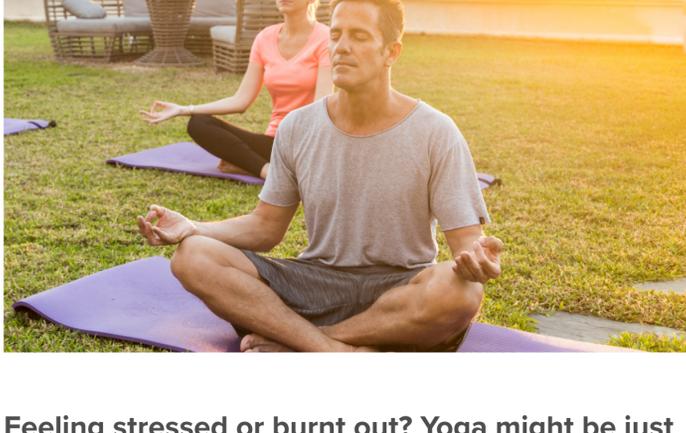


4 ways yoga can help you feel happier

Tictrac | Aug 9, 2021



Feeling stressed or burnt out? Yoga might be just what you need. It combines physical and emotional elements designed to promote an overall sense of calm in both body and mind.

Yoga can also boost happiness levels while blitzing stress and lessening feelings of anxiety.

Focus on the present

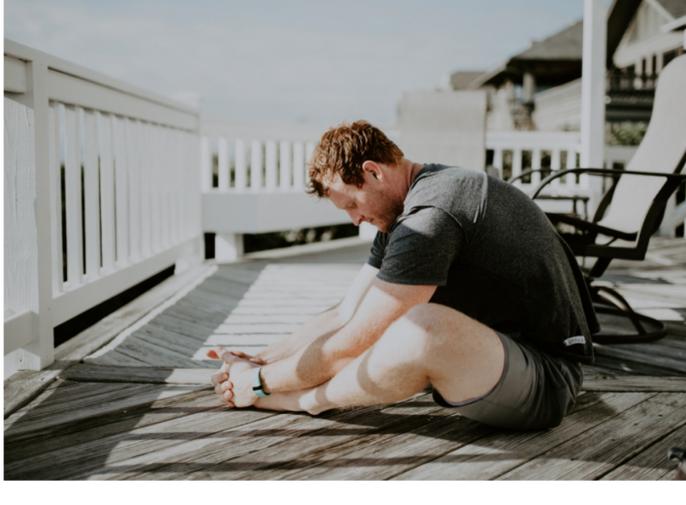
Not just for the most flexible among us, yoga works by practising a combination of breathwork and stretches, which not only improves fitness levels but focuses on grounding ourselves.

The main focus of this peaceful practise is being present in the current moment, promoting mindfulness and relaxation while helping to shut out intrusive or niggling thoughts that may be causing unnecessary stress or worry.



Practising yoga has been linked with reducing anxiety levels while enhancing mood and overall sense of wellbeing, even just a simple practice at home can set you up for the day with a sense of calm and control [1].

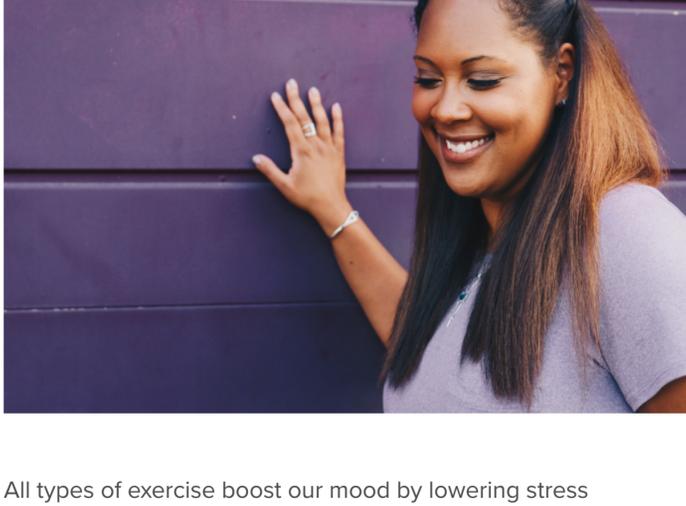
Alleviating anger



Once considered a purely holistic activity, yoga is now widely regarded as having tangible scientific benefits when it comes to improving our mental health. There have been multiple studies undertaken that demonstrate the effectiveness of practising this comforting activity and its ability to reduce anger and anxiety, improve sleep quality, bolster bright moods and even help with some of the difficulties associated with post-traumatic stress disorder [2].

Because yoga involves both body and mind, it deeply impacts our emotions and thought processes, which alongside gentle movement allows us to regulate racing thoughts in a similar way to meditation.

Happy hormones



All types of exercise boost our mood by lowering stress hormone levels and boosting endorphins, which helps us to feel happy and healthy.

Yoga may have even more happiness boosting benefits than other activities, as it can elevate GABA (gamma-aminobutyric acid) chemical levels in our brain, which is linked to improved mood and decreased anxiety.

Alongside other forms of fitness, yoga, like other complementary practices such as massage therapy and listening to music, has been found to be one of the longest-lasting relaxation techniques out there, which helps us to manage stress, symptoms of anxiety and even symptoms of mild depression.

Because it promotes deep, slow breathing, yoga manifests a sense of deep calm, as it helps to activate the parasympathetic nervous system - our body's natural state of relaxation [3].

Stress-free self-care



As well as encouraging happy hormones, yoga can also decrease the secretion of cortisol, which is our primary stress hormone.

One study, which looked at the impact of yoga on stress, followed twenty-four women who considered themselves to be emotionally distressed. After three months of practising yoga, they had notably lower levels of cortisol as well as lower levels of stress, anxiety, fatigue and depression [4].

Integrating yoga into your life can have an incredibly positive impact on your overall mental health.

As well as improving symptoms of stress, taking time out of your day to find a moment of peace to focus fully on you can be an empowering and important act of self-care.

Discover more about yoga

If you'd like to try yoga but aren't sure where to start, try these videos from our 'Discover yoga' series:

- [Vinyasa slow flow yoga class to connect with your body](#)
- [Tip: embrace yoga off the mat and learn to stay present](#)
- [Stretching: hips and thighs](#)

You can find more videos and a wide range of classes by looking for 'Discover yoga' in the Discover section of the app.

1. [Yoga: Fight stress and find serenity](#). Mayo Clinic, December 29, 2020.

2. [5 ways yoga can benefit your mental health](#) Psychology Today, January 24, 2019.

3. [Yoga for better mental health](#) Harvard Health, May 18, 2021.

4. [13 Benefits of yoga that are supported by science](#) Healthline, August 30, 2017.