



Energy Medicine Yoga

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Every yoga book will tell you that the word yoga means “union”—literally “to yoke,” to bring two disparate things together. In the yoga context, this initially means bringing together movements of the breath and the body. Later, as you go deeper in the yoga practices, it means bringing together the body and the mind.

However, yoga, in its ultimate context, means to merge with that part of us that is unchanging, universal and omniscient. Yoga is a science both of being and of becoming and how you, as the practitioner, can influence the direction of change. It helps you to answer the constant question, what next?

That understanding of yoga is at the heart of Energy Medicine Yoga. It is the practice of influencing the direction of our body’s energy patterns in order to create positive change.

We have very few ways of describing energy in our world. We either have lots of energy or we are tired and feel lacking in energy. The truth is that energy is all there is. It is both the matter and the movement of matter in the universe. The way we use it in EMYoga is by learning its rules and seeing its outcomes.

Here are some basic rules of energy — energy needs to move. Energy needs space to move which is why yoga is such a perfect energetic practice. During the asana (posture) part of the yoga practice, we are literally creating more space in the body, opening up

energy channels by stretching, moving, and directing breath. As well, energy moves in predictable patterns and those patterns are learnable and universal.

The two most important ways energy needs to move in our body for our optimal health is forward and crossing over. This is achieved very simply in EMYoga. We start each class with a Wake-Up routine that consists of thumping all over the chest, Tarzan style (to wake the energy and get it moving forward). Then we cross it over by either marching in place and crossing opposite hand to opposite leg - or - by literally drawing an X across the body. We then go on to the rest of the EMYoga practice and learn how to optimize the many energetic pathways of the body. (Some of these are the meridian lines, some are chakras, and some are radiant circuits. All of them are easily used within our practice.) In the Energy Medicine tradition as learned from my teacher, Donna Eden, every pathology can be traced back to these two principle actions of energies — they must be moving forward and crossing over.

Energy Medicine is prevalent in our world and encompasses many different paradigms. Acupuncture, tai chi, ultrasound, Reiki, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), laser surgery and radiation therapy are all forms of energy medicine. But the model of Energy Medicine that we will follow in this article comes from Donna Eden:

“Energy Medicine is the art and science of fostering physical, psychological and spiritual health and



well-being. It combines a rational knowledge and intuitive understanding of the energies in the body and in the environment. By focusing on your body as a living system of energy, you begin to realize that powerful energy technologies are already inherent in your hands and in your being.” (p. 2, Energy Medicine by Donna Eden, Tarcher/Putnam 1998)

Energy, for our purpose, is both the capacity to perform work and an internal power used to produce an effect. In EMYoga, we use the power of energy, aligned with its healing principles, to harness our own life force and both transform ourselves to our highest good and accept ourselves in our innate perfection.

release toxins by massaging certain trigger points for the lymph; we build upward moving energy (udana) and increase our immune system strength by working with the spleen. There are targeted practices to help body, mind and spirit thrive.

Part of the development of EMYoga came from my time teaching at Norwich University, the oldest private military college in the country. As I saw the effects this practice had on the men and women preparing to serve our country, I determined that I wanted to offer it to as many deploying soldiers as possible. I designed a program to give these EMYoga tools to people about to face some of the most intensely stressful situations possible.

Yoga is a science both of being and of becoming and how you, as the practitioner, can influence the direction of change.

EMYoga is designed to teach you to communicate with your body in a way your body can understand. This is a two-way street. Our bodies and souls talk to us in numerous ways. Messages come to us through our dreams, intuitions and feelings, as well as through physical sensations like pleasure and pain. We need to learn to speak to our bodies on a deeper level in the same language that the body itself speaks. We do this in a variety of ways— through imagination, visualization, meditation and through physical means such as touching, tapping, holding specific points, stretching and massage.

During a typical EMYoga class, we incorporate Energy Medicine practices with virtually every ‘traditional’ yoga posture, activating specific energies to help our practice. There are practices that work specifically with the emotions, helping to release and process those emotions through poses that stimulate the organs and meridians that those emotions rule. The emotional release works with the Five Elements theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine, in which each organ is governed by an emotion. We work to

Total beginners to advanced students and yoga teachers were able to greatly increase the power of their existing practice by incorporating EMYoga techniques into it.

Once you learn what energy means in the body and how to work with it, you will see how so much of your time is spent fighting against yourself. Like rowing a boat upstream, you often work harder than necessary, to get to where you want to go. The goal with EMYoga is to turn the boat around, so you are flowing easily with the currents of energy that are already working in your body. When you do this, you will also be able to harness that energy to use how you need it, like the power of a well-placed, power-generating dam.

EMYoga is a modern tantra, or weaving, of ancient wisdom to help us heal and thrive. The techniques are easy to learn, easy to apply and will powerfully help you to change your life for the better. €