LIFE IS BETTER WITH YOGA

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It’s never too late to reset and restart life by embracing new things that will make us happier. And one way to create this profound change is to experience the transformative power of yoga.

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Photography Menaka Aravinda.

Anarkalee Kodagoda has had a deep connection with nature, with a desire to embrace pursuits with universal depth and feeling. This yearning was her induction into the universe of yoga as a teenager and as she practiced it more and more, she realized its power to remove the obstacles that were impinging on her ability to express herself fully and experience life in all its fullness. Today, as a graduate in biomedical science and with training in hospitality management, Anarkalee has launched herself as a yoga instructor following training at the Paramanand Institute of Yoga Sciences and Research, India. Her one year comprehensive course focused on yoga and the anatomy, yoga therapy, yoga and Ayurveda, yoga philosophy and

extensively on Hatha Yoga. As she battled insomnia and stress as a youngster, yoga, with its holistic effect to create balance between body, mind, consciousness and soul became her refuge. One of the very basic reasons many people take up yoga, said Anarkalee, is to change something in themselves. Maybe a move driven by a desire to think less and act more, be more aware or be more in the present moment, which drastically helps in controlling anxiety, or to simply feel and do better than yesterday. Encouraged by her own experience, Anarkalee was propelled by a thirst to master the art of yoga beyond the postures; to have a profounder understanding of the fundamental principles underlying it, a knowledge that would give her the ability to encourage more people to embrace and practice yoga to deal with mind-related matters to achieve oneness.

Interestingly, ‘Yoga with Anarkalee’ integrates yoga and Ayurveda, both originating from the Vedas and have developed parallel since ancient times. Her yoga classes are for all ages, with the assurance of helping individuals to regain ‘your swing’ by focusing on physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. What is special about her yoga training is the combination of yoga and Ayurveda to help individuals overcome the ‘doshas’ in the body, by resetting their lifestyle to assume a healthy diet, with the use of powerful herbs and spices, treatments, rituals, and meditation. Having started her training program a year ago, Anarkalee, a specialist in Hatha Yoga, combines yoga postures (asana), breathing techniques (pranayamas), energy locks (bandhana), hand gestures (mudra), mantra and cleansing activities in her program. Anarkalee advocates the application of Ayurveda-yoga therapy, as it addresses the needs of many of her students who desire to embrace a holistic approach to health management. For instance, obesity management that she instructs is all-inclusive, a combination of lifestyle change, with diet and exercise modification.

Anarkalee’s ‘wellness shot’ is part of her Yoga-Ayurveda combine, providing suggestions on the preparation of nutritious beverages to deal with various health conditions. Be it her anti-inflammatory properties infused pineapple and turmeric wellness shot to fight against fatty liver and enhance complexion, or her cucumber and lemon wellness shot to help relieve migraine, diabetes and cholesterol, and weight loss, these Ayurveda health shots are important inclusions to our diet to boost immunity, a major concern these days

Anarkalee believes that her training must also evolve to offer variation to students. So, in spite of being a specialist in Hatha Yoga, constant growth is in her system, amplifying her knowledge through learning, so that her teaching can always provide a better experience to the user. She has, thus, recently incorporated props such as

the yoga strap, yoga wheel, yoga blocks and yoga rings into her routines, which one would call tools of the trade that provide a personalized experience according to the comfort level of a yogi when practicing different moves. These props are especially useful in the practice of other yoga styles such as Ashtanga, Iyengar and Vinyasa, which Anarkalee has incorporated into her sequences in order to serve individual needs.

“In the midst of the challenges of confinement, practicing simple yoga The calming cross-legged Lotus posture is a comfortable position for breathing and meditation. poses, breathing techniques, hand gestures and meditation for at least 30 minutes a day to cleanse the mind of negativity is vital,” she says. Regular yoga in the midst of our sedentary lifestyle can immensely help in the prevention of chronic ailments like diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol. Since working from home is the new corporate culture, Anarkalee insists that it’s important to separate the bedroom from the work space and to always choose a separate bay to engage in daily physical activity. Despite the inability to conduct classes physically, Anarkalee continues her work online, while mapping out her future in the practice by joining the tourism industry to broaden its reach to promote spiritual, mental and physical wellness. In fact, she’s excited about her collaboration with the travel trade to launch brand ‘Nivaana’ to focus on Ayurveda related wellness, yoga related services, meditation, indigenous medicine and astrology related services. Further, she desires to introduce yoga training among school children, hopefully as part of their curriculum; and a separate program to help with gynecological diseases. Yoga in the workplace is another initiative she envisages to launch once people get back to office.

Anarkalee invites people to embrace yoga because it’s for everyone, and offers something valuable for each phase of life and physical constitution and is geared to accommodate the needs and conditions of the present. Yoga offers every individual a unique starting point. So, start today by getting in touch through the ‘yoga with anarkalee’ instagram page, and if you are young and looking for physical fitness and strength or a senior citizen seeking spiritual and mental fulfillment, there’s always a yoga routine that’ll help reach your desired realm of contentment.

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