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Foreword

by Dr. Madeleine Singer

Moving, breathing, relaxing and practicing yoga offers everyone the opportunity to unwind and have fun. *Creative Yoga* acquaints children 4-13 years of age with yoga stretches and postures, as well as the philosophy behind yoga. Also included are practical breathing techniques that can be done anytime or anywhere. It provides the necessary information for children to be successful and safe.

Using her 35 years as a researcher and movement educator, Larkin offers children the same guidance as presented in her first book, *Practical Pilates*, to help them use their bodies in functional and expressive movement. *Creative Yoga for Children* joins Larkin's series of fun and instructional fitness, dance, and yoga books in which the delightful, simple, and well-organized lesson plans make the principles of movement come alive for both children and adults.

Teachers and parents are on the front lines to help our nation's children get fit. This book is for teachers, parents, childcare workers, therapists, and yoga instructors who wish to create and teach children's classes. *Creative Yoga* acquaints children with yoga in a playful manner with lessons that can be used anytime.

This book is a unique combination of yoga that can be performed at a desk and mat exercises with empowering breathing techniques that will enable the participant to live a higher quality of life. It is user-friendly and requires very little preparation to use. The exercises are good for the mental and physical development of the child as many of the yoga positions are inspired by animals and are designed to stimulate suppleness and strength. All of the aspects of yoga are included: such as relaxation, breathing, concentration, meditation, and visualization.

Yoga can also be used to increase a child's concentration and self-esteem as it stimulates them to express their creativity and imagination, as well as improve their social skills.

Research shows that breathing, or any of the yoga techniques, help children remain calm during testing and studying and can teach them how to relax in stressful situations. The book focuses on the practice of yoga as a way to gain self-confidence, coordination, body awareness, and flexibility. A supple body is a powerful body. The participant can utilize the stretching and breathing exercises to prepare both the body and the mind for sports competitions while helping avoid injuries. Because yoga is a calming agent, it is an excellent way to eliminate pre-performance jitters.

Although this book is called *Creative Yoga for Children*, adults can also benefit from Larkin's knowledge of making fitness simple and use yoga as a daily habit to build a strong body and mind.

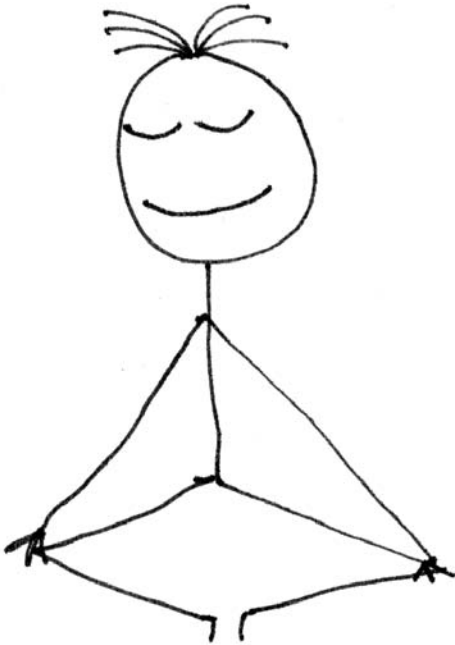
Dr. Madeleine Singer received her B.S. in Education with majors in science and psychology. Her extensive training includes herbology, nutrition, acupuncture, and Time Line Development. Dr. Singer is certified by New York University School of Nursing in Therapeutic Touch, and she is a practitioner of Neuro-Linguistic Programming with majors in education, health, creativity, and leadership. She has also attained her Doctorate in Clinical Hypnotherapy. She currently works globally with Fortune 500 corporations, universities, and professional athletes in the areas of creative thinking, stress management, productivity, and effectiveness training, including relaxation techniques for transformational growth. She has produced and hosted two television series, is a life-enrichment columnist for several magazines and the author of four books and five CDs. Her philosophy of Changing Ordinary to Extraordinary has served to make her a dynamic and effective educator or personal productivity and performance.

Chapter One

Introduction

**The Sanskrit name for
a yoga pose is *asana*.**

**The routine practice of the poses
will give you radiant health in
your daily life.**



Your body is a temple for your mind and spirit. Treat it well and you will reach your full potential. A yogic pose, posture, or exercise coordinates your body with your mind and spirit.

Yoga is like taking the car into the shop for service. Each time you do a pose you fortify your muscles, joints, and organs. Breathing during the pose is your fuel. A calm, focused mind is the key that unlocks the door to your temple or healthy body.

Chapter Two

Yoga and Its Benefits

Yoga is a Sanskrit word meaning “union.” Yoga helps you join your body with your mind, bringing you a happy sense of harmony. Yoga makes you feel like you went to the spa to relax, unwind and rejuvenate.

Your yoga practice is like having your own coach to teach you discipline, patience and perseverance.

How Yoga Helps

- Yoga can help improve children’s attitudes and reduce test-taking stress. Children who use deep relaxation breathing and basic yoga at their desks to cope with stress can concentrate better.
- Yoga also teaches children how to relax during normally hectic lives. It offers alternative ways to react to situations that may otherwise cause them to reach for food to calm down. A proven contributing factor to stress is the use of food as an escape or as a comforter. Yoga offers new ways to relax and concentrate.
- It is easily adaptable at home and school when stress levels get too high. Yoga puts a new light on a child’s world and makes it much more enjoyable. There are meditative and calming benefits.
- It improves focus, strength, coordination, balance and confidence.
- Yoga can help children succeed in school and other activities and it works well with children with special needs.

