



Week 4 – Mindful Living Yoga

History of Yoga

Yoga originated in India. While it is often associated with religions, such as Buddhism and Hinduism, the practice of Yoga is more of a spiritual / meditative path. Yoga is a joining or uniting of mind and body through the practice of physical asana, pranayama practice and meditation.

The history of Yoga can be divided into four periods – The Vedic, Pre-classical period, Classical Period and Post-Classical period.

The first Vedic scriptures were first recorded in approximately 2500 BC (some may even say closer to 3000 BC). The Vedic period is characterised by the existence of the first yoga scriptures - the Vedas. The Vedas are a collection of hymns and / or Yogic teachings.

Paths of Yoga

There are 4 paths to yoga – Karma, bhakti, Jnana, Raja

Karma

- ॐ Based on teachings of the Bhagavad Gita
- ॐ “Discipline of Action”
- ॐ “Union through action” = Karma Yoga
- ॐ Selfless Service
- ॐ About doing the right thing
- ॐ Cause & Effect = do one to others as you wish done to you, meaning that if you intentionally harm another the thought is that harm will be done to you in turn (either directly or indirectly; may not be an immediate return of action)

Bhakti

- ॐ Love devotion
- ॐ Association to spiritual pathway
- ॐ Active participation in worship of God (own belief / spirituality / God)

Jnana

- ॐ Knowledge / Mind / Learning
- ॐ “Path of Knowledge” / “Knowledge of the absolute” / “Path of Wisdom”
- ॐ Intellectual self-discovery



- ॐ “Neti-Neti” Meditation – “not this, not this” = Repeat words “Neti-Neti” to clear mind and reveal true goal of meditation. Jnana meditation is to withdraw all emotional / mind senses to achieve discovery of self. “Neti-Neti” helps to concentrate of Jnana meditation.
- ॐ Self-realization

Raja

- ॐ “Royal Union”
- ॐ Ashtanga / eight limbs
- ॐ Mind principles
- ॐ Self-control / Self-discipline of the mind
- ॐ Differs to Hatha yoga (Hatha = asanas / pranayama while Raja = meditation / concentration of mind)
- ॐ Self-realization through practices of mind principles

Eight Limbs of Yoga

The Yoga Sutras as written by Patanjali are considered the most important scriptures of Yoga. The Yoga Sutras form the foundational text of Raja Yoga.

The Eight Limbs of Yoga are:

- ॐ Yama
 - Self restraint
 - 5 restraints / abstinences
 - Non-violence
 - Truth / honesty
 - Not Stealing
 - Self-control
 - Non-possessiveness
 - “Way of Living”
- ॐ Niyama
 - Commitment to practice
 - Observances
 - 5 precepts for healthy self-development
 - Purity
 - Contentment
 - Self-discipline
 - Self-directed learning
 - Devotion
- ॐ Asana
 - Mind / body integration through physical activity
 - Use of postures – either through dynamic movement or stillness / without effort maintaining stability and being relaxed, calm and in the moment
- ॐ Pranayama
 - Breathe



- Regulation of breathe energy
- Mind / body integration through breathing exercises
- Life energy control
- Purification of nadis and awakening of kundalini

ॐ Pratyahara

- Withdrawal of senses from external world
- Bring complete awareness of self

ॐ Dharana

- One-pointedness of mind / concentration

ॐ Dhyana

- Meditation

ॐ Samadhi

- Enlightenment

Yoga Styles

There are many different styles of yoga.

Introduction into western culture has in fact seen a diversification from traditional styles and some very interesting new styles emerge.

Not one style will suit anyone person. We are individual and I encourage you to find a style that suits you.

Some of the different styles of Yoga practiced in Modern Western Culture include:

Hatha

- ॐ Refers to the physical aspects of yoga.
- ॐ Style that I teach. Although a blend of my Aikido and Yoga philosophy

Vinyasa

- ॐ A flowing movement incorporated into a yoga style.
- ॐ Synchronised with breathe

Ashtanga / Power Yoga

- ॐ Originally developed for young boys or men
- ॐ Order / sequencing is pre-defined
- ॐ Uses Bandha work (energy locks), jumping and high intensity work

Iyengar

- ॐ Founded by B. K. S. Iyengar
- ॐ Uses Alignment
- ॐ Props used to enhance practice
- ॐ Slow paced
- ॐ Seek teachers who have Iyengar certification



Kundalini

- ☯ Focus on developing higher level awareness – through meditation and asana
- ☯ Kundalini is energy arising – spine
- ☯ Uses breathe, chanting and meditation
- ☯ Asana work is said to be very energetic, completed in bursts

Bikram / Hot Yoga

- ☯ Room is heated to 37 degrees
- ☯ Series of 26 poses
- ☯ Seek specialised / Certified teachers

Acroyoga

- ☯ Blends yoga, acrobats and Thai Massage
- ☯ Strength work
- ☯ Learning trust as you work with a partner

Yin Yoga

- ☯ Soft gentle style of yoga.
- ☯ Focuses on the yin aspects of yoga practice. There is a belief that traditional yoga focuses on the yang (masculine) energies. Yin (yoga) focuses on a more feminine qualities.
- ☯ Poses held for longer than standard yoga class to encourage prana flow
- ☯ Energy channel strengthening

Dru yoga

- ☯ Dru Yoga is a graceful and potent form of yoga, based on soft flowing movements, directed breathing and visualisation

Chair Yoga

- ☯ Gentle yoga practice in a chair
- ☯ More of an adaptation of hatha yoga than a style
- ☯ Great for seniors and those who find it difficult getting up and down from the floor
- ☯ Poses can be performed in a chair or standing

Yogalates

- ☯ Combination of pilates and yoga
- ☯ Commencement with breathe work
- ☯ Limbering / warming up of joints slowly
- ☯ Lots emphasis on core-stability (being abdominal / diaphragmatic)



Exploring the Different Styles for yourself

There are various workshops and yoga festivals held throughout the South East Region of Queensland. Here are some links to get you started on your exploration:

Yoga Fest

Held yearly in Brisbane and Sunshine Coast

<http://www.yogafest.com.au/>

Kundalini Yoga

<http://www.brisbanekundaliniyoga.com/>

Iyengar Yoga

<http://www.iyengaryoga.asn.au/>

Bikram Yoga

<http://www.bikramyoganorthbrisbane.com.au/>

Yoga Associations Australia

<http://www.yogaaustralia.org.au/>

<http://iyta.org.au/>

Other

<http://www.myhealthyoga.com/>

<http://www.yogarhythms.com.au/>