

Yoga for Business People: Mind-Body Connection

A rising number of business people are finding the mind-body connection.

Yoga, meditation, and other Eastern-born exercises are finding a growing audience among harried business people craving inner calm. Classes are offered at health clubs, company fitness centers, corporate retreats and spas.

Ideas that once were left-of-center are finding greater acceptance with the public support. Mind-body executive fitness is a hot topic right now.

Lynn Doody, owner of Zen Fitness wellness programs in Chicago, notes that, whereas in the past most of her clients pursued traditional cardiovascular and weight-training exercise, most now incorporate mind-body applications into the regimen.

There's just a general awareness, and non-conventional health care is a little more available.

No need to convince Mark Frantz. The 40-year-old vice-president at Merrill Lynch & Co. had learned in 15 years of trading commodities to manage stress and anxiety. He ran a few times a week, worked out at the gym, and worked at reducing stress in other conventional ways.

But he still ground his teeth at night, massages were temporary Band-Aids, and even while running he'd tense his muscles. He wanted more. He sought 'a different quality of life.'

What he found was yoga and meditation. At home, on an airplane, or for 10 minutes behind closed doors at work, Mr. Frantz can shut out distractions with deep breathing, yoga poses, imagery and other relaxation techniques.

He still runs, but '(yoga and meditation) forces you to focus on what's going on in the moment and to be aware of what your body is telling you. It relaxes you, brings your heart rate and your blood pressure down.