



Svaroopa® Vidya Ashram

January 2019 Teachings Article:

Quick Fixes #1

Want to Feel Better?

By Sadguru Nirmalananda

Everything you do is for the purpose of making you feel better. Whether you're eating chocolate, spending time with a loved one or watching a favorite show, you're wanting it to make you feel better. When you include yoga on your list of things that make you feel better, you discover that it works better than anything else. Our 2019 series of teachings articles will offer you "Quick Fixes," easy things you can do to improve your state instantly.

First, please consider why you need a quick fix. What's going on when you decide you'll have a cup of coffee, get a breath of fresh air or watch a funny cat video? You want something to make you feel better because you're not feeling "better" already. Notice how you are feeling. It's called your "emotional set point." Researchers used to believe you were stuck with it, with genetics contributing as much as 50% to your set point. Fortunately, science has discovered that yoga and meditation change your emotional set point. It's called "neuroplasticity."

Yoga's ancient sages didn't wait for scientists to do brain scans. The sages' methodologies have been in continuous use for thousands of years, successfully changing how people feel, one-by-one. I am one such person. I never dreamed that I could have the inner peace and joy that is my set point now. I used to ask myself, "Is this happiness?" I asked myself that at my graduation ceremony after high school and again after college. It was puzzling to me because what I felt was relief. During other significant life events, I'd wonder, "Is this the happiness that everyone says is so great?" It always felt like a temporary high, like being on a rocket ship that would land back on earth a few hours later. My emotional set point was very clear to me. Looking back, I'd characterize it as "plodding along."

When I found yoga, it turned from "plodding" into "trekking." Yoga gave me a destination as well as a way to get there. Better yet, I had someone who had already made the trip, Swami Muktananda. He made yoga's promise tangible, both by his words as well as by his inner state. I loved to sit with Baba because his inner bliss was completely contagious.

lokaananda.h samaadhi-sukham — Shiva Sutras 1.18

In every moment, the Master experiences the Bliss of Self-Knowingness,
which is transmitted to those in contact with him.¹

I knew inner bliss was real because I experienced it when I sat with Baba. This was what I was unable to find in the graduation ceremonies and other events. I thought it was coming from Baba, but he taught me to find its source inside me. I did the practices he recommended so that I could find it and live in it all the time. It worked. I found within me what Baba had found within himself.

It's there inside you as well. It's called your own "Self." You'll find it where you lost it — inside. When you went chasing after happiness in the world, you abandoned your inherent bliss, fullness and joy. Yoga's sole purpose is to give you back your Self.

It works in Shavasana (Corpse Pose), even better with the Guided Awareness. After 6-10 minutes, you feel like a new you. Ujjayi Pranayama (Yoga's Ocean Sounding Breath) works even better. It not only refreshes and centers you, it fills up your tank, so you can keep going for hours. After a Svaroopa® yoga class, your aches and pains are gone (or mostly gone), plus you feel more peaceful and happier. This is an organic feeling, not a pumped-up high like you get from exercise or caffeine. Instead of a temporary high, it's a deep happiness.

¹ Translated by Swami Nirmalananda

Do More Yoga

It's incredibly reliable. You do yoga, you feel better. Instead of one class per week, if you do two, you feel even better. Thus, if you want to feel better, you do more yoga. It works with meditation too. In the beginning, if you miss a class or personal practice session, you go back to your old set point. The same thing is true with chocolate, but you never complained about that. After you've been doing yoga for a while, your set point changes. Then, even when you miss a class or session, you don't backslide.

Something more is going on as well. Every time you do yoga or meditate, you get the same results quicker. It takes fewer yoga poses to push your reset button. When you do the same amount of yoga, like taking a class, your results are greater than last time. Your peace and happiness expand exponentially. How big can this inner feeling get?

It's an organic feeling, this inner peace and deep happiness. As it expands inward, you'll find it encompasses the entire universe and beyond. Finding this inside, you know the depth and expanse of your own Self. This is what *Svaroopa®* yoga and meditation have been giving you all along, the inner opening to your own Divinity. You thought it was about feeling better, but "better" was a feeling that was arising from its source, your own Self.

Do Less Yoga, More Frequently

Fortunately, you don't have to do an hour of yoga or meditation in order to find your Self. A long practice session is delicious when you have the time, of course. But what about during the rest of your life? This is why we have Quick Fixes. Whether it's a physical thing or a trick with your breath or your mind, you can push your reset button whenever you need. Try this:

Level Up

Level your weight out evenly in both sides.

If you're standing, spread your weight evenly in both feet (aligned in Tadasana is best).

It works when you're sitting, too; spread your weight evenly in both sides of your seat.

To get even more, sit a little deeper in your seat or stand a little heavier in your feet.

In 30-90 seconds, you'll "level-up," just like in a video game.

When you use your Quick Fix more often, it works better. Why? One reason is that you're getting better at it, simply because practice makes perfect. In addition, when you use it more often, you don't have a chance to get so bent out of shape, physically or mentally-emotionally. It's easier to get back to your Self if you haven't gone too far away.

Of course, some of you will want to add mantra repetition to this. Go for it!

This is still called, "Doing more yoga."

THIS IS AN ARTICLE IN A YEAR-LONG SERIES ON "QUICK FIXES," OUR THEME FOR 2010, AUTHORED BY
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