



Inspired by the life and teachings of Guru Ram Das, the charity was established in 2003 to support the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of individuals and communities most in need. Our primary activity is providing Kundalini Yoga and Meditation classes. Although our charity was founded by Sikh yoga practitioners, these classes are not religious and are taught by people from a wide variety of faith backgrounds (including atheist).

Kundalini Yoga is particularly effective at helping people in crisis or when they feel vulnerable, since it is far easier to move the body when feeling stressed than it is to sit still or take on board clever ideas. Just 30-40 minutes of Kundalini Yoga is usually sufficient to completely change a person's experience. Even if this oasis of calm wellbeing is not a permanent state, it is still invaluable in aiding positive decisions, supporting recovery or keeping going in adversity - and of course one can always come back to class next week or practise at home.

GRDP has helped many different groups in this way, including: the elderly, those with dementia, recovering addicts, homeless, victims of domestic violence, people on benefits or low income and those struggling with mental health challenges and chronic health conditions.

GRDP vet the qualifications of all of their teachers, and sign them up to a professional code of conduct. GRDP has an expert panel of advisors providing support to teachers, which consists of a medic, yoga therapists, yoga teacher trainers, counsellors, and advisors on chronic fatigue, dementia and children's yoga.

WHAT IS KUNDALINI YOGA?

All Yoga brings calm and vitality to the practitioner. Core strength and fitness are very efficiently improved through a skilfully chosen sequence of physical exercises and postures. Harmony and restoration are promoted through mindfulness, correct alignment, breathing exercises and relaxation.

Kundalini Yoga does all of this, but also adds other ingredients too. Creating a pulse with the rhythmic movement of breath and body increases the flushing out of toxins and releasing of muscle tension. Using voice (mantra) and subtle posture (internal body locks, eye positions, finger positions), supports a more profound integration of changes and potentially deeper states of meditation.

A class typically lasts 45-90 minutes and often contains four distinct parts – warm up, kriya (set of yoga postures/exercises), relaxation and meditation. Anybody can do Kundalini Yoga. Since it incorporates everything from sitting comfortably and simply breathing to advanced yoga postures, sets and meditations can be chosen to suit the practitioner's ability.

RESEARCH

There is a vast body of research on the subject of Yoga and Meditation, and a smaller but growing body of work on Kundalini Yoga. Examples are given overleaf. This research widely supports the assertion that Yoga is a safe, cost effective and effective methodology for improving both physical and mental health. As Kundalini Yoga has Hatha Yoga postures as its building blocks, and incorporates an approach to sitting in awareness similar to Mindfulness, many of the studies in either of these two fields are relevant here.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

The **Yoga Alliance** website has 21 pages listing research papers on many different yoga and meditation topics including *Elderly and Aging* and *Cognitive and Emotional Functioning*.

https://www.yogaalliance.org/About_Yoga/Research_on_the_Benefits_of_Yoga

The **Alzheimer's Research and Prevention Foundation** are dedicated to preventing Alzheimer's disease by funding integrative Medicine Research and providing educational training, outreach and memory screening

alzheimersprevention.org

RESEARCH PAPERS (examples)

Effects of Meditation and Music-Listening on Blood Biomarkers of Cellular Aging and Alzheimer's Disease in Adults with Subjective Cognitive Decline: An Exploratory Randomized Clinical Trial. *Authors: KE Innes, TK Selfe, K Brundage, C Montgomery, S Wen, S Kandati, H Bowles, DS Khalsa, Z Huysmans*

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-11-meditation-music-blood-markers-cellular.html>

Both Kirtan Kriya (a Kundalini Yoga meditation) and music listening significantly improves memory and cognitive function, as well as sleep and psychological status. Kirtan Kriya is significantly more effective than music in relation to stress, mood, and quality of life.

Yoga Meditation Associated with Better Mental Health: A pilot study of yogic meditation for family dementia caregivers with depressive symptoms: effects on mental health, cognition, and telomerase activity. *Authors:*

Lavretsky H, Epel ES, Siddarth P, Nazarian N, Cyr NS, Khalsa DS, Lin J, Blackburn E, Irwin MR. Kirtan Kriya (a Kundalini Yoga meditation) is significantly more effective than relaxation music in lowering levels of depressive symptoms, and improving mental health and cognitive functioning. The KK group also showed a 43% improvement in telomerase activity (c.f. 3.7% for relaxation music).

The Anti-Aging Effect of Meditation: Cerebral Blood Flow Differences between Long-Term Meditators and non-Meditators. *Authors: Andrew B. Newberg, Nancy Wintering, Mark R. Waldman, Daniel Amen, Dharma S. Khalsa, Abass Alavi.* People who meditate have a younger, healthier-looking brain. They also have more brain blood flow at rest.

Relationships between mindfulness practice and levels of mindfulness, medical and psychological symptoms and well-being in a mindfulness-based stress reduction program *Authors: James Carmody and Ruth A. Baer.* The practice of mindfulness meditation leads to increases in mindfulness, which in turn leads to symptom reduction and improved well-being.

The benefits of Yoga Practice compared to Physical Exercise in the Management of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus: a Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis *Authors: Ranil Jayawardena, Priyanga Ranasinghe, Tharindu Chathuranga and Ambikanandan Misra.* If performed correctly, yoga can affect muscles and glands, eliciting advantageous physiological changes. Evidence suggests that yoga interventions appear to be equal and/or superior to exercise in most outcome measures.

BOOKS

The Principals and Practice of Yoga in Healthcare by *Sat Bir Singh, Lorenzo Cohen, Timothy McCall and Shirley Telles,* Published by *Handspring Publishing, 2016.* This is a medical text book on Yoga and Yoga research.

Meditation as Medicine by *Dr. Dharma Singh Khalsa and Cameron Stauth,* Published by *Fireside, 2001.* This book follows real case studies on everything from arthritis to ulcers to cancer.

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