

Yoga in the Mainstream

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"The body is the vehicle for our beautiful souls. Moving our body brings balance back into our lives."

-Oprah



For the past two years, former congresswoman **Gabby Giffords** has been recovering from brain injury as a result of this one bullet that tore through her head, leaving her with the kind of physical limitations that would frustrate even the most patient of saints. Yet, she knows it's a miracle she survived at all, telling Diane Sawyer in a recent ABC News interview that the hardest part of her life now is simply, every day. How does she carry on? "Lots of therapy every day," she says

in her upbeat, grateful voice, "physical therapy, speech therapy ... yoga."

Yes, *yoga*.

A Way of Life. Yoga has hit the mainstream, and with good reason. This 5,000-year-old science, philosophy and way of life, which includes not only movement and meditation, but a global view centered on love, generosity, honesty and compassion, continues to ring true with the human race -proving its power to heal.

"The ultimate purpose of yoga in all its forms, is to enliven awareness and expand our understanding of the true self," says **Deepak Chopra**, in the Chopra Center's 21-Day Meditation Challenge. Several times throughout the year, the Chopra Center offers 21 days of theme-specific meditation instruction to people all over the world via the Internet, free of charge. "The steady practice of asanas (which means seat in Sanskrit) not only enables us to develop balance, strength and flexibility but it ultimately offers *a good seat for the soul* within the vehicle of the human body. In this prime position, we are then better poised for spiritual growth."

Often called "the Wizard of Wellness," America's favorite **Dr. Oz** offers asanas and yoga-inspired moves to help us with everything from whole-body wellness to improving energy levels to easing chronic discomfort caused from stress. For instance, he identifies deep breathing, Thread the Needle, Cat/Cow, Extended Cat Stretch, Triangle and Downward Dog as head-to-toe stress relievers. "You need to have a biological bag of tricks," he says, "ways to relax any part of your body as soon as tension strikes."



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