



## NEWSLETTER

### The Origins of Yoga

by Vernetta Butler



Hatha yoga: which is the physical form of yoga, is a combination of amazing physical exercises that work all the systems of the body, not just aesthetics. This is combined with balancing postures, brilliant breathing techniques and relaxation. All these work together to get the body into the best physical state possible leaving the mind calm, clear and relaxed to help each individuals potential.

The origins of yoga date back well before the birth of Christ, in fact, traces of yoga postures have been found in ruins dating back to 5000BC in India and even Egyptians had their own form of yoga as is depicted in their hieroglyphics.

Stones have been found in Tibet that date from over 10,000 years ago that show early signs of yoga postures!

The techniques developed by the Yogis to transcend also help us to try and take away the things that try to define us, albeit wrongly i.e. the emotions, sensations, desires, achievements and failures of daily life. Through yoga we learn to develop greater awareness of our physical AND psychological states and as a result, we're in a better position to manage our reactions to these various situations we deal with every day as well as getting toned and fitter at the same time.

#### So how does yoga work?

Yoga works as a whole, treating mind and body as one and not separate. When the body is healthy, the mind is clam and happy and vice versa.

Yoga not only creates strong, lean, flexible muscles but works on all of the bodies systems – skeletal, muscular, digestive, endocrine, respiratory, nervous, circulatory....

In fact yoga works on every part of the body all of the time.

It is sometimes helpful to think of yoga as a toolbox, for any problem the individual has there is a move to help. There are moves for headaches, backaches, joint problems, stomach ailments, depression, anxiety...the list is endless and this is why yoga is so popular as its benefits are numerous and obvious.

One question I always get asked is 'how does yoga help with weight loss?' The answer is in all of the above. Due to its wide range of postures and breathing exercises, it makes the body as efficient as it can be and thus getting the most out of anything we do and is perfect to add alongside any other activity, like the Curves workout.

There are moves such as Shoulderstand and Plough that work the thyroid and parathyroid glands in the neck. These glands stimulate the metabolism, which helps us to regulate and correct weight issues and appetite control. There are moves to help digestion and the elimination process which again helps with weight, bloating, constipation and other weight related problems.

Correct deep breathing in yoga also aids the body in working correctly. Breathing deeply oxygenates our whole system and uses the diaphragm and the whole of the lungs whereas usually we are used to shallow breathing. We get energy from everything that goes into the body, we think about what we eat and drink but we forget our breathing.

With yoga there is no restriction on who can or can't do yoga, regardless of size, age, flexibility OR religious beliefs. Although Yoga was founded in the Hindu faith, Yoga is open to everyone to benefit from, so why not book up with Vernetta at Chertsey Curves, to try Yoga, held every Saturday, 1.30pm