



Photo: Yoga Instructor, Martin Pincus & student, Amy Miller, at the Red Hen Bakery & Cafe' discussing Yoga.

### Connecting Through Yoga The Student By Amy Miller

Yoga has always interested me and for many years intimidated me. Over the past 15 years, I had probably attended that many yoga classes, and purchased that many home videos/DVDS. I was having trouble finding the time in my schedule for the classes and was finding the videos overwhelming. Overwhelming, because I had a sense that I was not in the correct posture, and it bothered me to be reinforcing something that was likely to be incorrect. Still, all of this time I was drawn to what yoga represented to me: physical fitness, flexibility, balance of mind and body, good self care.

During this past winter, I noticed that my ability to tolerate stress was diminishing. For me this looked like excessive emotion - feeling overwhelmed and unsettled. I was meditating and exercising, and I was still not able to find my balance. My life situation was on its way to becoming more stressful rather than less and I made a decision to give Martin a call. I had experienced Kripalu yoga with Martin in the past and found the sessions to be a good match for me.

Since December (2007), yoga has been a regular part of my week, something that I look forward to and benefit from in many ways. There are the postures and stretches that add to my endurance and agility. There is the meditation and the breathing that connect me to the process in the universe. Through the yoga my body is worked, my mind is cleared, my emotion is released and my spirit soars.

For several years now, in my own mind-body work (myofascial release), I have regularly monitored where my body is at with regards to tightness, aches and pains. Once noting, I ask myself what the emotional issue is buried in this tightness, with the answer, a release of emotion takes place and the body responds. Doing the yoga became the next natural step for me. When I am aware of tightness in a muscle, or chest pounding, I give it the time and space it needs, and I am able to focus on breathing, relaxing, and releasing the tightness.

When I first started mind-body work, I was not connected to my body as I am now. It takes time and practice. There are likely hundreds of books on ancient healing, like the Chakra system, that have documented over thousands of years where a tightness or injury in a certain area of your body originates. The idea is to get to know your body, so that when the tightness occurs you will be able to identify the emotional issue/ stressor in your life and deal with it before further injury occurs. Those working in energy healing would say start in the energy field, before the injury reaches your body.

There are many ways to get to know yourself through the mind-body connection for better emotional, physical, soulful and spiritual health. The practice and philosophy of yoga is a great place to start.

Amy Miller has a private therapy practice in Central Vermont and is a resident of Middlesex Vermont. Amy's practice includes psychopharmacology and mind-body healing. She is host of CVTV's 'Connect with Amy Miller: mind, body, soul, spirit' and can be reached at [ConnectwithAmyMiller.com](http://ConnectwithAmyMiller.com).



### Connecting Through Yoga The Teacher By Martin Pincus

Hi. I'm Martin Pincus, an actor, yoga teacher, and living in my self-built house on Zdon Road in Middlesex, Vermont.

How I got into Yoga. In the 1970s, my wife at the time Ingrid, returned home from the gym and, as she started to touch her toes while keeping her legs straight, said, "can you do this?" "Of course", I said. "Well, let's see." So smiling, I got up and discovered I couldn't do it. In fact, I couldn't even touch my knees while keeping my legs straight. Ingrid smiled, and left the room.

I was an A Type personality in a stressful job (a Real Estate and Tax lawyer in New York City), a smoker, drinker, and born with a heart murmur. I was not long for this earth. So I began to look for, and found a yoga teacher on Fifth Avenue and 13th Street, and have been practicing yoga ever since (over 30 years). Everyone has a story like mine; and if you want to do something about it, you can. I suggest you try yoga, because it is a gentle/moderate practice you can do for a long time.

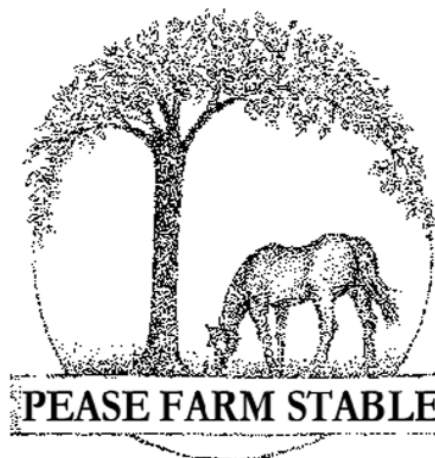
I teach yoga by guiding students to learn to listen to their bodies. The body communicates to you in a "non-verbal" language of physical feelings and sensations. Listening to and following this language will help you develop greater self-respect and empowerment, reduce stress, and make you healthier. That's why I became a yoga teacher.

The value of precise postures. In an article I wrote for the February, 2004 issue of this paper, I said Hatha Yoga is about one's inner physical experience. i.e., consciously feeling the physical effects of doing the yoga postures. The postures are like the tools you use to build your house. You need the tools, but they are not your house. Similarly, you need the postures to do the yoga, but they are not the yoga. The yoga is done when we do the postures and then consciously feel their physical effects inside the body, i.e. that inner physical experience which opens the door to transformation and happiness.

If you've never done yoga before, then maybe these are just words with little meaning. It's like learning to play golf, or anything else. Though it may help to read a book on How To Play Golf, you cannot fully understand what it means until you first go to a golf course and actually play golf. So to fully understand what yoga can do for you, you first have to go to a class, do the postures, and then consciously physically experience the effects.

The February 2004 article ended with a question: if the postures are only the tools, why bother with precise directions for each posture. The answer again relates to building a house. If you know how to use your tools, you will build a better house. If you know how to do the postures, you will have a deeper more meaningful experience doing the yoga. That is why I often say in class, "do not strive, trust the body, keep practicing, and don't try to get anywhere." I will explain this last sentence more fully in the next article. Till then thank you, and bye-bye.

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