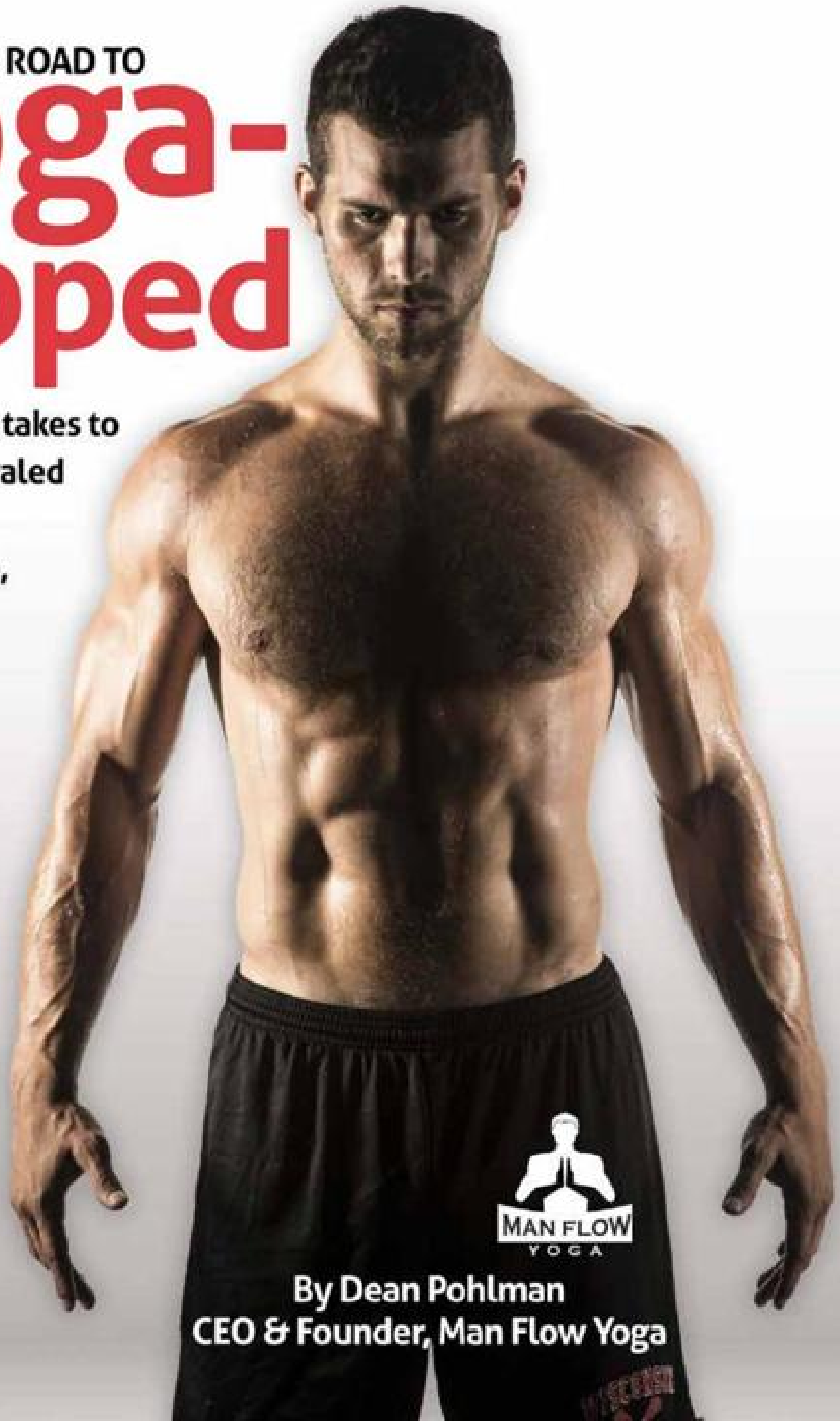


THE ROAD TO Yoga- Ripped

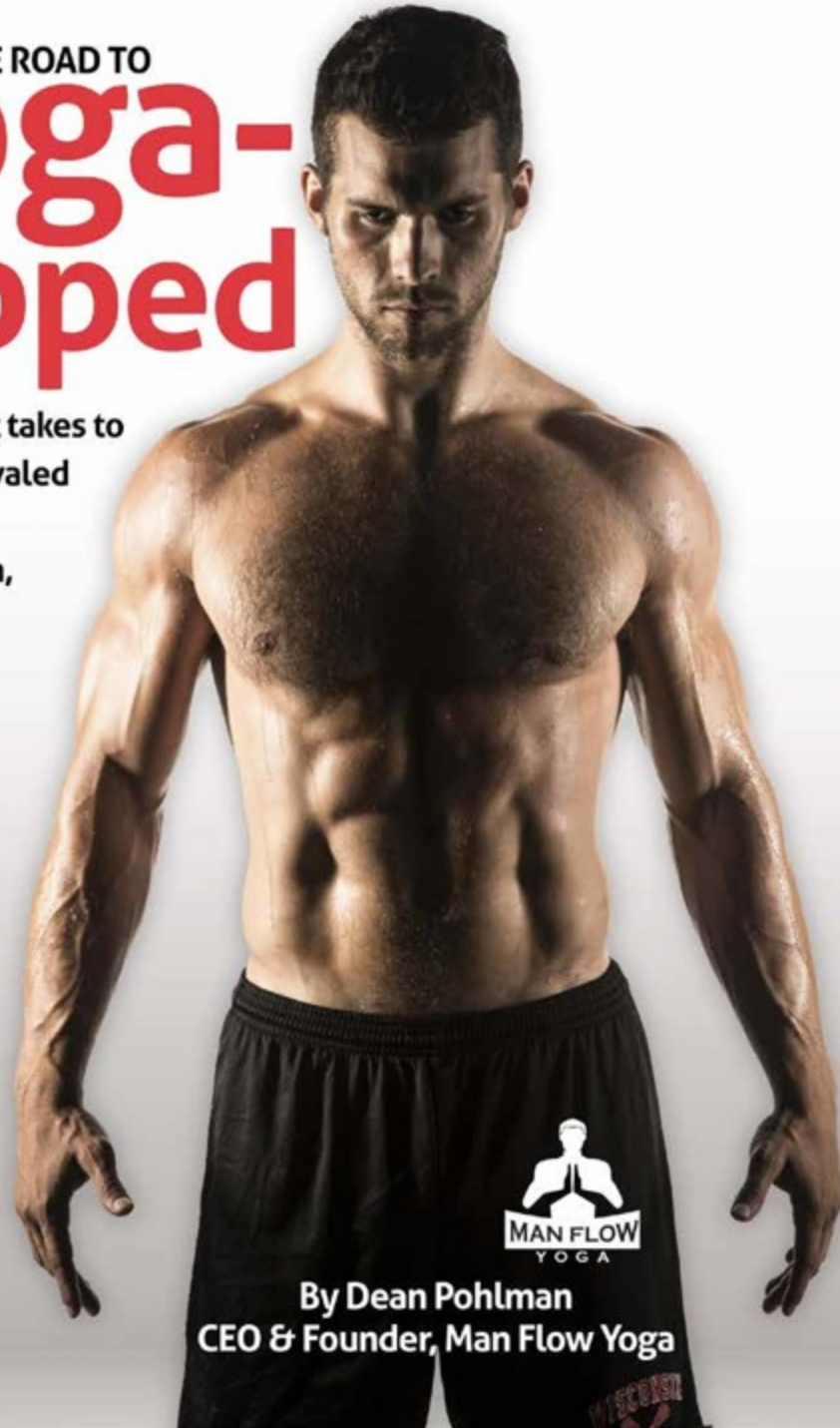
Learn what it takes to
achieve unrivaled
definition,
core strength,
balance, and
flexibility.



By Dean Pohlman
CEO & Founder, Man Flow Yoga

THE ROAD TO **Yoga- Ripped**

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Yoga-

The Road To

Ripped

Learn what it takes to achieve unrivaled definition, core strength, balance, and flexibility.

By Dean Pohlman

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Message from Dean:

I am extremely appreciative that you are open to learning about how you can improve your health with me. You are part of the new generation; a generation that cares more about their personal well-being than the judgments of the ignorant. Soon you too will find what I've known for years - that yoga has the power to transform your life. as a sign of my gratitude, I'm giving you this eBook, The Road to Yoga-Ripped, a compilation of my most popular (and many of my personal favorite) editorials that I've written since founding Man Flow Yoga in 2013. It doesn't matter if you're a fitness fanatic, or just starting to take your health more seriously. The Road to YogaRipped brings together insight and knowledge from a variety of areas into one easy-to-read format that will help instill you with the motivation and the know-how to get yoga-ripped and live a healthy, pain-free life style. It gives you a front row viewing experience to some of my deepest and most personal thoughts, and it reveals knowledge that I've accumulated over years of immersion in yoga, physical fitness, collegiate sports, and overall health and wellness.

The Road to Yoga-Ripped is special because I reveal what was going on in my life at the time that I wrote each blog. I give you a front row seat into the environment and the state

of mind that I was in when I wrote each of these essays. You'll understand my personal reasons for writing every one of these blogs, my intended audience, the desired result, and learn a little bit about the behind-the-scenes marketing of a niche fitness company.

My mission with Man Flow Yoga is to help you do the things that you want to physically perform at the highest possible level, and for as long as you possibly can!

This introductory eBook is just the tip of the iceberg of a yoga brand that will change everything you thought you know about yoga and get your body feeling and looking better than you ever have before.

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My Personal Story:

My first yoga class was entirely on accident. I was looking for the tailor and stumbled into a Bikram Yoga studio. I had always been interested in yoga but had never taken a yoga class before that day. I asked the yoga instructor if this class would help my athletic performance. (at the time I was a lacrosse player for the University of Wisconsin.) She told me that it would help me tone my muscles and make me much more flexible. That was exactly what I was looking for. Then she said that I didn't even have to wear my shirt for the workout. Two hours later, drenched in sweat from head to toe, feeling like I had just exited the pool, and utterly exhausted, I had just completed my first yoga class. It was, and probably will remain, the hardest workout that I have ever done. From that point on, I was sold.

after two months of doing yoga consistently, I realized that the benefits of yoga extended far beyond flexibility. My level of limberness skyrocketed, and so did my endurance, body control, core strength, and balance, just to name a few of the benefits I was experiencing. More than that, it made me even stronger in the weight room. I first began instructing yoga as the conditioning coach of my lacrosse team in 2011. That success encouraged me to take my knowledge and passion to a larger audience. I started Man Flow Yoga in

January of 2013 to bring the physical benefits of yoga to as many people as possible. Since then, I have been teaching at gyms, parks, workshops, international retreats, and online. I'm also a #1 bestselling author. My eBook, Yoga Basics for Men, reached #1 in 4 categories and is a featured book of the month on amazon. I am a certified 200- hR Registered Yoga Teacher through Yoga alliance.

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BLOG

Yoga - The Exercise That Doesn't Stop -



Date of publication: March 5, 2015

Mar I wrote this article because I get sick of people saying that they will do yoga when they get in better shape. Yoga is so much easier on your body than other forms of fitness, and it makes much more sense to learn the basics of movement 5

through yoga, rather than doing them at an accelerated rate 2015

and priming your body for injuries before you've eaten had a chance to see some physical results. Basically, learn to crawl before you learn to walk. I also wanted to encourage people looking to restart their physical fitness routines to try Man Flow Yoga, as a fitness-centric form of yoga that will teach you the foundations of movement more quickly than most typical yoga classes.

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Yoga - The Exercise

That Doesn't Stop

I've always been a proponent of utilizing as many forms of physical fitness as possible in order to make yourself as fit as possible. I encourage people to lift weights, to go running, to try a spin class, or do cross training. But, I always come back to yoga as the primary form of exercise. Mainly because, in my eyes, it is the most practical. It is the

one form of physical fitness that I've done that hasn't left me with a chronic injury, or taught me bad habits. I think the objective of your physical fitness should be just that - keeping your body physically fit. Well... duh. What do I mean by that though?

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THE ROAD TO
Yoga-Ripped





There are many forms of fitness out there that people can do only when

they're at 100%. When they aren't at 100%, they revert to other forms of

fitness, like physical therapy, yoga, or a "lighter" form of fitness. Then, when they've used these "less intense" forms of fitness to repair their bodies, they go right back to the sport or fitness that wrecked their body in the first place.

Weight training is a good example. Cross training is an even better example. My point is this: shouldn't the goal of your primary form of physical fitness be to keep your body healthy for whatever

physical challenges you encounter?

Granted, this is not the stone age, and we don't have to go to battle unless we want to, but that's what our bodies

evolved to do. Your physical fitness shouldn't be an activity that causes injury - it should prepare your body in a way that helps reduce the risk of injury!

To those of you reading this right now shaking your heads, I want to assure you (once more, because I already did so at the beginning of this blog) that I am a huge advocate of doing as many

forms of physical fitness as possible.

Train with more variety for better overall fitness. however, there are some forms of exercise out there that are seriously dangerous for your body if you are doing

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so without the proper preparation or training. It could even happen right under the eye of an experienced coach in a group class setting, because he or she can't possibly monitor everyone at once, no matter how hard they try. (It's hard enough for me to monitor a class of 5 people, and I'm sure that many of you have been in a class with 25 people or more!)

Is there a one-size-fit-all solution? honestly, I think there is. I think that the emphasis that a fitness-centric yoga places on correct posture extends beyond the workout session that you attend once a day or a few times per week. In the classes that I teach, I help the participants understand how they can utilize what they've learned in their workouts in everyday life situations, such as waiting in line, sitting in an office chair, driving, or standing up. every one of these situations is an opportunity to strengthen your body. I was a collegiate athlete and fitness freak for years, and before my exposure to yoga I hadn't even considered what proper posture might be able to do for me. Now as a yoga for men, yoga for athletes, and yoga for physical fitness expert, I find myself constantly talking with my clients about how the postural alignment principals found in yoga go beyond the yoga session, extending into every day life.

There isn't a magic button here. You don't just start doing yoga and all of a sudden your body feels 20 years younger, your posture improves so that you look 2 inches taller and exhume confidence, and you develop tone, lean muscle. But those things can happen over time if you're doing the right stuff. It takes consistency and conscious effort to start applying the focus on postural to everyday life. Gradually, as you catch yourself "in the act" (slumping your shoulders, arching your lower back, etc) and adjust yourself, you'll begin to make postural errors less and less, and your body will go stronger. You'll have less pain. You'll get better at all the other disciplines of physical fitness you used to avoid because you apply the physical alignment principals in yoga to weigh lifting, running, cycling, and functional fitness.

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BLOG

How do I get ripped? -



Date of publication: February 6, 2014

Feb I wrote this article in the beginning of 2014, back when Man Flow Yoga was just starting to get some traction and people were beginning to get interested in Man Flow Yoga. At that time, many people weren't so interested in the technique 6

and movements involved in Man Flow Yoga, and were more 2014

interested in my own personal story of physical fitness, and how I had achieved my physique. I wrote this article to emphasize that being "ripped" isn't an accomplishment or something to reach; it's a lifestyle that you live. The physique is just a by-product of that lifestyle. Being ripped goes beyond a few good workouts and healthy dieting. It also involves the way you hold yourself up during the day, the posture that you have while sitting down, and even whether or not you choose to sit or stand while you're out and about. Read on to get a look into the mindset required to live the lifestyle necessary to achieving a ripped physique.

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How Do I Get Ripped?

I am writing this article not to give you a few workouts or a diet plan to get you in the shape that you (think that you) want to be in, but to tell you that in order to get ripped, you need to understand that there are no shortcuts, that it takes a combination of patience and dedication over a long period of time, and that it often involves a lifestyle change. Being in excellent physical shape means not only having proper diet and exercise, but also embracing and enjoying the

activities that go along with it. Instead of just wanting to have a particular body type, you need to enjoy the process of achieving a particular body type. It is the journey, and not the destination, because even when you get to that level of fitness that you want to be at, you will never actually be satisfied. There is always room for improvement, new techniques to learn, and more, more, more to do! So, back to your original question: how do I get ripped?

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The first step is to make sure that you are getting in shape for the right reasons. Your reasons should be things that you feel comfortable explaining to anybody, including your mother or father. Chances are that if you say something along the lines of, "I want to get ripped so I can fuck bitches", then this is not going to work for you. one of the

major reasons that I stay in the physical shape that I am in now is because I eNJoY doing all of the activities that I do, and I want to be able to continue to do them for as long as possible. While I really (really, really) enjoy the aesthetics that come with this lifestyle, they are largely a by product of my ultimate goals in life: to be happy and live for a while, because life is good, right?

Second, you have to start changing the way you

approach fitness. It needs to be something that you LoVe doing, something

that you enjoy talking about, and something that you look forward to doing.

It should not be something that you dread doing when you think about it. Find a form of exercise that you enjoy. Better yet, find multiple forms of exercise that you enjoy, and do all of them. The more you do, the more your body is prepared for whatever life tends to throw at you. While living in the 21st century doesn't exactly allow for the most unpredictable situations (for example, you probably will not have to fight off a bear on the way home from work), ultimately having good physical fitness is the ability to deal with situations where you need to use your physical abilities to survive, and the way your body looks generally reflects these abilities.

Next is diet. everyone who knows anything about fitness will tell that you that diet is actually more important than the exercise that you do if you are seeking to optimize

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your level of physical fitness. That means eating your vegetables. It means skipping fast food. I could list a buzzfeed article-esque list of diet rules, but instead I am going to tell you that the two main things that you need to do are to think about food in terms of what your body

needs and to actually enjoy eating healthily. Consider that your body is a machine and that it needs proper fuel to function at full capacity.

Consider how you feel after eating a value meal at McDonalds when compared to a plate of broccoli. healthy food is healthy because it makes you feel good! Yes, the cookie tastes amazing as you are eating it. But how about afterwards? Do you feel like moving around? Do you feel like you are ready to work out? There is nothing wrong with having cheat days, but your general approach to food needs to see food as fuel for your body.

Building off of that, in order to reach the state of “ripped” you need to think long-term instead of short-term. You need to make a commitment to yourself (and maybe even to your friends and family, if you need some extrinsic motivation) that you are going to put in the effort to start changing the way you think about diet and fitness, and that you will not give up after a month or even three months if you haven’t reached the level that you had hoped to reach. It takes a months and sometimes years, but you only have one body, so you might as well keep trying! eventually you will get to the point that all of the things that make you healthy, that make you look the way you want to, are the things that make

you happy. The concept of living in the moment will apply to healthy dieting and regular exercise because you will actually like it. (I know, crazy, right?) Initially, living in the moment isn’t a great approach to thinking about diet or exercise, because it takes some time to realize that healthier eating habits and regular exercise

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contribute to overall happiness, but after you get accustomed to it, you can begin to constantly live in the moment because you actually realize and enjoy the benefits of eating your vegetables (just like your mom told you to do) and doing yoga.

To sum up, being “ripped” is more a state of mind than the combination of a few good workouts and a healthy diet. It is approaching your daily activities with the intent of making yourself as healthy as possible so that you can realize the ultimate goals of happiness and a fulfilling life. Thinking “ripped” will ultimately guide you to the ripped physique that you are looking for.

Don’t forget to stop and smell the roses along the way. The journey is much more important than the destination, because even when you get to the level of “ripped”

that you envisioned for yourself, you will never truly be satisfied because there is always more to do. That being said, it will be really nice to compare your new self to the you from six months ago and realize just how far you have come. always appreciate what you have accomplished, and use it as motivation to keep striving towards new goals. Your happiness with fitness will only grow as you reach new levels and encounter new challenges.

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BLOG

5 Things You Need to Know About

Shoulder Repair -

Date of publication: January 8, 2015

Jan

I wrote this article in January of 2015, when I was rehabbing myself simultaneously from a knee injury and a rotator cuff strain. I've struggled with shoulder issues for many years.

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Most of it goes back to poor lifting form when I was younger, 2015

but what you do when you're younger has a huge effect on your body at any age. I've worked with physical therapists, personal trainers, online resources, and movement experts who have all helped me learn something about what goes into taking care of my shoulders. In this article, I outline 5 of the most important lessons that I learned, in the hopes that you can utilize them and avoid the issues that I've gone through.

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5 Things You Need to Know

About Shoulder Repair

Something that I've been fascinated with over the last year is shoulder repair.

What all goes into it? how many different disciplines of physical fitness do you need to bring into your fitness regimen in order to be effective? I began to put all of my knowledge of shoulder health together last month, and am in the process of finalizing the content for a shoulder rehabilitation project that I'm working on. here's my story of fixing my shoulders, and 5 things that I learned and practiced regularly in order to heal my shoulders after years of lifting and collegiate sports.

My shoulders were in bad shape. even though I didn't realize it at the time, years of lifting with poor form, a lack of flexibility training, a lack of understanding of basic shoulder anatomy, and a desire to push myself beyond my limits had me on a path to physical

limitations by the time I would be 30 years old. The problem started when I was about 21, with a sharp pinch in my shoulder

every time I put a shirt on. I asked friends and family what to do

about it. They said that it was a rotator cuff injury, and that it would just go away if I backed off for a couple of weeks. as

a testosterone-driven 21 year

old, “backing off for a couple weeks” was simply something
|

didn't do. Secondly, how would a brief period of inactivity help cure the issue that had caused the pinching in the first place.

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The issue, I later learned, was due to limited range of motion and poor mechanics.

I was overusing one muscle in a way that I wasn't supposed to, and leaving other muscles completely out of the equation. I didn't know what to do. Yoga wasn't even something that I had considered doing. eventually, I just

stopped doing motions that hurt too much, and pushed through the exercises that were tolerable.

When I was a senior at the University of Wisconsin, I started doing yoga. After a few months of this revolutionary exercise, I thought that surely my shoulders would be cured. To my amazement, the problem persisted. Instead of addressing the problem, I just stopped doing the vinyasa movement so integral to a power yoga class (the high plank to low plank to upward facing dog transition) so as to avoid stressing my shoulders too much. I would go back to that vinyasa movement after a couple weeks of leaving them alone, only to have the issue flare back up again later that month.

What was I doing wrong? I didn't understand.

Around November of 2013, the problem reached a crescendo. At that time, I was teaching about 10 - 12 classes a week, and I was participating in every class that I taught. Every. Class. That meant that I was working out about 3-4

hours a day. In addition, I was still working part-time for a moving

company, which meant that I was

actually working out for something like 8 - 12 hours daily. I was putting my body through a tremendous

amount of stress, and even though it was "just yoga", my body was

beginning to really feel it. I decided it was time to do something. I started working with a personal trainer, and he started teaching me about real mobility, and helped me to

reveal just where the imbalances were in my body. That inspired me to do my www.manflowyoga.com



own research and my own experimentation in order to begin to repair my shoulders.

after a few months of research, I finally began to understand what all went into healthy shoulders, and now I'll explain a few of the main things that I learned from that.

Lesson #1 - Traditional yoga is not enough. Yoga involves a lot of pushing exercises, but lacks pulling exercises. This inequality of pushing and pulling exercises contributed to muscle imbalances that were causing the pain in my shoulders.

even though my my pushing muscles were strong, my pulling muscles were, in comparison, very weak. Doing planks for 20 minutes a day and then neglecting to counter it with any rows was probably a big reason for that.

Lesson #2 - Proper shoulder placement comes first. I learned that a huge contributing factor to my shoulder issues was from poor bodily mechanics in every form of physical fitness that I did. I realized that my shoulders were completely out of place. Shoulders aren't meant to be in front of your chest. They're supposed to frame your chest. Shoulders shouldn't be shrugged. They should be relaxed, down and away from your ears. For most of us, countering this improper shoulder placement meanings pulling your

shoulders down and back, so that you feel the tops of your shoulders and the very upper region of your chest muscles begin to stretch. The point is that you should make sure that your shoulders are where they're supposed to be before lifting, pushing, or pulling something.

Lesson #3 - In yoga, your lower body stretches because it has to. Your upper body stretches only if you want it to. What I mean by this is that your lower body will stretch more than your upper body because it has to support the full weight of your body. When doing a Warrior 2 pose, for instance, your hip flexors will stretch because the weight of your body is causing them to engage and lengthen. Your upper body, however, is only fighting against the force of gravity on your arms, which isn't much.

Therefore, you have to focus more on engaging the muscles in your upper body in order to get an equal benefit.

Lesson #4 - Deep tissue massage / soft tissue manipulation. You may think that as long as you work on the flexibility in your shoulders through stretching that you

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can eventually get your shoulders back to healthy. If only it were that simple. There's more to it. Deep tissue massage is essential for breaking up the knotted muscle that stretching alone will not be able to help. Stretching a knot would be like trying to cut through wood with a plastic knife. eventually, it might work, but you could just use the saw instead. Deep tissue massage is a tool that you'll need to start using in order to fix your shoulders.

Lesson #5 - Distraction. Distraction is another tool, similar to deep tissue massage, that you'll need to help repair your shoulders. Repeated use of poor movement mechanics in your shoulders can lead to the wearing away of cartilage, which serves as a buffer zone that prevents the bones of your shoulders from rubbing against one another. The wearing away of cartilage can lead to uncomfortable or painful

“clicking” or “popping” in your shoulders when you make simple movements like arm circles or lifting your arms overhead. Distraction helps address this issue by creating more space in the shoulder joint to reduce the grinding of bones on one another.

So there are 5 lessons from my journey into shoulder rehab world. This will eventually be part of the shoulder project

that I'm working on (yet to be titled) that combines multiple disciplines of physical fitness into two yoga-centric workouts (one longer and one shorter) that people can use to fix their shoulders. It will also basic shoulder anatomy explained as simply as possible, common shoulder problems, tests that help you measure your level of shoulder flexibility, and a guide of exercises to address them, which includes yoga poses, stretches used by handstand enthusiasts, physical therapy, soft tissue manipulation techniques, distraction, and more.

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BLOG

4 Surprisingly Mainstream Habits That



Hold Back Your Happiness -

February 5, 2015

Feb I wrote this article right around the time I got back from the NCAA Division 1 Football Championship game in Arlington, Texas. My brother flew to Austin from Cleveland to watch the 5

game, and we drove up from Austin to Arlington to watch the 2015

game. Along the drive, we talked a lot about my brother's life and my own experiences. While I was at the game, I contemplated what we had talked about and began to form the foundations of this blog. Around me, I noticed so many people emotionally invested in the outcome of a game that they had very little to no personal involvement in. It bothered me that these people cared so much about something that had nothing to do with themselves, and it made me think about how people live vicariously through others, rather than creating greatness in their own lives.

Note: Man Flow Yoga is focused on physical fitness, but every now and then I go into life coach mode and talk about simple things that you can do to improve your overall contentment with your personal life. Fitness is extremely important, but it's all in the hopes that it can contribute to our overall feeling of confidence and happiness. So

sometimes I jump outside my boundaries of fitness and share ideas that I think people are missing.

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4 Surprisingly Mainstream Habits

That Hold Back Your Happiness

(With Your own Life)

everyday you do something that allows you to live through something or someone other than yourself. You invest your emotions and your success in the success of others instead of yourself. I do it too. We all do. I look at this as a way for people to escape their own [dull] lives, when really we should be doing everything we can to make our lives the reality that we want to be in. Crazy as it sounds, you should be happy with your own life. one of the first steps to doing this is recognizing and eliminating the activities or habits that you participate in or utilize to escape from your own reality. You might even do all of the things on this list on a daily basis -

that's how mainstream these habits are.

The trick is to drawing the line between inspiration and vicarious living. Vicarious living is imaginative or sympathetic participation in the experience of another. Being inspired to be the best version of yourself is what makes the world go round. Life would be incredibly dull without inspiration. You digress to vicarious living when you're more excited about the success of someone else than your own; when you have such little hope for yourself that you invest your emotions and feelings of success in someone who you feel deserves them more.

here are 4 surprisingly mainstream habits that you should avoid or check yourself on if you want to start being happier with your own life.

1. Immersing Yourself In Movies or Tv Shows - Living through the fictional stories of actors on an electronic screen is something that you might not count as a tool for you to escape your own life, but it absolutely can be, depending on your level of involvement. This isn't to say that some TV shows are beneficial to self-development if they are thought-provoking or educational, but I am cautioning against getting so absorbed into a TV show that thoughts such as,

“I wish I was as strong as...” or “I wish I was as smart as...”
or “I wish I had HIS life

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so that..." begin to surface whenever you watch the show. at that point, you're no longer watching the TV show as a distraction. You're watching the TV and trying to absorb yourself into the character, and by doing so you're forgetting your own reality and living through another one instead. even worse, you're living a reality through a made-up story!

2. Fanatically Supporting Sports Teams (Read the whole paragraph before you freak out) - I went to BCS Championship in arlington, Texas in January, to watch the Bucks and the Ducks compete for the title of the #1 college football team, the first tournament of its kind in NCaa history. I saw people that had seemingly lost their personal identities as they became absorbed in nationalistic fever. People were celebrating as if they had personally won thousands of dollars or had accomplished a lifelong goal. "We're #1!" was chanted incessantly when the game ended and the Bucks had won. Let me break that down. "We're" is short for "**We** are". as a fan, I'm not sure how **you** became part of the team. You cheer for the #1 team. You, specifically, are not the #1 team. You watched the game and cheered, and while your support helped to embolden the players, you did not score the touchdown for them.

on the other hand, I need to present the opposing side of this argument. I am an athlete myself. I've played lacrosse my whole life, including at the collegiate and international level. I understand the benefits of being part of a sports community. The sport of lacrosse has served as a point of common interest that has been the basis of countless friendships that have served me both emotionally and financially. In fact, I'm certain that what I do today would not have been possible without the sport of lacrosse. But, for people to feel such connection to an organization that they truly have very little to do with is concerning to me. at some point, it becomes another method of escaping reality. The point is that there is a line between a supporter and a fan(atic).

Don't get absorbed to the point that your very happiness and feelings of success depend on a sports team that you have almost zero effect on. Don't vicariously live through a team. You should vest your emotions instead in something that you can control - and you know what that is? Yup. Your self.

3. Celebrity Stalking - Celebrities can be extremely inspiring people. arnold

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Schwarzenegger is a bodybuilder turned Governor of California. Chris Kyle is an American hero. Tom Brady is a fantastic athlete. These people all have qualities that many of us want to possess, whether it's work-ethic, a sense of mission, or athleticism. However, all of these people have one very important thing in common: **They are not you.** You have your own name and your own history. You have your own set of unique skills and talents (even if you haven't quite figured them out yet). Use these people to inspire you. Copy their habits for your own success. But don't become invested in them to the point that your own happiness depends on their success. Stop wishing to be a celebrity and go be a celebrity, if that's what you want. Wishing without a plan of action is pointless. Knowledge without application is useless. and living through someone else is pathetic.

4. Judging Other People - Next time you're having a conversation, I want you to be aware of just how much of your conversation is made up of you talking negatively about the people that you deal with in your life. Your co-workers.

Your brother. Your friend who made a decision you find questionable. Notice all the assumptions that you make in your head, and then notice how many of those assumptions

actually make it through your mouth, and into the conversation. It's scary how much of our conversation revolves around our judging of other people. It's easy to do. It's a good way to make people laugh. It sure makes us feel better about ourselves. But here's the thing: Judging others is simply a reflection of your own insecurities. Let me say that again, underlined and bolded: **Judging others is a reflection of your own insecurities.** every time that you say something negative about someone else you are only reinforcing that particular insecurity of yourself. You're making yourself feel okay because you have it better than someone else in some regard. When comparing yourself to others, it's a way for you to reassure yourself that you're

“okay”. Basically, mind your own business. The only person that you need to be worried about is the best f*cking version of yourself. Sure, use other people's levels of success to help inspire you to their heights, but don't point out the reflections of your own insecurities in other people to make yourself feel good, you dick. That is only reinforcing the insecurity that is holding you back! To quote Benjamin Franklin, “Speak ill of no man, and speak all the good you

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know of everybody.” You’ll find that people start to like you more because of it.

It’s a short list of things to avoid in order to be happy with your own life, but some of these things are so ingrained that they may be difficult to adjust. Next time you’re watching a TV show or a movie, check in with yourself. Don’t forget about the real hero of your life. When you’re cheering for your favorite team, consider your actual attachment. When you’re following a celebrity, ask yourself: do you want to be him, or do you want to be LIKE him? Finally, stop judging other people. every time that you make a joke or judge somebody else because they don’t measure up to your standard, you are only reinforcing your own insecurity. You solidify your own personal fear that you will not live up to that standard.

The only person you need to judge is the best version of yourself. Imagine that everyday you went to battle with the best, most driven, energy-filled, and motivated version of yourself, and perform accordingly. You know you can perform at that level, because it’s YoU that you’re struggling against. embrace your own reality, even if it hurts. and then change it so that it’s something you’re proud of.

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BLOG

5 Poses to Fix Your Shoulders -



Date of publication: December 18, 2014

Dec I wrote this article while I was rehabbing my shoulders. After many months, I noticed that a combination of certain poses was more effective than some other techniques that I had been trying out. I pinpointed the most effective poses that I 18 was using, and listed them in a blog with reasons for why I 2014

selected them as well as technique points to keep in mind when performing them.

Often when my creative gears are not turning, or I am lacking my philosophical hat, I choose instead to write an article based solely on fitness. I use my specific knowledge to create a blog that is both useful and informative to people interested in improving their physical fitness through yoga. I provide them with specific knowledge that they can instantly apply to their fitness routines to improve their health.

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5 Poses That Will Fix Your Shoulders

You know that crickity-crackity sound your shoulder makes when you move your arms around in a circle? That ShoULDn'T haPPeN. We can blame it on any number of things. Most likely it's a combination of many things,

including the way we sit with our shoulders hunched, the way that we stand, with our shoulders hunched, and the way that we walk... with our shoulders hunched. Basically, stop hunching your shoulders, and you've taken the first step to fixing your shoulders. The second biggest reason for poor shoulder health is our love for pushing exercises and our negligence of pulling exercises. This causes imbalances because your body is doing lots of pushing, and not enough pulling, meaning that the muscles in the front of your body are overdeveloped and tight, compared to the weak and overstretched muscles in your back.

Fortunately, there are a few simple exercises which can begin to reverse the effects of your crappy lifting form and your constant hunchedness. These poses will all be included in a project that I am working on that will address the issue of shoulder inflexibility and shoulder health in general. Make sure you sign up for my email list for more details on that. okay, I've plugged myself. Now, it's time for the poses.

1) Standing Side Stretch (Crescent Moon)

This pose is great for stretching all the muscles around your armpits. The only problem is that when people do this pose they tend to shrug their shoulders up to their ears, greatly reducing the benefits of the stretch. Instead, try to keep your shoulders down and away from your ears in order to maximize the shoulder stretch.

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2) Dolphin

oh dolphin. You son of a bitch. This always makes it on to any list that I have for fixing your shoulders.

This pose is on here because not only does it stretch your shoulders, but it also strengthens the muscles in your shoulders that you should be using while you do pushups and bench, but don't, because your muscles don't have the range of motion required.

3) Wide-legged forward fold with

interlaced fingers

This pose opens up your chest muscles like no other pose can. (Debatable, but it's still really great.) It stretches your pecs, which connect your shoulders to your chest, and are some of the tighter muscles found in the male (and even female) body. as always, keep your shoulders away from your ears here.

4) Eagle

eagle stretches the muscles that attach from your shoulder blades to your spine. It's a stretch that almost nobody does outside of yoga, and the stretch that actually does stretch your rhomboids and is typically done outside of yoga is almost always done incorrectly. To skip the testicle-crunching and balance aspect of this pose, just stand up straight on both feet and work on getting your elbows up high, your forearms away from your face, and your shoulders down.

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5) Superman

Superman is important because it strengthens the muscles in your back. It is a direct counter to all of the exercises that you do too much that cause the shoulder imbalance in the first place. Press your fingertips as far forward as you can, and

bring your shoulders as high up as possible. Make sure that you keep your core and your legs engaged in this pose, or you risk straining your lower back.

6) Warrior 3

Warrior 3 is a very difficult and humbling pose.

Just when you think you've got your life figured out and you're the alpha gym rat, you encounter this shit and suddenly you're the last kid picked in kickball again. This pose is great for your full body, for flexibility, strength, endurance, and balance.

For the purpose of this article, it's fantastic for strengthening your shoulders and opening up your upper body.

obviously there are quite a few more poses that can help you with your shoulder problems, but these are some of the most effective.

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BLOG

7 Poses for Complete Beginners -



Date of publication: December 11, 2014

Dec

I distinctly remember writing this article in response to a ridiculously titled YouTube video I found titled “Yoga for Core for Beginners”. In it, the instructor quickly progresses through an advanced yoga sequence that even I would have difficulty following. She makes no explanation of technique involved in 20145

each pose, and she finishes with a pose that most instructors can't even do. (That finishing pose was firefly pose, for those of you wondering. Do a quick google image search and you'll see just how difficult it is.) I understand the point of using certain keywords in your video title to attract more viewers, but you're an a**hole for doing it. You potentially turn off hundreds of people from attempting yoga by making an unrealistic expectation of where they should be as a beginner in exchange for a very small amount of YouTube revenue.

In response, I created this article with 7 poses that are TRULY

for beginners. These are poses that I start off my clients with when they first start learning yoga. I do this with people who are young and fit, and people that are old and overweight.

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7 Poses for Complete Beginners

The reason that I'm writing this blog today is because I want to introduce a few poses that are truly accessible by complete noobies to yoga. Many poses are simply too difficult for people who have not had a consistent fitness routine for a long period of time, or who are inflexible because they lack flexibility training. The poses below are the poses that I work on when I begin with people that are not ready for a full blown Man Flow Yoga session yet. They are easy to learn, do not require significant flexibility and place (relatively) little stress on the body. (Plank is always a pain in the ass, regardless of your fitness level.) So, here are 7 poses that you can do to start at anytime, regardless of your fitness level.

#NoFlexibilityRequired

You can view all of these poses with a step by step breakdown in my eBook, Yoga Basics for Men: an Intro to Man Flow Yoga.

1) Catcow

Catcow is one of the first poses that I teach people because it is of paramount importance for a healthy spine. It works on the range of motion of the spine with an extremely low risk of injury, because all of the weight is in your hands and knees.

2) Low lunge

hip flexors are something that almost everyone could use a little more of, but attempting a Warrior 2 pose after 2 years of inactivity will most likely leave you feeling discouraged and in tears.

Low lunge is a good way for you to start to open
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up your hip flexors, while working on proper posture and core engagement.

3) Plank

Plank is a very simple pose that does not require flexibility. It does require proper core engagement, which is easy to teach in the plank position.

Simply try and maintain a flat back. I like to remind my students and class participants to “lift your belly button two inches” in order to properly engage the core and prevent sinking in the lower back. This builds upper body endurance and core strength.

4) Child’s pose

ahh, child’s pose. Where were you when I was playing lacrosse for the first 21 years of my life?

Child’s pose can be difficult if you have a belly or if your hips are tight to the point that you can’t get your butt back far enough. Some people don’t always feel the stretch right away because their lower backs are tight to the point that it won’t even release. If you’re not feeling this stretch

immediately, do a few more squats to warm up and get your spine a little more mobile.

5) Standing forward fold Bend your knees, and let your upper body sink towards the ground. This pose uses gravity to help release the tension in your spine as well as the tightness in your hamstrings. Don't worry about touching the ground.

Bend your knees as much as you need in order to feel a stretch in your lower back.

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6) Squat hold (modified chair pose) Squat hold (which is somewhat of a modified chair pose) is a pose that I do in almost every workout I teach and do. It teaches proper core engagement, works on lower body endurance, and does not require any amount of flexibility. Go as low as you can while keeping your back flat (core engaged), and remember to keep your knees behind your toes.

7) Reclined pigeon pose Pigeon pose is often too difficult for people who haven't stretched their external hip rotators (piriformis, glutes) in years, but reclined pigeon pose is something that most

people can access. This pose is huge in helping to relieve lower back pain and

reversing the damage from sitting in a chair all day.

There you have it. 7 poses that you can do, no matter what your level of fitness is. Seriously. Try it. Share this with a friend who feels like yoga isn't for them.

Downdog, Warrior 3, and handstand are

all very difficult poses, but they begin with foundational poses like the ones listed above. happy yoga-ing.

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BLOG

Muscle Mass and Yoga -



Date of publication: December 4, 2014

Dec This is a question that I receive so often that I had little choice but to write an article on it. People see videos on the Man Flow Yoga YouTube channel, or they see pictures of me online, and the first question they think is “can I really look like 4

that with only yoga?”

2014

That question is not answerable without looking into a few things. Yoga is certainly not the most effective way of building muscle mass, but it is very effective in building lean muscle mass. This article talks about the benefits of sculpting a body from yoga postures and bodyweight exercises (calisthenics) versus building a body from weights. I also talk about the reasons why yoga can help you build an extremely solid foundation of physical fitness, and explain that your physical fitness isn't just about increasing your muscle size. You also have to take into consideration the injury-prevention benefits that accompany yoga that will allow you to keep up your physical fitness routine. Finally, I list some other examples of yoga instructors who have physiques similar to mine that are also jacked.

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Muscle Mass and Yoga

Can I Build Muscle Mass Doing Yoga?

I'm writing this blog because this question is usually the question that people ask before they consider coming to one of my yoga classes. I tell them first that what I do focuses on the physical fitness involved in yoga, second that it's catered to men (or women who are interested in the

physical fitness aspects of yoga), and then specifically that it will help you develop endurance, core strength, body control /

balance, and, of course, flexibility / range of motion. at that point, they're almost ready to come to a class or try out a video.

There's usually just one more question to go after that: "Can I build muscle mass doing yoga?"

It's either that exact question, or a question related to muscle mass. Some people

want to put on a lot of muscle, and others are just afraid of losing the muscle that they've worked hard to acquire. The answer to both of them is that yoga will help you whether you're trying to build muscle mass, maintain muscle mass, or reduce bulk. I remember that when I started doing yoga I was equally concerned about losing muscle mass. My experience was that I toned up and lost unnecessary bulk, but not the muscle mass. You'll find a more in-depth, scientific response below.

There are a few ways that I go about answering this question. The first answer is absolutely yes, you can build muscle while doing yoga. as long as you're getting to www.manflowyoga.com



the point of muscle failure (where your muscles start to shake, you feel the burn, and you start to question your decision to do yoga after leg day) then you are initiating the muscle-building process that causes gains. Not all yoga focuses on reaching this point, and some that do only do it once or twice per class. This means that not all yoga classes are effective or even meant to help you significantly build muscle mass. even fewer forms of emphasize upper body. That being said, there are plenty that emphasize reaching

muscle failure and concentrate on both lower aND upper body, and Man Flow Yoga is one of them. are you going to gain 15 pounds of muscle in 2 months of doing yoga? Probably not. But you also won't gain the unnecessary bulk that usually goes along with weightlifting. I recommend a combination of weightlifting or functional fitness, cardio, and yoga for optimal physical performance.

The second answer I give is my own personal experience with yoga. "of course yoga will help you build muscle mass, look at me! I don't do any weightlifting anymore; all I do is yoga." Yoga has helped me maintain, tone, and even build muscle mass in certain areas of my body. The biggest change that I noticed after switching from yoga to weights was the trimming of unnecessary bulk in my upper body, and an increase in the size and definition of muscles in my lower body. I test weights every few months or so, and it's interesting to find that I can still lift JUST aS MUCH as I used to. Clearly this answer is more flawed than the one above. Genetics, diet, consistency, level of effort, and past physical fitness history all contribute. Still, sometimes people just want to see physical proof to connect the dots. Well... ta-da.

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The other point I like to emphasize with building muscle mass and yoga is that building muscle mass is not just a result of mindlessly doing rep after rep. In order to build muscle mass SaFeLY, proper technique is imperative. There are MaNY top college and professional (I would even argue a majority of) that train for years with poor technique or body mechanics, and it's the reason why they only last a few years before succumbing to back pain, knee problems, or other chronic injuries. Seriously

- go talk to an ex-NFL athlete and ask them how they feel everyday. It's probably less than fantastic. The emphasis that yoga instructors (at least, the emphasis that yoga instructors ShoULD) place on technique is more in-depth than any other form of physical fitness that I've seen. Most other forms of fitness involve movements that are quicker, counted, and measured by a timer. Yoga slows down the timer. It gives you an opportunity to check in with your body and consider every region, joint, limb, and appendix to ensure that everything is working the way that it's supposed to. You can then take this attention to detail into your other forms of physical fitness to ensure that you are using proper body mechanics, which keeps your body healthy, injury-free, and allows you to do whatever it is that you want to do, whether that is Man Flow Yoga, yoga, bodyweight calisthenics (which yoga is a part of), weightlifting, or any of

a number of forms of physical fitness that help you feel the burn and initiate the muscle building process.

The conclusion? Yes, yoga helps you build muscle mass. as long as you're doing the right poses while reaching or approaching muscle failure, you will gain muscle while doing yoga. Period. I'm proof of that. Man Flow Yoga is proof of that. (Try it for a couple months, you'll notice the difference too.) You can also check out some other yoga fanatics. Ryan Ferree. Brian Miller. Dylan Werner. Carson Clayhoun. These dudes are all jacked, and their primary form of physical fitness is yoga (to my knowledge).

Lastly, yoga helps you safely build muscle because of its attention to detail. So even if you want to keep pumping iron, it's a great idea to use yoga to help keep your body healthy enough to do it.

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BLOG

Morning Routines: Why They're Important

and How to Create Your Own -

Date of publication: November 13, 2014

Nov I wrote this article a couple weeks after returning from a Tony Robbins conference. I went because I felt like I was hitting a wall, and I knew that I needed a big motivational push to help me reach my goals. I had some significant breakthroughs 2014

at the conference, and by Sunday I was ready to get back to Austin and start implementing some changes in my life. I planned on skipping the last day, the one focusing on physical fitness, but I decided to stick around. It was this day that I learned a lot about morning routines, and that I decided to start utilizing them more seriously. Over the next few weeks, I researched morning routines, and eventually crafted my own morning routine using a variety of templates from well-known bloggers. From them, I learned that morning routines were absolutely critical to anyone interested in optimizing their full potential. I also learned that they should be something you look forward to, rather than something you dread. Then I summarized everything that I learned and put it into an article so that you could have a template and some ideas for creating your own morning routine.

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**Morning Routines:
Why They're Important and**

How to Create Your Own

Most people have jobs that require them to be at work at (what may seem like) an ungodly hour. We scramble out of bed, throw a bagel in our mouth, and drink coffee on the way to work.

Before we even realize it, we're sitting at our desk, reading emails, checking Facebook, and we haven't even had a chance to move our bodies. Instead of using our body's natural ability to create energy, we use caffeine to create an unnatural boost of energy. There's a better way.

The way you start your morning

determines how your day goes. If you wake up, scramble out of bed because you've hit snooze 3 times, and then rush to work, all without having had a minute to transition from sleeping to awake, then you're not setting yourself up for a great day. You're setting your body up to feel like crap. You'll be sweating, nervous, high-strung and pumping cortisol within the first hour. If you can start your morning doing something you enjoy, adding in some movement, a visualization (this is hUGe), and some healthy nourishment, then you are well on your way to an awesome day.

Try and avoid the stressful aspects of your life until after your morning routine. That often means avoiding your email or talking to your parents. Figure out what causes stress in your life, and shut that part of your life out until you're ready to face it after www.manflowyoga.com

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you've had your morning

routine. Instead, include activities that you enjoy.

It doesn't need to be long.

a great morning routine

can take as little as 20

minutes, if you want it to.

Make sure that you have

something that you like

to do in your morning

routine. It won't be fun if you don't like any of it.

also include some form

of exercise in which you are working on your full range of movement. That's why yoga is fantastic. It stretches out all the kinks and soreness from the day before and from whatever crumpled position you managed to get yourself into while you were sleeping. Water and oxygen are number one. Wake up, drink some water.

You're dehydrated. and breathe, because oxygen gives you energy and you need that.

You can simply sit down and breathe deeply, or use exercises that increase your heart rate and bring more oxygen to your brain. Try breathing quickly in and out of the nose for 30 seconds as loudly as possible. Visualization is the next component. I believe that this is an extremely important tool to use to help make you the best version of yourself. Simply thinking about what you want to accomplish, and imagining the best possible outcome of

what can happen that day, that week, or a project that you're working on for months from now, can help you feel better in attacking your day.

Spend a couple minutes thinking about 2 or 3 goals for the day - specific, attainable goals - and then go get some good food in your belly.

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Here's my morning routine:

1. Hydration - Chug a glass of water with lemon and sea salt. Doesn't need to be a fresh lemon - lemon juice will do just fine.

2. Breathing - I stand in mountain pose for a couple minutes, breathing deeply while listening to music on loud, closing my eyes, and trying to pay attention to every part of my body. I check in and see what's tight, what's sore, and what feels strong.

3. Movement - I move through a 10 minute yoga session that covers my full body.

The point isn't to break a sweat or to deplete energy. This is to stretch out my body and ensure that everything is working the way that it should be for the day.

4. Visualization - after I finish my 10 minutes of yoga, I stand (sometimes sit) up tall, close my eyes, and think about what I need to accomplish for the day.

I visualize the best possible outcome of everything on my schedule and to-do list. I make myself excited for what's to come, whether it's training people, writing a blog, working on a new Man Flow Yoga project, or even a thrilling

escapade to the grocery store. This also helps me compartmentalize my thoughts.

5. Super fuel - I put good food in my body. every morning it's eggs with peppers and spinach leaves. It's a great source of protein and a good source of vegetables. I skip the coffee and then get to work.

Some essential components to a morning routine:

1. Hydration.

2. Breathing

3. Movement (Something you like to do).

4. Visualization.

5. Super fuel.

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Other options:

1. Meditation. – Not my favorite, but this works well for a lot of people. I use visualization as my meditation.

2. Gratitude. – article after article supports this theory, but showing gratitude is the most powerful emotion that we experience. If you can spend 2 or 3 minutes each day being thankful for what you have, then you will be better off for it.

This can be a form of prayer, a silent thank you to a friend or family member, or even a thank you to yourself. I'll admit, I haven't been able to incorporate this one myself, but I hope that I get there someday.

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BLOG

Having High Standards - Being the Best

Version of Yourself -

Date of publication: October 30, 2014

Oct

Fresh off my experience at the Tony Robbins conference, I went over my notes from the conference to figure out what I could put into my own words. I found that the idea of having 30 high standards was something that had been a huge factor 2014

in my own life, and decided to expand on that in this blog. It was also during this conference that I realized my creeping complacency. I was emerging as a leader in what I did, and even though comparatively I was doing very well, I knew that if I was performing this mission in competition with the best version of myself that I would be getting my ass kicked. I realized that it wasn't enough to just be the best in the room; I had to be the best in a room full of other me's. It was time to push myself against myself, instead of comparing my progress against others, and simply staying ahead of the game.

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Having High Standards - Being the

Best Version of Yourself

Last week I attended a Tony Robbins conference. For those of who you aren't familiar with Tony Robbins, he is a motivational speaker and self-help coach. he also is a business coach to Ceos of some of the most successful companies in the world. The guy is an unstoppable force, as he would put it. he's also 6'8"... which helps when working a crowd. The conference was an extremely positive experience. I'm happy to say that I live a very fulfilling life, and I felt extremely fortunate during some of the events that took place that weekend, which revealed a desperate desire to change for many of the 6,000 people there. all of them there for different reasons, but all had a desire to help bring more fulfillment and happiness to their lives. one of the things that Tony talked about, and that I will elaborate on in my blog, is the concept of high standards.

In this blog section, I talk a lot about the importance of pushing yourself to new limits; pushing beyond where you are comfortable. I even talk about using competition as a way for you to help motivate you to reach new heights. Competition driven by people that you see as similar to yourself or people that you aspire to be is a powerful force. We want to measure

up to people around us. If we see someone experiencing

something that we want to experience ourselves, it is an excellent stimulus for us to push ourselves to reach that level as well. even more powerful than that, though, is the competition that you have with yourself.

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This brings in the concept of having high standards. Now when I say high standards, I don't mean having high standards in comparison to everyone else. I mean high standards as if you were going head to head with the best version of yourself every day, and the work that you would have to put in in order for you to be able to tie or defeat the best version of yourself, day after day after day. It isn't enough to push the limit once in a while. You need to push your limit on a consistent basis, as often as you (or as often as your body) can. You need to think to yourself: what is the best version of myself doing right now and how can I beat him?

The only way for you to measure up to that best version of yourself, then, is having high standards. having high standards for when you train, having high standards for when you approach life and business, and having high standards in the amount of passion that you exert. That brings about the question: Why don't all of us have high standards? Why wouldn't everyone in the world have as high standards as they possibly could, so that they could be the best versions of themselves?

The answer is that people fear pain. They fear the pain of rejection. The pain of failure. They fear the pain of not measuring up and letting down their loved ones.

They live a life with minimal expectations, comfort, and easily attainable happiness, rather than put themselves through pain. Some of those people may eventually reach a breaking point, where they say “no more!” and begin to make drastic improvements in their lives. But the majority don't. The majority plow on through their mediocrity, making excuses for themselves; excuses along the lines of: “at least I have a job. at least I'm not alone. at least I have my car. at least I can walk.” They set crap standards for themselves to feel better.

That's where the motivator comes in. I'm the guy (or Tony, in the case of this past weekend) that gets you off your fucking ass and says, “YoU DeSeRVe BeTTeR. You have people that depend on you. Stop dragging them down. Because they deserve better, too.” More specifically, I'm the guy that comes in and says, “You're not even 50. are you seriously going to accept having back pain just moving throughout the day? are you really going to give up on your body because yoga is “hard”, or you didn't succeed the first time?”

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Do you think I succeeded the first time? Did I get the job I wanted out of college, despite putting in more effort than my peers, learning 3 languages, and triple majoring? Did my life work out as I had planned when I was 19? Did I quit

when I hurt my knee the first, second or third time? What about my ankle? Chronic shoulder tightness? Fuck no. as my mom said - LIfe is a struggle. If you're not struggling, you're not living. here's what I'm trying to tell you.

1. Set high standards for yourself.
2. Find something worth struggling for.
3. Go FUCKING GeT IT.

and then be proud of yourself knowing that you're struggling for something that you care about. We find meaning in our lives through purpose. For me, it's getting people to do yoga to help them improve the way that they physically feel. It's to allow them to live pain free. It's to give them the body want. It's to help them perform better in sports so that they can go to college with a D1 scholarship. It's to help them live longer lives and be able to play with their grandkids when they get older and see the family that they were able to help create.

Your body is the only one that you will ever receive. ever. You do not get a freebie for a new one. Do yoga. Get physical therapy. Put in the hours, and fix yourself.

I have had knee issues my whole life. I haven't been 100% in 4 months! But I'm not going to give up and resign myself to the couch for the rest of my life. I have a

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purpose in life, and the struggle that I will go through for others will always be greater than the struggle that I will exert on my own behalf.

I hope that you now feel like attempting to slay a dragon. I hope that that's how you feel every day when you wake up!

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BLOG

7 Things I Learned About Weight Lifting

from Yoga -

Date of publication: October 9, 2014

Oct

People are perplexed when I tell them that I don't lift weights.

I do pull-ups, yoga, and some other bodyweight exercises.

They are shocked that I am able to maintain (and even build) 9

muscle mass from yoga or bodyweight exercises alone.
Even 2014

though it isn't a regular part of my routine, I still hit the weights every now and then, mostly as a way to measure my strength levels than to increase them. Also, with my knee injury precluding me from doing a number of full body movements, I decided that weight lifting was one thing that I was allowed to do. So in October of 2014 I went back to the weight room and did some exercises that I hadn't done in years. After years of mindful movement through yoga, I learned quite a few things about what I used to do with my body, and what I do now. The utility in this article lies in the realizations that I made when applying what I had learned in yoga to weightlifting, and how it can help you be more effective and safer in your own weigh training sessions.

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7 Things I Learned About Weight

Lifting from Yoga

I'm writing this article to teach people what they can learn about weight lifting from having a consistent yoga practice.

Repeated practice becomes habit, and eventually all that yoga that you're doing will translate into other forms of physical fitness. Weight lifting is something that I haven't done consistently in 2 years, but with my knee injury keeping me out, I need to get my workout fix in without putting any pressure on my lower body.

answer - weights. on Tuesday, October 7th, I made my return.

as soon as I started my session, I realized that it felt completely different from before. I was being much more conscious of body placement. I was double

checking where my shoulders were. I was making sure that I was applying principles of yoga (shoulders down and back, chest lifted, core engaged) to every lift that I was doing. The result was stunning. I was engaging muscles that I had never engaged before in certain lifts. It's no wonder that I felt sore for years. What I was doing to myself was making me stronger, but I was also hurting myself in the process with some of the technique that I was using. Glad I found yoga! here are a few things that I experienced.

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1) First and foremost, my dips SUCK.

I was rounding my shoulders completely for 6 years of dips. My arms crowded my chest, my chest caved in, and my back was hunched and rounded, shoulders not drawn back and down like they were supposed to be. The result of the poor form that I was using before was severe (yes, severe) pressure on my rotator cuff. I remember doing dips for the first time in 6 months a couple summers ago and being sore for a full week. as a result of that poor form, my muscles were not only sore; they were INJURed. Now, with proper form (shoulders drawn down and back, chest broad), I was feeling the exercise in my back like never before.

2) Muscles left out.

Limited range of motion and a lack of strength in certain muscles leads to inefficiencies in your body. Namely, it leads to your body using larger muscles when it should be recruiting the smaller synergist (helper) muscles. For example, I had been doing shoulder press for years, trying to keep my back straight, but even with that effort I was basically just doing a modified chest press. The load of the weight was in my chest, not at all in my upper back like it should have been. Doing a shoulder press after 2 years of

yoga and no weights showed me that a shoulder press feels completely different from a chest press.

3) TIGHT. SHOULDERS.

Building off of my last point, I realized that my tight shoulders made it impossible for me to do certain lifts probably. My expanded range of motion from yoga facilitated the inclusion of muscles that I was simply removing from the lifting equation altogether. It taught me to use muscles that I hadn't been using before. Tight shoulders not only restrict your range of motion; it also forces you to put way more pressure on your chest muscles, because the synergist muscles of your shoulders don't even know how to engage!

4) Bench press - bring the weight all the way down!

I used to avoid bringing the bar all the way to my chest in bench press. I had read something somewhere that this was detrimental to your chest health. (Bro science of some sort, no doubt.) after doing yoga, I realized that there was no reason why you shouldn't be bringing the weight down, using the full range of motion of your

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muscles. The result is a more effective lift.

5) Done correctly, weightlifting can actually INCREASE to your range of motion.

Lifting weights naturally contracts your muscles, but if you use the weight to open yourself up then you can actually use weights to expand your range of motion. For example, when doing a dumbbell bench press, I slowly guided the weight all the way down to my chest (and a little bit past it) so that I could feel my pectoral (chest muscles) stretching. The weights acted as an assisted stretch tool!

6) Control, power and explosive strength.

There is a difference. Since starting yoga, my focus is no longer on explosive power.

Whenever I do body weight calisthenics or yoga, the focus is on slow, controlled movement. Doing weights again helped me realize that there is a significant difference between simply getting the weight up and controlling the weight as you guide its movement against gravity. For overall strength, i.e. the ability to respond to any situation, should include explosive movements as well, but it is good to know that there is a difference between a quick, explosive lift, and a slow, controlled one.

7) Core engagement.

oh boy. I left my core out of a lot of lifts. I literally completely forgot it altogether. I wasn't engaging my core in bench press, shoulder press, and many other lifts. Now, focusing on my core as I lift helps me to isolate the muscles that I am really trying to work. Sure, you can replicate that isolation by using the assistance of machines (think of a curl rack), but I like full body movements, and integrating my core into exercises. Core engagement is also a huge factor in keeping your lower back flat and keeping your chest from splaying out, which is crucial to a shoulder press. Moral of the story - be conscious of core engagement at all times.

I'm glad I got to return to this form of physical fitness that I've neglected for a long time. I'm looking to see how it will affect my yoga practice. When my knee is better, I'll return to yoga full time and make some comparisons to figure out what I am missing from an all-yoga training regimen. hope you learned something from this post. as always, I encourage you to go out and try as many forms of fitness as possible. That's what real fitness is.

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BLOG

5 Reasons for Athletes to do Yoga -



Date of publication: September 11, 2014

Sept

Around the time I wrote this article, I was working with Maximum Performance Yoga, which teaches yoga instructors and other fitness professionals to teach yoga to athletes.

In November of 2014, I parted from the company because of their lack of emphasis on technique, upon which I place 2014

paramount importance. However, their mission was very similar to the reason why I began Man Flow Yoga.

I have been an athlete my whole life. I still consider myself an athlete, rather than a “yogi”. I started doing yoga as a lacrosse player for the University of Wisconsin in order to address some other aspects of my fitness that were missing from my traditional strength and conditioning program. I began to realize the physical benefits of addressing these missing aspects of fitness that yoga covered, and then created Man Flow Yoga in order to present yoga in a way more understandable to people like me; athletes. This article is directed to those athletes that don’t believe yoga can help them in their sports careers.

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5 Reasons for Athletes To Do Yoga I'm writing this post because one of the main goals of Man Flow

Yoga is to help athletes reap the benefits of yoga in order to make them perform better on the field, make smarter decisions, and

play injury-free.

This is quite often a difficult sell, and it's usually because mainstream yoga isn't geared toward athletes. For the most part, a yoga studio caters to women who are more interested in stress relief than using yoga for performance. However, as you've probably learned from the hundreds of articles you've seen, yoga isn't just for those women seeking stress relief. It just depends on the instructor's presentation of and approach to yoga.

Here are 5 reasons to do yoga as an athlete.

1) Yoga covers aspects of physical fitness that traditional strength and conditioning programs do not cover.

Remember the last time your strength and conditioning program spent 45 minutes on flexibility training? Neither do I. Yoga is one of the few forms of exercises that combines core strength, flexibility, endurance, and balance into one workout. It teaches you to use the power of your body at the extreme range of its motion.

2) Yoga helps you push through physical pain.

Yoga is fantastic in that the exercises are a mental challenge as much as they are a www.manflowyoga.com



physical challenge. Most often, the question is not whether or not you can hold the pose – you can. The question becomes whether or not you have the mental strength to push through. Practicing this mental strength will help you perform on the field when you start to run out of juice, or think that you’re tired.

3) Just breathe.

a few months ago I was coaching lacrosse and conducting people who several sprint drills, when a student looked at me and said that he couldn’t run anymore, because he couldn’t breathe. Dumbfounded, I looked back at him and said, “If you can talk, you can breathe. Get going.” and he finished his sprints. Yoga teaches you to use your breath to keep you pushing through the poses, no matter what level of fatigue you are at. once you apply that discipline of breathing to sports, you’ll find that you have more endurance than you previously thought. Kind of like Dory said in Finding Nemo, but instead of “swimming”, say breathe: “Just keep breathing, just keep breathing, just keep breathing, breathing, breathing.”

4) Recovery.

athletes are notorious for not stretching. Yoga helps your muscles recover by lengthening your muscles, which relives

soreness and lets you get back to playing your sport more quickly. Going beyond that, once you figure out how the exercises in yoga work, you will be able to do them yourself, without an instructor, video, or guide, to empower yourself to relieve your sore muscles.

5) The bodily awareness necessary in yoga is applicable to every aspect of your physical fitness, regardless of the activity.

Proper core engagement. Using the full range of motion of your muscles. avoiding the arching of your lower back. all of these things are applicable to other forms of physical fitness, especially weight lifting, one of the main tools of athletes to become stronger. Using the lessons of yoga will help you improve your performance in other forms of physical fitness, which will make you perform better in athletics.

There you have it. 5 reasons why you should be doing sports.

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BLOG

6 Poses That Guys Hate -



Date of publication: August 28, 2014

Aug

If you have a physical history in weight training and athletics, but have never focused on flexibility training or yoga, there is a good chance that your first yoga experience is unpleasant, uncomfortable, and even torturous. Chair pose 28 is bad enough, but forcing your body into positions that it 2014

is extremely unaccustomed to can make you regret your decision to do yoga that day. This article is about six poses that are traditionally more difficult for men than women, and explains why we should do them (even though they are uncomfortable). Warning: Profanity is used here.

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6 Poses That Guys Hate

(But Need To Do)

There are several poses that are notoriously more difficult for men than they are for women. The big reason for that is anatomical differences; men typically don't have to give birth. The other reason is for the way that most guys work out. More men than women are focused on developing muscles in their upper body, so they get tighter shoulders, chests, and backs as a result. anyways... the six poses that guys hate but need to do: **1) Dolphin** - Fucking. Dolphin. I thought it was a joke the first time I did it, but it's a real thing. It's hard, it's uncomfortable, but you need it.

2) Downward Facing Dog (Downdog) - Your shoulders are tight, and your hamstrings are tight, so it's probably a good idea that you use an exercise that kills two birds with one stone.

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3) Warrior 2 – There’s nothing more basics and better suited to opening up your hip flexors than a simple Warrior 2 pose. open your hips while working on proper core engagement. Good for posture, good for sports, good for life. Boom.

4) Pigeon – Pigeon is infinitely easier for women than for men because of that whole child birth thing, but having stretchy external hip rotators (glutes) can help reduce lower back pain, make you run faster, give you more power in your legs, and more.

5) Pyramid – Your hamstrings. are. Tight. So is your lower back. Pyramid is a fantastic stretch to help stretch both of those things. You can also get your IT band involved in pyramid if you’re being mindful of your hip positioning (make sure they’re facing straight forward!)

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6) Eagle - Tight shoulders. Tight, tight shoulders.

eagle can be a huge pain for guys (especially in the testicle area when you wrap the leg too tightly).

That being said, there are very few stretches, exercises, or poses that stretch the rhomboids (those muscles that connect your spine to your shoulder blades) as well as eagle does. enjoy.

6 poses. Learn 'em, love 'em, and do 'em.

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BLOG

I Do Yoga: Why Are My Shoulders So

Tight? -

Date of publication: August 21, 2014

Aug I wrote this article when I was deep into the process of rehabilitating my own shoulders. At this point, I had stopped doing all pushing exercises and was focusing solely on pulling 21 exercises and self-myofascial release, mainly in the form of 2014

deep tissue massage with a lacrosse ball. I wrote this article to explain to others what I had experienced myself; logical reasons as to why their shoulders were so tight, even though they did yoga consistently. The reasons that I pointed out are not profound, but they are significant. It basically boils down to two main points: 1) Yoga is not enough. 2) You need to try harder when pushing your upper body flexibility limits (when compared to pushing flexibility in your lower body).

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I Do Yoga -

Why Are My Shoulders So Tight?

here's an article for you guys that do yoga that might be wondering why you still have such tight shoulders. I had extremely tight shoulders until a few months ago when I started doing physical therapy exercises and deep tissue work on my own that helped undo YeaRS of

tight shoulders. (Keep in mind that I was a weightlifter before I started doing yoga.) It actually comes down to logic. Your hip flexors and hamstrings are much more likely to open up when you are doing yoga because you have the full weight of your body to facilitate deeper stretching as those muscles are stretching and strengthening. This doesn't always apply to your upper body. Consider poses that help open your upper body such as crescent moon (standing side stretch), reverse warrior, and triangle pose - these poses all help to open up your upper body, but they do not use the weight of your body to help your upper body open up. There are only a few poses that help with this, namely downward facing dog and dolphin. eagle is another great pose for opening up your shoulders, but it does not use your body weight to help you open up.

Rather, eagle and other poses that do not utilize your full body weight rely on your strength and your willingness to push harder.

So, what's the point of this blog? Is it to tell you that you can't rely on yoga alone to open up your shoulders?

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Well, yes. Yoga is not the only thing that you need to help open up your shoulders.

You need to be doing pulling exercises using a pull-up bar or resistance band to help counter the pushing exercises prevalent in yoga (planks, downdog, low plank, updog, etc).

I am also writing this because you need to keep this in mind when approaching exercises that target your upper body but do not rely on body weight resistance to help you push further. In these instances, You have to push yourself to go further.

You can't let the weight of your body do the work for you. You have to reach back more. You have to pull your shoulders down and back. You have to really concentrate on keeping your ribs drawn in and not splaying open your chest. here are 5 tips to take with you to your next yoga session to help you work on upper body flexibility: **1. Push beyond what's easy.** You can usually go further than you think you can.

Keep pushing in poses. ask the instructor for an extra little push. Squeeze a little bit more. (Note: Be careful though. Pushing too far beyond your range of motion limits can result in injury.)

2. Proper shoulder positioning. easier said than done, but one of the big problems that people have with upper body mobility involves them not being to let their shoulders relax. You need to be able to pull your shoulders down and back so that your chest is framed by your arms and shoulders. Most people tend to have their arms and shoulders in front of their chest.

3. Reach your arms back further. You have to mindfully reach your arms back further than you're used to. You can't get complacent with a little bit of discomfort. You want to push your range to really help open up your shoulders.

4. Downdog is not just for your legs. Downdog is for your back, not just your hamstrings. Try pulling your body away from your hands, externally rotating your arms so that your biceps face slightly forward, and squeeze your shoulder blades away from one another to make this pose more focused on your back.

5. Don't get lazy in inversions. Inversions are great, but if you are still looking

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forward in handstand, that means that your back is arching and you're not using your full range of motion. The goal of inversions is to replicate mountain pose as much as possible while balancing on your hands, head, or forearms.

When your body is not perpendicular to the ground, you are putting too much pressure on the fronts of your shoulders, and you could end up with chronic injury to your shoulders.

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BLOG

3 Poses for Upper Body Mass -



Date of publication: August 18, 2014

Aug

Yoga places so much emphasis on the lower body that sometimes it's difficult for people to understand how they can build upper body mass through yoga. I wrote this blog because building upper body mass through yoga is 18 achievable with just a few basic poses. I also present a circuit 2014

workout in this article that utilizes the exercises discussed and can help you implement these movements into your fitness routine right away, with a workout that's less (way less) than 15 minutes long.

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3 Poses for Upper Body Mass The 3 Yoga exercises You Need for Upper Body Mass I get a lot of questions on how I can maintain upper body mass. It's actually pretty simple. There are a few exercises that do the trick quite well, and you can knock out a great upper body workout using yoga moves in less than 15 minutes. (Seriously.) Remember that muscle mass comes from moving slowly and deliberately; not quickly. holding the poses for as long as possible (until failure, as long as you don't keep pushing after your core fails), will get you the best results.

1) Plank and Half Push-up These are full-body exercises that

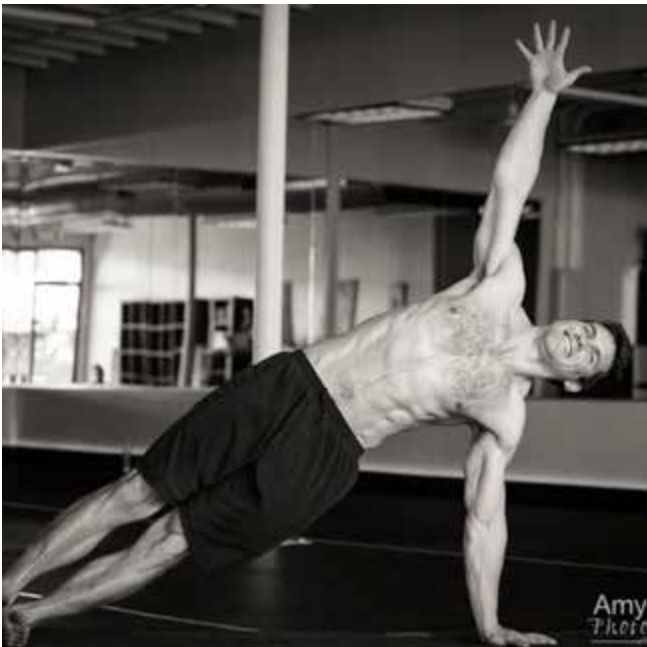
focus on proper core engagement

while testing your core strength and

upper body endurance. a good way to work on upper body strength is to do multiple sets of planks and half push-ups, either through holding the half push-up for an extended period of time (start at 10 seconds and build to 60 seconds) or through moving

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slowly from high plank to half push-up (essentially, doing slow push-ups).

2) Dolphin

Dolphin is fantastic for your shoulders. It is probably one of the most difficult poses for men, because of the shoulder mobility that it requires, but it will set your shoulders on fire, and really helps with building up the muscle around your shoulders and upper back.

3) Side plank

What's harder than plank? holding yourself up with one arm instead. Side plank is a great way for you to use your body weight resistance to build up your upper body strength from the side, rather than straight on (as you would in plank). It adds variety and works different muscles than in high plank. It is also a fantastic exercise for your core.

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Here's a good way for you to knock out all of these in less than 15 minutes.

Plank - 30 seconds, build up to 90 seconds **Half push-up** - 15 seconds, build up to 60 seconds **Dolphin** - 15 seconds, build up to 45 seconds **Side plank** - 15 seconds, build up to 45 seconds **Downdog for rest** (or just do nothing!) - 60 seconds Do it three times. Your upper body will be burning, and you'll see the results if you keep it up.

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BLOG

5 Things You Need to Stop Doing to Be

More Confident -

Date of publication: July 14, 2014

Jul I had been out with a friend when he told me that he admired my ability to approach women. We were not out in a high-pressure late-night atmosphere. I had simply been curious 14 about what was going on in the bar that we were in, and 2014

struck up a conversation with a person who seemed to be in charge. I had never considered myself a pick-up artist (nor was I), but I did recognize that I was more confident than most people. I also realized that I had done many things over the years to help make myself less insecure, forcing myself to be more confident. Rather than write about what people should be doing to be more confident, I decided to write about what people should not be doing in order to be more confident.

I was very encouraged by my endeavor to put this into writing when I received a message from a friend that this blog had been very helpful to him, and that he had struggled with confidence issues for a long time because he considered himself short. As I say in this article, sometimes confidence can make you appear taller than you really are.

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5 Things You Need to Stop Doing to

Be More Confident

I have a confession to make. I'm actually only 5'10" (on a good day). Most people tend to think I'm 6' tall though.

Why? When you're more confident you seem taller. When you're confident you seem to take up more physical

space, and that means that you occupy a larger area

of somebody's mind as well. So how can you be more

confident, regardless of your occupation, looks, socio-economic status, height, weight, or ability to wrestle a bear?

Confidence is a mindset. It is a reflection of your behavior, both while you are alone with others. It is partly related to how others see you, but a larger factor of confidence is how you see yourself. The best way to increase your confidence, without changing a thing in your life (job, relationship status, whatever) is to stop practicing behaviors or actions that innately force you to question yourself. Simply put, stop second guessing yourself. This isn't something that you can change in one day. It is, however, something that you can change over time by

making a conscious effort to change your actions. here are 5 ways to start.

1) Don't use your phone so much.

More often than not, many of us are not looking at our phone out of necessity for work or because we are expecting to meet somebody and they're running late. We check our phone because we do not like the feeling of being unloved,

lack the feeling of instant gratification from social media updates, and can't bear to be by ourselves for more than a few minutes. It's okay if your significant other hasn't texted you in 5 minutes. If you chose a decent partner she (or he) is probably not cheating on you. Who the fuck cares if your photo has 6 or 7 likes? Is it really going to affect your

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actions that day? Unless you're a marketing analyst, you have no reason to count likes.

2) Stop fishing for compliments.

No. Body. Likes. This. People will give compliments if they find it appropriate or deem the situation or person compliment-worthy, but don't apply pressure on somebody to give you a compliment. From a selfish perspective, you shouldn't even want the compliment at that point because it is not genuine, not to mention that people will think less of you because even though you clearly display or exude qualities worth complimenting, you devalue those same compliment-worthy qualities (and your own level of self-confidence) by looking for vindication from others. (You might have to read that sentence twice.) Basically, being attractive or intelligent is much more powerful when you don't get people to try and comment on those positive attributes.

(Side note: If somebody compliments you, TaKe The DaMN CoMPLIMeNT. Don't be shy and try to argue with them, or it just makes the compliment-giver feel stupid.

Side side note: Unless it's a creepy comment. Then ignore that shit.) **3) Stop telling people about your positive qualities.**

You're not interviewing for a job. actions speak louder than words. If you're awesome, then you shouldn't have to tell other people that you're awesome in order for them to understand that you're awesome. They will understand that within the first few minutes of talking with you. If they are too aloof or have made a snap judgment of you before you've even started your conversation, then don't even try with them.

They're probably not the kind of people that you want to associate with anyways.

The worst thing that you can do in that situation, though, is to harp on about your awesomeness. People will perceive those more effectively when you use your words or actions to display your awesomeness. More than that, people will sense personal insecurities about your self-professed awesomeness because you feel as if you must specifically state your awesomeness in order for it to be true. In short - just go be awesome. You don't need to tell people you're awesome in order for it to be true.

4) Don't give a fuck in low-pressure social atmospheres.

Bars. Parties. Socials. hanging out at the park. These are opportunities to unwind, be yourself, and have a good time. It shouldn't feel intimidating or stressful. Do

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you ever notice how the funny guy is the

center of attention? one of the reasons is because people like laughing. The other, more subconscious reason is because he is confident to the point that he doesn't care if you think that his actions are appropriate or not. he's there to have a good time and make people laugh, and he isn't going to be upset if you think he's weird or outlandish.

5) Don't be a man-whore.

(**Note:** I almost didn't include this one in here.

I'm not saying this because it's not "yogic" to be a man-whore. I'm saying this because it is a way for you to be more confident - take it or leave it.)

It is ingrained in the minds of most young men that the more women you sleep with (and in the most demeaning way possible) the more of a man you are. From personal experience, I've found that this actually wreaks havoc on your self-confidence. Consider this question: Did you gain more long-term pleasure from the memory of the one-night stand experience itself, or from talking about it with your friends?

There you go. 5 ways to be more confident.

Stop second-guessing yourself. Stop relying on others for your own confidence. Try not to give a fuck what people think. It will make you seem taller.

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BLOG

10 Poses for Better Sex -



Date of publication: May 29, 2014

May

When I wrote this article, I knew that it would be popular, but I had no idea just how popular it would be. It is by far the most popular post that I ever wrote. Within just a few hours of posting it, it had over 100 shares. I think it eventually totaled 29 250 shares after it had posted for a few days and its popularity 2014

started to fade. Sex definitely sells. Or, at least, it's popular.

10 poses for better sex... for men. I was sick of seeing articles on how to improve your sex life consisting of only poses focused on deepening hip flexibility. I decided to write an article focused on sex for the heterosexual guy, in which physical capabilities like core strength and lower body endurance were much more important. I focused on poses that replicate the same movements you would find in sex.

Some poses focus on the ability of your upper body to hold your bodyweight up, while others focus on increasing hip and core endurance so that physical fitness where it counts is not the deciding factor between completion and non-completion.

I even get specific and talk about some poses in relation to thrusting ability. Finally, I acknowledge the intimacy that sex

creates and encourage men to have the ability to relax and chill the **** out after finishing.

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10 Poses for Better Sex

I've read a lot of these articles on sex and yoga, and most of them are geared toward women. honestly, can you think of a time when a straight guy is going to need to put his ankles over his head? This is the sex article for men. Guys, pay close attention - take notes. Girls, pass this on - you'll thank me later.

one of the things that I am frequently asked is whether or not yoga has had an effect on my sex life. Well... (expletive) yes it has. Body control, range of motion, and core strength are the most important physical components of sex, and yoga helps you integrate and practice all of these things. Let's get started. here are ten poses specifically for dudes to help improve sex life.

1) Low plank - You need to have the core strength and upper body endurance to be able to hold yourself up without getting tired. and you most certainly cannot sacrifice quantity (the number of up and down motions) for quality

here, so you need to be able to control your body and keep a solid rhythm as you go through the motions.

2) Cobra - Cobra is awesome for your lower back strength, but it is also amazing for helping you to control your breathing. Cobra is a pose that forces you to breathe hard if you take your chest off the ground as high as you can, and being able to control your breathing in the heat of the moment is often the difference between experiencing the

climax and pumping the brakes to try again later (and possibly killing the mood).

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3) High Lunge – You are combining hip flexibility, core strength, endurance and balance all into one movement with the high lunge. Being able to develop the core strength and flexibility required to bring your butt slightly under your body in high lunge will greatly increase your hip mobility and endurance while teaching your core to contract, which

means more power, control, and range of motion from your just above your knees to your chest. Think about it.

4) Haka (aka Goddess or horse) - This pose gets deep into hip flexibility and mobility while testing your lower body endurance and forcing you to engage your core like crazy to keep the pressure out of your low back. It forces you to keep your body upright while working into hip flexibility, which is something that's pretty necessary for any decent sexual encounter.

5) Crow - Unless you want to flop around like a fish during sex, you should be able to hold yourself up. Crow Pose helps you develop the strength to hold yourself up while forcing you to utilize your core strength and balance.

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6) Bridge – It takes two to tango, so even if you're on bottom you're going to need to help your partner out while they are on top. Bridge helps you replicate the motion of lifting your body off the ground while lying on your back. The result will be a partner who's satisfied because they aren't doing all the work and a deeper connection because both of your bodies are moving.

7) Downdog Knee-to-Nose – Being able to contract your core is essential for getting an extra push in your thrust. Squeezing one knee at a time to your elbow or nose from a downdog

position will tremendously improve your ability to squeeze your core and give your hips increased range of motion. an inch or two can really make the difference here.

8) Chair – Neither one of you wants to stop because your lower body endurance and balance can't handle it when you're standing up behind your partner. (More specifically, it's not exactly a boost for your ego when you get tired here.) Chair pose gives your lower body more endurance

and core strength so that you can hold your position and keep going by improving your balance and control with your legs bent. Keep your arms parallel to the ground and your feet spread hip-width distant to best apply this pose to the bedroom.

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9) Standing Side Stretch (Crescent Moon) – obviously you need to have hip mobility to move your body from front to back, but people can forget that adding a side-to-side element to your hip mobility can seriously improve your ability to be hit different spots, and therefore add a potentially whole new and creative dimension to your sex life.

10) Savasana (Corpse Pose) – Personally, I feel at my most vulnerable after orgasm, and it's at this point, the obligatory post-coital 5-minute cuddle stage, that you can reach a level of intimacy as great, if not greater than, the orgasm itself.

If you start fidgeting at this phase, it can make you and your partner feel extremely uncomfortable. Savasana

teaches you to relax your body,

and to minimize your fidgeting, which helps make you aND your partner feel more comfortable, and therefore to bond more deeply after sex. Just make sure to hold off on savasana until both you aND your partner have reached your climaxes - don't be selfish, dude.

Men, practice and apply. Ladies - share this. again, you'll thank me later.

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BLOG

How To Get A “Perfect” Body -



Date of publication: May 1, 2014

May

I was careful to include in my introduction that this was not just another yoga article saying that your body is perfect just the way it is. I wrote this article because I wanted to explain to people that even though it may appear that a body is 1

perfect, the truth is far from that. There are things that go 2014

beyond what the eye sees. There is always some part of your physical fitness that can be improved. I'm sure that even Arnold Schwarzenegger at his prime would agree with me on that. My argument here is that the only way to have a “perfect”

body is to be perfect in your struggle for a perfect body. You can only be perfect in the sense that you constantly strive to improve your physical fitness through consistent hard work.

Achieving a perfect body is an unreachable destination, but the journey to achieving it is, indeed, real.

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How To Get A “Perfect” Body Since I have been working out on

a consistent and dedicated basis, I wondered to myself: Is it possible to achieve a “perfect” body? (By the

way - let me just start off saying that this is not another yoga article saying that the perfect body is whatever

you have now. Screw that.) There are different ideas of what a perfect body is considered. Some people will cite a certain ratio of weight to height, or compare bodyweight to the amount of weight that you can lift. Other people look at aesthetics, and imagine that the perfect body is supposed to look a certain way. Personally, I consider the perfect body something that is ready for anything; one that can go play a lacrosse game one day - and without fear of injury, completely dominate, score multiple goals, and run up and down the field for 60 minutes - and then the next day go out and do a

Bikram yoga session, followed by

crushing a CrossFit workout the day afterwards before doing a series of backflips through a ring of fire. That is my idea of the perfect body. Getting back to my question: does it exist?

There are so many different aspects of your physical fitness to train. When we speak of knowledge, we often say that the more you know, the less you know. I think that the same concept applies to fitness. The more types of physical fitness that you know www.manflowyoga.com



about and the more types of

physical fitness that you strive to get good at only fuels your realization of all of the deficiencies that exist in your physical fitness, and the less accomplished, or

less physically fit you feel. It's like that for me a lot. I go kill a power yoga session and then teach and participate in two Man Flow Yoga classes, but then come home and watch a video of a guy beasting a CrossFit workout, doing awesome gymnastics, or doing a killer weight lifting session, and I think to myself, "Man I wish I could be doing all of that." I think of all the things that I want to improve about my body, the little imbalances and deficiencies that I want to address,

and I realize that if I wanted to fix all of them that I would have to be working out 6 - 8 hours a day. alas, I am not an olympic athlete or a professional athlete. People don't pay me millions to be in ridiculously good shape. I consider further that even if I "fix" all of those deficiencies, that I would then have to maintain all of those different levels of fitness. There's no way! So... knowing all of that, how can you ever be satisfied by reaching the perfect body?

Sorry. It's just not going to happen. You will never have the "perfect" body. It's the same as never having "enough" money. You can set a goal for yourself, but even when you get there, you will just want to set the bar higher. Your quest for physical fitness is no different than your insatiable appetite for anything else. What's the alternative, then? how do you get a "perfect" body?

The answer is by constantly pushing yourself. Make reasonable, measurable goals for yourself, and work consistently to reach those goals. If you ever get discouraged, just look at where you were two months ago, after two months of hard, consistent work.

I'm hoping that there is some difference, and that you can appreciate yourself for it! Specifically, what I recommend doing, is picking one or two things that you really want to address, and spend a little bit of each day working on that deficiency. If that www.manflowyoga.com

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means that you want to work on your pull-ups, it means creating a pull-up workout for yourself and sticking to it for 2

months, no matter how much it sucks! It means taking care of all the back muscles that you will be exercising by using a foam roller and stretching consistently. If you want to get better at headstands, it means staying 5-10 minutes after every

yoga class that you attend to work on your handstands as other people are rolling up their mats and walking out the door. Personally, I am

currently working on my shoulders.

For 30 minutes a day, I do something to improve my shoulder strength, flexibility, or endurance. Today I did a bunch of work with resistance bands to strengthen the muscles in my back and take some of the tension out of my shoulder tightness.

Yesterday I did sets of 15 pull-ups and some deep stretching to open up all the muscles that meet at the rotator cuff. Tomorrow I will be doing pull-ups again, and some range of motion exercises.

You can't be perfect at everything. You can, however, be perfect in your struggle to achieve the best physical fitness results that you can. Don't get complacent, but appreciate yourself for the gains from consistent, hard work. (Notice how I said "appreciate" and not "reward" yourself. Feeling entitled to slack off because you work out is like complimenting yourself for - it's just something you do.) I will never achieve the perfect body. I don't know if anybody believes that they have or even can.

I will, however, always take comfort in doing my best to improve my current level of physical fitness.

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BLOG

Healthy Diet -



Date of publication: February 13, 2014

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In addition to having the catchiest title ever written in the history of blogging, this article helps to create a template for which you can design your own personal dieting style. I wrote this article because at this time I was receiving a lot 13 of questions on how to eat more healthily. Rather than give 2014

people a list of rules that they needed to follow, I decided to give them some guidelines for creating a diet that they could personally develop to fit their needs. You don't have to eat foods you don't like. You don't have to make absolute rules (no cookies, no ice cream, etc) in order to be in good shape.

You just have to create a system of eating habits that helps your body and mind do what they need to do. I include four critical components of having a healthy diet, and then give you a list of some simple rules that you can follow in order to keep your diet enjoyable, and therefore, sustainable.

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Healthy Diet

This blog is meant to give you a few ideas

on how to improve your dieting habits. It is a conglomeration of many of the dieting guidelines that I have personally developed over the last few years to help me both optimize my athletic performance and keep the physical appearance that I aspire to retain. I have entered countless forums, read hundreds of articles, and read full books on conflicting perspectives about how to properly approach diet, and have subsequently developed my own constantly changing and

evolving approach to diet. This is not a list of what and how much I eat from the time I wake up until the time I go to bed. Instead I am writing this blog as a tool for you to develop your own, personalized diet that works for you. Oh, and I also give you 12 extremely useful dieting rules to help you get started. There are four parts of developing your own diet that I would like to share with you.

The first part of developing a proper diet for yourself is recognizing that nobody else in the world is the same as you, and that what works for one person may not work for you. Your body is unique; Your metabolism, your body's responses to certain foods, and the amount of energy you require to perform a given task are all different from every other body in the world.

The second aspect I would like to address goes back to my recent blog, entitled "how to get ripped", which was published last week, and that is to enjoy what you do. a diet www.manflowyoga.com



needs to be something you enjoy. If you can't stomach carrots, then don't eat carrots.

Find healthy vegetables and other foods that you enjoy, and make those a part of your eating habits. a diet is not meant to be something temporary, and I don't expect you to eat something that you thoroughly disgust forever. Find healthy foods that you like, and include those.

The third part of having a proper diet is changing the way you think about food. Food is fuel for your body. That doesn't mean that you should NOT enjoy eating, but your diet should be considered more in terms of what feels good rather than what tastes good. eventually the two will be the same. Consider when your body needs more fuel.

Consider when it needs less fuel. Consider what foods make you tired, which ones make you sleepy, and which ones help you replenish your body after a workout. Plan your diet in terms of your daily schedule. You need certain foods when you wake up, certain foods before and after you work out, and certain foods before you go to bed.

This is where you have to experiment. Your body is a finicky thing. one type of food that does a particular thing for somebody else may not have the same effect on you.

The fourth and final part of having a healthy diet is taking an interest in nutritional science. Learn which foods are good for you and which are bad for you. organic does not necessarily mean good for you, processed food is not always bad, and not everything found in nature is good for you. Read articles about dieting found on all sorts of Facebook groups, from health perspectives based on ayurveda (the nutritional science of yoga) to articles for body builders. This also goes back to my first point, that your body is different from everyone else's body, and that you need to figure out what does and what does not work for you. Taking an active interest in reading about dieting, and choosing what and what not to include in your diet will help you find the right diet for you.

To recap:

- 1) You are unique, and as such you must develop a diet that works for you.
- 2) eat what you like.
- 3) Food is fuel for your body, and that's how you should think about it.
- 4) Take an interest in nutritional science.

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That being said, I am not going to leave you out to dry and not give you any specific tips. here are a few guidelines for you to use as a basis to developing your own personalized diet.

1. Don't skip breakfast.

Don't skip other meals, for that matter. Skipping meals makes you hungrier later and slows down your metabolism by

putting your body into survival mode. When your body does not get food, it conserves energy. If you're hungry, eat - just don't eat the whole bag of cookies.

2. Listen to your body.

Your body is the best resource you have for your diet. Test out different foods, and listen to your body afterwards to figure out how you feel. Don't worry about the immediate satisfaction of having fast food. Pay attention more to how you feel an hour afterwards. If you feel like crap (and you probably will), then maybe McDonalds wasn't the best idea.

3. No absolute rules. Ever.

Making yourself abide by a rule such as “never eat a cookie, ever” is just asking for trouble. Don’t put such tough restrictions on yourself, because it will only make you think about that particular food more, and lead you to stress over it.

4. Eat sporadically throughout the day.

Never give your metabolism a chance to slow down. Nibble at some food sporadically throughout your day, whether that means eating some almonds, snacking on carrots, www.manflowyoga.com

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or having half of your sandwich at noon and the other half at one.

5. Be active.

If your body moves, your digestive system and your metabolism move. Get up. Walk around. Do a few air squats. Just get your body moving.

6. Eat lots of vegetables.

That green stuff? eat it. It helps clear out your digestive system, is loaded with nutrients, and helps fill you up. Your stomach likes the feeling of being full, so shove a few greens in there to shut it up. The important thing with vegetables is to remember to not drown it in butter or sauce. Some salt, pepper, and chili powder usually go a long way.

7. Protein shakes really aren't that great for you.

Protein shakes are awesome if you need some protein and you don't have an alternative, but should not be a regular part of your diet. There are plenty of natural meats (chicken, turkey) that are high in protein that will give you the same benefits.

8. Do it like ikea.

Build it yourself. as much as you can, buy foods in their most basic form and construct a meal from there.

9. Take time to eat healthily.

If your excuse is that you don't have time, don't try and justify that to me or your trainer. Do you think that it's me that you're affecting? You not taking the time to be healthy only negatively affects yourself and those around you by shortening your life span.

10. Your diet is your life.

It isn't a joke. Depending on what you do or do not eat, you could live for 50 years or for 100 years. Do you want to see

your kids graduate from college and get married?

Do you want to meet your grandchildren, and your great grandchildren? Ultimately the point of being healthy is to live as long as possible and be able to do the things that you love as long as possible.

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11. Moderation.

Just like all the beer commercials say, apply this concept to your diet. Yes, you could eat the whole pizza, but do you really need to?

12. Hydrate.

You need water. Just drink it. You don't really need 8 full glasses a day, but aim for at least 4 or 5. If you're prone to drinking caffeine, you'll need to drink a little more water than most people, as caffeine is a diuretic. (It dehydrates you.) **13. Keep it fresh.**

eating the same foods over and over again can get boring. Be open to new recipes and new foods, and do your best to not get bored with your diet. The average human being spends about 90 minutes a day eating or drinking, so we might as well enjoy it.

I hope this helps you develop a diet that works for you.

Outro:

Thank you for reading! I hope that you were able to glean some useful nuggets of information from these blogs and find yourself ready to embark on your own fitness journey with Man Flow Yoga!

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By Dean Pohlman
CEO & Founder, Man Flow Yoga



YOGA BASICS FOR MEN

By Dean Pohlman
CEO & Founder, Man Flow Yoga



Yoga Basics for Men

Ready to ReaLLY get started? The

first step is to get the 2nd edition of my eBook, the amazon #1 bestseller that will teach you the basics of Man Flow Yoga. This is The yoga guide

for men who want an effective, full-body workout that improves overall endurance, core strength, body control, and flexibility to help you in your everyday movements, sports, fitness, and more! This eBook includes:

1. Key Concepts - Learn the mental and physical concepts necessary to safely and effectively do yoga.

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3. Sequencing - Sample sequences that put together the poses into an order that makes sense for your fitness needs. It also gives you the basics for you to build your own yoga workouts.

Get your copy of Yoga Basics for Men: an Intro to Man Flow Yoga by [CLICKING HERE!](#) 15% off with the code "RoadToYogaRipped".

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— **Coming soon — Yoga Basics for Men: The Workouts** once you've finished reading the book and practicing some of the poses, it's time to put that knowledge into action with the accompanying workout videos. For less than the cost of a yoga class you receive 6 workouts that you can do over and over, on any viewing platform (computer, iPad, apple TV, etc).

The Man Flow Yoga App:

available for iOS beginning in April 2015, the Man Flow Yoga app features a continuously expanding pose guide, unique workouts exclusive to the app, a community section where you can interact with, friend, create groups, and message other Man Flow Yoga enthusiasts, and an inspiration section. You can also create a profile within the app and earn points for workouts that you complete. The app is free to download.

Still want more?

Then apply your knowledge to the premium Man Flow Yoga, workouts, available on www.gumroad.com/manflowyoga. You can also get access to informational and useful content on the Man Flow Yoga Facebook page, YouTube channel, Instagram, and Twitter.

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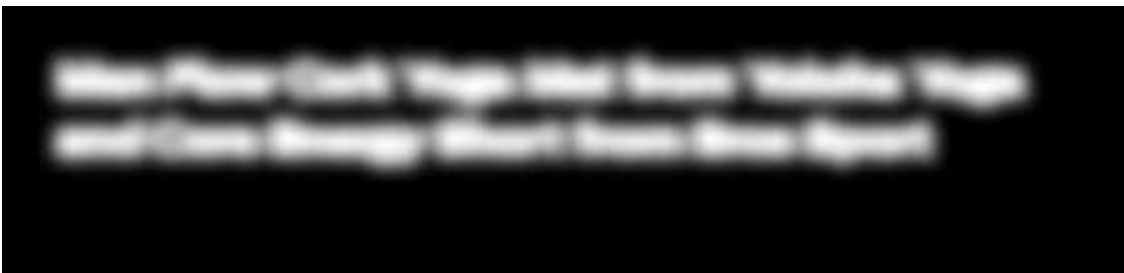
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For direct, personalized training with me via webcam, you can contact me at dean@manflowyoga.com to inquire about my remote training programs (training via webcam), or read

about the two programs I currently have available below:
[**The 90-Day Get Yoga-Ripped Program**](#)

[**Remote Training**](#)

Dean's Gear Bag

Need a yoga mat?

The [**Man Flow Cork Yoga is a joint v**](#)enture between Man Flow Yoga and Yoloha Yoga.

This yoga mat is made of cork and recycled tire, which means no more slipping and sliding on your mat. It's also a man-sized mat - at 80 inches long, it's 8 inches longer than traditional yoga mats. This mat comes with a lifetime warranty. This is an aggressive yoga mat, meaning that it has a solid surface great for balancing postures.

Take care of this mat, and it will take care of you. There is a medium-sized Man Flow Yoga logo in the bottom-left corner of the mat (not as pictured in the example here.) **Eros Sport** eros Sport is my go-to brand for

Man Flow Cork Yoga Mat from Yoloha Yoga yoga performance apparel. Their

and Core Energy Short from Eros Sport products are affordable but high in

quality. I prefer [the Core X w/ built-](#)

[in compression short or the Core](#)

[energy short.](#) If you need a carrying case for your yoga mat, I also highly recommend their [Yoga Gear Bag](#), which has a cinch tie to keep your yoga mat and towel secure, and a

convenient side pocket to insert other
personal belongings. Use the code
“**MANFLOW15**” at checkout to receive 15% off your order.

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Natural Force

Natural Force [is the only whey protein product that I trust.](#)

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to get 5% off the protein products, or "**MANFLOW10**" for 10% off their other supplements.

Vital Proteins

Collagen is the basic building block of your body's skin, hair, nails, joints, and bones.

Is it quite literally the glue that holds your body together. Vital Proteins is a single-sourced pasture-raised bovine hide collagen protein supplement. The collagen peptide dissolves in any liquid in seconds, while the collagen protein (gelatin) can be used in coffee or even jello snacks. Use the code **"VPA-7719-POESI-QSAC"** at checkout **to receive 10% of your order.** You can purchase your collagen protein or read more about collagen protein and Vital Proteins at <http://www.vitalproteins.com>.

Pictured here: everything that goes into my "coffee smoothie": [Bulletproof](#)

[coffee](#), Vital Proteins, coconut oil (you can also get [upgraded MCT oil \(Brain](#)

[octane oil\)](#) from Bulletproof), and Irish pure grass-fed butter. This turns your coffee into a fat-loaded (fats are Good), protein-filled power drink to start your day off right.

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