

## THE ROLE OF ABSORPTION: THE KEY OF SPIRITUALITY IN MODERN POSTURAL YOGA

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This paper explores the Role of Absorption in Modern Postural Yoga (MPY). Yoga as a modern and secular practice is often linked with spirituality; the paper argues that the key to this association is mental absorption and a person's ability to control their attention for a period to access, deep or light, Altered States of Consciousness (ASCs). Certain techniques, practices and modern rituals allow individuals to experience spirituality through ASCs; this is not necessarily limited to seated meditation but can involve movement, sometimes vigorous, and breathing practices. A key aspect that characterises MPY and influences ASCs is the mixing of concentration techniques and philosophical teachings with physical practices through the legacy and the innovation of key figures of yoga and their influence in secular settings. This study would aim to bring clarity to the role of absorption within the practice of yoga, it would highlight the ongoing development of new practices and rituals and discuss how these have evolved into its modern westernised postural yoga versions. It would also discuss the ways absorption induced by yoga practices can support mental and physical health.

The paper draws from my MA dissertation, which explored Trance and Yoga, and sets out the initial ideas underpinning my current PhD research at the UK's Open University.

Adriana - Bio

Adriana became a BWY Level 4 500+ yoga teacher in 2017. She completed an MA in Traditions of Yoga and Meditation at SOAS in 2021 and starts a PhD at the Open University in 2023 exploring the Role of Absorption in Modern Postural Yoga. She has been teaching History and Philosophy of yoga at Yoga Teacher Trainings since 2021 and continues teaching yoga.

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