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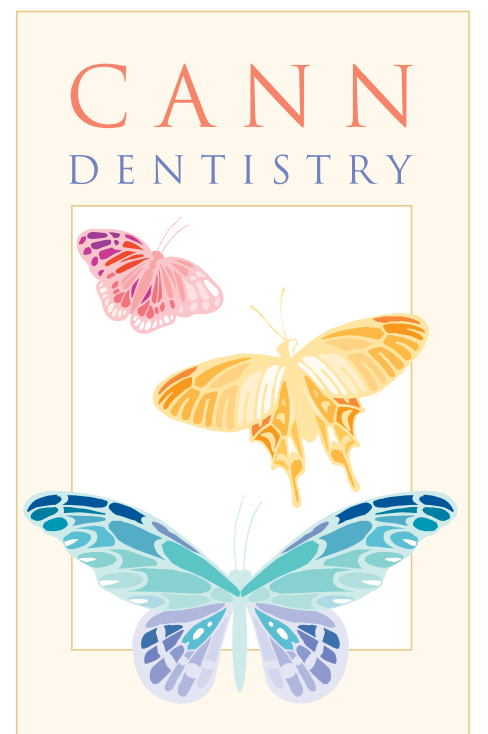
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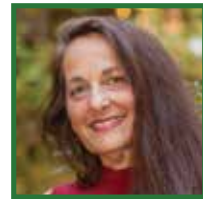
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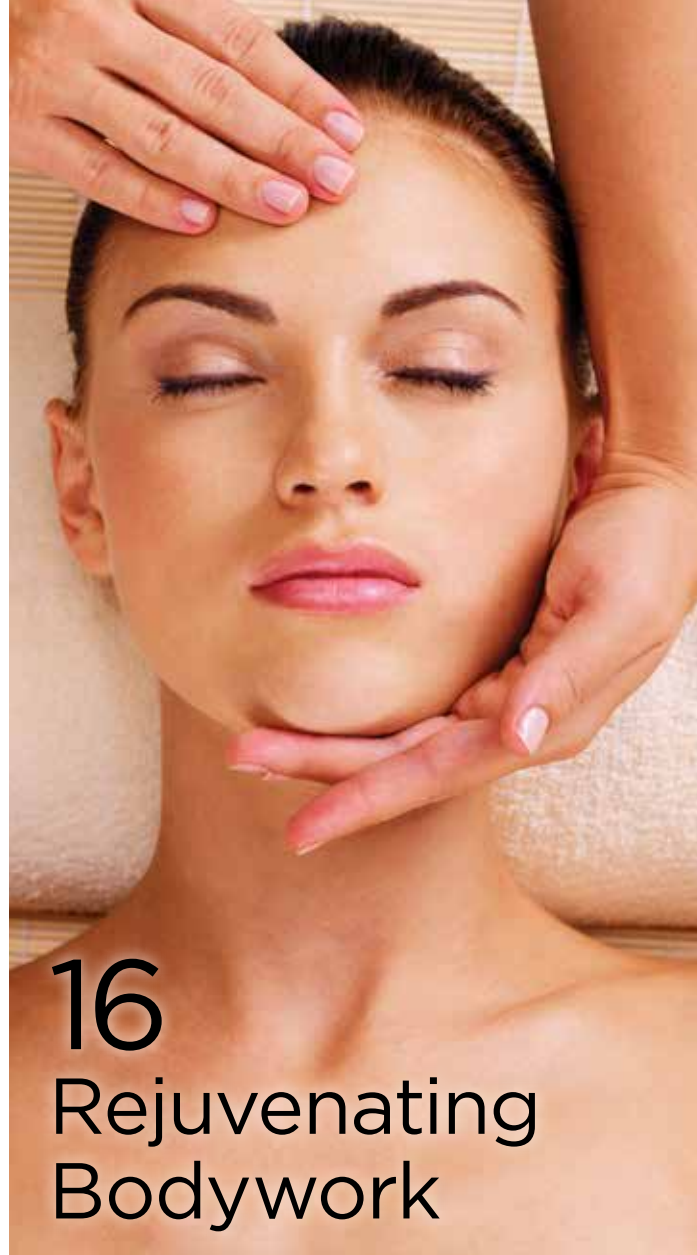
Gedalia Genin, Guest Contributor

We'd like to thank Gedalia Genin for her three-part series on Ayurveda, which starts this month and will run through our November issue.

Gedalia has helped women uncover new paths to health and vitality by drawing on a wealth of holistic practices: Ayurveda, meditation, essential oils, gemstones, Marma, breathwork, sound healing, nutritional advice, herbs, yoga, intuitive guidance and creativity.

She holds a Ph.D in Traditional Naturopathy, a four-year certificate in hands-on healing from Mount Soma in Asheville, as well as a Marma Certificate from The Ayurvedic Institute, New Mexico. She has also traveled to India with Vasant Lad for a clinical Ayurvedic program.

Her book *Enough Drugs I am a Woman and Can Heal Naturally: A Practical Guide To Feeling Your Best*, published in 2018 and available on Amazon, offers readers a host of tools that empower them to take back their health on all levels—body, mind and spirit.



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ON THE WEB

Check out more of our yoga stories on the web!

A Yoga Lover's Yoga Journal

naatlanta.com/yoga-lovers-journal

Kundalini: The Channel of Awakening

naatlanta.com/kundalini

Hide & Seek: Our Life's Journey through the Chakras

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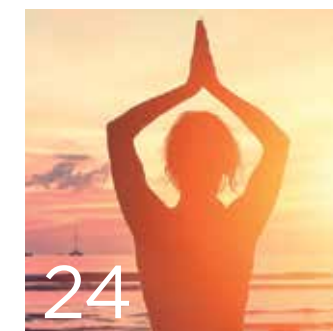
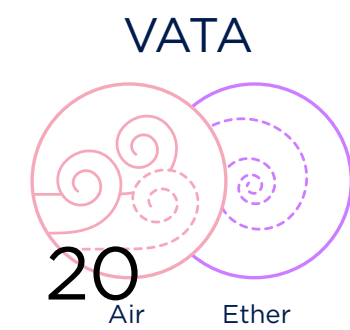
A Yogi's Morning Practice:

naatlanta.com/10-steps

CORRECTIONS: The phone number listed in the *Soundbath and Purpose-Driven Life Tools* article in our August print issue was incorrect. The correct phone number is 310-663-0595.

Also, in our list of Black-Owned or -Managed Vegetarian/Vegan Resources, the address listed for Sevananda Natural Foods Market was incorrect; it is 467 Moreland Ave, NE, Atlanta, 30307.

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**About the Cover**

Our cover subjects are the four Atlanta yoga luminaries we are profiling in this issue. From left to right they are: William Hufschmidt, Gina Minyard, Jessica Murphy and Octavia Raheem.

The photographer was, once again, Jason Dennard, pictured above, of Encounter Hart. As always, special thanks to Loyall Hart for his generous support of this publication.

Location: Santosha Studio in north Atlanta. Thank you to Amanda Trelvino, owner of Santosha, for allowing us to use her studio and grounds for this photo session.

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Repeat After Me: An Ounce of Prevention Is Worth a Pound of Cure

Marna Demidova/Shutterstock.com

In March I wrote that we were expanding our coverage of natural health and healing. And we started in that issue with managing editor Diane Eaton's *Be Healthy & Stay Healthy: Our Experts' Top 10 Keys to Wellness*.

And in every issue since, our local editorial team has pushed out natural health and healing content, including a 12-page special section on Energy Healing in April.

This month we kick off a three-part series on Ayurveda.

Why Ayurveda?

Because, as I suggested back then, most of us probably have health issues, but just don't know about them. "The fact that one is asymptomatic is not a sign of health. Disease does not develop overnight; it builds until the last straw breaks the proverbial camel's back."

And Ayurveda, with thousands of years of history, is one of humanity's oldest, most complete systems of natural health enhancement and maintenance; each one of us can benefit from Ayurveda.

Now here's the disappointing thing I discovered: there's not that much going on in Atlanta around Ayurveda. As a magazine, we are interested in selling advertising, and found out that there are simply not that many Ayurveda-related businesses to approach.

This was somewhat surprising given the popularity of yoga in Atlanta and the fact that Ayurveda is often referred to as yoga's sister science. Also, given what I

perceive as a large Indian population in the metro area, I expected more Ayurveda practitioners and businesses.

Alas, the Indian population falls short of 80,000, and Atlanta yogis aren't very aware or knowledgeable about Ayurveda.

Indeed, during the photo shoot for this month's cover, I spoke with our yoga luminaries. Only one of them rated their own knowledge about Ayurveda above-average among yoga teachers they know. I also asked them to estimate what percentage of Atlanta yoga students were "minimally knowledgeable" about Ayurveda. Their guesses: 10%, 10%, 15% and 20%. The good news: Three of our yoga luminaries felt that yoga students with at least minimal knowledge would have above average interest in learning more about Ayurveda.

So, allow me to proselytize for just a moment. Chances are, there's something not quite right about your health, even if you're not symptomatic. Regardless, see a health care practitioner versed in enhancing health, trained to spot developing issues before they become full-blown crises. Chances are such practitioners are not traditional allopathic doctors, but chiropractors, acupuncturists, naturopaths, homeopaths, and yes, Ayurvedic practitioners.

On a personal note, I recently started seeing an integrative medicine practitioner, and yes, several things were brought to my attention that I had no or low awareness of.

ATLANTA'S YOGA LUMINARIES

Our esteemed editor Graham Fowler and I agree that the mission of the yoga section is to help practitioners go deeper in their practice and realize even more benefits than they're experiencing now. Which is why one is far more likely to find our yoga content shining a light on the seven limbs of yoga beyond asanas.

It also explains why one is not likely to read about local yoga personalities. But with this month's special yoga section, we're thrilled to write about the Atlanta luminaries who appear on our cover!

And what a great group they are. Octavia Raheem was cited by a number of her peers as outstanding in many ways: a great teacher, an expert on Yin and restorative, a crusader for diversity and inclusion, and a wise and thoughtful commentator—more than one person referred to her writing as authentic and inspiring.

Both Gina Minyard and William Hufschmidt were called "a teacher's teacher" by their peers, a reference to the fact that their depth of knowledge is so great that just about any yoga teacher can learn from them. "They walk their talk" is another way in which their peers spoke highly of them.

Since "building community" was one criterion for selection, Jessica Murphy, founder of Dirty South Yoga Fest, was a slam dunk. There are no umbrella yoga organizations in Atlanta, and since the demise of the Southeast Yoga Conference, Dirty South stands as Atlanta's only current homegrown festival. And Murphy says that her motivations behind the festival were to build community and to give yogis the opportunity to sample Atlanta's many superb teachers.



Paul Chen has been owner/publisher of Natural Awakenings Atlanta franchise since January 2017. He is a practicing Buddhist and a founding member of East Lake Commons, a cohousing community.

Southeast Wise Women's Herbal Conference CELEBRATES 15 YEARS

The Southeast Wise Women's Herbal Conference will hold its 15th annual event in the Blue Ridge Mountains outside of Henderson, NC on October 11 and 12. The conference focuses on issues of women's health and healing, herbal medicine, plant identification, nourishing foods, sexuality, empowerment, racial equity and self-love. It includes more than 50 workshops, classes and intensives, breathwork circles, ceremony and dance events.

More than 40 teachers and performers are scheduled to speak and lead classes including herbalists, psychotherapists, healers, spiritual counselors, African drummers and dancers and social justice advocates. More than 1,000 women are expected to attend.

The conference's approach to herbs and healing is steeped in the Wise Woman

Tradition, which "embraces the Earth, local plants, deep nourishment and self-love and is a lens by which we can recognize our interconnectedness and wholeness of body and spirit," says founder Corinna Wood. Wood was a student and apprentice of Susun Weed, an influential leader in the Wise Woman Tradition.

Nourishment is a central tenet of the Wise Woman Tradition, "so we turn our attention away from 'fixing' or 'cleansing' ourselves and move toward nourishing ourselves so that our bodies respond by moving toward optimum health," Wood explains.



Students at the Conference (Photo: Jesse Kitt)

Adult registration costs \$345 and includes all classes, activities, and special events for the weekend, as well as tent camping at no additional charge. Intensives and workshops require an additional \$20-\$40 fee. Youth programs are also available starting at \$110. The conference will be held at Kanuga Conference & Retreat Center, 130 Kanuga Chapel Dr., in Hendersonville, N.C. Attendees can choose to commute, camp, share rooms or book a private room. For more information, see SEWiseWomen.com.

ATL Conjure & Culture Fest CELEBRATES AFRICAN SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS

The first of its kind in Atlanta, the ATL Conjure & Culture Festival will be held October 26 and 27 to celebrate the spiritual traditions of persons of African American descent and ancestry. Its aim is to be a safe place for those seeking knowledge of spiritual traditions and to help educate people about how to connect spiritually.

On October 26, Market Day will run from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and will include workshops, vendors, food trucks, a kids' club, live performances and more.

On October 27, the Closing Gala will run from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and will feature a banquet celebration with live music, poetry readings and a hair and fashion show.

"Navigating spiritual paths can be a daunting task when undertaken alone, so it is my intention to provide my sisters and brothers with the resources needed to assist in their personal evolution," says event founder Tesi J., formerly Communications Director for Gemstone Management.

Vendor markets and stage performances for the festival will take place in a parking lot at the corner of Hairston Road and Memorial Drive in Stone Mountain. Featured workshops will be held nearby at Ibu Ile Spiritual Center & Botanica, 6009 Memorial Dr. Unit 7, Stone Mountain. Some workshops and the banquet will be held at John Koryan Event Center, 6009 Memorial Dr. Unit 10, Stone Mountain.

Entrance to the event is free, workshops range in price from \$5 to \$50 and tickets to the Sunday banquet are \$50. A variety of access passes are available online. For more information, visit ATLConjureFest.com, [Facebook.com/Conjurefest/](https://www.facebook.com/Conjurefest/) and [Instagram@ATLConjureFest](https://www.instagram.com/ATLConjureFest).



New Curiosities & Healing Arts Shop IN DECATUR

Antlers and Wings Healing Arts & Curiosities, a new healing arts center and curiosities shop, has opened in downtown Decatur.

The retail space is an eclectic mix of crystals, jewelry, art by local artists, photography, bone art and shamanic tools, leather jewelry and sketchbooks. A used-book library is available for checkout, while tinctures, blended oils and other body-focused products round out the wares for sale.

In the healing room, massage, Reiki, energy work, sacred sound healing, sound play, intuitive readings and Vedic astrology are available by appointment. The company is offering 10% off the cost of healing sessions for their end-of-summer special through September 21.

"Antlers and Wings is a long-time dream; a culmination of wanting to own

a retail store, a desire to help others and to assist other practitioners in growing their businesses," says owner Kristen Dawn, who has a degree in retail marketing. "I believe in community, where we all work together to create great things in the name of healing and happiness."

The shop also offers workshops, classes and retreats, including Balancing Mindfulness with City Living, weekly Shamanic drumming circles, tantra and shapeshifting classes, equinox and solstice full-day celebrations and more.

Antlers and Wings is located at 245 E Trinity Pl #1210 in Decatur. For more information, visit AntlersandWings.com, [Facebook.com/antlersandwings](https://www.facebook.com/antlersandwings) or [Instagram @antlersnwings](https://www.instagram.com/antlersnwings).

Ayurvedic Healing Center OPENS IN ATHENS



Ayurvedic physician, Falguni Trivedi. (Photo: Atul Shah)

The Athens Ayurveda Center recently opened its doors in Athens, providing Ayurvedic consultation, treatments and herbal supplements for health and wellness.

Owner and CFO, Atul Shah, MS, says, "Conventional modern medicines only mask the symptoms, whereas

Ayurveda reaches the roots of the symptoms through complete balance of life. Our goal and our mission are to help people wean away from allopathy by increasing immunity and treating imbalances in the body."

Ayurveda focuses on finding the imbalances in the body/mind and providing treatments and products accordingly to increase immunity and address the roots of an ailment.

Athens Ayurvedic Center provides a full spectrum of Ayurvedic-related services, including traditional healing practices such as *Panchakarma*, which Shah describes as "total detoxification and rejuvenation," and *Shirodhara*, when oil or other liquids are poured on the head. The practice "will take care of psychosomatic problems, people with anxiety, depression," Shah says. "It calms down their mind and lets them focus on what they want to do."



The center's healing team includes registered Ayurvedic doctor, Falguni Trivedi, who has been treating patients for 27 years. Additionally, Amita Shah, wife of Atul, is a recently retired pharmacist of 30 years who has longed to offer herbal supplements for health instead of drugs with side effects.

The Athens Ayurveda Center is located at 1945 Barnett Shoals Road in Athens. It is open to the public Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on weekends by appointment only. For more information, visit AthensAyurveda.com, [facebook.com/AthensAyurveda/](https://www.facebook.com/AthensAyurveda/) or email holistic@athensayurveda.com.



(Photo: Rob Knight Photography)

Béla Wellness Drink REACHES COAST TO COAST



(Photo: Sara Hanna Photography)

Béla, an herb-infused wellness drink inspired by holistic principles of Ayurveda, has achieved national distribution—now available in retail outlets from Atlanta to San Jose, California—in just over a year since its initial launch in Atlanta in the spring of 2018.

The company's first blend, Béla Harmony, was introduced in two flavors, Elegant Tropical and Plain Unsweetened. Since that time, Béla grew rapidly to reach over 50 retail locations in and around Atlanta, and it has been expanding nationwide since April 2019.

"Béla was born out of a personal need for healthy hydration to complement my wife's health and fitness needs," says Béla founder and CEO Atul Agarwal. "I created herbal infusions at home to complement and support her goals."

Life Time Fitness, the beverage company's first and largest retail partner,

offers Béla products in more than 135 locations in Atlanta and nationwide. Béla's total national distribution has climbed to about 180 retail partner locations, including Atlanta's Bring it Om Power Yoga and Lift Yoga studios.

The beverage combines turmeric, tulsi, ginger and other herbs with minerals and vitamins into sugar-free, zero-calorie blends that work to support immunity, promote calming, and improve optimal hydration, according to the company's press release. The Béla brand is owned by Althea Brands, which was founded and is headquartered in Atlanta, GA.

For more information, visit DrinkBela.com or email Info@DrinkBela.com for wholesaling opportunities.

ALON Wellness LAUNCHES FULL-SPECTRUM CBD OIL BUSINESS



ALON Wellness, an Alpharetta, Georgia-based company, has opened for business as a purveyor of CBD products.

CBD, an acronym for *cannabidiol*, has become a popular natural remedy to help relieve chronic pain, reduce inflammation, alleviate symptoms of arthritis, decrease anxiety, improve sleep and suppress seizures. It is one of more than 100 chemical compounds known as *cannabinoids* found in the cannabis plant.

ALON Wellness offers "full-spectrum" CBD oil, the purest form of hemp oil, which contains several beneficial compounds in addition to CBD. The company's tinctures are produced from organic hemp and are

non-GMO, THC-free, with no added sugar or artificial colors. They have been produced in a cGMP-certified facility, their strength is certified, and their purity is validated. The product is legal in all states.

"We are dedicated to helping people find high-quality natural wellness solutions to address pain, discomfort, anxiety, inflammation and other adverse health conditions," says founder and president Therron Foley.

Products include tinctures, soft gel capsules, topical pain balms and massage oils. They are available online and will soon be offered in retail outlets. Visit www.alonwellness.com.

Runyon Returns to Atlanta FOR FELDENKRAIS WORKSHOP

Margaret Mead once said, "The Feldenkrais Method is the most sophisticated and effective method I have seen for the prevention and reversal of deterioration of function."

Feldenkrais teacher, Louise Runyon, will return to Atlanta on Saturday, October 19 to teach her Awareness Through Movement Feldenkrais workshop.

The workshop will help participants "learn to move and function as a whole person, make movement connections between mind and body, left and right sides, upper and lower halves, and the left and right sides of the brain," says Runyon.

"The lessons are ingenious, gentle movement sequences designed to bring mobility, ease and efficiency to all forms of physical activity through interrupting habits and heightening awareness of how the body and mind can function together as an integrated whole," she explains.

Recently retired in North Carolina, Louise Runyon has taught Awareness Through Movement classes in Atlanta for 20 years, including her own weekly classes as well as classes held at Emory, Life Enrichment Services, the YMCA, and universities around the Southeast. She is a certified teacher of Bones for Life, a Feldenkrais approach to improving bone strength and alignment, and has been a dancer/choreographer for 35 years.

The October Awareness Through Movement class will be held at 1151 Sheridan Road, Atlanta on October 19 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The cost of the workshop is \$125 through September 19; \$150 after that. For more information, email louiserunyon@aol.com, call 404-803-8023 or visit FeldenkraisAtlanta.com.

Youth Climate Strike COMING TO U.S.

Demanding immediate action, students are taking part in climate strikes around the world, and on March 15, young activists in the U.S. will add their voices to the escalating #FridaysForFuture movement. It was bolstered in January by 16-year-old climate activist Greta Thunberg, of Sweden, calling for the first global climate strike while attending the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Action in this country is being supported by such environmental groups as 350.org, Extinction Rebellion and the Sunrise Movement.

Recent climate strikes have taken place throughout Europe, Australia and elsewhere. A rally in Brussels on January 31 drew approximately 35,000 people.

Teen climate activist Jamie Margolin, the founder of This is Zero Hour, says that youth across the U.S. will "show our legislators that we need a 'Green New Deal.'"

For more information or to participate, contact ClimateStrike_USA@gmail.com or find on Twitter [#ActOnClimate](https://twitter.com/ActOnClimate) or [#ClimateStrike](https://twitter.com/ClimateStrike).



Sustainable Scrubbing TIPS FOR TOXIN-FREE HOUSE CLEANING

Cleaning the house shouldn't be a health hazard, yet studies have linked many popular cleaning products to asthma and other respiratory ills, developmental problems in young children and breast cancer. The nonprofit Environmental Working Group (EWG.org) warns in its Guide to Healthy Cleaning that both toilet and oven cleaners and heavy-duty degreasers

that contain hydrochloric acid, phosphoric acid, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide or ethanolamine can cause skin burns, blindness and lung irritation.

Products containing ammonia or chlorine bleach produce dangerous fumes when accidentally combined. Even air fresheners and scented cleaning or laundry products can trigger allergies,

and often contain suspected endocrine disruptors such as phthalates and synthetic musk.

EWG scientists have evaluated 2,500 cleaning products and posted the results online: Out of 507 all-purpose cleaners, only 59 earned an A for safety and 151 got an F. Other indicators of high eco-standards are a Green Seal or an EcoLogo certification symbol on the product's container.

There are many good, safe and effective cleaning strategies that use natural ingredients. ChasingGreen.org lists 23 ways to use baking soda in the kitchen, including cleaning grease stains, iron pots and baby bottles. For example, to clean both wooden and plastic cutting boards, use a paste made of one tablespoon each of baking soda, salt and warm water.

Vinegar, which is nontoxic and antibacterial, is another natural go-to cleaner. An equal mix of distilled white vinegar and water in a spray bottle can clean windows, stovetops, countertops, porcelain and ceramic tile. TheSpruce.com lists ways to use vinegar to clean everything from crayon stains to mold and mildew, and suggests adding a drop of lavender or citrus essential oil if the smell is unpleasant.

Treehugger.com cautions not to discard old, toxic products down the drain or in the trash, where they'll end up poisoning the water supply or landfill soil. Instead, keep an eye out for local toxic and electronic recycling events.



Essential Oils for Pets

How to Use Them Safely

by Sandra Murphy

Essential oils are derived from plant-based sources, leading people to equate natural with safe; but that's not always the case. Knowing how and when to use oils is vital, according to Gary Richter, DVM, an integrative veterinarian and medical director of Holistic Veterinary

One thing I'd say is, learn all you can before using oils around pets. ~Gary Richter, integrative veterinarian and founder of Ultimate Pet Nutrition

Care, in Oakland, California. A veterinarian trained in the use of essential oils understands the properties of each oil, along with its proper dilution and application, a subject not generally taught in traditional veterinary schools; holistic medicine requires additional training.

With proper use under professional guidance, essential oils can be part of a larger treatment plan, says Richter. Cats are generally more sensitive to oils because they don't metabolize medicine as efficiently as dogs, he notes. "As one professor used to tell our veterinary class, 'Cats are not small dogs, so they can't be treated as if they are'—always good to remember."

Soothing Effects

Just as chamomile tea relaxes humans, anxious dogs find its scent calming. Some vets spray the exam room with lavender between appointments to calm anxious clients.

Sally Morgan, a physical therapist and advanced certified practitioner of the gentle animal bodywork therapy known as Tellington TTouch, sees clients in her Northampton, Massachusetts, office. "I put a drop of a peace and calming blend or lavender on the carpet or a pillow," she says. "It relaxes the animal and dissipates the smells of previous clients. I don't use diffusers. The odor can be too strong for their sensitive noses. There's also a danger it could spill and be licked up."

Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed Kim Paciotti, owner of Training Canines, LLC, based in Statesville, North Carolina, finds the scent of green apples relieves anxiety and soothes upset tummies for dogs and puppies that suffer

Susan Schmitz/Shutterstock.com



from motion sickness. "Cotton balls placed inside a small container clipped to the outside of their crates deliver the smell," she says. "They don't have direct contact, but still reap the benefits, allowing the dogs to self-medicate by sniffing when they feel the need."

Kimberly Wallace, founder of kW Sustainable Brands, in San Diego, burns organic, sweet basil-scented candles for their antiviral, antibacterial properties. Her pugs love the smell. "Our rescue pug has mast cell tumors which compromise her immune system. I do my due diligence to buy all-natural products whenever I can."

Proceed With Caution

Pure essential oils are far too strong to use undiluted, Richter says. Age, physical condition and species are so varied that guessing which oil and how to use it can be dangerous to the pet. "Skin irritation like a hot spot or rash is a relatively minor problem that could benefit from the right essential oil. An open wound requires a veterinary visit," he says. "Some oils aren't recommended unless under veterinary guidance. Reactions can range from mere annoyance to toxicity."

Wintergreen, melaleuca, pennyroyal, tea tree and pine oils cause the most reported problems for dogs, according to *PetPoisonHelpline.com*. Peppermint, cloves, cinnamon and oregano oil also can be quite strong and require educated use, says Richter. An uneven gait, vomiting, diarrhea, drooling and weakness can be symptoms of toxicity, requiring immediate veterinary care to prevent damage to the central nervous system or organ failure.

In its fragrance and taste, plants have defense mechanisms to ward off destructive insects or to attract bees and butterflies. Those same properties can help people and animals. The plant's natural compounds can ward off fungi, bacteria, parasites or inflammation. However, just reading a label isn't enough to know which oils will work best for these problems.

"*The Animal Desk Reference II: Essential Oils for Animals, Second Edition*, by Melissa Shelton, is a reader-friendly guide," says Richter. "I touch on the subject in my book *The Ultimate Pet Health Guide: Breakthrough Nutrition and Integrative Care for Dogs and Cats*, but for deeper study, I recommend Shelton's book."

"One thing I'd say is, learn all you can before using oils around pets," Richter says. "There's not a one-size-fits-all formula for dilution for safe use. There are too many variables with oils and animals."

Be more than a well-meaning pet lover—also be well-educated.

Sandra Murphy is a freelance writer in St. Louis, MO. Connect at StLouisFreelanceWriter@mindspring.com.

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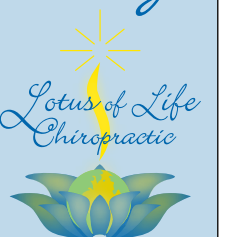
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During stress, the body is primed to resist or escape a threat, and ... it's not going to prioritize restorative activities.

~Margaret Connolly

laureate Elizabeth Blackburn, it is now understood that prolonged daily stress weakens DNA structures by shortening chromosome-protecting telomeres, a major component in premature cell death and the trigger of genetic, predisposed markers for disease.

Studies by Dr. Owen Wolkowitz, of the University of California, San Francisco, demonstrate the link between shortened telomeres and insufficient response to free radicals, resulting in chronic inflammation, now believed to be the catalyst of most degenerative

diseases. Psychological stress, according to research published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* by Sheldon Cohen of Carnegie Mellon University, in Pittsburgh, changes how the body regulates inflammatory response.

"Stress and inflammation cause pain and disease," says Certified Reflexologist and holistic practitioner Martha Garland, of CreativeSpirit Healing Arts, in Baltimore. "All of this that we carry in our bodies will make us feel much older than our years."

Through application of pressure on specific reflex zones on the feet, hands and ears, reflexologists like Garland can help promote the natural flow of bodily functions. "Reflexology, a modality that is separate from massage therapy, reduces the tension, stress and pain that we hold in our feet and in the rest of our body, which can promote longevity and better quality of life," she says.

Certified craniosacral therapist Margaret Connolly, of Narberth, Pennsylvania, agrees that mental or emotional

strain plays a key role in the aging process. "During stress, the body is primed to resist or escape a threat, and in that situation, it's not going to prioritize restorative activities," she says. Craniosacral therapy (CST) focuses on the cerebrospinal fluid and the meninges surrounding the brain, spinal cord and related connective tissue, and helps the body drop out of excessive fight-or-flight mode.

Pain, Serotonin and Substance P

Bodywork and its ability to impact the chemistry of stress has far-reaching effects on most bodily systems. Studies in 2016 from the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami School of Medicine have shown that massage therapy helps to regulate hormones, boost immunity, improve attentiveness and ease the symptoms of depression.

Licensed Massage Therapist Michele Duncan King, of Sea Spell Massage, in Cannon Beach, Oregon, knows firsthand how her work can assist in counteracting the energy-sapping effects of stress. "When the digestive system doesn't go into the 'rest-and-digest' state via activation of the parasympathetic nervous system, it can affect muscles, joints, organs and hormones. This, along with elevated cortisol, can certainly make us function less optimally, making us feel older and less vibrant."

Traditional massage modalities such as Swedish, deep tissue, Thai and Lomi Lomi help reduce blood pressure, boost immunity by augmenting natural killer cells, decrease symptoms of depression and support the cardiovascular system. It can also assist lymphatic movement, which can prevent cold hands and feet and achiness. Massage also raises serotonin and dopamine levels, neurotransmitters that play vital roles in memory, mood regulation and immunity.

Most significantly, higher serotonin levels are linked to lower levels of substance P, a neuropeptide that is central in pain perception. It soars during times of stress, anxiety and insufficient sleep, and has also been linked to tumor growth and inflammatory conditions.

As human beings, touch is so important.

~Anita Bondi

Multidimensional Well-Being

Bodywork can assist the physical body, but it can also be a restorative balm for the emotions and psyche. "As human beings, touch is so important. Massage modalities invite safe, healing touch," says Anita Bondi, licensed massage therapist and a founder of the Wellspring Holistic Center, in East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. "A good therapist will also educate a client about other benefits of a more holistic lifestyle. I believe any time we give ourselves permission to listen to the body's wisdom and follow its lead, we reduce stress and increase well-being."

While women are more apt to include bodywork sessions in their health care,

men can be hesitant. Connolly encourages both women and men to experience CST and other modalities. "Sometimes men are a bit nervous about being touched, whether the practitioner is male or female. Even when open to hands-on therapy, some men believe extremely deep pressure is needed in order to be effective." Not so, says Connolly, who cites the experience of Mark Bertolini, CEO of the Aetna health insurance company, who credits CST with saving his life when he was contemplating suicide and suffering severe neuropathic pain from a skiing accident.

Menopause and Cognitive Function

CST can also have an impact on women's hormonal changes. "Very slight movement of tissues near the pituitary gland can exert a subtle pumping motion on the master gland in a way that will facilitate its

Age-Defying Bodywork

How to Turn Back the Clock

by Marlaina Donato

It has been said that stress kills, and it often can be a slow and premature process, leading to common but avoidable symptoms of decline: impaired memory, loss of mobility, fatigue and decreased libido. Good nutrition, getting enough sleep and staying active contribute to vitality; however, fortifying the nervous system is critical to combating age-accelerating stress hormones like cortisol.

The key to keeping body and mind young may lie in the therapeutic modalities of bodywork, an umbrella term for up to 350 methods that include massage, energy work and meridian-based therapies like acupuncture, shiatsu and reflexology, which can improve quality of life and promote cellular integrity. Once considered a luxury confined to spas and private home sessions, bodywork is moving into the medical mainstream with reputable hospitals like the Memorial Sloan Ket-

tering Cancer Center, in New York City, which offers reiki sessions and instruction for patients and caregivers.

According to a survey by the American Hospital Association, reiki and its close cousin Therapeutic Touch comprise one of three top complementary therapies in American hospitals, along with massage therapy and music. The Arthritis Foundation recommends massage for all types of arthritis and pain syndromes like fibromyalgia, as it can reduce discomfort and stress.

The Chemistry of Premature Aging

Busy lives without enough downtime can set up the body to be in a chronic state of "fight-or-flight", which compromises cardiovascular health, nutrient absorption, waste elimination and immunity. Thanks to groundbreaking researchers like Nobel

Highlighting Bodywork Benefits

For Her:

- Shiatsu and acupuncture for hormonal imbalance, insomnia, migraine headaches, irritable bowel syndrome
- Swedish, deep tissue and aromatherapy massage for stress reduction, premenstrual syndrome, pain, food cravings
- Craniosacral therapy for headaches, back and joint pain, morning sickness, postpartum wellness
- Maya Abdominal Massage (Arvigo techniques) for reproductive health, fertility, bladder health, constipation
- Reflexology for healthier skin, food sensitivities, seasonal allergies, overactive bladder

For Him:

- Shiatsu and acupuncture for back pain, office-related pain syndromes, gout and inflammatory bowel disease
- Swedish, deep tissue and aromatherapy massage for cardiovascular and lymphatic circulation, blood pressure, depression, anxiety, better sleep
- Neuromuscular therapy, myofascial release, trigger point release and cross-fiber friction massage for supporting muscles of the male pelvic floor integral to the prostate, bladder and sexual health
- Craniosacral therapy for pain reduction, headaches, asthma
- Roling, structural integration and the Feldenkrais Method for changing structural patterns, pain reduction, body awareness
- Reflexology for kidney stones



ability to produce and release hormones,” explains Connolly.

The therapy is sometimes used in conjunction with acupuncture, which also impacts hormones and works on the brain. A 2018 study by Chinese researchers published in the journal *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine* shows neuronal improvement through acupuncture in both cognitively impaired patients and healthy individuals.

Tools for Life

Most practitioners believe that deriving benefits from bodywork requires consistency, which can support longevity in unexpected ways. Garland says, “What really makes a difference in reducing chronic stress is consistent stress reduction. One session occasionally will feel good and reduce tension temporarily, but will not make a major difference in reducing stress in the long term.” King agrees: “A massage once a month is my recommendation for ideal overall maintenance, and more frequent sessions for specific conditions or goals.”

Research and results confirm that well-being is not a luxury, but a necessity, and puts to rest the idea that bodywork is a guilty pleasure. “The more we do to help ourselves, the better our lives will be as we age,” says Bondi.

Marlaina Donato is certified in massage and bodywork, and is the author of several books. Connect at AutumnEmbersMusic.com.

The Brain In Your Skin

by Greg Paine

If the eyes are the windows to the soul, then the feet are the windows to the brain.

With over 7,000 nerve endings in each human foot, our two feet make excellent sensory control panels with direct access to the limbic part of the brain via the central nervous system. The limbic brain, also known as the *paleomammalian* brain, houses the thalamus and hypothalamus, areas of the brain that are vital parts of the endocrine system. These uniquely human organs and glands are crucial to dealing with emotions, memories and sensory arousal.

Reflexology is a 2000-year-old non-invasive science that uses reflex points on the bottom, lateral and medial sides of the foot and ankle to help relax the body and gives the limbic brain a chance to collect itself when dealing with our ever-chaotic world. Research being done by neuroscientist Claudia Aguirre explores the links of communication between the skin and the brain, even asserting that the skin has the ability to think and feel—going beyond the traditional understanding of how the cerebral cortex processes touch. These new insights confirm what modern reflexologists have been discussing and documenting for a long time—that the *somatosensory* system, a complex system of sensory neurons and pathways that responds to changes at the surface or inside the body, plays an even more important role in healing than previously thought.

Drawing the most attention in the neuroscience community is the *neuroimmunocutaneous* system, which is

responsible for the “feeling” stimuli and sensation in the human body and is one of the first, if not the first sensory system to develop in utero. Studies of the system are finally shedding light on one of the most mysterious parts of the brain, called the *angular gyrus*, thought to process gentle or light touch. This offers new insights about “Mother’s first touch,” and is lighting up the neuroscience community and their understanding of the biological mechanisms that influence how genes switch on and off.

These concepts bring buoyancy and new life to the work done by Robert St. John and Gaston-Saint-Pierre, respected reflexologists from the 1970s, who developed the Metamorphic Technique, a transformative healing modality that uses the lightest of touch along the spinal reflex of the foot, hand and occipital region of the head. This relatively new therapy is very popular in the UK and Europe and is slowly gaining traction in the United States. The technique helps people reconnect with some of their first thoughts and feelings while in the womb and can help people tap into their unlimited potential.



Greg Paine is co-owner of Marietta’s Out of the Grey Wellness, a certified reflexologist who practices the Metamorphic modality and serves as VP of the nonprofit Georgia Reflexology Organization. More info at OutoftheGreyWellness.com.

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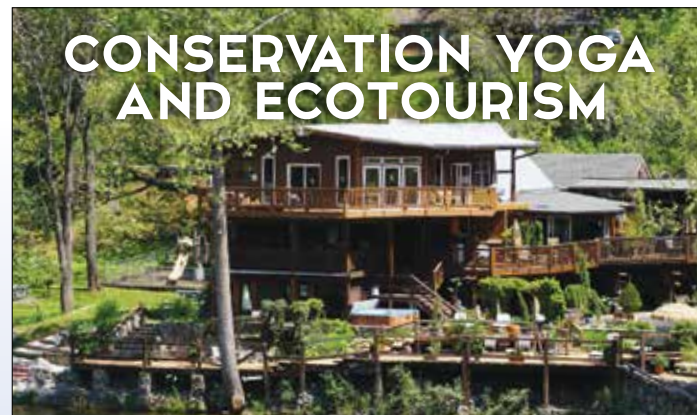
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primarily uses drugs and surgery to rid the body of pathogens, the goal of Ayurvedic practice is to keep the energy pathways, or *nadis*, unblocked for optimal health. In Chinese medicine, the energy in these pathways is known as “chi;” in Japanese healing practices, it is known as “ki;” and in yoga and Ayurveda the vital energy force is called “prana.” Practices such as yogic breath, meditation and chanting, and Ayurvedic therapies such as Marma and Polarity Therapy, work to enliven prana.

The Doshas

According to Ayurveda, each of us is made up of a combination of fundamental energies, or *doshas*. The three doshas—*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*—each have their own qualities and flavors and are derived from a unique blend of the five elements—earth, air, water, fire and ether. While each of us have all three doshas in our physiological makeup, one or a combination of two are predominant at birth.

The doshas are used as the basis for creating a customized wellness program that might involve shifting dietary choices, using essential oils, revising lifestyle patterns, incorporating yoga postures and more. Detox programs, herbs, gemstones, breathwork, self-massage, and Ayurvedic therapies such as meditation and Marma—which involves pressure points and chakra balancing—can become part of one’s Ayurvedic path to wellness.

“The three doshas are present in every cell, organ, tissue, system and organism and at all levels of consciousness,” wrote Dr. Vasant Lad, an Indian physician who brought Ayurveda to the West. The seasons, times of the day, and portions of the life cycle also have a predominant dosha associated with them.

Take A Dosha Quiz Online

There are several dosha quizzes online that make it easy to find out which dosha(s) you are and to learn more about the benefits of making Ayurvedic changes to your lifestyle. For best results, work with a skilled Ayurvedic professional.

- bit.ly/NABBotan
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Vata

Those born with a Vata constitution may have a thin frame and tend toward dry skin, constipation and scattered energy.

Vata types get balanced with the help of warm, cooked foods and grounding tastes, such as sweet, salty and sour, as well as root vegetables, sea vegetables, sweet potatoes and ghee. They thrive when they get “oiled” both inside and out—with healthy fats and self-massage. Warming essential oils such as vetiver, nutmeg and vanilla bring peace to an often scattered Vata mind.

Yoga postures such as *Tadasana*, or standing pose, and *Uttanasa*, or forward bends, are classical poses that bring calm and centeredness to these often-unsteady types. Alternate nostril breathing, like that used in *pranayama*, or breathing techniques, can reduce anxiety and stress. Calming a Vata’s sensitive nervous system is key. We are currently living in a Vata-provoking society, so paying attention to overwhelm and overstimulation will prevent Vata derangement in most everyone.

While yoga has flourished and enjoyed mainstream acceptance over the last few decades, its sister science, Ayurveda, has not received as much attention. Yet people turn to both practices to reduce stress, eliminate pain, lose weight, prevent disease, reduce dependence on prescription drugs, improve quality of life and accelerate spiritual development. So what’s special about Ayurveda?

According to Dr. Marc Halpern, founder and director of The California College of Ayurveda, “Ayurveda is considered to be the mother of all healing sciences, and yoga is its corollary... Ayurveda is the healing side of yoga; yoga is the spiritual side of Ayurveda.”

What is Ayurveda?

The word “Ayurveda” literally means “knowledge of life.” Originally handed down in an oral tradition, Ayurvedic teachings were recorded in sacred Sanskrit texts called the *Vedas* over the course of 4,000 years. The teachings offer guidance for daily routines, diet, lifestyle and thinking as well as herbal formulations and other practices that aim to balance both mental and physical health.

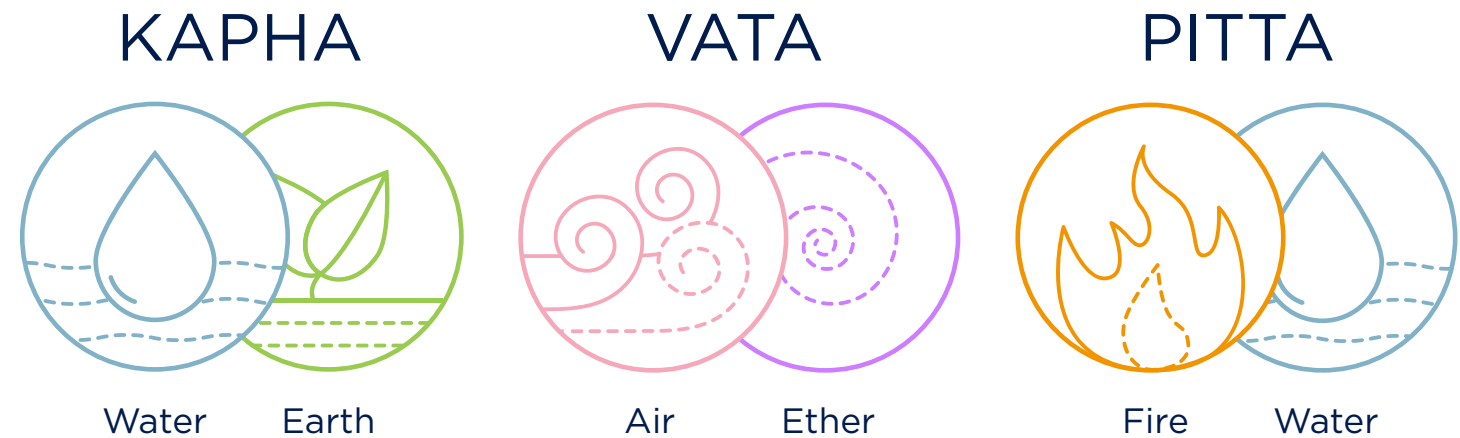
While the concept of mind-body connection is new to modern science, Ayurveda has recognized it for millennia. In fact, it asserts that the mind-body connection is essential for optimal health, longevity and disease prevention. It considers good digestion and elimination to be key

to health, and it guides people to learn what types of foods, colors, aromas, sounds and touch create balance for body and mind.

Benefits of an Ayurvedic lifestyle can include natural weight loss, increased self-awareness and self-care, anti-aging, glowing skin, reduced or eliminated pain and increased creativity.

How is Ayurveda different?

While Western medicine views human physiology as being comprised of separate parts—bones, joints, muscles, organs and so on—Ayurveda looks at the whole human being, including their mental, emotional, physical and spiritual natures. And while Western medicine focuses on symptoms of diseases and



The Kapha dosha derives from the elements of water and earth and includes the structural elements of the body. Vata, combining air and ether, has very dynamic properties. Pitta energy combines the fire and water elements, providing the energy of metabolizing and transformation.

Pitta

Pitta energy combines the fire and water elements, providing the energy of transformation. Pitta types are often of medium build, have strong metabolism and sharp intellect. They may have fair skin, freckles and even red hair. They have tendencies toward inflammation, diarrhea, acid reflux and skin conditions such as acne and redness.

Pitta types get more balance with cooling foods such as cucumber, coconut, mint, aloe vera juice, sweet fruits, coriander flavoring and sweet, bitter and astringent tastes. It's best for Pittas to avoid spicy foods, too.

Being in nature and near water cools the Pitta nature. In other words, "chilling out" is the remedy. Cooling essential oils such as sandalwood, peppermint and orange help Pittas relax, as does the "Cooling Breath" pranayama breathing technique. Yoga postures that calm and balance Pitta are Cobra Pose and Moon Salutation. Summer is Pitta season, in fact—a time when everyone can benefit from a few heat-pacifying practices.

Kapha

Kapha, the energy type that derives from earth and water, includes the structural elements of the body. Kapha types are often larger-boned, are blessed with strength, endurance, and stamina and are

often loving and caring people. They are usually very calm, tolerant and forgiving. When out of balance, Kapha types have tendencies toward weight gain, congestion and resistance to healthy change.

People with predominant Kapha energy find balance with vigorous exercise and stimulating tastes such as pungent spices, astringent and bitter tastes. Dry brushing is an effective ritual for these types since it helps the lymphatic system move stagnant energy. Kaphas often do well with light food and grains.

A helpful yoga asana for Kapha types is Sun salutation, since it is vigorous and stimulating, along with Soul Cycle and spinning classes. And a breathing exercise, Bastrika Breath, can be used to get Kaphas' energy moving.

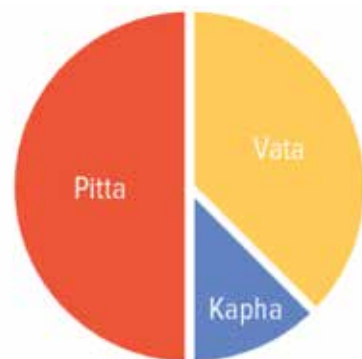
Next month: Part 2 of our Ayurveda Series: Ayurveda Brings Balance to Digestion



Author Gedalia Genin, Ph.D., has been using Ayurveda, breathwork, meditation, essential oils, Marma, sound healing and more for

over 15 years to help women experience greater health and vitality. Contact her at GedaliaGenin@gmail.com, or 678-357-3443.

Sample Dosha of Pitta-Vata Type



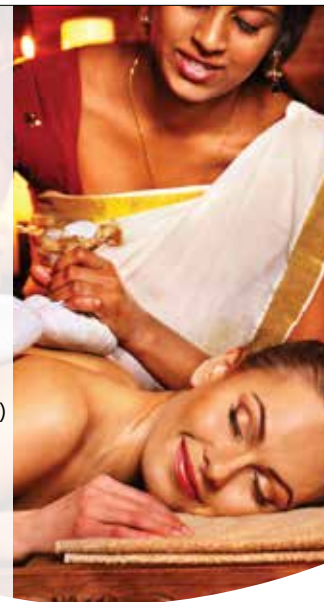
This means that you are generally intelligent, ambitious, creative and full of new ideas... Your light, quick body and your competitive nature likely keep you active and on the move... That said, you do have a propensity for overexertion, and the grounding, stabilizing influences in your life benefit you greatly. Your natural digestive strength allows you to eat as you please for the most part, though... you may not always make eating a top priority. You likely prefer a warmer climate because you tend to have poor circulation... Ultimately, it is your intensity that drives you, but you have a healthy enthusiasm for life that allows you to enjoy yourself along the way. In fact, you probably wake up alert and fresh each morning—excited to greet a new day.

www.banyanbotanicals.com/info/dosha-quiz/

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Yoga gives us
powerful tools so we
may age gracefully.

~Lisa Moore

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The Power of Yoga Tapping Into the Life Force

by Marlaina Donato

Longevity is something most of us strive for, and increasingly, research shows that implementing a consistent yoga practice can be a fruitful investment toward that goal. Yoga is an eight-branch system of well-being that encompasses exercise, meditation, conscious breathing, diet and other elements, but how it effects mind-body fitness alone is proving to be a reliable defense against age-related loss of mobility, cardiovascular disease and depression.

Its stress-busting capabilities help to support challenged adrenal glands and lower elevated blood pressure. Getting on the mat can improve insulin sensitivity in diabetics and also help balance immune responses in individuals with autoimmune conditions or insufficient natural killer cells.

Combined research from 22 studies by the University of Edinburgh reveals that yoga, compared to both sedentary lifestyles and other forms of exercise such as walking or chair aerobics, improved the lower-body strength and flexibility in individuals age 60 and older. The findings published earlier

this year in the *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* also showed improved quality of sleep and fewer symptoms of depression.

Fewer Health Risks, Stronger Bones

Yoga's inverted poses increase blood circulation to vital organs, including the intestines, which facilitates assimilation of nutrients and waste elimination. Asanas like shoulder stand, bridge and downward-facing dog stimulate blood flow from the lower extremities to the heart and fortify red blood cells by increasing hemoglobin, guarding against blood clots, stroke and heart attack. Yoga can also strengthen the bones. A 2016 study published in the *International Journal of Yoga* shows improved bone mineral density in women with postmenopausal osteoporosis.

"Much like a house that sits empty or a car left to sit unused in a garage, our human parts can age and rot without movement. Movement creates more energy," explains Nancy Poole, a teacher at Clarksburg Yoga

and Wellness, in Clarksburg, Maryland.

Joints lose flexibility as we age, but yoga movement provides them with essential oxygen, blood and nutrients. Lisa Moore, owner of Free to Be Yoga, in Great Falls, Montana, underscores, "A joint needs to move through its full range of motion to function well. Movement helps lubricate and cushion joints, provides nutrition and removes wastes."

Stretching Into Joy

A 2014 hatha yoga study published in the *Journals of Gerontology* revealed increased cognitive function in older adults after eight weeks of yoga three times a week. Yoga's super power lies in its capacity to reset the autonomic nervous system and ramp up mood-boosting serotonin while decreasing monoamine oxidase, an enzyme that disarms the effects of stress hormones like cortisol. Under the influence of yoga, the brain is bathed in calming neurotransmitters, combatting depression and anxiety, and instilling a sense of optimism.

"Yoga also helps us to embrace the hard times and ride the waves. With the tools that yoga provides, we can swim toward the light. It also helps us to experience a more intimate relationship with body and soul, and in turn make better choices in all aspects of life," notes Carmen Ferreira, owner of the Sunshine Barre Studio, in Rocky Point, New York.

Moore concurs, advising, "Yoga gives us powerful tools so we may age gracefully. One of them is to manage stress with equanimity."

Each time we show up on our mats, we show up for ourselves, an opportunity to nourish the body, our one and only temple.

~Carmen Ferreira

The Breath of Life

Conscious breathing is at the core of a dedicated yoga practice, and a lowered risk of cardiovascular and respiratory disease gives us another reason to inhale and exhale deeply. Poole observes, "Our general population does not breathe correctly, and many of us even hold our breath unconsciously. For my students, the hardest part of yoga is learning to take deep, full breaths. Old breathing habits must be unlearned. Once attention is given to the breath, tensions can be released."

"Yoga improves lung capacity and brings more energy to the cells, which in turn creates more energy and life force in our bodies," says Ferreira. "It helps us to live from the heart's center and foster a better quality of life," she adds. "Each time we show up on our mats, we show up for ourselves, an opportunity to nourish the body, our one and only temple."

Marlaina Donato is an author of several books and a composer. Connect at AutumnEmbersMusic.com.



September Is National Yoga Month

This marks the 10th anniversary of the designation by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. National Yoga Month was developed to raise awareness of yoga's health benefits.

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Four Luminaries in Atlanta's Thriving Yoga Community

by Noah Chen

This month, Natural Awakenings shines a light on four local yoga luminaries. Each has been nominated by their peers and colleagues for at least one of three reasons: developing the community around yoga, deepening the study and experience of yoga for their students and broadening the audience for yoga. We are pleased to feature William Hufschmidt, Octavia Raheem, Gina Minyard and Jessica Murphy.



William Hufschmidt

William Hufschmidt has been described as a yoga teacher's teacher and is known as someone who can take his students more deeply into their yoga practice than most other teachers. He is respected by many for his depth of knowledge and experience of Kripalu yoga, a yoga tradition that can be traced back to the prestigious yoga teacher, Swami Kripalu.

"My path to yoga began when I was fourteen," says Hufschmidt. After breaking his leg in a car accident and going through a tough physical recovery, yoga was the first physical activity at which he felt competent. "After I broke my leg, there was a part of me that always felt broken," he explains. "Yoga gave me a way to feel into and heal with my body." Two years after he first started yoga classes, he began filling in for his teacher.

After college, he started working full-time and stopped doing yoga rigorously, but it wasn't long before he had his first experience with what became his favorite style of yoga, Kripalu. | *Continued, page 28*



Octavia Raheem

With a background in Pranakriya yoga and Yin yoga, Octavia Raheem has been teaching yoga since 2006. She currently teaches several classes at Sacred Chill West, a studio she co-owns with Meryl Arnett. As an African American, she is acutely aware of the lack of diversity in many yoga studios, and she seeks to make yoga more inclusive and accessible for all.

"I come from communities that have been systematically and historically marginalized and wounded. Yoga is incredibly healing," says Raheem. "I believe that yoga can/should/must reflect the vast diversity and beautiful spectrums of black, brown, yellow, and red that thrive in the people of this country. I want to teach yoga because I know my family—my community—needs access to the healing, peace, and beauty of yoga."

Raheem's studio, Sacred Chill West, will celebrate its third anniversary in October. "Our studio is truly welcoming to all," she says. "You will see the heart and soul of the diverse people of Atlanta represented in our classes." | *Continued, page 28*



Gina Minyard

Gina Minyard has been described by a peer as Atlanta's best yoga teacher on alignment.

Minyard focuses on fine-tuning the alignment of the yoga poses and, in doing so, has made the practice more satisfying and enriching for herself and her students.

Minyard started her training at Atlanta's Peachtree Yoga Center in 1999. Within a year she went on to study Anusara yoga, a branch of Hatha yoga, and in 2006, she became the first certified Anusara yoga teacher in Georgia.

"The hallmark of Anusara is that it is an alignment-based yoga," says Minyard. Its focus on alignment is coupled with the philosophical aspect of Anusara yoga, which leads to deeper personal understanding. "To me, what is so powerful about alignment in yoga is not just that it heals and frees the body, but it is the practice that helps us to enact and embody alignment with life itself."

While other forms of yoga can focus on movement, breath, or other aspects of the practice, Anusara works on going deeper into the individual poses. | *Continued, page 29*



Jessica Murphy

Jessica Murphy is the creator of Atlanta's only current homegrown yoga festival, Dirty South Yoga Fest. She, too, has been trained under Yoganand Michael Carroll, and is a certified Pranakriya yoga teacher. Murphy has been interested in yoga since middle school, but, she says, "my mother did prenatal yoga, so I joke that I did yoga in utero!"

Murphy, who has worked many jobs and is currently freelancing as a digital marketer, says yoga is a nice constant in her life, and several factors keep her involved in the practice.

"It's really grounding. Being a person who does a lot of different things, it's nice knowing I can go to a yoga class and leave feeling grounded. But along the way, I have really come to love and connect with the yoga community. For a long time, I practiced, but I didn't have the person-to-person connection. As soon as I started making those deeper connections with people in the community, I couldn't imagine not having them in my life." | *Continued, page 29*

William Hufschmidt, continued

Hufschmidt had been laid off from his job at a law firm when he realized he wanted a change of pace. “I was not looking to become a yoga teacher; I was looking for a retreat to get away for a while,” he says, and he signed up for a teacher training class thinking it would be just that. While there he met Yoganand Michael Carroll, who introduced him to Kripalu and eventually became his primary teacher.

“There’s a lot more breathwork involved in Kripalu, compared to what other yoga classes have,” says Hufschmidt. “We use breathwork as a way of moving energy through the body.”

While Kripalu yoga can be very physically taxing, the focus is more on the spiritual side of yoga: “The goal is for everybody, no matter the state of their body, to have an experience of stillness,” he says.

“When people practice Kripalu for a while, it becomes about more than just the body. I think if your first teachers are practicing in that way, it does kind of hook you in a different way for the yoga practice.”

His teacher did that for him. Carroll was a graduate of the Kripalu School of Yoga, the school set up by Swami Kripalu when he came to the U.S. Carroll eventually left the school, and Hufschmidt stayed with him and continued as his pupil.

“There are very few yoga traditions in the United States that can be traced back to an Indian person who lived in India in our lifetime,” shares Hufschmidt. “We trace back to a Swami who did a lifetime of intense practice and taught based on his personal experience.”

Hufschmidt has been teaching and practicing in Atlanta since 2006 and only recently has begun setting aside more time for himself. He teaches private lessons for the Synapse Organization, working with people in various stages of substance recovery. He teaches a weekly Tuesday night class at the Neighborhood Church in Atlanta and has three upcoming workshops in October, December, and March 2020.

For more information, see YogaWithWilliam.com.

Octavia Raheem, continued

Raheem knows the challenges facing BIPOCs (Black and Indigenous People/Persons of Color) in Atlanta’s yoga scene. “The way I ‘earned my keep’ at one of the first studios I taught at was to teach *and* clean the studio. None of the other teachers did that, and I was the only black woman.”

Diversity in the yoga community is one of Raheem’s top priorities. To her, it means not only diversity in who is coming to the classes, but in who is recognized as teachers and figures of respect and authority in the yoga community. “It has affirmed to me that when black women and marginalized folk have access to leadership and ownership in yoga and wellness spaces, it radically transforms the culture, and creates access for so many others to come to the practice,” she says.

To that end, Raheem established a mentorship program for yoga teachers called Held, in which she coaches a diverse set of yoga teachers through “clearing inner and outer obstacles that impede them doing the work they need to do.”

“When marginalized yoga teachers have opportunities in the wellness field, our communities have more access to wellness,” she says.

Raheem also leads what she calls Starshine and Clay yoga retreats for BIPOC women. The retreats provide a safe space for women with similar backgrounds to come together and focus on their health. They allow people to “re-enter families, communities, work and world with more peace and a sense of wholeness,” she says.

All in all, Raheem has been successful in creating a place where diversity is celebrated, and members of all races can gather and practice yoga without feeling targeted. She says in the three years she has co-owned Sacred Chill West, she has “encountered more black and brown yogis and BIPOC teachers than I ever did in any other spaces in all of the 13 years prior—combined.”

For information about Raheem’s classes, lessons, retreats and more, visit SacredChillWest.com.

Gina Minyard, continued

Alignment had not always been Minyard’s main focus within the study of yoga. In her early twenties, she was more into the movement aspect of yoga, but after an accident on a bicycle, she found it difficult to go through the motions of yoga. She gravitated to Anusara yoga not only because its focus on alignment was more compatible with her injuries, but Anusara yoga helped her learn how to take care of her body.

She found that by aligning her body in certain ways during the poses, she could have a painless experience, and her body began to heal.

Minyard credits her insistence on correct alignment, along with “hundreds of hours of training with incredible teachers,” for leading her to become so knowledgeable and respected among her fellow teachers and their students.

She says that her experiences with her own body have given her an ability to “sense” into the alignment of her students, making her a more observant teacher.

“I have a way of teaching alignment that really engages people and brings them to new places of awareness that they haven’t experienced yet,” she says.

Students of all skill levels have found Minyard’s teachings to be helpful. After all, everyone has some bad habits, and asana yoga “requires that we break down habitual patterns and move into new, more harmonious patterns in our bodies and our minds.

“At a certain moment, there’s quite a delight, there’s a discovery that there’s always more than was thought possible.”

In addition to yoga, Minyard also teaches a meditation class. “Where we go in meditation, asana alone can’t get us there,” she says. She sees meditation as “the most profound practice of alignment.” The two go well together and provide her with a calm sense of mind: “It keeps my energy moving. It brings me into a place of steadiness and well-being, no matter what it is I’m facing.”

Minyard teaches several yoga classes in Atlanta, including some at the Yoga Collective, as well as a teacher training class.

For more information on her classes and meditation course, visit GinaMinyard.com.

Jessica Murphy, continued

It was while Murphy was practicing for her 200-hour yoga teacher training that she came up with the idea for the Dirty South Yoga Fest, an annual event credited with growing Atlanta’s yoga community.

Inspired by Atlanta’s yoga teachers, Murphy wanted a way for people to come together and experience what those teachers had to offer. “I was getting exposed to so many new teachers, and I was having such a great experience, it seemed to me that everyone should have the chance to try out all the great teachers in Atlanta,” she says.

Murphy was nervous about how the festival would be received, but they sold out their first year.

“Seeing all the people who came out, I remember walking away thinking, *‘This is what I really love to do,’*” she recalls. From that day, Murphy has made The Dirty South Yoga Fest one of her top priorities; she quit teaching so she could put more energy into the yoga festival. And her efforts seem to have paid off: the festival has been growing in size every year. “Collaborating with people and making new connections—it’s what keeps me coming back to the festival,” she says. “If people keep showing up, I’ll keep doing it.”

While Murphy doesn’t teach a regular class, she is gearing up to lead her first retreat—a surfing and yoga trip to Chile. “I spent a year in Chile learning to surf about seven years ago, so this will be my way to take people with me and do yoga and surf in a country that’s really special for me!”

For more info about the Dirty South Yoga Fest and Murphy’s Chile yoga retreat, go to <https://dirtysouthyogafest.com/>.



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How To Find Yourself

IN THE WOODS

by Graham Fowler

There's no shortage today of yoga studios, books, videos, teachers and permutations of yoga practice styles. Millions benefit from the precious legacy that has been passed on from antiquity.

Yet ironically, one of the most important core practices, revered by ancient yogis, is often neglected.

Mountain. Lotus. Eagle. Tree. Frog. Fish. Butterfly. Cobra. Scorpion. Tortoise. Firefly. Crocodile. Bird of Paradise.

What does every item on this list have in common? They are all names of yoga poses. And they are all found in nature. We could even add Salutation to the Sun and Salutation to the Moon to the list.

Clearly, all of nature spoke to the great yogis who came before us. Their yoga practice embraced the valleys, mountains, and thick forests of India. And while they also often practiced in ashrams and sat at their gurus' feet, their gurus often said to them, "Go into the forest. The deepest teachings of yoga are teachings in silence. Sit down and listen."

One of the first and most acclaimed Ayurvedic physicians, Charaka, said that the cause of all human suffering is *pragyaparadh*: literally, the "mistake of the intellect"—referring to our forgetfulness that, beyond surface appearances, we are all part of the One.

What was true then seems even more true today. The biggest misconception of Western civilization is that we are separated from nature. For too many people, nature is something they only see through their car window or on the Discovery Channel.

Yet we *are* part of nature. Still, as Patanjali notes in a yoga Sutra, "our essential nature is usually caught up in the activity of the mind (y.s.1.4)." Most of us have been caught up on the hamster wheel of concerns and thoughts of past and future, and distracted by ever-present electronic screens, obscuring the clarity and power of who, where, and what we are.

And yet the potential gifts of connecting with nature are infinite. Three of the most essential gifts that come from engaging with nature are opportunities to cultivate presence, open the heart, and elevate one's life force, or *prana*.

The following practices do just that and are intended for regular use. Feel free to modify them and make them your own; make them shorter or longer to fit your schedule and your needs.

Asking Permission

For best results, when you first go into nature, begin by asking permission. This may seem strange since, for a long time, human beings have considered nature something to use and take from in any way they desire. Asking permission can be the

first step to connecting with nature—and it's a prerequisite for cultivating presence, opening the heart and elevating prana.

Cultivating Presence

Just being in nature can help break the patterns of distractedness. Try these practices:

- Make a commitment to spend at least 20 minutes in nature every day. Dedicate this time wholeheartedly to being fully present. Whenever you experience your mind slipping into the past or the future, notice it and come back to enjoying what's here and now. The sights and sounds of nature will assist you.
- Seek out and attune to nature's beauty. Enjoy the majesty of a mighty oak tree, the sound of a rushing river or the movement of clouds against a blue sky. Do you feel your senses get more enlivened in this natural setting? With practice, superfluous mental chatter will begin to dissolve, and thoughts that arise out of a background of silence will be more powerful and clear.
- Take an hour or more and walk slowly until you find a spot in the woods or a meadow where you can have some privacy. Sit comfortably and keep your eyes open. As you take a few nice, easy breaths, begin to tune into the sights and sounds of your surroundings. Notice that there's a natural environment of harmony around you.
- As you tune into the rhythm of your breathing, start to notice what's happening, moment by moment, both in the areas around you and within you. Notice the parts of your body that are in contact with the earth, and what that contact feels like. Notice how your body moves as you breathe.
- Do you get a sense of continuity between the outer harmony of nature and the harmony of your body's internal rhythms? Maybe your shoulders begin to soften down away from your ears. Maybe there's an upsurge of inner happiness as you

remember your oneness with nature. Take a few minutes to enjoy this inner and outer harmony. Then journal about your experience.

Opening the Heart and Elevating Prana

Opening the heart and increasing life force often go hand in hand. The prana that exists in nature is the same force and potency that makes us alive. By becoming more present, and opening our hearts to what's around us, we gradually increase our sensitivity to flows in our environment. Even the simple act of breathing in the fragrance of a flower can bring a pleasant wave of life force.

The Practice of Breathing with a Tree

Reciprocal breathing is a powerful practice that deepens presence, opens the heart, and elevates prana. You can practice it with any of nature's inhabitants, but trees are especially well-suited for it as there is

already a symbiotic relationship between us and them. The carbon dioxide in our exhalations is absorbed by trees. They then breathe back life-giving oxygen to us.

1. To begin, go out into nature and find a tree—or let a tree find you. Can you be open to feeling which tree would like to have a relationship with you? Once you have found the tree that you will be working with, take a moment to get acquainted. Appreciate its qualities, such as its strong trunk, its rootedness, how it sways in the breeze or the texture of its bark.
2. Stand and face the tree and place your palms on it. Or, if it seems mutually acceptable, wrap your arms around it with a hug. Or, as some people prefer to do, touch the energy field, with your hands slightly out from the tree.
3. Stand tall but not rigid. Feel your feet on the ground. It's best to be barefooted. Feel the breath moving through you. As you inhale, feel prana from the tree

flowing in through your palms, as well as your belly and chest.

4. Keep your breath easy and full, without forcing. Breathe in the gifts from this wonderful being. Breathe out love and appreciation. Feel and enjoy a beautiful exchange of love, appreciation and prana. Allow this simple practice to purify and restore you as it opens your heart, cultivates presence, and elevates your life force.
5. Continue for five minutes or longer with this natural communion. When you have a sense of completion, breathe love and gratitude to the tree and gently withdraw.

With practice, you will come to realize and appreciate more and more the possibilities of a deeper and more reciprocal relationship with all of our fellow travelers in nature—including the two-legged variety.

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Ayurvedic Insights

FOR YOUR YOGA PRACTICE

by Graham Fowler

In “Discovering Ayurveda,” on page 20, Gedalia Genin introduces the three doshas, or body energy types, that Ayurvedic practices define and use to help people design an optimal health regimen. Each regimen is unique and customized to the individual and might encompass diet, herbal treatments, lifestyle changes and yogic breathing. Here, yoga editor Graham Fowler provides guidance through specific yoga asanas, or postures, that might be especially helpful to balance each of the three dosha energies—Vata, Pitta and Kapha—and optimize one’s yoga practice.

Ayurveda often recommends yoga asanas to help promote health and vitality in a number of ways—to resolve energetic imbalance in the body, pacify or reduce dominant doshas, strengthen the physical body and remediate structural issues, release tension and calm the mind.

Here are a few general guidelines to yoga asanas for each of the three Ayurvedic doshas. While a particular asana is recommended for each dosha, keep in mind that many asanas can be used by multiple body types if they are customized according to the individual’s needs.

You might want to record the guidance below, so you can practice while listening to it in your own voice.

VATA

General Guidelines

When people who are predominantly Vata are young, they tend to be quite flexible. Having a consistent and regular yoga practice over the years might counteract the usual tendency to lose that mobility, due to the dry quality of Vata.



Downward Facing Dog

1. Start on your hands and knees. Have your wrists directly beneath your

The bones of Vata types can be brittle and joints unstable. With their sometimes-flighty nature, there’s often an inclination for quick movement, which can aggravate Vata.

To balance your Vata constitution, keep your yoga movements deliberate, slow and strong, avoiding strain. Feel the power of deep, smooth breath. Stay present to your bodily sensations. Doing so can gradually strengthen bones and muscles that are often weak in Vata types. It also can help release tension in the body and cultivate steadiness of mind.

With regular practice, Vatas often find they love asana practice. They enjoy the movement and gain strength to complement their innate flexibility.

shoulders and your knees directly under your hip joints.

2. Tuck your toes under and straighten your legs but don’t lock your knees. Keep your arms straight as you draw your sit bones toward the back wall.
3. Spread your fingers and root down the base of your index fingers. Rotate your arms so the crooks of the elbows face each other. Draw your chest toward your thighs and press the fronts of your thighs into the backs of your thighs.
4. Search for equal connection to the earth through all fours. Keep your neck relaxed. Draw your shoulder blades down away from your ears. Broaden your collar bones.
5. Focus on extension of torso and arms. Try to create a straight line from your wrists to your tailbone.

As you hold the pose, stay present to sensations in the body. Feel the stretch in your legs as you breathe slowly and smoothly. Gradually increase holding time as you become stronger in the shoulders and arms.

Rest by gently coming back to hands and knees. Repeat.

PITTA

General Guidelines

Pittas tend to have good muscular development and be fairly flexible, though they’re not usually as flexible as Vata types.

Pitta yogis tend to bring good focus and motivation to the mat. Because they have more fire than Vatas, they may have a tendency to overdo things. If they push too hard in their practice, it can actually aggravate the fiery nature of Pitta, resulting in irritability.

Due to their fiery constitution, a cooling practice that relieves tension, along with some challenging poses to satisfy their drive to accomplish, will serve Pittas well. Also, keeping the intensity level at 70-80% capacity is a good general guideline to help Pittas stay in balance.



Seated Forward Fold

1. Sit tall on the mat, with legs extended on the floor. Reach forward through your heels. If your hamstrings are tight, elevate your hips by sitting on the front edge of a folded blanket or two.
2. Lift your arms overhead to lengthen your spine. Breathe in deeply.
3. Exhale as you pivot forward from your hip joints. Lengthen the front of your body as you fold, as if to make an offering of your heart toward your feet.
4. Extend your belly forward. Hold your lower legs, ankles or feet.
5. Scan through your body and let go of the struggle. Let conscious relaxation take you more deeply into the pose. Feel the “Ahh” of each exhalation. Stay at around 75% capacity. Exhale with mouth open as needed to cool down.
6. Sit up, breathe in and out, and immediately be still. Feel the energy circulate.

It’s best to keep your breathing steady and smooth. Keep in mind that if your breathing becomes rough and uneven, it’s a sign that you are pushing too much. Take a breath and let it go. You can release some heat and intensity by occasionally exhaling through the mouth.

KAPHA

General Guidelines

Kapha individuals tend to be stout and strong with good endurance. Yet they typically are less flexible than Vata and Pitta types. When out of balance, Kaphas tend toward inertia. The challenge is to get them going. Once they are on the mat and in their practice, their stamina and steadiness can keep them there for a nice, long practice.

Kaphas should spend a few minutes to warm up first, and then, go for it!

The Kapha constitution thrives on elbow grease and single-mindedness. Be sure to take deep breaths and, when you need more energy, pick up the pace of your breathing. In general, challenge yourself with long holds but when doing forward bends, use shorter holds because they can increase kapha.

Kaphas can also enjoy a vigorous practice of *Surya Namaskar*, or Sun Salutations. (See “Sun Salutations: Put Spring in Your Step” in our April 2019 issue.)



Bow Pose

1. Lie down on your belly with legs close together. Gently press your tailbone toward your pubic bone.
2. Bend your knees and grab your ankles. Breathe in.

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3. Exhaling, press your feet toward the back wall, lifting your torso and legs off of the floor. Try to get as much of the body off of the floor as possible. Challenge yourself with a long hold.
4. Breathe smoothly and deeply.
5. Rest briefly and repeat.

FOR ALL DOSHA TYPES

Regardless of your dosha, Savasana, or Resting Pose, is a very important asana and highly recommended to complete your practice. Everyone can benefit from Savasana. It pacifies Vata and Pitta, and for all body types allows the body-mind to receive and integrate the results of one's asana practice.

1. Lie down on your back, extending your legs comfortably apart. Let your feet fall away from each other. Try to get your body straight as best you can, so that your left and right sides mirror each other.
2. Draw your shoulder blades down. Keep your neck long with face angled toward the ceiling.
3. Extend your arms down by your sides with palms comfortably up.
4. Check that your lower back is comfortable and in a neutral position. If there's any discomfort in your lower back, put a rolled-up blanket under your knees.
5. Scan through your body and make any last-minute adjustments so that your Savasana can be delicious.
6. Take in a deep breath and hold for a few seconds.
7. Exhale and release into total softness.

Remain in Savasana for 5 to 20 minutes, depending on the length of your practice. For Vata types, long holds in Savasana are especially useful.



Graham Fowler is creating a haven on the banks of the Upper Tallulah River for yogis and lovers of nature. Contact him at grahamfowler@comcast.net.

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YOGA EVENTS

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Yoga 4 Beginners – 4pm. With Caroline. No need to bring a mat if you don't have one, class set available. 1st class free; \$10/returning students. Grant Park location. 888-724-7287. thecircusschool.com

SUNDAY

Family Yoga – 2pm. Introduce your children to the pleasures of fitness with a weekly restorative yoga session. Designed for children 12 and under. Reiki With Love, LLC Healing Sanctuary, 420 McDonough Blvd SE, Atlanta. Tinyurl.com/y6qcu4oj.

Restorative Yoga – 3-4pm. With Reiki with Love, LLC, LaShorn Love, Owner. Bring yoga mat, water bottle and any other equipment you may need. \$10 if preregister. 420 McDonough Blvd SE, Atlanta. Tinyurl.com/yccx9jev.

MONDAY

Hatha Yoga – 6-8pm. With Raj Mehta. Gentle stretching and health education. Each week Raj presents information about different herbs. Free. Sevananda Community Room, 467 Moreland Ave NE, Atlanta. 404-681-2831. Sevananda.coop.

Hip Hop Yoga – 6:30-7:30pm. Led by certified yoga teacher Jaimee Ratliff. An inspiring flow for all levels, set to your favorite Hip Hop + R&B tunes. Free. The Home Depot Backyard, 1 Backyard Way, Atlanta. JaimeeRatliff.com.

TUESDAY

All Levels Yoga – 6-7:15pm. Focus on de-stressing body and mind from the challenges of the day. Each class will begin with gentle warm-ups to release tension and prepare body for vinyasa and deeper stretches. Decatur Healing Arts, 619 E College Ave, Ste B, Decatur. DecaturHealingArts.com.

Yoga for Runners and Athletes – 6:30-7:30pm. Not held 1st Tues. With Morgan Bettini. Class gives you specific cross training that creates more strength, flexibility, mobility and mental stamina. All levels welcome. \$6/class. The Center for Love and Light, 1145 Zonolite Rd, Ste 10, Atlanta. More info & to register: WithLoveAndLight.com.

WEDNESDAY

Free Yoga & Mindfulness Class – 12-1pm. Introduction to mindfulness and how to apply it to daily life in order to live with greater freedom and happiness. Includes discussion, a gentle yoga practice and a formal mindfulness practice. 5575 New Northside Dr, Ste 100, Atlanta. SatiYogaAtl@gmail.com. SatiYoga.net.

FRIDAY

Community Class – 4:30-5:30pm. Enjoy a vinyasa flow or power class. Format determined by the teacher. Benefits Holbrook Farms Retreat for Survivors of Heros. \$5 donation. LiveURYoga, 408 S Atlanta St, Ste 157, Roswell. 770-299-1639. LiveURYoga.com.

Community Kirtan – 8-10pm. Last Fri. Open mic/informal format, where you take turns in sharing

songs and chants. Free; donations accepted. Form Yoga, 533 W Howard Ave, Unit C2, Decatur. Pre-register: FormYoga.com.

SATURDAY

Sunrise Yoga Meditation – 7-8am. Simple mantras, gentle asanas, pranayama and guided meditation. Unity North Atlanta, 4255 Sandy Plains Rd, Marietta. 678-819-9100. UnityNorth.org.

Free Yoga – 8:30-10am. Yoga and pranayama (breathing) for all levels and ages. Greater Atlanta Vedic Temple, 492 Harmony Grove Rd, Lilburn. 770-381-3662. VedicTemple.org.

Aerial Yoga: All Levels – 1:45-2:45pm. No experience needed. Stretch, swing, invert, build strength, learn about yourself while supported or suspended in a hammock. \$19/1st-time drop-in. Truth In Motion Yoga, 9950 Jones Bridge Rd, Ste 1000, Johns Creek. 404-789-9526. TruthInMotionYoga@gmail.com. TruthInMotionYoga.com.

PRIVATE INSTRUCTION

Mind Yo Bodhi Yoga offers private instruction for one to five students, helping you get grounded, develop inner peace and realize self-love. Tee Brooks, MA RYT-200, 704-669-8305, sociomindfulwellness@gmail.com.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Publicize your event! This section hosts free and paid listings. Each month, we select a limited number of events — they must have broad appeal and cost no more than \$10 to attend — to list for free. Otherwise, basic listings are \$35 and enhanced listings are \$75.

Submit free listings to calendar@naAtlanta.com and paid listings to ads@naAtlanta.com.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

Sustainable Atlanta Roundtable - 7:30-9am. Topic: The Challenges and Trade-Offs of Regenerative Design. Listen to our expert panel discuss the balance between cost, efficiency, health and reused materials in the built environment. Southface Institute, 241 Pine St NE, Atlanta. Southface.org.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

Jekyll Island Day Paddle - Join the Georgia Conservancy for a paddle in the tidal creeks, marshes and intracoastal waterway. More info: GeorgiaConservancy.org.

Visceral Technique - Sept 7-8. A system of procedures designed to invigorate the internal organs. These procedures have been used to help individuals with various conditions. Heal Center Atlanta, 270 Carpenter Dr, Ste 500, Sandy Springs. 404-307-0004. HealCenterAtlanta.com.

Clarity Fitness Summer Experience - 10am. Free outdoor group exercise class. Bring towel, mat, water. 1 W Court Sq, Decatur. Tinyurl.com/yyhgga3a.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

AFFIRMATIVE PRAYER CIRCLE

7-8:30pm. With Debra Mazer. Come receive channeled Affirmative Prayer, a non-denominational energy shift, using words. Individuals will share "conditions" or challenges you would like to transform, and/or intentions you would like to charge with powerful positive energy. Free.

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5531 Roswell Rd NE, Atlanta.
404-255-5207. PhoenixAndDragon.com.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Meditation Practice Group - 6-7:30pm. Special guest speaker, Ajili Hodari. Learn how to shut everything off and just sit in silence. The secret is meditation. It's your private retreat from the problems of the world. All welcome. Free. Sevananda Community Room, 467 Moreland Ave NE, Atlanta. Cindy: 770-363-8935 or Cindykyker@gmail.com.

Transmission Meditation - 7:30pm. A dynamic process that serves the world and is a hothouse of spiritual growth for participants. Sponsored by Share International USA Southeast Region. Free. Phoenix & Dragon Annex, Clifford Steele Building, 5505 Roswell Rd, Atlanta. 404-680-7423. Info-se@share-international.us. Share-International.us/se/upcoming_events.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Back to Your Roots Farm Fair - 12-4pm. Get back to your roots and get down in the dirt. Meet live farm animals, bring a picnic, and be sure to plan to spend the day with us for all the fun activities. Included with general admission, free/CNC members. CNC, 9135 Willeo Rd, Roswell. 770-992-2055. ChattNatureCenter.org.

Son of Chicken Qabalah - 2-4pm. Join Lon Milo DuQuette as he talks about his new book, Son of Chicken Qabalah. This simultaneously funny and serious book provides the easiest, fastest way for readers to painlessly attune themselves to the mysteries of the Hebrew alphabet and immerse themselves in the fundamentals of practical Qabalah. \$10. Phoenix & Dragon Bookstore, 5531 Roswell Rd NE, Atlanta. 404-255-5207. PhoenixAndDragon.com.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Open Your Third Eye with Ascended Master Horus - 7-8:30pm. Also held Sept 30. Join Jessica Valor to connect with Ascended Master Horus to learn how to open and activate your Third Eye by seeing the world with your Divine Truth and Higher Self's eyes. \$20. Phoenix & Dragon Bookstore, 5531 Roswell Rd NE, Atlanta. 404-255-5207. PhoenixAndDragon.com.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

The Re-Emerging Ancestor Altar - 7-8:15pm. With Coach APOP. Ancestors will walk with you, as well as work behind the scenes to accomplish your wish, dream/desire. But first, you must invite them to participate in your life. \$11.11. Phoenix & Dragon Bookstore, 5531 Roswell Rd NE, Atlanta. 404-255-5207. PhoenixAndDragon.com.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Myofascial Release and Breathwork to Heal the Upper Body - Sept 20-21. Build a firm foundation of anatomy and kinesiology of the upper back, apply skills to decrease pain, improve functional mobility, and prevent injury. Heal Center Atlanta, 270 Carpenter Dr, Ste 500, Sandy Springs. 404-307-0004. HealCenterAtlanta.com.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Brownwood Bike Rally - 8am-2pm. Includes street bike races and a bike safety rodeo for kids, a "fun race" and more challenging crit-CX courses for adults, a health fair, a food court and a festival area featuring family-friendly activities. Brownwood Park, East Atlanta. BrownwoodBikeRally.com.

Clarity Fitness Summer Experience - 10am. Free outdoor group exercise class. Bring towel, mat, water. 1 W Court Sq, Decatur. Tinyurl.com/yyhgga3a.

The Veggie Taste - 12-6pm. A vegan, raw, plant-based food tasting event. A family fun-filled day with nutritional speakers, artisan marketplace, music, product samples and much more. Free admission. 1444 Lucile Ave SW, Atlanta. TheVeggieTaste.com.

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ASTROLOGY DISCUSSION - Wed, Sept 25, 7:00-8:30pm. Join Laura Boone and Ashley Marie Adams for an open astrology discussion. We will review a chart and discuss upcoming transits; you will notice trends and gain insight into your own life! bit.ly/Astrology-Discussion

INTUITIVE DEVELOPMENT - Sat Oct 5 - Sun Oct 6. This workshop with Janet Raftis, Scott Hall and Lea Morgan takes you into the heart of your connection to Spirit, combining intuitive development with channeling, mediumship and connection to your Spirit guides. bit.ly/Intuitive-Development

LUMISUMMIT 2019 - Fri Oct 11 - Sun Oct 13. Three enlightening days of amazing speakers, meditation, sound healing, channeling, kundalini yoga and YOU! Hosted by Jamie Butler. Speakers include Leigh Mallis, Peter Lombardi, Ashley Jones, Lori Hayes, Dr. Julia Spinolo, Danielle Hall, more. bit.ly/LumiSummit

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

TRANSMISSION MEDITATION

7:30pm. A dynamic process that serves the world and is a hothouse of spiritual growth for participants. Sponsored by Share International USA Southeast Region. Free.

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

The Nature Club Dine and Discover – 7-9pm. Gordon Rogers of the Flint Riverkeeper will present on the restoration and protection of our rivers. \$10/general public, \$5/CNC Members. CNC, 9135 Willeo Rd, Roswell. 770-992-2055. More info: ChattNatureCenter.org.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Woofstock – Sept 28-29. 11am-7pm, Sat; 11am-6pm, Sun. Fun for the whole family. Enjoy over 50 nonprofit and rescue groups. Admission free. Smyrna Market Village, Smyrna. WoofstockAtl.com.

Transmission: A Meditation Workshop for the New Age – 2pm. A dynamic process that serves the world and is a hothouse of spiritual growth for the participants. Perfect for beginners or practiced meditators. Introductory talk followed by meditation. Free. Phoenix & Dragon Annex, Clifford Steele Building, 5505 Roswell Rd, Atlanta. 404-680-7423. Info-se@share-international.us. Share-International.us/se/upcoming_events.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Atlanta Streets Alive: Southwest – 2:30-6:30pm. Free entertainment and activities for all ages. Bring your friends and family, and share in the experience of enjoying our city streets as public space. Connecting 7 neighborhoods spanning from Cascade Ave along Ralph David Abernathy Blvd to Georgia Ave. AtlantaStreetsAlive.com.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Open Your Third Eye with Ascended Master Horus – 7-8:30pm. See Sept 18 listing. Phoenix & Dragon Bookstore, 5531 Roswell Rd NE, Atlanta. 404-255-5207. PhoenixAndDragon.com.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6

Pause to emPower – 4:30-6pm. With Deborah Garrard. A conversation for interfaith leaders around the topics of food and faith, wellness and wholeness. Free. The Gathering Room, Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, 4814 Paper Mill Rd SE, Atlanta. RSVP: Bit.ly/PauseToemPOWER.

ONGOING EVENTS

sundays

Sunday Experience – 9:30am, Adult Study; 10:10am, Meditation; 10:30am, Service. Spiritual Living Center of Atlanta, 3107 Clairmont Rd, Ste A, Atlanta. 404-417-0008. slc-atlanta.org.

Meditation Service – 10am. See website for complete list of services and events. Atlanta Meditation Center of Self-Realization Fellowship, 4000 King Springs Rd SE, Smyrna. 770-434-7200. SRFAtlanta.org.

Meditation Instruction – 10-11:30am. Free instruction for newcomers and practitioners at our Open House. Free childcare. Shambhala Meditation Center of Atlanta, 1447 Church St, Decatur. 404-370-9650. Atlanta.Shambhala.org.

Sunday Meditation, Talk and Fellowship – 10:30-11am, personal, silent meditation. All are welcome to meditate or sit quietly. 11am-12pm, talks followed by Q&A and discussion. 12-1:30pm, tea, coffee, snacks, fellowship. Vedanta Center of Atlanta, 2331 Brockett Rd, Tucker. 770-938-6673. VedantaAtlanta.org.

Meditation Class: Sandy Springs – 10:30-11:45am. We begin each class with a short meditation, followed by a practical teaching, and end with a brief meditation based on the teaching to help integrate it into our daily lives. \$12. Loving Hut Vegan Cuisine, 220 Hammond Dr NE, Ste 302, Sandy Springs. MeditationInGeorgia.org.

One World Spiritual Center: Celebrating One World, One Heart Sunday Service – 11am. Held at the Open Mind Center, 1575 Old Alabama Rd, Ste 213, Roswell. 678-214-6938. OneWorldSpiritualCenter.net.

Reading Service – 11am. See website for a complete list of services and events. Atlanta Meditation Center of Self-Realization Fellowship, 4000 King Springs Rd SE, Smyrna. 770-434-7200. SRFAtlanta.org.

Shamanic Journey Meditation – 11am-12:30pm. First Sunday of every month. Experience Shamanic Journey as pathway to inner peace, healing and wisdom. Drums and rattles welcomed. Hosted by Gailie Spirit Weaver. Love donation. The Heron House, 102 Russell Rd, Mountain Park. For more info, RSVP & check schedule: Meetup.com/ShamanicJourney.

Free Meditation & Self-Reflection Workshop – 11:30am-12:30pm. Experience bliss and tranquility, and learn about the essence of meditation, basic posture, breathing meditation and the basics of self-reflection. Free. Happy Science Meditation Center. 1874 Piedmont Ave, Ste 360-C, Atlanta. 404-892-7770. Atlanta.HappyScience-NA.org.

Health & Success Seminars – 1:30-2:45pm. Check website for most current times, dates and topics and other weekly programs. Happy Science Atlanta, 1874 Piedmont Ave NE, Ste 360-C, Atlanta. Atlanta.HappyScience-NA.org.

Monthly Feminine Energy Empowerment Seminars – 2:15-3:30pm. 4th Sun. Topic changes monthly. Designed with the particular needs of the transformative woman, these workshops deal with topics pertinent to spiritual empowerment, health and wellness, and living your authentic self. \$15. Hidayah Reiki, 4282 Stone Mountain Hwy, Ste K, Lilburn. 678-438-6442. HidayahReiki.com.

mondays

Monday Night Ride: Larry's Winter Edition – 6:30pm. 17 miles; 15-17 mph (no drop). A good ride for a Monday, not too slow but isn't a strenuous ride either. No ride if raining. Roswell Bicycles, 670 Houze Way, Roswell. BikeRoswell.com/events.

Monday Night Meditation – 7-8pm. An instructor-led meditation and discussion as we develop our meditation practice by maintaining a moment-to-moment relaxed awareness of our surrounding environment, bodily sensations, thoughts and emotions. All levels. \$10. Open Mind Center, 1575 Old Alabama Rd, Ste 213, Roswell. 678-243-5074. TheOpenMindCenter.com.

One Breath at a Time: Buddhism and the 12 Steps – 8-9:30pm. Also Thurs, 7:30-9pm. Meetings start with 10 mins of shamatha meditation. Reading from One Breath at a Time followed by open discussion. Shambhala Meditation Center of Atlanta, 1447 Church St, Decatur. 404-370-9650. Atlanta.Shambhala.org.

tuesdays

Sierra Club Meeting – 7pm, refreshments; 7:30pm, program. 2nd Tues. Georgia Chapter Office, 743 E College Ave, Ste B, Decatur. More info: Georgia.SierraClub.org/Atlanta.

Introductory Presentation on Meditation and Positive Living – 7-9pm. Come and enjoy this most inspiring of topics to reach your highest potential as soul. Free. Life Enrichment Center, 1340 McConnell Dr, Decatur. To register, Dhana: 404-273-5704. Santmat.net.

Meditation on Twin Hearts – 7-8pm. This meditation works on the physical, mental and spiritual levels to open the heart chakra and the crown chakra, thereby enabling you to draw down a great amount of high-quality divine energy into the crown. Donations of \$10 & up accepted. The Center for Love and Light, 1145 Zonolite Rd, Ste 10, Atlanta. WithLoveAndLight.com.

wednesdays

Noon Time Four Stage Meditation – 12:15-12:45pm. With Minister Bob Imai. Check website for most current times, dates and topics and other weekly programs. Happy Science Atlanta, 1874 Piedmont Ave NE, Ste 360-C, Atlanta. Atlanta.HappyScience-na.org.

Decatur Farmers' Market – 4-7pm. Also Sat, 9am-1pm. Local farmers, artisanal food makers and crafts. Every market hosts live music, free samples from our chef demos, CSA subscription pick up and more. First Baptist Church of Decatur, 308 Clairmont Ave, Decatur. 404-373-1653. fbcdecatur.com/index.php.

An Introduction to the Happiness Program – 7:30-7:30pm. We all want happiness but how do we get there? Come find out how in a fun-filled, interactive and informative session. Includes: guided relaxation through the breath; light yoga & stretching; insights into the nature of mind; guided meditation; Q&A session. Free. Art of Living Atlanta Center, 7730 Roswell Rd, Ste 400, Atlanta. ArtOfLiving.org/us-en/atlanta.

Weekly Wednesday Meditation Class – 7-8:30pm. Open to all levels. Experience true inner peace. With the Venerable Nicholas Thannissaro Georgia Meditation Center, 4522 Tilly Mill Rd, Atlanta. MeditationCircle.org.

Spiritual Women Entrepreneurs Network – 7-9pm. Meets the 2nd Wed each month for a Cookies + Connection networking and mastermind event. Soul, Mind, Body, 3115 Piedmont Rd, Ste D102, Atlanta. RSVP: Meetup.com/SpiritualWomenEntrepreneursAtlanta.

Medicine Circle: Healing Chants from the Buddha Dharma – 7:30pm. A community offering for anyone who is in need of healing, or anyone who knows someone who is in need of healing. Free; donations accepted. Candler Park Yoga, 1630-D Dekalb Ave, Atlanta. MantraChant.com/medicine_circle.

Wednesday Night Meditation Service – 7:45-8:30pm. Features guided meditation, chanting, silence and prayer. Unity North Atlanta, 4255 Sandy Plains Rd, Marietta. 678-819-9100. UnityNorth.org.

thursdays

Monthly Park Meeting – 7:30-9am. 2nd Thurs. Park Pride brings together community leaders and park advocates from throughout Atlanta for education, networking and strategy. More info: ParkPride.org.

Light Workers Support Group – 11am-1pm. A support group for beginning and current Light-Workers, Star Seeds, Earth Angels. All practices welcome. Commune with others, share experiences and connect with a conscious community of individuals dedicated to rising the vibration of others. Lake Claire Community Land Trust, 270 Arizona Ave NE, Atlanta. 708-320-942. Thetxlp.com.

Midday Meditation – 12-12:45pm. With Kisha Lee Crawford. Meditation practitioners of all levels welcome. \$10. Phoenix & Dragon Bookstore, 5531 Roswell Rd NE, Atlanta. 404-255-5207. PhoenixAndDragon.com.

Orientation to Energywork – 7pm. 1st Thurs. Introduction to channeling and energywork. Bill will explain concepts of channeling, energywork, remote healing, transfer process, and potential benefits of energywork. Free. One block from Midtown Marta Station. To reserve a seat: 404-423-5747. inmatehealingbill@gmail.com. EnergyworkATL.com.

Meditation Practice Group – 7-8pm. 2nd & 4th Thurs. A free program for new and experienced meditators who wish to learn how to meditate or deepen their practice of meditation on the inner light. No experience necessary. All welcome. Sevananda Community Room, 467 Moreland Ave NE, Atlanta. Cindy: 770-363-8935 or Infose@sos.org.

Twin Hearts Meditation – 7:30-8:30pm. This meditation is an act of service. We use divine energy to bless the planet, our loved ones and every part of our life. Atlanta Pranic Healing Center, 1955 Cliff Valley Way NE, Ste 215, Atlanta. 470-333-2742. AtIPranicHealing.com.

One Breath at a Time: Buddhism and the 12 Steps – 7:30-9pm. See Mon listing. Shambhala Meditation Center of Atlanta, 1447 Church St, Decatur. 404-370-9650. Atlanta.Shambhala.org.

fridays

Environmental Sustainability Board Meeting – 8-10am. Decatur City Hall, Conference Rm, 509 N McDonough St, Decatur. Lena Stevens: 404-370-4102 or Lena.Stevens@DecaturGA.com.

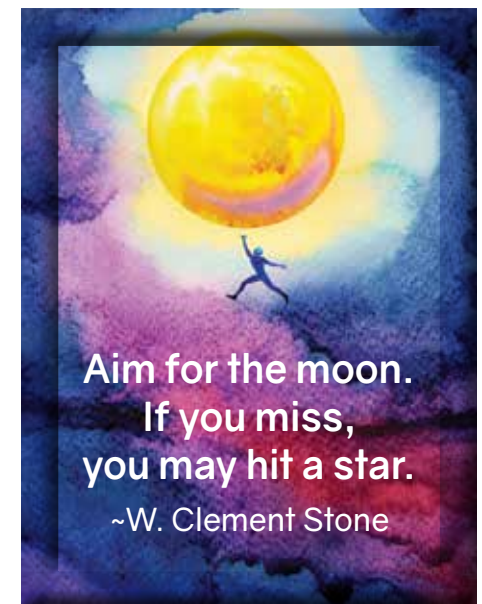
Friday Patio Nights – 7pm. Includes sidewalk sales and live music, when live music is available otherwise it is playlists and Pandora. Antlers and Wings, 245 E Trinity Pl, Ste 1210, Decatur. 404-861-6216. AntlersNWings.com.

saturdays

Glow of Love Saturdays – 10am. Volunteer wanted. Come rain or shine we will be in attendance gaining knowledge, volunteering our times, and tending to the most precious herb garden. Refreshments and a mini-herb lesson. Free. Grow2Glo Herb Garden, 2215 Browns Mill Rd SE, Atlanta. Tinyurl.com/yxtc8g8w.

Bike Roswell Saturday Morning Ride – 9am. Informal, year-round group ride that rolls along 25 miles of the beautiful Roswell Mayors Ride route through Roswell. Riders of all abilities. Roswell Area Park (Front Lot), 10519 Woodstock Rd, Roswell. More info: BikeRoswell.com/events.

Decatur Farmers' Market – 9am-1pm. See Wed listing. First Baptist Church of Decatur, 308 Clairmont Ave, Decatur. 404-373-1653. fbcdecatur.com/index.php.



Nature's Virus Killer

Copper in new device stops cold and flu

By Doug Cornell

More and more people are saying they just don't get colds anymore.

They are using a new device made of pure copper, which scientists say kills cold and flu viruses.

Doug Cornell invented the device in 2012. "I haven't had a single cold since then," he says.

People were skeptical but EPA and university studies demonstrate repeatedly that viruses and bacteria die almost instantly when touched by copper.

That's why ancient Greeks and Egyptians used copper to purify water and heal wounds. They didn't know about viruses and bacteria, but now we do.

Scientists say the high conductance of copper disrupts the electrical balance in a microbe cell and destroys the cell in seconds.

So some hospitals tried copper touch surfaces like faucets and doorknobs. This cut the spread of MRSA and other illnesses by over half, and saved lives.

Colds start after cold viruses get in your nose, so the vast body of research gave Cornell an idea. When he next felt a cold about to start, he fashioned a smooth copper probe and rubbed it gently in his nose for 60 seconds.

"It worked!" he exclaimed. "The cold never got going." It worked again every time.

He asked relatives and friends to try it. They said it worked for them, too, so he patented CopperZap™ and put it on the market.

Now tens of thousands of people have tried it. Nearly 100% of feedback said the copper stops colds if used within 3 hours after the first sign. Even up to 2 days, if they still get the cold it is milder than usual and they feel better.

Users wrote things like, "It stopped my cold right away," and "Is it supposed to work that fast?"

"What a wonderful thing," wrote Physician's Assistant Julie. "No more colds for me!"

Pat McAllister, age 70, received one for Christmas and called it "one of the best presents ever. This little jewel really works." Now thousands of users have simply stopped getting colds.

People often use CopperZap preventively. Frequent flier Karen Gauci used to get colds after crowded flights. Though skeptical, she tried it several times a day on travel days for 2 months. "Sixteen flights and not a sniffle!"

Businesswoman Rosaleen says when people are sick around her she uses CopperZap morning and night. "It saved me last holidays," she said. "The kids had colds going round and round, but not me."

Some users say it also helps with

sinuses. Attorney Donna Blight had a 2-day sinus headache. When her CopperZap arrived, she tried it. "I am shocked!" she said. "My head cleared, no more headache, no more congestion."

Some users say copper stops nighttime stuffiness if used just before bed. One man said, "Best sleep I've had in years."

Copper can also stop flu if used early and for several days. Lab technicians placed 25 million live flu viruses on a CopperZap. No viruses were found alive soon after.

Dr. Bill Keevil led one of the teams confirming the discovery. He placed millions of disease germs on copper. "They started to die literally as soon as they touched the surface," he said.

People have used it on cold sores and say it can completely prevent ugly outbreaks. You can also rub it gently on wounds or lesions to combat infections.



Dr. Bill Keevil: Copper quickly kills cold viruses.

The handle is curved and finely textured to improve contact. It kills germs picked up on fingers and hands to protect you and your family.

Copper even kills deadly germs that have become resistant to antibiotics. If you are near sick people, a moment of handling it may keep serious infection away from you and your loved ones. It may even save a life.

The EPA says copper still works even when tarnished. It kills hundreds of different disease germs so it can prevent serious or even fatal illness.

CopperZap is made in America of pure copper. It has a 90-day full money back guarantee. It is \$69.95.

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Dreams & Opportunities

by Rev. Dr. Danny Spears

I'll be honest. Until recently, I haven't paid a lot of attention to my dreams. That is, other than to wake up at times after a particularly bizarre dream and promise myself never to consume whatever it was I consumed right before bedtime that night.

But a few months ago, I had a dream that stirred a personal awakening.

I was walking in a building with a huge indoor pool. The pool was filled with a diverse group of people having a great time; I was enjoying watching them while I took my walk.

The next thing I knew I was in the water—way over my head. Apparently it was an L-shaped pool, and I wasn't watching where I was walking, and had stepped right into the very deep section of the pool. I was surprisingly calm, reminding myself I know how to swim. But I was suspended somewhere between the surface and the bottom of the pool; it felt as though I was wearing more layers of clothing than when I first involuntarily entered the pool.

With no sense of panic, I thought to myself, "Wow. It looks like I'm going to die." And then the thought, "Not today!" burst into my mind. Suddenly, I was able to effortlessly kick my legs, rise and break the surface of the water.

As I climbed the ladder to exit the pool, I thought, "Well, this is embarrassing! But who cares? I'm alive!" When I looked around, however, apparently no one even noticed what, for me, was a humiliating episode.

I was still soaking wet, but by then I was wearing different, lightweight clothing. As I turned to leave, I looked in the pool and saw my old clothing ever-so-slowly sinking into the water's depths. I briefly thought about trying to retrieve these items, and then thought to myself, "No. I don't need those anymore." And suddenly I noticed that my new lightweight clothes were completely dry!

Soon after, I awoke. The message "You have an opportunity" came to me loud and clear. So loud and clear, as a matter of fact, that I startled myself by saying it out loud. Both the dream and the message were a first for me.

That dream and message are still with me today. Since that initial dream, I deepened and increased my meditation practice and renewed my personal journaling practice in an attempt to dig deeper into the possible meanings of both. It wasn't—and isn't—always easy. In fact, like falling in that pool and eventually climbing out fully-

clothed, sometimes the revelations are embarrassing. And just like the dream, no one notices but me.

As a result of my explorations, I'm beginning to wear a new and lighter—and less self-judgmental—consciousness. I've learned there are some things I've allowed to drag me down. I no longer need them and am slowly releasing them without judgment, watching them sink ever-so-slowly, knowing they will eventually fade from my consciousness.

The best news of all is that, as I release what no longer serves me, I learn that I have not just one, but several, amazing opportunities beginning to manifest in my life. For this, and for so much more, I am truly grateful.



Rev. Dr. Spears is an ordained minister with Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC). A student of Unity and other New Thought teachings, he also speaks at several

Unity churches in the Southeast. Contact him at spinmaster1958@gmail.com.

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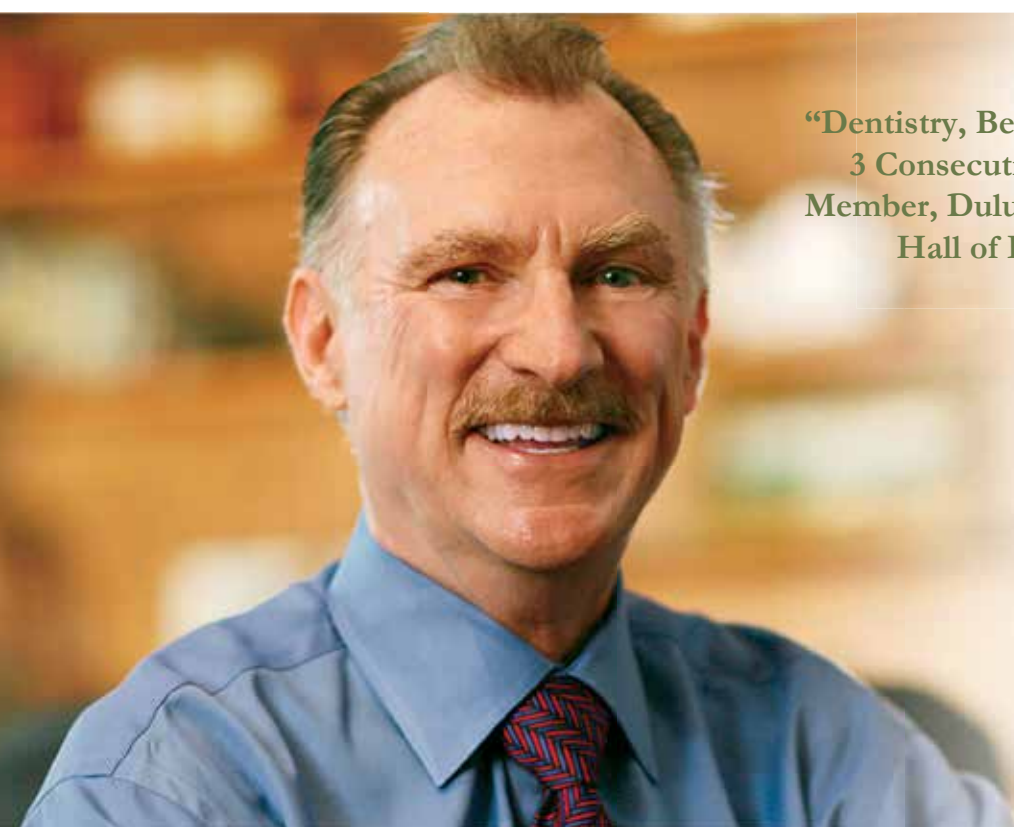
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