



Yoga is for Everyone
Newsletter

April 2022 Newsletter



How is it April already?

Springtime. Clocks have gone back and we have more daylight hours, with the temperature rising and spring flowers appearing. New life begins with nature and it is therefore a great time of year to explore, balance and recharge our yoga practices.

CLASS NEWS

New - Restorative Yoga Classes

Trauma informed practice. Work pressures mean I need to delay the start. Sorry. Keep an eye out though!

Tuesday Night Yoga - 7pm Billingley Village Hall

Classes will remain fully Covid secure, please don't come along if you feel unwell. I will still be sticking with the recent measures to help keep us all safe. Please do NOT attend if you have any signs of Covid - please respect your fellow yogis.

Classes are filling up so if you need to cancel your booking, please let me know.

Classes will stay at £4 on Zoom and £7 face -to-face.

Costs are for the zoom licence/hall fees and to support charity. This can be paid via PayPal (when you book online) or via bank transfer (please email me for details).

If you are struggling financially, there is no need to pay, we appreciate that times are tough.

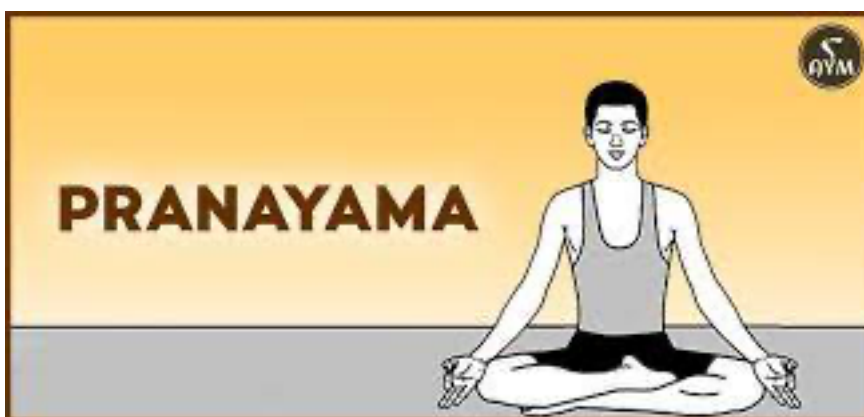
Gift Vouchers, Yoga Mats, Blocks and Netties are all available for sale.

[You can book your place on the Online Class via the website.](#)

www.yogaisforeveryone.net

www.ukyogatherapy.co.uk

This month's practice is all about our minds and breath



From the Sanskrit words prana (“life force” or “vital energy”) and yama (“control”), the practice dates back to ancient India—like, 700 BCE, ancient. It includes a variety of breathing patterns and techniques that are scientifically proven to boost both our physical—think respiratory, cardiovascular, metabolic—and our emotional—stress, anxiety, concentration—health.

Here’s a quick biology refresh. Our breathing directly affects our nervous system via the vagus nerve, which governs our fight or flight and rest and relaxation responses as well as our cardiovascular, respiratory and digestive systems. In other words, the way we breathe controls just about everything. And with no cost, side effects, equipment or major time commitment required, there’s no real argument against giving pranayama a try.

The benefits of pranayama

Before you pass this off, countless studies document the wide-ranging benefits of practicing pranayama.

There’s no doubt stress relief and immunity are key this year, but they’re just the tip of the iceberg. Read on for more wide-ranging and surprising benefits.

- Immune system: First, certain techniques are proven to boost our immune systems. Deep breathing activates our digestive tracts, where as much as 80 percent of our immune tissue lives. Breath retention significantly increases our count of white blood cells, which are the first to attack infections and viruses.
- Reduce anxiety and depression: The vagus nerve, when activated, increases levels of GABA in our bodies, the neurotransmitter that helps us unwind. Remember all those times your parents —or, heaven forbid, your spouse—implored you to “just breathe?” Well they’ve got actual science on their side.
- Respiratory: This one’s obvious. Breath control improves lung function and capacity for healthy individuals and those with asthma and chronic bronchitis.
- Digestive: IBS, diarrhoea and hyperacidity are disorders closely linked to brain activity. Studies prove these symptoms subside with consistent breathing practice, thanks to its calming effects.
- Cardiovascular: Research proven pranayama has an immediate and positive effect on circulation, heart rate and blood pressure. It’s often used to treat patients with arrhythmia.

- Sinuses: Certain techniques help clear our nasal cavity and create ventilation, improving allergies, sinus infections, congestion and sinus headaches.
- Sleep: Back to our anxiety. When we're stressed, we take short, shallow breaths. Deep breathing, on the other hand, slows our heart rate and relaxes our mind. This improves sleep quality and combats insomnia.
- Weight loss: Deep and forceful breathing quickens our metabolism and activates abdominal muscles in ways those pesky crunches can't, thanks to an increased oxygen supply.
- Skincare: When we hold an inhale, retained breath supplies oxygen to our skin cells. This increases the blood and detoxifies our blood, improving skin appearance and preventing premature ageing like wrinkles and sunspots.

Some Practices to Try:

1. Ujjayi Breathing

Seal your lips and start to breath in and out through your nose.

Take an inhalation through your nose that is slightly deeper than normal. Exhale slowly through your nose while constricting the muscles in the back of your throat.

If you're having trouble getting the right sound for your breath, try this:

- With your mouth open, try exhaling the sound "HAAAAH"—it's similar to the sound you make when you're trying to fog up a mirror. Get comfortable with this sound to get the hang of the practice.
- Close your mouth and attempt a similar sound, feeling the outflow of air through your nasal passages. Once you have mastered this on the outflow, use the same method for the in-flow breath, gently constricting the back of your throat as you inhale.

If you're doing this correctly, you should sound like waves in the ocean—the inhales can be compared to the sound the ocean makes as the water is gathering up to form the wave, the exhales can be compared to the sound of the waves crashing to the shore. Some people compare Ujjayi breathing to Darth Vader from Star Wars, if that's helpful.

2. - 7/11 breath

This is a simple yet powerful technique. Closing the eyes, you simply:

- Inhale to a count of 7
- Exhale to a count of 11

- Aim for 10 rounds of the 7/11 breath

This practice helps us feel calmer because the longer exhale helps to stimulate the body's relaxation response (parasympathetic nervous system).

3. - Box breathing

How to do the box breathing method. 📦

1. Close your eyes. Breathe in through your nose while counting to four slowly. ...
2. Hold your breath inside while counting slowly to four. Try not to clamp your mouth or nose shut. ...
3. Begin to slowly exhale for 4 seconds.
4. Repeat steps 1 to 3 at least three times.

It may help to imagine going up the side of a box, along the top of the box, down the other side of the box then along the bottom.

4. Nadi Shodhana or "Alternate Nostril Breathing (one of my favourites)

Best for: Unwinding before bed or trying to calm down - or a great way to balance yourself to start the day.

It balances hormones, soothes nerves, and stills our minds. Studies have proven that it can lower our heart rates and blood pressure. Try it during a work crisis (I feel you) or just before bed.

- Sit, with crossed legs or on your knees, or lie comfortably
- Bring your right thumb to your right nostril and your ring and pinky fingers to your left. Your index and middle fingers can rest on the bridge of your nose or folded down toward your thumb.
- Exhale completely
- Using your fingers, press on the right nostril and inhale through the left.
- Exhale through the left, close the nostril, and inhale through the right
- Exhale through the right to complete one cycle.
- Repeat for 10-12 cycles and sleep tight

Benefits of Pranayama

Daily pranayama trains the lungs and improves the capacity of respiratory system immensely. Pranayama directly works on the nervous system. Daily Pranayama positively affects autonomic nervous system which controls and governs essential functions of the body like the heart rate, respiration and blood pressure etc

Cautions and contradictions

- You be the judge. If you feel any discomfort or lightheadedness, stop immediately and return to normal breathing. Consult an instructor for guidance and supervision.

- Never force or restrict your breath. Don't compromise the quality of the breath. Do the best that you can. The more you practice, the longer you'll be able to perform the exercises, and eventually, you'll be able to use more of your lung capacity.
- Patience and practice. Pranayama should be done with great care and awareness. Try to stay focused on the journey, not the destination! Over time, you will start to notice the benefits of the practice.
- Precautions. If you are pregnant, or suffer from diabetes, high or low blood pressure, heart conditions, epilepsy, or vertigo, please consult your health care provider before performing any of these breathing exercises.



Patanjali Sutras

*'Yoga pose is steady and comfortable position
 yoga pose is mastered by relaxation of effort
 lessening the tendency
 for restless breathing
 and promoting identification
 of oneself as living
 within the infinite breath of life'*

*'In the fourth method
 of regulating ones breath
 prana is extended
 into the divine light force
 and the range of prana
 terminating everywhere
 transcending the attention
 given to either
 external or internal objects'*

Quote of the Month

"What we think we become"
Anon

See you all on the mat. Stay safe out there.

Namaste

Michele 

