

# Accepted Manuscript

Yoga, fascia and the second law of thermodynamics

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PII: S1360-8592(18)30068-8

DOI: [10.1016/j.jbmt.2018.02.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbmt.2018.02.002)

Reference: YJBMT 1675

To appear in: *Journal of Bodywork & Movement Therapies*



Please cite this article as: Gracovetsky, S., Yoga, fascia and the second law of thermodynamics, *Journal of Bodywork & Movement Therapies* (2018), doi: 10.1016/j.jbmt.2018.02.002.

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# Yoga, Fascia and the second law of Thermodynamics

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Some 5,000 years ago the Egyptian physician Imhotep wrote the first book of manual medicine - 17 pages known as the Edwin Smith papyrus (J.H Breasted, 1991) describing how to diagnose and treat physical injuries resulting from the hand to hand battles of his time. In so doing, Imhotep crystallized several fundamental concepts:

1. It is not necessary to have the diagnosis and treatment (and that includes his written incantations to the gods which we might call a “placebo effect”) to be logically related to the production of good results to the patient.
2. This remarkably modern thinking has some unfortunate consequences. Good results are often misinterpreted to mean that the diagnosis and/or its underlying philosophy that led to it were correct.
3. Hence good results do not necessarily imply good diagnosis but may induce complacency or self- gratification and hence slow down the urge to investigate what really created the observed good results, including doing nothing in view of the excellent natural recovery of our species.

And so, the freedom to innovate without the burden of a proof resulted in the development of a plethora of treatment philosophies by many visionaries with the best intentions. Yoga is one of these philosophies /approaches which have done a lot of good to countless individuals. Osteopathy, Chiropractic, Physical therapy, Rolfing, and many others, are also rehabilitation methodologies competing for the same clientele, with similar outcomes. Some see Yoga as prophylactic rather than therapeutic, since its advocates commonly speak of prevention, enhanced function etc., rather than the direct form of treatment more specifically targeted by the other manual therapy techniques (Chu 2014).

This created a logistical problem. Since the patient’s pathology does not depend upon the clinicians training, one would expect the treatment to depend upon the pathophysiology alone, something that flies directly against the reality of the existence of several schools of thought, each with its own philosophy, diagnostic and treatment methods. It must be noted that the impact of these plethora of techniques is seen by many as enhancement of self-regulation, or at the limit the removal of obstacles to self-regulation, rather than actually solving the problem.

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