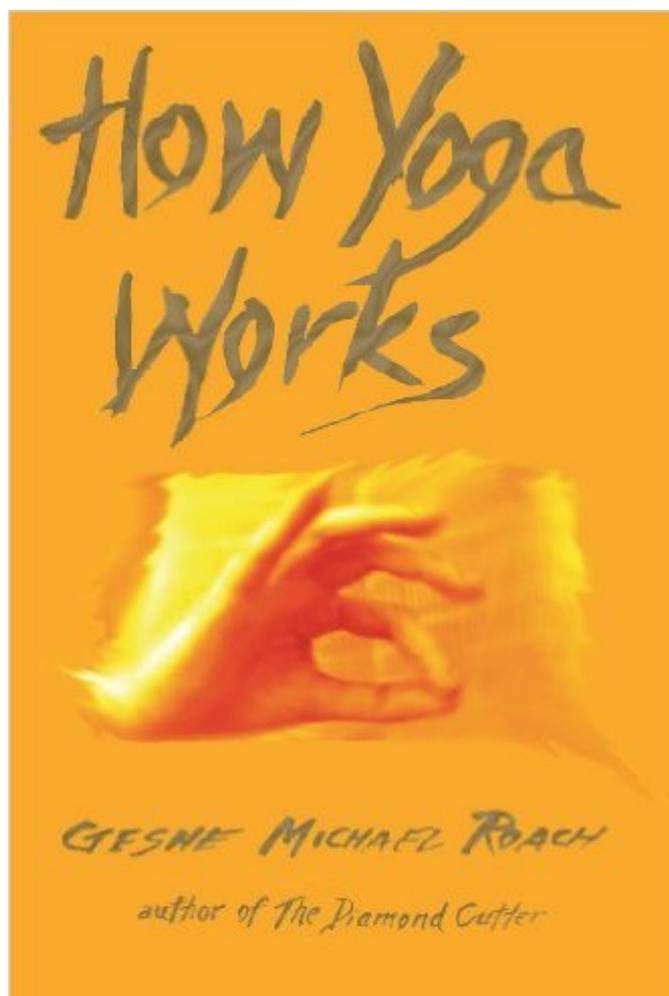


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# How Yoga Works



## Synopsis

The secrets of how yoga works to make us truly whole are revealed here in a delightful story based on how these precious teachings reached Tibet from their home in India, over a thousand years ago.

## Book Information

Paperback: 406 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (158 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #11,102 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #47 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Exercise & Fitness > Yoga](#)

## Customer Reviews

This book is a practical explanation on the deep practices of yoga, encased in an easy to read tale. The protagonist - a young woman - makes a nice change from the bearded, middle-aged male that so often is the 'star' of yoga stories. Through the chapters of the book, the storylines cover a) specific directions on how to relate to a yoga practice, b) commentaries on the Yoga Sutras of Master Patanjali, and c) how the practice of yoga actually can transform the world around you, from a prison to a school and beyond. Like some other reviewers mention, the story is at first glance a bit simple, this is just the outer layer of a very rich and illuminating book. One of the nicest things about it is that it describes yoga without reference to any specific God or religion, in simple and compelling terms that us modern people can probably accept and deal with. All together, its a great work, I highly recommend it.

I just finished my first reading (there will be many more) of "How Yoga Works" last night and it was bittersweet. To the reviewer who felt corny admitting that it "changed my life," you are not alone. This is not the first book to delve into the whole of yoga, but it is the first one I have read that does it so accessibly. The authors' concept of writing this book in the form of a novel makes it more attractive to a greater audience than past attempts. And in a society where the physical poses of

yoga have become so popular, I think it is more important than ever to provide insight into the rest of yoga. I have felt changes in myself and my thinking since finishing the very first chapter. As I said, now that I have finished reading it in its entirety, I plan to re-read, one chapter at a time, meditating upon the contents of each chapter before beginning another, as I felt like I was really rushing myself through some very important ideas in the first go-round, because I was so excited by the book. If you don't like this book, I will give you your money back myself!

When I began seriously practicing yoga I asked an instructor at the studio for some reading suggestions. She broke out a recommended reading list from a training course (which I later enrolled in) and selected *How Yoga Works* as the book I should start with. This turns out to be the perfect book for me to have started my journey with. What we have in this book is a fictional story about a yoga teacher and her student. Without giving too many details away, this story is a vehicle for illustrating the applications of yoga sutras to life and the situations that we encounter in the living of our lives in a believable and a relatable way. The authors use the method of storytelling to make the ideas and practices of yoga applicable to the real life circumstances, situations and crises that every human deals with. I give this book a five-star rating because it was the perfect primer for a beginner. It gave enough information to make me hungry for more, so much so that I did get irritated at there being no index to search the book from. An index does not serve the format of this book however, so I can't begrudge such an omission. Instead, reading the story with a pen and pad of paper to record questions and thoughts is a good way to go with this book, as it will surely bring up ideas for further research and study.

To try to read and understand Patanjali without knowledge of context and purpose, without a living teacher and community which can show this wisdom incarnated, is almost invariably to invite frustration. The authors of this book use the conceit of a story in the course of which the wisdom of the sutras is unfolded. The translation of the sutras in the story is fresh and accessible. The commentary on them -- in fact the conversation between characters -- expands the reader's understanding. Certain aspects of the story, particularly its closing chapters, require a rather large suspension of disbelief as the tone becomes increasingly like that of a fairy tale. At times, too, the plot plods forward slowly. Although some may cavil at the fact that not all of the sutras are presented and that those that are are not unfolded in order of their appearance in Patanjali, the overall presentation is certainly faithful to the spirit of the whole. No one is likely to regret having read the book and some will surely benefit from it.

This has been one of the most beautiful books that I have ever read. The story is deeply moving and gives the reader the tools they need to live a life full of happiness and compassion. I recommend this book to anyone, but especially to those who have a heart filled with revenge or hate for crimes committed against them by others in this world. Forgiveness has always been the only answer for complete happiness.

At first, I thought this book was a little slow and shallow. Not so, I have changed the way I approach many things in my life and now am enrolled in yoga classes as a result reading this.

The extraordinary gift of this book, even beyond how well-written and wise the book is, is the presentation of ideas and principles in the form of a story. The reader comes to know these characters and understand their circumstances and as a result, the principles become real, rounded-out and alive. The characters stand in the place of the middle step in understanding an idea, translating that understanding into what kind of person we are building in our practices, and manifesting that. Here the characters grow that understanding on our behalf, they give us an example and an inspiration that even the most valuable and rewarding principles often don't have on their own. The human frailty of the characters, their obstacles and misunderstandings, all become real, fertile and inspiring as we see practice and theory blossom into the kind of life sincere practice can bring.

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