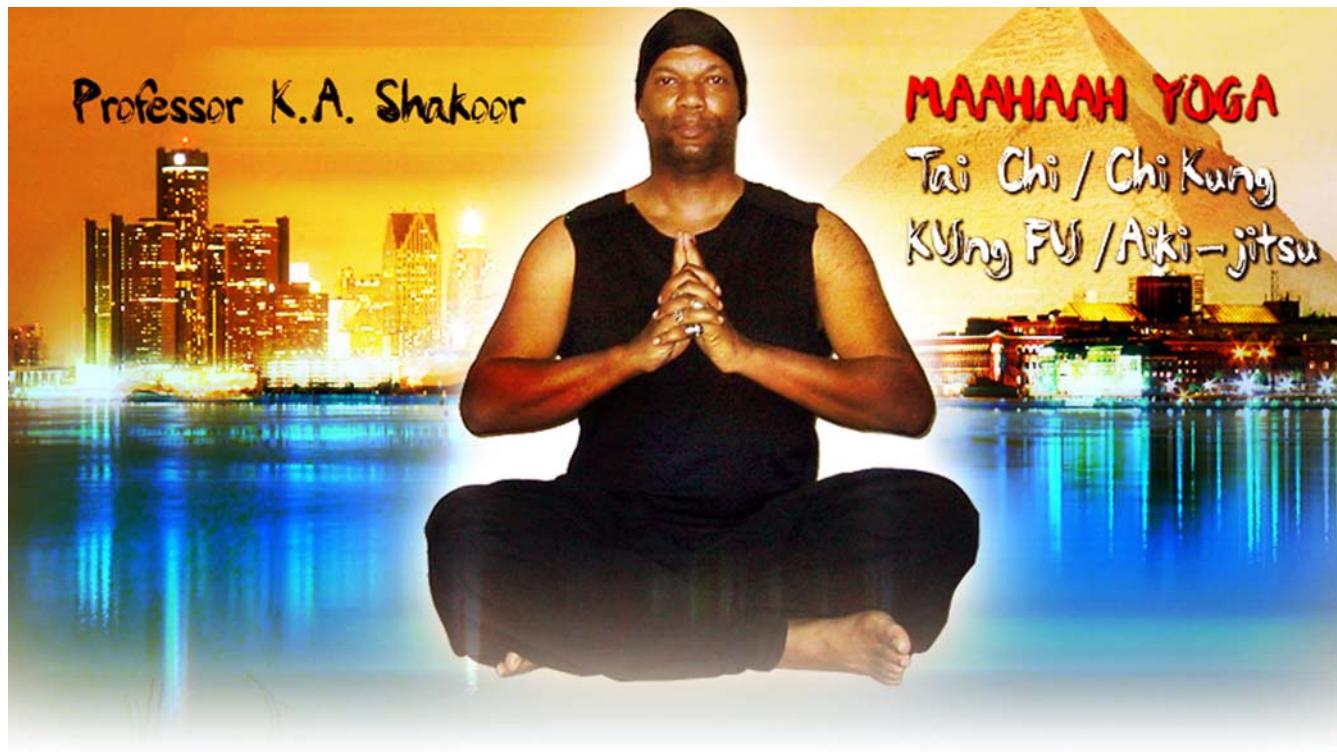


Maahaah Yoga : The Book

Health Healing & Happiness



BENEFITS

- Equalize Blood Pressure
- Aid in Controlling Diabetes
- Stress Elimination and Relaxation
- Detoxifies and Repairs Internal Organs
- Helps Digestion
- Promotes the Anti-Aging Process
- Rejuvenates The Entire Body
- Cardio and Circulation Benefits
- Toning, Shaping and Building Muscles

Dedicated my mother and my children
A Special Dedication to Noah Shakoor

(1982-2006)

MAAHAAH YOGA

Introduction

Yoga has been practiced for many thousands of years, and various descriptions of yogic discipline accompany the most ancient human history. Commonly ascribed to ancient Indian culture, the ancestral origins of yoga have revealed themselves to be widespread. Anyone can practice yoga. It is not necessarily tied to traditional religion of the subcontinent, traditions all over the world had some style of yoga practice. My research shows yoga goes back to ancient Egypt (Kemet or Nubia), Dravidian, Tamil, Vedic and ancient civilizations of the Americas. Ancient Egyptian or Kemetic yoga is expressed in the spiritual texts and artwork found in their ancient tombs and temples. On wall paintings we see figures in positions that we now know to be yoga postures. The earliest surviving physical depictions of yogic posture were found at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, engraved on small seals some 50,000 years ago. Antediluvian funeral rites and creation stories reflect the elemental aim of yoga-balance, harmony and universal order. Many systems have evolved, demonstrating myriad methods of integrating ones spirit, mind and body.

There are many excellent books written on yoga. The purpose of this book is to demonstrate techniques that will enhance the lives of people living in an urban environment, as well as to present information to those who have been misinformed on the subject. Hatha yoga like Tai Chi Chuan, is a series of movements-sometimes dance, sometimes flowing; power and static.

The benefits from consistent practice are:

1. Improved coordination and balance
2. Opening of energy pathways or meridians
3. Bringing the mind to a state of calm

Yoga connects mind, body and spirit. The exercises will focus on stretches, balance, and longevity.

Hatha Yoga

Hatha-meaning forceful, requiring determined effort a combination of ha (represents the masculine, solar, positive polar aspect) and tha (lunar, feminine, negative polar aspect).

Hatha yoga practice is an excellent introduction to the Maahaah Yoga experience. The movements in the following sections represent its physical phase. Hatha yoga is prevalent today, familiar to many and increasingly integrated into Western methods of healing and restoration. The primary goal is physical health and balance, in the belief that greater mental and spiritual awareness are achieved through a healthy and pure body. Relative to today's culture of distress; these practices can alleviate strain and actively loosen the body. Relaxation is an initial benefit; what follows is calibration of the flow of energy along our bodies natural meridians so crucial to vitality.

There are 14 meridian points-3 in each extremity and 2 in our mid line-that connect to 7 chakras or energy intersections. Chinese acupuncture applies this classical system of meridians and offers an instructive description of them as definite pathways on the body, each with its origin in an organ. Energy transverses internally and externally through these circuits; each with a definite vector or direction of flow. In Hatha and Tantra yogas, we use discipline postures of the physical body (asanas) to combine the internal energies and to direct this combined energy up through the central nerve channel (sushumna nadi) to create a divine union. Like Chinese meridians, the nadis constitute conduits of subtle vital force; variously described as veins, arteries, or channels. Sushumna is said to reside in the very center of the spinal cord; Ida and Pingala, 2 secondary nadis, are said to wrapped around it and are loosely associated with the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous systems. On the left, Ida is associated with the prana or rising breath. On the right, Pingala is associated with the apana or descending breath. When the flow of energy is balanced, one has vigor and good health. Conversely, with continual blockage comes disease.

Most disease first manifests itself spiritually, then mentally, then physically. Hatha yoga addresses physical ailment, which then promotes mental and spiritual wellness. By practicing asanas, waste material is excreted from the bloodstream through perspiration. The stress of daily living has particularly negative effects on the digestive system, turning food into negative substances in the body:

Lactic acid: builds up in muscle, leading to fatigue and exhaustion.

Carbon dioxide: (or toxic gas)- combines with water, producing an acid that irritates the body, especially the nervous system; leaving one edgy, restless, irritable and heavily distracted.

Concentration is difficult, interfering with meditation.

Bile: affects the liver, leaving one apathetic and pessimistic in attitude and thinking. Biliousness is a major physiological obstacle to spiritual awareness.

Mucous; (or phlegm)- blocks the prana by obstructing breath into the body.

Anger, frustration, tragedy, noise pollution, and the medias constant onslaught of negativity are prohibitive to well being, each causing blockage in its own way. Blocks are commonly centered in the third chakra (in front of the stomach), in the lower back and in the throat. When centered in the throat, thyroid function is disturbed-triggering changes in the metabolism that can cause weight gain. One effect of yoga practice is to speed up the metabolism. Practitioners become more invigorated, and in many cases body weight normalizes relative to body structure, bone structure, heredity, age and gender.

From the postures and mental concentration of asanas we move to breath control exercises, or pranayama-the link between the physical and the spiritual that is instrumental to focus in sitting

meditation. From there we are able to experience the absolute in the finite: intense concentration leading to full absorption in the object of meditation is followed by Samadhi, the eighth limb of yoga, or ultimate level of human consciousness. Conscious breathing calms the mind, regulating heart rate, blood flow and improving health. As one does exercise that work various organs, blocks to optimal health are released and their causes become apparent-often through dreaming. Trauma is retained not only in the mind but also in the tissues. Purifying aspects of sitting meditation allow one to eradicate poisons of hate, anger, fear, lust, greed and envy. These poisons are transformed into contentment, then love. One develops the sense of peace which is fertile ground for a pure feeling of joy that leads to bliss and transcendence for those who seek it. The key to these interdependent aspects of yoga is to transcend duality (good/evil, left/right, male/female) and live in the realm of the absolute;a constant state of creativity, childlike optimism and enjoyment.

Tai Chi Chuan

The Chinese characters for Tai Chi Chuan can be translated as “grand ultimate exercise,” or “supreme ultimate force.” Associated with the philosophy of yin and yang, the “supreme ultimate” concept signifies the duality (negative/positive, active/passive, and dark/light) in all things. Chuan means “fist”- the “force” or exercise that is a means to achieving equilibrium.

Modern practice of Tai Chi is well described as “meditation in motion.” A moving form of meditation combined with yoga The forms are grounded in martial arts and, more primitively, from the natural movements of animals and birds; its history spans over 15 centuries. It is low-impact and is the most widely practiced form of exercise in the world, appealing to young and not-so-young.

Intrinsic to Tai Chi practice is the Chinese philosophy of chi, the invisible life force that animates and motivates us. Chi circulates in patterns related to that of the nervous and vascular systems, a fundamental concept to the practice of acupuncture and other Chinese healing arts. Tai Chi forms are gentle, circular sequences with smooth transitions between movements performed with a relaxed state of concentration. Emphasis on continuity of motion combined with focused intention aims to harmonize body and mind.

Chi Kung (or Qigong, or Chi Gong)

Chi Kung is a foundation for Tai Chi Chuan and predates Tai Chi in that it is believed to be over 2000 years old. Chi is the vital energy or life force, Kung (pronounced gung) means skill cultivated by steady practice. Chi Kung thus means mastering energy. Spiritual Chi Kung was introduced to China by Buddhist and Taoist adepts, in the form of standing and sitting meditations that move the chi through the energy centers (as in chakras) in order to attain enlightenment. Passive Chi Kung shares many therapeutic potentials of meditation, active Chi Kung shares many therapeutic potentials of Tai Chi. Chi Kung encompasses thousands of exercises, collectively characterized by rhythmic movement. There are a wide variety of practices, from the soft or non-combative internal forms (Tai Chi, Shing-I

and Ba Gua) to the more complex and challenging external styles (Kung Fu). Its appeal is universal, offering benefits to the physically challenged and the athlete. The discipline accommodates children, the elderly and anyone in between; it can be practiced anywhere, anytime.

Maahaah Yoga

An urban approach

Maha-from Sanskrit, meaning great, mighty, strong, abundant

Yoga-from Sanskrit root “yuj,” meaning a yoke that unites the strength and direction of two animals; union; to join; especially to unite the self with the divine nature

Maahaah Yoga is a practical combination of ancient Kemetic, Dravidian and Vedic yoga(to include Hatha yoga, Kundalini yoga and Tantric yoga), breathing techniques from Chi Kung and Taoist yoga, and Sufic breathing exercises, visualization and meditations. Maahaah Yoga is designed to promote physical rejuvenation, emotional stability, mental and spiritual equanimity plus cultural and historic knowledge. Professor K. A. Shakoor's background in the martial and internal arts spans 44 years; 18 of those spent teaching in academic and clinical environments where he was able to realize a successful approach that meets individual needs; particularly those of dysfunctional personalities, learning disabled and emotionally impaired adolescents, juvenile offenders, substance abusers and victims of domestic violence.

Pervasive daily stress punctuated by periodic catastrophe is the current character of both our neighborhoods and the global arena. Urban life stimulates a complex and often malignant dynamic between one's self and one's surroundings. Effective response to pressure and trauma in this environment is equally complex. This applies not only to the disadvantaged but also to the general community and those in positions of authority and achievement. Professor Shakoor has scrupulously integrated strategies from a group of traditional disciplines, all linked by a familiar sense of the absolute, or the essential truth. Maahaah Yoga practice provides synergy that is instrumental to mindfully thriving in the 21st century.

Book One : Moon Exercises

The Moon exercise is one of the first exercises that students learn in the Maahaah Yoga system. The main keys in this practice are consistency, patience and repetition.

PATIENCE: Do not worry what others are doing. You can be aware of others but need to focus strongly on yourself. Each person is there to achieve their personal best which will differ with age, gender and size. Every one is different and therefore how you learn and perform the postures will be different from anyone else.

CONSISTENCY: Practice every day even if only for 5 minutes. It is the accumulative effect that gives benefits.

REPITITION: These postures need to be done over and over again so not only your mind but your body as well can memorize them. This makes them feel natural and relaxing.

Note: For all exercises keep the tongue pressed to the roof of the mouth while breathing through the nose.

MOON

Benefits: Strengthens the complete nervous system, helps open the intuitive. For women daily practice will balance and restore the female body.

There are 5 moon forms. Students should practice one at a time daily.

1. Rhythm-hold posture while mentally counting, using an even number, with each movement. This brings about balance and harmony in the energy flow (chi or prana).
2. Power-hold each movement or asana for 3 to 5 minutes with a strong focus on breathing with eyes closed and eyebrows raised.
3. Flow-moving in a dance like pattern. Student will know intuitively
4. when to change postures.

MOON I

Health Benefits

LION POSE: Stimulates circulation throughout the body, good for high blood pressure and respiration. Helps the digestive system and aids with elimination. It detoxifies all internal organs and helps the abdominal muscles.



PIGEON POSE:

A- Stretches lower back and strengthens spine. Good for lymphatic system and thyroid.



B-Hands are at the third chakra or chi point which activates energy in the body and opens the energy channels.



C-With arms spread wide and shoulders stretched back arms and back are strengthened. Blood flow is increased throughout the body in particular in the brain and the carotid artery.



D-WARRIORS POSE: Open up the THYROID, helps the lower back , strengthens the heart, it also increases circulation in the heart by opening up the arteries.



LION POSE: Stimulates circulation throughout the body, good for high blood pressure and respiration. Helps the digestive system and aids with elimination. It detoxifies all internal organs and helps the abdominal muscles.



MOON II

LION POSE: Stimulates circulation throughout the body, good for high blood pressure and respiration. Helps the digestive system and aids with elimination. It detoxifies all internal organs and helps the abdominal muscles.



PIGEON: Stretches lower back and strengthens spine. Good for lymphatic system and thyroid.



CAT STRETCH: Helps alleviate insomnia. It relieves stress, migraines, and eases acid reflux and constipation. Good for asthma relief. Stretches the spine and is good for the hip flexors.



MOON III

LIONS POSE: Stimulates circulation throughout the body, good for high blood pressure and respiration. Helps the digestive system and aids with elimination. It detoxifies all internal organs and helps the abdominal muscles.



Connecting Movements: Helps blood pressure and opening up the lungs.



CHILDS POSE: Balances hormones helping to relieve insomnia and depression. It aids in sinus problems and colds as well as laryngitis and tonsils. It also stimulates the nerves behind the eyes.



CAT STRETCH: Helps alleviate insomnia. It relieves stress, migraines, and eases acid reflux and constipation. Good for asthma relief. Stretches the spine and is good for the hip flexors.



WARRIOR POSE: Open up the THYROID, helps the lower back , strengthens the heart, it also increases circulation in the heart by opening up the arteries.



LION POSE: Stimulates circulation throughout the body, good for high blood pressure and respiration. Helps the digestive system and aids with elimination. It detoxifies all internal organs and helps the abdominal muscles.



Connecting Movements: Helps blood pressure and opening up the lungs.



MOON IV

LIONS POSE: Stimulates circulation throughout the body, good for high blood pressure and respiration. Helps the digestive system and aids with elimination. It detoxifies all internal organs and helps the abdominal muscles.



CHILDS POSE: Balances hormones helping to relieve insomnia and depression. It aids in sinus problems and colds as well as laryngitis and tonsils. It also stimulates the nerves behind the eyes.



CAT STRETCH: Helps alleviate insomnia. It relieves stress, migraines, and eases acid reflux and constipation. Good for asthma relief. Stretches the spine and is good for the hip flexors.



SPINAL TWIST: Good for the abdominal muscles and spinal nerves as well as circulation and the sciatic nerve. Relieves back pain and arthritis in the knees. Also, massages the kidneys, liver, spleen and pancreas.



WARRIOR POSE: Open up the THYROID, helps the lower back , strengthens the heart, it also increases circulation in the heart by opening up the arteries.



LIONS POSE: Stimulates circulation throughout the body, good for high blood pressure and respiration. Helps the digestive system and aids with elimination. It detoxifies all internal organs and helps the abdominal muscles.



MOON V

LIONS POSE: Stimulates circulation throughout the body, good for high blood pressure and respiration. Helps the digestive system and aids with elimination. It detoxifies all internal organs and helps the abdominal muscles.



LEFT Side

PIGEON POSE:

Stretches lower back and strengthens spine. Good for lymphatic system and thyroid.



WARRIOR POSE: Open up the THYROID, helps the lower back , strengthens the heart, it also increases circulation in the heart by opening up the arteries.



CAT STRETCH: Helps alleviate insomnia. It relieves stress, migraines, and eases acid reflux and constipation. Good for asthma relief. Stretches the spine and is good for the hip flexors.



Right Side

PIGEON POSE:

Stretches lower back and strengthens spine. Good for lymphatic system and thyroid.



WARRIOR POSE: Open up the THYROID, helps the lower back , strengthens the heart, it also increases circulation in the heart by opening up the arteries.



COBRA: Works on the brain and nervous system, strengthens the spine by compressing and opening it. It accelerates the circulation of synovial fluid. Also increases the tone of muscle fibers.



CAT STRETCH: Helps alleviate insomnia. It relieves stress, migraines, and eases acid reflux and constipation. Good for asthma relief. Stretches the spine and is good for the hip flexors.



LIONS POSE: Stimulates circulation throughout the body, good for high blood pressure and respiration. Helps the digestive system and aids with elimination. It detoxifies all internal organs and helps the abdominal muscles.



INSERT CHART
(begin and end with lions pose!!)

SPINE FORM

HALF & FULL LOCUST POSE: Using left, right and then both legs together. This has many of the same benefits as the cobra pose as well as strengthening the lower back muscles and removing excess fat.





SKY DIVING POSE: A- This pose also has the benefits of the cobra pose. It aids in digestion and invigorates the spleen and liver. Strengthens the spine. B-Open the hands with palms facing downward.



C-Arms to the sides with palms facing the body. This pose helps circulation in the heart, brain and cardiac arteries.



BOW POSE: Helps digestion, prevents constipation, releases trapped gas. It strengthens the spine and makes it more flexible. The thyroid is opened and energy flow increases.



SMALL COBRA: Aids the nervous system, strengthens the back and helps delay menopause.



LARGE COBRA: Aids the nervous system, strengthens the back and helps delay menopause.



CAT POSE: Sends energy to the brain and opens the wisdom eye (ajna). Gives relaxation and stretches the spine.



LIONS POSE: Stimulates circulation throughout the body, good for high blood pressure and respiration. Helps the digestive system and aids with elimination. It detoxifies all internal organs and helps the abdominal muscles.



REJUVENATION & HANGING POSE: Keeps the spine flexible, opens the rib cage. It stimulates the heart, lungs, digestion and the nervous system. Also, stretches the throat which works on the thyroid and sends blood to the brain. Fresh blood is sent to the kidneys, which helps eliminate toxins.



CAMEL: Digestion is improved. Helps slim the waist and build the abdominal and rectal muscles. Also strengthens the neck.



EGYPTIAN CAT: Makes spine extremely flexible. Cleans the kidneys and aids the thyroid.

VARIATIONS: The same benefits as well as strengthening the abdomen.
BALANCE STRETCH; Stretches the spine and sciatic nerve.





TIGER: Balances the kidneys, stimulates the brain and nervous system while activating the thyroid. Also, stretches the spine.



FISH POSE; A-Female fish- Sends blood to the brain and relieves mental tension. Aids the thyroid and lower back and helps relieve stomach disorders. B-Stimulates the thyroid and sends energy to the brain relieving mental tension. Also helps with diabetes and varicose veins. Also, forms abdominal muscles.



HEAVEN AND EARTH; Massages the frontal lobe of the brain. Works on the thyroid and abdomen as well.



DOUBLE MAHAMUDRA; Helps knee and ankle joints as well as working on the sciatic nerve and hamstring muscles. It Tones the abdomen, helps with thyroid problems and diabetes. It increases circulation to the liver, spleen and pancreas while stimulating digestion and the immune system.



BALL POSE: Totally massages the spine relieving tension in digestive and nervous system as well as the sympathetic medulla oblongata. It massages the optic nerves.



Sitting and Relaxation: Eyes closed, tongue at the roof of the mouth, shoulders relaxed with raised eyebrows and intertwined hands.
1 to 15 Minutes.



