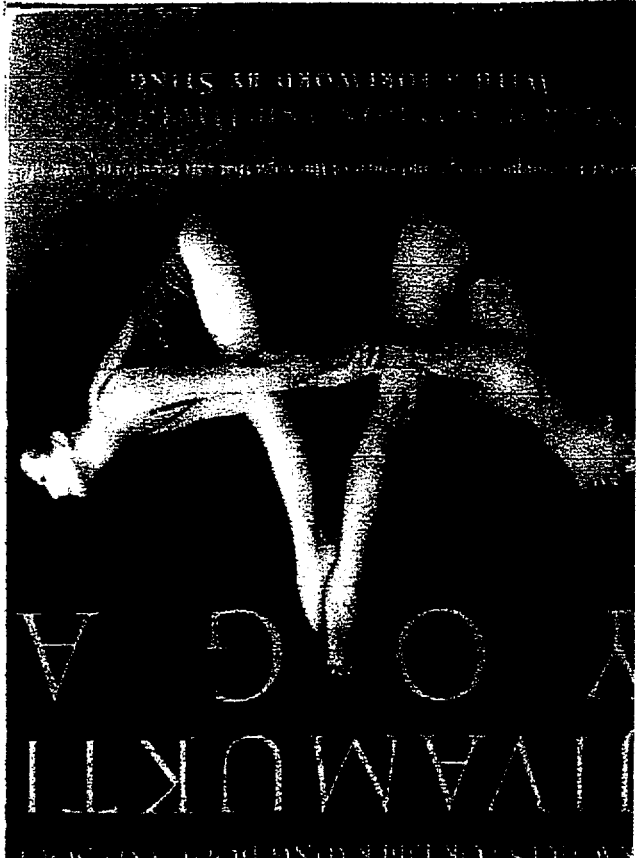


# YOGA JOURNAL



These chapters are illustrated with photographic panels spanning each two-page spread, showing Cannon or Life modeling series of postures. Unusually, there are no instructions for specific asanas—which include some quite challenging poses; this is not a beginner's hatha yoga guide—but one nonetheless learns much from the capable demonstrations and the construction of the sequences.

The third section, "Inner Practices That May Lead to Yoga" includes three chapters exploring *pratyahara* (sense withdrawal), meditation, *nadam* (the "unstruck sound"), and *bhakti*, or devotion. There are also extensive appendices (including "asana charts" which classify scores of poses and rate them by relative difficulty), recommended reading, and a valuable glossary.

Throughout, the authors' voice is authoritative without being ponderous, entertaining without being glib, personal without being self-absorbed; the result is a text that engages the reader and encourages deeper, further study. In the grand tradition of yoga scholars reaching across the millennia, Cannon and Life are careful to acknowledge their many teachers and the various sources—from ancient scriptures to modern pop songs—on whose artful wisdom they draw. On the whole, theirs is a wonderfully illuminating book.

The only place where *Jivamukti Yoga* fails to inspire is in its chapter on *abhisna*, where the authors' valid arguments about cruelty to animals are undercut by doctrinaire assertions. ("We agree that vegetarianism is not for everybody; it is only for those who desire happiness and peace") and rhetorical excesses ("Could the rising levels of breast and ovarian cancer in women have a karmic source in the inhumane treatment of mothers of other species?"). But, these lapses aside, *Jivamukti Yoga* is that rare book to which one will return frequently over the years for insight and illumination, and it deserves a cherished place on many a yogi's bookshelf.



## JIVAMUKTI YOGA: Practices for Liberating Body and Soul

BY PHIL CATALFO

### BOOK REVIEW

by Sharon Cannon and David Life, Ballantine.

FAMED NEW YORK City-based yoga mavens Sharon Cannon and David Life occupy a deservedly prominent position in the American yoga community, having not only done a great deal to help foster the burgeoning popularity of yoga but also done that as a by-product of decades-long study (with a veritable pantheon of contemporary masters) and profoundly devoted practice. Directors of the two *Jivamukti Yoga Centers* in *Mahabharata*, where celebrities and anonymous yogis practice side by side, they are often profiled in the popular press, write and model for *Yoga Journal*, and otherwise serve as diligent keepers of the flame. Their first book handsomely complements their multifaceted work as teachers and popularizers of the ancient tradition in the modern West.

