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Yoga and Chiropractic

“There is a universal intelligence in all matter, continuously giving to it all its properties and actions, thus maintaining it in existence, and giving this intelligence its expression. A living thing has the intelligence of the universe inborn within it, referred to as its innate intelligence. Interference with this innate intelligence causes dis-ease.” – R. W. Stephenson, D.C, 1927.

Chiropractic was formulated in 1895 by D. D. Palmer, but moving bones of the spine is mentioned as early as the works of Hippocrates of ancient Greece. In 1927, long before the “new age”, and long before the rebirth of yoga and meditation in the West, the philosophy of chiropractic was explained in these principles quoted above.

In 1974 I was introduced to both Kundalini yoga and chiropractic and have been blessed with the opportunity to serve as a teacher and a chiropractor for almost 40 years. I want to share the similarity of these two sciences and how they complement each other.

Yoga is a specific set of tools and techniques that you can use to release old patterns and attachments in order to more clearly experience your inner truth, which is one with the truth of all creation or SAT NAM. Truth is my name. Truth is my identity. Infinite Truth is the ultimate reality of the universe. You are a spiritual being that has chosen to incarnate on planet Earth to have a human experience. As a powerful spiritual being, you attract challenges in your life to create conflict and resolution. As you transcend and grow through these experiences, you release the old patterns and blocks that have accumulated throughout this and past lives. As you release these obstacles, you begin to ACT with truth and righteousness (dharma) as opposed to REACT with fear, anger, distrust, insecurity, and attachment (karma). You begin to surrender to the guidance of your higher self or soul and see through the illusions and distractions of your lower self or ego. Specifically, in Kundalini yoga, you are balancing and clearing the pathways to allow the flow of Kundalini to rise up from your root chakra at the base of your spine, to your crown chakra at the top of your head and into your 8th chakra which is the aura that surrounds you.

In chiropractic, the intention is to release interference to your nervous system that is blocking your innate or inborn intelligence from expressing itself through your physical body as health. This innate intelligence is a part of the Universal Intelligence that is in all things. In the words of Yogi Bajan, “Health is your birthright.” Dis-ease is a result of interference with the innate intelligence of your body. The nervous system controls your entire body, so interference with the flow of communication between your brain and body is the source of dis-ease. If you release the interference, then your body’s innate intelligence is able to restore balance and health. This interference is often created by subluxations of your spinal vertebrae which causes irritation to your spinal nerves. Subluxation means “a condition of less light” and is the term chiropractors use to describe this imbalance. Through proper adjustment and balancing of the spine, your subluxation interference is removed, your lights are turned back on, and you are able to heal yourself.

(over)

In yoga, the focus is on the mental and spiritual effects, but any practitioner knows the improvement of physical health that happens with regular practice. In chiropractic, the focus is on the benefits to the physical body, but anyone who gets regular chiropractic care knows the powerful changes that happen on the mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions.

As someone who has worked with thousands of people in both arenas, I can say with complete certainty that whether you are releasing old karmas (yoga), or releasing nerve interference (chiropractic), that this is the same process viewed from two different vantage points. There is no difference between the yogic concept of Sat Nam and the chiropractic concept of Universal Intelligence, no difference between your soul, and your innate intelligence.

So if you are releasing the same blocks, do you need to do both yoga and chiropractic?

Any type of holistic work is going to share these principles, whether it be Tai Chi, acupuncture, yoga, chiropractic, Zen meditation, etc. But because each works in a very different way, often the blocks that are released are very different. In my experience, Kundalini yoga and meditation is the most all encompassing technique and eventually you can heal any block with a regular practice. But with chiropractic, you can access and release some issues much quicker and easier. In fact, my practice members find that yoga helps clear their chiropractic blocks more easily, and Chiropractic adjustments open up a deeper level of spiritual awakening in a person's yoga and meditation practice.

What these two approaches also share in common is they both need to be done regularly. In yoga, you can have a profound experience after one or two classes, but for real growth, you need to have a consistent daily practice. Without a daily practice you accumulate stress and negativity in your aura and according to Yogi Bhanan you begin to "stink", just as if you didn't bathe or shower daily.

Similarly you can go to a chiropractor with a specific symptom and get relief in a few visits. But these symptoms will reoccur because the cause of the symptoms has not been addressed. The true power of chiropractic is not just about getting short term relief, but about turning on your body's innate self-healing power on all levels. Health is not just an absence of symptoms. It is about vitality, energy, enthusiasm, creativity, radiance, and spirituality. This is only achieved by keeping your innate intelligence flowing through regular chiropractic care. Going to the chiropractor is more like going to a gym or a yoga class. You need to keep going to get results. You don't just go when you feel poorly, and you don't stop when you feel better.

Yogi Bhanan, for those of you who have not heard of him, was the yogi who brought Kundalini yoga to the West in 1969. Yogi Bhanan said many years ago when he was speaking to a room of chiropractors that the human nervous system was never designed to move through the earth's magnetic field at high velocity, as it does when we drive a car. He said this is very stressful to the nervous system and is addressed by chiropractic adjustments. He even went so far as to say that it should be required that anyone who has a driver's license should have to get regular chiropractic care!

Yogi Bhanan also said many times that our age is determined by the flexibility of our spine. By combining Kundalini yoga with chiropractic, you can achieve this flexibility and live Healthy, Happy, and Holy for many years.