

YOGA

The Philosophy

Translation:

YOGA means UNION

Union with what?

What is yoga?

- Yoga comes from the sanskrit work "yuj" meaning to unite or integrate and refers to the "yoking/binding" of our individual consciousness with the Universal consciousness.
- Its purpose is that state of enlightenment that is reached when we are in complete union with the absolute highest vibration of the unified field.

Yoga

- **Yoga** is a physical, mental, and spiritual discipline, originating in ancient India whose goal is the attainment of a state of perfect spiritual insight and tranquility. The word is associated with meditative practices in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.

Yoga & Health

- Without understanding consciousness, Yoga and it's purpose become lost.
- Without understanding consciousness, how we heal through Yoga becomes incomprehensible.

Developing your view

- When developing a deeper sense and understanding for how things work, it is important that....
 - You stay open minded
 - You understand that authors / presenters are trying to describe the indescribable.
 - You experience things for yourself....**nothing is more powerful than experience!**

The Consciousness Model

- What is consciousness?
- Consciousness versus Attention
- Pure Consciousness
- Meditation
- Human consciousness
- The Illusion of the Physical

What is Consciousness?

- Consciousness is that screen onto which the movie of life is projected.
- Consciousness is that which witnesses the experience.
- Consciousness is similar to being present / being in the "now" – buzz word
- This is separate from our thoughts, our focus, our feelings, our physical sensations.
- Consciousness is the opposite of the illusion of separateness.

Consciousness vs. Attention

- Attention is where we turn our focus
- Attention is where we point the camera – it is different from the film that receives the impression

Pure Consciousness

- Most of the time, consciousness is not experienced separately from the impressions that are being witnessed.
- Most of the time, our consciousness gets overshadowed and we identify with our thoughts, our feelings, our physical sensations and not with our conscious self.
- This identification overshadows us and keeps us from knowing the true nature of consciousness.

Pure Consciousness

- Pure consciousness is when we experience inner wakefulness without the impression of the mind, senses, emotions or body.
- It is experienced in certain types of mediation in which the mind is "transcended" or when we go beyond the thinking, perceptions, and impressions of the mind and experience consciousness by itself – i.e., pure consciousness.
- Exercise: Close eyes, Repeat "Buddham", watch thoughts

Meditation

- Without experiencing this type of meditation, it is hard to know what pure consciousness is except in an abstract, theoretical sense.
- Meditation in this sense is **different from focusing the mind or contemplating something** – it is a means for transcending the mind.
- Once pure consciousness is known we begin to understand what reality is and what illusion is (easy & effortless transformation)
- This is because of the relationship between individual human consciousness and the rest of the world.

What is Human Consciousness?

- Just like our exercise showed us, there are layers of thought & subpersonalities that cloud our experience of consciousness.
- The body gives us the illusion of separateness.
- This combined with a lack of experience of or lack of awareness of the connection allows us to live in the illusion or separateness / isolation.

The Illusion of the Physical

- The illusion of the physical body as the creator of consciousness is reinforced by the common concepts of medicine.
- Luckily modern science is finally discovering a lot about the brain and body and it all supports the information passed on by the ancient sages and yogis, which is:

Consciousness must be more!

The Reality of the Brain

- The brain does not contain enough cells to be able to store all the memories we have.
- The brain is able to operate on the level of the smallest quantum of energy.
- The brain most likely taps into an underlying field that contains the information.
- Consider our common experience.....

The Telephone Survey

- You reach for the phone to dial a friend and the phone rings and it is the friend you were going to call.....
- Almost everyone has experienced this.
- What are the odds of this happening?
- There are 60 seconds in a minute, 60 minutes in an hour, 24 hours in a day – you probably have 20 or more people you call regularly.....

1 in 1,728,000

Lottery Winning Odds

The Nature of Reality

- All creation arises out of an underlying field of energy & intelligence – this is a message given to us by both mystics and physicists (quantum physics).
- Human consciousness is part of that field.
- The field that the brain “taps into” is the same quantum field – it is the storehouse of impressions.

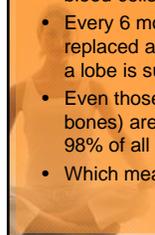
The Permanence of the Body

- Because of the apparent permanence of the body and our limited experience of consciousness, we tend to assume we are the body.
- But consider the reality:



The Permanence of the Body

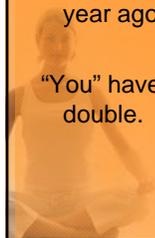
- 1 in every 5 days the cells that line the stomach replace themselves
- Every 90 days the body has a completely new set of red blood cells
- Every 6 months the majority of the liver cells are replaced and the liver can grow a new lobe in 2 months if a lobe is surgically removed
- Even those parts of us which we believe to be solid (our bones) are constantly being replaced; within 1 year, over 98% of all the molecules in the body have been replaced
- Which means:



The Permanence of the Body

If “you” are your body, “you” were not here a year ago.

“You” have been replaced with a clever double.



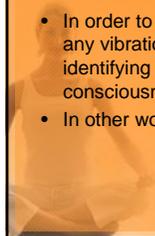
Back to this slide: Yoga & Health

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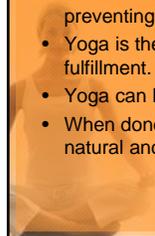
Yoga

- Yoga is Union with the underlying field.
- It's purpose is that state of enlightenment that is reached when we are in complete union with the absolute highest vibration of the unified field.
- In order to attain to yoga, we must heal and purify out any vibration that prevents us from experiencing and identifying with the underlying field (pure consciousness).
- In other words:



Why practice yoga?

- The purpose of a yoga practice is to clear the physiology of stresses, blocks and imbalances that might prohibit the full evolution and growth of your consciousness.
- We are clearing the blocks within the physiology that are preventing union.
- Yoga is the key to finding complete happiness & fulfillment.
- Yoga can lead you to liberation from suffering.
- When done properly the changes yoga creates are natural and organic.



Yoga as a Cure...

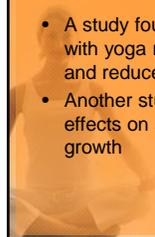
- There has been an emergence of studies investigating yoga as a complementary intervention for
 - Cancer patients
 - To decrease depression
 - To decrease insomnia
 - To decrease pain
 - To decrease fatigue
 - To increase anxiety control.



Yoga as a Cure...

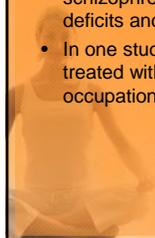
Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) programs include yoga as a mind-body technique to reduce stress.

- A study found that after seven weeks the group treated with yoga reported significantly less mood disturbance and reduced stress compared to the control group.
- Another study found that MBSR had showed positive effects on sleep anxiety, quality of life, and spiritual growth



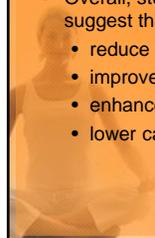
Yoga as a Cure...

- Schizophrenia has also fallen subject to yoga studies.
- Yoga's ability to improve cognitive functions and reduce stress makes it appealing in the treatment of schizophrenia because of its association with cognitive deficits and stress related relapse.
- In one study, at the end of four months those patients treated with yoga were better in their social and occupational functions and quality of life



Yoga as a Cure...

- The three main focuses of Hatha yoga (exercise, breathing, and meditation) make it beneficial to those suffering from heart disease.
- Overall, studies of the effects of yoga on heart disease suggest that yoga may:
 - reduce high blood pressure
 - improve symptoms of heart failure
 - enhance cardiac rehabilitation
 - lower cardiovascular risk factors



Yoga as a Cure...

- Implementation of the Yoga Lifestyle has shown to help substance abuse addicts increase their quality of life according to psychological questionnaires like the Behavior and Symptom Identification Scale and the Quality of Recovery Index



Yoga as a Cure...

- Long-term yoga practitioners report
 - musculoskeletal improvements
 - mental health improvements
 - reduced symptoms of asthma in asthmatics
 - brain GABA levels
 - improved mood and anxiety (compared to other metabolically matched exercises, such as jogging or walking)



What is Ayurveda?

- Ancient Indian system of belief, medicine, philosophy
- Ayur = life or longevity
- Veda = truth or knowledge
- Charaka is considered the father of Ayurveda
- He summarized the principles of Ayurveda in Sutras (or sayings) thousands of years ago and this was passed on as a verbal tradition and then eventually written down in 4 volumes of Sutras.
- Charaka explained the purpose of Ayurveda as follows:

What is Ayurveda?

"Mind, soul and body, this trinity we call the human being, rests upon Unity (the unified field of consciousness); this whole world arises and is supported by this underlying unity, just as a tripod is supported by the ground beneath it. This is the true subject of the Veda we call Ayurveda. It is for the sake of knowing and experiencing Unity that this science is brought to light."

What is the purpose of Ayurveda?

- Ayurveda: the Truth of Life
- By rebalancing the body at every layer we are clearing the way for a better stream of consciousness from the Universal consciousness.
- Ayurveda's purpose is yoga...to develop our consciousness: enlightenment!
- Yoga & Ayurveda are one in the same.

The 8 Limbs of Yoga

1. Yama can be thought of as the ethical restraints that are necessary for achieving harmony with other beings.
2. Niyama are the actions necessary for achieving balance within oneself.
3. Asana (yoga pose) are the ashtanga yoga poses (or postures) so commonly made the focal point of many types of yoga today.
4. Pranayama is the practice of breath control, a fundamental aspect of the ashtanga yoga system.
5. Pratyahara is the stage of withdrawal of the attention into oneself. It is the state of re-sorption into the self of all the senses.

The 8 Limbs of Yoga

6. Dharana is the act of concentration of the mind. It can be said that it at this stage where 'real yoga' actually begins!
* Without concentration of the mind, there is no yoga!
7. Dhyana is meditation, an unbroken stream of consciousness whereby very little sense of the 'Self' remains.
8. Samadhi is the stage of 'mystic absorption', where knowledge of the 'essential Self' is attained. It is the state otherwise referred to as nirvana, jivana mukti, satori.

The 8 Limbs of Yoga

These first 5 limbs are referred to as the Bahiranga Yoga, or the 'outer practices' of yoga.

The final 3 stages, known as Antaranga Yoga, or 'inner yoga', are higher stages of the practice of yoga. These final 3 stages are also referred to as Samyama Yoga.

Often, in the US & certainly in Michigan, yoga is a word used to describe the "Asana" (physical pose) of yoga.

This is a very small piece of yoga.

Broken Down

- Vedas
 - Ayurveda
 - Yoga Sutras
 - 8 Limbs of Yoga
 - Asana (physical poses)
- The study & information is VAST.
- Start where you can: asana classes, workshops, retreats, etc.
 - (What grabs your attention? Follow your intuition.)

Asana (Pose) Practice

- Hot yoga vs. room temperature yoga
- Yin yoga
- Ashtanga yoga
 - Vinyasa
 - Slow Flow / Slow Burn
 - Hatha
 - Bikram (pronounced Beek-ram) yoga
- Many, many others!

Anusara Yoga

- Relatively new form of yoga (1997)
- Pairs strict principles of alignment with a playful spirit
- Postures may be challenging
- The real message of Anusara is to open your heart and strive to connect with the divine in yourself and others.

Side Note: Namaste (end class)

Ashtanga Yoga

- This style of yoga is physically demanding
- It involves synchronizing breathing with progressive and continuous series of postures
- Produces intense internal heat and a profuse, purifying sweat that detoxifies muscles and organs.
- Results in improved circulation, flexibility, stamina, a light and strong body, and a calm mind.
- Room may be 80 – 100 degrees
- Ashtanga is an athletic yoga practice and is not for beginners.

Bikram Yoga

- Comprehensive workout that includes all the components of fitness: muscular strength, muscular endurance, cardiovascular flexibility and weight loss.
- One of the unusual but most beneficial aspects of Bikram's yoga practice is the 95-105 degree temperature which promotes more flexibility, detoxification, and prevention of injuries.
- Specializes in using the heated environment.

Hatha Yoga

- Hatha Yoga focuses on "shatkarma," the purification of the physical body as leading to the purification of the mind ("ha"), and "prana," or vital energy
- Compared to the seated asana, or sitting meditation posture, it marks the development of *asanas* (plural) into the full body 'postures' now in popular usage and, along with its many modern variations, is the style that many people associate with the word "Yoga" today

Kripalu yoga

- Called "the yoga of consciousness"
- This gentle, introspective practice urges practitioners to hold poses to explore and release emotional and spiritual blockages.
- Goal-oriented striving is discouraged and precise alignment is not as important as in some other traditions.
- There are three stages in Kripalu yoga. Stage One focuses on learning the postures and exploring your bodies abilities. Stage Two involves holding the postures for an extended time, developing concentration and inner awareness. Stage Three is like a meditation in motion in which the movement from one posture to another arises unconsciously and spontaneously.

Kundalini

- Concentrates on awakening the energy at the base of the spine and drawing it upward.
- In addition to postures, a typical class will also include
 - Chanting
 - Meditation
 - Breathing exercises

Power Yoga

- The American interpretation of ashtanga yoga (combines stretching, strength training, and meditative breathing).
- Power yoga takes ashtanga one step further. Many of the poses resemble basic calisthenics -- push-ups and handstands, toe touches and side bends.
- The key to power yoga's sweat-producing, muscle-building power is the pace. Instead of pausing between poses as you would in traditional yoga, each move flows into the next, making it an intense aerobic workout.

Restorative Yoga (Yin)

- In a restorative yoga class you'll spend long periods of time lying on blocks, blankets and yoga bolsters - passively allowing muscles to relax.
- Yin Yoga is a popular type of restorative yoga.
- Poses are typically held 10 + minutes, which allows the muscles to relax and one is able to work into the fiber tissues.

Vinyasa

- Type of Ashtanga Yoga
 - Uses Ashtanga poses in a fast pace
 - One breath, one movement
- Focuses on coordination of breath and movement and it is a very physically active form of yoga.

Metro Detroit Yoga

Practicing yoga is a wonderful opportunity to develop your consciousness and deepen your understanding of yoga Ayurvedic philosophies.

Finding a yoga studio that is right for you:

- try various studios
- follow your gut instincts / intuition
- start practicing at home
- evaluate & change as often as necessary
- yoga is a journey; ENJOY it!!! ☺

Metro Detroit Yoga

- There are many studios to practice yoga at in Metro Detroit.
- Different studios...different philosophies
- Spiritual yoga vs. exercise yoga
- Private vs. classes (intimidation factor)
- Clinics vs. classes
- Corporate yoga

- EXPERIMENT

- (Groupon deals)

Enjoy the Process

- **BE YOUR OWN GURU**
Therapists, teachers, life coaches and yoga instructors can assist you in finding the keys to happiness. However, don't rely on them to do the work. The key is in the experience...the development of consciousness.
- **SKEPTICISM IS A GOOD THING**
It causes you to go out and experience things for yourself. Read, view, discuss...but most importantly, feel.

- The beauty of this transformation is not only does it have such a profoundly positive influence on your life, but it will **NATURALLY (EFFORTLESSLY)** positively affect the lives of everyone you come into contact with.

For more information....

- If you are interested in more information on anything we have discussed today, please see me after presentation or email me at csobelton@dmc.org

- Be sure to sign up for the Yoga Clinics!!!
 - Wed, 8-24 @ noon Student Center Room 29
 - Tues, 9-20 @ 11 am Student Center Room 29
 - Thurs, 9-29 @ 5:30 pm Student Center Room 29