

## Yoga Stretch For Fitness

**Beth Shaw**

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Founder of YogaFit International and teacher of YogaFit—her fitness oriented, user-friendly style of Yoga—Shaw is clear and pleasant as she guides one through a series of yoga stretches. Steven Halpern's music is soothing and supports the sense of peace and calm that Shaw is radiating on the cassette.

She starts with breath awareness, asking the listener to place the hands first on the stomach, then the chest and ending with the hands on the throat so that one becomes more aware of where the breath moves or does not move in the body. She reminds the listener that deepening one's breath keeps one present in the moment. Breath awareness makes yoga unique when compared to other exercise programs.

More instruction and encouragement would help the subtleties of moving from one posture to the next. She recommends that one put the cassette on pause when one desires to stay in the posture longer, which is helpful and works well. Shaw does a relaxation at the end of the first half of the cassette and explains the meaning of yoga; she also once again encourages breath awareness. In the first half of the program she focuses on large muscle groups and warming up the spine. The second half is devoted to small muscle groups.

Hearing the program again makes one more comfortable in moving through the postures. The beginner may want to listen to the program before doing any of the movements to become more comfortable with the instruction and become familiar with the postures. This program will help people tone muscles and manage stress for healthier living.

JACKIE ANKERSON (July / August 1999)

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