

YOGA Series

KUNDALINI

The Yoga of Awareness

Yogi Bhajan, master of Kundalini Yoga, and the sage who brought its ancient teachings out of India in 1969, once said, "God who cannot be experienced, and the experience that cannot be explained, are of little value to the human psyche" Kundalini Yoga has a profound and immediate affect upon the practitioner; at the end of a class, whether it's your first, your hundredth, or your thousandth class, you feel ... different.

Originally developed some 4,000 years ago. Kundalini yoga awakens the kundalini energy and consciousness through the systems of chakras and the eight energy centers in and around our bodies, Known as the Yoga of Awareness' it truly lives up to this name by developing a more intricate and responsible connectedness to the self, the surroundings, and the interpersonal relations.

It is the yoga of angles and triangles, the nerves, glands, energy circulation and organs. It's the yoga of breathing and moving and chanting and sitting still; it's the yoga of using the forces of mind, body and spirit in union and in harmony. As Yogi Bhajan said, "your mind, emotions and body are instruments, and the way you align and tune them determines how well you play life."

With Kundalini Yoga one learns how to breathe; even though you already know how to breathe, you more than likely don't breathe correctly. You learn how to stretch even though you already stretch a lot, you don't necessarily stretch integrally. Kundalini yoga teaches you the proper remedial ways to energize your physical life through the glands and organs, nerves, respiration and circulation, and your mental life through breathing and meditation. It creates a bonded relationship between intentions and performance.

This relationship is bridged via the vast energies at play here, a life-force energy known as prana. Prana is a universal force that nourishes life at an atomic level just as oxygen nourishes life at a cellular level, During Kundalini yoga we draw prana in through the breath and the skin as we do our kriyas combinations of postures, breathing and movement,

In Kundalini yoga classrooms, although there are levels of proficiency, there is often no actual separation between advanced students and beginners. Practitioners do what they can and (without judgment) feel good about that; we are not in a Kundalini class to prove anything we are there to improve everything. Attending classes, one can expect to become calmer, more flexible, energetic, inspired and focused. Kundalini yoga is taught at centers throughout the world under the sponsorship of 3HO the Healthy-Happy-Holy organization.

Also known as the 'master's yoga: Kundalini combines the asanas of Hatha yoga, the chanting of Naad and Laya yoga, and the meditations of Raj and Bhakti Yoga. Each class consists of warm-ups, stretching, breathing, rapid diaphragmatic breathing (known as 'breath of fire'), long deep diaphragmatic breathing, alternate nostril breathing, movement, asana mudra (hand positions) and chanting. At the end of each class there is always the singing of a universal healing prayer known as "the longtime sunshine"

Although this all may sound intimidating, the actual experience of a Kundalini yoga class is anything but intimidating. It is invigorating, inspiring, encouraging and empowering. Kundalini yoga is truly the yoga of awareness and in taking a Kundalini yoga class, that awareness can then be applied to anything and everything in your life.

Yogi Bhajan once said that Kundalini yoga is not a path, but a freeway to wellbeing. It is a yoga of the common person. As Guru Nanak, a yogi from the 15th century said, "it is Grist Ashrama the life of an enlightened householder." Kundalini yoga suits one who has a 'real' life living in the "real" world: with family, with day Job, with all aspects of our common lives. Kundalini yoga allows us to render the common into the uncommon.

By
Guru Singh Khalsa

BY GURU SINGH