

Yoga Proves Useful For COVID-19 Sanity — Reports Mark Whitwell, Founder of the Heart of Yoga

New Zealand, Auckland, Sep 20, 2021 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - KEYPOINTS:

- *Recent meta-analysis of global mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic has shown “that the pooled prevalence of mental health problems during the COVID-19 pandemic is higher than before the outbreak.”*
- *Depression, anxiety, PTSS, addiction, and sleep problems are higher across over 32 countries*
- *Research from the Heart of Yoga Foundation has surveyed practitioners and found that 98% of those practicing yoga are feeling the same or better mental health than pre-COVID-19*
- *Founder of the Heart of Yoga [Mark Whitwell](#) describes how Yoga is helping people take care of their mental health*

A recent meta-study published in Nature found that despite differences between countries around the world, there is a global trend of increased mental health problems among the general population. This is described as a “high burden,” whether or not it is compounded by economic difficulties in particular countries.

The Heart of Yoga, founded by [Mark Whitwell](#) surveyed a cohort of 200 practitioners from over 20 countries around the world and reports a strange finding: happiness and wellbeing have actually increased for 98% of them, thanks to using lockdowns and restrictions as inspiration to establish a home yoga practice.

Founder of the Heart of Yoga, [Mark Whitwell](#), comments: “A home yoga practice is a vastly underestimated tool for mental wellbeing. People are out of the gimmicky studios and exercise-like classes and actually just moving and breathing in their own home, and reaping the rewards of that.”

“When people move and breathe in the way that is right for them, it connects their mind with the body, and the body is nature. They can spend time in nature, right there at home. They can receive all the restorative mood of walking in a forest, just through being intimate with their own breath and body.”

One student in Bangalore commented on how despite the challenges of being at home with children and reduced income, her practice had allowed her to feel like her home was “a sanctuary, not a prison.”

Conflict with family or housemates is often reported to be a high source of lockdown anxiety and stress, and many practitioners have commented on how their practice has made such relationships easier.

“When you practice even just a little bit, with the precise breath principles passed on from Krishnamacharya, it becomes easier to regulate your emotions and not use the people as a punching bag,” says [Mark Whitwell](#). “My teacher TKV Desikachar emphasised that this is the point of yoga, to become capable of harmonious relationship. The point is not to do the splits, it is to become able to love others.”

The Heart of Yoga is named after the book by TKV Desikachar, published in 1995, and is now a standard textbook for hundreds of pieces of training around the world. Desikachar's father, Tirumalai Krishnamacharya, was famous in India for his success as a teacher helping people heal all kinds of physical and spiritual ailments, including insomnia and addiction.

[Mark Whitwell](#) describes how Heart of Yoga has offered online training by donation during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has enabled people from around the world to learn a home practice and participate in an online community.

"Right now we have people participating from all over the world, all going through their version of pandemic disruption. Honduras, China, India, Uganda, Iceland, Germany, Italy, Spain, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, USA, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Peru, UK, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, Costa Rica, Colombia, eSwatini, Cyprus, Israel —people practicing all over the world in the midst of their unique challenges and stresses."

"Genuine yogis and yoginis around the world are proving that peace is something you practice in the midst of ordinary conditions, not something you go looking for in the Himalayas," says [Mark Whitwell](#). "This pandemic is testing everyone, and they are coming through with dignity and even joy, their own sense of belonging and being at home on mother Earth."

If you would like to try out this yoga for yourself, you can access the Heart of Yoga's online education courses by donating at www.heartofyoga.com/online-immersion

For more information please contact [Mark Whitwell](#)

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