Taming Stress with Yoga
Meditation in Motion

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MBSR & Yoga

Yoga in MBSR (Kabat-Zinn)
• Yoga is meditation!
• Reduces stress, increased energy
• "Mindful" Hatha Yoga
  • self-acceptance
  • listening to & honoring your body
  • exploring limits lovingly, gently, respectfully
• Improved mindfulness, stress, anxiety, psychological well-being
  (Carmody; Gard)

VA MBSR Programs and Studies
• PTSD, pain, depression, anxiety, other
• Kearney, Simpson studies
• MSCOE study - submitting grant
Alicia’s Yoga & MBSR Experience

Yoga Practitioner
• MBSR, classes, retreats, workshops, immersions

VA MS Fit Study (Turner)
• Referrals to local classes, NMSS grant, online, free DVDs

VA Take Control of MS Study (Turner, Bourdette, et al)
• Comparing two educational group oriented programs
• NMSS brochure: “Taming Stress in Multiple Sclerosis”

VA Puget Sound - Rehab Care Services
• OT offers yoga classes to Veterans (Roberts)
• Improved patient selected goals related to physical and mental health (8 weeks, 3 days/week, n=18); Increased demand for program.

Yoga History

• India, Ancient tradition
• Yoga (Sanskrit) means “yoke”
  – Practice of yoking together or unifying body & mind
• “Secular”, mainstream
• Evidence-based benefits in health and mental health care

(Kabat-Zinn)
Yoga History

Om
• Sound of the universe
• Mantra for mind, body, and spirit

Namaste
• Every day greeting in India
• "The Spirit within me salutes the Spirit in you."

(urbandictionary.com)

Yoga Styles

Common Types – Good for MS
• Hatha (Basics) - slow paced, gentle, basic poses; focus on self-regulation; “Mindful Yoga” – Jon Kabat-Zinn
• Iyengar (Basics) - body alignment, holding poses; Eric Small; Oken study
• Viniyoga (slow flow, renew/rebuild, restorative) - individualized approach to student’s needs, gentle movements; Laura Yon, yoga teacher for MS

People with MS - Be Careful Of or Avoid:
• Vinyasa (“flow”) – can be fast paced, breath synchronized movement, “sun salutations”
• “Hot” (Bikram) - 95-100 degrees, 26 poses, physically demanding
• “Power” (Ashtanga) - fast paced, physically demanding, 80-90 degrees
Anyone can do yoga!

Seriously...

Oken’s Oregon/WA Survey of People w/MS:

- 30% practice yoga
- 57% Yoga is “very beneficial”

More controlled studies needed with higher number of subjects…
Evidence Based Practice in MS

Fatigue
- Asano Meta-analysis: 2 studies (Oken; Velikonja)
- Guner & Inanici, 2015: Pilot study - fatigue, gait, balance
- Velikonja – Significant reduction of fatigue

Cognition
- Improved selective attention (Oken; Velikonja)

Mood/Stress
- Kim & Oken: MSCOE website
- Focused breathing and positioning (Oken, et al)
- Reynard, Sullivan, Rae-Grant 2014 Review: Class IV evidence - Pritchard, et al, Yoga Nidra meditation MS & Cancer
- Complement to psychotherapy & pharmacotherapy (NMSS Clinical Bulletin: Minden, et al)

Self-Regulation
- Emotional, cognitive, behavioral self-regulation to reduce stress (Gard)

Physical Wellbeing – Gard; Velikonja
- Stretching, flexibility, strengthening, endurance
- Isometric muscle contraction and relaxation
- Spasticity, muscular strength, flexibility - reduction EDSS pyramidal functions score (Velikonja, et al)
- Fatigue, Balance & Gait - step length, walking speed (Guner & Inanici)
Yoga’s Five Tools of Mindful Resilience

1. Breathing
2. Meditation
3. Mindful Movement
4. Guided Rest
5. Gratitude

Yoga In Your Practice!

- Simple Yoga Breathing Techniques
- Chair-based Yoga
- Distribute brochures & DVDs, online sites
- Refer clients to MS oriented yoga classes
- NMSS grant – call MS Navigator about classes or referrals (1-800-344-4867).
- Participate in yoga yourself
- Let’s Try it!
Breathe out that Stress!
Lion’s Breath

1. Sit or kneel with your seat resting in your feet.
2. Place your hands on your knees.
3. Inhale through the nose.
4. Exhale through the mouth, making a "ha" sound.
5. As you exhale, really push your breath out, open your mouth wide and stick your tongue as far out as possible towards your chin.
6. Inhale, return to a neutral face
7. Repeat 3-5 times

http://yoga.about.com/od/breathing/a/Yoga-Lions-Breath.htm

Another Breathing Exercise

• Take a deep breathe.
• Hold it for 3-5 seconds.
• Then blow it out as fast as you can.
• Repeat a couple of times until you feel better
Namaste!

Alicia's sunrise walking meditation, Yoga Retreat at Maya Tulum, Mexico. Photo by co-yogi Jennifer Miller, May 2013.

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Online Resources

Social Work Professionals

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction
- Online MBSR course: [palousemindfulness.com/selfguidedMBSR.html](http://palousemindfulness.com/selfguidedMBSR.html)
- UMASS MBSR Training: [www.umassmed.edu/caf/Stress-Reduction](http://www.umassmed.edu/caf/Stress-Reduction)
- VA Puget Sound MBSR Program: [www.pugetsound.va.gov/services/mindfulness.asp](http://www.pugetsound.va.gov/services/mindfulness.asp)

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction - MS and Stress
- "Taming Stress in Multiple Sclerosis" Brochure: [www.nationalmssociety.org/NationalMSSociety/media/MSNationalFiles/Brochures/Brochure-Taming-Stress.pdf](http://www.nationalmssociety.org/NationalMSSociety/media/MSNationalFiles/Brochures/Brochure-Taming-Stress.pdf)
- "MS and Your Emotions" Brochure: [www.nationalmssociety.org/NationalMSSociety/media/MSNationalFiles/Brochures/Brochure-Emotions.pdf](http://www.nationalmssociety.org/NationalMSSociety/media/MSNationalFiles/Brochures/Brochure-Emotions.pdf)
- NMSS: [www.nationalmssociety.org/NationalMSSociety/media/MSNationalFiles/Brochures/WellnessMSSocietyforPeoplewithMS.pdf](http://www.nationalmssociety.org/NationalMSSociety/media/MSNationalFiles/Brochures/WellnessMSSocietyforPeoplewithMS.pdf)

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction - MS and Yoga
- "Yoga for MS" DVD (Teva Neuroscience, Inc., 2014): Distributed free to patients by Teva Clinical Nurse Educators.
- VA MSCOE: [www.va.gov/MS/Veterans/complementary_and_alternative_medicine/Yoga_and_Multiple_Sclerosis.asp](http://www.va.gov/MS/Veterans/complementary_and_alternative_medicine/Yoga_and_Multiple_Sclerosis.asp)

General Yoga
- Free yoga and meditation: [www.veteransyogaproject.org/practice.html](http://www.veteransyogaproject.org/practice.html)
- Yoga Journal: [www.yogajournal.com](http://www.yogajournal.com)
- Free yoga online: [www.myfreeyoga.com/](http://www.myfreeyoga.com/)
- Wheelchair Yoga: [http://mayallbehappy.org/wheelchair-yoga/](http://mayallbehappy.org/wheelchair-yoga/)

YouTube
- There are a variety of yoga videos on YouTube.
- Go to [youtube.com](http://youtube.com), and type in “multiple sclerosis yoga”, “wheelchair yoga” or “chair yoga” and many choices pop up. For example:
  - Adaptive Yoga for Multiple Sclerosis: Chair Yoga: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=hblIFT2Ztsw&list=UL_4Awb2TpfR6_UvpmJ7VEXKQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hblIFT2Ztsw&list=UL_4Awb2TpfR6_UvpmJ7VEXKQ)
  - Easy Chair Yoga: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kkX37IYVWw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kkX37IYVWw)
  - Wheelchair Yoga For Those with Severe Physical Limitations: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gl1Asq9x3Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gl1Asq9x3Y)
Studies


