

YOGA

ISSUE 264/ APRIL 2025

Jai
'Gurudev'

Yashika
Rubber Girl



**SURPRISING
FACTS
ABOUT YOGA**

YOGA &

- Clairvoyance •
- Addiction Recovery •
- Sustainable Living •

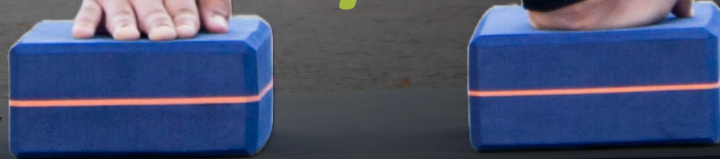
The science of

pranayama



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CONTENTS

ON THE COVER



On Cover: Yashika Bandita K
THE RUBBER GIRL



PHILOSOPHY

28 THE GREAT DISEASE OF THE MIND – HAROLD STEWART AUSTRALIAN BUDDHIST

A concise look at Harold Stewart's transformation into a significant Buddhist figure through his poetry and teachings.

62 CLAIRVOYANCE: BEYOND WHAT EYES CAN SEE

Explore the power of clairvoyance and yoga, revealing how hidden senses and aura can diagnose and foresee health conditions.

32 WHY SOMATIC SOBRIETY WITH YOGA IS ESSENTIAL FOR ADDICTION RECOVERY

Somatic sobriety combines yoga and emotional awareness to aid addiction recovery, fostering healing through bodily movement and spiritual practices.

42 MOUNTAINS, MOVEMENT AND MEDITATION

Exploring the transformative power of mountains through yoga, meditation, and Tantra Shaivism, fostering inner reflection, resilience, and spiritual growth.



36 SIX THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT YOGA

Discover unexpected historical, political, and cultural aspects of yoga, from its roots in war to its modern global impact.

48 BREATHE EASY: THE SCIENCE AND ART OF PRĀṆĀYĀMA FOR MIND AND BODY

Explore six key Prāṇāyāma techniques, their methods, benefits, and scientific research supporting breath control for holistic well-being.

FEATURES

22 THE YOGI'S WAY TO LASTING INNER PEACE

Explore ancient yogic wisdom to overcome emotional challenges (kleshas) and cultivate lasting inner peace through breath, awareness, and mindful practices.

82 THE AYURVEDIC PATH TO HEALTHY, BEAUTIFUL HAIR

Discover Ayurvedic hair care rituals to nourish your scalp, prevent hair fall, and achieve healthy, radiant hair at any age.

14 YASHIKA BANDITA K: THE RUBBER GIRL

At just 13, Yashika Bandita K, India's "Rubber Girl," has set records and won titles for her extraordinary flexibility, strength, and dedication to yogasana.



BWY SPECIAL

18 NURTURING THE PLANET THROUGH YOGA

Explore how yoga fosters a deeper connection with nature, encouraging mindful living and sustainable environmental practices.

YOGA STUDIO SPECIAL

76 WHY YOU NEED A MEDITATION COACH

Discover how a meditation coach provides personalised support, enhances consistency, and helps you overcome challenges for a deeper, transformative practice.

CREATIVE ART

57 ILLUSTRATION OF THE MONTH - 'INNER PEACE'



WELLNESS DESTINATION

86 ANCIENT PRACTICES, MODERN LONGEVITY

Discover how yoga, Ayurveda, and modern science merge to promote longevity, health, and vitality at SHA Wellness Clinic.

70 RECLAIMING BALANCE

Nick Rice recounts his revitalising experience at OM Academy & Mind Spa in Porto, blending detox, Yoga, Pilates, and holistic healing to restore body, mind, and spirit.

INTERVIEW

08 SPIRITUAL KEYS TO GLOBAL HEALING & TRANSFORMATION

Lena Franklin interviews Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar on compassion, commitment, and conscious change.

READERS' ASHRAM

66 ASK YOGI MAHARAJ DR MALIK

98 VEDIC ASTROLOGY

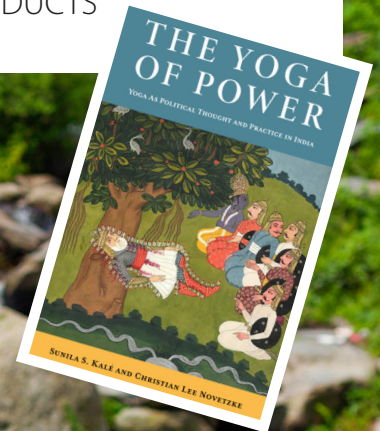
SERIES

54 THE KUNDALINI: MEMOIRS OF A YOGI (CHAPTER 28)

Yogi Raj Muni recounts Kundalini's transformative power, spiritual rituals, and the journey toward enlightenment through yoga and meditation.

WHAT'S HOT

92 NEW BOOKS, ACCESSORIES AND PRODUCTS



Ancient Practices, Modern Longevity



Words: Ingrid Yang, M.D., C-IAYT
Photos by SHA and Ingrid Yang

Bridging Yoga, Ayurveda, and Science at SHA Wellness



Every magazine you pick up or programme you watch seems to be discussing longevity—whether it’s the latest supplements claiming to extend your lifespan or new scientific breakthroughs. Yet, this fascination with living longer and healthier is far from new. The principles of longevity have been at the heart of yoga and Ayurveda for millennia, meticulously studied and practised as part of a holistic approach to health and well-being.

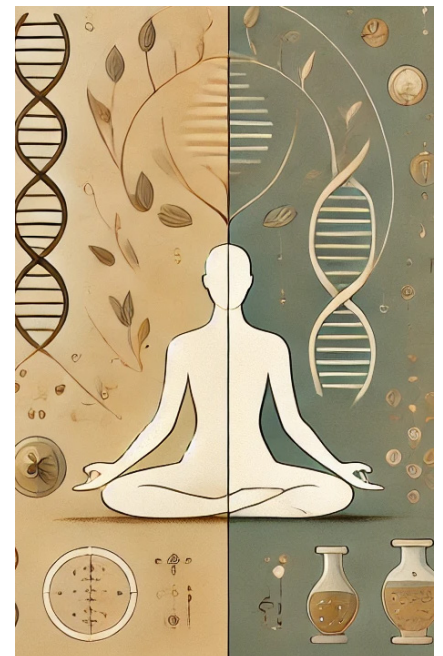
Ayurveda, a system of holistic medicine, offers a rich tapestry of practices aimed at achieving balance—the cornerstone of a long, vibrant life. This ancient science has informed and complemented yoga for over 5,000 years, with both emphasising harmony within the body, mind, and spirit. While Ayurveda provides the dietary, detoxification, and lifestyle frameworks to sustain vitality, yoga adds depth through movement, breathwork, and meditation. Together,

these practices address not just physical health, but mental clarity and emotional resilience.

Today, this integrated wisdom continues to thrive, inspiring modern wellness programmes like those at SHA Wellness Clinic, which has locations in Spain and Mexico. In the pursuit of better understanding how ancient practices like yoga and Ayurveda contribute to longevity, I visited to SHA to examine how it bridges these ancient traditions with modern medical advancements.

Ancient Foundations of Longevity: Yoga and Ayurveda

Both yoga and Ayurveda share a common goal: cultivating balance across every aspect of the self. Rooted in the Vedic traditions of ancient India, these practices emphasise harmony as the key to health and longevity. While yoga is often recognised for its physical postures (*asana*), it is, in fact, an eight-limbed path encompassing ethical principles (*yama*), self-discipline (*niyama*), breath control (*pranayama*), sensory withdrawal (*pratyahara*), concentration (*dharana*),





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meditation (*dhyana*), and ultimate self-realisation (*samadhi*). In complement, Ayurveda focuses on balancing the three *doshas*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—to maintain health and prevent disease.

Many modern wellness centres, including SHA, approach longevity through a personalised lens, integrating genomic medicine and hormone optimisation with holistic well-being strategies. These advancements allow for individualised health planning, much like Ayurveda's focus on tailoring treatments based on a person's *dosha*, or unique constitution. Both systems recognise that no single approach fits all, and personalisation is key to optimising health.

Similarly, regenerative therapies such as platelet-rich plasma and stem cell treatments are gaining popularity for their potential to repair tissues and slow cellular aging. Ayurveda's *Rasayana* therapies share a comparable goal—enhancing vitality and promoting longevity through botanical formulations, dietary practices, and rejuvenative treatments like *Abhyanga* (therapeutic oil massage) and *Shirodhara* (pouring warm oil over the forehead to calm the nervous system). During my visit to SHA, I observed how therapies like stem cell infusions and hormone-balancing treatments are integrated with

lifestyle modifications. In conversations with their medical experts, I learned that these approaches foster cellular repair and deep rejuvenation—an ethos that mirrors *Rasayana's* emphasis on nutrient-dense diets, targeted herbal remedies, and specialised bodywork to nurture overall well-being.

One particularly fascinating technology I encountered at SHA was the Human Regenerator, a quantum-based therapy using electromagnetic frequencies to enhance mitochondrial function, promoting deep relaxation and cellular renewal. Lying inside its sleek chamber, I felt a subtle vibrational hum, as if my body were being finely tuned. Afterward, there was a distinct lightness, as if my cells had recalibrated.

This technology aligns with the Ayurvedic concept of *prana*—the vital life force—and echoes ancient seers' understanding of energy long before quantum physics confirmed our reality as oscillating fields. Much like *pranayama* refines breath and energy flow, the Human Regenerator harmonises the body's bioenergetic field, bridging ancient wisdom with cutting-edge longevity science. Perhaps, in some way, these fields were never separate to begin with—just different languages describing the same unseen forces that shape our health and existence.



Balancing the Doshas in Modern Life

A cornerstone of Ayurvedic longevity is the balance of the *doshas*, each of which represents specific energies within the body. *Vata* governs movement, *Pitta* oversees metabolism, and *Kapha* provides stability. Imbalances in these *doshas* can accelerate aging and lead to chronic disease.

In line with these principles, Ayurvedic dietary guidelines emphasise seasonal, mindful eating, mirroring the plant-based, anti-inflammatory diets gaining popularity today. Meals designed to balance the *doshas* correlate with nutritional science that highlights the importance of reducing inflammation for healthy aging. While at SHA, I discovered creative ways to integrate revered Ayurvedic ingredients—such as turmeric and ashwagandha—into everyday meals, including mushroom teas and turmeric porridges, illustrating how ancient wisdom and modern innovation can work in harmony to optimise well-being.

The Breath of Life: Pranayama and Cellular Vitality

Pranayama, the yogic practice of breath control, offers more than mere stress relief; it is a key to cellular rejuvenation that has attracted significant attention in the longevity field. Breathwork techniques practised by yogis for centuries have been incorporated into modern stress management and cellular health strategies, with recent scientific studies showing that controlled breathing can lower cortisol, reduce inflammation, and improve heart rate variability—all key indicators of longevity.

My daily guided pranayama sessions at SHA helped me tap into these benefits, fostering deep relaxation and fueling cellular renewal. Whether practicing





mindful awareness, *asana* transcends mere exercise, becoming a cornerstone of vitality and resilience.

Detoxification and Rejuvenation: Shared Goals

Ayurveda recognises water as a conduit for transformation, whether through internal cleansing or external therapies, a philosophy reflected in SHA's hydrotherapy circuit designed to rejuvenate from within.

I was struck by how the hydrotherapy circuit I experienced at SHA left me both energised and grounded, evoking the deep cleansing of *Panchakarma* or the immersive stillness of a focused yoga practice. Moving through cycles of heat and cold—from the infrared sauna and steam room to the cold plunge and ice room—stimulated circulation, deepened relaxation, and sealed in the benefits. By the end, I felt both refreshed and deeply centred, experiencing firsthand what Ayurvedic traditions have long recognised—water's profound ability to restore balance and vitality.

Daily Longevity Practices: Lessons from Ancient Traditions

If yoga and Ayurveda teach us anything, it is that longevity is not built on quick fixes, but on the quiet power of daily habits. By blending centuries-old wisdom with modern science, we learn how to align with the body's natural rhythms and make well-being a daily practice. Inspired by my time at SHA, here are a few simple yet powerful longevity practices to incorporate into your routine:

- 1 Morning Rituals:** Begin your day with simple cleansing practices like tongue scraping and drinking diluted apple cider vinegar before breakfast. Follow with a short yoga or pranayama session to gently awaken your body and mind.
- 2 Mindful Eating:** Embrace eating seasonally and mindfully, focusing on whole, plant-based foods. Incorporate anti-inflammatory spices like turmeric and ginger into your meals.

alternate nostril breathing for mental calm or *kapalabhati* for detoxification, these techniques integrate with mindfulness and cognitive therapies, creating a synergy that elevates both physical and mental vitality.

Movement as Medicine: The Role of Asana

As the physical limb of yoga, *asana* confers a wealth of benefits essential for longevity—maintaining mobility, strengthening muscles, and enhancing circulation. Certain postures, such as twists and inversions, also facilitate detoxification by stimulating lymphatic flow and improving digestion—principles that bridge Ayurvedic insights with contemporary wellness philosophies.

As a dedicated yogi, I embraced my daily *asana* sessions, which were thoughtfully structured to harmonise my body's physical and energetic systems. These routines, often paired with mental and emotional cleansing practices like meditation and mindfulness, showcase how centuries-old techniques can be woven into a holistic longevity strategy. By integrating movement, breath, and





- 3 **Daily Movement:** Include yoga asana or other gentle exercises to maintain mobility and circulation. Tailor your practice to your body's needs and energy levels.
- 4 **Breath Awareness:** Use *pranayama* techniques like alternate nostril breathing to manage stress and enhance focus throughout the day.
- 5 **Evening Wind-Down:** Create a calming evening routine with meditation, restorative yoga, or herbal teas to promote restful sleep.

A New Paradigm for Longevity

The intersection of yoga, Ayurveda, and modern science offers a transformative approach to longevity. Some of the most forward-thinking wellness spaces like SHA bring this philosophy to life—merging ancient practices with contemporary medical insights to create a truly holistic model for health. Through the wisdom of yoga and Ayurveda, enhanced by modern advancements and personalised care, the path to a vibrant,

fulfilling life becomes clear – it is in finding balance. In this way, we learn to balance body and mind, tradition and innovation, the ancient and the modern. It is in this harmony that true well-being and longevity flourish.



Ingrid Yang M.D. is a physician, meditation teacher, travel writer and internationally-recognised yoga therapist of over 25 years. She is the author of the books *Hatha Yoga Asanas*, *Adaptive Yoga*, and *The Zen Mindfulness Workbook*. Dr. Yang's teachings are a rare and special experience; she leads trainings and retreats around the world, with a special focus on mindfulness, healing through breathwork, kinesthetic physiology and the mind-body connection. Find out more at www.ingridyang.com or [instagram.com/ingridyangyogamd](https://www.instagram.com/ingridyangyogamd).