

ARUN + Yoga = Fitness for the "Witness" ¹ - Part 1

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Perhaps no approach to physical and mental "fitness" goes as deep as Yoga...

First of all, Yoga is an elegant way to keep Your spine, joints, breath, muscles, nerves, and all other body tissues lubricated and functioning smoothly and harmoniously. As well as counter-acting stiffness and promoting bodymind flexibility, Yoga practice awakens the vital energy potentials and Consciousness hidden within the mystery of the miraculous *Human Energy Field*.

Through the simple intelligence of the various "asanas" (different body stretches held consciously and slowly), an incredible "inner touch" can be felt and self-directed. Through the stretch, opening and lengthening of the bones, and the Breath, this touch travels from the surface of the Body to the deepest and most subtle physical tissues within the Brain and Spinal cord. This "touch" is like a "light inside", and reminds us that every part has its own function within the "Organic Unity" of human body, mind, feelings, emotions, and Spirit. The "Design" and implications are amazing...

With a deep inner understanding and experience of Yoga, words like 'the Breath'; Fascia; sensory and motor nerves; 'Balance'; Glands and their hormones; visualization; "watching inside"; gratitude; circulation of energy; - All of these words "come alive" and take on a new, relevant meaning in our lives.

Let's take a meditative, artistic, and scientific look "with wonder" at our bodies from inside.

Our spine is our "base". Physically, it is the most intrinsic part of you. The "top" of the spinal cord is actually "inside your head"... It is called the "brain stem" and it is here that our 'ensori-motor nerves begin. (Cranial Nerves I - XII are responsible for eyes, ears, nose, mouth, face, teeth, heart, breath, and all other vital life processes). So it is far more accurate to picture and feel your Brain and Spinal cord as one, continuous unity - with "branches" leading off either side, carrying sensory information and muscle coordination ("synergy") from "inside, out", and "outside, in". All sensations, feelings, and body movements flow through your spine. Everything in your body (including "thinking" brain) is connected to your spine. So, spinal awareness, flexibility, suppleness, and coordination are absolutely essential for the optimal health of the Body and the growth of your inner Consciousness. We all need to develop and maintain a "great friendship" and cooperation with our spinal column. Yoga "asanas" (positions) are designed with the basic

¹ "Witness", in this sense of the word, refers to the seldom talked about, but universally available human ability "to observe" our inner processes of movement, thinking, feeling, etc., moment by moment. It is another way of describing "Meditation", or "watching inside".]

understanding that each individual (including you!) is a vibrating, electro-magnetic energy-field. Way before Western science re-discovered electro-magnetic energy in our universe and other discoveries of modern physics, - Yoga mystics had already realized (by feeling deeply inside) that our physical body is a micro-cosm of the universe, and had figured out methods and ways for the body to utilize and transform its potential for spiritual growth.

Did you know?? A few things about your spine: The Spinal Column is said to have 26 different irregular-shaped bones, forming a passageway for the spinal cord and "small off-ramps" or openings for the nerves to reach into the whole body. This is true, but only part of a deeper understanding of potential function and inner-consciousness. There are well over 30 bones if you include the Sphenoid/Occiput joining as part of the entire mechanism. (Which I do, because any authentic understanding of the Human Nervous System must include "the Glands", which interact simultaneously each moment with our spinal nerves. The Pituitary Gland, which is the master gland, sits in "a cradle" within the Sphenoid bone. The "rocking of the cradle" is facilitated by the fluid motility of the Sphenoid/Occiput and Sacrum). Also, the 2 "Temporal" bones - which house our essential "sense of balance" are so close to the Atlas (C-1) that the **same** finger can simultaneously touch both bones. Along with the Sphenoid and Occiput, the Temporal bones form our "Cranial Base", or in my viewpoint, the top of the spine. The "Coccyx" (tailbone) and "Sacrum" are actually more than 2 bones. And the "pelvic bones" (ilia), which anchor our spinal column in a non-moving, oscillating wedge before transferring our weight and movement through our legs and feet--these bones are also part of essential spinal balance.

So far, this is only the bones of our Spinal Column...there is much more to consider and feel. Before looking and feeling more details, I will give a few important hints: We have "fluid cushions" (discs) between each bone, bound by an intricate balance of "ligaments". These require a continuous blood/oxygen flow to maintain equilibrium and ease of movement. We have a synergetic design of over 650 muscles (like the strings of an amazing "puppet") that have a tendency to 'glue' together, distorting our natural skeleton. Each muscle should be free to lengthen and contract without fear. Holding our muscles, tendons, ligaments, fluid-vessels, bones, and organs together is an incredible "spider web" of "Fascia" (connective tissues). Pulls, or strains in one part of the "web" exert a predictable and unpredictable reaction through the whole web-work of body fascia.

Yoga asanas touch everything I've mentioned and much more. They are an easy, direct method to purify, open, and energise your Body and its Consciousness. A deep state of Relaxation, Love, Awareness, and inner Trust starts functioning in the bodymind...