

MIND BODY MATTERS

An Embodied Experience

Building resilient health, through mind-body matters, takes a multifaceted approach. There is much information out there, however, getting started is often the biggest hurdle.

*“Better to start something imperfectly
than do nothing flawlessly”*

By Glen Monks



MIND BODY MATTERS

A brief Introduction



*"There is nothing so useless as doing
efficiently that which need not be done"*

After a life time of soul searching, I have come to the understanding that anything I share with you is of no use. Not unless you truly accept it for yourself that is. Your job therefore is to believe nothing in this book. Not until you have tested and applied it for yourself. There is an abundance of information in here and 'out there' on the subjects of mind-body matters. The secret to harmonising your own mind and body is all in the doing. My wish is that you find what you are looking for, and that the ideas I present bring you one step closer to peace.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Contents

MIND

- Stress
- Meditation
- Sleep
- Relaxation
- Breath
- Nervous System

BODY

- Nutrition
- Metabolism
- Gut Health Fasting
- Physical Exercise
- Hormones
- Cell Repair

SOUL

- Consciousness
- Light Therapy
- Yoga Spectrum
- Action Steps
- Purposeful Practice
- Finding your WHY



MIND BODY MATTERS

A Mind - Body - Soul Approach

Copyright Notice

No part of this work is to be reproduced or transmitted – without dated and signed permission from the author. All copyrights are reserved.

Disclaimer and Legal Notices

The information presented is for educational purpose only. Nothing is to be taken as medical advice. The information is based upon the writer's experience and interpretations of the latest research. You should consult with a physician, before attempting any of the ideas shared, especially if you have a pre-existing health condition.

The document is for informational purposes only and the author does not accept any responsibility for liabilities or damages, real or perceived, resulting from any actions taken.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Resilience in Mind & Body

Welcome Home

"In between the expansion and contractions of life, there is divine opportunity, a place where mind-body matters harmonise"

At conception, you were the most resilient sperm that helped create an embryo which housed your life-force. You entered the world, unique, untainted and with the capacity to become anything you could ever dream. Somewhere, between then and now, your life experience impacted your current state. The objective of this work is to guide and empower you back to innocence, to the beginners' mind, with new-found integrity and wisdom.

The word resilience builds connotations around being powerful, strong and able. On this journey together, we will cover more subtle aspects of mind body matters. You will learn, that personal and spiritual development does not require the blood, sweat and tears you were led to believe. No, resilience is truly about meeting the world with compassion, and understanding, of self and others.



MIND BODY MATTERS

The Influence of Stress

In each given week, we have 168 hours to spend – 40 to 50 of them are work related, the rest is lifestyle. A lifestyle devoid of passion, commitment, focus and a love for self and others, is a waste of this time.

Before our journey begins, it's important to address your current stress levels.

"An ounce of prevention, is worth a pound a cure"

Chronic stress is very bad for us, that much we know. The stress we experience, when stuck in a traffic jam or if we lose our house keys is not the problem – those stresses soon go away. It's the chronic stress, starting from an early- age or long-term adversity that poses our biggest threat. Such incidents can cause the adrenals to over produce cortisol which can distresses our hormones and nervous system. Disease often manifests later in life, with prolonged adrenal stimulation of this nature.

To invest our time wisely, in activities that bring joy and focus on the journey of life, is a sensible way to combat stress. To do this, we must understand the difference between good and bad stress. Not all stress is bad – stress teaches us to adapt. The right amount and type of stress is known as 'eu-stress'. The wrong type we know as 'di-stress'.

MIND BODY MATTERS

Mind - Sleep - Brain Chemistry

Resilience is about 'capacity building', developing the capacity to adapt and tender to daily stressors. With the right approach, we can all learn to invite positive stress into our lives. This prepares us for the inevitable hard times and reminds us that stress is never permanent. We then become willing to see the positive messages that stress presents and learn how to gain leverage from it.

I chose to begin with the mind first, because the mind rules like a Lion. Your job is to tame the tendencies of your mind, so you can develop mental and emotional resilience. Then you can better tender to the needs of your body.

Transformation begins in the mind, first with a desire to change. However, to address change means meeting the wall of resistance. All change-work lives just the other side of this wall. By approaching change safely and with the right support you can own lasting results.

Keeping the brain in good condition is key to improving mood, memory, cognition, and concentration. Mind-Body Matters will show you that a balanced mind, combined with movement, nutrition and spiritual practice can help to reduce stress-related illness. It is important to point out here, that when it comes to overall well-being, its not always about doing more. In fact, in this instance, it's quite the opposite.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Meditation and its many benefits

“Meditation abides in the unknown stream of consciousness that pervades all”

Inner refuge is to wake up from the stories of the mind and feel who we truly are. The stories we create, our addictive behaviours and tendencies, are ways of trying to fix what we think is broken. Mind Gym Meditation, allows us to feel relaxation in the body-mind without needing any external ‘crutches’. It may seem daunting, to explore the inner terrain of your mind, but with a safe and simple approach Mind Gym will teach you to ‘clear the cobwebs’ so to speak. By trying the exercises that follow, you will feel more at home. Visiting the Mind Gym causes blood to flow deeper into the brain and sedates the Pre-frontal cortex. This is the part of your brain that plays a role in moral reasoning and gets triggered by stress.

Courage and willingness are all that’s required to explore the pain of our suffering. With practice, you will soon get over the ‘wall of resistance’ through self compassion. When we learn to meet and soften our fears, we make peace with ourselves. We can then turn our attention towards better managing stress.

Visiting the Mind Gym will expand your field of awareness and enhance your perception. This will help you to develop your ‘inner eye’ or insight. As you learn to refine this practice, you will develop better cognitive skills. Building such awareness is a lifelong project, so be patient – we are never the finished article. Our ability to understand reality, make better decisions, and support those we love can always be improved.

MIND BODY MATTERS

Stepping Into the Mind Gym

*“Only when we shine a torch on the darkest corners
of our mind can we embrace the light”*

Adjust yourself into a comfortable seated position. Place your feet firmly on the ground and set an intention of openness, of none resistance. Relax the jaw and let your tongue soften into the base of the mouth. Begin to draw your attention to your breath and notice its natural flow. Do not try to alter the flow initially. Observe, accept, and allow it to flow of its own accord – I will cover more breathing techniques later.

Soften your gaze, as you widen your peripheral vision, as best you can. The next phase is to gently close your eyes and rest your gaze into the space behind the eye-sockets.

Now imagine a symbol floating behind your head, this could simply be a tennis ball – if nothing more significant presents itself. Focus your ‘inner eye’ on developing clarity around the symbol. What does it mean? With practice, you will gain better awareness of what you focus upon and greater insight into what your unconscious is telling you.

It’s important to point out here, that visiting the Mind Gym is not another ‘to-do’ item but something to be practiced in a state of grace and gratitude.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Outer Mind-work

'Changing our perception of the world is often as good as changing the world itself.'

Our map of the world is not reality – even the best maps are imperfect. That's because they're a condensed version of the real thing. If a map were to represent the territory in its entirety, it would reveal the truth, but a map is only a snap shot. Maps are a frozen point in time, representing something that no longer exists. This is important to keep in mind as you think through any problems you face. This will help you to make better decisions. The territory, in the context of this work, is something we explore wholeheartedly – it brings us closer to home.

As well as resting the brain, challenging and stretching it allows new synapse connections to develop. The adult brain continuously adapts to sensory stimuli. Activities which challenge the senses help maintain its processing speed. There are many mind activities that challenge our brains – the broader the range, the more you will stimulate and develop it. It's important however, to choose activities that you enjoy and to do them regular.

Examples:

Reading, expanding your vocabulary, creative writing, crosswords and art to name a few.



MIND BODY MATTERS

The Language of Meaning

Semantics

Semantics is the philosophical meaning of the language we use. It can be applied to entire texts or single words. For example, "destination" and "last stop" technically mean the same but can have different meanings.

Students of semantics analyse shades of meaning to identify the root of what is being said. Often, the unconscious speaks to us without our knowing. Understanding the words and phrases a person uses can reveal a lot about their mind-set.

I can't; it's too hard; it's just not fair; are ways the unconscious negatively speaks to us. The unconscious mind processes our past and uses such language to protect us and steer us from danger. If this 'negativity switch' stays flicked on for long periods of time, you will unconsciously begin to seek out negativity in all aspects of life. This is known as 'unconscious negative bias'. If your language has become tainted this way, you may often confirm your struggles to the world without even realising. But, does anybody really want to listen?

A positive semantic turnaround is to replace words such as hard or impossible with the word 'challenge'. When we find something a 'challenge', we are more likely to uptake a positive mental attitude over the despair of it being impossible.

MIND BODY MATTERS

Outer Mind-work cont...

Word Partitions

So, your language is a clear indicator of where your mind is at, in relation to your struggles and achievements. Words portray how we meet the world. We are either moving 'towards' or 'away from' what we want to achieve. We either express joy or suffering – guess which one will take you in the direction of success? The negative unconscious can also steer us away from what we think we want in order to protect us. This is perhaps because underneath we are not prepared for it. Using the phrase, 'things always goes wrong for me', could unconsciously be a way of ensuring that things always do – be aware of this!

You can go one step further, when it comes to semantics, by looking at word partitions. For example, the word realize can be broken down into two parts 'real' and 'eyes' – when we see the world with deeper understanding we 'realise'. Such new-found meaning to your language will make your vocabulary and life itself more colourful. Try to notice the words you use and their deeper meaning, it will serve you greatly

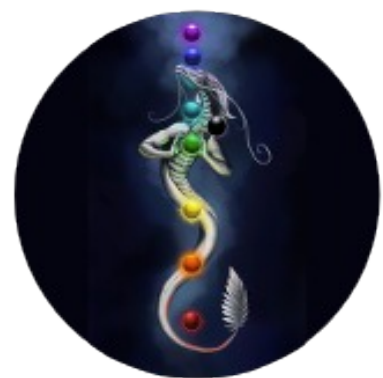


MIND BODY MATTERS

Action Steps

7 Day Challenge

For next 7 days listen to the language of your unconscious, is it working 'towards' or 'away from' your life goals. As you become more familiar with your unconscious language and expand your listening skills, you will also hear what others are truly expressing. A word of warning, try not to judge, change or coach anyone without their permission. Your greatest work, could simply be accepting others, by giving them the freedom of uninterrupted speech.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Nervous System and HRV

“When trying something new, our nervous system can get hijacked by fear. Understanding your triggers will help you to stay open and curious.”

Your central nervous system is a direct indicator of your physiological health. With every heartbeat, your central nervous system (CNS) is saying, “slow down or speed up” based on feedback from sensory input. A healthy nervous system has a balanced push and pull, between the Sympathetic and Parasympathetic branches of the CNS. Heart Rate Variability is an accurate, non-invasive measurement of this push - pull process. We could say, HRV is your fingerprint for stress tolerance, adaptability and resilience.

The nervous system’s response to stress focuses on short term survival over long term health. This can become chronic with the stress of modern living. We all need to be mindful of our work, relationships, finances, environment, diet and lifestyle choices. Stress, from multiple sources, can dramatically impact health-markers and overall performance. Monitoring your HRV with a professional health coach, will help you optimise your score and your life. If your goal is to reduce stress, then you will aim for a higher HRV score.

[Learn More about HRV here](#)



MIND BODY MATTERS

The Breath of Life

We couldn't cover the nervous system without mentioning the breath. Some breathing patterns calm the body, others energize it. Often we hear the suggestion, "take a deep breath". For some this can be difficult, because breathing deeply means experiencing what is going on inside. We all harbour different breathing patterns based on numerous factors. Practicing breath awareness and expanding your lung capacity, will help uncoil some of these patterns. This means unlocking some of those emotions you harbour inside.

Taking a full breath, filling the diaphragmatic cavity, expands the lower, mid and upper parts of the respiratory tract. In yoga terms, this is known as '*Pranava- OM*' – the full breath. Breath-work of this nature is part of Yoga Therapy which, amongst other things, seeks to improve lung capacity and gaseous exchange. *Prana* means 'life force' in *Sanskrit*.

The word *OM* is where we take semantics to a new level. By introducing sacred symbols and sounds we can dial into the universe. Symbols have deep meaning that only the unconscious can understand. It uses them to help us process life's experiences. The *OM* symbol (below) represents the Divine – whomever that might be for you. When we chant *OM*, it is said to dial-us-into the world of manifestation. Try chanting *OM*, with full breath awareness and feel into the vibration of the universe.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Breath of Life Cont...

One point, when it comes to breathing, is that you don't always have to take deep breaths. Sometimes little sips of air will better serve you. When we invite fresh sips into the body, we do not disturb our internal state. Try this and see how it differs from regular deep breathing. As you improve your technique, you may find that your exhalation breath becomes your best friend. It can get us out of all kinds of trouble.

Breath Pausing - KUMBHAKA

Kumbhaka requires a delicate holding of the breath. The breath can either be suspended inside or outside of the body. When feeling anxious, this technique yields positive results when applied correctly. Before practicing, you must develop a comfortable relationship with your breath, firstly by balancing the inhale and exhalation this is known as *Samavritti*. The development-work is to increase the duration of your exhalation. Once you master this you can then gently explore breath-holding, for a few brief seconds after each inhalation.

Try one round – inhalation – hold – and then after the exhalation gently hold once more. Now, go back to breathing normally for the same amount of time. Here, you will feel how your physiology changes with breath-work. This ancient practice is known as *pranayama* and is not to be underestimated, so go with caution. Develop your practice, second by second – over months and years – NOT days or weeks.

MIND BODY MATTERS

Sleep Chemistry

We spend a third of our lives asleep, that's if we're lucky. At some stage, for one reason or another, almost everyone will experience sleep deprivation. If you've ever hit a bad patch of sleep, you know it can be hell on earth. For the unfortunates that develop insomnia, the repercussions negatively impact their work and family life.

By controlling our daily sleep-wake cycles we greatly impact overall health and longevity. Therefore, sleep architecture is serious business and needs to be well structured. Good sleep hygiene increases melatonin production, a vital hormone made by the pineal gland. Maximum daylight in the morning and afternoon greatly impacts this process and too much 'blue light' exposure negatively effects it (I coverer light therapy later).

Poor sleep is not a hardware issue, outside of you; it's more so an internal software issue. Another supplement, hi tech mattress or diet change won't fix things. Basically, the brain needs to learn to switch off and, like much of human growth, the tools are in-built. To recharge and rejuvenate, the body-mind needs closure each night. We need to know everything's going to be ok. Only then will you 'rest-assured'.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Sleep Chemistry Cont

“ A good night’s sleep is not just about the right number of hours, but the right kind of sleep. “

Sleep helps with

- Repairing worn out tissues
- Manufacturing hormones
- Processing memories
- Generating healthy new cells
- Immune function
- Replenishing energy stores

To get good sleep we need these 5 stages

1. **Light theta wave:** The bridge between sleep and wakefulness
2. **True light theta:** Deep sleep, muscles relax, slowed pulse, lower body temperature
3. **Light delta wave:** Deeper sleep, freezing our muscles and turning off outside signals
4. **Deep slow wave delta:** Deepest restorative, designed for repair and maintenance
5. **Rapid eye movement (REM):** Active sleep used for processing and dreaming

The first 4 stages are considered NREM – or non-rapid eye movement sleep. Each stage lasts for up to 15 minutes, with stage 5, REM sleep, usually starting about 90 minutes after we initially fall asleep. For complete restorative sleep, completing all 5 stages is needed.

MIND BODY MATTERS

More Sleep Chemistry...

If you're getting 6 hours each night, it should be okay, but only if those hours are uninterrupted and good quality. The most beneficial hours are between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. This four-hour window is when optimal repair happens. Not climbing into bed at 10 p.m but sleeping between these hours. This is the period where our circadian rhythm resets itself.

Sleep Rituals to Live By

- Go to bed tired
- Employ regular sleep-wake cycles
- Clock watching is frustrating so don't keep checking the time
- All blue light electronics must cease 1 hour before sleep
- Heavy meals and alcohol is a no, no 3 hours before bedtime
- A small snack may be suitable (research Tryptophan)
- Light stimulates and deregulates our circadian rhythm – so the darker the better
- Let go of the day, revisit and resolve the mental activity of the day
- Picture yourself waking, fully rested and ready to take on a new day



MIND BODY MATTERS

The Physical Layer

If we truly are what we eat, then it would make sense that the perfect diet could rid the world of diss-ease, right? Wrong...

WHY? Because your metabolism requires enzymatic stimuli from your hormones, which work together to maintain equilibrium – everyone is different. Our environment also greatly impacts which fuel is best suited to us. For example, the harsh winter leans us towards healthy fats to keep us warm, whereas the dryness of summer produces more fruits and salads to lubricate us. There is no one approach, or we would lose our ancestral connections to the seasons and the earth.

It might be easier to convince someone to change their religion than their diet. Unless you are a nutritional professional, save having your head bitten off by keeping food advice to a minimum. Why? Because diet is not usually approached until it's too late and changing one's diet is frustrating. In this book I will not be covering macros, micro-nutrients, supplements or diet per se, due to the enormity of the subject. Another reason is that current models of 'personalised nutrition', suggests each of us has a unique diet combination – based on numerous factors. To crack this combination requires personal commitment and sometimes a skilled professional.

"As scientists seek a miracle cure, they need look no further than inflammation.

A cure will not come from a pill, but from diet accuracy and detoxification."

MIND BODY MATTERS

Nutrition - Detoxification - Activity

"Your body is the vehicle in which you travel. However, when things go out of balance, it can feel like the wheels have fallen off."

An optimal diet fuels more than just our muscles and vital organs, it also feeds our brain. The link between diet and brain activity doesn't just end there. Modern lab testing now shows that certain bacteria in our gut affect our mental state. When pathogenic bacteria (the bad guys) overwhelm and inflame the gut, we become inflamed in the mind. Just imagine, the trillions of tiny bacterial mouths waiting for their next meal! This places a whole new perspective on the idea, 'you are what you eat'.

Your body cannot fully function or repair itself, in the face of nutrient deficiencies. Key nutrients are required for our hormones to stay in check. When nutrients are missing from the body, due to insufficiencies in the diet or mal-absorption, problems arise. The body's inbuilt warning system is subtle and often our emotions override its intelligence. Instead of listening to the bodies warning signs, instead, you may find solace in eating the wrong type of food. Of course, this exacerbates nutrient deficiency and thus adds to your problems.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Emotional Eating

Short-term emotional regulation, otherwise known as food binging, leads to inflammation in the digestive tract. Inflammation in the gut, weakens the immune system and can lead to auto-immunity. The job of the immune system is not to attack the food we eat. So, if you're eating things that are bad for you, unhealthy foods or food that you're allergic to, then your immune system is right to attack it. Research [histamine production](#) for more information.

When it comes to metabolic illnesses, diet alone is not always the solution.

Cravings and weight gain are not necessarily about food. Intimacy with food is not just greed and desire, but can be due to a lack of intimate loving relationships. With poor food choices there's usually something more sinister at play. If this sounds like you, you may need to delve further into some of your personality traits.

Are you an abstainer or a moderator? Some personality types don't allow for moderation in their lives. You'll know if you are one of these people, you just can't stop once you start something – you are overly obsessed in getting things done. If you can't do moderation with diet, its perhaps best to remove the items completely from your fridge. A word of warning here, don't go all out too soon. When it comes to removing food groups, go slow and reduce wisely! Limiting food options too rapidly, can lead to eating disorders.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Emotional Eating Cont...

In the long term, you must learn to neuro-regulate your pallet, by selecting wise food options and not becoming neurotic with fad diets or bingeing. The downside of extreme dietary changes, means the metabolism can become severely compromised. This can lead poor health. The message is to be mindful of what, how and why you eat. Of course this takes some commitment.

Definition of Commitment

“doing the things, that you said you would do, long after the mood you were in, when you said you would do them, has left.”



MIND BODY MATTERS

Therapeutic Fasting

When poor food choices compromise the immune system, the body responds by generating inflammation. But, finding a solution, to reduce inflammation, whilst maintaining nutritional efficiency, is a minefield. When it comes to maintaining balance, and building resilience it's not just about what we eat, but how and when.

Nutritional fasting is a way of replenishing your cells and reducing inflammation through cell activation. A therapeutic fast will shut down a hyper-reactive immune system by giving the gut a break. Here, we allow the liver to better detoxify. By staying hydrated whilst doing so, we're telling the kidneys to push unwanted toxins out of the body. Many studies now confirm that therapeutic fasting boosts health and longevity. The metabolic benefits of fasting far outweigh the initial food cravings and addictions we face.

Fasting works for many people and there are many protocols. It is, however, important not to stress the body by putting it into shock through nutritional deficit. Firstly, we must develop metabolic flexibility, for some this takes time. A wise approach is to go cautious and steady – again there is no one size fits all.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Fasting Cont...

Fear around food, or the lack of it, can shorten cell telomeres; these are the tails at the end of each DNA strand. Telomeres protect our DNA, like the plastic coating at the end of a shoelace. Metabolic stress shortens these strands, through cell division, thus they become unprotected. This can lead to reduced immune functionality and eventually cell death.

There are 2 kinds of cell death. Cells either die from being 'starved' of nutrients and oxygen, or are 'programmed' to die. The former is called *necrosis* and the latter *apoptosis*. For those that mindfully fast (apoptosis), the process is smooth and therapeutic which is far better than the cells being shredded aggressively.

Therapeutic fasting causes the body to revert to its natural methods of storing and burning ketones for fuel. This can be done by adjusting the diet, specific to the individual or by reducing food altogether. Here we train the body to call upon its fat reserves for fuel. The mitochondria, the 'engines' of our cells, function more effectively and neurotransmitters' journey across synapses in the brain more easily.

Useful Hyperlink

[Food-Wars-Link](#)

MIND BODY MATTERS

Intermittent Fasting

Eating as nature intended is not only beneficial to our body but also our mind. When refined carbs and sugar serve as the brain's primary energy source our neural pathways can become overwhelmed. Free radicals and glucose can also deplete antioxidant levels. This leads to excess oxidation and inflammation in the brain. When the brain draws its energy from ketones, fewer free radicals are produced, allowing natural antioxidants to work for us. Understanding which foods create high blood glucose and the role of healthy fats and protein, to balance insulin, is crucial to diet mastery. Intermittent fasting, helps us realign the body's fuel pathway, which plays an important role in building better health. With the right methodology, fasting not only heals, but can help you thrive.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Fasting Action Plan

Action Steps

The best way to begin fasting is by giving your body a basic 12-hour break from food – between your evening meal and breakfast the next day. This allows 4 hours to complete digestion and 8 hours for the liver to complete its detoxification cycle. Once you can do this, you can try extending your fasting window – 16 to 18 hours. Eventually, you can build up to a full day fast each week.

Last meal of the day	6 PM	7 PM	8 PM	9 PM	10 PM
First meal the following day	10 AM	11 AM	NOON	1 PM	2 PM
First meal the following day	8 AM	9 AM	10 AM	11 AM	NOON

Helpful Hyperlink

[What-happens-when-a-cell-dies](#)

MIND BODY MATTERS

Healthy Gut, Happy You

We could not address food and fasting without covering the health of your gut. There is a sound body of evidence, showing that gut microbes are responsible for the connection between chronic stress and poor health? It is estimated that there are over 100 trillion bacterial cells in the human gut. They live in colonies throughout the digestive tract, starting at the mouth, right through to the colon.

To keep your body and mind running well, it's critical to keep your digestion optimal and the gut microbiota happy. Much of the brain's neuro-chemistry is triggered by the gut which influences neural development and all behavioural phenomena. Your gut microbes respond to your daily life style – much of which I cover throughout this book. So, your brain chemistry, hormones, nervous system, body composition and fitness levels all heavily rely on your Gut Microbiota. The simple message here is this: *'a healthy gut is a happy you'*.

Helpful Hyperlink

[The Gut Institute.com](http://TheGutInstitute.com)



MIND BODY MATTERS

Physical Exercise

World leading health institutes suggest:

“Adults should perform a minimum of two and a half hours moderate-intensity exercise per week to reduce the risk of chronic disease.”

When it comes to movement and exercise it's important to find balance between strength and endurance. Whether it's free running, tree climbing or salsa, your body is designed to move. A quick surge of exercise, for 30-60 seconds, increases breathing and enhances blood flow to the brain. This will sustain you for at least 30 minutes. On a hormonal level, balanced exercise helps to regulate three important hormones: cortisol, insulin and oxytocin — covered throughout this document.

Exercise helps balance many systems in the body and helps optimise energy output, rest and relaxation. As brain chemistry is greatly impacted by the correct amount of exercise, it's also important to differentiate between too much and too little. Training to your maximum may initially release serotonin and adrenaline, the feel-good chemicals, but, doing too much can be counterproductive.

The habitual pattern of keeping busy or pushing beyond your limits, is a coping strategy to be aware of. The dopamine response is such that the brain rewards us for 'getting things done'. But, without awareness, over stimulation of dopamine can be as addictive as cocaine!

MIND BODY MATTERS

Exercise cont...

Resilience training seeks to map-out the difference between healthy and unhealthy stress. Knowing your strengths and fitness boundaries is crucial for optimal health. Here we safely explore our 'edge' to get a handle on our level of tolerance and improve our bio markers. In the field of resilience training, it makes little difference what kind of exercise we choose, so long as we work optimally and intelligently.

Lymphatic Drainage

As well as the benefits on cardiac output and mobility, we need movement to help us detoxify. Why, because your lymphatic system needs shunting along. The difference between the lymphatic system and your cardiovascular systems is that the cardiovascular pump is always on. This pump is called your heart; it pushes blood, oxygen and nutrients through your body all by itself. The lymphatic system, which drains toxins and waste, doesn't have such a pump. The only pump for the lymph system is movement, motion and exercise. You can even pump this toxin pathway through self massage.

Helpful Hyperlink

[Benefits-of-Self-Massage](#)

MIND BODY MATTERS

Rhythm of Relaxation

Rhythm is a living process, where all parts concerned dance in accordance with a universal law. The sun, the stars, and the planets are governed by this law. It's only mankind that has wandered, in his ignorance and complacency, from this cycle. When we interfere, with the rhythmic process of Mother Nature, sadly, we pay for it!

To cover physical exercise is only half of the health story. To develop optimal health we must address our 'stressors' and their counterpart – in the case of relaxation we must address tense, over stimulated muscles. Relaxation is when we learn to deliberately loosen tension felt in the body. You can do this by letting go of any contractions you feel. But, firstly you must learn to feel into your aches and pains. To do this requires acceptance and grace.

Your body automatically tenses, as a vigilance response, when stress levels go up. Here, your muscles receive messages from the brain to contract, to deal with whatever the stressor. Each of us has 17 layers of bodily tissue that store tension, the deeper the tension the deeper the root cause. Through conscious relaxation, you can penetrate these layers and reduce any burden stored on a neuro-physical level.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Pandiculation

With conscious relaxation and mindful movement, we harmonize with the 'rhythm of life'. Such neuro-physiology can be re-cognised easily. When you yawn, your neck and shoulders naturally release, there is sensory motion felt throughout the body which is comforting. The name for this natural feedback loop is Pandiculation and we can train it to overcome trauma and injury experienced in the body. This natural phenomenon can be induced by exercises that awaken the 'sensory-motor system'. Activating this system, through gentle sensory movements such as Yoga and tai Chi, can help to prepare other parts of your body that are less mobile (known as sensory amnesia). Getting started is as easy as riding a bike.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Sensory Motion

Sensory and Somatic Movement

Through sensory motion, we exercise the mind and body simultaneously. Here, the mind makes peace with stored traumas whilst sensory amnesia regains its memory. Through little physical effort, we can set the foundations for a more agile, interconnected mind-body. This type of movement harmonises our inner and outer space. We get to explore and feel into the body's subtle layers whilst maintaining harmony with our environment. To make peace with the world, first we must embrace its interconnectedness. Through sensory motion we witness our range of movement and what impedes it. To do this, we harmonise body and mind with the breath. This reduces any impact on the nervous system. By energising the gateway of the body-mind in this way, we train ourselves to better understand the importance of stillness and space. Such somatic movements bring a new dimension to exercise and allow the bodies intelligence to accomplish change. With patience, self-love and acceptance you can resolve most of the heaviness felt in your body.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Aspects of Sensory Motion

The 3 aspects of sensory motion

1. **SMA** - sensory motor amnesia. This is responsible for the loss of muscular control and feelings of fatigue. Motor control of the muscles and skeleton is limited with SMA. This is our feedback barometer; it tells us how much tension is being stored in the body. If you can't move all that much, then you carry this type of tension.

2. **Stretch Reflex** - is a good thing; it gets us out of danger. The spasms and cramps that often happen with subtle movements, a sharp pain or twitch. They mostly happen when you do not stretch opposing muscle groups and stick to the same routine. It doesn't take much to turn on your stretch reflex. The key is to vary your movements.

3. **Quality of Motion** - not only covers range, but also the internal micro-movements you make. Here you can address the subtle layers of tissue and begin to address what's happening underneath them. Once muscle motion improves, general mobility will increase without trying. Improve your motion quality and you will increase performance on many levels. Action steps to follow.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Action Steps

Take up an exercise stance or lay down on your back. Think of the blood circulating through your veins; command it to flow to each organ, carrying life-force and nourishment throughout. This will produce a state of inner warmth. Next, align your breathing; feel into its natural rhythm as you slowly lengthen your exhalation. Gradually as the mind accustoms itself to the idea of letting go, the lungs will rhythmically align spontaneously. Next, we micro-manage areas of tension: feel into your multiple layers of tissue and imagine their potential range of movement. After you have explored movement in your mind, and felt internally what it is to reach your target, physically make the movement.

This type of mind-body conditioning helps to 're-cognize' the body's ability to achieve what you desire. In a newfound relaxed state, you will find your overall range of movement greatly improves.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Polarity Therapy

Cross Polarity Movement (CPM)

CPM is when we employ opposing muscle groups, from either side of the body. For example: laying on the stomach we stretch out the right arm in front whilst lifting the left leg simultaneously. Here we make a diagonal stretch across the lower back. This type of movement has multiple applications. Applying this type of therapy will enhance your range of movement and synchronize the two hemispheres of your brain – masculine & feminine.

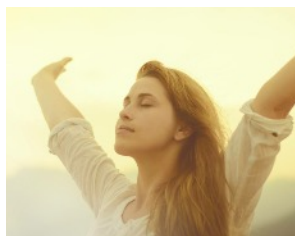
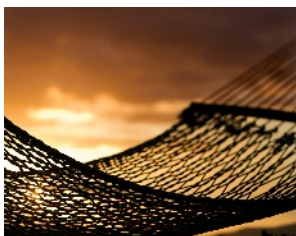


MIND BODY MATTERS

The Desire Trap

Desire is something we are outside of; it is something we want to achieve but to date have not been able to. It could be a distance you want to reach on the treadmill, a record you aim to break – it's the things we strive and long for. Sensory motion is where we explore the repercussions of our striving, the knocks we have had on the battlefield of life.

Through practice, we learn to embrace a state of acceptance. We cognitively shift our experience, to needing nothing externally other than peace. This means you will feel safe in your own skin. Here, the present moment and even the entire weight of history will have no bearing on you. Reaching such inner comfort, is the foundation for a stronger more pliable body. This type of resilience will be reflected in your personality and therefore your relationship with others. Embracing acceptance is how you will develop more compassion and empathy. Homing such life skills, will greatly reduce the likely hood of you falling into the desire trap.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Hormone Connection

The three main hormones we cover in this body of work are cortisol, insulin and oxytocin. Balancing this triage is something you can actively take a role in. By doing so, you will greatly improve your overall health.

Insulin Resistance

Insulin is the hormone, made by the pancreas, that allows your body to utilise sugar (glucose) from carbohydrates. It helps keep your blood sugar levels from rising too high (hyperglycaemia) or too low (hypoglycaemia). Regulating blood sugar is an art, but once mastered multiple systems in the body benefit. The reason for mentioning this, is to draw your attention to the importance of blood sugar regulation and the potential benefits associated.

Helpful steps to balance blood sugar

- Increase your activity level
- Increase the amount of water in your food
- Decrease total carbohydrate to 40 - 45 percent of daily calories
- Reduce your total calories
- Increase fibre intake (25 - 35 gm/day)
- Eat foods that have a lower glycemic index / load

MIND BODY MATTERS

Emotional Intelligence

Fear is the response to an immediate threat. Anxiety is the emotional response to an anticipated threat. Both have the same physiological impact. Mind-body-looping is when thoughts manifest in the body as anxiety and then fuel further thoughts which result in more anxiety. When this loop becomes chronic, the mind will continue to look for things to worry about, even though they may never happen. Addiction to worry, is more common than you think, its when automatic conditioning goes into overdrive. Be aware of this pattern.

"Some of the worst things, in my life, never even happened."

Mark Twain

The root meaning of the word worry is 'to strangle'. If life feels like life its strangling you, ask yourself this: what am I not willing to face? Fear of failure and fear of loss prevents us from being the best version of ourselves. Self-doubt is at the root of this. The prison of self-doubt has the potential of locking your body down completely. However, by challenging your behaviour and breaking any negative forming habit patterns, the walls of self-limitation can come down for ever. Facing this kind of challenge develops self compassion and emotional intelligence.



MIND BODY MATTERS

The Impact of Cortisol

We covered the negative impact of cortisol earlier, in the section on stress. Cortisol is produced by the adrenal glands and once stimulated impacts the entire body. When our body is under severe stress, the adrenal glands kick-in to protect us. But, and its a big BUT, over stimulation of the adrenal glands, can cause lasting damage.

You may be familiar with the fight-or-flight response – initiated by the sympathetic nervous system – where the body encounters a threat or stressful situation. This is when the adrenals produce cortisol, the hormone that gets us out of trouble. To learn to better manage stress and consider all factors that overwork your adrenals is a wise move. It could be inflammation, balancing your blood sugar or other stress factors. Your job is to find out your triggers and learn to how to manage them before they accumulate.

So, the Adrenals rise to the occasion and react to whatever stimulus is presented through the fight, flight or freeze response. Your mind is now focused on whatever it needs to do to protect you. The next phase, is to positively challenge the nervous system. To do this we employ a forth 'F'. The forth 'F' stands for 'face'. You face things. When it comes to managing the nervous system, our greatest work is to stop running and courageously face the fear in life.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Oxytocin, The Hug Drug

Together, we breed oxytocin which is a hormone produced by neurons in the brain and spinal cord. Oxytocin helps to improve your positive mental attitude. This hormone, often referred to as the love hormone or the cuddle drug, is produced when we bond with others. Healthy, loving relationships really do infuse our bodies with life.

Oxytocin

Self love is also a powerful healing tool. Feel into the sensations of your body. Can you re-cognise your felt experience? Ask your unconscious, what does it need to learn from this experience? Such inquiry will help you de-condition any unwanted emotions. By breaking the bodies feed-back- loop, in this way, you will begin to shake the foundations of the things you once worried about.

When we develop a better understanding and learn to regulate the emotions that once controlled us, we begin to experience the world with fresh eyes. In the past you may have been guarded or afraid of being open in order to get what you want. The mind set of 'I win you lose' rarely delivers positive results. Contrary to this, to be open and empathetic towards others breeds a 'win-win' attitude. By supporting the needs of others, as well as those of our own, we reap rewards on many levels.

MIND BODY MATTERS

Equanimity

"If you want to go fast, then go alone. If you want to go far, go together." - African Proverb

Equanimity knows no boundaries, all nationalities; abilities and economic structures fall under this paradigm. Policies, political terminology and legislation must not divide us. Without healthy relationships and strong communities, humans become isolated – overcoming this is one of the greatest challenges we face. Herein lays your greatest opportunity for finding peace.

Because relationships hold the key to our inner most feelings, through them we learn about our insecurities and vulnerabilities. Here we have the opportunity to move up the emotional ladder. But, it's not until we hit 'the wall of resistance' within ourselves that we realise we need to climb further. Relationships provide us with this opportunity by revealing our blind spots. When we delve into the depths of intimacy, our current state of existence becomes challenged – it's only through the mirror of another that we reveal our shadows. When we harmonise with others, or vibrate on the same level as them, we feel a conscious connection. Through love we expand this connection out towards all living things. Human emotion vibrates at different levels; some emotions are a lower frequency, others higher. The purpose of spiritual evolution is to move through the lower levels of emotion towards the higher ones – this known as transcendence.

MIND BODY MATTERS

Hierarchy of Human Emotions

Higher Frequency

Enlightenment (1000)	Transcendence (1000)	Peace (600)	Joy (540)	Love (500)
Reason (400)	Acceptance (350)	Willingness (310)	Neutrality (250)	Courage (200)
Neutrality (250)	Courage (200)	Pride (175)	Anger (150)	Desire (125)
Fear (100)	Grief (75)	Apathy (50)	Guilt (30)	Shame (20)

Lower Frequency



MIND BODY MATTERS

Soul Connection

"The implication is that dark is evil – let's shed some light on this notion."

The Impact of Light

I have covered how your internal rhythms influence everything you do: sleep-wake cycles, hormones, and movement. Also the impact of what you digest, not only food but life in general. Light exposure also impacts us on many levels. Periods of feast and famine, experienced by our ancestors, were dictated by the rise and setting of the sun. Hunting and eating were natural daylight activities. Modern living has disrupted this natural rhythm and human health has suffered as a result.

As we move towards the spiritual aspects of mind-body-matters, I will uncover a different form of light. Light is a bio-available resource upon which we rely – we are all light-beings. When you invite more light into your body, your sense of interconnectedness will improve. Think of how your mood lifts on a sunny day.

We live in a frantic world, the world of technology, in the search of having and being more. For many, this can seem like life is going faster than they can handle. It can feel like the intellect is running ahead of their emotions and souls! Light therapy has the power to reduce such feelings. Depression and other psycho-emotional conditions are often described as dark emotions. It would therefore make sense that light has the power to heal.

MIND BODY MATTERS

Red Light v's Blue Light

The fact that 'blue light' penetrates all the way to the retina (inner lining of the eye) is something you need to know. Laboratory studies show that too much blue light damages our eyes. This can cause vision problems and age-related macular degeneration. All artificial light, including LEDs, fluorescent and incandescent bulbs, interrupt our sleep patterns. The body's biological clock is set by the amount of light and dark the body is exposed to. Your circadian rhythm controls the timing of all your physical functions. It determines your sleep, feeding patterns, brain activity, hormones and cell regeneration. Quite simply, too much of the wrong type of light will play havoc with your body clock

Red light is more rejuvenating than blue light. It stimulates the production of collagen, which gives your skin its elasticity, hair its strength, and connective tissue its ability to hold everything together. Red light delivers the same healing and rejuvenation properties as the sun, only without the harmful UV rays. There is much research around the benefits of red light therapy and its life-enhancing properties. It seems we humans love the warm, cosy, glow of red and orange tones. This is how Neanderthal man developed as a species. Just picture yourself, sitting around a fire with friends, contemplating life, eating naturally cooked food. This is perhaps the best therapy known to man.



MIND BODY MATTERS

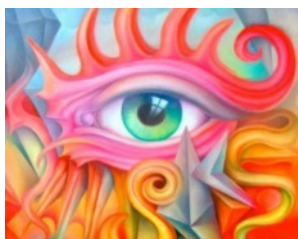
Healing Light

Luminosity

Spiritual light is more than just what you see, it's what you become. You know that lifting your face towards the sun makes you feel better. Those warm rays somehow fuel our soul. But what when you lovingly reach inside and nurture yourself, this is a different light. Spiritual light is known as luminosity and lives at your core – when we feel 'light of heart' we feel connected to the universe. Luminosity can flood our being with energy and instill peace and gratitude. The path to spiritual wellness involves developing this 'inner light'. Meditation, prayer, affirmations and other spiritual practices connect us to something greater than our individualised self. You might call it a higher sense of purpose.

Helpful Hyperlink

[Benefits -of-light](#)



MIND BODY MATTERS

Universal Consciousness

*“Through the eyes of spirit, we see an interconnected universe
and all its living organisms.”*

You wouldn't attempt these contemplative practices, if you didn't feel that something needed improving. Here lies one of the paradoxes of spirituality. Feelings of dissatisfaction cause us to overlook the intrinsic freedom of consciousness. There are many reasons to practice meditation and embrace the changes it brings. The goal of spirituality is freedom from the illusion of the 'self'. But, to 'seek' freedom, as if it were something we could gain through effort, actually reinforces that we are caught up in chains of bondage.

The solution to this paradox, is to approach transformation not as a compulsive practice of self-improvement, but rather a state of active presence with everyday life. Embracing consciousness in any given moment is a powerful way of training ourselves to respond differently to adversity. It's important to differentiate though, that accepting negative emotions is not just a strategy to get them to go away. Accepting all situations, as they arise is more like an art form, we have to master the craft. My mantra here is this: as best you can, just for now, let everything be as it is.

Helpful Hyperlink

[Ocean-of-tranquility-link](#)

MIND BODY MATTERS

Trust, Accept, Allow

The word body, in ancient Greek is known as soma. Soma is the body, separate from soul, mind and psyche. Somatic movements link body and breath in perfect harmony. To develop spiritual awareness, however, requires we go deeper. To do this, you must first experience the body-mind-breath in its totality. Only then will you connect to your spirit.

Spirituality is many things to many people; it doesn't mean you have to follow a religion or dogmatic belief system. For some, 'connecting to the spirit of things' or deeply connecting to others is enough. For many it takes more work. Attuning yourself, to the spiritual power of the universe, cannot be done blindly. To understand, that the world will go on with or without you is the first step towards spiritual maturity. The next step, is to own the fact that none of us controls anything!

When we have faith in something greater than our individual self, something clicks into place. Spirituality could simply be, the realisation that the world is taking care of itself, with or without our help. By trusting and accepting things exactly as they are, we relax our desire to change things. Of course, this is much easier said than done. Why? Because we are taught to achieve as much as possible, even though this often feeds our frustration. This I call achievers disease, its at the root of all human illness and incomparable to spiritual alignment. To balance both sides of the coin, you can aim to do your best in every situation and yet surrender to whatever the outcome . The good news is, such a mind-shift often greatly impacts our overall efficiency. And, all you really have to lose is your lack of patience.

MIND BODY MATTERS

Yoga as Therapy

To be with the suffering of our limitations is a valuable life skill, but, to ignore the possibility of transformation is spiritual ignorance. If spirituality is about reflection, acceptance and re-alignment. Yoga Therapy aims to combine these qualities with a deep sense of purpose. With the right intention, one of love empathy and compassion, you will learn to embrace life and have more appreciation of the path before you.

When yoga becomes more than just a set of stretching exercises, its therapeutic values are truly felt. Through yoga (union) there is an opportunity to develop courage, faith, patience, and integrity. Developing such life skills perpetuates interpersonal growth. Yoga therapy is really about creating healthy, happy harmonious relationships. Through body-mind awareness you can confront the things that hold you back from this. Yoga provides us with the ingredients required to reach what is known as *Ananda*.

Ananda, is a state of bliss. It's the state of transforming sorrow into peace, which itself is blissful. This is not just positive thinking, which for many clearly doesn't work. It's more so about accepting the fleeting nature of things – good and bad. And then, as the Buddha so famously taught, walking the middle path.



MIND BODY MATTERS

Action Steps

Tapas is a yogic term which involves the concepts of expansion and contraction. Setting a *Tapas* is a deliberate practice that helps us to build resilience. We do this by nudging beyond our limitations. **Example:** Take a simple task or goal, you have been procrastinating. Make a resolve to do whatever it takes to accomplish it. What will a positive outcome mean for you? What is holding you back from this outcome? How is your language taking you towards or moving you away from having it? Begin to make peace with your limitations and go to work on letting them go. Now, aim to achieve your target in a set period of time. This type of enquiry will help you to build your 'resilience muscle'. The message here is this: start small and be diligent.

Developing a mantra or positive affirmation can greatly help with this process. Base your mantra on honouring and respecting the reality of things. Remember you are not striving to achieve here. Instead, simply hold in mind the conscious vibration of what achieving this feels like. See, hear, feel, smell and taste exactly what you are aiming to reach. Let go of your resistance and be ready to welcome something amazing.

Sat Chit Ananda – is the ultimate destination. It means pure unconditional awareness – you cannot conceptualise this state, only experience it!



MIND BODY MATTERS

Deliberate Practice

You must only aspire to transform things, where the genetic odds are in your favour. Deliberate practice is necessary for success, but this alone is not enough. The people at the top of their game are both well-equipped and well-trained. To maximize your potential, engage in consistent and purposeful practice. Learn to align your ambitions with your natural abilities.

Your genes, do not necessarily determine your destiny. It's like a game of cards. You have a better chance of winning, when dealt a good hand, but you still must play the hand well to win.

My point here is this: no matter what cards you were dealt, or which way you play the game of life, building awareness will never fail you. Why, because awareness turns potential into reality.



MIND BODY MATTERS

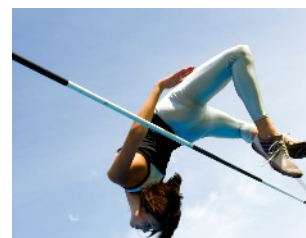
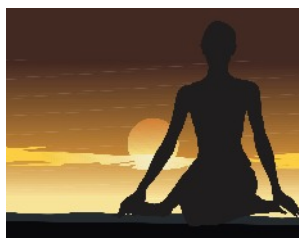
A Final Word

It's all about the WHY?

To know your 'why' will help you stand strong. You may have traversed life with little emotional turbulence; others learn about life the hard way. When you know your why, the reason for the things you do, you will find fresh motivation. This requires digging deep into the soul. You may be determined in life, but to achieve what? How do your efforts bring satisfaction and peace into your life and the lives of others? How does it feel when it's you verses the world? To feel like you have every element in the universe on your side, is to have found your why? [Open-your-heart-link](#)

"In war, the victory strategist seeks only to do battle after the mind has won."

Sun Tzu



MIND BODY MATTERS

Further Resources

Research Hyperlinks

- [Heart Rte Variably - HRV - Link](#)
- [Gylcemic Load - Blood-sugar - Link](#)
- [Ayurveda principals - to live by - Link](#)
- [Spectrum Associates - Link](#)
- [Deliberate Practice - Link](#)
- [Dr Ruchio - Diet - Link](#)
- [Better - sleep - guide - Link](#)
- [Dr-Jack- Kruce - Link](#)
- [Pandiculation - Link](#)
- [Wired-to-eat-reset - Link](#)

Suggested Reading

- Letting Go – David R. Hawkins MD PhD
- The Sedona Method – Dale Howskin
- Smile at Fear – Chogyam Trungpa
- Feeding your Demons – Tsultrim Allione
- The Power of Now – Eckhart Tolle
- Asana Pranayama Mudra – Bihar School
- Tantra (Supreme Understanding) – Osho
- Bodywise – Josphe Heller
- The Seasonal Diet – John Doulard
- Heaven Lies within us – Theos Bernard
- Structural Yoga Therapy – Mukunda Styles
- The Only way to Live – Rameshi Balsekar
- The Divided Mind – John E. Sarno MD
- Meditation, NOT what you think - Glen Monks

YouTube Links

- [The Choice we all Have](#)
- [End Inflammation Now](#)
- [Illness is a Choice](#)
- [Low Carb Performance](#)
- [Intermittent Fasting](#)
- [Happy Life Phylosophy](#)