



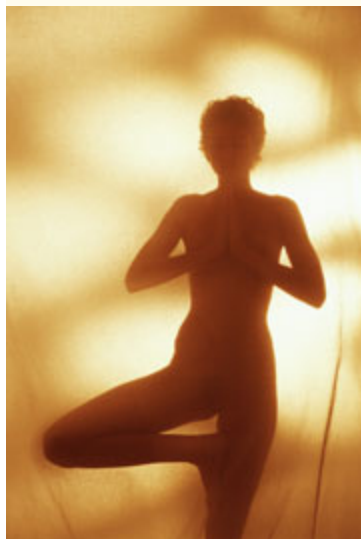
From the **May 2008 Issue** of The Edge

## Discovering Deep Peace, Tranquility and Healing through the Practice of Classical Yoga

by Julie Halevan

In the fast-paced world we create for ourselves, scurrying here and there, trying desperately to get all the stuff done and feeling drained in the process, I believe at some point we come to this understanding that we're really not living at all. Our minds, like untamed monkeys, are constantly in motion, often dwelling on the past or fretting about the future.

It begs the question: When are we ever really living in present time?



Let's face it, being in a state of frenzy does indeed affect our biology. Like software, we begin to store, unconsciously or even consciously, negative programs and patterns of disharmonies and hurriedness into our computer-like bodies. Discomfort and dis-ease then begins to manifest on a physical level. We eventually come to realize that, along the way, we've given our spirit away and have drained our life force. Have we lost ourselves forever? Perhaps it's time to introduce yourself to your Self.

Yoga encourages the body to function as an integrated whole. Body, emotions, mind and spirit can pull in their own directions as each, in turn, demands the fulfillment of its own needs and desires. This causes a continual separation. Yoga unifies the diverse aspects of the organism.

The word "yoga" comes from the root word "yoke," meaning "union." As we begin to practice yoga on a regular basis, integrating our four-bodied system, we come to the greater experience of our higher Self that has always dwelled within – that place of deep peace, contentment and wisdom. In a sense, our reality begins to shift as the experiences of life take on a whole new perspective. A healthy detachment is

fostered, as if now, we are the observers of the "picture show." A feeling of balance and centeredness resides, and the life-force within is strengthened and directed by the intelligent body, for deep healing.

Yogic postures, called asanas, are performed in slow motion where no strain should ever be felt. A balanced program of postures works upon every muscle, nerve, gland and organ in the body. Additionally, asanas help to release energies trapped in the spine and joints. It feels wonderful! Breathing completely while performing the asanas also is vital to healthy physical, mental/emotional and spiritual well-being. The primary source of one's sustenance is derived from the prana or life force extracted from the air. The more life force one has within the body, the more alive one is. When one focuses on the breath and understands the importance of this life force, one becomes totally present in the moment, and a stillness of the mind pervades!

In yoga practice, one aims to relinquish the hold the mind has on the organism. Through such liberation, knowledge of Self occurs, and one experiences the infinite – where there is no mind, there is no limitation. Emotions of the mind can be managed by firstly acknowledging them as blessings, as they give a push for action or motion or to alert us to a discordant mind-thought, but then by letting them quietly subside from the mind ocean. When limitation of mind ceases, the unconditional Self shines as *Sat-Chit-Ananda* – Existence, Knowledge and Bliss.

So, where does the body end and the mind begin? Where does the mind end and the spirit begin? These aspects of Self are intimately related and can never be divided.

Yogi B.K.S. Iyengar contends that with continued yogic practice, one gains health – the state of complete equilibrium of body, mind and spirit. The yogi never neglects the body or mind, but cherishes them both as he stimulates the life force within. By strengthening and harmonizing these aspects of self, one increases his organism's healing power.

We practice yoga to realize our true, perfect and divine nature and to dedicate this spirit to the service of humanity for which it is intended.

Copyright © 2008 [Julie Halevan](#). All Rights Reserved.