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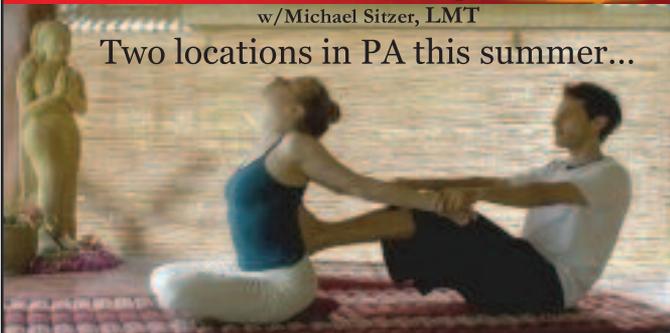
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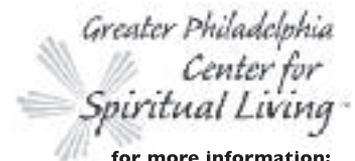
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fluctuations of the mind.” The physical benefits of yoga are a side effect! While positive, and appealing to our visually dominant, skinny-youth-oriented society, yoga can easily become just exercise. Exercise, too, is positive, and physical yoga, for most, is better than no yoga. However, to get the full benefit, we need to understand and implement a balance in a yoga practice.

The difference between the styles as practiced today, are in the way the postures and breath work are emphasized and sequenced, and the attention of the teacher. “Gym yoga”, where an overly large group of people are crowded into a class taught by a teacher who stays at the front of the room and offers a non-adaptive practice is an extreme form of commodity yoga. The emphasis is on sweating and burning and is reminiscent of the phrase “no pain no gain.” Internet yoga is similar, in that there is no supervision or individualization. While many people can get away with doing this type of yoga when they are young, the chances of injury go up and the benefits of these styles of yoga can decrease, especially as the practitioner gets older.

This mass-yoga is a far cry from the original way it was taught thousands of years ago, one-on-one, with an emphasis on the mental and spiritual aspects. To achieve the full magic of yoga (including the siddhis!), a yoga practice needs to have this sort of emphasis.

### Yoga Physiology

In yoga physiology, the emphasis is on prana, or energy. The classic model describes chakras, or energy centers, and each have a major relationship to emotion and physiology. Energy flows between chakras and other parts of the body through nadis, or channels. Dis-ease, physical and mental, is explained as deficiency, excess or reversal in the flow of energy through these energy paths. Postures and breath are applied to alter the flow of prana, or energy, through various parts of our physical and non-physical body. A full yoga practice includes all eight limbs, including yamas and niyamas (personal and social precepts), and the “internal” practices of pratyahara (turning off of external senses), dharana (concentration) and dhyana (meditation).

Classical yoga is not just a one-hour class, it is a lifestyle choice. It is a scientific method that has been perfected over thousands of years. Its purpose is to “optimize” us as spiritual-mental-physical beings.

### Recent Science and Physiology Begins to Explain Yoga

Recent scientific studies of the effects of yoga and meditation on health validates its ability to improve virtually every aspect of our functioning—brain function, hormonal function, sleep, mood, balance, etc.

In holistic medicine, there is a huge emphasis on the adrenal glands as both a cause and result of illness and trauma. When we are chronically stressed, this system cannot keep up with production of our stress hormones, which then begins to affect our mental and physical functioning, as well as our thyroid, sex hormones and metabolism.

When we over-do exercise, or over-do yoga, we add to this stress. While there may be short term benefits on our muscles and weight, the long-term effects of stress, though the hormone cortisol, causes a deterioration of most tissues, including muscle, tendons and ligaments, and brain. This is one explanation why people who exercise excessively become injured. And when exercise stops, the altered metabolism then causes weight gain.

Yoga, done slowly, is one of the only techniques for re-setting the adrenal system. It also can reset the autonomic nervous system, which controls “automatic” functions such as blood pressure, digestion, immunity, sleep, etc.

### But I Don't Like Going Slow

Going slow, like having a slow computer or car, is highly anti-American! However, once the physiology of stress and aging is understood, as well as the true nature of classic yoga, it becomes easier to commit. It is similar to slowly eliminating processed comfort foods from the diet, spending a little extra money on organic foods, or going to sleep a bit earlier to get closer to 8 hours. There are certain aspects of our lifestyle that we must consciously change, even if at first inconvenient, or even unpleasant. We often need to challenge ourselves to break out of our comfort zones to get to the next level of mental and physical health. As children, most of us didn't like brushing our teeth or doing math homework. As adults, we clean our bathrooms and put money away for retirement, though this is not fun. Doing slow yoga yields tremendous long-term benefits. It is well worth the exploration, and the practitioner does not have to choose one style of practice over another. A fast, hot or vigorous practice can easily be integrated and complemented by a slower more meditative style of practice a few times a week. ▲

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *This general information should not be used to make decisions about medical care without the involvement of a knowledgeable practitioner.*

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>*Tulip Mania occurred in the 1630's, when a fad caused the price of special single tulip bulbs to cost more than a house!*

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# The Yoga of Jury Duty

**R**ECENTLY I WAS CALLED TO JURY DUTY, and I decided to use it as an opportunity to practice yoga as part of a lifestyle journey.

First I arrived and waited in a long security check line to enter the courthouse. Once I entered, I waited in the jury lounge with hundreds of other prospective jurors to be called. Waiting provided many opportunities to connect with my breath, be in the present moment and practice enjoying the journey. During this time, I also chose to feed my spiritual self by reading a spiritual text on the Yamas and Niyamas.

I was eventually placed on a panel with about 50 other prospective jurors, and we were asked numerous questions that lead to the elimination of some jurors. Questions such as: Have you or anyone you know ever been convicted of a crime? Have you or anyone you know ever been a victim of a crime? Have you or anyone you know ever been involved in a domestic violence situation?

Again, patience was key, as asking 50 individuals that many questions took a lot of time. Within those questions, even more opportunities to be with my breath arose. It also provided the opportunity to share loving kindness. Some of the panelists had to share very personal stories about being victims of violent crimes and abuse. I practiced active listening and gave my full attention while sending out metta as they told their life stories in front of total strangers.

After all the questions were asked, the attorneys had the opportunity to dismiss a certain number of jurors. Here, we were asked not to take dismissal personally. Not taking things personally is definitely an important aspect of yoga practice! However, I was not dismissed, and made my way onto the final jury of 12 jurors and 2 alternates.

Then the actual trial began. The trial was an amazing place to practice nonjudgmental awareness and active listening. First, the charges against the defendant were heard. In this case, they were grizzly – nine counts of domestic violence, including physical violence resulting in injury, false imprisonment, rape and threats of murder. I found myself working on remaining open to the discovery process and unattached to any verdict. In order to be fair and balanced as a juror, I assumed that the defendant was innocent and did not pass any judgment on him before all of the evidence was presented.

During testimony, even more opportunities arose for listening with nonjudgmental awareness. I found myself sometimes responding in my mind before the witness would – especially

when it was a question that had been asked multiple times, and seemed to be the case in this trial. It was an interesting exercise to hear my own responses, and to separate them from what was actually happening. Mindfulness in action – being aware of my thoughts and the way they color my experience of reality. In the case of justice, there is no room for such coloring.

As a juror, active listening is a fundamental task. I had to sit, hour upon hour and listen to testimony, much of which was repetitive and filled with violence and suffering. I worked to do this with open ears and without clouding the testimony with my own thoughts, opinions or experience. This is another application of nonjudgmental awareness, and a very tiring one at that!

When there were pauses, down time, shuffling of papers, I practiced sending loving kindness to everyone in the room. There was a lot of human misery on display at this trial. Regardless of whether the charges against the defendant were true, it was clear that both parties involved were suffering. The lawyers deal with this kind of ugliness on a frequent basis, as do the judge and court staff. That is a lot of pain and suffering to bear witness to day after day, I noticed that it was weighing on them. I sent them loving kindness to lift their spirits.

After 5 days of testimony and deliberations, the jury as a group went looking for truth or what is called *Satya* in Sanskrit - one of the fundamental ethical principles that guide a yoga practice. We had to decide whether the victim's testimony was believable. First exploration, was she telling the truth? Were the other witnesses, who

didn't directly observe the crimes, committed to telling the truth? Did what the experts say have a bearing on the case? We were presented with a limited account of what happened, and some questions still remained, but we did our best to find truth among these details.

In this case, it was surprisingly fast. We all were in agreement that the victim's testimony was believable; that she was telling the truth, and that the defendant was guilty of all charges. After two hours of meticulously going through each charge and being certain that we agreed, we came to guilty verdicts on all charges.

And at this point, I became a witness to the feelings that arose around the guilty verdict. On one hand, I felt like justice had been served, that we had found the truth and had come to the right decision. I felt secure in the judgment. On the other hand, as the verdicts were read in the courtroom, there was a family being shattered. Even with some certainty around a guilty verdict, it is hard to feel good about sending someone to prison, especially knowing that the conditions in prison are unlikely to lead to rehabilitation.

After the Jury Duty experience, I returned home feeling shell-shocked and a bit heavy. Yoga postures, guided relaxations and meditation helped me to get grounded, rest and recover after a long week. ▲



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# Your Personal Path: Which Yoga Fits Your Personality?

**M**any people become confused about the seemingly many paths being offered when they start practicing yoga,

but at the core there are only four major paths of yoga, and they have the same end goal, which is enlightenment. The end goal can be likened to the top of a pyramid. Even though people may start climbing the pyramid from different sides, at the end they will reach the same goal and thusly achieve unity.

## THREE PERSONALITY TYPES

In yoga philosophy people's personality types are divided into three main groups. One group is driven by action, the second group is driven by emotion and the third group is driven by intellect. Plato echoed this distinction in Greek philosophy when he said that human behavior was largely driven by desire, emotion and intellect. These three personality types then became the base for the four major types of yoga. One path focuses on acting with non-attachment (Karma), another focuses on elevating human emotions (Bhakti), the third focuses on discerning the real from the unreal through a piercing intellectual practice (Jnana) and the fourth (Raja) offers the yogic practices we have become so familiar with, including postures, breathing, concentration, meditation and ethical behavior, with the goal of harnessing the life energy and supporting our chosen path.

## YOUR CHOSEN PATH

Even though personality types are thusly divided it doesn't mean that a person that is driven by emotion neither thinks nor acts. Everyone has access to all three personality types, but usually one of them is dominant. The four main paths of yoga revolve around these groups or categories. Depending upon which personality trait is dominant, you can choose a yoga practice to fit your tendencies.

- A person that is driven by action practices Karma Yoga, the path of action
- A person that is driven by emotion practices Bhakti Yoga, the path of love and devotion
- A person that is driven by intellect practices Jnana Yoga, the path of intellectual discernment and contemplation
- And everyone can use Raja Yoga to enhance their life energy, because Raja Yoga is the path of systematic practice

Within the diverse world of yoga you can find other paths, but they all fall under one of these four major categories. For example, the popular physical aspect of yoga, called Hatha Yoga, which

includes postures and energy manipulation, falls under the practice of Raja Yoga. Within the Hatha Yoga category, you will find a variety of newly formed brands or trademarks that have entered the market in the past few decades, including Iyengar, Bikram, Anusara, Ashtanga, Kripalu and more. These are all branded variations of Hatha Yoga, and are the main cause for people's confusion about the perceived variety within yoga.

## PRACTICE EXAMPLES

**Raja Yoga** practices are the easiest to explain, because most of what is taught in the West is based on the eight limbed Raja Yoga system, which includes ethical guidelines, yoga postures, breath control, sensory withdrawal, concentration and meditation. When you attend a yoga class you are most likely to encounter some of the practices mentioned above.

**Karma Yoga** is more of an attitude towards life than anything else. Action oriented people are encouraged to cultivate attitudes of non-attachment and selfless service. They fully engage in every action without regard for the rewards and with the intent to serve. With practice this attitude will become their dominant character trait.

**Bhakti Yoga** focuses on elevating human emotions. Emotional people, either those who are very sensitive, or those who easily lose control of their emotions, are encouraged to elevate their emotions through prayer, chanting, devotional ceremonies and gratitude. This path clearly resembles a religion, but when approached as a personal spiritual path, devotion can elevate and transform base emotions into joy and compassion.

**Jnana Yoga** uses the intellect to peer through illusions. Cerebral people are encouraged to use their intellect to discern between the real and unreal. Yoga makes a clear distinction between temporary reality and ultimate reality. Temporary reality is that which changes, while ultimate reality is that which never changes. The intellectual pursuit of yoga is challenging, because it demands constant awareness and discernment between the two.

## PERSONAL PATH

Yoga is much more than the stretching and breathing practices most people associate it with. Yoga can become part of your daily life, it can influence the way you approach everything, from the way you do your job and raise your children, to your health and wellness, to your stress levels, to your interaction with the people around, to your core belief system. Yoga is a personal path and when you become aware of your dominant personality traits, you will understand why some yogic ideas resonate with you and why others don't. Then, simply choose the path that fits your personality. ▲

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# Yoga vs. Exercise: A Comparison Study Finds Yoga Measures Up



**W**HEN WE GO TO OUR MATS TO PRACTICE YOGA, we often tell ourselves that we are doing something good for us – as well as something fun. And we are right. A recent study published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complimentary Medicine* found yoga asana superior to other types of exercise on most measures of health and mental health.

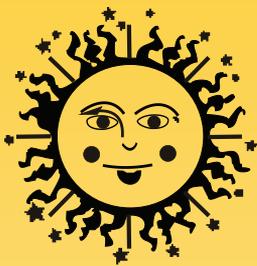
Intrigued by the evidence that yoga improves our health because it decreases stress, researchers Alyson Ross and Sue Thomas, from the Nursing Department at the University of Maryland at Baltimore, undertook the study to synthesize recent findings that compared the benefits of yoga to other types of exercise on a variety of health and mental health outcomes. The studies included in their research spanned five continents. In every study, yoga met or bested other types of exercise on every measure except for fitness.

Yoga seems to act differently than other kinds of exercise, and the main difference may in fact be the de-stressing effect of yoga practice. Kay Corpus, MD, RYT 200, the Director of the Center for Integrative Medicine at Owensboro Medical Health Systems has seen the benefits of yoga first hand both personally and in her medical practice. Patients who practice yoga experience a decrease in stress and also lose weight, she says. “What I see happening is that yoga gives them a sense of peace and self-discipline to help them begin to respond to situations instead of react to them.”

One mechanism of our bodies’ stress response is the hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal axis, or the H-P-A axis. The hypothalamus is a portion of the brain that links the nervous and endocrine systems. It regulates the autonomic nervous system, which is composed of the “fight-or-flight” sympathetic nervous system and the “relaxation response” parasympathetic nervous system. In times of stress, the hypothalamus signals the pituitary gland to release a hormone that causes the adrenal glands to secrete stress hormones. When we are continually stressed, our bodies continually release stress hormones. Our body chemistry is different when our bodies are stressed than when they are relaxed.

By deliberately activating the parasympathetic nervous system, yoga seems to help us to re-wire our response to stress. One of the ways yoga may do this is through the breath. According to Corpus, the breath can serve as a type of biofeedback, allowing us to monitor and change our stress response. “In a difficult yoga practice as well as in a stressful situation, our breath may be shallow and rapid. In noticing that, we can begin to slow and deepen our breath down through the nose instead of the mouth such as in ujjayi breathing, which will in turn slow down physiologic stress response.”

In this way, the lessons we learn on the mat can be applied off the mat. Corpus sums up the research and practice of yoga succinctly: “Yoga is amazing physically, emotionally and energetically. That is why it is such a healing practice and keeps us youthful.” ▲



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# A Practical Guide to 2012

## WE HAVE ALL SEEN THE BIG BUILD-UP TO THE YEAR 2012.

With pervading views polarized between Apocalypse and Transformation, it can be difficult to reconcile the varying opinions as to what might happen as the Mayan Calendar comes to the end of its 25,920 year cycle. Some say that we are ascending into a new Golden Age and that chaos always precedes change. Others are burying gold, buying guns, and stocking food in preparation for Armageddon. Still others remember the recent non-event that was "The Year 2000." So, who has the real lowdown on 2012?

The mainstream media has predictably latched onto the "impending doom" theories, with some stations devoting themselves almost exclusively to apocalyptic programming content. These shows are all fire and brimstone until the last five minutes when a positive ending is presented, perhaps to keep the entire channel demographic from taking their own lives preemptively.

Heading over to alternate media such as YouTube provides a mixed bag of messages. We can view channeled galactic messengers giving us indications of hope about the coming new world. Many start out with the comforting preamble, "If you are watching this, you are already tuned to the 'new energies.'" In fact, some claim that our very DNA is changing to accommodate the higher vibrations. Thank goodness, because we have to move through "The Shift," a transformative process possibly caused by sunspots, the magnetic poles flipping, a powerful influx of spiritual energy, or some other phenomenon. I don't think my current DNA is quite up to the task! Although I do notice the number 11:11 all the time, said to be a spiritual wake-up call, so perhaps I'll be in good shape after all<sup>(1)</sup>.

According to some theories, the "tuned-in ones" get to move to a fifth dimensional planet which is essentially a do-over for our lovely blue orb. Great, until you start thinking about the non-chosen ones who are left on the current Earth to scramble for the remaining resources in a real-life "Survivor" exercise. Hey, wait a minute. What if I am one of the ones left behind? I don't even like camping, so I'd better raise my vibration pretty quickly. Oh wait, worrying about raising your vibration can actually lower your vibration. This is feeling a bit "Catch-22"<sup>(2)</sup>.

Of course, we don't need conspiracy theories or New Age predictions to fuel justified concern about where our planet



is heading. Between the very real Earth changes, and human-caused disasters, it is no wonder that many are drawn to negative outcomes, whether in 2012 or the not-so-distant future. As cracks appear in every institution, it appears that we are personally being asked to re-evaluate, well, everything; to face our fears and shift our value systems amidst the chaos of economic and societal upheaval.

Still, if you can pull away from the standard media outlets, there are some pretty amazing things going on in the world. There has never been a time of such escalating awareness of inequities due to gender, race, differing abilities, poverty, or being a non-human resident of this planet. Thoughtfully planned out societal changes, many based on the principles laid out in the Earth Charter<sup>(3)</sup>, are arising at the grass roots level. Transition Town<sup>(4)</sup>, Intentional Communities, Eco Villages, the upsurge of Time Banks<sup>(5)</sup> and other resource sharing arrangements make it feel as though an alternate society is building to take place of the old in an eco-spiritual revolution.

So, what is going on? Are we truly perched on the precipice of Armageddon, the resurgence of a Golden Age, or is it business as usual? The real question for me is, how much can we know about our future with certainty in any case? All we have ever known 'for sure' is the information we get from sitting quietly and facing our own sometimes ignoble, yet beautifully complicated selves. Instead of looking outward to the chaotic forces which make me feel, well, chaotic, I find myself going back to the spiritual basics. Meditate. Observe negative emotions as they arise and realize you have a choice as to what to do next. Be kind to yourself. Be kind to others. Take responsibility for your creations both negative and positive. Speak simply and from the heart. Remain receptive to magic and miracles. Appreciate EVERYTHING!

And, given the volatility of the weather lately, it probably doesn't hurt to keep prepared with food and water to last a few weeks along with an alternate power source, just in case! ▲

### Footnotes

1. The 11:11 Phenomenon is discussed at [www.greatdreams.com](http://www.greatdreams.com)
2. Having trouble staying positive? Try reading Rob Breznay's book: *Pronoia Is the Antidote for Paranoia*
3. Read the Charter at [www.earthcharterinaction.org](http://www.earthcharterinaction.org)
4. Did you know that Media, PA is a Transition Town? Learn more: <http://transitionmedia.memberlodge.com>
5. The Phoenixville Area Time Bank has been in operation for several years: [www.pa-timebank.com](http://www.pa-timebank.com)



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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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# When Hidden Loyalties Hurt Your Health

**T**HERE'S NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN, SAYS ECCLESIASTES. Maybe that's true, but eye-opening connections have come to light recently between family ties and your overall health. And they will soon prove to be game-changers. The narrowly individual way we currently view and treat chronic suffering, whether emotional or physical, is only about half the story.

The other half is hidden loyalties—subconscious attachments to unresolved issues and events in your birth family's past. When these go unshifted, remedies too often fail, or else a chronic condition abates for only a while, before returning once again. You are the living expressions of a family system several generations deep that has typically been challenged in various ways. Here's what that can mean.

**Breast Cancer:** An older woman we'll call Dinah has already had one operation. But now doctors say growths are appearing again in both breasts. She has a tremendous fear of radical mastectomies. A look at her family history shows that, when Dinah was born, her mother had just lost a male child, and desperately wanted a boy. Everything—the blankets, cradle, and room—was already all blue. The story is Mom cried a lot for 3 days.

Of course, at puberty, it is budding breasts that make a “failed boy” finally, irrevocably obvious. So there is an unconscious sense in which Dinah's breasts were already, originally experienced as “unwanted growths.” Removing them would return her to the state where Mom could at least pretend. *Or so the subconscious childhood loyalty still believes.*

The unscripted psychodrama of a family constellation reveals this as a powerful dynamic, and, interacting with a representative for her recently deceased Mother--Dinah is able to repair this lack of love. Six months later, all signs of re-growth have disappeared.

**Crippling Arthritis:** Gregor's profession and lifelong love is gardening. Yet his swollen, deformed joints make it more and more difficult, especially in cold or damp weather. Various, increasingly aggressive treatments for this autoimmune disease have all failed.

A lost love, if it was deep and real, and especially if the lost person incurred a tragic fate—echoes down through the family system. Usually in some descendent a hidden loyalty will emerge. In this case, Gregor's mother was deeply in love with a soldier captured on the Russian

front. On learning that he had been sent to a gulag in the frozen wastes of Siberia, she despaired of his return and eventually married another.

After a constellation intake interview, a “blind” constellation looks into the possible connection between Gregor's condition and this family tragedy. Gregor stands representatives for himself, his mother, his father, and the lost love out on the floor—*without telling them whom they represent.* As their silent, intuitive movements unfold, Gregor's representative and the lost love end up facing one another with tear-filled eyes.

Gregor, who always tries to hide his deformed hands, is asked to stand now in the place of his representative. Once in place, he suddenly, openly, weeps. The lost love finds Gregor's gnarled hands and holds them for several minutes. A look of wonder comes into Gregor's face. Finally, his mother's representative comes over, moves him aside, and embraces her lost love herself. Afterwards, Gregor tells the facilitator that, during that handclasp, for the first time in 15 years—he felt no pain in his joints. A year later, his hands are not perfect, but still much better.

**Anxiety and Depression:** Claire has had bouts of mental illness since puberty. On and off of antidepressants, she comes to constellation work during another attempt to shake them. The intake interview is not that suggestive, and representatives for various combinations of parents and grandparents show little energy when placed on the floor. With the facilitator still in search mode, Claire recalls one last great aunt, Mary Claire, who supposedly died young.

Placed on the floor, the representative for Mary Claire seems about to collapse, when Claire's representative rushes over and holds her up. As the constellation ends, the facilitator says, “well—we don't know, but back then, when relatives were committed—in order to avoid the stigma, family members were often told they died.” Still, to be safe, he tries to clear any entanglement to this excluded ancestor.

Afterwards, Claire has a funny feeling about this. Over several weeks, she does research on Ancestry.com. Eventually, she finds the “smoking gun,” in the form of an institutional death certificate. It's dated 22 years later than the family believes great aunt Mary Claire to have died. Claire herself feels lighter. Building a life without the prescription drugs gets easier. ▲

**Author's Note:** For more health-related cases, see Stephan Hausner's *Even if Costs me my Life—Systemic Constellations and Serious Illness*. Not all chronic illnesses are anchored by hidden loyalties, but many are—and it's easy to find out which.





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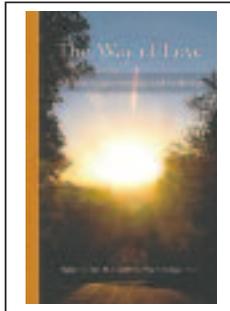
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# WHAT IS HUMANISTIC ASTROLOGY, AND WHAT CAN IT DO FOR YOU?

**I**N ASTROLOGY'S MULTI-MILLENNIAL HISTORY, it's been in and out, fashionable and derided. Astrologers have worked with kings and queens and have been rewarded or banished. St. Augustine tolerated astrologers as long as they didn't claim to supplant the will of God. The Nazis threw them into concentration camps. Financier J. P. Morgan used them to brag about his wealth: "Millionaires don't use astrologers; billionaires do."

Though still regarded as superstition by officialdom, astrology is undergoing a renaissance, aided by psychologists, scientists, and philosophers, defining a new 'humanistic astrology.'

Yet cross-discipline interest in astrology isn't new. Ptolemy, Galileo, Kepler, Newton, and Jung all practiced astrology. In the 20th century, Jung wrote, "I do not hesitate to take the synchronistic phenomena that underlie astrology seriously," while psychologist James Hillman claimed that, "Astrology provides the best descriptions of character qualities. More than any other field, astrology gives background for the psychology of personality."

And that is the center of the humanistic astrology renaissance: astrology offers each person not some fixed fate but a personality profile — a self-awareness tool.

In other words, planets do not determine our lives, an idea attached to astrology by the ancient Stoics. Rather, humanistic astrology embraces Jung's synchronicity approach: correlating the sky's patterns to life-patterns, astrology offers each of us a dynamic map of meaning.

These meaning-maps help us explore core issues: Who are we? Where are we going? What is our potential? What are our challenges? What

development do we experience individually, in relationships, and in the world?

These are big questions, and astrology helps not by giving rigid answers, as if our destiny is fixed in star-stone, but by indicating life-themes. Astrology makes us aware of patterns. And awareness is a potent tool.

For those new to astrology, self-exploration begins with the natal chart, derived from a picture of the sky the moment we're born. It's considered the 'seed plot' from which our characters grow.

But the sky is always changing, and so are we. Transits map the dynamics of these changes — the rhythms of our lives. Transit consultations look

at trends the way one looks at weather forecasts: something significant may be happening, to which we can respond in many ways, including ignoring the whole thing.

Astrology also maps relationships. It gives us a language to talk about intimacy dynamics. And it looks beyond social roles to the character of each partner. Then it examines the subtleties of how the two characters interact.

Relationship charts can help us understand romantic partners, friends, family members, and professional colleagues. Similarly, parents may use relationship charts for exploring options in interacting with their children — an ideal use of the discipline.

Whether astrology will ever be less marginalized is anyone's guess, even with its new personality-profile approach. But humanistic astrology today is working hard to make itself as useful to psychology-minded Americans as its classical ancestor was for the duty-minded Greeks and Romans. And as it offers self-awareness tools, the new humanistic astrology carries on a multi-millennial history that may stretch into a multi-millennial future. ▲



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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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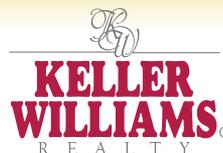


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# Seven Causes of Pain and Poor Health

**W**e all experience pain, illness and disease. And we know that there are many reasons for this — some of which we have control over and some we don't. But did you know that most people's poor health is commonly caused by seven factors?

These factors include: imbalances, climate, emotions, diet, activity level, stress and sexual activity. Of course, this list does not include those serious conditions caused by physical trauma or viruses. However, with regard to our daily aches, pains and ailments the list is an adequate representation of causes. By considering your signs and symptoms in these terms you will be able to identify the causative factors of your pain, illness or disease and administer or receive the proper corrective therapy.

Let's now look at some of the more prevalent illness-causes that people tend to overlook because they are prone to them every day.

**GENERAL IMBALANCES:** Pain, illness or disease in the body are the result of either an Excess of something (e.g., too much alcohol or sex), a deficiency of something (e.g., not enough calcium or iron in the blood), or a stagnation of something (e.g., muscle spasm or constipation). The main point of any wellness program, then, should be to identify and to correct the imbalance(s). Moderation is the key, in all aspects of life in order to maintain a feeling of overall well-being.

**THE CLIMATE:** The six climatic changes found in nature include Wind, Cold, Summer Heat, Damp, Dryness and "Fire" (mild heat and high heat). Under normal circumstances they do not produce adverse changes in the body. However, each sort of climate does invade the body via the skin, mouth or nose.... and in extremes can cause unbalanced ("poor") health.

For example, on damp and rainy days you might feel cold and chilly and pasty; on hot summer days, you risk getting sunstroke or feeling overheated, dehydrated, tired; on cold winter days you can catch a chill, have a runny nose, experience muscle aches and pains. If left untreated (i.e., "out of balance"), these simple inconveniences may lead to conditions like pain, numbness, nausea and infection.

**EMOTIONS:** Emotions play a vital role in both wellness and illness. While emotions are natural and important parts of life, in excess they can be damaging to the body. We are talking here about excessive feelings of Joy, Anger, Melancholy, Anxiety, Grief, Fear and Fright. Under ordinary conditions, emotions are normal reactions to events in daily life. However, if emotional frustration is extremely abrupt, intense or persistent, and so exceeds an individual's normal

endurance, it may then produce functional disorders of the organs by upsetting the harmonious balance of energy and blood. At extremes, emotions then become the pathogenic factors, bringing on diseases.

**DIETARY CHOICES:** In terms of diet, a way of life that allows the consumption of too much fatty and sweet food can generate internal heat and result in excessive adipose tissue (fat), phlegm, congestion, colitis and irritable bowel syndrome.

Excessive consumption of raw or cold food can cause harm to the stomach and spleen. The cold and damp qualities of these foods may lead to the abdominal pain and loose stools.

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:** Normal levels of physical exertion and exercise are helpful to digestion, the movement of blood and removal of toxins and, of course, the toning of the body. However, excessive physical or mental exertion or over-indulgence in sexual activity or a lack of physical activity and exercise may cause illness.

Inadequate physical work and exercise can result in low energy and slower blood flow. These can cause loss of appetite, lassitude and feebleness in the limbs, listlessness, phlegm and damp retention, obesity, as well as shortness of breath, spontaneous sweating and other secondary illnesses.

**STRESS:** Stress is one of the leading causes of illness in the United States. Indeed, nearly 66 percent of all signs and symptoms presented in doctors' offices in the U.S. are stress induced. The effects of stress include nail biting, anxiety, a racing mind, obsessive thoughts, compulsive behavior, unending worry, muscle tension and spasm, poor appetite or too great an appetite, digestive disorders, constipation, insomnia, poor blood flow, belabored breathing, neck pain, shoulder tension and the possible onset or continuation of bad habits such as dependence on alcohol, drugs, painkillers, food and caffeine.

**SEXUAL ACTIVITY:** Excessive sexual activity undermines the life "essence" and kidneys. The result is general debility, with aching and weakness in the lumbar region of the back and in the knees, dizziness, tinnitus, lassitude, hypo-sexuality, nocturnal emissions, premature ejaculation and impotence.

As you can see from the above examples, there are many things we do and don't do on a daily basis that tax our health and affect our wellness. We could even say that much of the chronic, daily pain and suffering we experience is, in fact, self-induced. That is, it is caused or made worse by our actions, habits and emotional states.

The good news is, once you understand what is causing your non-life-threatening (yet chronic) health issues and start being mindful of your daily life, you can learn to largely prevent pain and illness through awareness and proactive understanding. ▲