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Yoga and Grief



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Category: Grief and Loss

For thousands of years, yoga has been a practice that helps heal and promote health in body, mind, heart and spirit. Yoga teaches soothing and settling ways of attending to ourselves. Anyone can practice yoga: it is not so much about twisting the body as it is about untwisting the mind. As you breathe and move in new positions, tension and tightness are released a little at a time. As you do this, you learn how to nurture yourself through mindfully respecting your limits. When a person is coping with the death of a loved one, it may seem too hard to try to do one more thing. But practicing yoga is not just another "should." It is a gift to yourself, a time of quiet designed to leave you with a sense of peace. The following are some ways yoga practice can help you take care of yourself.

Breath work is paying attention to how we breathe. When we do this, we become more sensitive; life energy flows naturally and fully through the body and clears the mind. This helps us to become focused and able to concentrate. Some breath practices help to release anxiety or depression, while others re-energize.

Postures help with the letting go of stress so healing can occur from deep within. The postures promote strength and flexibility. The nervous system responds to this by bringing a sense of calm and release.

Deep relaxation is the restorative aspect of yoga. Learning to relax is a necessary skill for those trying to readjust to life after a loved one has died. It is a practice that teaches us how to let go and to be present within ourselves.

Yoga focuses on your inner experience and how to take care of yourself from the inside out. Through small steps, you increase your ability to stay balanced as you change. As you observe yourself with more compassion, you gain a more positive perspective. Your inner wisdom – knowing what is needed for healing – is given a chance to surface.

