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— the ultimate mind-body exercise!

Yoga with Weights

FOR
DUMMIES[®]

Sherri Baptiste

Founder of Baptiste Power of Yoga

with Megan Scott, PhD

Yoga therapist

A Reference for the Rest of Us!



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About the Authors

Sherri Baptiste is an inspirational teacher at the forefront of yoga training in the United States. She was born into a rich heritage and family of pioneering teachers; her parents, Magaña and Walt Baptiste, established yoga on the West Coast in the mid-1950s. Her brother, Baron Baptiste, authored the book *Journey into Power: How to Sculpt Your Ideal Body, Free Your True Self, and Transform Your Life With Yoga* (Fireside). Sherri has been teaching yoga since her teens and is the founder of “Baptiste Power of Yoga,” a nationally recognized yoga method, as well as a yoga-with-weights teacher-training program and a yoga teacher certification and advancing studies program recognized by *Yoga Alliance*. Sherri presents classes and workshops throughout the United States; she’s a presenter for Western Athletics’ Bay Clubs, Gold’s Gym, Nautilus, Equinox, IDEA World Fitness, Body Mind Spirit, ECA; and she offers many yoga retreats, including retreats at Kripalu, Omega, Haramara, Green Gulch Zen Center, Rancho La Puerta Spa, and Feathered Pipe Ranch. A radio and television personality, she’s featured in video, DVD, and CD “Power of Yoga” and “Power of Meditation” programs. You can learn more about Sherri at the following Web sites: www.powerofyoga.com and www.yogawithweights.com.

Megan Scott, PhD, is a doctor of integrative medicine, sports rehabilitation, and clinical psychology specializing in advanced healing techniques. She has 20 years of

training and practice in mind-body, self-regulation techniques. Dr. Scott combines her knowledge of science and self-healing in her clinical settings, highlighted by using the left/right brain neuro rebalancing technique for self-healing. She teaches at California Pacific Medical Center, the Institute for Health and Healing, and the University of the Pacific School of Dentistry. She's also a founder, director, and contributing researcher at the Chronic Pain Institute. In her private practice, she teaches Anusara yoga and yoga therapy classes, biofeedback training, and alternative psychotherapy. Her mission is to assist her students in discovering their own greatness and to awaken her students' passion for yoga and all its gifts.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to “The Spirit That Lives Within You.”

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Contents

[Title](#)

[Introduction](#)

[About This Book](#)

[Conventions Used in This Book](#)

[Foolish Assumptions](#)

[How This Book Is Organized](#)

[Icons Used in This Book](#)

[Where to Go from Here](#)

[Part I : Getting Started](#)

[Chapter 1: Introducing Yoga with Weights](#)

[In the Beginning, There Was Yoga . . .](#)

[. . . And Now There's Yoga with Weights](#)

[Weighing the Benefits of Yoga with Weights](#)

[Evaluating Your Readiness](#)

[What You Need to Get Started](#)

[Mastering Posture Alignment Techniques](#)

[Heeding the All-Important Safety Issues](#)

[Chapter 2: Gearing Up](#)

[Weighing Your Hand- and Ankle-Weight Options](#)

[Settling on the Right Yoga Mat](#)

[Assembling Your Workout Ensemble](#)

[Shopping for Shoes](#)

[Keeping Water on Hand to Stay Hydrated](#)

[Chapter 3: Preparing for Your First Workout](#)

[Finding the Time to Exercise](#)

[Creating Your Workout Sanctuary at Home](#)

[Working Out in a Group Setting](#)

[Part II : Mastering the Basics](#)

[Chapter 4: A Breath of Fresh Air: Yoga Breathing Techniques](#)

[Exploring the Breath-Mind Connection](#)

[Considering the Health Benefits of Yoga Breathing](#)

[Practicing Yoga Breathing Techniques](#)

[Chapter 5: Making the Mind and Body Connection](#)

[Taming the Monkey Mind](#)

[Focusing on the Transitions](#)

[Exercising from the Inside Out](#)

[Letting Go of “I Can’t Do It”](#)

[Bringing Your Mind into the Present Moment](#)

[Chapter 6: Warming Up and Cooling Down](#)

[Reaping the Benefits of Warming Up](#)

[Walking to Warm Up](#)

[Adding a Handful of Warm-Up Exercises to Your Walk](#)

[Knowing the Benefits of Meditation](#)

[Cooling Down: Ending Your Workout with Meditation](#)

[Chapter 7: From Head to Toe: The Balanced Workout](#)

[The Mountain](#)

[Heaven and Earth](#)

[The Rag Doll](#)

[The Airplane](#)

[The Triangle](#)

[The Exalted Warrior](#)

[The Warrior II](#)

[The Camel](#)

[The Table](#)

[The Cat](#)

[The Dog](#)

[The Bridge](#)

[The Frog](#)

[The Zen](#)

[Ending Meditation](#)

[Part III : Refining Your Technique](#)

[Chapter 8: Waking Up Your Mind and Body: The Energy Workout](#)

[The Chair](#)

[The Skater](#)

[The Crow](#)

[The Runner](#)

[The Eye of the Needle](#)

[The Dog to Plank](#)

[The Twisted Triangle](#)

[The Warrior I](#)

[The Rise and Shine](#)

[Ending Meditation](#)

[Chapter 9: Taking It Easy: The Restorative Workout](#)

[The Child's Pose](#)

[The Lion](#)

[The Pigeon](#)

[The Sphinx](#)

[The Big Ease](#)

[The Gauge](#)

[The Twister](#)

[The Plow](#)

[The Serenity](#)

[Ending Meditation](#)

[Chapter 10: Pumping You Up: The Strengthening Workout](#)

[The Lightning Bolt](#)

[The Crescent Moon](#)

[The Dog to Plank](#)

[The Side Plank](#)

[The Half Moon](#)

[The Swimmer](#)

[The Rabbit](#)

[The Dolphin](#)

[The Lift](#)

[Ending Meditation](#)

[Chapter 11: Releasing Your Athlete Within: The Endurance Workout](#)

[The Tree](#)

[The Dancer](#)

[The Eagle](#)

[The Russian Dancer](#)

[The Road Runner](#)

[The Side Bow](#)

[The Horse](#)

[The Ball](#)

[The Press](#)

[The Straddle](#)

[The Recharge](#)

[Ending Meditation](#)

[Chapter 12: Iron Abs: The Belly-Burner Workout](#)

[The Cow to Cat](#)

[The Flying Locust](#)

[The Locust](#)

[The Love Handler](#)

[The Staff](#)

[The Burning Boat](#)

[The Archer](#)

[The Pearl](#)

[The Belly Crunch](#)

[The Belly Dancer](#)

[Ending Meditation](#)

[Part IV : Personalizing Your Program](#)

[Chapter 13: Eating to Enhance Your Yoga-with-Weights Workout](#)

[Listening to the Wisdom of Your Body](#)

[Improving Your Diet through Yoga with Weights](#)

[Following Guidelines for Healthy Eating](#)

[Developing Good Eating Habits](#)

[Chapter 14: Addressing Body Aches and Pains](#)

[What Causes Chronic Muscle Pain Anyway?](#)

[Managing the Pain in Your Neck](#)

[Loosening Your Stiff Shoulders](#)

[Relieving Back Discomfort and Pain](#)

[Alleviating Hip Pain](#)

[Lengthening Your Hamstrings with a Stretch](#)

[Stretching Out Your Quads](#)

[Chapter 15: Toning and Focusing on Different Body Areas](#)

[Creating Your Own Workout](#)

[Targeting Parts of Your Body](#)

[Part V : Addressing Special Situations](#)

[Chapter 16: Improving Your Game](#)

[Swimming](#)

[Running](#)

[Cycling](#)

[Basketball](#)

[Volleyball](#)

[Power Walking \(and Power Breathing\)](#)

[Racket Sports](#)

[Golf](#)

[Skiing](#)

[Football and Soccer](#)

[Baseball and Softball](#)

[Cross-Training](#)

[Chapter 17: Girl Talk](#)

[Addressing Women's Health Issues through Yoga with Weights](#)

[A Special Workout for Expecting Mothers](#)

[Chapter 18: Exercises for Seniors](#)

[Reaping the Rewards of the Senior Workout](#)

[Candle Blowing](#)

[The Mirror](#)

[The Ticking Clock](#)

[The Wave](#)

[The Egyptian](#)

[The Pigeon](#)

[The Heart Lift](#)

[The Hacker](#)

[The Champion](#)

[The Body Builder](#)

[The Triangle](#)

[The Lift](#)

[The Seated Twist](#)

[Ending Meditation](#)

[Part VI : The Part of Tens](#)

[Chapter 19: Ten Ways to Stay Motivated](#)

[Take a Deep Breath](#)

[Make the Commitment to Exercise](#)

[Take Care of Yourself](#)

[Celebrate the Benefits to Your Sex Life](#)

[Reward Yourself](#)

[Consider How Well You're Sleeping](#)

[Set Your Sights on a Goal](#)

[Find a Workout Partner](#)

[Talk to Yourself](#)

[Create a Workout Routine You Enjoy](#)

Chapter 20: Ten Myths about Yoga with Weights

[You Must Be Flexible](#)

[You Can't Balance While Holding Weights](#)

[Yoga Is a Religion](#)

[You Must Be a Vegetarian](#)

[Yoga with Weights Is for Super-Trendy Health Freaks](#)

[Yoga Makes You Wimpy](#)

[You Have to Be Very Coordinated](#)

[You Have to Go Away to Do It](#)

[You Must Have a Certain Body Type](#)

[You Must Be Fit and Young](#)

Chapter 21: Ten Ways to Chart Your Progress

[Monitor Your Weight](#)

[Keep Tabs on Your Physical Energy](#)

[Look in the Mirror](#)

[Check Your Clothes for Comfort](#)

[Take Notice of What People Say](#)

[Observe Your Mental Alertness](#)

[Use a Training Diary](#)

[Recognize Your Feelings of Gratitude and Peace of Mind](#)

[Reap the Benefits of Proper Breathing](#)

[Feel Your Increased Endurance and Stamina](#)

Appendix: Resources

[Yoga-with-Weights Web Sites](#)

[Yoga Mats and Clothing](#)

[Hand and Ankle Weights](#)

[Yoga and Health Magazines](#)

[Books about Yoga, Fitness, and Diet](#)

[Videos about Yoga](#)

[Directories and Web Sites for Yoga, Health, and Fitness](#)

[Yoga Retreats and Spas](#)

[Fitness Centers That Offer Yoga Classes](#)

[Yoga Study Centers](#)

[Health, Yoga, and Fitness Organizations](#)

Introduction

Yoga with weights is the newest incarnation in a long line of yoga-based exercise programs. Yoga itself is at least 5,000 years old; yoga exercising — what we know as *yoga postures* — emerged about 600 years ago. Over the centuries, yoga evolved as it traveled to new cultures, and its practitioners have refined it. Yoga is based on universal principles that appeal to its practitioners on every level — mentally, physically and spiritually. It effects deep change. The discipline acquires a new significance for each generation that encounters it.

What's different about yoga with weights? If you haven't guessed already, yoga-with-weights practitioners carry weights in their hands and strap weights to their ankles as they exercise. Weights add another dimension to yoga; they stabilize your body and engage you more deeply into the yoga exercises. All the physical benefits of traditional yoga — muscle toning, balance, and flexibility — come faster because yoga with weights is more intense and dynamic than traditional yoga. Yoga with weights creates a balance of strength and flexibility. You notice an increase in vitality and an overall sense of well-being. Each time you practice leaves you feeling a little bit better, and, cumulatively, the workouts have enormous health benefits.

Like traditional yoga, yoga with weights is a practice of mind, body, breath, and spirit. Within every exercise you have the ability to harness the power of yoga and bring alive these great Eastern teachings in practical ways that will serve you in your daily living. This book represents a golden opportunity to start down the road to good health and well-being.

About This Book

Yoga with weights is a new exercise program. You won't find the exercises we describe in this book anywhere else. We have three goals in writing this book: to clearly explain the benefits of yoga with weights, safely instruct you in the practice, and motivate you to do the workouts.

Between us, we have 65 years of experience with yoga. Sherri, daughter of the American yoga pioneers Walt and Magaña Baptiste, has been associated with yoga since she took her first baby steps or assumed her first lotus position, whichever came first. Sherri followed in her parents' footsteps, founding "Baptiste Power of Yoga," a nationally recognized yoga method. Sherri has been teaching since her teens and hosting yoga classes, workshops, and retreats for 14 years. Megan, a doctor of integrative medicine, has 20 years of training and practice in mind-body self-regulation techniques. She studied in her college years with Walt Baptiste and has extensive training in Anusara yoga, a discipline that specializes in living with grace and mastering the

alignment principals. Megan has been teaching yoga therapy classes for ten years.

We called upon our collective experience with yoga, our understanding of how to teach yoga, and our experience with physical culture practices to create the exercises you find in this book. Some of the exercises are modifications of traditional yoga poses (the *asanas*); others are exercises we developed ourselves to complement traditional yoga. All the exercises are rooted in the classic yoga principles that cultivate the quality of the mind as well as the body. We want every exercise to strengthen your body, build your physical stamina, and cultivate your overall health and well-being. We also make every effort to pay attention to your safety and not put you in a position where you could injure yourself. As long as you follow our instructions, pay attention to your breathing, and consciously remain aware of your body and its needs in the course of exercising, you can be confident about doing your yoga-with-weights workout without getting injured.

We divide the exercises into several different workouts. For example, we offer practical exercises to relieve stress, plus stamina-building, total-body, and energy workouts. We also provide instructions so you can create a yoga-with-weights workout tailored to your health needs and goals. All the exercises in this book are illustrated with photos so you know exactly how to move your body in the exercises.