

"Our body - a precious vessel"

Yana Kazbekova E-RYT500



When I wake up in the morning and look at the mirror, I am certain that the body that reflects back to me, head to toes, is ME...

But no quite.

My body is a gift from my ancestors.

My body is a precious vessel-home, in which I live, feel, move and experience.

Our physical body is the only thing that is with us from our first breath to the very last one. Unlike our relatives, friends or belongings, our body is with us all our breathing life. 24/7.

Have you ever wondered who digests the food you eat? Who maintains your breathing and keeps your heart beating while you are asleep?

There only one answer to these questions: our body is in charge of all that and much more.

Our physical body is the only thing that is with us from our first breath to the very last one. Unlike our relatives, friends or belongings, our body is with us all our breathing life. 24/7. Have you ever wondered who digests the food you eat? Who maintains your breathing and keeps your heart beating while you are asleep? There only one answer to these questions: our body is in charge of all that and much more.

Centuries ago somebody invented the first toothbrush and now we use it as part of our normal every day routine. Indisputably. Cause is we do not, we would have bad breath, our food would taste bad, our mouth would harbor tons of bacteria, we would be prone to many diseases and our life expectancy would probably be as short as it was in the primitive times. We have been taught to take care of our physical appearance. And what about inside our body? How can we clean what lays under our skin? How can we take care of this amazing human laboratory that is in charge of all our ongoing inner processes and functions?

Our body produces toxins every second of our passing lives. And there is no "brush" or "soap" that we could use to clean inside us. There are only a few natural biological mechanisms that serve that purpose: bowel movement, urination, sweating and breathing. Healthy variety of

food, enough liquids, regular moderate balanced physical activity and proper breathing help us to keep those natural mechanisms in a good shape. There is hardly anything better than yoga to keep up with all that.

Yoga is noble. It gives us absolutely everything needed for a healthy life: mental focus, emotion management, physical balance, flexibility, muscular tone and resilient spirit.

And the only thing it requires from us is our self-discipline: to faithfully dedicate to our body a few minutes a day. That's it! Isn't that AWESOME?!

Just think for a second, no expensive gear, state of the art equipment or excessive asceticism. You just need to... practice. Every day. At least 15 minutes. At your home. As unconditionally as you brush your teeth.

Yoga is a "tooth brush" for your internal body. If you continuously ignore your inner laboratory, sooner or later it'll start to fail. And you will see it reflected on the texture and glow of your skin, on the brightness of your eyes, the density of your bones, on the flexibility of your muscles, the mobility of your joints, on your productivity at work, your capacity and willingness to enjoy, on the clarity of your mind and your emotional state. NO make-up could mask that.

In fact, we are taught to believe that these are indispensable characteristics of aging. When in reality, instead of being synonym of 'disease', 'pain' or 'suffering', aging is a reflection of wisdom, and the ability to appreciate every moment.

Yogis say: "Healthy body is NO body."

Indeed, when you don't feel pain, you rarely think about our body. When you are healthy, you are free. When pain doesn't distract you, you dedicate your time, effort and money to achieve your goals and enjoy your hobbies and friends.

Yoga teaches us to understand our body language. And makes us attentive to the body signs, before they turn into a palpable physical issue.

Yoga raises our awareness and ability to "catch" negative thoughts. Yoga shows us respect to the nature of our body, and helps us to address what it needs when it needs it. Beyond the tricks of the mind.



Let me give you a couple of very simple examples. So you can see how often our choices are unconscious or conditioned by the society.

- You spent long time in front of the computer and you need to stretch out. But your dead line is tomorrow and you have no time to lose. You've got to focus to not miss a thing..... You take your hands off of the keyboard, close your eyes and take a deeeeep breath..... Then you get up and stretch your legs a little, extend the arms out to stretch your chest and the back. Aaaaaahhhh.... Sit back and continue with your work.

- You are at an endless job meeting. Sitting for long time makes you bored and sleepy, and you're dying for a good yawning. But you are a responsible worker, so you literally swallow this natural reflex and put an extra effort to concentrate and do not look spaced.

In which of these two scenarios you will feel better and be more productive?

Regular yoga practice shifts your choice from the externally conditioned to the internally conscious. So, instead of swallowing your yawning, you excuse yourself for a minute and enjoy it behind the door. Then get back to the meeting.

A yogi's choice will be based on a profound respect to the nature of his body, without messing with the etiquette or disrespecting the colleagues. His level of awareness and understanding allows him to gracefully honor them both.



So what is yoga, in a practical sense?

- Yoga is the best way to *test* your overall condition.
- Yoga is the cheapest *preventative* and the best *rehabilitation 'therapy'*.
- Yoga is the *mindful movement with the breath*.

To understand yoga, observe babies or animals. Notice how they breathe, move and how flexible and agile they are. They are not influenced by stress, neither by the social rules. They eat when they need to eat and sleep when the need to sleep. They simply follow the nature of their body.

Yoga is based on this principle. Every asana here is taken from nature and is named so. Practiced with dedication, yoga gives elegance to your movements and grace to your thoughts. It sweeps away your mental noise and gives you a sense of ease. It makes you comfortable within your body, and harmonious with your Self and the world.