

## **Stretched & Stressed**

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I cannot believe the number of hours I spend in meetings and dealing with high impact situations each week. All this leads to feeling stretched beyond belief and, some days, so stressed that I wonder if I am going to break.

Sound familiar? There are a million of techniques for dealing with stress. Believe me, I am sure I have tried just about every one of them! They come and go. Sometimes they help. The rest of the time they just irritate me.

A friend called about six months ago and asked if I wanted to learn some new stretching techniques. Reminding me that we're not getting any younger, he said that if we were to keep playing tennis until we were old and gray we should take better care of our bodies.

Given that he beats me at tennis two out of three times, my competitive spirit kicked in - I did not want him to get an edge on me. He then let me know he was signing us up for yoga!

"Yoga!" I thought. "Come on! Why would I engage in this highly trendy world?"

He convinced me and am I ever glad he did.

I am not sure of the technical terms for what we do at yoga but it feels like I'm stretching my stressed muscles just enough to relax them. It has given me a whole new perspective and the addictive qualities of yoga have now become a way of life for me.

What I did not expect from yoga was that it has a way of relaxing the brain (my most stretched muscle most days).

I can hardly wait for that last pose, shava asana - commonly known as "dead man's pose" - lying still on my back this incredible feeling comes over me as my instructor sings a wonderful life affirming song. I relax, feeling every muscle that's just been stretched. Heaven!

I am hooked. As someone who obsesses about changing the world just about every minute of every day, yoga has not only helped to relax my body but it has become a technique for quieting my mind. It's a gift I had not expected.

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