



health & wellness

KARA MCNABB

Yoga of awareness

Kundalini is known as the coiled energy that sits at the base of the spine, and through this specific yoga practice, the energy is released, resulting in myriad health benefits.

AFTER SUSANNE WERBLOW experienced debilitating back problems 10 years ago, her doctor said swimming and yoga were her only exercise options.

"I'd never liked yoga," she says. "But I hated cold water. So I gave yoga another try and chose the studio closest to my home in Paris."

And that's how the French native discovered Kundalini yoga.

"While it was weird at first, I felt better after only one session."

Kundalini yoga has become an integral part of her life. After training at Spirit Rising in Chicago, Werblow has taught in Grand Rapids since 2013.

Other significant components are powerful energy work, mudras (hand positions) and drishti (focused gaze).

Mantras — a specific sound that has a meaning and vibration — are also key. Werblow says the repetition stimulates the meridian points on the upper palate of the mouth directly connected to the brain, essentially serving as a message pathway.

Werblow says Kundalini yoga helps her tune in to her body.

"I am rarely sick," Werblow says, explaining that through the practice she's acutely aware of when her body feels different. If a virus or bacterial infection is present, she is able to take the proper measures before she gets sick.

Kundalini yoga is best learned in a class setting that allows each student to become familiar with the techniques and various yoga sets.

"There are enough sets to do something different every day for 10 years, from working on anxiety and memory problems to changing habits like smoking, drinking or eating sugar."

Werblow provides a foundation in class and material for students to practice at home, which she recommends for the greatest impact.

Since Kundalini yoga is focused on energy, it's best done in the morning.

"You'll have more energy waking up early and doing Kundalini than you will if you sleep in an extra hour or two."

Werblow teaches at The Wellness Collective, 1324 Lake Drive SE, Suite 4.

For information on classes and events, visit the Kundalini Yoga GR Facebook page.

— Kara McNabb is a freelance writer, natural health consultant at Continuum Healing and a member of The Wellness Collective GR.



While some styles of yoga emphasize stretching and relaxation, Kundalini yoga works body, mind and spirit simultaneously.

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Werblow says Kundalini yoga strengthens the immune, glandular and nervous systems and improves circulation.

In addition to movement and breathing,