

FITNESS QUICK TIPS

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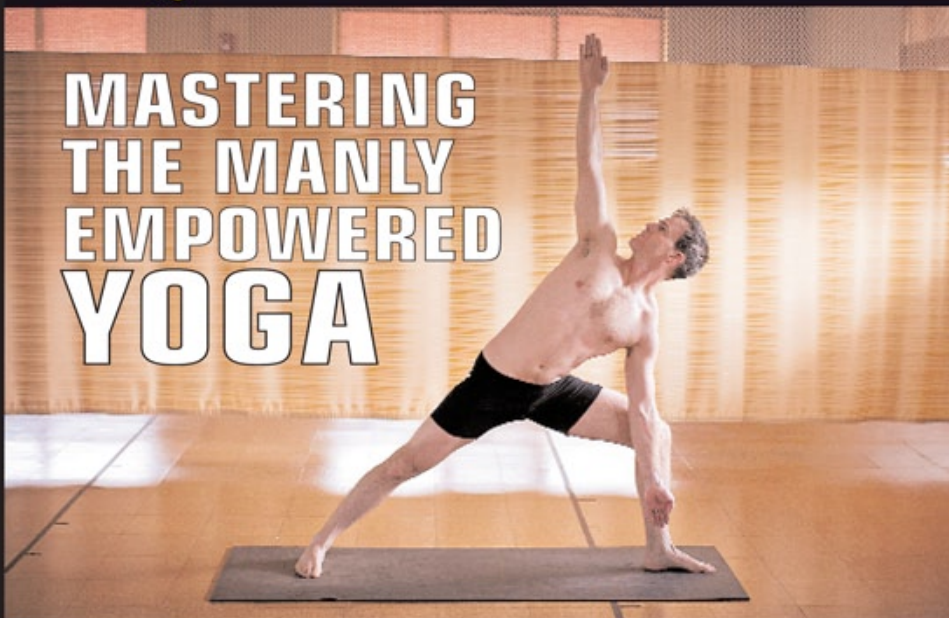


There is a hot new workout called Empowered Yoga that is helping guys of all sizes and abilities to shape up their bodies and their minds. It is not the religious experience found in your typical yoga class. Instead, it is a serious fitness workout with a stringent pre- and post-regimen that I developed for myself after I discovered that yoga can strengthen, realign and rehabilitate the body and mind, plus relieve joint pain.

When we remove the cultural underpinnings or what I call the "religiosity" from yoga, what's left is a very practical form of exercise that can help relieve stress within your mind and body, and return you to a greater state of strength and functionality. That's a very compelling combination, especially for men.

Men are gravitating to these classes because they love the physical benefits combined with expert coaching on improving their mental game, alleviating their back pain and helping tone and strengthen their muscles.

MASTERING THE MANLY EMPOWERED YOGA



Why would a guy want to practice yoga? Truthfully, we don't want to teach you how to wrap your leg around your head, and we're not going to make you wear a leopard. When I got into yoga, it was because I was in pain. I'm a banged up jock. Most guys over age 30 are living with back or joint pain if they've been athletes. Empowered Yoga helps alleviate pain. It will teach you how to stand properly and strengthen your body.

Guys also need Empowered Yoga for the mental perspective. We have so much pressure on us. Since we're stressed, many of us work out with aggression in the gym. With Empowered Yoga, you're learning how to bring yourself into a calmer place.

Most men are shocked when I explain that Empowered Yoga is a secret weapon that can shorten the average guy's workout by 50 percent and increase results. Spending an hour and a half at the gym is often inefficient and ineffective. After 35-40 minutes, testosterone levels drop and you start getting diminishing returns.

Empowered Yoga solves this problem. It's not just a series of stretching and relaxation exercises. Guys often don't think they need yoga until I explain from a practical standpoint why they would benefit from certain movements. We never get to the point where it becomes a religious endeavor. The men who practice Empowered Yoga become calmer and more grounded. Yoga allows them to see more clearly while at the same time giving them a great workout.

Immersing yourself in yoga is a quick way to make changes in your life. For example, feet are literally and figuratively the furthest things from most people's minds. Yet with three arches and 25 percent of the body's bones, they can affect your whole structure. Most people put pressure on their heels which causes your body to slouch and fall out of alignment. I teach people to walk barefoot frequently so that they can spread their toes and focus on the front of their feet as much as possible.

Empowered Yoga focuses (continued on page 95)




THREE TIPS FOR MAXIMIZING YOUR EMPOWERED YOGA WORKOUT

1. Be proactive about preparing your body for a workout. Athletes know that preparation starts long before they get to the practice field, and guys studying Empowered Yoga are doing the same. I always encourage my students to offset the stress in their lives. Drinking plenty of water, and avoiding processed foods, also go a long way toward keeping you in prime condition;
2. Learn how to maintain calm, balance and focus before and after a workout. I encourage men to consume foods and beverages containing *suntheanine* (a pure form of *L-theanine*). It's like yoga in a bottle because it helps to bring men back into balance with their nervous systems. *Suntheanine* (nostress.com) brings a state of clarity into your day, which can help you make better lifestyle decisions;
3. Make massages a regular part of your workout regimen. Massages don't just relieve stress and ease muscle tension. They also help athletes prepare for, and recover from, strenuous workouts. They also increase joint flexibility, and improve your total range of motion.

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on the process of aligning and strengthening your mind and body from the tips of your toes to the top of your head. It improves all 12 systems within the body, and has the potential to make you a more powerful human being. Through my association with the National Strength & Conditioning Association (NSCA), I have made a lot of connections with top coaches and brought respect to yoga. I'll be talking about it again at this year's NSCA National Conference.

Yoga teaches you how to move properly and with principle, alleviating injury, and giving you a workout that you can't necessarily get in a gym. I still run and lift weights, but I consider yoga to be a great foundation for fitness. It's a welcome addition to other forms of exercise. 

Editor's Note: Johnny Gillespie, a dynamic and youthful teacher, founded the health and fitness company Plexus in 1999 with the perspective that fitness was more than just exercise. He is a national presenter with the National Strength & Conditioning Association, where he also teaches the Balanced Athlete Program. His extensive study of both western and eastern science allows him to deliver an experience unlike anything you have ever felt before.