



Bobbi Misiti
2201 Market Street
Camp Hill, PA 17011
717.443.1119 befityoga.com

TOPIC OF THE MONTH April 2015

NOTES FROM ASHTANGA YOGA CONFERENCE BALI, INDONESIA APRIL 2015

I just returned from attending a yoga conference in Bali. It was with all my favorite long time teachers; Nancy Gilgoff, Manju Jois, David Swenson, and Danny Paradise (among a few other wonderful teachers). It was a great experience and I am very happy I went. Although I have to say . . . I like Maui so much better than Bali . . .

What I did like about Bali are the friendly people. Everyone always smiles and says hello when you pass them. I like that, I remember some of my times in Mexico . . . you walk down the street and everyone smiles and says "Hola", so you literally just walk and every few seconds you are greeting someone . . . "Hola" with a head nod, "Hola", "Hola", "Hola" (you know, there is a lot of people in Mexico!) and you just can't help but smile! Getting off track here, there is a definite health and mood benefit to smiling and saying hello to strangers, to sparking up conversations standing in lines with people you don't know or maybe don't even have much in "common" with (other than we are all one . . .), and just being friendly — this certainly beats taking anti-depressants with many negative side effects.

[http://lifespaspa.com/how-to-manifest-joy-in-the-mundane/?](http://lifespaspa.com/how-to-manifest-joy-in-the-mundane/?utm_source=article&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=manifestjoy&inf_contact_key=1ccf75ba91ccf47d042cd9dd812e540856b873dd8a57c151fcb8d94327059507)

[utm_source=article&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=manifestjoy&inf_contact_key=1ccf75ba91ccf47d042cd9dd812e540856b873dd8a57c151fcb8d94327059507 \)](http://lifespaspa.com/how-to-manifest-joy-in-the-mundane/?utm_source=article&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=manifestjoy&inf_contact_key=1ccf75ba91ccf47d042cd9dd812e540856b873dd8a57c151fcb8d94327059507)

My overall take from these long time teachers of ashtanga -- and I mean long time Manju who is 70+ years old started the practice when he was 7 years old, Nancy was introduced to this practice over 40 years ago with David Swenson and Danny Paradise not far behind in years of practice. Their message, the way I understood it ... Don't kill yourselves with Ashtanga ... Now that our form of yoga has gotten so popular our western minds have turned it into grunt work -- turned it into a hard core cross fit type of workout that is borderline causing damage to tendons and breaking down the body too much.

Latest research on exercise and its benefits support what these teachers have been saying ... and it also supports 100% what Pattabhi Jois told Nancy "one hour per day you take practice".

<http://fitness.mercola.com/sites/fitness/archive/2015/05/01/right-dose-exercise-for-long-life.aspx>)

As it turns out there is a "Goldilocks zone" when it comes to exercise. Too little and you have higher risk of disease, too much not only has no added benefit but can break the body down, create a lot of oxidative stress in our bodies and lead to premature aging.

The magic dose, about an hour per day -- it can be accumulated meaning it does not have to be all in the same hour -- accumulating it throughout the day may even be more beneficial for those with desk jobs.

(Sitting is now being called the "new smoking". Sitting increases your risk of lung cancer as much as smoking — or even more so:

Findings presented at the 2015 Inaugural Active Working Summit also found that sitting increases:

- ☪ Lung cancer by 54 percent
- ☪ Uterine cancer by 66 percent
- ☪ Colon cancer by 30 percent



Bobbi Misiti
2201 Market Street
Camp Hill, PA 17011
717.443.1119 befityoga.com

Another reason for this increased cancer risk is thought to be linked to weight gain and associated biochemical changes, such as alterations in hormones, metabolic dysfunction, leptin dysfunction, and inflammation—all of which promote cancer.) <http://blogs.bmj.com/bjbm/2015/01/21/sitting-ducks-sedentary-behaviour-and-its-health-risks-part-one-of-a-two-part-series/>

For best results a few 30 second - 90 second higher intensity intervals mixed in to get the heart pumping (for example run, leap, jump up your stairs when you have to run upstairs ...) is also important; it was not mega doses of high intensity exercise -- just a few little spurts -- kind of like nakrasana ;)

"High-intensity interval training boosts human growth hormone (HGH) production, which is essential for optimal health, strength, vigor, and yes—longevity. That said, intermittent movement is equally (if not more) critical for maximizing the quality of your life. " From Mercola.com

As little as 30 minutes accumulated exercise each day will help reduce diseases, less than that not so helpful -- about an hour showed the most benefit, more than that is not a good return on your time and higher risk of injury

Let's put this research in context to primary series ... If you do all the vinyasas (in between right and left sides as the new schools of ashtanga say is required!) and the back bending series you are looking at 1/1-2 - 2 hours of exercise Let's go back and look how Nancy learned primary series ... She learned entire groups of postures without any vinyasas, for example janu sirsasan a,b,c then one vinyasa, marichyasan a,b,c,d then a vinyasa ... No back bending in primary (save that for your second series days) and you are done in about an hour ...

Oh and what you are not allowed to practice second series? Latest research does not support doing the same thing everyday, but shows cross training is more beneficial in effecting different muscles groups, organs, blood and lymph flow, etc. than repeating the same routine day after day. So you are better balanced rotating through the different series throughout a week, and some days having softer easier practices and some days being more energetic.

SOURCES: The Physician and Sports medicine, September 1996. Todd Schlifstein, DO, sports medicine rehabilitation physician, Rusk Institute, New York University Medical Center, New York. James Herrera, MS, CSCS, director of coaching, Trainright.com; premier coach, Carmichael Training Systems Inc., Colorado Springs, Colo. Jim Thornton, MA, ATC, NASM-PES, member, board of directors, National Association of Athletic Trainers; director of athletic training services, Clarion University of Pennsylvania, Clarion, Pa.

Also ... Even though our master teachers of ashtanga stress the importance of a daily practice, there is less benefit if you beat yourself up over missing a day ... We have should on ourselves enough, feeling guilty over missing a day of practice can cause ill effects in your heart ... Yet we are using our practice to have a healthy heart ... Among other benefits.

Manju on what happens if you miss a day of practice ... He says Indians do not even feel guilty, they just do what they need to do that day and get back to practice the next -- Americans on the other hand tend to be too hard on ourselves if we miss a practice due to work or family obligations. This then sets us up to blow of the practice entirely. It's ok to miss a day if you have to ... Just get back on your mat the next.

Let me remind you; yoga means Union. Sometimes that union is with your child, or family member -- sometimes that is more yoga than being on your mat



Bobbi Misiti
2201 Market Street
Camp Hill, PA 17011
717.443.1119 befityoga.com

Some of the notes below also come from Megan Grandinetti who was also at the conference (we shared our notes).

Some notes from Manju

Manju is the eldest son of Pattabhi Jois. He started practicing yoga when he was 7 years old. His father never pushed yoga on him, and he always made it fun for Manju and his siblings. Actually Manju said his father did not want him to be a yoga teacher — he wanted him to be a doctor so he could earn money for the family. Remember back then Pattabhi Jois and his family were not earning a lot of money from the yoga shala. It was not until the last 20 years or so that the family became wealthy from teaching yoga. Pattabhi Jois hung in there in the lean years believing in his yoga.

If you are naive . . . it is a blessing

if you think you know it all . . . it's a curse

He told a story how Pattabhi Jois, his father, cured leprosy . . . Someone brought a man with leprosy to his father and asked if he could cure it . . . he said "Yes, you come." Manju said someone said to his father, do you know what leprosy is? And Pattabhi Jois said no. But yoga can heal. So he started teaching him yoga, and at the same time Manju's mother, Amma, started cooking him ayurvedic soup (manju called it that, most likely I think it was kitchari). So everyday he would come to the shala and take practice and eat soup. Manju laughed, he said he would hear his father saying to the man; breathe, breathe, breathe . . . then he would hear his mother say to him; eat, eat, eat . . . After 6 months he went back to his doctor — the doctor was surprised and said wow, the disease is getting better, you show signs of healing — keep doing what you are doing . . .

IN TWO YEARS HE WAS HEALED OF LEPROSY . . . This was thought to be an incurable disease . . . Good thing Pattabhi Jois did not know that . . .

Other one liners from Manju:

"Adjustments should not hurt — A guru is a healer . . . not a hurter . . ."

"If someone tells you that you need to do drop backs before you start 2nd series, they are trying to break your will power."

When teachers don't give you postures, it's usually a control thing (as long as it's not a safety issue).

Manju is big on chanting . . . he includes chanting in his workshops . . . I have to laugh he calls it spiritual torture . . . he says "now it is time for spiritual torture . . ." he works us into chanting these long lines that you chant all in one breath. And then we try to say the lines too . . . but they are in sanskrit and quite long sometimes . . .

"Chanting is the most powerful practice . . . it requires pranayama to chant the entire line without taking a breath."

There is a difference between dogma and therapy. Listen to your body, NOT just your teacher. Your body is the best gauge for your practice.

Here is a nice link to an interview with Manju that someone did when he was in Canada:

<http://www.thecoast.ca/halifax/the-jois-of-yoga/Content?oid=4635965> (text below)



Bobbi Misiti
2201 Market Street
Camp Hill, PA 17011
717.443.1119 befityoga.com

The Jois of yoga

World-renowned teacher delivers valuable lessons on yoga's past and future.

By Michael Lee



- *Manju Jois has taught the true Mysore ashtanga method for over 47 years, spanning 22 countries and 21 states in the US.*

• MANJUJOIS.COM

Manju Jois has given lessons on ashtanga yoga for nearly five decades. His father's pupil at age seven, and a teacher since 15, Jois's ashtanga combines aspects of strength, therapy, energy and cleansing. Before going to the US and Europe, Jois met with The Coast at the ashtanga studio in Halifax to share some thoughts on yoga, the West and letting go.

I was wondering what your thoughts were on the commercialization of yoga here in the West.

Well, in the West they're mostly into business. As soon as they start doing that, it's going to lose its value. That's why we like to keep it as authentic as possible. It's sad because everybody wants to cash in on something.

And what is the true value of yoga?

Health. Concentration helps you get healthier and be healthy for a long, long time. It improves the memory and people live for a long time if they practice it right.

Purifying the nervous system. I was wondering what that means.

A lot of the time in your body, the circulation is not right and people get problems with that. A lot of nerves are blocked up...so when they start practicing, you put the pressure on those things to make the blood flow. So that is what cleansing means. Just making it work.

What do you believe is the most important thing someone should take from the practice?

Ashtanga yoga requires dedication. Breathing is very important in yoga. You have to breathe. That's more important than the postures actually. When you start breathing right, it takes care of all the other aspects of yoga. That's why we always say, "Deep breathe."

Something you had mentioned earlier is when you teach yoga, you don't want to scare away your students. You don't want to say, "You have to do this." Why has yoga come to that point where it's very regimented?

When you're a yoga teacher you don't try to control. You have to give them what tools work for them and then you have to be more loving and caring with your students. I think in the West they like to control everything all the time and that's why there are so many problems in the yoga world. We should stop doing this, trying to control. Give students what they want. Don't tell them they can't do it because you have no authority to say that to a student. Yoga is a therapy. Everybody's physique is not the same, so you have to work according to that.

Over the years, how has your teaching style evolved, or has it changed?

Yoga has so many other aspects to learn. I decided about 11, 12 years ago I should go on the road, go to workshops and teach all the other aspects of yoga. When I went to Sweden, I had a big teachers' training there. Then I started teaching all the chanting and people loved it.

You had mentioned the true value of yoga is health. For you personally, what does yoga mean to you?

It means everything to me. I love teaching, I love sharing, I love talking about yoga. I like to guide them. That's why I go to so many countries every year.

Interview conducted and edited by Michael Lee

Notes from ASHTANGA YOGA CONFERENCE, BALI INDONESIA TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH with notes from David Swenson, Nancy Gilgoff, Jeffery Armstrong, Danny Paradise, Prem & Radha, and Eileen Hall