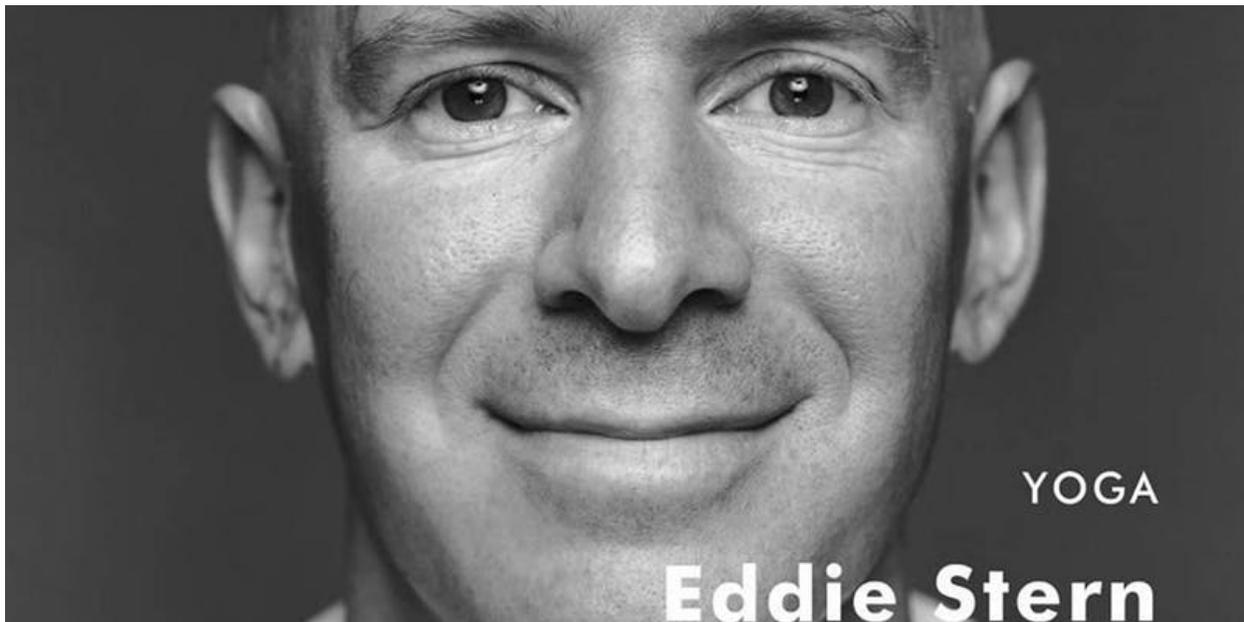


Eddie Stern in Oxford

8-11 October 2019



We are delighted to welcome Eddie Stern to Oxford for the first time! There will be something for everybody, seasoned Ashtangis, budding Yogis, Teachers, Healthcare Professionals and Scholars. Eddie is a yoga teacher, author, and lecturer from New York City. He is known for his multi-disciplinary approach to furthering education and access to yoga, as well as his teaching expertise in Ashtanga Yoga. He recently released his first solo book, *One Simple Thing: A New Look at the Science of Yoga*, which examines in clear and simple language the underlying neurophysiological mechanisms that make yoga an effective practice. He is also the creator of *The Breathing App*, which guides the user in a paced breathing exercise that balances the nervous system, helping to improve sleep, and reduce stress and anxiety.

Ashtanga Yoga: Purification of Body and Mind

The first presentations of Yoga in India ancient originated in its contemplative traditions. These traditions held, in one form or another, that self-knowledge was the best and most lasting cure for the suffering and pains that life brings. The transcendence of the mind, our faculty of thought, which hold the structures of our

limited identity, such as our likes, dislikes, fears, ambitions, ideas and judgments is crucial to this process. Beyond the mind or perhaps deeper than the mind is awareness, sometimes called consciousness, which is the source of knowing, larger than the troubled realm of the mind. Yoga is the practice that the ancient seers taught to remove the clouds that cover pure consciousness, removing sorrow and awakening us to our inner state of joy.

The yogis taught that the mind is a field that holds thought, and awareness is an unlimited potential that the mind rests upon. The saying that the mind is a wonderful servant, but a terrible master is apt for the yogis, and sums up the essential purpose of practicing the different limbs of yoga. Is there a way that I can master my mind, and engage it to help answer these basic questions of existence: Who am I? What am I doing here, or, what is my purpose? And last, what do I do next, or, how can I live my life according to my purpose? A contemplative practice seeks to allow answers to these questions to rise up from the depths of awareness, into the quieted field of the mind, so that our thoughts, words and actions become expressions of our purpose. This is where, according to the yogis, fulfillment in life comes from living in alignment with our inner purpose.

In the practice of asana, or posture, we learn how to bring our limbs into alignment; when we add in breath, we bring ourselves in alignment with our mind; and when we do yoga as a practice of devotion, we bring ourselves into alignment with our purpose. Ashtanga Yoga was founded on these principles. It is a challenging practice because the mind is difficult to master; however, its benefits are profound.



SCHEDULE

Tuesday 8th October

10am-13, Rhodes House, free event for Rhodes Scholars, Oxford University students and Mariella's students <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/yoga-with-eddie-stern-at-rhodes-house-tickets-65652667897>

18-19.30 Book presentation and signing: **One Simple Thing, a New Look at the Science of Yoga and how it can transform your Life** [one simple thing book](#)

Wednesday 9th October

6-8am Mysore-style practice, Richard Benson Hall, 276 Cowley Rd, Oxford OX4 1UR

8.15-9.45am Introduction to Ashtanga (Richard Benson Hall)

18-19.30 **Lecture: Mechanisms of Yoga (Part 1)** Estia Wellspace (6 King St, Oxford OX2 6DF)

Thursday 10th October

6-8am Mysore-style practice, Richard Benson Hall, 276 Cowley Rd, Oxford OX4 1UR

8.15-9.45am Introduction to Ashtanga (Richard Benson Hall)

18-19.30 Lecture: Mechanisms of Yoga (Part 2) Estia WellSpace (6 King St, Oxford OX2 6DF)

Friday 11th October

6-8am Mysore-style practice, Estia (book via www.estiawellspace.com)

17.30-19 Ashtanga Led Primary, Estia (book via www.estiawellspace.com)

BOOKINGS

EARLY BIRD (paid in full by Sat 28 Sep)

£80 TWO MYSORE OR LED INTRO SESSION + 2 LECTURES

£30 each Individual Mysore or Led intro sessions

£12 each lecture

LATER BOOKING

£100 TWO MYSORE or LED INTRO SESSION + 2 LECTURES

£35 each Individual Mysore or Led intro sessions

£15 each lecture

All events except Tuesday morning and Friday are made

via Ian at oxfordyoga@gmail.com A booking form will soon be available

at www.oxfordyoga.co.uk For any other queries contact mariella@astangayoga.org

Class and Lecture Descriptions



Wed-Fri Mysore Practice: 6-8am (Richard Benson Hall, Wed and Thu, Estia on Friday)

Mysore practice is appropriate for beginners as well as students of all levels, and is the traditional method of learning yoga, one-on-one from teacher to student. However for this three session only, regardless from the level of your practice, we ask you to be already familiar with the Ashtanga Yoga Mysore Style of practice.

Wed-Thu Introduction to Ashtanga Led class: 8.15-9.45am (Richard Benson Hall OX41UR)

The primary series of Ashtanga Yoga is a sequence of postures that are excellent for strengthening and stretching every limb of your body, massaging the internal organs (especially the organs of digestion), and activating the parasympathetic branch of the nervous system, which is related to our need to be able to “rest and digest”.

If you have heard about Ashtanga Yoga, but think that it sounds too hard or tiring, or you have wanted to try it but you feel intimidated, then this class will give you an easy going introduction to some of the poses, breathing, and philosophy behind this practice. We will talk about the techniques used in yoga, the philosophy behind the practice, the original meanings of the word vinyasa, and practice some of the poses

from the primary series. It will be part discussion, and part practice. We'll cover modifications of poses that are difficult, or that allow for practice if you have any injuries that you are being wary of.

We will also save time for questions, tips on how to start and maintain a practice, or anything else that is on your mind. Ashtanga Yoga is a cohesive, structured practice of yoga that is meant to be internalized, meaning, once you learn it, it is yours forever, to practice wherever you are, on your own. Yoga seeks to make us autonomous beings; structure is supposed to lead to freedom. We will discuss, and hopefully experience these things, in this class.

Tue 18-19.30 at Estia

Presentation and book signing: *One Simple Thing: a new look at the Science of Yoga and how it can transform your life*

In this lecture, Eddie will discuss some of the underlying mechanisms of yoga that make it an effective practice for self-regulation, emotional regulation, and spiritual experience. Drawing from his book, *One Simple Thing*, he will discuss a variety of scientific findings and yogic explanations that complement both an Eastern and Western approach to spiritual practice. Even after thousands of years, yoga continues to be an infinitely interesting and exciting practice and philosophy, never growing old, and always staying new. In this class, we will look at some of the reasons why this is so.

Wed and Thu 18-19.30 at Estia

Lectures: Mechanisms of Yoga (Part 1 and 2)

The focus of these two days of lectures will be on the Yogic and Western views of the nervous system. According to the earliest references of Yoga in the Upanishads, the purpose of yoga is to steady the sense organs, and move our awareness inwards towards Self-knowledge, rather than towards the ever enticing, changing objects of the world. In these lectures we will have an overview of the presentation of the Nadis, the different types of nerves, according to Yogis, and their corollary systems according to Western medicine. These two complementary systems are very important for maintaining health, homeostasis, our ability to listen and communicate well with others, and find a sense of peace within our own nervous system. We will discuss how some of the most interesting benefits of asanas, pranayama and chanting are actually activating our nervous system, particularly the vagus nerve, to help restore us to balance, and lead us towards transcendent states of awareness.

As part of these lectures, we will also discuss the concept of the five sheaths, or panchamayras, from the Taittiriya Upanishad. Our body, breath, mind, intellect, and source of joy are described as having five, interconnected parts that envelop each other like clouds. These are called the five sheaths, and they exist as part of the three-body model. The three bodies are the physical, subtle, and causal bodies, that though each made of different constituents, pervade each other. The basic practices that were practiced by the yogis - postures, breathing, mantra, meditation, and service - address and purify each of the bodies and sheaths. We will discuss and examine each of these layers, and learn how we can, in a deliberate way, work with every level of our being in an effort to move towards answering the age old question, and original impulse behind all contemplative traditions: Who am I?

Further information:

www.eddiestern.com

<https://eddiestern.com/one-simple-thing/>

<https://eddiestern.com/teaching-schedule/>

<https://www.thehouseofyoga.com/practice/yoga-modern-day-life> (5 minute video)

