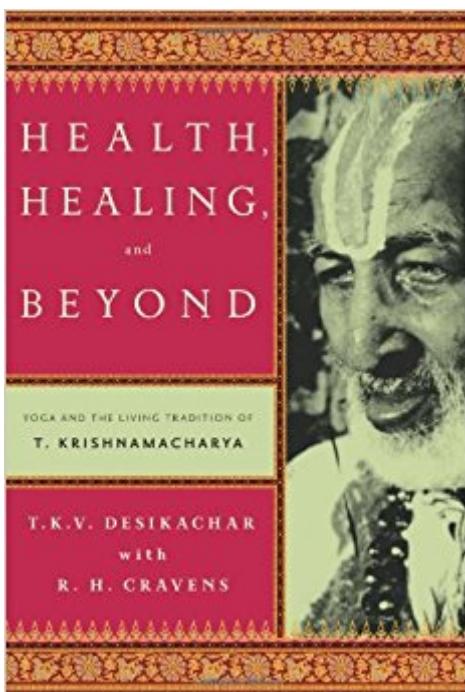


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Health, Healing, And Beyond: Yoga And The Living Tradition Of T. Krishnamacharya



Synopsis

The much-sought-after, greatly beloved exploration of the work of Krishnamacharya, teacher of many of twentieth-century yoga's greatest and most influential exponents, Health, Healing, and Beyond is filled with deep wisdom •an indispensable guide to the philosophy, principles, and limitless possibilities of yoga. First published in 1998, it is now available again to yogis, students, and teacher trainees everywhere.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Unlike "Autobiography of a Yogi," this work is not about magic but about the living tradition of yoga, and of a yogi skilled in all six Ways of Viewing, a wanderer, who journeyed for years on end learning the Vedic teachings, finally settling in south India to live yoga and raise a family. Not quite a biography, this book is a mixture of reminiscences, teachings and photographs of the author's father, Sri Krishnamacharya. One of my favorite stories describes Krishnamacharya's journey to a temple known long ago for its learned teachers. When he arrived by foot, exhausted, the gateskeeper suggested he first nap outside the grounds. Later, inside, he met a great teacher "seated beneath a banyan tree granting knowledge to all his disciples" and promptly memorized all his words upon recitation--only to awaken outside to the self-same gateskeeper, who slyly asked if he had found what he was looking for. The lost teachings had been transmitted in a dream. There is much more than this, of course, including many practical aspects and insights on all 8 limbs of classical yoga. There are two related shortcomings in this otherwise superb book. First, look at the fine "Essence of Yoga" by Desikachar's student, B. Bouanchaud. The frontispiece is a drawing by

Krishnamacharya depicting Patanjali surrounded by his four students. These students represent the four books of the Yoga Sutras, the same teachings having been presented differently and with different emphases for each student. This skill-in-means is fundamental to Krishnamacharya's whole approach to yoga. While three of his students (B.K.S. Iyengar, Indra Devi, T.K.V. Desikachar) are mentioned here, I was surprised to read all 211 pages and find that A.G.

When TKV Desikachar was a kid he refused to do asanas (yoga poses) so Krishnamacharya tied him up in the lotus position for a while, with ropes: "and left me for a while to think about it". The kind of thing a yogi does to his child. Hm. I was taken back by the book, left breathless at points. It is not everyday you get such a presence in the account of the life of Krishnamacharya as it is here, by his son, and written with full presence.. Here are things that I didn't know/surprised me:- Defying Our Common Assumptions Let me ask you: What is the one organ within the human body on which all others depend? Tell me. Did you answer the "heart" by any chance? I did. "To give you just one example: It is axiomatic Western physiology that the heart pumps blood that enables other organs to perform their function.... In Krishnamahcaryas system, the lungs are the pump that makes the heart work. It defies all we know" Game changer how Krishnamacharya saw the center of the body. No wonder his emphasis was so much in pranayama (breathing extension, breathing slowly, counting lifetimes in amount of breaths rather than years)- Vinyasa Not only does Krishnamacharya have the unique vision of vinyasa as being the effort that accompanies asana through the breathing, which is how he interprets Yoga Sutra 2.47 (unlike ALL other teachers), he goes further in the eyes of his son: Desikachar: "My father's students were often amazed that he would greet them at the gate when they arrived, conduct the lessons, and then escort them back to the gate and bid them farewell. It is a practice that I continue. Often a student considers it a somewhat elaborate courtesy, but it is actually vinyasa..."

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