

Harmonise mind, breath and body

In this article on holistic healing, Yogacharya Nelson Thomas provides insight into Yoga Therapy and its benefits in relation to a holistic approach to health and healing.

Every fortnight Dr Ludmila Vassilieva (MBBS, MD, PhD, GP), homeopath, iridologist, makes simple the concept and practices of holistic healing. Having practised medicine for 25 years, she is the first licensed homeopathic doctor in Dubai.



“The style of yoga I teach is Hatha Yoga,” explains Nelson. What is it? People say ha means sun and tha means moon, to explain the dualities of the world. Yoga Therapy, however, transcends that fundamental translation of hatha, defining these dichotomous energies as prana (ha) and apana (tha), the two energies controlling the internal organs and systems of the body. Prana is the force governing what enters the body, the receptive power. Inhalation and eating are controlled by the body's pranic power, while apana regulates the body's secretory functions ranging from eliminating urine to giving birth. On the mat, Yoga Therapy focuses on balancing these two energies to attain and maintain optimum health.

Health is defined, according to yogis, as a perfect state of equilibrium, harmony and concord with the physical, mental and spiritual sheaths of an individual. Consistent with this definition of health, Nelson states "All disease stems from the imbalance of the prana and apana energies. Therefore, a healthy body is more than just a good lean physique." While runners may be in good physical shape, their minds are not focusing on their bodies while exercising. The prana and apana remain imbalanced. We can truly heal ourselves by learning how to exercise our mind, breath and body harmoniously. The real benefit of Yoga Therapy comes from keeping the mind on the particular point or area of the body, "breathing into that point, directing the prana to that point," as Nelson says. "That's when you can correct your problem; that is the secret to yoga and the essence of Yoga Therapy."



Yoga Therapy embraces the holistic approach to healing. Just as you cannot take a pill to completely heal that pain or illness, you will not achieve the full healing benefit of the postures (asanas) in a Yoga Therapy session without the breathing (pranayama) and concentration of the mind. Of course you may look good and feel strong, but if your goal is therapeutic, you will fall short. For example, if you have a thyroid condition and your yogic master tells you to perform the shoulder stand pose, for the pose to be therapeutic, he or she will tell you to breathe into that thyroid point and focus on it. Only then will you experience relief.

There are specific breathing techniques for the different yogic postures. Learning how to breathe in each posture to increase the capacity of the lungs, strengthen the heart, eliminate toxins and experience complete relaxation is the key to the healing power of Yoga Therapy.

Yoga Therapy is a mix of asanas, breathing, mind control and relaxation. The twisting, squeezing and stretching effects of the asanas massage and stimulate the internal organs, while the breathing and concentration on the ill area directs the energy and oxygen to that point, which when combined yield healing. The asanas and pranayama performed in a Yoga Therapy session can help regulate hormonal secretion of glands while massaging and detoxifying the internal organs, assisting the patient in alleviating and preventing stress and other medical conditions like depression, constipation, headaches, asthma and heart disease. Combined with homeopathy, Chinese herbal medicine, and other natural remedies, Yoga Therapy provides restoration and rehabilitation of health and creates harmony in the healing process.



Yoga Therapy stimulates creativity, fights fatigue, eliminates toxins, improves stamina and flexibility and even slows the ageing process. When performed with a qualified therapist, it can help you attain and maintain optimum health. Remember, however, to reap the ultimate benefits of Yoga Therapy, it truly is mind over matter.

Programmes

- Detox Yoga.
- Healthy Spine.
- Happy Heart.
- Root of Life.
- Solar Yoga.
- Art of Breathing.
- Prenatal Yoga.

Benefits

- Create harmony.
- Develop mind over matter.
- Stimulate creativity.
- Fight fatigue.
- Eliminate toxins.
- Improve stamina.
- Increase flexibility.
- Slow the ageing process.

— *Dr Ludmila can be contacted at the **Holistic Healing Medical Centre** in Dubai*

