



Reducing Stress & Inflammation for those with Autoimmune Illnesses

Welcome to living a more pain free-life with yoga! We are grateful for your presence here.

I am so excited to share some amazing techniques that have helped me deal with inflammation and led me to a pain-free life. I bare personal testimony of this beautiful practice and the powerful effect that it can have on a providing both restored and renewed energy, increased vitality, and an overwhelming sense of well-being.

I wandered into my first yoga class because all the elliptical machines at the gym were being used and I wanted to fill space while I waited. I started in a class that was really beyond my ability and it kicked my tail, yet I awoke the next day feeling better than I had in years. That's all it took, I was hooked.

Note, though, that we will not be starting with anything close to kicking tail – that's not at all what this journey is about. This is just me sharing my beginning with yoga.

So, I went back to yoga the next day and the next, I couldn't get enough of a practice that allowed me to move or be still, depending on what I needed in my life on that day, and left me feeling good instead of exhausted like all the other forms of movement had done.

I tried one class after another as each provided me with new information to make more informed decisions about what I wanted. A few years into it and I became a yoga instructor, then I became someone who trained yoga teachers, then someone who owned a studio, and finally, someone who had gathered enough information that I knew how to help others feel as good as I do through the practice of yoga.

This workshop is designed to help start you on your path to feeling good, and then feeling better, until soon you are feeling great!

I wish someone had been there to explain to me what was happening to make me feel so good, and how simple breath techniques and certain movements and poses could provide me with such relief from pain. It took over a decade to absorb so many of the possibilities yoga has to offer and while I have learned so much I feel sure there is more to learn and share and I am so grateful to have this opportunity to share some of this knowledge with you, and to deliver it in a way that you will know what you are doing and why you are doing it.

This workshop is just the beginning and there are tons more places to go from here.

So, let's get started! Gently...

Love and Light,
~ Melody White

P.S. Like all things in life, take it that which resonates with you and the leave what doesn't for another time.

Autonomic Nervous System

Sympathetic

Increases
Heart Rate,
Blood Pressure
& Breathing
Rate
Pupils Dilate

Body Cannot
Heal

Poor Digestion
& Poor Sleep

In a State of
Alarm/
Depletion

Flight or Fight

Stimulates

Vagus Nerve

Modulator

High Tone

Low Tone

Parasympathetic

Rest & Digest

Inhibits

Slows Heart Rate
Reduces Blood
Pressure
Slows Breathing

Sets Body to
Healing

Governs
Digestion &
Sleep

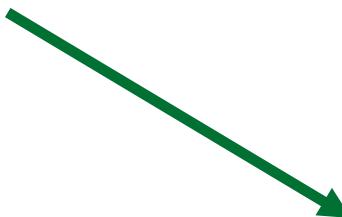
Calm State of
Being

Vagus Nerve

Stimulating the Vagus Nerve

Staying in stress mode depletes resources and produces cortisol and other hormones that contribute to:

- ◊ High inflammation
- ◊ Pain
- ◊ Illness



Releases the neurotransmitter acetylcholine throughout the body:

- ◊ Puts the brakes on inflammation
- ◊ Turns relaxation response back on
- ◊ Responsible for memory & learning
- ◊ Allows for healing

Stimulating the Vagus Nerve

Just Breathe

- 1. Diaphragmatic Breathing
- 2. Ujjayi Breathing
- 3. Alternate Nostril Breathing
- 4. Kapalabhati Breathing

Yoga Postures

- 1. Restorative Poses that Open the Diaphragm
- 2. Series of Movements/Postures

Other Ways to Stimulate the Vagus Nerve

(these are just a few—there are many more)

- 1. Oming, chanting, boisterous singing
- 2. Sunshine
- 3. Happy Social Settings

How Yoga Supports those with Autoimmune Disorders or Diseases

- ◆ Yoga decreases stress. Yoga helps you to have a sense of calm and well-being. This sense of calm helps to decrease stress, helping lower the release of stress hormones that compromise the immune system
- ◆ Yoga increases immunity. Yoga stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system (our rest and digest state), which reduces the body's stress response (flight or fight state) and helps to bring the nervous system into balance. This is shown to have a profound effect on the immune system. It also helps to condition the lungs and respiratory tract, stimulating the lymphatic system, releasing toxins from the body and drawing oxygenated blood back into various organs to ensure optimal functioning
- ◆ Yoga reduces inflammation. Regular yoga practice is shown to reduce levels of inflammatory markers in the body. Sometimes when the immune system sends out extra white blood cells without anything negative to attack, they inflame nearby healthy tissue
- ◆ Yoga brings inner peace. Yogic practices, such as meditation and calming yoga poses, help you find an inner connection, teaching you to be able to shift your focus away from pain or discomfort and into a pleasant state of being. It gives you tools to be able to focus your attention away from pain. Yoga also teaches you to listen to your body and to treat yourself with compassion and kindness, honoring what your body needs

4 Types of Supportive Breath Work

- ◆ 3 Part-Breathing: to open and inflate the diaphragm and send rich prana and oxygen to the vital organs of the torso. This breath work supports the expansion of the diaphragm for proper breathing and signals the parasympathetic nervous system (rest and digest mode) to turn on and the sympathetic (flight/ fight response) nervous system to turn off
- ◆ Nadhi Shodhana Breathing (Alternate Nostril Breathing): balances the energies of Prana and Apana and calms the central nervous system. A great technique to do at the beginning or end of a practice or day
- ◆ Kapplabhati Breath: helps to clear the mind, a great breathing technique to do during the practice or in the middle of the day to clear the mind and energize the body. (Not recommended for those who have high blood pressure and/or those who are pregnant)
- ◆ Ujjayi Breathing (Victorious breath): the breath of the practice. This type of breathing tones the vagus nerve and supports decreasing inflammation in the body

Calming Poses for those with Autoimmune Illnesses



Supported Reclined Bound Angle

This restorative pose opens up the chest and the hips. It helps balance the nervous system by bringing the body and mind into a relaxed, parasympathetic state.



Supported Bridge Pose with bolsters or blocks

Stretches the chest, neck, spine, and hips, improves circulation of blood. Helps alleviate stress and mild depression, calms the brain and central nervous system, stimulates the lungs, thyroid glands, and abdominal organs, improves digestion, reduces backache and headache, reduces fatigue, anxiety, and insomnia, rejuvenates tired legs, relieves symptoms of asthma and high blood pressure, therapeutic for hypertension, osteoporosis, and sinusitis.



Supported Fish with Blocks or Bolster & Block

Restorative Fish Pose gives space for the diaphragm to open aiding in diaphragmatic breathing and setting the body to rest and digest mode. Expands and stretches the front of the body, particularly the throat, chest, abdomen, hip flexors, and intercostals (the muscles between your ribs). It strengthens the upper back muscles and the back of the neck, which improves spinal flexibility and posture.



Restorative Reclined Twist with Sandbags

Twisting can help regain flexibility in the spine, as well as in the hips, shoulders and abdomen. Twisting also stretches the muscles in the back, helping to relieve tension and pain, twists compress the internal organs and glands of the torso, forcing out metabolic-waste. When the pressure is released, fresh blood rich with oxygen flows back into the organs, with a cleansing effect.



Restorative Child's Pose

Restorative Child helps to lengthen the spine and releases tension in the neck and lower back. It gently stretches the hips, thighs and ankles. Helps to quiet the mind and calm the body and normalizes circulation throughout the body.



Supported Shoulder Stand

This pose compresses the thyroid and parathyroid glands to help with metabolism and immunity, relieves stress and depression, improves digestion, opens the shoulders and neck.

Yoga Nidra

Yoga Nidra, also referred to as “Yogic Sleep,” is a meditation technique that allows for ultimate relaxation, bringing us into a state of deep relaxation and releasing stress and tension.

1. Begin by lying down on the floor in comfortable Savasana, corpse pose. Turn your palms to face up and take your feet out wide, letting your toes fall outward. Get comfortable and close your eyes. Take 3 deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth.
2. Gradually move your awareness throughout your entire body. Start at the tips of your toes, feeling each toe individually. Work your way up through your feet, through your ankles, up your shins and calves, through your knees and thighs, to your hips. Scan your belly and back all the way up to your shoulders, down your arms, to your hands, and all the way to your fingertips. Scan back up your arms and shoulders to your neck and throat, up the back of your head and through your ears, chin, lips, nose, and eyes, going all the way up to the crown of your head.
3. Then bring your awareness to your breath, noticing where your inhales fill up your body and the length of your breath. Without judgement, notice any other thoughts that come in and just watch them float back out. After a few minutes, when you are ready, draw your awareness back to your body, then to the room, slowly allowing yourself to come out of it. Blink your eyes open.