

M O T H E R S



D A Y

# Mother Motherhood

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# **MOTHER AND MOTHER HOOD**

*by Sowmya Raman*

## **About Sushma**

She is a woman who has a brilliant mind and great energy levels. Like most other urban women, she is learning to balance her responsibilities and play the many roles she has chosen. A yogini, a mother, a wife, friend and guide. She plays all these roles with élan and has her timetable intelligently crafted. A yoga instructor I met by accident less than a year ago. A friend who I admire. She is a source of inspiration to me



Conversations with her lead to very interesting and insightful learnings.

One of the many we have had was about being a Mother and what Motherhood means to her.

## **What does motherhood mean to you ?**

Motherhood is a feeling that creeps into a woman when she starts thinking of becoming a mother. It is very personal and sacred. It begins when a couple start thinking about conception.

## **We see and hear a lot of young couples who are fighting infertility these days. Can you please share your thoughts about it.**

In this day and age where both men and women wear all the hats and share all responsibilities of a successful house hold and marriage, they MUST also share equal responsibilities for a healthy procreation.

Stress is a major factor that is detrimental in natural conception. This interferes with egg or sperm health and in instances even block regular ovulation in women. A recent study found that women with high levels of alpha-amylase, an enzyme that correlates with stress, have a harder time getting pregnant. ... If stress can influence the chance of conception, managing it may improve the odds.





## **Can you suggest ways of managing stress to improve the odds of natural conception?**

I would like to share 3 points

1 – Make it a priority to reduce or eliminate stress from your life

It can be achieved by booking some quiet time in your calendar for yourself. Make yourself a priority, schedule it on the calendar like any other appointment.

2 – Create a discipline

There are many ways to eliminate stress. Whatever way you choose, Make it a habit. Be committed. Be accountable.

3 – Detox

Detox of physical body can be achieved by food and exercise.

Detox of mind can be achieved through meditation.

## **In one of your classes, you mentioned about Garbh Sanskaar. Can you talk about the benefits of Garbh Sanskaar**

The meaning of garbh sanskar is educating the foetus in the womb. In Indian culture and especially in Hinduism it is believed that education starts right from the time the foetus is formed in the womb. Science has proved that baby in the womb can learn from initial stages.

Mother's bond with the child starts right from the time of conception. The foetus listens to the mother and feels her feelings even when it is developing in the womb. This is why it is important to transfer positive thoughts, positive energies and the emotions to the baby.

The mother can shape up her baby's first impressions by listening to good music, by being positive in her thinking, meditating, doing yoga and much more. The positive thinking and attitude promotes physical wellbeing of the mother and the baby throughout the pregnancy and after. The advantages of garbh sanskar are not only that you educate your child but there is development of a bond between the mother and the child. Garbh Sanskar should be used to impart the seed of knowledge and interests in the baby.

Did you know Israeli women solve math when pregnant ?

The great Indian epic Mahabharata brings about a beautiful story of Abhimanyu learning the fighting skills of breaking the enemy's formation while being in his mother's womb.

He could only learn to decode and enter the trap (Chakravyuh) because his mother fell asleep after that.



### **Can you explain how Yoga can support you during pregnancy?**

The poses, breathing and relaxation techniques that are part of the yoga practice nurture both the physical and emotional well being of both the baby and the mother-to-be. Oxygen and blood flow helps in excellent development of the vital organs of the baby.

Giving priority to “me-time” also provides an opportunity to form a connection with baby.

The most important factor of any type of yoga is the breath. The breath has more significance in prenatal yoga because it can be such an incredible tool during labour. It helps to build the mind-body connection which is paramount. Prenatal yoga is one way to help women access deep stores of emotional strength and confidence that they can put to use during contractions and pushing the baby out of the womb.





## **Can you share your personal experience of how yoga helped you during your pregnancy?**

The first relationship that I built with my son was when he was in my womb. Throughout my pregnancy, I had scheduled regular time for myself on the yoga mat. That “me-time” on the mat was to keep my physical body strong, prepare for a natural birth and to connect with the new life growing within me through meditation.

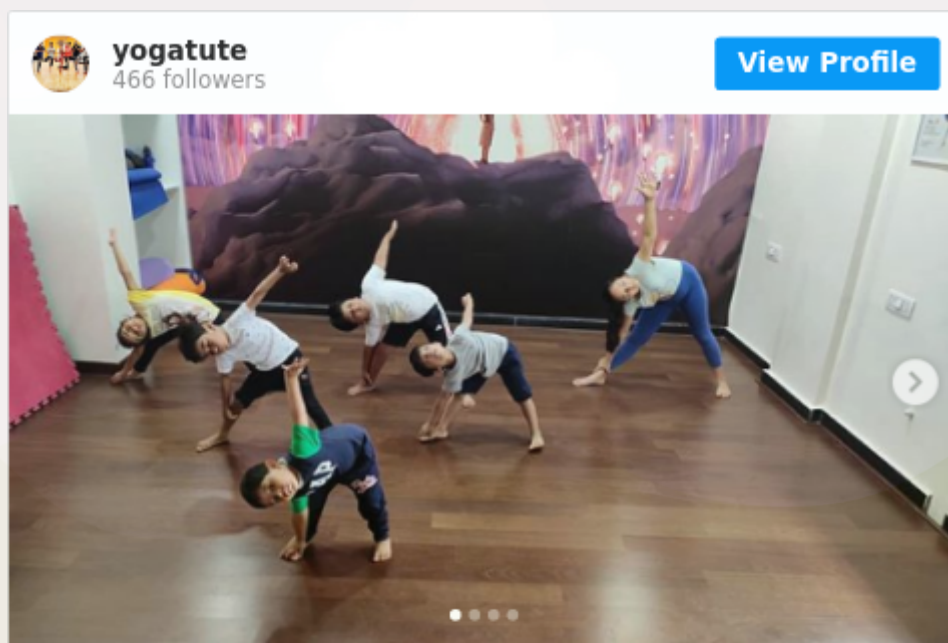
I put all that I had learnt into use, all the breathing techniques that I had practiced when I got into labour. This gave me the strength to be peaceful and present when I gave birth to my son.

## **Would you like to share how Yoga can be helpful to women of all ages.**

I’m glad we are talking about this. I was introduced to Yoga when I was in my 20’s and I wished I have stepped into this much earlier. Over the years, I have transitioned from being a novice, to a yogini to a teacher. Yoga is not an exercise routine. If one can inculcate this as a way of life, it will help by supporting you through at all stages and ages of life.

**For Kids and students** – I encourage mothers to introduce their children to the world of Yoga at a young age.

I am being an example. My son is 5 years and I can proudly say he has completed more hours of yoga practice than a few trainers who I know. During the Covid-19 lockdown, my son joined me and we jointly scheduled an online session for kids only every evening.





**For pregnant women** — as mentioned earlier, practicing Yoga during pregnancy will play a vital role in building physical, emotional and mental strength in the mom-to-be.

**For mothers of Infants** – Being a new mom and adjusting to the new life with a baby at home and the routine of caring for a new life can cause a lot of stress. New mom's may find it difficult to be physically active and hence we often hear the term "mummy tummy". On the contrary, It doesn't take much to schedule a "me-time" to take care of the new mummy body. It however needs a strong mindset coupled with discipline.

**For mothers with multiple children of various ages** – I admire this category of women. Especially the ones who during the testing time of the Covid-19 lockdown stayed calm, composed and collected. The one I have recently spoken with has told me how she scheduled a "family yoga-time" and led by example that it was as important to be physically fit and mentally strong. As a mother, patience is sometimes endless and at other times easy. Patience with your children and your spouses count but what matters most often the most difficult is to be patient with yourselves. There are a lot of breathing practices that can aid here.

**For mothers of teenagers** — the stress of coping with raging hormones doesn't need to cause your hormones to take a nose dive. I teach a group of women who are mothers of teenagers. I look forward to having them in my studio as much they look forward to being there. The group energy is electrifying and contagious.

**For mothers of young adults** – Most women go thru' the "empty nest" stage, which is a psychological condition when their children leave home. They experience feelings of sadness, anxiety and excessive worry. Empty nest mothers often face new challenges, such as establishing a new kind of relationship with their children, having to find other ways to occupy their free time, reconnecting with each other, and a lack of sympathy from people who believe that mothers should be happy when their children leave home. It is a trying time for them. Some of the ways to cope with this is to accept it, seek support, stay positive and to let go. These are the fundamentals that many yogis follow. It is easier to advise than follow but there is no better compliment to a teacher than a willing mind to learn.

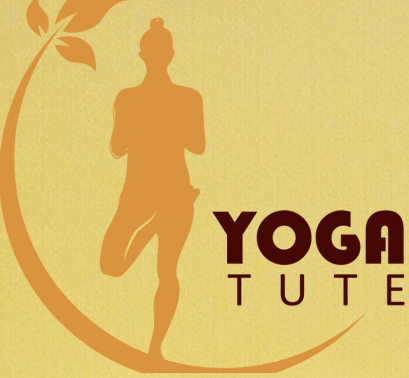




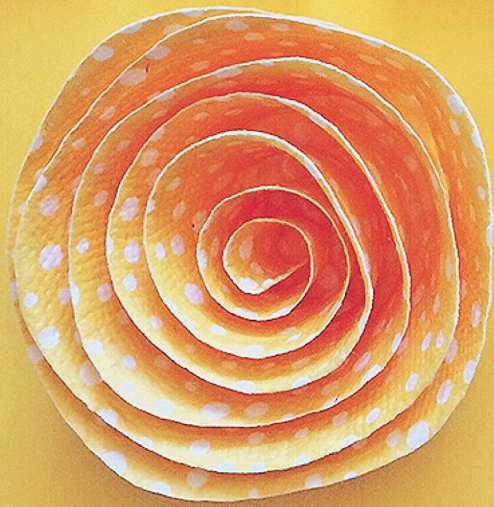
**For grandmothers** – The first thing that comes to mind is how healthy, active and simple most grandmothers are. Yoga is one of the best types of exercise for older women. The right form of Yoga can help one age better. It will keep you flexible and strong through low-impact moves. Yoga will also aid in better sleep, lessen the risk of depression and alleviate aches and pains.

So, there is no age limit to learn and as it's rightly said **“Do it Now. Sometimes later becomes never”**.





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