

Life is a Stretch: Easy Yoga Anytime Anywhere

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Elise Browning Miller

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Life is a Stretch will be a worthwhile addition to the bookshelf of many. It offers a routine for the person at the desk, a routine to be used while traveling, stretches for the athlete, strengthening and lengthening the lower back, and six other routines with different focuses. In the first chapter, the authors give a brief overview of what yoga is, a bit of history, benefits of yoga, posture and back care, how to begin a yoga program and how the book is organized.

Each of the following chapters is structured with an introduction, postures with written step-by-step instruction (most often accompanied with a photograph of the posture) and a relaxation that they suggest you record and play back to yourself. The last chapter titled "Relax and Find Balance in Your Life," contains three step-by-step relaxations and visualizations for support in becoming a more balanced, relaxed individual. Each chapter takes approximately twenty minutes to complete with each succeeding chapter increasing in difficulty. At the end of the book they have added a resource list and a bibliography for the student who wants to stretch their life a bit more.

This book came about when Blackman asked her friend Miller if they could create a series of simple and short routines that she could do at her desk, waiting in line or just before sleep. They address a variety of needs for the lifestyle of those who are on the go and find it unrealistic to add another big commitment. The authors are very supportive of starting a yoga practice in a realistic way.

Miller is an Iyengar yoga teacher and has studied with the Honorable B.K.S. Iyengar and acknowledges his inspiration and guidance as a teacher. She has also studied with other well-known teachers such as Judith Lasater and Angela Farmer.

Life Is A Stretch is well organized and the descriptions of the postures are very clear, correct and easy to follow. The authors have added the Sanskrit name of the posture when applicable. This book is a good guide for the beginning yoga student because of the emphasis on creating a realistic goal of setting aside ten to twenty minutes a day and the continual reminder of proper breathing.

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