

# Yoga Spirit Academy E-zine

Healing body, mind and spirit  
with the wisdom of Yoga, meditation and Ayurveda

January/February 2018

Volume 11, Issue 1

## Sitting Meditation By Janet W Parachin

2018 is the year to go within. We do not turn within to escape the world (as tempting as that may be at times), but rather to calm our own anxious mind, to gather our thoughts, and to prepare ourselves for right action. This year in this column we'll be looking at different aspects of meditation, such as walking meditation, chanting, chakra balancing, and yoga nidra.

To begin, let's look at the classic way of meditating which is sitting meditation. It's so important to be able to sit comfortably since an uncomfortable seat can be a big roadblock to daily practice.

Āsana is from the root ās meaning "to sit" and is closely related to another root which means "to be." To practice āsana is to take a seat that is comfortable and steady. In the early days of yoga, the only āsana was seated meditation postures. Over time, as the practitioners tried to work the kinks out of their bodies (Yes! They had them too!) other movements and body positions evolved into the postures we all know and love today. But notice that they are all still called āsana, which means to take a seat.

So what is needed to sit comfortably? An erect spine held in its natural curves, what we know as "good posture." Good posture allows for the breath to flow freely into the lungs and encourages the free flow of energy (prānā) from the root chakra to the crown chakra. And a neutral spine is the most comfortable position for the body because the natural curves of the spine stack in a safe and supportive way.

Because of poor sitting habits, however, most people are unaware of what this erect spine with its natural curves

looks or feels like. Here is where some suggestions and props can be very helpful. Let's explore three ways to make sitting more comfortable:

First, use a cushion to raise the hips higher than the knees. When the thighs angle down, the muscles of the hips and the back don't have to work so hard to keep the legs in place. A zafu (round cushion) or meditation bench will accomplish this, as will a stack of blankets or a yoga bolster. If hips are just too tight or knees have been injured, sitting on the edge of chair will work too.



Second, support the thighs from underneath with blankets or blocks. When the thighs are not supported, the muscles of the thighs and hips have to work too hard to hold the legs in place. Fold one or two blankets to tuck under the thighs.

Third, tip the pelvis forward into an anterior pelvic tilt. This re-establishes the natural lordosis (inward curve)

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Yoga Spirit Academy  
200-hour and 300-hour yoga teacher training  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
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## Yoga Teacher Training

Yoga Spirit Academy offers 200- and 300-hour programs for those who want to become yoga teachers and those who want to enrich their personal study of Yoga. The 200-hour program meets one weekend a month for a year with some additional workshops and independent study. The 300-hour advanced program is a unique immersion in Ayurvedic Yoga. Seven courses are required for the certification, but each course can also be taken on its own for personal enrichment and continuing education. To find out more

<http://yogaspirittulsa.com>



## Sitting Meditation *continued*

of the lumbar spine and balances the weight of the body on the sitting bones. Sitting in the middle of the floor can be hard at first because the upper back muscles get tired and start to ache. Try sitting with your back against a wall until your muscles are strong enough to hold you there. Four points should touch the wall: the bottom edge of the sacrum, two shoulder blades, and the back of the head.

Have fun finding your comfortable seat!

## Workshops on Weight Loss and Allergy Relief

Janet Parachin, PhD, is a certified yoga therapist and Yoga and Ayurveda Wellness Consultant. Her "Healthy Living through Yoga & Ayurveda" series continues with two exciting workshops on Healthy Weight Loss (February 18) and Allergy Relief (March 23). The cost for each is \$45. These workshops demonstrate how the ancient wisdom of Yoga and Ayurveda can help people tackle modern health challenges. Yoga teachers will receive 2 hours of continuing education credit, but even more, helpful information to share with their students and clients. For more information and to register



<http://yogaspirittulsa.com/Training-Workshops/>

### CALENDAR

- February 10 and 11 Yoga Teacher training weekend
- February 18 Healthy Weight Loss with Yoga & Ayurveda
- February 24-25 Restorative Yoga advanced teacher training
- March 3-4 Yoga teacher training weekend
- March 23 Allergy Relief through Yoga & Ayurveda

*For more information please visit our website*

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