

# Office Yoga for Relaxation

STCRMC Chapter Meeting  
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# Thank You, Disclaimers, and Eastern vs. Western Medicine

- Thank you for inviting me
- Don't do yoga on a full stomach
- I am not a medical doctor, and yoga is not a substitute for medical advice
- Western medicine is good for acute conditions
- Eastern medicine is good for chronic conditions

# History of Yoga

- Yoga is so old...
- 5,000 years old? (Oral history)
- One of the 6 original branches of Hindu philosophy
- The *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali
  - earliest known text on Yoga
  - written between 200 B.C.E and 400 A.D.
  - describes 8 increasingly spiritual limbs/paths of yoga:

# 1<sup>st</sup> Limb: Yamas (Restrictions)

- Ahimsa: nonviolence
- Satya: truthfulness
- Asteya: nonstealing
- Brahmacharya: physical restraint
- Aparigraha: nonjealousy

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Limb: Niyamas (Practices)

- Saucha: cleanliness
- Samtosa: happiness
- Tapas: spiritual austerity
- Svadhyaya: study sacred scriptures and the self
- Isvara pranidhana: surrender to God

# 6 Remaining Limbs

- Asanas: poses
- Pranayama: breath
- Pratyahara: sensory transcendence
- Dharana: concentration
- Dhyana: meditation/contemplation
- Samadhi: transcendence of self/bliss

# What Is Yoga?

- Translation/definition = yoke; union; to unite the finite with the infinite, the individual with the universe
- A way to improve meditation (traditional)
- Many different kinds of yoga are practiced today
  - Hatha (ha=sun, tha=moon)
  - Iyengar (B.K.S. Iyengar, still living)
  - Bikram (hot)

# Hard Work Can Kill You

- Our jobs are notorious for 2 reasons: lack of motion and too much repetitive motion
- Rush hour traffic, long work days, skipped meals
- Air quality, poor lighting, etc.
- **STRESS**



# Yoga Can Help

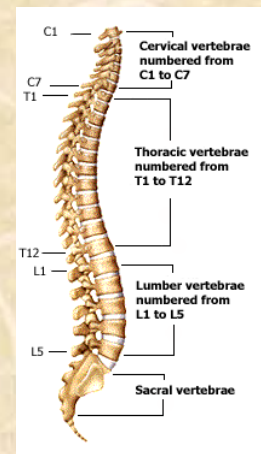
- Slow down the monkey mind
- Improve your energy level
- Feng shui, aromatherapy, etc.
- RELAX

# The Yoga Lifestyle: Is this what your day is like?

- Daily schedule:
  - Up early for meditation/asanas
  - Nutritious breakfast
  - Large lunch between 10 am and 2 pm
  - 20 minute refresher nap (on left side)
  - Light exercise
  - Light dinner before 6 pm
  - In bed by 10 pm (10 – 2 am metabolism window)

# Breath Meditation/Pranayama

- prana = life energy (chi, etc.)
- yama = restraint (control)
- Traditional yogis teach that if you can control your breath, you can control your life.
- Meditate on breath/practice breathing (5 minutes)
  - Good posture
  - Eyes open or closed
  - Finger mudra or
  - Hands on abdomen



# Office Yoga Exercises – Eyes

- Eyes
  - 20-20-20 rule to avoid CVS (computer vision syndrome)
- Exercises:
  - Rub hands together, warm eyes
  - “Clock eyes”; follow the hands of a clock
  - Thumb & focalpoint
  - Thumb to nose

# Office Yoga Exercises – Neck

- Exercises:
  - Don't lean forward or back, only to the side
  - Ear to shoulder, left arm out to side, right arm gently on head; reverse
  - Look to the right/left
  - Chin to chest
  - Look up at ceiling (don't compact neck vertebrae, think length instead)
  - Gentle neck circles

# Office Yoga Exercises - Shoulders

- Keyboarding causes rounded shoulders
- Backbends help reverse this trend
- Exercises:
  - Shoulder circles
  - Shoulder shrug/drop (relaxation)
  - Stretch arms up/clasp hands/hands behind head open elbows
  - Arms out from shoulders, internal/external rotation
  - Eagle arms
  - Prayer hands behind back/grab opposite elbow
  - Posture clasp (Gomukhasana)

# Office Yoga Exercises – Upper Body and Arms

- Exercises:
  - Upper body circles
  - Seated cat/cow
  - Half moon pose (side stretch)
  - Clasp hands behind back/forward bend
  - Gentle twist
  - Lift self off chair

# Office Yoga Exercises – Hands

- Exercises:
  - Bend fingers back
  - Interlace fingers, turn hands away from you, pump arms
  - Arms away from you, fingers point up and back
  - Wrist circles with closed fists
  - Flower pose (thirty second fist, two minutes to open fists)
  - Cat's paw



# Office Yoga Exercises – Abs

- Exercises:
  - Sit towards front of chair, stretch legs out, do crunches
  - Balance on chair

# Office Yoga Exercises – Lower Body/Feet

- Exercises:
  - Stretch legs with strap/hands
  - Knees to chest
  - Cross legs and lean forward to stretch hips
  - Type with your toes
  - Heel/toe touch with walking meditation
  - Ankle circles

# Office Yoga Exercises – Standing Poses

- Exercises:
  - Mountain (tadasana)
  - Stretch/side bend
  - Forward bend
  - Back bend
  - Simple balance pose
  - Gentle/floppy twisting
  - Wall exercises
    - Pectoralis minor doorway stretch
    - “Swim” against the wall (windmill)
    - Arms against wall

# Relaxation

- Forward bend/rest with abdomen on upper legs
- Seated full twist
- 10 minute guided relaxation

# Questions/Wrap-up

- Pose requests
- Health concerns, etc.
- Email questions to: [ron\\_arnier@comcast.net](mailto:ron_arnier@comcast.net)
- Excellent pose finder at:  
<http://www.yogajournal.com>