

PUREMIND

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

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Graphic Design By :
Vanessa & Lauren
Youth Volunteers

THE POWER OF THE SUN

Why Sunshine Makes You Smile. The science behind sunny days and a boost in serotonin. We see it all the time in media and movies, where sunshine and bright things are associated with happiness and justice, whereas darkness and dim lighting allude to evil or deep sadness. As human beings, we link sunshine and brighter light to joy. Stepping outside on a blue-skied, bright morning, or “getting some fresh air” often has the power to improve your mood...but how? A healthline.com article by Rachel Nall, edited by Timothy J. Legg, Ph.D., it is noted that lighting has diverse effects on not only how we think but also the hormones our bodies release. The reactions we have to warm sunshine might be caused by more than just a pretty view. The article says it has more to do with the fact that “sunlight cues special areas in the retina, which triggers the release of serotonin”.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

The opposite can also take place, where “at night, darker lighting triggers the brain to make another hormone called melatonin”. This hormone tells the body and brain to relax, and we cannot fall asleep without it. This is why doctors and medical professionals like the National Sleep Foundation advise device-holders to put up their screens about “30 minutes before bed”. Scihealth.org reiterates that the “blue light is harmful to your eyes”, and “restrains the production of melatonin”, disrupting your cycle of sleep. Looking back to the sunshine science, as your body takes in the rays and your retina releases serotonin, the hormone that boosts your mood and aids you in concentration and focus. Hormone Health Network notes that serotonin regulates your mood, along with helping to control “bowel movements and function”. Low levels of serotonin, additionally, can lead to “depression, anxiety, suicidal behavior, and obsessive-compulsive disorder”. At this point, however, you should look to a doctor, not solely the sun, for treatment and help. Next time you’re outside on a clear morning, know that there are special chemical reactions going through your mind caused specifically by the sun on your face!



Written By Sydney Tipton, Youth Volunteer, Georgia

What Vitamin D can do for your body are you getting enough Vitamin D? This can be an important question to ask, especially during the winter months. Vitamin D is produced in our bodies when it is exposed to sunlight. It is important that we make a conscious effort to expose ourselves to the sun as much as possible in order to keep getting our necessary dose.

But what exactly is Vitamin D good for? It boosts your immune system: Maintaining a good and healthy immune system is now more important than ever. Making sure you get that sunshine will help your body fight disease more efficiently. It helps the development of healthy bones and teeth: It is important to take care of our bones from an early age to prevent fragile bones in the future. It can help strengthen muscle: Keeping strong muscles isn't just about looking good aesthetically. It is about keeping your muscles strong in order to avoid mobility issues in the future. A daily goal of 15 minutes of sunlight every day can help improve your health in these three areas in the present and to build health for the long term future. Get in that sunshine!

Written By Laura Baudes, Volunteer, Spain

An Inspiring Story

This month's story also comes from a best-selling book but from a well-known name, Jessica Simpson. In her recently published memoir, "Open Book". When we think of celebrities, a lot of us just assume their lives are easy, carefree, and full of amazing moments just because they have something most of us don't: wealth and fame. That is why "Open Book" is relatable on many levels. In it, Jessica Simpson reveals her personal struggles from childhood trauma to be in the spotlight at a very young age and the effects of having your life constantly filmed and shown on television. In the book she talks about how she leaned into pill and alcohol addiction in order to deal with the pain she endured throughout her life including divorce, scrutiny from the media, and also issues with her career. In the end, Jessica comes to the realization that in order to be the best version of herself, she must seek professional help. She has been sober and is now a proud fashion business owner and happy wife and mother of three children. The level of honesty and rawness of the content that is poured into the book is something the majority of readers will find inspiring.

**Written By Laura Baudes,
Volunteer, Spain**

YOGA POSE OF THE MONTH

Surya Namaskar

Sun Salutation(s), “Surya Namaskar” in Sanskrit, is named so as it is practiced to pay respect to the Sun, the source of all energy for the planet. It is believed that when one is in sync with its flow and cycles, they will prosper with good health, energy, and vitality to enjoy one’s life better.

It is a series of 12 postures, mixing forwards and backward bends to fully work the spine and the body, all performed with synchronized breathing. Each posture flows from the preceding one, maintaining a balance between flexions and extensions of the body.

1. Pranamasana (Prayer Pose)
 - a. Starting at the edge of the mat, balance your feet on both feet.
 - b. Relax your shoulders, expand your chest
 - c. While inhaling, lift both arms from the sides.
 - d. While exhaling. Bring your palms together to the front of your chest, praying.



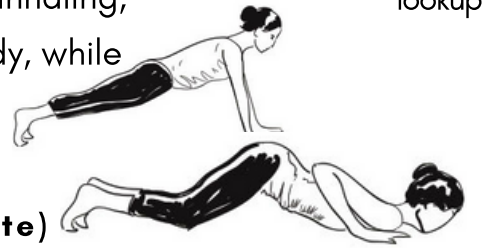
Written By Surya Narukullapati,
Youth Volunteer, Florida



2. **Hasta Uttanasana** (Raised Arms Pose)

a. While inhaling, lift the arms back up again and stretch the whole body at both the tips. b. Push the pelvic region while trying to reach back with the fingers (not bending the body alone)

5. **Dandasana (Phalakasana) (Plank)** a. While inhaling, take the left leg backward b. Straighten the body, while staying up with arms perpendicular to the floor.



lookup

6. **Ashtanga Namaskara (Eight Points Salute)**

a. Being the knees down to the floor, and then exhale b. Take the hip back a bit, and stretch forward c. Rest the chest and chin on the floor, with hips still up (2 hands + 2 feet + 2 knees + Chest + Chin = 8 points)

7. **Bhujangasana (Cobra Pose)**

a. Slide the body forwards, being the hips to the floor. b. Raise the chest upwards, while bending the elbows behind the ear c. Look up and inhale, while pushing the chest forward



8. **Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward Facing Dog Pose)**

a. While exhaling, lift the hips upwards and push the chest inward. (/ \ Posture) b. Feet and palms flat on the floor, with palms being stretched outward

3. **Hasta Padasana** (Hand to Foot Pose)

a. While exhaling, now stretch forward b. Bend downwards, bringing palms to the floor (Besides the feet) c. Straighten the knees, for a stricter stretch



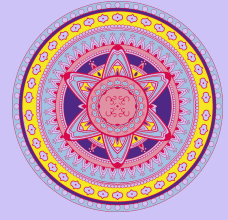
4. **Ashwa Sanchalanasana** (Equestrian Pose). While inhaling, take the right leg as far back as possible and bring the knee to the floor (leave the left foot between the palms) b. While exhaling,

Repeat steps 4, 3, 2, 1

Written By Surya Narukullapati,
Youth Volunteer, Florida



Upcoming Events!



Feb

- OM Meditation for 1 hour on Sunday, **Feb 28th, 10 AM EST (8:30 PM IST)**

March

- - March **11th** Thursday - *Mrathunjaya* mantra chanting 54 times at **6:30 PM EST** March 28th Sunday, **10 AM EST(8:30 PM IST)**- Meditation (Mind Sound Resonance Technique)

April

- - April 21st Wednesday - Hanuman Namaskara 108 at 6 AM - 7:00 AM EST
- April 25th Sunday - Meditation of "Ram" mantra 10 AM EST(8:30 PM IST)

Regular Classes

- One Hour Yoga Class **Twice a Week** Monday, Wednesday **7:30 EST**
- 30 Minute Yoga Class **Thrice a Week** Monday, Wednesday, Friday **6:00 PM EST**
- Bhagavad Gita Class 4 times a month Saturday **7 AM EST**

To Register: Contact **Shaila**
shailakomar@gmail.com
puremindnonprofit@gmail.com
Call or WhatsApp: +1 6095051718

Thank You For Reading!

Final editor
Shreya Komar