



Yesterday 11:11 AM

Yoga and Mental Health

Therapy not your thing? Consider yoga to supplement your mental health and boost your EQ. Learn how it works.

STRESS AND RESILIENCY

Yoga for mental health 101

Have you considered therapy for improving your mental health? Do you wish there were other options for treatment? People understand the value of emotional intelligence (EQ) more than ever, but a significant amount of people still struggle with mental health problems. Plus, there are many reasons why therapy may not be an option for you. Consider starting your own yoga practice for taking charge of your mental health. The science might surprise you.

Yoga is popular enough that most people know of health benefits from this 5,000-year-old tradition. Greater flexibility, increased strength, and more lean muscle come to mind. How does yoga increase mental health? It turns out that having a dedicated yoga practice may play a role in claiming your own mental wellness. No traditional therapy. No awkward conversations. For the ultra-introvert, this may be a great way to heal. How does it work?

- **More Oxygen to the Brain** – In yoga, there is a special kind of breathing called Pranayama. People with PTSD, trauma, and other emotional dysregulation get stuck in [fight-or-flight mode](#). In this mode, the brain's amygdala gets overactivated. Pranayama breathing helps deliver the oxygen required to draw blood back into the frontal lobes where reasoning and higher-level cognition for processing emotions happens.
- **Neurolinguistic Programming** – While not [true NLP](#), yoga classes are often accompanied by affirmations. With symbolic repetition in combination with yoga poses (Asanas) and flows (Vinyasa), these signifiers can become habits of mind for thought and belief. Working with words like this can help “turn” the mind. For instance, when a yoga teacher says “let go of what doesn’t serve you” or “receive what serves you,” these are poetic ways of guiding intentional, language-based neural reconfiguration.
- **Mind-Body Connection** – Dissociation is a common psychological problem. In fact, while most people don’t meet the diagnostic criteria for a dissociative disorder in the DSM-5, many folks struggle with dissociative episodes fueled by lifestyles filled with numbing activities. The yogic mind-body connection fights dissociative symptoms by encouraging presence. This is technically meditation and is much like the Buddhism-inspired mindfulness practices in [Dialectical Behavioral Therapy](#) (DBT).

Will yoga transform your mental health? The best way to tell is to try. This ancient practice was always passed on by word of mouth for thousands of years. The science is out and more is coming, but “just try it” may be enough motivation based on the tradition – not to mention [life-changing results people report](#). If it’s for you, check out your local yoga studio today and gain not only strength and flexibility but also joy, forgiveness, and peace.