



BY GABRIELLE MCMAHON, DIRECTOR OF
INFINITY YOGA & WELLBEING

recipe for wellbeing

YOGA WILL TAKE YOU exactly as you are and help you in your life

Many people believe that yoga requires tremendous flexibility and the willingness to twist oneself into pretzel-like positions while chanting something unintelligible, however, contrary to this opinion, the art of yoga can be practiced by people of any age or fitness level. If you can breathe, you can do yoga! If you haven't touched your toes since pre-school, don't worry. Okay, so you can't even touch your knees. It doesn't matter. Yoga will take you exactly as you are and help you not to pass judgment on yourself.

What is Yoga?

"Yoga is not an ancient myth buried in oblivion. It is the most valuable inheritance of the present. It is the essential need of today and the culture of tomorrow," said Swami Satyananda Saraswati. Some meanings for the word yoga are "union", "to come together" or "to unite". It was traditionally practiced for preparation to meditation. Another meaning is "attaining what has previously been unattainable". This can be anywhere from not being able to touch our toes to touching our toes, from panicking over the deadline proposal, to remaining calm over the deadline proposal. Each of these movements and changes are yoga.

These are considered the four main yogas:

- Karma yoga (meditation/action)
- Bhakti yoga (devotion/services)
- Jnana yoga (awareness/wisdom)
- Raja yoga (ethics/personal codes)

Hatha: Hatha yoga is the most popular branch of yoga and from which many styles of yoga originated, the most notable being Ashtanga yoga and Iyengar. When people mention the term yoga, they usually refer to Hatha yoga. Hatha yoga uses physical postures (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayam) and meditation in order to bring the body into perfect health and for more subtle spiritual

elements of the mind to emerge freely. Generally speaking a Hatha yoga class is gentle and appropriate for all fitness levels.

Ashtanga Yoga: For those who want a serious workout, Ashtanga may be the perfect yoga. Developed by K. Pattabhi Jois, Ashtanga is physically demanding. This method of yoga involves synchronizing the breath with a progressive series of postures—a process producing intense internal heat and a profuse, purifying sweat that detoxifies muscles and organs. Participants move through a series of flows, jumping from one posture to another in order to build strength, flexibility and stamina.

Iyengar: Iyengar yoga was named after B.K.S. Iyengar who is one of the best-known yoga teachers. Iyengar's style is noted for great attention to detail and precise alignment of postures. He also popularized the use of yoga props such as blocks and belts. This great attention to detail, posture, and alignment has also become the notable characteristics of Iyengar yoga. The yoga poses are held longer and repeated several times. The props help to achieve the best possible pose and provide support and minimize risk of injury.

Why Yoga?

Through regular yoga practice the body will become aligned, your posture will improve, it will reduce unwanted stress and it encourages correct breathing. The body will become healthier and stronger and the mind will become tranquil. Yoga draws together the body, mind and spirit in health and knowledge. Yoga is non-competitive; it is about accepting your physical and emotional being each and every day. It has the ability to direct the mind without distraction and interruption. So give it a go! See and feel the improvement within yourself.



Complement your next meeting, event or your own workplace with sessions on yoga, wellbeing workshops, work/life balance, meditation, nutrition and massage. Gabrielle can be contacted on 0417 396 332 or email gabrielle@infinityyoga.com.au.