

MARGO SHAPIRO BACHMAN

Yoga Mama Yoga Baby

AYURVEDA AND YOGA FOR A HEALTHY PREGNANCY AND BIRTH

CONTENTS

Foreword by Dr. Vasant Lad . . . xiii

Introduction . . . I

How This Book Was Conceived

How Yoga and Ayurveda Can Guide Your Pregnancy

Pregnancy and Birth as Rites of Passage

How to Use This Book

My Gift to You

PART ONE The Basics

CHAPTER 1 Ayurveda, the Science of Life . . . 13

Ayurveda: The Basic Principles

The Physical Body: Elements and Doshas

Your Unique Constitution: Prakruti and Vikruti

EXERCISE Dosha Self-Assessment

The Subtle Body: Prana, Tejas, and Ojas

EXERCISE Assessing Your Ojas

The Mental Body: Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas

EXERCISE Understanding Your Mind

CHAPTER 2 The Complete Practice of Yoga . . . 29

Fundamental Principles of Prenatal Yoga

Body: Prenatal Yoga Postures (Asanas)

Breath: Breathing Practices (Pranayama)

EXERCISE Observing the Qualities of Your Breath

Mind: Meditation

EXERCISE Exploring Intentions for Your Meditations

Focal Points for Practice by Trimester

The Three Doshas and Yoga Practice

EXERCISE Observing the Doshas at Play in Your Yoga

CHAPTER 3	Nourishing Diet . . . 41
	Sattvic and Ojas-Building Foods
	Eating According to Your Body Type
	EXERCISE What Do the Dosha Guidelines Mean for You?
	Digestion
	JOURNALING EXERCISE Observing How Food Affects Your Body
	General Guidelines for Improving Digestion
	Preparing the Kitchen
	Vegetarianism or Not?
	Honoring Your Roots
	Vital Nutrients
	Sample Pregnancy Meals According to Body Type
CHAPTER 4	Harmonious Lifestyle . . . 57
	Peaceful Mother, Peaceful Baby
	EXERCISE Increasing Sattva in Your Life
	The Positive Use of Sound
	Healthy Daily Rhythms
	Daily Rhythms for Each Dosha
	Daily Rhythms in Pregnancy
	Daily Rhythms for Women with Babies and Young Children
	JOURNALING EXERCISE Your Daily Rhythms
	An Essential Practice: The Ayurvedic Self-Massage
PART TWO	Your Pregnancy: A Month-by-Month Guide
CHAPTER 5	The First Trimester . . . 75
	What's Happening in Your Body?
CHAPTER 6	Month One: <i>Intuition and Dreaming</i> . . . 79
	Dreams
	JOURNALING EXERCISE Dream Journal
	BREATHING PRACTICE Relaxing and Calming the Breath
	MEDITATION PRACTICE Moonlight Reflection
	SOUND PRACTICE Mantra Pushpam

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 7 **Month Two: *Protection*** . . . 87

Using Milk in Pregnancy

JOURNALING EXERCISE Acknowledging and Releasing Fears

BREATHING PRACTICE Shitali Pranayama

MEDITATION PRACTICE Protection

SOUND PRACTICE Devi Sureshvari

CHAPTER 8 **Month Three: *Peace*** . . . 95

JOURNALING EXERCISE

Accepting Your Changing Body as Healthy

BREATHING PRACTICE Ujjayi Pranayama

MEDITATION PRACTICE Focusing the Mind, Encouraging Peace
(So Hum)

SOUND PRACTICE Shanti, Shanti, Shanti

CHAPTER 9 **The Second Trimester** . . . 101

What's Happening in Your Body?

CHAPTER 10 **Month Four: *Nurturing*** . . . 105

JOURNALING EXERCISE Nurturing Yourself

Nurturing the Cravings and Desires of the Mother

ASANA PRACTICE Beginning a Home Prenatal Yoga Practice

BREATHING PRACTICE Shitali Pranayama with Ujjayi Exhale

MEDITATION PRACTICE Trataka, Nurturing Yourself
with Candlelight

SOUND PRACTICE Ha Vu Ha

CHAPTER 11 **Month Five: *Mothering*** . . . 119

JOURNALING EXERCISE What Being a Mother Means to You

ASANA PRACTICE Pelvic Openings

BREATHING PRACTICE Shitali Pranayama with Ujjayi Exhale
and Counting

MEDITATION PRACTICE You Are the Perfect Mother for Your Baby

SOUND PRACTICE Ma

CHAPTER 12 **Month Six: *Support*** . . . 127

Birth Vision

Dharma

JOURNALING EXERCISE Exploring Your Dharmas and Support

ASANA PRACTICE Supported Restorative Poses

CONTENTS

BREATHING PRACTICE Nadi Shodhana Pranayama
MEDITATION PRACTICE Support from the Mountains
SOUND PRACTICE Asato Ma

CHAPTER 13 **The Third Trimester . . . 137**

What's Happening in Your Body?

CHAPTER 14 **Month Seven: *Opening the Heart* . . . 141**

Exploring Your Changing Relationship

JOURNALING EXERCISE Exploring Intimacy with Your Partner

FUN PRACTICE Creative Intimacy

ASANA PRACTICE Opening the Heart

BREATHING PRACTICE Shitali with Alternate-Nostril Pranayama

MEDITATION PRACTICE Partner Meditation, Sending Love

SOUND PRACTICE Hridayam Mayi

CHAPTER 15 **Month Eight: *Balance and Blessing* . . . 151**

Instability of Ojas

JOURNALING EXERCISE Blessings in Your Life

FUN PRACTICE Hip Circles, Figure Eights, and Dancing

Rituals and Blessings to Prepare for Birth and Motherhood

ASANA PRACTICE Balance Poses

BREATHING PRACTICE Silent Recitation Pranayama, So Hum

MEDITATION PRACTICE Balance

SOUND PRACTICE Ayur Mantra

CHAPTER 16 **Month Nine: *Completion* . . . 163**

Simple Practices: Abhyanga and Yoni Pichu

Preparing for Birth and Postpartum

Eating and Digesting in the Last Month of Pregnancy

JOURNALING EXERCISE Building Confidence

ASANA PRACTICE Integration

BREATHING PRACTICE Relaxing and Calming the Breath

MEDITATION PRACTICE Flower Blooming Meditation

SOUND PRACTICE Purnamadah, "Honoring the Wholeness of Life"

PART THREE Birth and Postpartum

CHAPTER 17 The Journey of Birth . . . 175

Early Labor

Yoga for Labor

EXERCISE Reviewing Yoga to Help You in Labor with Your Partner/

Labor Support

Support During Active Labor

Marma Points to Assist with Labor

EXERCISE Finding the Marmas on Your Body with Your Partner/

Labor Support

Aromatherapy during Labor

EXERCISE What Else Is in Your Tool Bag?

Immediately After Birth

CHAPTER 18 Gentle Beginnings: *The First Two Months Postpartum* . . . 185

Guidelines for Mom's and Baby's Health and Happiness

JOURNALING EXERCISE Writing Your Birth Story

Postpartum Diet

Diet and Breast Milk

Ayurvedic Baby Massage

Adjusting to Your Postpartum Body and Self

ASANA PRACTICE Gentle and Safe Postpartum Movement

BREATHING PRACTICE Nadi Shodhana Pranayama

MEDITATION PRACTICE The Sun as a Source of Strength

SOUND PRACTICE Surya Mantra

Appendices

APPENDIX 1 Remedies for Common Pregnancy Ailments . . . 205

APPENDIX 2 Food Guidelines . . . 227

APPENDIX 3 Recipes . . . 245

APPENDIX 4 Herbs to Avoid During Pregnancy . . . 263

APPENDIX 5 How to Make Herbal Oils . . . 267

APPENDIX 6 How to Use Essential Oils Safely and Effectively . . . 269

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments . . .	273
Resources . . .	275
Glossary . . .	281
Bibliography . . .	285
Index . . .	291
About the Author . . .	313



INTRODUCTION

I consider motherhood as one of my *dharmas* in this lifetime. *Dharma* is a Sanskrit word that means a duty, responsibility, or purpose to our society, our families, and ourselves. Each of us has many dharmas, or roles, in life that support us if we act to support them. Like many women, I'd always had an inherent desire to experience pregnancy, birth, motherhood, and family life. When I was younger, motherhood always seemed distant, but as the third decade of my life approached, it beckoned. My husband and I had found each other and married, and I felt ready to embark on this new journey. As an alternative healthcare provider and longtime yoga practitioner, I wanted my pregnancy journey to be guided by the wisdom of yoga and Ayurveda.

After spending over a decade immersed in the study of Western herbal medicine, I revisited my longtime interest in Ayurveda, which integrated well with herbalism and improved my understanding of health and wellness. This interest led me to spend years in private and small-group studies with some of the pioneers in the field of Ayurveda today, including Dr. Vasant Lad, Maya Tiwari, and Dr. David Frawley. These extraordinary teachers shaped my education, inspired my clinical practice, and helped me to understand myself. Each one contributed something uniquely different and compelling to my Ayurvedic education. I was and continue to be blessed by my mentorship with Dr. Frawley, a leading expert on Ayurveda and other Indian sciences, who took me under his wing and carefully guided my work on many levels.

Yoga, Ayurveda's sister science, has been an integral part of my life for almost fifteen years, through studying, practicing, and teaching in a variety of contexts with different populations. My interest in yoga brought me to the Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, one of the leading educational institutions for yoga therapy in India, and Sonia Nelson (a senior teacher in the lineage of T. K. V. Desikachar and T. Krishnamacharya) continues to mentor and support me today.

With the tools and insights of herbal medicine, yoga, and Ayurveda, I felt ready to prepare my body for conception and pregnancy. I took herbs renowned for nourishing and toning the female reproductive system and building the tissues and blood, including shatavari, vidari, raspberry leaf, and nettles. I changed my daily yoga practices to focus on opening my hips and pelvis, preparing my body for an easier pregnancy and birth, and performed a short round of *panchakarma* (Ayurvedic deep detoxification and rejuvenation therapy), which is often done to prepare for conception. My husband and I conceived our daughter on our first try, and we were ecstatic.

My first pregnancy was truly a joyous experience. By keeping my diet, herbal support, and lifestyle in harmony with my Ayurvedic constitution (the individual combination of physical, mental, and emotional characteristics), I rarely felt sick or fatigued. My mind was focused on my baby's health and my own. When imbalances did arise, I relied on simple Ayurvedic remedies and the tools of yoga, which worked extremely well. I made the pregnancy my highest priority and did whatever I could to honor the sacred process of gestation.

Because I'd had a healthy and easy pregnancy, I presumed that birth would be a seamless extension of it and that the baby would pop out in a birthing tub in our bedroom. But it did not play out the way I had envisioned. My water broke with no contractions. To help my labor along, I tried one natural method after another, from castor oil and herbs to acupuncture to dancing and prayers. Nothing kicked my labor into full gear. After twenty-four hours and only very mild contractions, my labor was still not progressing, and I started showing meconium, which can indicate fetal distress. Our midwife informed us that I needed to be transported to the hospital and labor would need to be induced.

Since I had not slept in twenty-four hours, when I received my first dose of Pitocin, I had no reserves to tolerate the artificial hormone. I tried to keep up with the rapidly intensifying contractions, but the force was so great that my body could not relax to dilate further. My eyes welled up with tears as I saw myself confined to a hospital bed with three intravenous needles in my arm and a belt around my stomach. As an earthy, natural person my whole life, I'd wanted to experience the sensations of natural contractions and squatting to push my child out in a comforting setting. Being in the sterile hospital, with all the accouterments of modern medicine, was not part of my vision! Eventually, I received an epidural and went to sleep.

A few hours later, my body was ready. In retrospect, I am thankful for the resources available, because they helped me to progress and successfully birth my daughter, Sierra. We were both healthy, and that was what mattered. This birth experience was my first exposure to the uncertainty of motherhood and a true experience of surrendering to what was out of my control. I now see that I had neglected to practice the yoga principles of *tapas*, *svadhyaya*, and *ishvara pranidhana*, which roughly translate to the practices of first making an effort to do something, then observing yourself in action, and finally adopting an attitude of not being attached to the fruits of your actions and accepting whatever happens. I was holding on too tightly to the end result I'd envisioned, and that attachment created an incredible struggle for me. If I would have remembered these important principles, I may have had a completely different, more positive experience.

My husband, daughter, and I spent our first year together bonding while I learned a great deal about myself and daughter, along with the ins and outs of parenthood. A few years later, when my husband and I decided we wanted another child, once again, with preparation and intention, we conceived quickly.

I felt great until one night in the sixth week, when I had a dream that the baby was not alive. I woke up disoriented and confused. The dream felt very real. I tried to ignore the thoughts that the baby was not alive, but my intuition told me that something was not right. At ten weeks, I went for an ultrasound and sadly discovered there was no fetal heartbeat. The fetus had stopped growing around six weeks of gestation, just when I had the dream.

I continually asked myself how and why this miscarriage could have happened. My husband and I were both very healthy. I knew there was no direct explanation, but I felt very heavyhearted and disappointed. The experience shed light on how dreams are one of the ways our intuition communicates with us. I tapped into yoga and Ayurveda to help with my grieving process and trauma recovery by adopting a positive attitude based on yogic principles, using simple *pranayama* practices to lift and transform sadness, and using herbs for emotional and hormonal balance and clearing stagnation after the miscarriage. Eventually, I came to terms with the loss.

After several months of recovering from the physical and emotional trauma of that experience, my husband and I wanted to conceive again. This time it did not happen as easily. Was there scar tissue from the miscarriage? Had my hormones reset properly? I questioned whether

or not I was actually ovulating. Tired after months of regularly scheduled lovemaking during my fertile period, we decided to let go of the effort and move on with other aspects of our lives. I became pregnant the next month.

However, this pregnancy was quite different from the previous two. The classic nausea and vomiting in the first trimester were my new world. Mine did not start in the morning, but began after lunch and lasted until I went to bed at night. Sometimes I would wake up woozy in the middle of the night. I could no longer stomach the beautiful, healthy meals that had been my staple during my first pregnancy. I prepared them for my daughter and husband, but became nauseated by the smell of the food. I settled on bagels and cream cheese.

This experience helped me realize that women in sound health do not always feel well when they're pregnant. I relied heavily on simple Ayurvedic remedies and the tools of yoga to feel stronger and more balanced. I also learned that our attitude toward the imbalances and discomfort is just as important as the tools we use to address them. Our ability to adapt to the situation at hand is crucial.

After the first trimester, the nausea subsided, and the rest of the pregnancy was smooth. However, I knew I did not want to repeat the same scenario of my first birth. I felt that it was my right as a woman to experience natural childbirth, and I became determined to do all I could (within my means) to achieve this. I wanted to feel the pulse of every contraction and the extraordinary magic of giving birth with minimal to no intervention.

I had two insights that I didn't have during my first birth: (1) the knowledge to keep my endurance strong with yoga and other forms of exercise through the entire pregnancy and (2) labor support in the form of a doula. Both of these served me well, and my son, Mateo, popped out easily after five hours of intense and exhilarating natural labor.

Both of my birthing experiences taught me invaluable lessons, especially in how to surrender and to empower myself. In my first birth, I had to yield to the river of life. It was all I could do to bring my baby into my arms. In my second birth, I tapped into a deep reserve of inner strength that I honestly did not know I had within me. These experiences gave me more strength and ability to face life than anything had given me before. Both rites of passage made me a different woman than I was before each child.

How This Book Was Conceived

After the birth of my first child, I decided to devote my yoga and Ayurveda practice to women and children's health. I dove deeply into the classical texts of Ayurveda and yoga to see what wisdom could be gleaned from these ancient sciences. I found myself continually asking, "How can I bridge these primordial teachings into useful, meaningful, and practical tools for modern women and families?" I looked for a book on yoga and Ayurveda for pregnancy and birth, but was surprised to find a void in this area of literature. Of all the pregnancy books on the market today, very few provide practical and sensible support from Ayurveda and yoga *together* to help women experience joyful and healthy pregnancies. I realized that I needed to write the book I was searching for.

The result, which you hold in your hands, blends my direct studies with renowned teachers of Ayurveda and yoga, research of classical texts from India, clinical experience working with pregnant clients, and personal experiences during my pregnancies. The basic principle of Ayurveda is that the body can and will heal itself, when it is given the right effort, tools, and guidance. In my years of counseling women in the childbearing stage of life, and addressing the myriad potential accompanying health challenges, I have seen time and time again how the natural wisdom of Ayurveda and yoga work effectively to restore health and bring balance to countless areas of life.

How Yoga and Ayurveda Can Guide Your Pregnancy

Yoga and Ayurveda are sister sciences that have been connected for thousands of years. Steeped in the same philosophy, they provide important, complementary tools and practices for creating a healthy body, a balanced mind, and higher consciousness. They promote a healthy, natural lifestyle through diet, herbs, physical postures, and breathing techniques. They also include prayers, chants, and meditation, and promote certain ethical values, such as truthfulness, nonviolence, and humility. But neither requires you to follow certain deities, dogmas, or religions.

The holistic diet and lifestyle recommendations of yoga and Ayurveda begin with understanding your unique constitution and how to live in harmony with it. *Self-knowledge and self-care are central principles of Ayurveda and are key to real, deep, and lasting healing and health.* Many times, imbalances arise as a result of diet and lifestyle choices that aren't appropriate

for our unique nature. By understanding your constitution, you can pay attention to your needs and make choices that support your health and well-being.

In pregnancy specifically, yoga and Ayurveda can help you improve the quality of your life, enjoy the process of gestation, and raise your consciousness, as well as achieve optimum health for yourself and your growing baby.

On a practical level, yoga and Ayurveda, as forms of natural medicine, provide specific tools for helping with the challenges that can arise during pregnancy. I have met countless women who really dislike being pregnant. They feel uncomfortable, sick, or exhausted, or suffer from a host of conditions for anywhere from a few weeks to their entire pregnancy. Some women feel hindered and don't like to feel slowed down. Others feel awkward in their pregnant bodies and don't enjoy their fullness or how their body is morphing to accommodate their growing baby. And a number of women feel that their hormones have hijacked their bodies and emotions. These are all natural and genuine responses to pregnancy. Yoga and Ayurveda offer simple breath and movement techniques, gentle herbs, and basic dietary suggestions to help you ride these changing tides.

On a more profound level, Ayurveda suggests that the prenatal environment influences your baby's *prakruti*, or constitution. Both in the womb and out, a child's consciousness, health, and happiness are shaped by its parents' activities, diet, lifestyle, and mental states. Ayurveda and yoga help you give your little one as much positivity as possible when she's in the womb, so she may come into this world as strong and healthy as can be. In addition, yoga helps you to become more present with yourself, moment by moment, day after day—an invaluable skill that can serve you well during birth and motherhood.

Pregnancy and Birth as Rites of Passage

The principles and practices of both Ayurveda and yoga can help you honor pregnancy and birth as important rites of passage—and honor yourself as you move through them.

A rite of passage is a ritual or ceremony to honor a significant juncture in life. Rites of passage have the potential to be incredibly powerful, if we take the opportunity to make them sacred. Then they can allow us to navigate through a transition and into a new phase of life with intention, confidence, and grace.

Births, weddings, and deaths are life-changing events, and various communities and religious groups honor them with specific traditions. In the process, these traditions help link an individual to friends, family, and the larger society. However, some significant transitions in a woman's life, such as menarche, pregnancy, and menopause, are not given as much attention, especially in our modern Western culture. All of these junctures affect a woman's physical, psychological, and spiritual self, and all have the potential to connect or disconnect her from others. By acknowledging all of these significant life transitions, especially through ritual, women feel supported, honored, and prepared as they move through them.

When a woman views her pregnancy as a rite of passage, it helps her recognize that her life is changing significantly. She is moving from mother-to-be to mother, an inherent transformation in a woman's being. Honoring this transition helps a woman to truly value her experience and process of pregnancy, become empowered by it, and move through it from a place of harmony and security.

Our modern society generally views pregnancy as an individual's responsibility instead of a community's responsibility. Pregnant women often feel isolated and alone. Even though pregnancy is a woman's *own* inner journey with herself and her growing baby, comfort and support can come from her community. When pregnant women come together for something as simple as a childbirth-preparation class or a prenatal yoga class, they feel supported and more connected to the whole of life. I remember meeting some extraordinary women in those classes. We shared our secrets for itchy bellies and how we handled our nesting instincts. These classes became opportunities to connect with other women going through a similar transition and laid a foundation for relationships that continued to develop after birth.

Birth is a rite of passage in and of itself. Birthing is a complex, intense experience that can forever change a woman's existence. The actual act is a profound initiation into motherhood. Our culture today often gives baby gifts to recognize new mothers after the baby arrives, yet little attention is given to what a woman has just gone through—physically, emotionally, and spiritually—to bring the baby into the world. The rite of passage of birth is often overlooked. Instead of more baby blankets, what women need is someone to listen to them, comfort them, make them a mug of tea or a pot of soup, and rub their backs as they adjust to their new identity as mothers.

With the principles and practices of yoga and Ayurveda, you can view your pregnancy and birthing as rites of passage and navigate them with intention and insight. Hopefully, with this awareness, you can move through these transitions connected to the inner light within you and the collective strength and wisdom of all women who have made these passages before you.

Several aspects of this book can help you honor pregnancy and birth as rites of passage. The journaling exercises, for example, can help you to reflect on how your life is changing by bringing more awareness and insights to your experiences. The *asana* practices can help you to feel comfortable in your body so you can move forward with grace and confidence. The meditations assist in deeply supporting the different stages of your pregnancy with intentions. And the sound practices can help you to vocalize supportive phrases to empower yourself.

How to Use This Book

This book is a guide to help you experience radiant health and abundant joy during your pregnancy and birth. The exercises and practices are intended to spark your own self-discovery and help you to move inward during your personal journey. The book can help you access your intuition, reflect on your process, and become more present, enabling you to achieve a deeper state of wellness and encounter the powerful, wise, intuitive woman inside of yourself.

Part one, “The Basics,” introduces you to the fundamentals of Ayurvedic and yogic diet and lifestyle, giving you the foundation you need to make use of the exercises, practices, and other juicy info in part two, “Your Pregnancy: A Month-by-Month Guide.” Part three, “Birth and Postpartum,” includes practical tips to encourage natural labor, and guidance on staying healthy and happy during the precious and tender first weeks with your baby. The appendices include suggestions for treating common pregnancy complaints with simple home remedies, delicious recipes to try, and other supplementary support.

If you are unclear or unsure about anything presented in this book, consult with your doctor, midwife, yoga teacher, Ayurvedic practitioner, or other health-care provider. This book is not a replacement for any direct care.

You will want to purchase a notebook for the journaling exercises. Keep it accessible along with a good pen, sharpened pencil, and any other tools you will use, like colored pencils. Feel free to use the journal at other times

for your thoughts, feelings, and reflections. Some women enjoy journaling after the meditation practices to further process new insights.

You may wish to stock a fresh supply of many of the herbs and spices mentioned throughout the book, so you will have what you need at your fingertips. Creating your own herbal pantry and refreshing your kitchen spice collection is fun and empowering. Many herbs and spices—such as nettles, raspberry leaf, milky oats, ginger root, cardamom pods, and cinnamon sticks—make delicious teas and additions to your food, and can be used freely throughout your pregnancy. Store herbs and spices in clean, dry, glass jars, out of direct light and away from heat.

Generally, most herbs traditionally used to support pregnancy are safe when used in moderation. Consuming normal amounts of spices in your cooking is typically considered harmless. There have been almost no reports of gentle herbs traditionally used to support pregnancy causing adverse outcomes in pregnant women, when used as directed. When negative outcomes have occurred, it has been from herbs that are *not* considered safe in pregnancy, or from products that have been contaminated with unsafe herbs, mostly from products imported from China and India. The resources section lists reputable companies that test their herbs for heavy metals, and offer organic, sustainably sourced, and high-quality products.

My Gift to You

I hope you enjoy reading this book and treasure every moment of your pregnancy. It truly is an extraordinary season in your life that deserves special attention and guidance. My greatest wish and most sincere desire is that the light of knowledge in this book will help you experience joy and excellent health in your pregnancy, so that more babies will be birthed into the world with radiant health, genuine happiness, higher consciousness, and divine love.



PART ONE

The Basics



Ayurveda, the Science of Life

It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver.

MAHATMA GANDHI

Over twenty years ago, I drove from Washington State to New Mexico to backpack in a wilderness area with a couple of girlfriends from college. We stopped by the Ayurvedic Institute in Albuquerque to see what it was all about. At the time, it was one of the few schools of Ayurveda in the US. They graciously invited us into their main classroom to hear Dr. Lad talk about the basics of Ayurveda. These basics deeply resonated with some unknown part of myself. The hair stood up on my arms as a wave of chills swept over me, and I realized that there was a system of medicine that intertwined nutrition, herbal healing, and lifestyle choices to enable us to live harmonious, healthy lives. At that moment, I had no idea exactly what I would do with Ayurveda, but was certain I wanted to learn more.

While I have always found the practical side of Ayurveda its most understandable and, perhaps, useful aspect, I have come to acknowledge the importance of its underlying philosophy. Examining the principles behind the system is essential to understanding its depth, reasoning, and