

YOGA

does a Body, Mind
and Spirit good

story by **Moira Anderson Miller**
photo by **Stella Pierson**

No doubt, you have heard that you should be doing yoga. Images of strong, flexible, peaceful people doing yoga are everywhere in the media. In fact, 15 million Americans include some form of yoga in their fitness regimens. You probably know someone who does yoga, and has recommended that you try it. Maybe your doctor suggested it. So what's all the fuss? Why has this 5,000-year-old practice from India become so wildly popular, and why should you be doing it?

The first reason is that yoga makes you feel great. Yoga postures, breathing exercises and relaxation/meditation techniques taught in yoga classes help you to relax, tune in, and be healthier in body, mind and spirit. Research has shown that practicing yoga is good for your health. Yoga has scientifically been proven to help with depression, chronic fatigue, headaches, diabetes, arthritis, anxiety, heart disease, asthma, back pain and many other conditions.

All these healthful side effects barely scratch the surface of what yoga can do for you.

Yoga is a Sanskrit word that means union. The original yogis developed the practice of yoga to find true happiness, enlightenment and liberation through union with divine consciousness. Practicing postures and meditation helped them quiet the mind, and find the stillness needed to achieve this union. Whether or not you

TEN REASONS TO TRY YOGA

- Reduces stress and tension
- Boosts self esteem
- Lowers fat
- Improves circulation
- Stimulates the immune system
- Improves muscle tone, flexibility, strength and stamina
- Creates a sense of calm and well-being
- Conditions the cardiovascular system
- Relieves pain
- Helps you focus on the present



MOIRA ANDERSON MILLER owns, directs, and teaches yoga classes at River Rock Yoga studio in Ocean Springs. She offers classes in yoga, pilates and bellydancing, with regular beginner classes. For info, call 228-818-4522.

seek union, you can still do yoga.

Practically speaking, yoga helps to connect you with your true self. It strips away the stress, mind clutter and superficial worries that we sometimes feel define us. We are all busy. The endless demands on our time, and the anxiety of balancing the duties of work and family tend to separate us from ourselves. We feel

run down, tense, short-tempered, exhausted and we begin to experience health problems. When we practice yoga, we find the space to dive down beneath the daily worries and expectations to remember who we really are. We are not our "to do list". We are not defined by the clothes we wear, the bills we have to pay, the car we drive, or how others perceive us.