

Fibromyalgia

Structural Yoga Therapy Course

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1 - Case study

a – Initial intake -

VJF is 43 years young married female with two kids. One is in college and other high school graduate with learning disability. She had a car accident when she was 23 years old. Due to whiplash, she started to have neck, shoulder and back pains. For 17 years she was in pain, sad, depressed, felt no one understood her, and her shoulders start to round, while the chest felt heavy, neck started to lean forward. She perceived that the whole world started to close on her and she felt that there is a hump developing in her back as result of this body posture. After exploring and checking the spine we discovered that there was no khyphosis remaining and she was never diagnosed having it either. She thinks that it might have disappeared when she started ballet again and followed her spiritual path.

She had been suffering with these chronic pains for 17 years until she was diagnosed with Fibromyalgia in 2003. A few years ago she also hurt her tail bone and back of her head when she fell down on the ice. Since then she has a little swelling on her S3-S4 but no redness or heat. She gets radiating pain across the hip from time-to-time but has neuropathy pain from knee to ankle all the time, and experiences continuous neck pain and stiffness at levels between 8 to10 (on a scale of 1 – 10). Lower back pain ranges from a 4 to 7. She is stressed most of the time and feels guilty, when she can not perform her family responsibilities due to her pain. Her goal is to give yoga therapy a try, practice, lessen her pain and stop taking some of the medication.

b – Physical assessment

Body reading: Standing Position:

- Five feet three inches tall
- Average and lean body frame
- Erect standing and sitting posture
- Right Shoulder is .5 inches higher than the left
- Both palm turns backward
- Bowed legs about an inch space between both legs
- Both feet externally rotated slightly due to ballet practice since childhood
- Sacroiliac dysfunction, no movement on left and .5 " down on right, swelling on her S3-S4 but no heat or pain

Special Notes on VJF:

- Taurus – The "Bull" sign governs the throat and neck. Astrologically they are at risk of diseases of the genitals, womb, liver and kidneys, and of abscesses and rheumatism.
- She suffered with extensive aches, pains, depression, fatigue, guilt and frustration for more then 17 years before she was diagnosed with Fibromyalgia. During all these years of being in pain she had forgotten how to breathe. My aim is first to reduce her stress and pain by proper breathing, pain pranayama and deep relaxation before working with her muscles to make her strong.

Body reading: Prone Position:

Right leg is ½" shorter than left

Range of Motion Assessments							
Joint Action	ROM	3/4/08		4/14/08		3rd	3rd
		Left	Right	Left	Right	Date	Date
	Norm°	Left	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right
HIP							
Flexion (Bent Knee)	135°	122°	128°	125	130	125	130
Flexion (Straight-Leg Raise)	90°	65°	80°	70	80	74	80
Flexors-quad/psoas (P&Q)restriction	NSS						
External Rotation (Supine)	45°-60°	52°	59°				
Internal Rotation (Supine)	35°	40°	27°	42	45	45	40
External Rotation (Prone)	45°-60°	47°	50°				
Internal Rotation (Prone)	35°	40°	30°	43	52	47	46
Adduction (Side Lying)	30°-40°	45°	40°				
Abduction (Side Lying)	45°	50°	60°				
NECK							
Extension	55°	45°		45		50	
Flexion	45°	35°		40		41	
Lateral Flexion	45°	50°	43°	40**	40**	41	40
Rotation	70°	25°	25°	40	50	60	60
SHOULDER							
Extension	50°	20°	30°	32	40	38	35
WRIST							
Flexion	90°	75°	75°	90	82	90	85

** Less ROM in Red (Note: her lateral neck flexion has gone down, variation in the test results due to Vata imbalance. She changes day to day, which was noticed earlier also.

Muscle Testing Assessments						
Joint Action	3/10/08		4/14/08		4/14/08	
	Left, 1-5	Right, 1-5	Left, 1-5	Right, 1-5	Left, 1-5	Right, 1-5
KNEE						
Extension	2	2	3	3	3	3
Flexion	1	1	1	1	1	1
HIP						
Hip Flexors & Abs (Supine)	1	1	2	2	3	3
Trunk Flexion (Supine)	1	1	2	2	3	3
Hip Flexors - Bent Knee (Supine)	1	1	2.5	2.5	2.5	3
Iliopsoas Isolation (Supine)	0	1	1	1	2.5/15sec	2.5/17 Sec
Sartorius Isolation (Supine)	2	1.5	3	3	3.5	3
Abduction (Side Lying)	3	3	3	3	4	4
Adduction (Side Lying)	3	3	3	3	2.5	3
Gluteus Maximus Isolation (Prone)	3	3	3	3	3.5	3
External Rotation (Prone)	3	1	3	2	3	3
Internal Rotation (Prone)	3	2	3	3	2	2
Quadratus Lumborum (Seated)	2	3	2	3	3	3
NECK						
Extension	1	1	2	2	3	3

Flexion	0	0	2	2	2	2
Lateral Flexion	0	0	2	2	2	2
Rotation	0	0	2	2	2	3
SHOULDER						
Abduction	2	1	2	2	2	1
Adduction	2	1	2	2	2	2
External Rotation	2	1	2	2	2	2
Internal Rotation	2	2	3	3	3	3
Flexion	2	2	2	2	2	2
Extension	3	2	3	2	3	2
ELBOW						
Extension	2	3	2	3	2	3
Flexion	2	2	2	2	3	3
WRIST						
Flexion	2	3	2	3	3	3

c – Summary of findings –

- According to muscle group testing, VJF has hypermobility in her ankles, 30 - 35° more than standard and hypomobility in her neck especially in neck rotation. She was shaking all the time in 1 min. test for Psoas (**See appendix 1**) on her left side and was not able to hold for more then 10 sec, resulting in zero in MT. Her shoulder and hamstrings muscle tests were done very gently using only hand pressure and neck testing was done using only finger pressure. She was only able to move 2” in trunk flexion test. Her right side is weaker than left. As seen in her chart, she is pretty Ok with her range of motion except her neck and ankle but pretty weak in her entire body. We will work slowly on the following muscles to increase range of motion in her neck and ankle and strengthen her entire body.

Muscles to Stretch	Muscles to Strengthen	Muscles to Release
Sternocleidomastoid Upper Trapezius	Sternocleidomastoid Upper Trapezius	
Hamstrings	Hip Flexors Psoas Sartorius Rectus Abdominis Quadriceps Hamstrings External hip rotators	
	Shoulders adductors Abductors Internal & External Rotators Flexors	
Pectorals Latissimus Teres Major	Infraspinatus Teres Minor	Pectorals
Gluteus Medius Tensor Fascia Lata	Adductors Gluteus Medius	Tensor Fascia Lata

d – Recommendations

Week 3 3/18/08

We start our sessions with three OMs and silent prayer and complete with universal prayer “Lokha Samastaha Sukhino Bhavantu” in Sanskrit & English.

- Introduced abdominal breathing lying down to lessen her stress level. Continue with neck roll side to side while I was keeping my hands on both sides and asking her to let go whatever she was holding by making an audible sigh and mouth exhale to release stuck energy.
- Introduced Bulls eye pranayama (**See appendix 2**) for pain and guided her to send her breath to one place where she was feeling the most pain. She used the breath as a bow and felt fireworks coming out of her knee.
- Continue JFS for ankle, knee and neck very gently with breath awareness
- Ending in long guided deep relaxation, which she loved. I gave her my own 18 minutes long deep relaxation CD based on Guided Relaxation and affirmation for inner peace by Gurudev Sri Swami Satchidananda, Yoga Nidra teachings of Integral yoga, Nischala Joy Devi, and Dhananjay Kumar.

Recommendation after session 3

- Practice abdominal breathing
- Bulls eye pranayama for pain
- Ankle, knee and neck Joint Free Series(JFS) with Ujjaye breath, gentle movements, bring your awareness inward, 6 repetitions, harmonize your motions with your breath and visualize that muscles are releasing
- Do deep relaxation as often as you can and use props to keep yourself comfortable.
- An excel worksheet with practices and dates was given to her to remember what to do and write comments after her practice sessions.

e – Results of recommendations after session 3

She felt better in her neck; but felt fatigued with migraines, leg and back pain. She explained that this pain was not due to practice, but was due to frustration and guilt she feels about her daughter. She mentioned that her daughter has slight learning disability and was not able to go to college. Her daughter only works one day a week and feels frustrated and angry most of the time. Her daughter's frustration and anger, give her migraines and heartaches. She practiced JFS twice and did abdominal breathing and pain pranayama, whenever she remembered. She had problems sleeping and asked me to teach her meditation to calm her mind.

She practiced JFS twice and did abdominal breathing and pain pranayama, whenever she remembered. This changed my course of action to work on JFS to first relieve her stress, back pain and balance Vata.

Week 4 3/25/08

- Introduced alternate nostril breathing to calm her nervous system and bring her stress down first focusing and counting breaths. After a minute or so guided her to let go of her frustration, guilt, anger, fears or whatever she was holding through exhale and bring peace, love and healing energy through inhale.
- Once she was calm, we did one object meditation (Divine sun light meditation ~ 7-8 minutes), I asked her to go where ever she wants to go. We sat in front of her grand ma's house near the lake and brought the warmth, energy and divine light in our bodies to purifying our minds, hearts and every part of our body. She felt calm and centered.
- Sacroiliac test showed no movement on left and .5” down on right. Continued with Sacroiliac Stabilizing Exercise (SSE)

- Did side to side roll lying on the back in Apanasana, touching elbow on the ground, pelvic rotation, making a circle from one side to another, and Ardha Pawanamuktasana (knee to chest in supine position, one leg at a time for 15 secs, while other leg is extended) to relieve back pain.
- Continued with positions of the Joint Freeing Series for External and Internal Hip Rotations, Spine Extension and Flexion, Hip Extension and Flexion and completed in Supta Vajrasana or Child's pose followed by Savasana.
- Emphasized the benefits of deep relaxation and the importance of this daily practice for calming both Vata and Pitta; along with the use of sighing-exhales, to stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system and relaxation response.
- We also talked about 4 keys and locks, **Patanjali Sutra 33** and more emphasis on compassion to self and for unhappy.

Recommendation after session 4

Remember to be kind and compassionate to yourself. I reminded her about one of the Sutra key, "compassion" not only to others and unhappy but to be kind and compassionate to yourself too, listen to your body and do deep relaxation as often as you can.

- Practice abdominal or/and alternate breathing whenever you need
- Bulls eye pranayama for pain as often as you can
- Continue following Joint Free Series (JFS) with Ujjaye breath while bringing your awareness inward, performed for six repetitions with gentle movements that are harmonized with your breath. Do not do these unless it can be done without pain
 - Knee Extension and Flexion to strengthen quadriceps and hamstrings.
 - External Hip Rotation to strengthen Iliopsoas, Sartorius, Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Maximus, and deep six external hip rotators
 - Internal Hip Rotation for Gluteus Medius, Minimus and Tensor Facia Lata.
 - Spine Extension to strengthen erector Spinae and Latissimus Dorsi
 - Spine Flexion to strengthen Rectus Abdominis
 - Hip Extension to strengthen Hamstrings and Gluteus Maximus
 - Hip Flexion to strengthen Iliopsoas, Rectus Femoris, Sartorius, TFL and 5 adductors
 - Neck Extension, Flexion and rotation to strengthen Sternocleidomastoid & upper Trapezius
- Do deep relaxation as often as you can
- An excel worksheet with practices and dates was given to her to remember what to do and write comments after her practice and bring with her every time.

e – Results of recommendations after session 4

She looked happy and excited that she practiced 3 times this week and did not say anything about her migraines, leg and back pain. She loved bull's eye pranayama and deep relaxation and practiced when ever she felt like it. We shared how to delegate, ask for help or tell her family when she is in pain instead of working in spite of the pain.

Week 5 4/1/08

- Continued with Sacroiliac Stabilizing Exercise (SSE) and told her to start with this before JFS
- Introduced the remaining JFS and did the entire series, completed in Supta Vajrasana followed by 5 minutes Savasana.
- Emphasized the benefits of daily deep relaxation and letting go of her frustration, guilt, anger, fears or whatever she is holding through exhale.

Recommendation after session 5

Remember to be kind and compassionate to yourself.

- Practice abdominal or/and alternate breathing whenever you need
- Bulls eye pranayama for pain as often as you can

- Practice Sacroiliac Stabilizing Exercise (SSE) everyday
- Continue with Joint Free Series (JFS) with Ujjaye breath to bring your awareness inward, perform six repetitions with gentle movements harmonized with your breath. Do not do these unless it can be done without pain
- Do deep relaxation as often as you can because it strengthens the immune system, balances the nervous system and speeds up the healing process.
- An excel worksheet with practices and dates and a copy of JFS series for her to practice was given to her to remember what to do and write comments after her practice

e – Results of recommendations after session 5

VJF is getting better at alternate nostril breathing, pain pranayama (Bull's eye), SSE and loves "Sun" or "divine meditation". Feeling better reinforced her to practice SSE and JFS everyday. I had to tell her to practice 2-3 days and rest one day because too much strenuous work can inflame her condition.

Week 6 4/8/08

- Neck strengthening JFS holding each position for 3-6 breaths and relaxing down to strengthen Sternocleidomastoid and upper Trapezius on both sides.
- Bhujangasana (dynamic Cobra), not getting into deep lumbar curve, staying low for a few breaths, keeping the hands on the ground and for a few breaths hands in the back, to strength upper Trapezius, middle Trapezius, Erector Spinae in upper back and stretching Pectoralis major and anterior Deltoid
- Practiced remaining JFS with Ujjaye breath.

Recommendation after session 6

Remember to be kind and compassionate to yourself. Do not do these unless it can be done without pain.

- Practice previous pranayamas as you have been doing
- Practice Sacroiliac Stabilizing Exercise (SSE) everyday
- Practice neck strengthening in JFS holding each position for 3-6 breaths and then relaxing. For neck rotation, lie on your tummy and put one cheek on the ground and completely relax for a few minutes; then turn to the other side. If you are completely relaxed your shoulders will be on the ground.
- Practice dynamic Cobra, not getting into deep lumbar curve, staying low for a few breaths keeping the hands on the ground and then a few breaths with the hands in the back
- Continue with Joint Free Series (JFS) with Ujjaye breath followed by deep relaxation

e – Results of recommendations after session 6

She is getting stronger in her neck and shoulders. According to self reporting she was able to decrease her heart rate as a result of doing alternate Nostril breathing and decrease one pain medication by half because she is now doing yoga practices instead.

Week 7 4/14/08

The second muscle testing (MT) showed great improvement in neck strength, all hip flexors except Psoas. ROM showed great improvement in right internal rotators, neck flexion and rotation and she had very little pain in her shoulders. There was little improvement in her Rectus Abdominis and trunk; she was able to raise her upper body 5"-6" compare to not be able to rise at all. We need to work on Knee flexion, Psoas, Rectus Abdominus, right external rotators, all shoulder muscles, elbow and wrist.

- Introduced modified Sunbird to tone external rotators; adductors, Gluteus Maximus & deep six, hold for few seconds building slowly up to 20 seconds
- Introduced Psoas isolation test pose (Appendix 1) and how to engage Psoas and hold for few seconds to strengthen it.

Recommendation after session 7

Remember to be kind and compassionate to yourself. Listen to your body and do as many as you can do without pain. Practice only 3-4 days and take rest one day in between.

- Make pranayamas, meditation and deep relaxation part of your daily practice
- Practice Sacroiliac Stabilizing Exercise (SSE) everyday
- Continue with Joint Free Series (JFS) with Ujjaye breath by bringing your awareness inward and gentle movements harmonized with your breath more emphasis on the following:
 - Knee Extension and Flexion up to 10 reps, placing your hands on the shin
 - Hip Extension and Hip Flexion up to 10 reps and hold for few seconds building slowly up to 20 seconds
 - Modified Sunbird – Starting from hip extension, turn your foot outwards, 6-8” away from your body and hold for few seconds building up to 20 seconds
 - Practice Neck strengthening JFS as before. For lateral flexion, relax and let the head fall on one side and hold for 3 Ujjaye breaths, let the neck muscles relax and do the other side
- Practice dynamic Cobra, not getting into deep lumbar curve, staying low and few breaths keeping the hands on the ground and few breaths hands in the back
- Practice engaging Psoas and hold for 3 breaths by lying on your back, straight leg lifted 12” up and 12” out to the side from the center as practiced in our session. Bring it down and relax as soon as other muscles get engage or try to help.

e – Results of recommendations after session 7

We are very happy with her progress. The credit goes to incredible JFS, other practices and her motivation and dedication to feel better and strong. She is almost completely off the Cymbalta and feels more energy as a result.

Week 8 4/28/08

Today she had little back pain due to bad weather, so we started with side to side roll, pelvis rotation, Supta Pawanmuktasana and Apanasana to relieve her pain.

- Continued with Sacroiliac Stabilizing Exercise (SSE)
- Polished JFS and introduced some JFS variations:
 - Stick pose to tone shoulder and thoracic extension by keeping hands farther back and wider than the basic position
 - To work on Hip flexors and knee extensors by lifting the leg to a height where back begins to react.
 - Hip external rotation to strengthen Psoas
 - Cats to strengthen Erector Spinae while checking her spine to find weak place (lower spine) and by keeping the attention on flexing this region to increase the stamina and mobility in that place.
- Practiced Psoas isolation test pose to make sure she knows how to engage Psoas and held only 2 breaths
- Talked about Vata, Pitta and Kapha and introduced Yoni Mudra (**see Appendix 3**) and guided her through it and completed our session.

Recommendation after session 8

Remember to be kind and compassionate to yourself, over exerting one good day, can bring many bad days. Continue with Joint Free Series (JFS) or variations as we practiced in our session today. Do not do these unless it can be done without pain.

- Stick pose to tone shoulder and back by keeping hands farther back and wider than the basic position
- Knee Extension and Flexion up to 6-10 reps, placing your hands on the shin
- Hip Extension and Hip Flexion up to 6-10 reps and hold for few seconds building slowly up to 20 seconds

- Hip external rotation to strengthen Psoas
- Cats to strengthen spine by keeping the attention on flexing the week (lower spine) region to increase the stamina and mobility in that place.
- Sunbird – Starting from hip extension, turn your foot outwards, 6-8” away from your body and hold for few seconds building up to 20 seconds
- Practice dynamic Cobra, not getting into deep lumbar curve, staying low and few breaths keeping the hands on the ground and few breaths hands in the back
- Practice engaging Psoas and hold for 3 breaths by lying on your back, straight leg lifted 12” up and 12” out to the side from the center as practiced in our session. Bring it down and relax as soon as other muscles get engage or try to help.
- Complete your practice in deep relaxation or Yoni Mudra

e – Results of recommendations after session 8

VJF had shown great progress in last 8 weeks due to her Taurus characteristics, which are solidity, practicality, extreme determination and solid will power. But last week she only practiced twice because she wanted to walk and work in the yard which made her very tired and brought pain back. She promised to practice more and be gentle and take care of herself and listen to her body then mind. Enjoy the sun-shine and yard work without over doing it.

Week 9 5/5/08

That brought us very nicely into Dosha and Kosha discussion. She wanted to know how body, mind and soul are connected. I explained her 5 Kosha (**See appendix 4**) and how they are connected and have to be aligned to feel healthy. If they are misaligned body is not at ease as “DIS” “EASE” and becomes “DISEASED”. She loved the Gurudev’s teaching.

After learning about Koshas and how to care for them, she agreed to listen to her body and promised only to do what she can do without pain to avoid last week’s episode, drink at least 6-8 glasses of water or liquid everyday and cultivate positive thoughts (we shared Patanjali Sadhana Pada Sutra 33 – Pratipaksha bhavana).

Recommendation after session 9

Because yoga is a multi-dimensional approach to a multidimensional person, we need to work on all levels. The two subtlest Koshas Vijnana and Ananda are indicators of spiritual stress, not being connected to wisdom and higher power. Be gentle, listen to messages that come from a subtler level and nourish your Koshas for harmony and good health.

Annamaya Kosha – the physical body:

- Drink one or few glasses of warm water first thing in the morning for good health. First of all it increases the gravity in the intestine, stimulates peristalsis movement which sends the signals of evacuation thus propelling the fecal matters downwards along, with liquefying the stool, thus giving rise to comfortable evacuation and cleanses your system. In Ayurveda it has been proposed that water should be drunk just before sunrise or towards the fourth quarter of the night which acts like nectar thus by pacifying all the three doshas and giving rise to a disease free life and enhancing life span. Drinking hot water digests the Ama (gastric and intestinal toxins), opens up channels and toxins are more easily thrown out of the cell vs. cold water, which closes the channels and toxins get entrapped. Adding honey in lukewarm hot water not only provides energy to the cell but also increases functional energy for cleansing the body and gets rid of toxins faster than in the normal process. - Dr. Sudeep Kumar Brahma. (Charak Samhita by Agnivesha)
Mukunda ji’s Mantra – drink water, water, water; 6-8 glasses of water, herbal or green tea everyday.
- Massage your head with warm Almond oil, Coconut or Amla oil in winter and on room temperature in summer to nourish your hair. Use warm Almond oil, Olive oil or Sesame oil in winter and on room temperature in summer to nourish your skin, lubricate your joints and calm your nervous system.

- Practice JFS and Vata vinyasas from Ayurvedic Yoga Therapy. Slow movements with Ujjai breath or holding for few seconds stretch and strengthen the muscles, making you flexible and stronger respectively. Begin and end a sadhna with vata balancing practice will balance vata and will return prana to its home region. (Ayurvedic Yoga Therapy -MS)
- Prepare fresh colorful, vibrant aromatic and well balanced seasonal food with calm mind, good intension and love and share with your family and friends – these are converted into “Prana”, which keeps this subtle body healthy.
- Eat little ghee to cleanse your system and sattvic foods like almonds, dates, figs, milk, fruits like banana, orange, apple, guava, grapes etc in different seasons based on The 3- Season Diet by John Douillard

Pranamaya Kosha – the Pranic body made of prana:

- The committed practice of Joint Free Series with Ujjai breath will increase the pranic flow and energy.
- Pain Pranayama “Bulls Eye” will remove energetic blocks and lessen the pain
- Wave Breath and Nadi Shodhana or Alternate–Nostril breathing will build prana and calm the entire nervous system

Manomaya Kosha – the mind body made of thoughts:

- Keep positive thoughts, When thoughts are beneficial, the mind is content and at peace.
- Create or join a sangha(group), who keeps your mind and spirit elevated
- Nourish your mind by reading spiritual or heartwarming books. Listen mantra or uplifting music. Watch fun movies with friends and family, laugh, laugh and laugh
- Use small prayers or mantra to transform your mind. Mantras can transport the mind to a higher level of perception and cognition.

Vijnanamaya Kosha – the wisdom body:

- This body is responsible for inner growth, for ethics and for moral.
- Access it by meditation, reflection and proper nourishment consists of good company, spiritual literature and selfless service. (Structural Yoga Therapy-MS)
- Reflect on your day and practice by writing or journaling.

Anandamaya Kosha – the bliss body:

- This body is composed of happiness, the true self inside us.
- Experience true self or the bliss during Yoga Nidra, where whole psycho-physiological system relaxes, allows energy to flow freely, awareness of the mind increases, which helps to strengthen our immune system, balances our nervous system and speeds up the healing process. During this we enter deeper into ourselves, through the layers of consciousness, to encounter the treasures that we are. (from many Teachers and books)

e – Results of recommendations after session 9

It’s wonderful to see that VJF is doing great and has developed her own sadhana and modified her diet by adding almonds, dates and ginger tea in her diet and does sesame oil massage sometimes to work on some of her Doshas. She seemed very happy and content. It was good to see her moving towards Satvic state from Rajasic state.

Week 10 5/19/08

We worked on strengthen the following:

- Introduced neck strengthening JFS variations to tone Sternocleidomastoid and upper Trapezius.
- Introduced shoulder JFS variations:
 - Shoulder extension to strengthen anterior Deltoid and Pectoralis Major by keeping shoulders down and back and then lift the arms to a line parallel with the floor.

- Shoulder flexors for middle Deltoid by keeping arms up at the elbow but shoulders pulled down and back from the ear.
 - Thoracic lateral rotation to strengthen Abdominis Oblique and Latissimus Dorsi using arms mildly and maintaining the position with lifted chest and scapula pulled backward.
 - Cats to strengthen Erector Spinae while checking her spine to find weak place (lower spine) and by keeping the attention on flexing this region to increase the stamina and mobility in that place.
- Introduced Palm Tree Vinyasa first 15 poses to balance her Vata.

Recommendation after session 10

Remember to be kind and compassionate to yourself. Nourish and enjoy every moment. Do just few of them, not all in one session and do not do these unless it can be done without pain.

- Practice following JFS variations to strengthen these parts as we practiced in our session today.
 - Neck & shoulder JFS variation
 - Cats to strengthen Spine by keeping the attention on flexing the weak (lower spine) region to increase the stamina and mobility in that place.
 - Lateral flexion and rotation using arms mildly and maintaining the position with lifted chest and scapula pulled backward.
- Practice first 15 poses of Palm Tree Vinyasa
- Practice modified Sunbird, Psoas Isolation Pose and dynamic Cobra if you feel up to and complete your practice in deep relaxation or Yoni Mudra

An email was sent to her with the recommendation for the week and to write comments after her practice.

e – Results of recommendations after session 10

VJF had bronchitis and was not able to come last two weeks. I was afraid that she will be weak and might fall back into her old routine but she was in good spirit and was happy to be back. She mentioned that it was easy for her to comeback on track because she has become much disciplined about her sadhana. She is doing meditation, pranayama and JFS everyday and tries a few asana everyday depending on how is she feeling, ending her practice in deep relaxation. She also mentioned that she was annoyed and angry at someone and her Vata was all over the place. We tried to look deeper to find the root cause.

Week 11 6/10/08

We talked about her Doshas (**3 – Ayurvedic assessment**), and explained Prakriti and Vikriti (**Appendix 5: Prakriti & Vikriti**). I mentioned the Pitta and Vata imbalances attributes (Ayurvedic Yoga Therapy by Mukunda Stiles pages 31-32). Her eyes just rolled and she said, "how did you know?" She was just fascinated with the concept of Dosha, imbalances and how to balance them (**3 – Ayurvedic assessment**). After that we revised and worked on the following:

- Revised neck JFS to strengthen and tone Sternocleidomastoid and upper Trapezius.
- Revised shoulder JFS variations:
 - Shoulder extension to strengthen anterior Deltoid and Pectoralis Major by keeping shoulders down and back and then lift the arms to a line parallel with the floor.
 - Shoulder flexors for middle Deltoid by keeping arms up at the elbow but shoulders pulled down and back from the ear.
 - Thoracic lateral rotation to strengthen Abdominis Oblique and Latissimus Dorsi using arms mildly and maintaining the position with lifted chest and scapula pulled backward.
- Revised Palm Tree Vinyasa only first 15 poses to balance her Vata but avoided the last 12 poses not to press the tender points in her upper Trapezius until it becomes strong.
- Introduced Tree pose, placing other foot touching ankle and knee
- Introduced half and full Locust to tone her entire back by toning hip extensors, Hamstrings and Gluteus Maximus

Recommendation after session 11

Remember to be kind and compassionate to yourself. Nourish and enjoy every moment. Do just few of them, not all in one session and do not do these unless it can be done without pain.

- Practice following JFS variations as we practiced in our session today.
 - Neck & shoulder
 - Lateral flexion and rotation using arms mildly and maintaining the position with lifted chest and scapula pulled backward.
- Practice first 15 poses of Palm Tree Vinyasa
- Practice one or two - modified Sunbird, Psoas Isolation Pose, dynamic Cobra, Tree pose or Locust. Complete your practice in deep relaxation or Yoni Mudra.

An email was sent to her with the recommendation for the week and to write comments after her practice.

Week 12 6/16/08

Today was our 3rd and final testing day. In comparison to week 7 testing, she showed great improvement in ROM and strength in her neck rotation & left shoulder Extension. ROM has gone down in Internal Rotation and right shoulder extension due to Vata imbalance or tightness and tiredness due to yesterday's furniture assembling work. Great improvement in MT in Psoas and some improvement in entire hip region, elbow and wrist, shoulder stayed same. We focused on the following area: Internal Rotation, Knee flexion and shoulder abduction, which still needs work, except those she felt that she has become much stronger by 12th week.

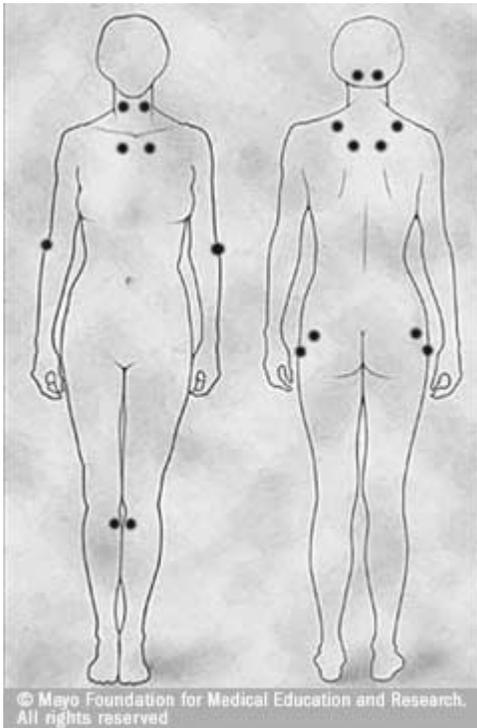
- Revised Internal Hip Rotation by not leaning too much to side and using her Gluteus Medius, Minimus and Tensor Facia Lata instead of Latisimus Dorsi and Abdominis Oblique.
- Revised Knee flexion to bring closer & hold the shin for few seconds with the breath to make Hamstring stronger.
- Revised Shoulder abduction by bringing awareness to Triceps Brachii and keep the elbow straight instead of bending.

Recommendation after session 12

VJF will continue her practice and will attend my pain class at the Hospital this summer and is looking forward to join regular Hatha class this fall at my studio. Her great improvement in quality of life is due to JFS, modified asanas, her discipline, determination and positive attitude towards life and to feel better and live a normal life. We had great time and admiration for Structural Yoga Therapy in this process.

2 a – Name and description of the condition

Fibromyalgia is a chronic condition characterized by widespread pain in your muscles, ligaments and tendons, as well as fatigue and multiple tender points — places on your body where slight pressure causes pain. Fibromyalgia is more common in women than in men. Previously, fibromyalgia was known by other names such as fibrositis, chronic muscle pain syndrome, psychogenic rheumatism and tension myalgias.



Although the intensity of symptoms may vary, they'll probably never disappear completely. It may be reassuring to know, however, that fibromyalgia isn't progressive or life-threatening, treatments and self-care steps can improve fibromyalgia symptoms and general health.

b – Gross and subtle body common symptoms

Signs and symptoms of fibromyalgia can vary, depending on the weather, stress, physical activity or even the time of day. Common signs and symptoms include:

- Widespread pain
- Fatigue and sleep disturbances
- Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
- Headaches and facial pain
- Heightened sensitivity
- Depression
- Numbness or tingling sensations in the hands and feet (paresthesia)
- Difficulty concentrating
- Mood changes
- Chest pain
- Dry eyes, skin and mouth
- Painful menstrual periods
- Dizziness
- Anxiety

c – Related challenges – lifestyle, diet, limitations on activities and depression

"Fibromyalgia isn't real" is very frustrating. Besides dealing with the pain, fatigue and negative emotions, such as guilt, anger, resentment, aggression, mental and physical exhaustion and fear, one may also have to deal with the frustration of having a condition that's often **misunderstood**. In addition to educating own self about Fibromyalgia; one has to provide information to family, friends and co-workers. According to many studies "Pain stresses your brain" -The Journal of Neuroscience, said the brain's state of equilibrium is disrupted when chronic pain causes the frontal cortex -- linked to emotion -- to never "shut up." The people with pain use their brain differently than the pain-

free group. Changes in brain wiring may make it harder for those with chronic pain to make a decision or be in a good mood to get up in the morning. Pain may produce depression and other abnormalities because it disturbs the balance of the brain as a whole.

3 – **Ayurvedic assessment** and Ayurvedic based yoga recommendations

VJF's prakriti is Pitta-Kapha-Vata and her Vikriti is Vata-Pitta. (See **Appendix 4:** for Prakriti & Vikriti). It is very important to know the current Vikriti then Prakriti because the Dosha's are very unstable and our work is to constantly bring them back to balance. From an Ayurvedic point of view Kapha is stabilizing force of the body, Pitta is the warmth of the mind and digestive strength and Vata is the rhythm of life and the connection to the life-force (SYT –MS page 321). Pain is Vata or pranic imbalance. The trauma resulting from the accident or injury can prolonged Pranic imbalance, where Vata gets displaced and does not return to its home neighborhood "Pelvic Cavity" and seat of balance "Colon". It becomes chronic pain and imbalances other Doshas too. This can result in fear, confusion, ignorance, anxiety and panic attack.

Excess Vata: VJF's Doshic Symptom logy

- Fatigue
- Irregular pains
- Noisy joints
- Loneliness
- Depression
- More pain during windy, cold and wet weather,
- Dehydration and chronic pain for more than 20 years

Vata enables our fluids to flow, our nerve impulses to fire, our thoughts to coalesce, and, as well as our wastes to pass. In other words, vata keeps all of our systems going and contributes to great vitality. Regardless of which dosha is imbalanced, balancing vata and returning pranas to their home region and function can rectify all other doshas. For this reason she will need to have a sadhna which begins and concludes with vata balancing practice. (Ayurvedic Yoga Therapy -MS)

Vata Treatment Strategy for Physical Ama and a Rajasic Mind:

- Massage with Sesame oil and Almond oil in winter pacifies vata however sesame oil is best oil for skin as vata remains dominant on the skin in the summer but in the entire body in winter.
- JFS: slowly, deliberately and with great concentration to connect movement with breath. Palm Tree-Tadasana, Balancing tree-Vrkasana, stick – Dandasana and Auspicious – Bhadrasana Vinyasas are done rhythmically at a slow breath pace with more emphasis on breath than asana
-
- Pranayama: Pain pranayama, Nadi Shodhana, Wave Breath and soft Ujjaye breath, long and slightly audible. Regular practice will refine prana. (class notes)
- Yoni Mudra also guides displaced Vata back to its home the pelvic cavity and the seat of balance colon (taken from class notes)
- Read Patanjali's Yoga sutras on suffering sutras II 16, II 33,II 46, II 47, II 48. Sutra II 16: "The suffering from pain that has not yet arisen is avoidable."—M. Stiles
- Self-study (svadyaya) that correlates in Ayurvedic language to a deeply pacifying method for balancing Vata, which develops the prana and stilling the mind. It also means that concerns the true Self. Study of uplifting scriptures and journaling will help to elevate the mind and bring you closer to true Self.
- Follow all the recommendations in session 9 to heal all 5 koshas.
- A Vata issue once resolved will free up not only the imbalanced pranas that Vata was suppressing it will also promote healthy Pitta. Peacefulness and sattvic state is sign of balanced Vata. (notes)

Excess Pitta: Anger, criticism, overworking, frustration and guilt

Pitta Treatment Strategy For Physical Ama and a Rajasic Mind:

- Massage with Sesame oil and coconut oil to calm down Pitta.

- Sun salutation, Cobra, sunbird Vinyasa, the practice of creative sequence of asanas that stimulate them to feel alert but not hot; should feel the stretch in asana but not burn will help to keep Pitta in balance. - Ayurvedic Yoga Therapy by MS (focus on the qualities of the stretch or strengthening in the asana.-delete)
- Pitta's home neighborhood is the abdominal cavity and its seat of balance is the small intestine. Bhastrika pranayama is beneficial when confined to the agni region of the middle abdomen. Agni is an interrelated aspect of Pitta. It is the bodily fire that transforms foods into body tissues and information into knowledge and experience. - Ayurvedic & Structural Yoga Therapy by MS
- Enthusiasm and love of life are balanced Pitta - Ayurvedic Yoga Therapy by MS

4 – Common body reading

One usually has depressed postural appearance forward head, rounded shoulder, sunken chest and if these conditions exacerbate for long time they might develop Khyphosis.

5 – Contraindicated yoga practices and general activities to modify or eliminate

Any activity or competitive type of exercises that causes pain, contraindicated types of yoga such as Bikram and Ashtanga should be avoided. Most of the time pain also causes doshic imbalance. According to Mukunda Stiles, "Regardless of which dosha is imbalanced, balancing Vata and returning the pranas to their home region function can rectify all other doshas. For this reason all students need to have a sadhana that begins and concludes with Vata balancing". If the pain is clearly a Vata issue a slow mindful practice should be encouraged. A Vata issue once resolved will free up not only the imbalanced pranas that Vata was suppressing it will also promote healthy Pitta. If the pain is due to a Pitta imbalance and there is inflammation, a heating practice should be avoided. If the cause of the pain is a Kapha imbalance and weakness of muscles, lots of stretching should be avoided and focus should be on strengthening.

6 – General recommendations for the condition

a – Therapeutic/free of pain

The most important thing in pain to remember to breath, When people are in chronic pain, they hold their breath or breath very shallow, which causes the muscles to contract due to poor circulation.

- Deep breathing or wave breath and intercostals breathing will make you relax. It will make lungs, diaphragm, intercostal, back and abdominal muscles work more, generating heat in the core of the body.
- Alternate Nostril Breathing has calming effect on the emotions, reducing fear and anxiety, and diminishes tension held in the muscles and the mind.
- Pain pranyamas are excellent tools to disintegrate, dissolve and let go of pain by sustaining the prana into the pain.

Doing Joint Free Series with Ujjai Breath will:

- Heighten awareness and distinction between stretching and contracting muscles and connect with their body.
- Move synovial fluid with in the joint capsule and will enhance vascular circulation.
- Release subconscious patterns by bringing to consciousness because specific posture at the point of trauma or injury often holds a chronic trigger for the mind to go unconscious.
- Free up the prana /energy to flow into the region being exercised.

Yoni Mudra will help to bring Vata home. Deep relaxation will strengthen the immune system and balance the nervous system. Meditation and self study will heal all Koshas and harmonize the body, mind and spirit.

b – Stabilize situation including lifestyle recommendations

- **Reduce stress** - By developing a plan to avoid or limit overexertion and emotional stress. Learn how to say no without guilt; don't change your routine completely and stay active. Do the above stress management techniques, such as pranayams, asanas, meditation and deep relaxation.

c – Maintenance and long term considerations

- **Get enough sleep** - Because fatigue is one of the main characteristics of Fibromyalgia, getting sufficient sleep is essential. In addition to allotting enough time for sleep, practice good sleep habits, such as going to bed and getting up at the same time each day and limiting daytime napping.
- **Exercise regularly** - At first, exercise may increase your pain. But doing it regularly often decreases symptoms. Appropriate exercises may include yoga, walking, swimming, biking and water aerobics.
- **Pace yourself** – Listen to your body and don't over exert on good days
- **Maintain a healthy lifestyle.** - Eat healthy foods. Limit your caffeine intake. Do something that you find enjoyable and fulfilling every day and be happy.

7 – Questions and answers on Yoga Therapy from www.yogaforums.com

Q1. I teach several students with Fibromyalgia. They experience more pain during seasonal weather changes. What would you suggest to help them through these times of struggle?

A1- As a vata stress induced condition, this situation will definitely have aggravated symptoms especially during spring, fall. But in fact each season may produce a shift in the constellation of symptoms associated with the situation. Main practices are learning to relax, keep a regulated lifestyle, and eliminating what you really should not be doing. This condition has been addressed in previous queries. You can see the archives of my responses at the searchable website www.yogaforums.com - M

Q2. I have several students with Fibromyalgia, one of whom is in regular pain. I tried the Joint Freeing Series with them and it triggered more pain the day after. I took your recommendations and tried it slower with less repetitions, more breath and only extending 3/4 of their ROM. This also did not work and caused pain. I'm wondering if you have any other insights as to why this is so painful for them. I understand Fibro and have learned that less is definitely more with these folks, but I don't understand the pain aspect and what triggers it. Any insight is appreciated. With many thanks and much respect-Christa

A2 -This condition sometimes has acute phases especially in the trigger points across the trapezius muscle of the upper back. Without hearing what specific pains were aggravated i would guess that is the problem your students are having. In this case i would suggest minimizing upper body work of the JFS and instead do the rest of the series. It sounds like you did all you could to modify the series by being more gentle and that is always first choice for adapting. In addition i find working with restorative poses, and especially with the support of a guided yoga nidra tape (avaialbe from Richard Miller's site www.nondual.com) is most beneficial. - M

Q3 - As I use meditation more and more, I find myself wanting to invent my own-guided visualizations/meditations for the students. However, I wonder if you know of a good source to locate specific meditations pertaining to chakras, specific medical conditions (beyond the ones visualizing the red and blood cells doing battle), like diabetes, fibromyalgia, Parkinson's, etc. An obscure question, but you never know with you!

A3 - Visualizations are good for pitta predominant students such as yourself. I would not have a reference for conditions such as you are recommending except to see Carl Simonton's literature on cancer clients he is one of the first to use this method in medical intervention, he is an oncologist. I find chakra meditations are not beneficial and do not recommend them. Instead concept of simply opening yourself to wave of breath (described in my book page pg. 53-55) which travels in the central channel of the chakras but not focusing specifically on them as Spirit knows best how to open us beyond our minds self centered interests. - M

Q4 - I have a new student with chronic pain from Fibromyalgia. Behind her R knee is painful, and her R leg is shorter than the L. She has pain in the psoas area as well on the R side. Before our yoga class, I gently pulled on her R leg (as I have seen you do in our Wichita training) and she said it gave her quite a bit of relief. Would your joint-freeing series be helpful to her? Should I encourage more breathing, relaxation and maybe meditation for her? Thank you for your consideration. Your Q & A's are a blessing! With great respect and love.

A4 - Chronic fatigue is a vata (pranic) imbalance. Changes in leg length are often due to the sacroiliac joint being unstable. I will show you how to work with this when I come next month. The joint freeing series addresses this and is

potentially a great help. In addition learning how to relax specific areas of the body individually, pranayama directed to that relaxation, and meditation on restoring the pitta (fire) energy to the belly can be of benefit. To work with energy it is best to learn to do these skills yourself then your energy will teach others energy. It will not come from didactic presentation, but from the subtle body sharing its state with another. In this way subconsciously you can be of more assistance. - M

Q5 - Q – from Tatiana. 1 - I have a new student with fibromyalgia. I am not sure where to start with her, besides pranayama and sitting. Many movements create pain. I understood your answer about Asana is not Yoga. Yet, it is very difficult for these students to sit and breathe. Any suggestions?

A5 - I recommend emphasis upon relaxation in between movements. And all movements to be connected with breathing, so that reflex of breathing becomes established. Fibromyalgia clients often hold their breath and when they don't they are shallow breathers. Establishing long deliberate breath with exhalation twice as long as inhalation is the goal. Doing this will create oxygen saturated blood and promote energy. Studies show that deep breathing creates 7x the oxygen availability of shallow breathing. Give them poses they can do – lying or standing if sitting is painful - but emphasize breathing. - M

Q6 - A friend of mine (he is a massage therapist) is currently treating a woman with fibromyalgia. She is interested in yoga as therapy for her condition. She is fairly active and would like to use yoga as treatment for joint/muscle pain. I have received suggestions on a sequence of breathing/postures from the Internet. I was wondering what breathing techniques/poses and sequencing of poses you would recommend for this condition. I would really like to help this person out. I would appreciate your input.

A6 - Fibromyalgia symptoms include trigger points of neuro-muscular sensitivity that are located in the shoulder girdle, pelvis, and sometimes extend into the abdominal and leg region. In more difficult cases they can include chronic fatigue, digestive disorders and a wasting away of tissue. In general I recommend a vata balancing practice to be at the core – specific sequence of motions done with more focus on breath than asana. By developing the breath into prana this condition is greatly improved. The key is to learn the practices by someone who knows how to develop prana. This body should not be looked at as a neurological or muscular problem. Should a yoga master not be available then other practices such as Chi Gung, Pranic Healing, and Tai Chi are quite helpful, when given by a master teacher in these methods. - M

8 – References and websites

Special thanks to Ms Debora Mangala Warner for her guidance, knowledge and support during and after our course

Special thanks to Nichole Nurenberg-Miller's paper for inspiration and knowledge on [Healing Injury on Each of the Five Koshas - Nichole Nurenberg-Miller.pdf](#)

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Websites

Many websites

9 – Appendix

Appendix 1 – Psoas Isolation Test

To see if the client can hold this position before doing the isolation muscle test. Client is supine, their straight leg lifted 12” out to the side, abducted 12” from the center and the hip externally rotated with the knee pointed out. Palpate the Psoas medially to the Rectus Femoris and laterally to the Gracillis. Make sure Psoas is engaged and ask to hold.

Appendix 2 – Bulls eye Pranayama for pain from Hatha yoga Pradipika V,9-11

1. Breathe into the pain, send your breath into the pain and watch what happens.
2. Describe the pain to yourself – Is it sharp, dull, hot, cold, radiating, specific? Then breathe into your pain consistently. Imagine the center of the pain is bull’s eye, your breath is the bow and your awareness is arrow. Inhale energy, and then imagine that as you exhale, energy is spreading throughout the bull’s eye. Exhale the breath but hold pranic energy in that place so that it builds.

Appendix 3: Yoni Mudra

The optimal time for this practice is at the beginning or end of your day just upon awakening or getting into bed. It can be done seated in bed or lying down. The morning practice will charge you up for an active day and the evening practice will help you dive into a deeper state of rest to rejuvenate you more thoroughly. It is especially beneficial at night if you have had fatigue or difficulty having uninterrupted sleep.



Yoni Mudra

The Yoni Mudra is done by placing your palms downward flat on your lower abdomen so that the thumbs align straight across, fingers together so that your forefingers touch, making a triangle in the space between your hands. The pelvic bones resemble the physical and energetic shape of the Yoni, a downward pointing triangle. Feel the “currents of sensation” which may arise anywhere. Whatever you experience is your energy body. It may have emotional, thought, or a kinesthetic component to the sensations. Disregard analyzing it, just feel it, and be with it.

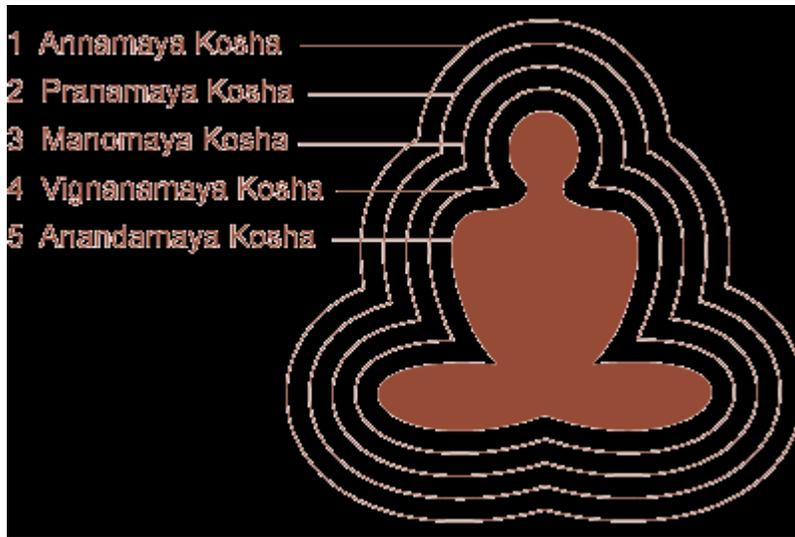
For self healing and as a foundation for connecting with your prana, you deepen this energy pattern by placing your hands frequently in the Yoni Mudra. It is especially beneficial to do this after yoga practice. Focus on directing your energies to come home from the extremities to this sacred shape (Yoni or Source) beneath your hands. This shape is the archetype of the feminine energy of receptivity. Follow your sense of the energy for some time, connecting to your energy until it feels steady. Sometimes the increased energy will tend to become polarized. In this case you will find that there is not one place that grabs your attention but two. When you perceive this, put your right hand on the lower energy spot and your left hand on the upper one. Encourage whatever is arising as an emotion, energy feeling, or a current of sensation and follow the energy wherever it leads you. This can result in a wide array of phenomenon such as deep stillness, physical motions, trembling, irregular breathing, or as suppressed emotions rising for expression. After the energy runs its course it will naturally seek its Source. As it comes to completion continue to follow its expression to a natural place of resolution. When the spontaneous component is over, and then slowly lower your hands to Yoni Mudra on your lower abdomen, to your four pelvic bones (two iliac bones at the outer upper pelvis and the two pubic bones at the lower center) with a moderate pressure to receive the rejuvenated energy and store it into your pelvic bones. You may find that in moving the hands lower you need to support your elbows with pillows or a yoga block for comfort. Others find that bending their knees

works best. Remain here until you feel a rejuvenation of your energy. Remember to persist in your practice yet stay detached from expecting specific outcomes. At first don't do for more than 5 -10 minutes of this practice, until you develop a consistent regular practice.

You may be drawn to this placement as an indication that your biological Vata quality has come home (the large intestine is home to Vata and small intestine home to samana prana – Vata in one of its subtler forms). Many students find that this technique is not really a technique but the result of a feeling of pranic harmony. By lingering in this place, deeper insights into lifestyle changes that are wanted or spiritual insights into your subtler nature will arise. This is the experience of moving through the Koshas as you are uncovering the multidimensional experience of your energy bodies.

Appendix 4:

The Five Koshas



According to Taittiriya Upanishad our ancient scripture our true nature is hidden from our perception because five sheaths enclose it. These sheaths are called Pancha Kosha means 5 sheaths.

Pancha Kosha

Sanskrit

Anna-maya Kosha	Body sheath made of food	Gross Physical Body
Prana-maya Kosha	Energy body made of prana or chi	Subtle Body
Mana-maya Kosha	Instinctive-mind-made of thoughts	Mind Body
Vijnana-maya Kosha	Body sheath made of Wisdom	Consciousness Body
Ananda-maya Kosha	Body Sheath of Bliss	Transcendental Body

In Sanskrit language “maya” means “Illusion” and all these bodies are illusion because according to yoga Philosophy the “True Self” is hidden beyond the bliss body.

1. **Annamaya Kosha:** Annamaya Kosha is the physical body which needs nourishment to survive. When we eat overcooked, stale, animal-based food, the food body becomes devitalized and has difficulty converting into the needs of second body. This body needs to be taken care by proper diet, moderate exercise and relaxation to make us healthy, flexible and strong.

2. **Pranamaya Kosha:** This subtle body's anatomy is made of energy channels called Nadis, which terminate in spinning energy centers called "Chakras", which means "wheel" implying an ever-spinning center of activity. This subtle body is composed of our senses and emotional states. When we are fed beautiful sense impressions – art, nature and eat colorful, vibrant aromatic food – these are converted into "Prana", which keeps this subtle body healthy.
3. **Manomaya Kosha:** This is the body of the mind, which is dependant of the former two and has its own capacity to generate positive or negative thoughts. The nature of this body is thought. When thoughts are beneficial, the mind is content and at peace. According to swami Vivekananda "Actions are mighty, thoughts are almighty". This body can be nourished by "Mantras", which means "the word which when contemplated transforms the mind". Mantras can transport the mind to a higher level of perception and cognition.
4. **Vijnanamaya Kosha:** This body is made of transcendent thoughts and it is awareness free of self-centeredness. This conscious body lies deeper than the previously described ones and is also interactive and dependant. This body is responsible for inner growth, for ethics and for moral. This state is accessed by meditation, reflection, keeping good company, selfless service and by reading spiritual and uplifting literature like the Bible, the Tora, and the Bagavad Gita etc.
5. **Anandamaya Kosha:** This is the most subtle body and without its existence life is impossible. This body is said to be as small as mustard seed, seated in the secret chamber of the interior heart to the right of the physical heart. This body is composed of happiness and doesn't need anything to generate its happiness because that is its natural state. It interacts with the others like the sun affecting our planet. This blissful body beyond words is perceived in flashes only in short moments, an indescribable experience where duality ends and I AM expresses the unity. We generally assume that if we want to explore new areas of experience, we first need to acquire knowledge and then to apply it. Yet in reality it works the opposite way. In the beginning we experience something new and then only begin to search for concepts that may explain our new experiences and connect them to our current understanding. The search is mostly intuitively and often subconsciously. This process is specific for all kinds of expansion of consciousness which help us perceive more subtle areas than the material world.

Appendix 5: Prakriti & Vikriti -First, everyone possesses all three doshas. At the moment of conception, each of us has a unique combination of Vata, Pitta, and Kapha that stays the same for the rest of our life. This is known as your prakriti (a Sanskrit term that means "nature" or "the first creation"). Your prakriti is your base point and it determines what will keep you in harmony with your nature and what will cause you to get out of balance and become sick. Trying to change your prakriti would be like trying to change your stature from short and stocky to tall and thin, or changing the color of your eyes or the texture of your hair. In contrast, your vikriti is the current state of imbalance in your doshas. – Deepak Chopra

Fruit Prayer by Mother Teresa

The fruit of the silence is prayer,
 The fruit of the prayer is faith,
 The fruit of the faith is Love,
 The fruit of the love is Service,
 The fruit of the service is Peace.

10 – Biography

Jaishree (Jaya) Gupta studied at the University of Michigan, NJIT and MIT and worked for a large corporation for almost 21 years as an IT professional. After an accident and living in pain for more than 2 years, in 2003, Jaya left the corporate world and her life was transformed when she became a yoga instructor. Jaya has been practicing yoga for more than 40 years after first learning from her father in India at the age of six. She is a Yoga Alliance registered E-RYT-500/ Integral yoga teacher and is certified in the "Yoga of the Heart" program by Nischala Joy Devi, former director of Dr. Dean Ornish's program for reversing heart disease. Currently Jaya offers private yoga and

therapy sessions and teaches Basic, Gentle/Chair, Yoga for Stress Management as well as, Yoga for back, neck and shoulder pain relief classes at the local hospital in Oak Hill, VA and Sunrise Assisted Living. Her life and her yoga are dedicated to divine, her Gurus and help to relieve the pain of others, heal and to teach them to care for themselves.