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WOMEN'S HEALTH

A SIMPLE YOGA PRACTICE

A simple yoga practice done on a daily basis can change your life. It changes the way you think about yourself and the things you do on a daily basis.

At first, the awareness you gain in a yoga class will encourage you to sit up straighter when you are at your desk or driving. When you find yourself getting a little stiff in the lower back you might get up and do a simple forward bend to relieve the back pain that is likely to occur. When you are slumping on the couch at home you might find a posture that won't lead to discomfort later. This is what happens when you pay attention to your body. You can learn how to feel good from the inside.

If you go to a yoga class or practice at home you are more likely to take a big deep breath when encountering a difficult situation instead of reacting. This ability to go into yourself and reflect before you act is one of the things you learn when you do yoga.

The yoga practice is only a little about stretching the muscles of the body. It is much more about becoming aware of the body you have and working in such a way as to create balance. There is a reason behind the positions that yoga teaches us. These postures align and balance the body so that the energy or "prana" can move more freely and equally within. When we pay attention to our bodies and breath, there is a connection that develops within us that helps us understand ourselves and our energy more completely.

When we come to understand ourselves better through the yoga practice, it encourages us to treat the people around us as we would want to be treated. In the yoga practice there are a whole set of moral and ethical principles that encourage non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, and ethical use of individual energies as well as personal cleanliness of body and mind, contentment, and self reflection.

These practices are to be done along with the physical postures and the breathing exercises so that when you practice yoga it touches on all aspects of your life. You are certainly challenged physically to do the postures, but more importantly the yoga practice causes you to look inside of yourself to see if you are living your life to the fullest.

HEALTH ADVICE VIA TOM HESS

Certified yoga instructor and co-founder of Yoga Center of Chico, located at 250 Vallombrosa Suite 150 in Chico. For more information, visit yogacenterofchico.com or call 530-342-0100.