

#MIND&BODY

Yogic Union

Yoga is more than just standing on your head. It's about uniting with the divine.



While yoga has become a trendy lifestyle and wellness practice in many parts of the world, its roots are ancient, spiritual, and profound. Originally developed in Hinduism, yoga provides a path to achieve a higher state of consciousness and to unite with the divine.

The Sanskrit word yoga literally translates to "to yoke," derived from the root word yuj which means "to join," "to integrate," or "to harness." The word yoga was first mentioned in one of the oldest texts known to humanity, the Rig Veda. The Rig Veda is the oldest of the Vedas - an ancient compendium of sacred songs, mantras, and rituals central to the Hindu religion. They are believed to have been composed between 1500 and 1200 BC.

The deity associated with yoga is Shiva, the Hindu god of destruction and regeneration. According to tradition, yogic knowledge was revealed as a divine gift by Shiva to the Rishis - sages or "men of vision" devoted to the spiritual life who, during their meditations, would receive visions or hear mantras and truths that others could not. In India,



Rishis were given the highest reverence, and their words were more highly regarded than even the most royal leaders of society.

Yoga was refined and developed by the Rishis, and they documented their yoga practices and beliefs in the Upanishads, a huge body of work containing over 200 scriptures, believed to have been composed around 500 BC. Passed down by the Rishis through centuries by guru shishya-parampara, the guru-disciple tradition, these teachings were given to people to help them realize their inherent divine nature.

The Primary Paths of Yoga

There are four primary paths through which yoga is expressed: Karma yoga (yoga of action), Bhakti yoga (yoga of devotion), Jñāna yoga (yoga of knowledge), and Rājā yoga (yoga of mind control).

Karma yoga emphasizes selfless service and fulfilling one's duties to sublimate the ego, purify the heart, and cultivate oneness. Physical activities like cooking, cleaning, and teaching are used. Bhakti yoga engages the emotional aspect of the mind through devotion to the divine, developing humility and surrender. Methods



include praying, chanting, and participating in rituals. Jñāna yoga focuses on self-inquiry through intellectual questioning, reflection, and meditation on the nature of truth. Rājā yoga uses techniques like Hatha yoga (described below), cleansing, breathing exercises, and meditation to control the body, mind, and senses. Its emphasis on the physical body and the use of specific techniques to achieve particular outcomes are based on an understanding of the body's physiology and the effects of the practices on the body and mind.

The Spiritual Connection

Essentially, yoga is a spiritual practice meant to help with purifying and preparing the body and mind to first recognize one's atman ("soul") within, and then unite it with Brahman or the divine. Hindu philosophy views this attainment of union with the divine as the ultimate goal of human existence, and it is called "Moksha" or "Mukti." This attainment is said to be a liberation or release from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth (samsara).

The Vedas emphasized ritual sacrifice to please the gods, but the Rishis believed that



Divyakriti Singh.



Tusharika Singh
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#TETE -A-TETE

to ride and compete throughout my school years, participating in numerous Junior and Senior national championships and steadily advancing through the levels. Looking back on those formative years, I cherish the memories of my time spent in the saddle, and am grateful for the foundation in equestrianism that Mayo College Girls' School provided me.

Q: How do you feel about being a trailblazer and inspiring others in your community?

A: I am thrilled to be the only woman from Rajasthan to have made it onto the probable list for the 19th Asian Games Indian team for equestrian sports. However, my ultimate goal is to use this platform to inspire other women to pursue equestrian sports professionally. In 2014, an all-women team represented India for the first time, but there has been a gap since then. With the abundance of talent and potential in our country, especially in Rajasthan, I firmly believe that with the right training and support, we can see many more girls and boys excel at the international level in the coming years. It is my dream to create a pathway for young equestrians to follow and to pave the way for greater representation of women in this exhilarating and rewarding sport.

Q: What challenges have you faced as a female athlete in this sport and how have you overcome them?

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She is Galloping to the Top



a level playing field, making it truly empowering for female athletes. From local competitions to the Olympics, women have consistently demonstrated their excellence in the sport, often surpassing their male counterparts. While every athlete faces their own set of challenges, I do not view my gender as a hindrance in my equestrian journey. Though I have faced my fair share of setbacks and difficulties, I am determined to continue pushing myself and achieving my goals.

Q: How do you prepare for competitions, both mentally and physically?

A: The preparation for equestrian competitions is a highly detailed and individualistic process. As an athlete in this sport, my teammate is a horse, and the key to a successful competition lies in the seamless partnership between the horse and rider. Achieving this level of harmony takes countless hours of practice, both in the saddle and outside of it. Every horse has a unique personality and requires a different approach to training, so it's essential to have a deep understanding of your horse's individual needs and preferences.

Personally, I have developed a close relationship with my horses over time. I have spent countless hours caring for them and getting to know them on a personal level. This bond is built on trust, and it's what enables us to work together as a team in competitions.

Leading up to a competition, we follow a rigorous training schedule for two weeks to ensure that we are well-prepared, without over-exerting ourselves too soon. This involves a variety of structured exercises, with support from a team of experts including trainers, farriers, physiotherapists, and veterinarians. Mental preparation is also critical in this sport, and as riders, we must maintain a calm and confident mindset to guide our horses through any situation.

Despite our best efforts, failures are inevitable in this sport. I have experienced my share of setbacks and disappointments along the way. However, I believe that resilience and mental toughness are essential qualities for any athlete. Through mental training and practices like Sudarshan Kriya and meditation, I have learned to cultivate a never-give-up attitude that has helped me persevere through tough times and emerge stronger on the other side.

Q: Can you walk us through your training regimen and how you stay in top shape for your competitions?

A: In the equestrian sport, every day is a new challenge, but having a



No matter the weather, I am dedicated to providing the best possible care for my horses. In temperatures as low as -7°C, through rain, snow, and storms, and even in the heat of summer, I make sure my horses are well taken care of. On competition days, I travel with my horses in the horse truck to ensure they receive the best care possible, and I am usually at the competition venue from morning until night.

dedicated team of experienced trainers and coaches makes all the difference. My team works together to create a tailored training regimen that meets both mine and my horses' needs, ensuring that we are able to perform at our best.

Starting early in the morning, my day is filled with a range of tasks from horse riding to horse care. Apart from riding lessons, I'm responsible for mucking out the stables, preparing feed, sweeping the barn, and taking the horses for their daily turn-out. On average, I train for 4-5 days a week, depending on the upcoming schedule. As a competition approaches, the intensity of training gradually increases to ensure that both my horse and I are fully prepared.

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horse truck to ensure they receive the best care possible, and I am usually at the competition venue from morning until night.

To keep the horses mentally happy and the training varied, we spend two days a week hacking out in the forest or cantering on the track. I also plan my training in such a way that I ride every day of the week. Even after a long day, I always make sure to check on my horses in the stables before I go to bed.

Q: How do you balance your training and competing schedule with other aspects of your life?

A: At present, I believe that both I and those around me have been solely focused on the Asian Games. As a result, I have been fully devoted to it and have yet to figure out how to balance it with other areas of my life.

However, like all aspects of life, particularly in sports, sacrifices must be made. In my journey, I too have had to make certain compromises along the way. I am not able to engage in activities that most people my age participate in, and I have had to be away from my home and family, even during the Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, riding and competing at this level have always been my aspirations, and the little sacrifices I have had to make seem insignificant in comparison to the opportunity to pursue my dreams. I feel grateful and fortunate to have the chance to do what I love.

Moving forward, I understand the importance of balancing my passion for riding with other aspects of my life for long-term sustainability. Riding is a sport that one can participate in for a lifetime, and I am determined to ride and compete for as long as possible.

Q: What advice would you give to aspiring equestrian athletes, especially those from non-traditional equestrian communities?

A: Although I do not believe that I am qualified to give advice to others, I have gained significant insight from my own experiences. There are two significant take-aways that I would like to share. Firstly, investing in a skilled trainer is critical to improve and refine one's riding abilities. The right trainer can offer valuable guidance and support, which can help achieve new levels of success.

Secondly, it is essential to have faith in oneself and prioritize the well-being of one's horses. Horses have a remarkable ability to go above and beyond for their riders, and as riders, we must prioritize their welfare as our topmost responsibility.

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#TRAVEL

The World's Most Beautiful Cities

Some standards and some surprises-all dazzling destinations to tempt you on your next trip.



How does one narrow down a list of the most beautiful cities? Each city in every corner of the world holds its own particular beauty. What sets some cities apart from the rest are their special combinations of the wildness of nature and structure of civilization.

Cities possessing natural beauty-marvelous mountains, remarkable rivers, fascinating forests, or captivating coastline-and human-made grandeur-astounding architecture, graceful green spaces, magnificent monuments, and superb structures-are those that rise above the rest.

These cities are particularly alluring and enchanting. Some that made the list may seem unusual while others will be on every "beautiful city" list until the end of time. Regardless, each of these cities is a treasure trove of stunning sights.

Lisbon, Portugal

In a city that boasts sunshine 290 days of the year, there's so much beauty to behold-whether it's on the edge of the beach or atop a rolling hill. The hills offer several viewing points called



Alesund, Norway

miradouro throughout this historic city-visit its most famous, Miradouro da Graça, or the less crowded yet still radiant Miradouro de Monte Agudo and Miradouro da Senhora do Monte.

Sydney, Australia

Between the turquoise oceans and golden sands of Bondi Beach to the lush rainforest of the Kuring-gai Chase National Park and the bush of Royal National Park, you're never far from natural beauty in Sydney. One of the best ways to see the sights is to walk the Glebe Foreshore walk, for example, to enjoy views of Rozelle Bay and Blackwater Bay, the Sydney Harbour, and Anzac Bridge.

For a more leisurely tour, enjoy a ferry or harbour cruise. Climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the world's largest steel arch, with BridgeClimb Sydney for pleasing panoramic views of the city and a breath-taking experience.

Québec City, Canada

Old Québec is a UNESCO World Heritage site and the only fortified city north of Mexico. Stroll the cobblestone streets to see the beautiful Basilica Cathedral

Notre-Dame de Québec and take in the ramparts and four gates surrounding the Old City.

For views of the St. Lawrence River and Château Frontenac, walk along the Dufferin Terrace. You can also visit the Fairmont Le Château Frontenac on Cape Diamond, a Québec City treasure that's been operational for more than a century. Visit the picturesque streets of Old Port and pick up a boat tour, or explore the Petit-Champ plain pedestrian street. For natural beauty, visit the Jacques-Cartier National Park or the Montmorency Falls-a waterfall that is 30 meters higher than Niagara Falls.

Alesund, Norway

After a fire destroyed most of Alesund in 1904, the city arose with astounding Art Nouveau architecture, with some of the most beautiful examples in all of Europe. Take in the gorgeous city by kayak along the Brosundet canal, which winds through the centre of the city.

Cape Town, South Africa

A port city on South Africa's southwest coast, Cape Town sits beneath Table Mountain, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the New 7 Wonders of the World. Hike or ride a cable car to explore the mountain's flat top and take in the vibrant views of the Mother City, the harbour, and the nearby prison that once held Nelson Mandela.

Kyoto, Japan

Kyoto's exquisite architecture and lush scenery make it a grand city. Located on the island of Honshu, Kyoto is home to many Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, including the Kiyomizudera Temple and Kinkakuji.

Other jaw dropping sites include the Togetsukyo Bridge and the Tenryu-ji temple. Visit in the spring to see the cherry blossoms or in the fall for the foliage. The Tango-hanto Peninsula is a must-visit area, with its white-sand beaches, rejuvenating onsen (hot springs), and superb scenery.



Québec City, Canada.

As its nickname suggests, the City of a Hundred Spires has an abundance of appealing architecture. The best way to experience Prague is on foot. Marvel at the many towers of Prague, like the Lesser Town Bridge Towers, the New Mill Water Tower, the Old Town Bridge Tower, and the Old Town Hall Tower-or take steps to the top of one, as each affords a distinctive view of the capital city.

largest city park in Holland's capital. Don't leave Amsterdam without taking a flight with This Is Holland. The experience allows you to see Amsterdam from above, over the canals, polders, tulip fields, the Wadden Sea, and Veluwezoom, the oldest natural park in Holland.

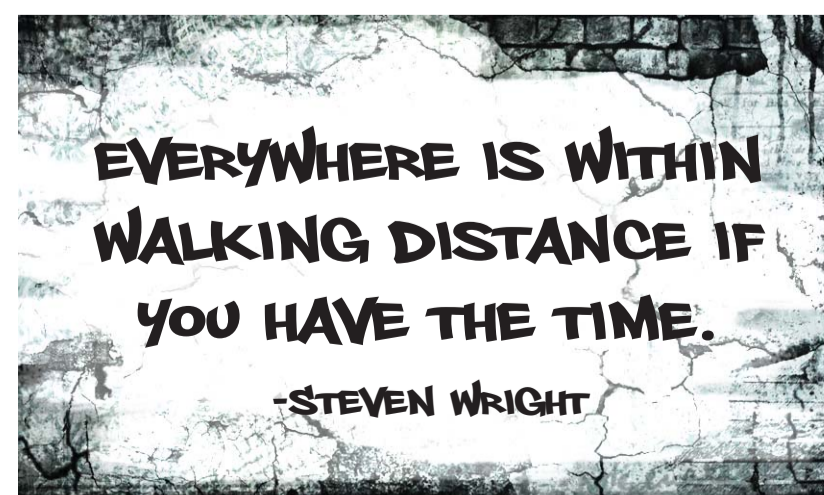
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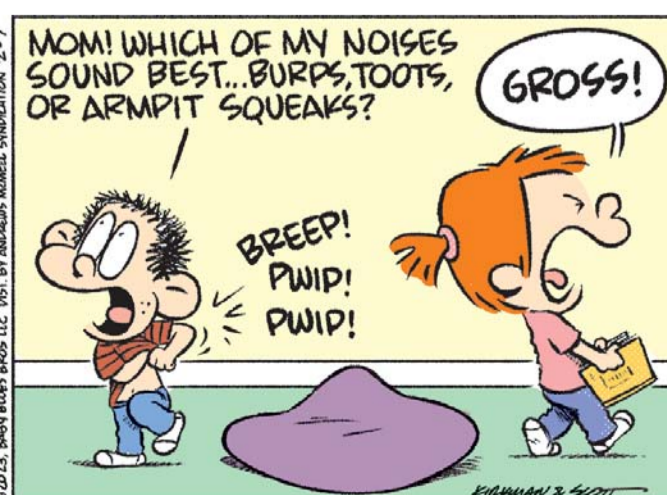
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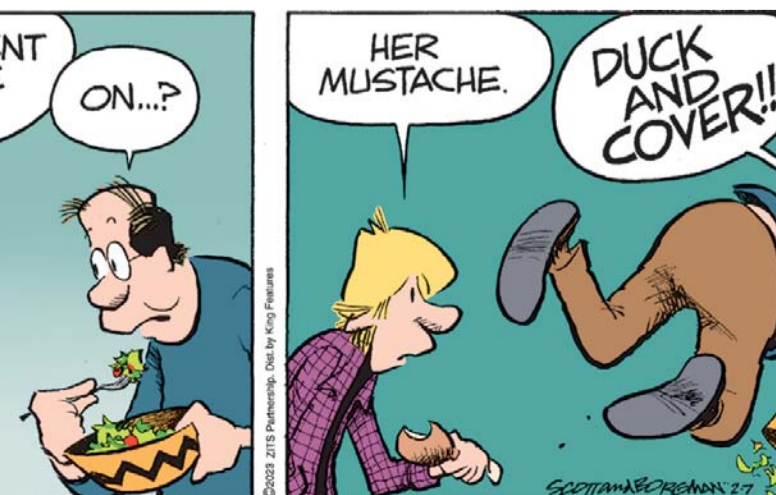
THE WALL



BABY BLUES



ZITS



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman