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KUNDALINI RISING

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Can yoga help young people navigate a complex world?

Every week, someone sends me a study, a podcast, a neuroscientist explaining something on a reel, and I find a new name for what my body already knew — Nervous system regulation. Fascia release. Lymphatic drainage. Hormonal balance.

I had none of this vocabulary when I first unrolled a mat 25 years ago. I only knew that I slept better, that my temper had a longer fuse, that a knot somewhere behind my ribs



loosened after a long exhale. The science is catching up with what the practice has always known.

I think about this when I look at the young people around me in Dhaka.

They are anxious, and they have nowhere to put it. A university student here carries exam pressure, family expectation, a job market that promises very little, and a phone that never sleeps.

Mental health is still whispered about at home. Counsellors are scarce. Most campuses offer nothing between "you're fine" and "see a doctor," and a great many young people are living in the gap between those two sentences, without the simplest tools to settle a racing nervous system. Breath. Movement. Stillness. A way back into the body.

Look at what our city offers its young: malls, cafés, more malls. Nearly every place to gather is built around buying something. There are few spaces to move, to meet interesting strangers, to hear a view that is not already in your feed. When they do go looking for wellness, it arrives looking foreign. Expensive studios, imported vocabulary, leggings that cost a month's tuition.

A sun salutation will not fix unemployment, and a breathing exercise cannot rewrite an exam system. But I have seen what happens when an anxious twenty-year-old slows her breath and feels her body answer. She finds a lever she didn't know she had. That is no small thing to carry into an exam hall, or a job interview, or a hard conversation at home.

What our young people need are places. They need the practices of their grandmothers handed back to them, with the science attached, so they can trust them. It took me twenty-five years to understand what yoga was doing for me. I would like the next generation to find out sooner.

Photo: Courtesy



