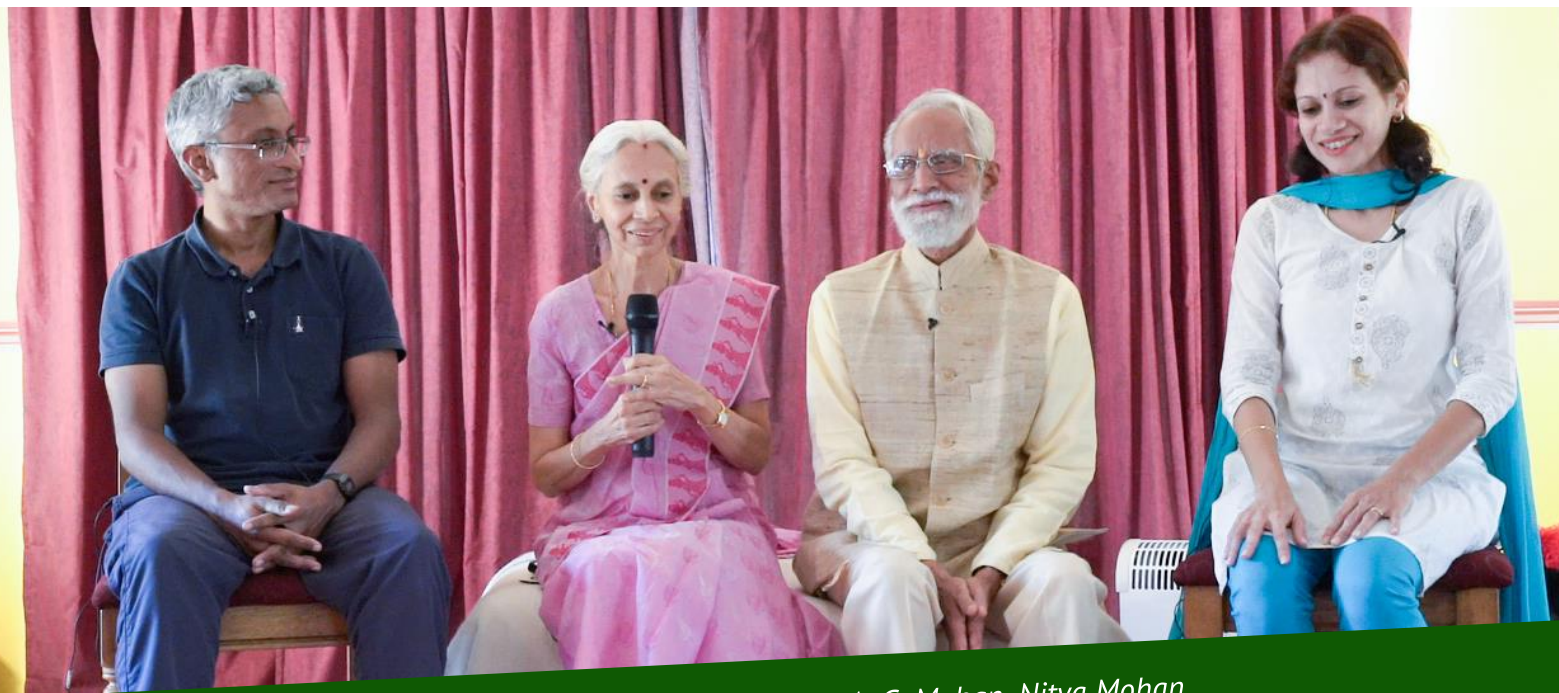


# Hatha Yoga of Krishnamacharya & Mindfulness for Svastha

Teacher Training with the Mohans  
4-26 January 2020 (200 hours)



*L-R: Dr. Ganesh Mohan, Indra Mohan, A. G. Mohan, Nitya Mohan*

## Prospectus

Deepen Your Knowledge. Become a Teacher.  
Exclusive program at Mamallapuram, India.  
Internationally recognized qualification.



## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	3
DIRECT STUDY WITH THE MOHANS.....	4
ABOUT THE MOHANS .....	5
MOHANS: LIFETIMES IN YOGA.....	7
PROGRAM STRUCTURE .....	8
PROGRAM CONTENTS.....	9
COMMUNITY & MENTORING .....	12
PATHWAYS FORWARD .....	12
WHAT THIS PROGRAM WILL GIVE YOU .....	13
PROGRAM VENUE .....	14
ACCOMMODATION.....	14
MEALS .....	14
PROGRAM COST.....	15
REGISTRATION .....	16
READING LIST .....	16
APPENDIX 1.....	18
APPENDIX 2.....	19

*“True yoga  
education is  
lighting a lamp,  
not filling a  
bucket.”*

A. G. Mohan



*L-R: Dr. Ganesh Mohan, A. G. Mohan, Indra Mohan, Nitya Mohan*

## *Introduction*

**The Hatha Yoga of Krishnamacharya Teacher Training** is a special program which integrates the wisdom and teachings of Krishnamacharya, the classical yoga texts, asana, pranayama, meditation and more, with modern science and practical application.

Whether your intention is to become a yoga teacher, deepen your own practice, or integrate practical yogic tools and techniques into your daily or professional life, this program is designed to inspire and transform you. You will learn the methods and gain the skills needed to teach yoga from a foundation of real knowledge. It is also an incredible opportunity for self-development and personal transformation.

You will receive an extraordinary amount of knowledge which will radically enhance your understanding and experience of yoga. However, the focus of this training program is experiential and transformative. So, you'll also be guided in establishing and deepening your own yogic practice; creating sustainable and real well-being and inner peace.

It is a rare and potentially life-changing opportunity to learn from and have direct access to internationally renowned master teachers who will guide and support your path forward to experience the peace and steadiness of a clear, steady mind and open heart. This is after-all the aim of yoga, and the foundation needed for a happy life and to become a grounded, inspiring teacher able to guide, support and uplift others.





*“The attitude of letting go and connecting with the inner presence of quiet and steadiness is most important.”*

Indra Mohan

## *Direct Study with the Mohans*

**This special Svastha Yoga Teacher Training is a rare opportunity to study the authentic yoga of Krishnamacharya with A.G. Mohan and Indra Mohan along with their son Dr. Ganesh Mohan and daughter Nitya Mohan in a single, comprehensive training program with all four teachers.**

The combined knowledge of the Mohan family is unsurpassed in contemporary yoga. This training program combines their collective knowledge, areas of expertise, and insights to provide a comprehensive program where the direct teachings of Krishnamacharya will be conveyed in an accessible, engaging, and illuminating way.

Krishnamacharya was among the most influential yoga masters and Vedic scholars of the last century. A. G. Mohan, a prime disciple of the late Krishnamacharya, was his direct student for 18 years. He was acknowledged by Krishnamacharya as his successor and is a direct link to the authentic yoga traditions.

Mohan kept meticulous handwritten notes and recordings of Krishnamacharya's voluminous teachings during their 18 years together. The knowledge transmitted directly, and the large archive of notes continues to inform the Mohans' yoga teacher training programs and their many books and lectures. Much material that is still unpublished is included in this program.

## About the Mohans

**A. G. Mohan** is internationally respected as one of the most senior yoga masters alive and a direct link to the authentic yoga traditions of Krishnamacharya who he studied with intensively for 18 years.

**Indra Mohan** is one of the few people ever awarded a yoga teaching certificate from Krishnamacharya and is a skillful and insightful yoga therapist with decades of experience. Indra is known for her astute intelligence, and capacity to guide students and clients to clarity, self-understanding and peace.



***Top:** A.G. Mohan with his guru Krishnamacharya at his centenary celebration 1988.*

***Bottom:** Indra Mohan receiving her post-graduate diploma in yoga from the master.*







**Dr Ganesh Mohan** was trained in yoga from early childhood and is a medical doctor, trained in both modern western medicine and Ayurveda. He is at the forefront of the emerging field of Yoga Therapy, and for a decade has conducted yoga teacher and yoga therapy trainings in India and around the world.

**Nitya Mohan** is also a lifelong yoga practitioner and exponent of chanting, holds a music degree and performs internationally. She has run Svastha Yoga Teacher Training programs in Singapore for over a decade.

Collectively, the Mohans have written 6 books which are regularly used as reference material in teacher trainings. They write for an Indian national newspaper and contribute to magazines and journals. They teach and lecture around the world.

***Top:** Dr Ganesh Mohan travels the world training yoga teachers and therapists.*

***Bottom:** Nitya Mohan has trained yoga teachers in Singapore since 2001.*



# Mohans: Lifetimes in Yoga

**A. G. Mohan** started his yoga studies in 1971 upon meeting his guru the yogi Sri Krishnamacharya. Over 19 years, he studied personally with his guru the full spectrum of yoga: asanas, pranayama, meditation, and philosophy. Following his guru's passing in 1989, he continued to study further for many more years, deepening his knowledge of Ayurveda, tantra, and more. The author of numerous books on yoga, he has spread the message of yoga across the world, under the banner of Svastha Yoga and Ayurveda.



27 years  
(1973)



71 years  
(2017)

A. G. Mohan was one of the early presenters at the European Union of Yoga, and a contributor to the International Association of Yoga Therapists in the USA in the 1980s and 1990s. In recognition, he and his family were guests of honor at the European Union of Yoga Congress in 2016 in Switzerland and he was awarded an honorary membership for his contributions to yoga.

**Indra Mohan** has been practicing and teaching yoga for four decades now. One of the few people to receive a post-graduate yoga diploma from Krishnamacharya, she specializes in yoga for the health and empowerment of women.



**Dr. Ganesh Mohan** is trained in both modern medicine and Ayurveda. He directs the Svastha Yoga Therapy programs and other trainings worldwide.

**Nitya Mohan** has a degree in music and has conducted seminars and concerts internationally. She has been running Svastha training programs since 2001.



Ganesh: Asanas  
as a child (1988)



Demonstrating  
Vedic rituals (1988)



Nitya: Asanas as  
a child (1977)



Inaugurating EUY  
conference (1983)





## Program Structure

Daily format of the program will include:

- Lectures on:
  - Yoga Sutra, Samkhya, traditional texts.
  - Yoga philosophy and Eastern philosophy
  - Understanding yoga psychology
- Theory and application of:
  - Functional movement
  - Breathing techniques
  - Meditation and mindfulness techniques
- Practices:
  - Guided asana, pranayama, meditation, mantra chanting, mudras, bhavana and more.
- Option of continuing online education at [yogaknowledge.net](http://yogaknowledge.net) after program completion
- Certificate of completion of 200-hour yoga teacher training registered with Yoga Alliance.



# Program Contents

## Yoga Theory

1. Philosophy and psychology of yoga based on the Yogasutras of Patanjali.
2. Sanskrit terminology: key words and concepts to facilitate and retain authenticity in the teaching and transmission.
3. Theory of Krishnamacharya's Hatha Yoga practice.

## Asana

1. Traditional vinyasa system of Krishnamacharya, combining breathing and movement.
2. Function-oriented approach to movement in asanas: awareness, stability, alignment, stretching, mobilization, daily life application.
3. Core asanas essential for fitness and in a therapeutic setting.
4. Preparation and balancing.
5. Common and useful variations
6. Using asanas in the larger yoga path. Deepen and broaden by practicing more asanas and pranayama and lead on to the

advanced breath work and skill of the bandhas. Connect this to the deeper aspects of yoga and the meditation and mindfulness. This subject will also integrate the skills and topics learned so far.

## Sequencing

1. Principles of sequencing from the traditional approach of Krishnamacharya and further developments from there.
2. Foundations of personal course planning and sequencing.
3. Understand the principles of sequencing and develop sequences for different needs.
4. Bring together instructions, presentation, and teaching practice learned over the course to deliver yoga classes.

## Pranayama

1. Principles and practice of working with your breath effectively.
2. Using asanas to prepare for pranayama.
3. Important types of pranayama with hands-on practice.



*‘According to Krishnamacharya, practice and knowledge must always go together. He used to say, practice without right knowledge of theory is blind. This is also because without right knowledge, one can mindfully do a wrong practice.’*

A. G. Mohan

## Sound

1. Using sound in asanas.
2. Using sound in meditation.

## Meditation

1. Theory of meditation and mindfulness: why, what, and how.
2. Practicing a core set of useful meditation techniques and skillful mindfulness.

## Anatomy & Physiology

1. Essential anatomy and physiology as applied to asanas.
2. Practical and functional points only, without non- relevant theory.
3. Explore how functional anatomy can help you understand practicing yoga effectively.
4. Key principles of movement and breathing in asana and pranayama explored from the modern science perspective.

## Chanting & Mantras

1. Importance and theory of chanting.
2. Useful mantras for chanting and meditation.



*Mohans as Guests of Honor  
European Union of Yoga Congress, Switzerland 2016*

3. Simple chants e.g. traditional Vedic peace chants.
4. Focus on the use of sound and mantra in asana, pranayama, meditation. Practice mantra meditation, intentions, and affirmations in yoga practice.
2. System of nadis, prana, cakras and their relevance to practice.

### **Personal Practice**

Establishing and refining one's personal practice is a key element of this program.

### **Ayurveda**

1. Introduction to Ayurvedic doshas and prakrti.
2. Basic principles of Ayurvedic diet.

### **Yoga Energetics**

1. Mudras and bandhas: their importance and how to practice and teach them.



## Community & Mentoring

After the program, participants can join the larger Svastha community online and continue with mentoring sessions with the Mohans and other teachers as well.

YogaKnowledge.net contains hundreds of videos from the Mohans that will help you pursue deeper studies to further understand the materials covered in the training, and also continue learning according to your interests.

## Pathways Forward

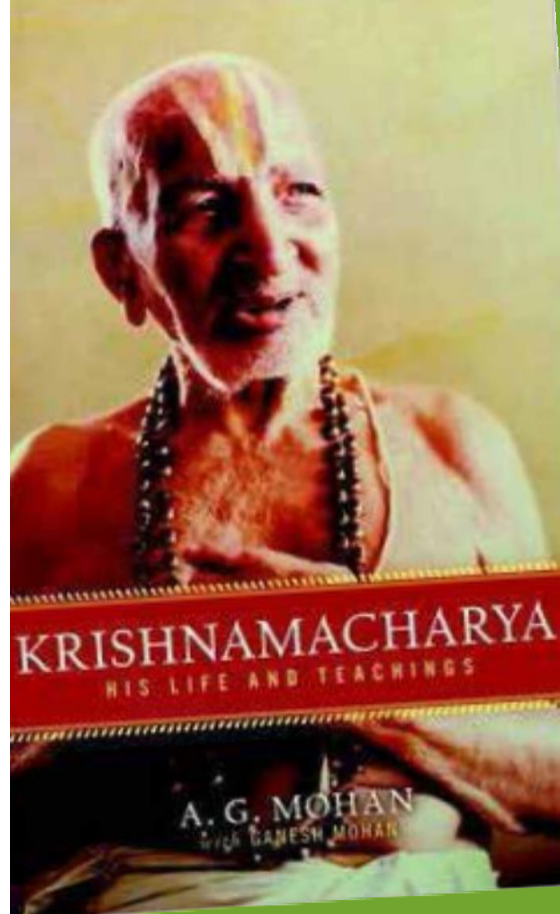
The Hatha Yoga of Krishnamacharya is a foundation program for further yogic education, yoga therapy training programs, and to becoming a competent, knowledgeable yoga teacher and/or yoga therapist.

Continue with the Svastha Yoga Therapy Program offered around the world.

This training program provides you with an immediate qualification to teach and share yoga in a variety of settings in your own community.

Drawing on the timeless, practical wisdom of the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali this program provides a toolkit of accessible yogic practices which can be applied to help understand and manage thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

The accessible, non-technical format of this program means it can be taught and integrated



*‘Nowadays, the practice of yoga stops with just asanas. Very few even attempt dharana and dhyana (deeper meditation) with seriousness. There is a need to search once more and reestablish the practice and value of yoga in modern times.’*

Sri Krishnamacharya

into wellbeing programs in corporate, educational, health, aged care and other community contexts.

## *What this program will give you*

- Skills to deepen your personal growth and effective yoga knowledge and practice you will use for the rest of your life.
- Understanding of the full spectrum of yoga practices: asana, pranayama, meditation, Yogasutras, mantras and more.
- The teachings of the great yogi Krishnamacharya from a trustworthy and direct source.
- Firm foundation and approach to teach yoga to people of all ages and fitness levels.
- A comprehensive base to progress to the Svastha Yoga Therapy program and deepen and widen your skills of yoga therapy.
- An internationally recognized qualification enabling you to confidently teach yoga anywhere in the world, and gain industry standard insurance.



*Indra Mohan receiving blessings from  
Krishnamacharya, 1988.*

## Program Venue

The 23-day program is to be held at the unique Mamalla Beach Resort located just outside the quaint seaside town of Mamallapuram, 50 km south of Chennai.

With its pristine beach and lush tropical gardens, the resort offers a serene environment for rest and reflection outside of program hours. There is direct beach access and an outdoor freshwater swimming pool.

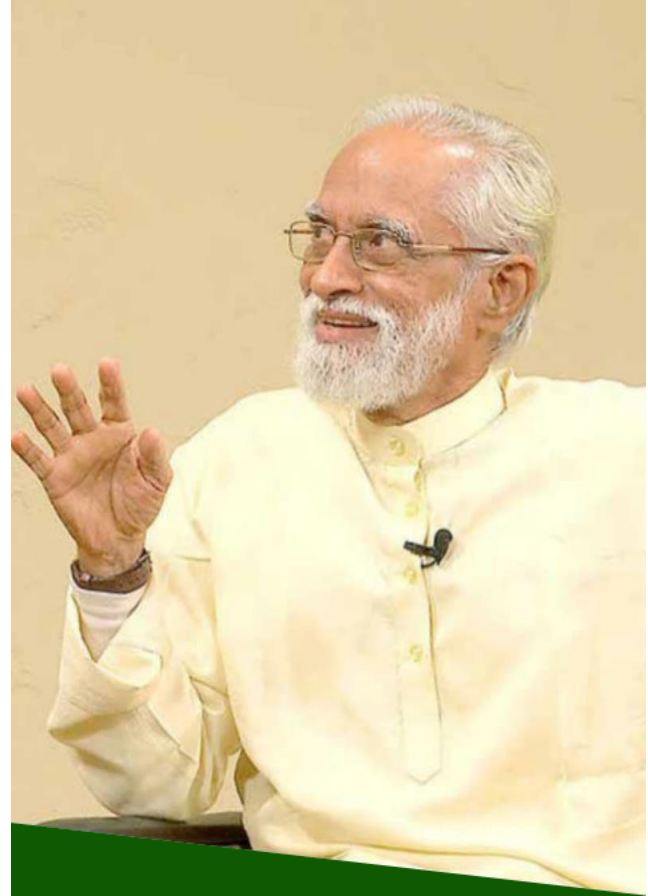
## Accommodation

There are 24 twin-share rooms available onsite, which can be booked directly with the resort on a first come, first served basis. All rooms are well-appointed, including wifi, and open out to views of the beach.

## Meals

A healthy vegetarian breakfast and lunch are provided daily and included in the cost of your accommodation.

Evening meals can be taken in the resort's restaurant, alternatively there are many eating options in the nearby town of Mamallapuram, approximately 2.5 kms from the resort.



*'Make steadiness of mind your goal. In every life, there is happiness and unhappiness. We can't control that. But through diligent practice, we can remain steady and peaceful.'*

A. G. Mohan



# *Program Cost*

\$3,300 USD Early bird/Upfront

\$500 deposit secures your place. Balance of \$2800 USD must be paid in full 8 weeks prior to the program (by 9 November 2019).

\$3500 USD - payment after 9<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

## **Payment Terms**

Your \$500 deposit is payable on registration. This reserves your place and is your commitment to attend and is therefore non-refundable. If you cancel before the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2019 all payments made will be refunded (other than your non-refundable deposit).

## **Price Includes**

- 23-day training with the Mohans
- 1-to-1 mentoring session with the Mohans
- Comprehensive training manual
- Internationally recognized teaching certificate (Yoga Alliance 200-hour)

## **Other Costs**

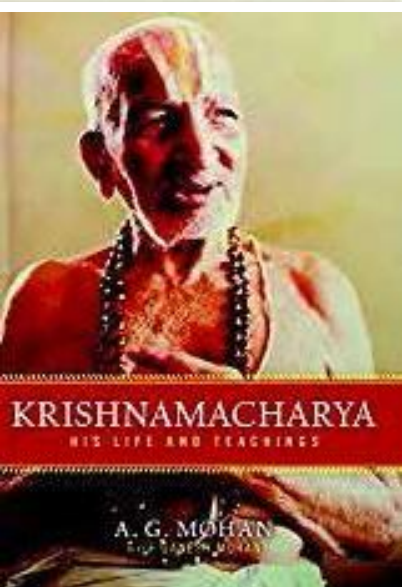
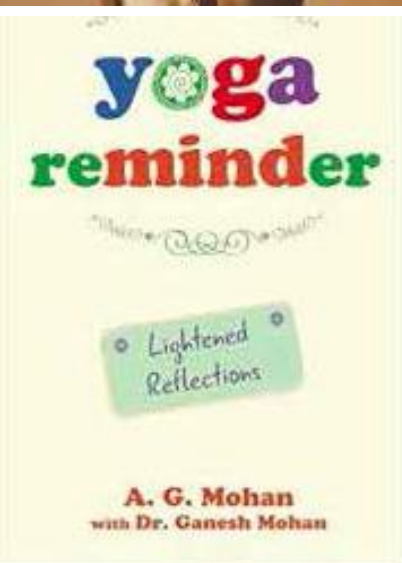
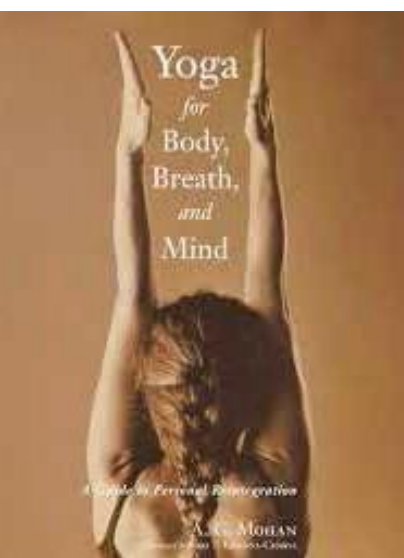
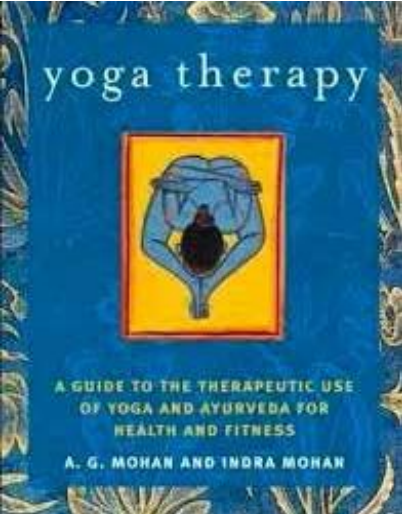
### **Mamalla Beach Resort Accommodation Package**

Twin Share room including breakfast & lunch: INR \$2750 per person, per night (approximately \$40 USD).

Transportation from Chennai Airport to Mamallapuram (estimated around \$30 USD), can be arranged by the resort if you prefer.

Please book your accommodation directly with Mamalla Beach Resort and mention that you are attending the training program with the Mohans.

Email: [rajeev@mamallaresort.com](mailto:rajeev@mamallaresort.com)



## Registration

To register please click here to access the application form:

<https://forms.gle/1mQ4GGQjCvmKz8HK9>

Questions? Please email: [studies@svastha.net](mailto:studies@svastha.net).

Once your registration is received, you will be forwarded account details for payment of your \$500 USD non-refundable deposit and your registration will be confirmed on receipt of the funds into our account.

To receive the early-bird Price you must pay the full amount by the required date (9 November 2019). If your payment is not received by this date the full price of \$3,500 USD is payable.

Note: To receive your teaching certification you are required to attend the full 23-day program.

## Reading List

It is a requirement of attending the training that you familiarize yourself with the Mohans' work. The Mohans' books Yoga Therapy and Yoga for Body, Breath & Mind are used around the world in yoga and yoga therapy teacher trainings as source texts for course content.

A benefit of training with the Mohans is you learn directly from the authors!

All of the Mohans' books can be purchased online through Amazon and Book Depository.

It is recommended to read these two books prior to the training:

- **Yoga Therapy: A Therapeutic Guide to Yoga and Ayurveda for Health and Fitness.** A.G. Mohan, Indra Mohan, Dr. Ganesh Mohan, Nitya Mohan.
- **Yoga Reminder: Lightened Reflections.** A.G. Mohan, Dr. Ganesh Mohan

Other titles by the Mohans which are recommended for you to read are:

- **Yoga for Body, Breath, and Mind: A Guide to Personal Reintegration.** A.G. Mohan. Foreword by Sri. T. Krishnamacharya.
- **Krishnamacharya: His Life and Teachings.** A. G. Mohan with Dr. Ganesh Mohan
- **Hatha Yoga Pradipika: Translation with Notes from Krishnamacharya.** A. G. Mohan & Dr. Ganesh Mohan
- **Yoga Yajnavalkya.** Translated by A. G. Mohan with Dr. Ganesh Mohan





# Appendix 1

FRIDAYREVIEW  
FRIDAY, JUNE 22, 2018

STATEWIDE 9

WORLD YOGA DAY - JUNE 21

## Yoga — for health, longevity and peace

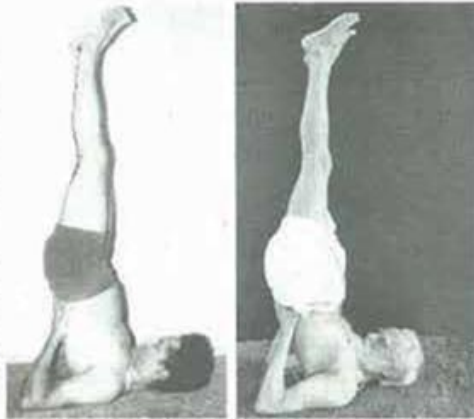
That was centurion Krishnamacharya's mantra. Prime disciple A.G. Mohan echoes it

GERTHA VENKATARAMANAY

Engineer-turned A.G. Mohan and his wife Indra have dedicated themselves to the propagation of authentic yoga. Acknowledged by the late Krishnamacharya as his successor, Mohan has authored several works, which underline the legend's principles. A co-founder of the Krishnamachari Yoga Mandiram, Mohan has been invited to several forums across the world to make presentations. The entire family comprising wife Indra, son Dr. Ganesh and daughter Nihya curated the European Yoga Congress, 2016, which took place at Zinal, Switzerland. Mohan, who co-authors with Dr. Ganesh the fortnightly column, 'Mind Your Yoga,' of this supplement, speaks of the relevance of Yoga and its essence. Excerpts from an interview:

There has been a spurt in the awareness regarding yoga in the past decade. How do you look at this interest?

With happiness! When I started studying yoga with my teacher, the great yogi of the last century, Sri Krishnamacharya in 1971, very few



Practising viparitarasana A.G. Mohan doing Viparitarasana in 1973 and now. (Below) Mayurasana

were interested. I was an engineer and management professional by training, and even my brothers were taken aback that I was devoting myself to yoga studies and teaching! Krishnamacharya, the teacher of BKS Iyengar, and others tried to propagate yoga in the earlier part of the 20th century, but it is only in the 21st century that yoga has become so popular worldwide! I think this is a profound positive development for the well-being of people and for society as a whole.

Is Yoga a panacea for all ailments? From obesity to depression, yoga seems to be prescribed as an answer. Your thoughts on that.

Yoga is not a panacea in that it cannot cure all diseases, and especially not acute conditions. But yoga can certainly help with great many chronic diseases, including obesity and depression! It is not just the asanas that are helpful, but the holistic approach of mind-body connection that is in the framework of yoga itself. Yoga incorporates a variety of practices: movement, breathing, meditation, sound, lifestyle changes and more. However, it is essential that yoga should be customised to the need and purpose of the individual.

Breath is the pivot of yoga. Expand — Breath is the key link between body and mind. Effective breathing brings health to our organs, balances the nervous system, and calms the mind. The traditional practices of yoga lay great emphasis on the importance of breathing in the form of pranayama. The ancient practice of meditation with the Gayatri mantra was traditionally done along with pranayama. In my teacher Krishnamacharya's approach, breathing was a central component in asana too. The importance of a guru in the learning

The role of the guru is important, but so is the role of the student. The path of yoga is one of self-transformation. The role of the guru is to provide knowledge, guidance and inspiration. But it is the student, who must create the personal change through his or her own practice and knowledge. All my personal learning with Krishnamacharya was individual, on a one-to-one basis, over two decades (1971-1989). Some theory or philosophy lectures were in a very small group. This would be ideal, but is difficult in today's world. One to one would be best, especially when yoga is used therapeutically. Besides, it is about the teaching being personalised and relevant to each student. A personal yoga class is not just teaching individually the same things that the teacher delivers in a group!

What is the relevance of meditation in the context of yoga?

My teacher Krishnamacharya used to say that even the practice of asana should have mental control. Yoga should start with dharana or the practice of keeping the mind steady. In that sense, yoga is inseparable from mindfulness and meditation. Of course, this does not mean that we can do yoga only if we can sit for an extended time in meditation. It means that we must bring stable, calm and comfortable attention in all the practices of yoga, whether it is asana or pranayama. In time, we will be able to sit for longer periods in meditation with a calm and clear mind.



In those days, rishis, who practised yoga, had a conducive environment to do so. How realistic is it in today's world of pollution and distractions?

This is why it is all the more necessary to practice yoga now! Modern life has many conveniences. Though there are many distractions nowadays, the material quality of life we have now has been improving. The distractions we face are often of our own making! If we choose to find quietness in our homes, we certainly can. Yoga is not about retreating from life as an escape. It is about cultivating stillness wherever we are.

It is worth spending time on calming the mind. We can take our attention away from our phones and place it on our body, breath, and thoughts! The gadgets can actually help us practice yoga. We can set reminders. We can play recordings of our mantra. In fact, I have on my phone the recordings that I did along with Krishnamacharya of Vedic chanting, the Gayatri mantra and more, as far back as 1984 when he was 96 years old! I can listen to them whenever I want, which was very difficult in those days. Opportunities are more in modern times to practise yoga if we choose to and know how to!

You were close to Sri Krishnamacharya. What was his theory regarding the practice of yoga all those decades ago? For instance, why did he think people should practise yoga? Did he spell out benefits?

Krishnamacharya would have been very happy to see the spread of yoga, had he been alive now. He wanted to see yoga taught in schools and in as many places as possible. All that is gradually happening now. I was the convener of Krishnamacharya's 100-year celebration function. Following that, in one of my last classes with him, I asked him privately, "What is important in life?" He replied simply, "Health, longevity and peace of mind." He was always of the opinion that yoga could give us all of them.

Have we come far away from the core? How can we get back?

Yoga has spread wide and far, and that is good. But as with many other fields in modern times, yoga has also become a commodity and a marketing buzzword. There are advertisements for yoga classes where you can 'drink' and do yoga at the same time nowadays. How this would lead to the mind being calm and steady is a mystery!

Some yoga classes are just exercise



### Where women differ

Indra Mohan says: "The practice of yoga is primarily aimed at steadying the mind. The mind has no form. Therefore, the practice of pranayama and meditation may be similar to men and women, but the body has a form and it differs according to the gender. Hence the practice of asana needs to be appropriate for women."

"With the growing popularity of yoga, we find more and more women practitioners of varying age groups worldwide. This is to be appreciated, but at the same time, women need to be aware that the practice needs to be adapted to their age and phase in life. The natural process of growth, change and decline are common to men and women. However, women experience these changes more intensely at times of hormonal changes from menstruation to menopause. For the practice of asana is not just the physical act of the postures but also using them to progress toward a calm mind within. And this can happen only if we cultivate mindful awareness of the body, discrimination on what is healthy and balanced reflection on the upper picture in the asana practice itself."

or fitness classes, with not much self-awareness or steadiness of mind. At one level, it is still good as people are exercising and that is beneficial to health. At a deeper level, they are missing out on the core integration and steadiness that yoga can bring to their lives if the teachings do not incorporate the holistic approach of the yoga of the ancient sages. It is important to propagate the message of yoga, but it is also important to see that it is wise and comprehensive. Only then will practitioners see deep and lasting well-being and peace of mind arising reliably in their lives.

What is the connection between yoga and Ayurveda?

Yoga and Ayurveda are founded from the same roots and related in their aims. The goal of ayurveda is the state of svastha — balance in the doshas or body functions, balance in the body tissues, healthy metabolism, clear and pleasant state of the senses, mind, and self. The steadiness of mind and transformation that yoga teaches us is also based on the state of svastha. The healing methods of Ayurveda and self-transformation of yoga are deeply supportive of each other.

Is Yoga related to religion?

The yoga of Patanjali is not synonymous with the religion of Hinduism and its many branches. It is a state of absolute calmness of the mind. Yoga can be practised along with any religion. Practise when you understand clearly, says Yogasutra, and your practice will be more effective.

### Time with Guru

"I began my study with Krishnamacharya in 1971, which continued till his demise in 1989," says A.G. Mohan. The association opened the door, among many things, to Yoga therapy, Yoga Yogueshtis, Nidra Yoga, Pranayama and the Bhagavad Gita. Vedic chanting, pranayama and Ayurveda were among the many areas master and disciple covered. Regarding hatha yoga, Mohan says, "...this period of study (1981-82) were illuminating years later... at that time I did not understand the nuances, which became clearer." Classes on at least three topics would be going on simultaneously. Krishnamacharya's demise brought a shift in Mohan's approach. Mohan had started compiling key principles from Krishnamacharya's teaching in his book, Yoga, Body, Breath and Mind. The preceptor had provided a foreword for it. The book was published in 1993. The translation of Yoga Yogueshtis into English was another landmark in his journey. "This was necessary in order to reach a wider audience," explains the author. He worked with son Dr. Ganesh to bring out a revised edition in 2011. "I still continue to learn, reflect and practice every day. Krishnamacharya said that learning should never stop," says Mohan.

Yoga Knowledge.net is an online learning platform devoted to the dissemination of knowledge of yoga and other related disciplines through short, easy to understand video talks, presented by A. G. Mohan and Indra Mohan. To contact write to info@svastha.net

This article appeared in The Hindu newspaper June 22nd, 2018



# Appendix 2

FRIDAYREVIEW CHENNAI  
FRIDAY, JUNE 21, 2019

WORLD YOGA DAY 3

6 ART

The writers of our column, 'Mind Your Yoga' – A.G. Mohan, Indra Mohan, Dr. Ganesh Mohan and Nitya – present the anniversary article to mark World Yoga Day, observed today

One of the major problems in modern life is the lack of awareness and integration of the different areas of ourselves and our lives. Many in the whirl of modern life are out of touch with their body. They wake up in the morning, and like getting into a car and going to work, get into their body and start their business. The question, "How does my body feel?" is not a question they consciously consider. The body is treated like a car that breaks down occasionally, and then they go to the doctor to fix it.

When am I hungry? When am I tired? When do I need to rest? Am I feeling restless or dull? – we often don't notice any of these things carefully until they hit us hard.

The same disconnect extends to the mind too. If one is not busy, one does not know what to do. Tolerance to 'boredom' is low. Consequently, people do not know how to manage their mind when things go against them: stress and depression are rising rapidly. We need internal resources for self-management, a purpose, identity and philosophy of life.

## Impact of modern life

At a lower level of our nervous system, modern life puts us in a state of disconnect with the body. At a high level of the brain, the mind is struggling to establish an integrated and clear sense of the self. This disconnect is contrary to how we have evolved and how our body and mind work.

An animal with a simpler nervous system, for example a dog, does not follow life philosophy or have complex, abstract thoughts like how humans do. It doesn't have that capacity nor does it have the need for it. A dog doesn't think about its future and get stressed over that. But as humans we can be disconnected: we have a story in our head about our future or past, and the body becomes something to be used in service of an abstract goal. Why am I pushing myself even though I'm sleepy? Why am I staying up late at night to watch a video? My mind is telling me that I have to do it for the sake of a future achievement or for entertainment, and so I ignore the needs of my body. The dog doesn't do that and that's protective of its health! As human beings we have a



For wellbeing (From left) Dr. Ganesh Mohan, A.G. Mohan and Nitya

## YOGA – THE ANCIENT PATH of balance and integration

A multi-dimensional approach will keep you connected to your body and the world outside, including the environment

double problem. We have the capacity for abstraction and higher thinking, which means we can ignore the body. But that higher thinking is itself a problem, as it often slips into stressful or depressive mode.

We see this profound disconnect magnified in the modern industrial and digital age. Machines do most of the work that humans do, thus disconnecting us from our body. Technology serves as the medium of communication, cutting off humans from the intimacy and care that come from face to face connection. From this disconnect with ourselves and our fellow human beings comes a greater disconnect with our environment and the planet and the damage done to our environment.

Ignoring the problem of disconnect is not going to make it disappear. Instead, bringing an awareness – about ourselves and to our connections with our fellow humans, and our environment, is the healing force we need to reintegrate in order to bring wholeness and well-being to ourselves, our communities, and to the planet.

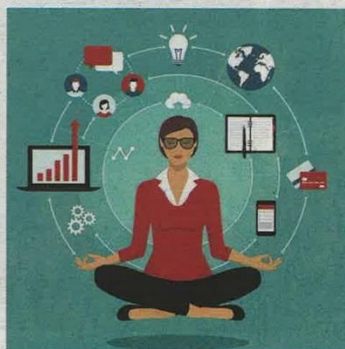
Yoga is the original template of reintegration from thousands of years ago. 'Yoga' literally means 'to unite'. Reintegration requires a multidimensional approach. Here are the dimensions and ways yoga can help us work with this reintegration:

## Nurture and nourish

While we offer our best to the world everyday, the practices of yoga guide us towards nourishing and supporting ourselves too. Age-old practices reaffirm the connections that exist between the outer world and the inner world.



This Yoga Day, it is worthwhile to pause and take time to also nourish the feminine within each of us – the power of nurturing.



This Yoga Day, it is worthwhile to pause and take time to also nourish the feminine within each of us – the power of nurturing.

As we offer kindness and compassion to those in need, bringing those intentions of self-compassion and kindness to our own body and mind with a little more understanding and sensitivity will make us the stronger and more grounded individuals, who will then connect and contribute to the outer world more meaningfully.

## Positive changes

Start with small steps. Big changes often collapse quickly while gradual changes last. Examine your motivations and value systems and align your goals accordingly. Take support from others and be part of a community that is moving in the same direction as you. Accept that there will be lapses – just pick up and carry on.

## Sustained awareness

Stable awareness is the foundation of a mindful life and the antidote to the feeling of being scattered that so many suffer from in modern day. Cultivate this skill through mindfulness and meditation – on the breath, on a mantra, on compassion, on the divine and more.

## Inner dialogue

We all have a voice in our heads that narrates a story of our life to us. Challenge that voice when it says negative things. Challenge that voice when it says negative things. Change that inner dialogue to be kind and supportive.

## Emotional balance

We all like to have positive

emotions, like love and compassion, but negative ones are a reality and should not be suppressed. Learning the skill of emotional balance, coming back to peacefulness and positivity as we go through the ups and downs of life is a great gift to oneself and others in our lives.

## Movement skills

Many who look at yoga are intimidated or impressed by the extreme asanas on display. But such extremes are not important. What is important is whether you can move functionally throughout your life: strong and soft, mobile and stable, confident and relaxed. That comes from a daily mindful practice of useful movement skills.

## Importance of breath

Research about the importance of breathing keeps growing. Long, easy, smooth and comfortable breathing patterns are vital to our organ health, stress modulation and longevity. And yoga teaches various breathing techniques. If you can manage your breath, you have taken a big step toward managing your mind, body and your life.

When are you tired and when do you have energy? Can you honour your body's need for sleep? What are you feeding your senses – what books do you read, what movies do you watch, and what music do you hear?

## Food as nourishment

How does your food make you feel? Can you be aware of how different foods affect your body and mind? The skill of healthful eating is not about following a strict diet, but about being connected to food as nourishment.

## Stress management

Stress is itself not bad; it is also the foundation of challenge and achievement. It's how we manage stress that matters. If we can bring safety, relaxation, empowerment to manage the stress response in all areas of our life, we can convert it into a friend.

## Of relationships

One of the greatest skills for wellbeing is forming good connections and relationships with other living beings and with nature. Good relationships also require ethics and boundaries.

We must begin with the basic principle of ahimsa (non-harmfulness) and with the practice of kindness. From that respect and positive intention, connections can flourish.

(Continued on page 6)

## YOGA – THE ANCIENT PATH ...

(Continued from page 3)

## Wisdom in speech

So much of life depends on how we speak with others; it can take years to undo a few harsh words. Bringing patience and clarity to speech, with wisdom and good intentions, is a key to building partnerships and promoting positive change. It's important to speak not just about what is wrong but also what we can do to heal it, to make ourselves and the world, whole.

## Touch as connection

Touch and other non-verbal communication are evolutionarily deeper and older than speech. Yoga traditionally uses gestures such as mudras, nyasas to communicate the intentions we hold in our hearts and minds. Just bringing our own hands to our heart or other parts of our body can shift the way we connect to the body, and by extension, to others.

The purpose of life, in one view, is to find a purpose! A strong commitment to ethical and meaningful engagement in life – to do good for other living beings and the world – is a powerful support for a rich and satisfying life.

## Power of spirituality

Faith and spirituality can be a great support for a troubled mind, provided they are aligned with the greater good of the world. By connecting with the deep wisdom transmitted through spiritual traditions, we can find insight and continuity in our lives and transcendence to what lies beyond.

## Expression and arts

From prehistoric times, art and expression have been a conduit for expressing what humans cannot show through other means. Music, for instance, has a profound and distinctive impact on the nervous system and the well-being of body and mind.

## Engage with the world

Faced with the disconnect of modern times, it can be attractive to turn away from engagement with the world, or fall into stress and feel scattered. But there is another way, one of reintegration: within ourselves, (through) mind and body, with others through connection, and with the world and the environment through meaningful engagement.

Bringing well-being to the world requires bringing well-being to ourselves, and vice versa. We are all connected. Yoga provides the framework and wisdom to bring this wholeness to ourselves and the world: it is the ancient and timeless foundation for reintegration.

This article appeared in The Hindu newspaper June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019 – International Yoga Day.