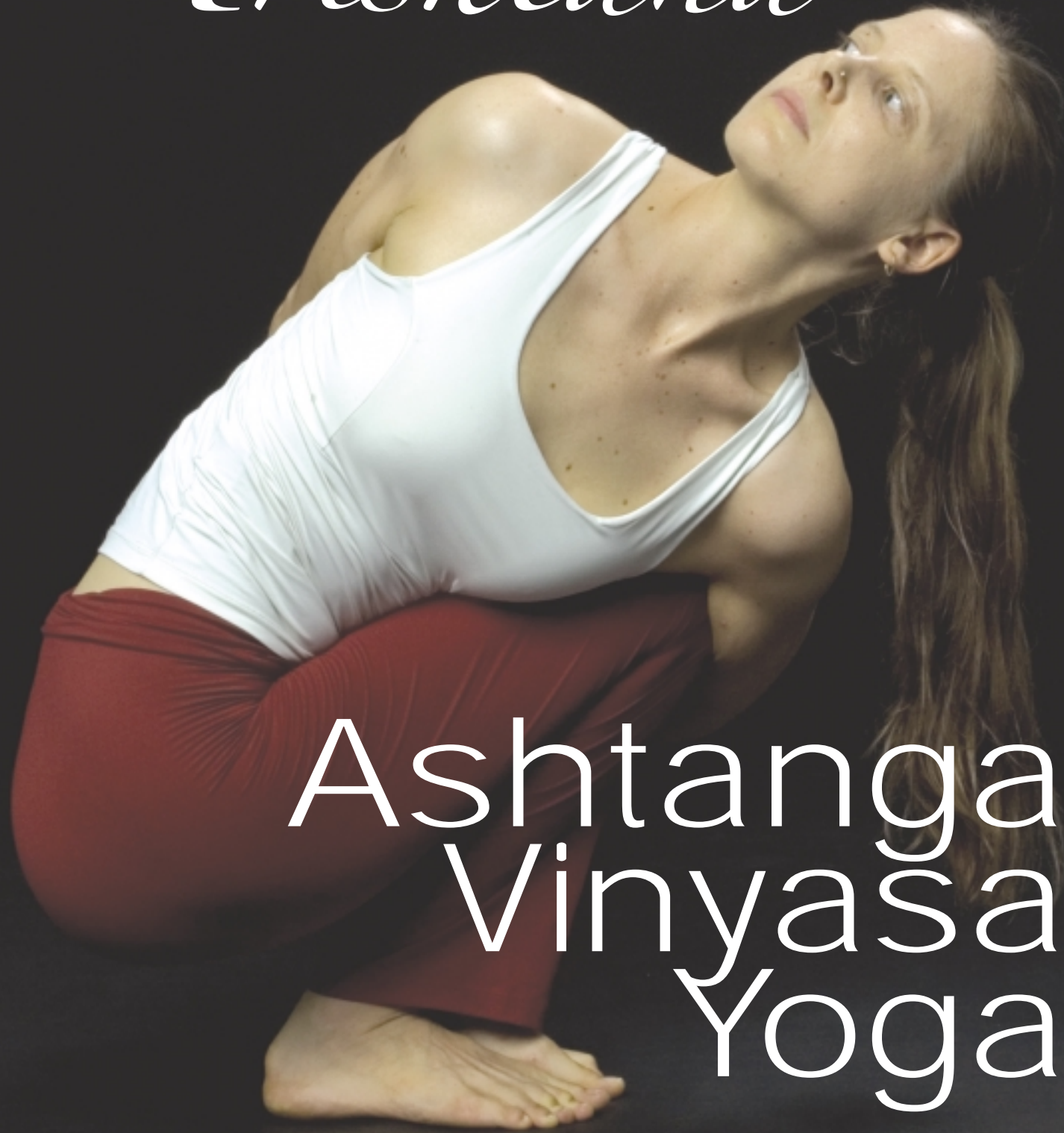


Trishtana

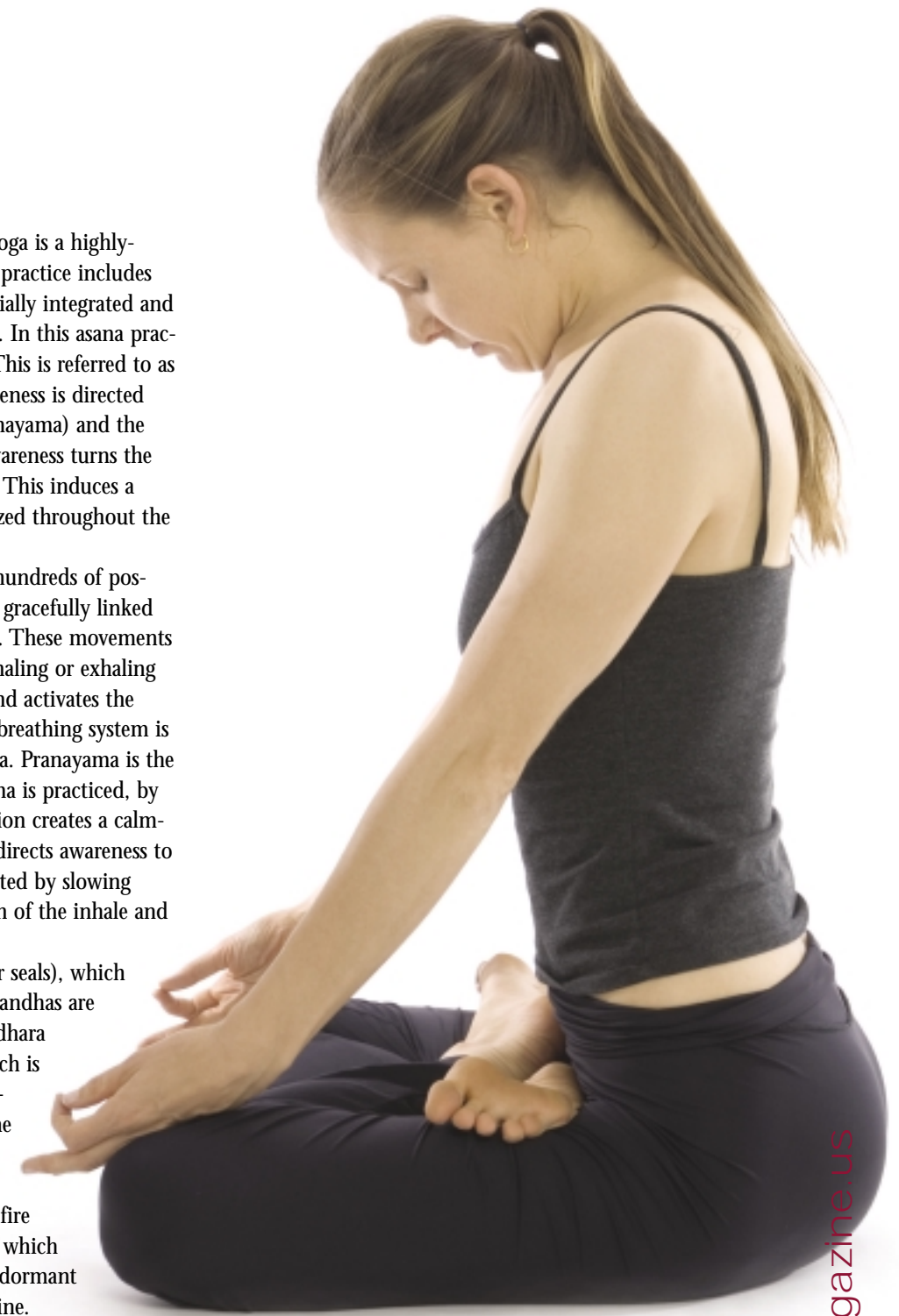


Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga

Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga is a highly-sophisticated method of asana practice. This practice includes six series of yoga postures, which are sequentially integrated and continuously practised throughout a lifetime. In this asana practice, awareness is directed into three places. This is referred to as Trishtana. The three actions into which awareness is directed are the posture (asana) itself, the breath (pranayama) and the looking place (drishti). This placement of awareness turns the mind inward and strengthens concentration. This induces a deeply meditative state. Trishtana is emphasized throughout the Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga practice.

The Ashtanga Yoga practice consists of hundreds of postures, which are intentionally sequenced and gracefully linked by specific movements between each posture. These movements or Vinyasa are accompanied by either the inhaling or exhaling breath. Vinyasa generates heat in the body and activates the breathing system. In the Asana practice, the breathing system is stimulated by Bandhas and Ujjai Pranayama. Pranayama is the controlling of subtle energy. Ujjai Pranayama is practiced, by slightly contracting the throat. This contraction creates a calming wind-like sound with the breath, which directs awareness to the breath continuously. The breath is regulated by slowing down, deepening and equaling out the length of the inhale and exhale.

There are three bandhas (energy locks or seals), which direct subtle energy in the body. The three Bandhas are Mulah Bandha, Uddiyana Bandha and Jalandhara Bandha. Mulah Bandha is the root lock, which is engaged by contracting the anus and the perineum, in the center of the pelvic floor. In the Hatha Yoga Pradipika it is mentioned that Mulah Bandha moves Apana Vayu (the downward moving breath) upwards into the fire region of the navel. This intensifies the heat, which is said to arouse Kundalini. Kundalini is the dormant energy which lies coiled at the base of the spine.



for **Beginners**

By Caroline Klebl

The awakened Kundalini reveals complete liberation to the yoga practitioner.

Uddiyana Bandha is the abdominal lock. Uddiyana Bandha is practised by drawing the portion above and below the navel back to the spine, this moves Prana into the Sushumna Nadi. The Sushumna Nadi is the central channel, which reaches along the length of the spine. Jalandhara Bandha is practised by contracting the throat and drawing the chin firmly into the chest. Jalandhara Bandha keeps the Amrita (the nectar of immortality situated in the brain) from dripping down and being consumed by the fire in the navel region. The contraction in the throat closes the Ida and Pingala Nadis (the solar and lunar energy

chisris are nasagrai (the nose), brumadya (the center of the forehead), nabi (the navel), pada (the foot), angustha (the thumb, hasta (the palm of the hand) and parshva (to the left or right). Drishti strengthens the eyes and assists in the correct positioning of the head in each posture. Practicing drishti increases the ability of the mind to concentrate.

It takes many years for the body to open up into the yoga postures, but it is possible from the start to place awareness on the breath, the drishti and the posture itself. From the start, a deeply meditative state is induced by Trishtana within the Ashtanga Vinyasa System.



channels which originate in the two nostrils) and moves prana in the Sushumna Nadi. When prana moves freely in the Sushumna Nadi, then the fire in the navel region and Kundalini can be taken there.

Drishti means to see, look or perceive. In asana practice, drishti refers to the looking place or direction of the gaze in each posture. There are a total of nine drishtis practiced in the Ashtanga yoga sequences of postures and vinyasa. The nine

Caroline Klebl is based in San Francisco. She spent several years practising Ashtanga Yoga under the guidance of Sri K Pattabhi Jois. She has been teaching yoga since 1997 and teaches workshops, teacher training courses and retreats within the US and internationally.

For more information see <http://sourceofyoga.com> or email info@sourceofyoga.com.

