

relaxing the mind through the body



with Arnaud Maitland



human embodiment as the vehicle. The traditional word Yoga has many associations which are usually associated with subtle prescribed movements intended to reduce stress and improve health and well-being. There are probably some Yogas that are similar to Kum Nye, but what is unique to Kum Nye is that it is a system of embodied knowledge that if practised deeply and sincerely can lead to a transformation of the human condition.

It is fantastic that so many different kinds of Yoga have become popular and have helped people to get in shape and become more still inside. I do not have enough knowledge to compare and contrast Kum Nye to other types of Yoga. For the last 30 years, I am diving into the Kum Nye practice and find more and more inside. Kum Nye has a long and vibrant tradition of Yogi practice as its base that, of course, has always been integrated with advanced spiritual practice. Kum Nye is part of the Tibetan Yogi tradition but is also connected to the medical texts and the traditional Vinaya, which are suggestions for body and mind on how to be and behave as support for the path of enlightenment.

Either way, Yoga is understood as a practice of unification. It yokes together body, sensory perceptions, feeling and mind. To me it seems that we are just becoming acquainted with the potentials of Kum Nye. It certainly introduces a new relationship of body and mind as it fosters harmony and positive feelings within the body.

“ Kum means manifestation or presence. Nye literally means inner massage. ”

First, Kum Nye facilitates inner calm but gradually the purpose of Kum Nye is to inhabit the present moment. Undisturbed by memories of the past, free of fears in the present and unconcerned with projections into the future, Kum Nye helps develop a healthy mind that engages experience freshly and directly. Everyone knows the importance of the present moment, mental health and the ability to recharge the body. The present moment is the moment of embodiment. Are we present in the present?

Kum Nye will lead us to the state of being present in the present, alert, nourishing and complete.

which are the pillars of this ancient practice?

Kum Nye is rooted in medical texts, the Vinaya, in Tibetan texts and traditional Lama Dancing. It is not a set of fixed practices and movements. The gestures grow and develop depending on the people and the situation. Of course, there are some essential practices that remain throughout time but Kum Nye as we know it addresses Western needs and Western situations.

Kum (*sKu* in Tibetan) refers to the body, not the physical body but embodiment, which is directly related to embodying awareness of space but Kum, is also a nexus of sensitivity. Nye (*mNye* in Tibetan) is a method of exercising that brings results; the body experience is transmuted from tightness and constriction into a floating quality. We become one with our experience and a new kind of knowing becomes accessible. It is not something to have or to lose but is a knowledge that we can taste and apply in every situation.

Further information from: www.dharmapublishing.com.

what is Kum Nye yoga?

Kum Nye, as it is being presented to the West is continuously evolving. It was introduced by Tarthang Tulku Rinpoche in the early 1970s as part of a human development programme at the Nyingma Institute in Berkeley, CA. Since then it has become a path of relaxation, of refreshing the senses, that leads to deep abiding calmness, perfect for meditation to take off from. As our understanding of this ancient tradition develops, it is becoming clear that Kum Nye balances the many sides of our human nature, and in the process it brings comfort and stabilises meditation thus opening the door to direct experience of non-duality. As body and mind are synchronised, the senses offer more nourishment. Then mind finds peaceful accommodation. We become more sensitive, capable and effective in the world around us. Without a discipline like Kum Nye, it becomes easy for us to oscillate between extremes of emotionality as we cannot find a point of balance. Our bodies become vulnerable to stress

and illness and our sense experiences provide little support.

The unique approach of Kum Nye is that it works with energy rather than with perceptions. It uses the body as a vehicle for realisation. Rather than the mind instructing itself to relax and stay open, the Kum Nye exercises create a sense of wholeness. It actually leads to a very unique realisation of being complete: we have what we need and we are what we seek.

Through Kum Nye we contact the reality of our being. Settled in its nature, developing a body awareness that is self-nourishing, self-energising, and self-reliant, our actions are more balanced as we are. Simply put, by practising Kum Nye you are able to relax superficial tension, loosen blockages in the energy channels, thus relaxing in the true sense by calming down what is over excited and awakening what is dormant. We wake up to ourselves and find an abundance of vitality and creativity.

Kum Nye can be practised by anyone. We start with gentle movements, some still postures, and breathing techniques. It is as

if we are re-engineering our energetic system, instead of leaning on habitual patterns. Rather than being fixed in automatic responses, our energies become flowing again, restoring the natural continuum of life's energies.

what is the difference between Kum Nye and other types of yoga?

This question is a very complex topic as so many yogic disciplines could be assembled under the word 'Kum Nye'. Kum means manifestation or presence. Nye literally means inner massage. When the energies within the body begin to melt and loosen up, they start to stimulate one another. Joined with the breath, the inner play of energies constantly receives new energy with the breath, and soon we have discovered a self-generating source of energy.

The self-generating quality is Nye. It massages us within. In the process, it refreshes the senses, calms the thought patterns and facilitates the heart to be comfortable and at ease. Kum Nye uses