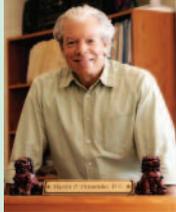
INFECTIONS: STEALTH, BIOFILMS AND GENETIC MODIFICATIONS

Many of the organisms that cause illness have certain modes of being that render them highly resistant to detection and antibiotics. Some can go “stealth” by shedding or altering their external coats (such as Lyme), by hiding within cells (HIV virus), or by other

continued on page 32



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tactics. Some can live “under the radar” for decades in a root canal or in the gut, toenail, or skin but still cause problems.

Most of these organisms create “biofilms”, fortress-like structures that increase the resistance of these organisms by up to 1000 times. Biofilms explain chronic and recurrent infections such as sinusitis, periodontitis, vaginitis, gut problems, implant infections and plaque on the teeth and in the blood vessels. Agents are now being developed, many of them herbally based, to tear down these biofilms. When taken simultaneously with anti-microbial agents the efficiency of such agents is magnified by up to 1000 times.

Our immune systems, programmed over millions of years, may not be able to identify and attack Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) since they contain “man-made” molecules. Once released into the environment, many will share their altered genes with related and sometimes unrelated organisms, potentially creating entire new species of dangerous, resistant bugs.

STRESS, ADRENAL GLANDS AND THYROID GLANDS

Unlike the sex glands which awaken at 11-12 years old, the adrenal glands begin to produce their hormones at 3 years old. Adrenal hormones are designed to work for seconds to hours. When they do not cycle properly, or at levels too high or low, they weaken many systems. Our stressful lifestyles, including those of our kids, are causing both adrenal excess and fatigue. Without addressing adrenal dysfunction through stress management and good sleep, chronic dis-ease can develop and fail to respond to treatment. Thyroid dis-ease and diabetes, now at epidemic levels, are due in part to unrecognized adrenal issues ^{3,4,6,8}.

THE GUT-BRAIN, INFLAMMATION, ALLERGY AND PROBIOTICS

The gut does not just process food. Serotonin, the target neurotransmitter of the newest class of anti-depressants, such as Prozac and Zoloft, is the main signal molecule made by the gut. Even without gut symptoms, any mental dysfunction (including autism, ADD, anxiety, depression and OCD) requires that the gut be evaluated ^{4,6,9}.

“Inflammation” is a low-level fire that is necessary for defense and repair, but like the flame in your water heater, can smolder or rage out of control. Many chronic diseases, such as atherosclerosis, arthritis, and cataracts are the result of decades of inflammation and can be reversed with improved gut function and related Holistic modalities.

“Leaky Gut Syndrome”, caused by gut inflammation related to many of the factors above, can turn an acute illness to chronic by over-whelming the immune system, liver, energy, hormonal and neurotransmitter systems.

Immune reactivity to foreign molecules (allergy) or to the self (autoimmune disease) always involves the gut and can be reversed if caught and addressed early.

Probiotics of specific types and amounts can alter internal ecology, “re-program” the gut and immune system, aid in detoxification and influence the above conditions ^{3,6,9}.

EPIGENETICS, MORPHIC FIELDS & ENERGY FIELD MEDICINE

Current pharmaceutical commercials tell us that we are at the mercy of our genes. However, numerous factors (including the ones discussed above) can turn genes on and off. Even identical twins, with the exact same genes, can have opposite health profiles based on these factors.

“Epigenes” are molecules that modulate gene expression, and are passed on from generation to generation. If genes are long-term memory, epigenes are short-term memory. They remember your grandparents’ lifestyle and health, and can make you vulnerable or resistant to dis-ease at specific points in your life ⁷.

“Morphic fields” are waves of information that transcend space and time, and can explain mysterious phenomena such as fetal development, autistic savants, and how species separated by thousands of miles develop the same behavior simultaneously ⁸.

Energy field medicine utilizes these concepts, and those of quantum physics such as non-locality to influence health in mysterious ways. The energy field can be thought of as the blueprint that guides how a skyscraper is built. Modalities such as acupuncture, yoga, prayer and even good sleep work in part by utilizing this energy field ^{3,8,9}.

THE IMPACT ON OUR CLINICAL STUDIES AND KNOWLEDGE

These concepts easily explain why medications, designed to “manage” or “suppress” symptoms, can enable a problem to persist and worsen. These new ideas also challenge our concept of aging—it may not be necessary!

Past clinical studies, even if “double-blind, placebo controlled” that have missed these factors may be rendered practically meaningless. The scientific and medical establishments have not been sufficiently open to these new paradigms.

Homo sapiens, despite its intellect, can succumb to greed and ego, ignore fact and put its species at risk. Hence the denial of global warming, the support of factory farms, the excessive use of nuclear and fossil fuels, and the dominance of the health care industry by pharmaceuticals.

The best of times is here in that individuals, families, and communities can embrace and implement the changes that are inspired and required by these new concepts. They can also use their power of purchasing and election to promote change. The sooner the better! ▲

IMPORTANT NOTE: *This educational material may not be used to make decisions about medical care without the oversight of an experienced practitioner. The contents of this article are copyright 2011 by Michael Cheikin MD and may not be reproduced without express written permission.*

Footnotes and Reading Materials:

1. Galileo was incarcerated until death in 1642 and was not exonerated by the Catholic Church in 1994. Semmelweis proposed the existence of bacteria on the hands of medical doctors as a cause of “child bed fever” 10 years before Pasteur’s work and died in an asylum.
2. Marshall & Warren won the 2005 Nobel Prize for the initially rejected discovery of H. pylori infection as a main cause of stomach ulcers.
3. See prior articles in Yoga Living.
4. McCandless, Jaquelyn: *Children with Starving Brains: A Medical Treatment Guide*
5. www.ewg.org
6. Moritz, Andreas: *Timeless Secrets of Health and Rejuvenation*
7. Look up an excellent Nova entitled “The Ghost in Your Genes”.
8. Sheldrake, Rupert: *The Presence of the Past: Morphic Resonance & the Habits of Nature*
9. Ballentine, Rudolph: *Radical Healing: Integrating the World’s Greatest Therapeutic Traditions*
10. Pollan, Michael (2006). *The Omnivore’s Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals.*
11. Campbell, TC et al: *China Study*
12. Sivananda Center: *The Sivananda Companion to Yoga.*

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Lifting the Veil:

A Personal Journey into the Human Form

Warning: Some portions of this article discuss human dissection

THE BODY IS A WONDROUS AND HOLY THING. Broken, healed, and wounded in the spirit or in the flesh: we are miracles. Our capacity to repair and recover, to move, to jump, to think, to laugh at a bad joke – even to be still in quiet contemplation – is extraordinary. The simple act of wiggling a toe requires a sequence of events that reach from our tiniest phalanges to our brain and back again in the time it takes to bat an eyelash.

I believe that now more than ever.

But as recently as last year, I wanted proof. I didn't want my knowledge of anatomy and physiology limited to plastic skeletons or what I read in textbooks.

In August 2010, when I was introduced to Gil Hedley via his "Fuzz Speech" (a video available on YouTube) during Yin Yoga Teacher Training in Northern California's Santa Cruz Mountains, I knew that it didn't have to. I'd found a teacher devoted to giving the study of anatomy heart and soul.

By October I was registered for his Six-Day Cadaver Intensive in San Francisco. Five months later the moment arrived. I picked up a scalpel for the first time since seventh grade biology class and made a tentative incision. I retracted the skin of our form's shin with my hemostat and examined the superficial fascia.

Six days later I held a brain that fellow students had meticulously dissected with the spinal cord intact. The bundle of nerves in our lower back we call Cauda Equina was exposed and the white filament in the middle of it all – the filum terminale – was teased into view. It was like looking into the center of the universe. It was the Source. It was the proof I'd been waiting to see. The proof I needed to believe in miracles. And for a moment my gloved hands held it all.

When my team of eight meets the cadaver at the beginning of the week, a fitted rubber sheet is stretched over the dissection table. We lift it together and her form is exposed. She is covered in layers of white gauze. Each layer of the gauze wraps around her like a long veil. I'm surprised (and admittedly relieved) that any sense of the spirit that once



inhabited this shell has disappeared. This is a human body and we treat it with respect and dignity, but the essence of who she was has passed. Even so, as the days progress I find myself becoming increasingly protective.

Every day we remove layers; skin, fat, tissue, viscera, bone, brain. Each layer is another beautiful veil and each time a layer is eased away, a new secret is revealed. Sometimes the veil is thin and delicate – the webbed fascia between muscle fibers – and sometimes it is dense and compact like the kidney or spleen.

Our reactions to these experiences – whether it's the cognitive response to seeing the latissimus dorsi attachment on the humerus or the emotional awe and wonder of seeing the tiny, mushroom shaped pituitary gland – is silent and personal. We might try to share during Morning Circle, but words are inadequate because as the veils on our form are drawn back, so are our own veils. How we perceive the world, our beliefs about death, our longing, our hopes and our pain – it all floats to the surface, is taken up and the next layer revealed. We may be using scalpels and hemostats to examine the forms in front of us, but the questions we ask ourselves probe as deeply the tools in our hands.

My fellow Somanauts (the term, coined by our teacher Gil, refers to our exploration of 'inner' space) are a mix of twenty-eight Yoga and Pilates teachers, body therapists and Rolfers. Most of them choose to work clinically. They are precise and devoted to their agenda.

Preparing for this workshop, I believed my intentions were clinical and imagined myself staying focused and working with surgical accuracy to wheedle a small vessel into view or coax the retinaculum across the wrist to loosen its grip.

But as I worked, my intentions changed. I no longer wanted to be focused to the point that everything else around me disappeared. I wanted to see the Big Picture. In order to do that, I perched on one of those stools we all remember from tenth grade chemistry class and took a good look at the view.

We were a group of men and women from Canada, Brazil, Australia and America ranging in ages from twenty to sixty;

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