

ANCIENT YOGA by Leila Worby

EXCERPT

Yoga, initially, through the breath, can help stimulate the nervous system toward balance. Even three minutes of smooth, mindful, deep breathing without the addition of more refined or sophisticated yogic breathing techniques, improves attention, relaxation, and the ability to cope with a challenging situation.

The greatest misunderstanding of our kind is that we have to “become” something and that we have to accumulate wealth in order to fill our inner void. Most societies reinforce these views, so very few of us manage to live in the moment without striving. We end up wasting our short time on this earth by chasing desires that, when consummated, only leave us feeling more empty than before. We can accumulate what we believe to be the ideal life or the perfect career or a garage full of luxury cars, only to feel that void greater than ever. Because the chase has ended, we got what we wanted, but we are still not fulfilled. At least as long as you’re chasing, you are occupied. But for the “lucky” few who get there, the void becomes unbearable. Or rather the lack of knowledge of how to fill that void. The emptiness that you feel inside you, that can sometimes threaten to engulf you, wants to be filled with life force, not material objects.

Yoga, as a complete system and way of life, works to promote your well-being by grounding you. It slows you down to a point where you can turn inward and tune into your true inner essence, which is part of the whole. By slowing down we are able to move beyond the chatter of mind and connect with our soul. This soul is just part of the greater soul or life force, that encompasses everything. Some people would refer to this life force as god or goddess.

As yoga practitioners, we also use nature to connect with the all-encompassing life force. Actual well-being relies on your ability to slow down and listen to your real needs, not your preprogrammed needs.

To use this system optimally it’s useful to have an established practice of about twenty minutes a day to connect back to. To more effortlessly access the flow state, you first need to establish a familiarity with it. It’s like filling up a pot with water. If it’s already full, it’s easier to make it overflow with just a few drops.