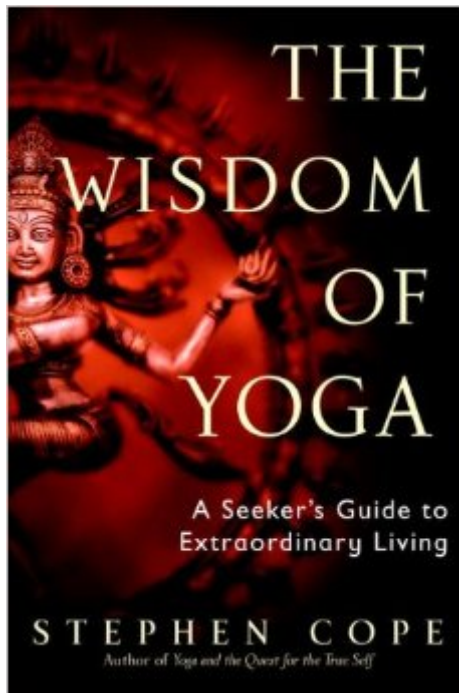


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# The Wisdom Of Yoga: A Seeker's Guide To Extraordinary Living



## Synopsis

For modern spiritual seekers and yoga students alike, here is an irreverent yet profound guide to the most sophisticated teachings of the yoga wisdom tradition—now brought to contemporary life by a celebrated author, psychotherapist, and leading American yoga instructor. While many Westerners still think of yoga as an invigorating series of postures and breathing exercises, these physical practices are only part of a vast and ancient spiritual science. For more than three millennia, yoga sages systematically explored the essential questions of our human existence: What are the root causes of suffering, and how can we achieve freedom and happiness? What would it be like to function at the maximum potential of our minds, bodies, and spirits? What is an optimal human life? Nowhere have their discoveries been more brilliantly distilled than in a short—but famously difficult—treatise called the *Yogasutra*. This revered text lays out the entire path of inner development in remarkable detail—ranging from practices that build character and mental power to the highest reaches of spiritual realization. Now Stephen Cope unlocks the teachings of the *Yogasutra* by showing them at work in the lives of a group of friends and fellow yoga students who are confronting the full modern catastrophe of careers, relationships, and dysfunctional family dynamics. Interweaving their daily dilemmas with insights from modern psychology, neuroscience, religion, and philosophy, he shows the astonishing relevance and practicality of this timeless psychology of awakening. Leavened with wit and passion, *The Wisdom of Yoga* is a superb companion and guide for anyone seeking enhanced creativity, better relationships, and a more ethical and graceful way of living in the world. From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: Bantam; Reprint edition (May 29, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0553380540

ISBN-13: 978-0553380545

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.8 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars — See all reviews (46 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #24,804 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #46 in Books > Religion &

Spirituality > Hinduism #94 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Exercise & Fitness > Yoga

#241 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern

## Customer Reviews

In his book, "The Wisdom of Yoga," Stephen Cope has created a small masterpiece. He has not tried to answer questions about man's place in the universe or the existence of an external world. He has, however, by means of telling vignettes from the lives of people he knows well and insightful comments about what must be one of the most gnomic series of insights into the practice of Yoga, given the average reader a sense of what it is to become involved in the practice of Yoga and some of its life-changing potential. In addition to this, he has included illustrations from other belief systems, specifically Buddhist thought and Christianity that provide a wider context for his practice. The Yoga practitioner, as well as the average person who would like to learn a little about Yoga, could both benefit from the wonderful book.

I am a huge fan of this book. In novel like prose, Stephen beautifully illustrates how the yoga sutras apply to our very modern, complicated lives. If you want to go deeper into the yoga wisdom tradition but have been put off by more esoteric texts, this is the book for you.

Stephen Cope has laid a map of the internal journey of yoga for beginners and experienced yogis all in the same brushstroke. He has brought together ancient texts, modern stories, and wise direction with practice, simple, humorous dialogue. You will keep turning the pages as you effortlessly learn about the depth of yoga through his real characters of today. Loved It! Great for anyone who wants to know more about meditation, its benefits, and how to do it easily!

The absolute best in its field, Wisdom of Yoga is no 'Idiot's Guide to Yoga'; you actually need gray matter in order to read it. However it's well worth it. I don't know of a more enriching, comprehensive (and above all) enjoyable read that will take you to the heart of the YogaSutras and the real purpose for taking up yoga.

This book is about the transformations that can occur thru the practice of yoga. It is an easy read, but has true depth and soul that true practitioners can relate to. I enjoyed this book even more than Stephen Cope's previous book which is also a good read. I recommend this book to anyone who is dedicated and wishes to achieve a deeper understanding of how to use their body and mind to evolve spiritually.

This is a unique and outstanding book which, for starters, points out that what most Americans think

of as "Yoga", i.e. asana or postures, is the tip of an iceberg which began hundreds of years before, but which has had little clear explanation for Western readers. Stephen Cope is obviously a learned scholar, and able to explain rather impenetrable Eastern philosophy in clear, concise, understandable writing, and to place it in the contexts of both centuries of philosophical thought (both Eastern and Western) and of modern psychology, fields in which Mr. Cope is clearly a master. By juxtaposing his crystal clear discussions of yogic philosophy with easy-reading examples of 5 contemporary "seekers", he has made the book extremely accessible to beginner and veteran yogis alike. With his unique background as a psychotherapist and "scholar in residence" at Kripalu, I suspect there are few if any others who could do this. If you have practiced yoga postures and found something special, you have only dipped your toe into an ocean. This book will open the door to a new world.

I am a clinical psychologist, and, although I have little indepth understanding of yoga philosophy, I found in this book a compelling (and, I believe, accurate) description of the possibilities of human maturation and development. Stephen Cope's description of the origins and fate of the ego ideal and ideal ego are especially helpful. In this new book, Mr. Cope makes many interesting connections between the psychoogy of th4e contemplative traditions (both yoga and Buddhism) and Western psychological thinking. He makes a good case for the application of these insights to daily life. In addition to the fascinating content, the book is well written; it is a rare delight to find well-crafted prose in a book such as this.

This is a great book. Cope's characters face the kinds of life challenges we all face and it's easy to see ourselves in their stories -- coming into relationship with our parents, considering what our life dreams really are, discovering the real demands of love, or facing the demons of addiction. Cope has interwoven these stories with Patanjali's yoga sutras and penetrating analysis of the sutras' meaning in relation to real life. He bring us into direct relationship with Yoga, not tell us about his yoga, which so many of today's yoga books do. As a psychotherapist and yogi, Stephen Cope brings a unique and valuable perspective to the yoga conversation here in the West.

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