

Contact...

the

Yoga

of relationship

By | **Carla Moukazel**

We all know that at some level, relationships are the base from which an extraordinary life of connection and happiness is built. Yet in today's modern world, life is often moving so fast that our relationships are missing the depth we crave and deserve. That is when the practices of contact yoga can offer you a clear path towards harnessing more of the extraordinary love, compassion, and commitment that lies within you.

Photographer: Elie Abi Hanna - Yoga students: Chant Hamilian & Rita Hajj Boutros

Contact offers seven steps to transform your relationship through yoga, and its goal resembles the true meaning of the word yoga: UNION. Contact is synonymous with union, and it is a potent spiritual medicine for your relationship – often referred to as the ultimate spiritual practice. Nowhere else can you see and feel your own beauty and challenges reflected more accurately than in the eyes and the touch of another you care for.

The Seven Points of Contact:

- 7- Union: surrender, service, freedom
- 6- Vision: intuition, clarity, creativity
- 5- Communication: rapport, connection, truth
- 4- Love: forgiveness, compassion, intimacy
- 3- Commitment: will, discipline, responsibility
- 2- Passion: sensuality, pleasure, desire
- 1-Trust: foundation, integrity, security



SURRENDER

- He grabs her hands as she arches over his back and gently pulls.

- When in contact they breathe, surrender, and relax.

Effort and surrender are like the two wings of a bird.

One of the benefits of contact yoga is the powerful transformation of the flow energy; there is a deep association between relationships and the seven energy centers of the body called Chakras. Relationships follow the same energy system as the chakras, moving from a place of foundation and trust, to one of surrender and freedom.

The ancient practice of yoga is defined as the union of the mind, body, and spirit. Contact yoga can help you to discover the power of union that emerges from stepping outside from your own experience, and connecting deeply with your yoga partner as you expand and transform together. A great wisdom tradition of the east, sacred union is symbolized by Shiva (the archetypical masculine) and Shakti (the feminine of the universe)... in which the singular aspects of each come together. When you become one with their dance, the exultation of spirit and the whole universe come alive in your whole being.

When you combine the sensuality of touch, with the transparent energy available through yoga practice with your partner, you achieve ultimate communion. The union is the goal of all life experiences and spiritual practice. Once achieved, the state of union becomes the source of all true creation, elimination, and evolution... the sublime context for personal transformation.

“Contact – when two become ONE.”

These postures are more about connection than perfection... more about exploration than expectation.

Conversing through TOUCH. Sit comfortably across from your partner, face-to-face. Open your eyes, focusing on each other for a few minutes. Next, decide who will receive and who will give to begin this exercise. Then close your eyes, and try to communicate with your hands with TOUCH; pick a message that you want to send through: it could be “I love you,” “I see your beauty,” or “I know you are afraid.” See if you can let the message pass without speaking, through energy. Contact is experiencing constant awareness of your partner.

When the sense of self is weak, surrender is difficult or impossible. You can't have WE, if YOU and I are not strong.

In contact yoga, you will experience something different when two people connect their minds, hearts, and spirit into a posture. A heightened consciousness emerges around the movements and intentions. The walls of separation between you will fall, and you create a third energy: “US”, the relationship.

EXTENDED BACKBEND

- She is in full backbend on his knees.
- While stretching their hands, he helps her open the chest.

They breathe and feel their connection through touch, establishing touch through communication.



FLYING SPLIT

- He puts his feet on her hips with his knees bent.
- She leans forward.
- He pulls her to the center while stretching his legs.
- Eye contact is very important.

Energy and confidence are the target.



Partners enter a state of being, not doing. Let each pose be an embrace.

Contact goes beyond partner yoga to express and embody the deeper and more transcendent aspects of relationships. Contact is a powerful metaphor and an invaluable tool in experiencing the dynamics of relationships. It breaks down the barriers of physical connection, opens the door to emotional connection, and merges you with the transcendent spirit.

Partners are working and tonifying the muscles of arms, legs, and core muscles, while a new energy and confidence is taking place between them.

The essence of contact is the constant awareness of your partner. In the process of moving through postures, one can actually overcome fear, form trust, increase communication, and deepen intimacy. As you embrace the full potential of each contact posture, you will experience a sublime expression of transcendent union.

OPENING OF THE HEART

- He is in the posture of a downward dog.
- She is in a handstand posture.

Respect for self, respect for others is the responsibility of partners.



SPINAL ALIGNMENT

- She is in a shoulder stand asana.
- They are working to reach a complete spinal alignment.

These postures are more about connection than perfection, more about exploration than expectation.



Opening of the heart; respect for self and respect for others is the responsibility of partners.

In contact, the energies of two partners move into their postures to serve their desires for a deeper awareness of self, and the experience of spiritual union. It is a safe place to experience all the emotions and polarities of relationships... the joys and anxieties, balance and chaos, intimacy and individuality, solitude and union.

Surrender; effort and surrender are like the two wings of a bird.

Contact teaches us to ask for what we want. So many of us find it hard to ask for what we want: a softer touch, a stronger presence, more honest communication, a moment of being heard or understood. You can speak with your eyes, your body movements, your breath, your touch. Learn to listen with all your senses even before words are spoken; listen to your partner's body language to see if he/she is ready and present. Listen for the places that are blocked or hesitant, the places that need to stretch and release. This is the refinement that allows you to really align your energy with another.

BIONIC

P

**THIGH STAND**

- She tucks her feet on his thighs as he squats.
- They clasp hands and in one big pull she is standing on his thighs.

They extend backward, straightening their arms and balancing their weight.

THEY FIND



Communication with the partner is not only what you are doing, but also what you are feeling.

To achieve true union in a relationship is a remarkable thing; no one is leading, no one is following... two become one. Even though most of us long for the union, we also fear it. We may think it means we have to give up ourselves and get helplessly lost in the other. But it's really just the opposite, for the transcendent state of union brings us closer to the place in which we really find ourselves. To find a beloved is a divine blessing indeed.