P 

anza gives energy to all our faculties without which they cannot function. There are five main subdivisions of prana (primordial energy) called vayus which operate at the level of the pranamaya kosha (one of the five bodily sheaths) and are divided according to their directional movement and internal organ control. Cultivating a basic awareness of one or more of the vayus (winds) via our yoga and meditation practice will enable us to deepen our awareness of the subtle body and patterns of the breath. The mastery of all of the five vayus leads to optimal health and increased longevity. The five vayus are: 

1. Prana which resides in the heart/chest region, moves inward and governs reception at all levels from ingestion of food, consumption of water and inhalation of air to the reception of sensorial impressions and mental experiences. Prana is the propulsive and the basic energy that drives us in life. Its element is air. Pathological manifestations include anxiety, asthma, heart palpitations and epilepsy.

2. Apana which resides in the lower abdomen moves outward and downward and governs all forms of elimination and reproduction. Apana governs the excretory system, the reproductive system and the elimination of carbon dioxide. On a deeper level it discriminates the elimination of negative sensory, emotional and mental experiences. Its element is earth. Pathological manifestations include constipation, enlarged prostate, dysmenorrhea and osteoporosis.

3. Udana which resides above the larynx moves upward and governs transformative movements of life energy. Udana governs the growth of the body, speech, enthusiasm, reason and conscious evolution. Its element is ether. It is udana which dissolves prana and apana, stopping their outer and inner flow, in order to bring them together in the sushumna (central channel/spinal cord), resulting in either samadhi (Bliss) or death. Pathological manifestations include speech problems, throat diseases, nose bleeds and tonsillitis.

4. Vayana which pervades the body and is the power of movement from the centre to the periphery. Vayana governs circulatory system, and oxygen distribution throughout the body and the processing of emotions and thoughts through the mind. Vayana assists the other four pranas in their work. Vayana governs the contraction and relaxation of all muscles as well as the movement of the joints and structures around them. Its element is fire. Pathological manifestations include arthritis, aneurysms, inadequate circulation and varicose veins.

5. Samana which resides at the upper abdomen moves from the periphery to the centre through the digestion of our gastrointestinal tract and the assimilation of nutrients in the intestinal system. Samana works in the lungs to absorb oxygen and in the head to integrate and sensitize sensorial, emotional or mental experiences. Its element is fire. Pathological manifestations include indigestion, malabsorption, flatulence and loss of appetite.

The balance of prana and the five vayus of the pranamaya kosha are absolutely necessary for your body’s health and longevity. Holistic yoga, pranayama and meditation practices alternately stimulate and/or pacify all the five vayus and their corresponding elements to maintain a dynamically balanced state. The reversing of the actions of prana and apana creates unique energy flows to access central channel Samadhi. The better we understand yoga, pranayama and meditation the more efficient and predictable the elemental outcome, the corresponding balance of the vayus and the health and function of our physical and mental bodies. This article is just the tip of the iceberg on internal energies.

"All that exists in the three heavens rests in the control of Prana."

– Prashna Upanishad II.13

The Dharma Centre on Lillfield Community has four yoga classes a week. Phone 02 6624-7120 or check out our Facebook page “Dharma Centre – Lillfield” for more details and directions.

Tactik knowing

Perception is a funny thing. You can notice some things straight away but not even see other things, and we are quite different in this way. For instance, I have a large Japanese torii painted red in my front garden. It is in plain sight, but not everybody sees it. A friend came by and had to be shown where it was, even though he’d parked his car directly in front of it. A torii is a gateway with no walls and symbolizes the transition from this world and the next. It is a very visually pleasing structure and frames my garden beautifully. Not seeing something doesn’t mean the object is completely out of awareness. A person encountering my torii for the first time would wonder, in my friend’s life what that, at a tacit level, she knows (although she doubts) what should go where, and what should be left out: the very skills needed to create boundaries around herself so that she cannot be abused. By drawing attention to her tacit knowing, she begins to have the skills required to take back her life and live the life her heart desires.

Tactik knowing can be built upon and strengthened. Regarding the woman just described, the reconnected skills of boundary making and right placement of intent in relation to certain other people that I suggested she deliberately utilize will, over time, become second nature, a tacit knowledge. For now, though, the knowledge she has in the making of beautiful spaces

by Dr. Elizabeth McCardell

M.Couns. PhD

BA, BA (Hons), M. Couns, PhD, Dip Clin Hypnotherapy

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Back pain

In nineyn percent of people will experience back pain at some time in their lives, an experience that can be extremely debilitating.

The vertebrae are evolved in four legged animals. Walking on two legs puts pressure on the lower spine in a manner that it was not intended to cope with, despite large vertebrate muscles and ligaments.

In terms of Chinese medicine, the main channels affecting the spine are the bladder and Governing vessel or Du channels. Lower back pain is frequently associated with low kidney energy. Repeated episodes of lower back pain and kidney deficiency.

Other pointers to a kidney deficiency are pain worse at the end of the day or worse for prolonged standing, a cold lower back and cold limbs. Other more general sign of kidney deficiency include dizziness, deafness, forgetfulness, insomnia, dryness and hot feet for yin deficiency.

We are all self-governing. Let us call upon our ancestors and teachers – past and present – to guide us in the way of the heart.

You are all my relations. We are all self-governing.

He is said to feel light, clear, open, true and resonates at a low vibration, it can be described as dense, draining, unclear, dark or unsafe.

The vertebral column evolved in four legged animals. Walking on two legs puts pressure on the lower spine in a manner that it was not intended to cope with, despite large vertebrate muscles and ligaments. In terms of Chinese medicine, the main channels affecting the spine are the bladder and Governing vessel or Du channels. Lower back pain is frequently associated with low kidney energy. Repeated episodes of lower back pain and kidney deficiency.

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We are all self-governing.

The following is a description of a postpartum ritual performed by Brigid Beckett in Lismore.

We are all self-governing.

For the birth of a mother

1. Forty days of confinement

The acknowledgement that the first forty days (or six weeks) is to be protected and treated as a time of recuperation. The mother accepts extra support from family/friends or a postpartum doula. She has relief from cooking and cleaning and instead focuses all her energy on falling in love and breastfeeding her baby.

2. Holistic treatments

The physical and emotional changes that happen to a new mother and the support and healing traditions are brought in to assist the mother. Treatments are given such as massages, the belly and legs using herbs/spices.

3. Rest

Traditional cultures place a lot of importance on rest and recuperation. Sometimes the mother is on a long way to be well and have a long way to recovery. Mandating rest and creating a quiet, safe, supported environment for the mother is to fall in love and learn to love and be loved.

4. Village support

These cultures assist the mother to rest and recuperate by having strong support networks in place. Families and friends usually step in to help care for the mothers other children and also help with chores around the house.

5. Mothering the Mother

Ceremonies help honour the labour of birth and the birthing process. They are performed and gifts given to signify and acknowledge the new mother.

The following is a description of a postpartum ritual performed by Brigid Beckett in Lismore.

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The dummies of Japan

Postcard from Japan, part 4 by Bob Tissot

So, here we are, back home in the glorious Northern Rivers. It’s a perfect day in paradise and as I contemplate and dare, I say, serenely on my own, opening up on to the bight on two side bush. Aussies throne, my first mind slips back to the vastly different places we became acquainted with in Japan.

The Japanese washes two different systems side by side to suit all tastes. There’s the flush-through-the-floor ceramic trench with a raised hood at the outlet end, much favoured by the older, more traditional squatters who aren’t all that keen on those new-fangled Western-style constructions. Our little residence only had this type, into this, inset into a raised, tiled area like a stage awaiting the next great virtuoso performance. One of the other side of the Japanese, the deep in their particular function, electronically-enhanced, western design with a favour rarely seen in the world of Water Closets. I mean, without a shred of exaggeration, that these Pedestals to Paradise have elaborate control panels to rival the Tardis, naturally all labelled in Japanese. Heated, soft-seat seat? Bog standard. Heated, multi-directional water jets? Also standard with adjustable temperature and pressure. A quick tip of the ring for the gentleman’s usual location to pick the right direction or else the family jewels might cop a hot, high-pressure blast. Need some sounds of nature like a rushing waterfall (volume adjustable) to mask the tickle of your wee brook? Not a problem. In fact, in the interests of public modesty let’s cue the waterfall to start on entry in the women’s loo, a tactic employed by a major supermarket chain in Kyoto. Handi-free, infrared flush pan!! Seat-pressure activated exhaust-fans! The list goes on. And if you’re especially busy and important you can use the heated air blast to avoid the tedious use of paper, thereby allowing for uninterrupted interaction with your phone.

One would hope that such high-tech appliances would come with at least some basic operational instructions, but the moment you point the remote at the wall the station was explaining how to sit down on the seat, not squat on it, and how to do it properly. As all almost train stations provide both styles, it was while we were on one of these stations that I saw the instructions on how to ride it! OMG! For the first week I’d been riding the bloody horse backwards!

So, I’m thinking back on all this and it strikes me just how amazingly power-consumptive those gleaming, vitreous-china testaments to the separation of man from his biology must be. I don’t reckon I could even keep the seat warm 24/7 on my 12v system.

A couple of pademelons, one with an oversized joey, cruise past, oblivious to my meditations. It’s time to get on with the day.
Triva
Devised by Martin Gill

1. Albedo refers to what property of an object?
2. Rib, stretcher, runner, ferrule, crook-handle and tube are parts of which common protective device?
3. What country is the world’s largest democracy in terms of its population?
4. Name the city that was the setting for Irvine Welsh’s 1993 novel, ‘Trainspotting’.
5. Earl Scruggs (1924-2012) pioneered and was master of the three-fingered technique for playing what?
6. The 5 string banjo. He was a frequent guest on The Beverly Hill Billies along with guitarist Lester Flatt.
7. Which country is the world’s largest democracy in terms of its population?
8. As at 2017 what is the only European country to routinely apply the death penalty for peace-time crimes?
9. Which country is the world’s largest democracy in terms of its population?
10. The God particle is more technically called what, after two (English and Indian) physicists?
11. Frosting of 1 across
12. Veterans’ club
13. An eagle. As in ‘The Eagle Has Landed’
14. Resinous extract of cannabis
15. Defeats opponent (in chess)
16. Obtain money or advantage
17. A cuddly cartoon critter, like Dale, Chip, or Alvin
18. Fudge, or chocolate
19. Resinous extract of cannabis
20. A cuddly cartoon critter, like Dale, Chip, or Alvin
21. Juniper infused spirit

Across
1. (8, 8) Dairy sweet
2. Kind
3. Kind
4. Terry
5. Stormtroopers? Cannabis plant ‘curing’
6. Superman’s nemesis
7. Non-digital
8. The Never Never
9. Veterans’ club
10. Follower of Shiva?
11. Frosting of 1 across
12. Veterans’ club
13. An eagle. As in ‘The Eagle Has Landed’
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