



CHOICES TO CALM A SENSITIZED NERVOUS SYSTEM: What do the studies show

YOGA:

- Can decrease sympathetic nervous system activity
- Can reduce inflammation
- Can reduce stress markers (cortisol)
- Can increase flexibility, strength, circulation and cardiorespiratory capacity
- Increase the frequency of positive emotions
- Can build physical and psychological resources
- Can improve pain control

MEDITATION:

- Exerts control over both pain and emotion
- In one study, people who practiced meditation for 30 years showed 40-50% lower brain response to pain compared with healthy controls
- Meditation has also been shown to be a great antidote to heart disease
- Meditation slows down your breathing, focusing on the breath

QI GONG AND TAI CHI:

- Qi Gong increases awareness of the body
- Helps with body mapping
- Helps facilitate deep abdominal breathing in an active, yet calm way
- Loosens up thoracic spine to decrease sympathetic nervous system upregulation
- Teaches you to move without tension, clears internal stress

GUIDED RELAXATION:

- Allows for individual exploration into belief patterns and movement patterns that may not be helpful
 - Increases body awareness without judgement
 - Carrico et al (2009) demonstrated 45% improvement in pain scores and episodes of urgency with guided relaxation
- Can be very helpful with people who are catastrophizers