

How to
ROCK *the* **WORLD**



When You
GET ROCKED

Shary Duff

Copyright © 2013 by Shary Duff

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without prior written consent of the author, except as provided by the United States of America copyright law.

Published by Advantage, Charleston, South Carolina.
Member of Advantage Media Group.

ADVANTAGE is a registered trademark and the Advantage colophon is a trademark of Advantage Media Group, Inc.

Printed in the United States of America.

ISBN: 978-159932-280-3

LCCN: 2013934165

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought.



Advantage Media Group is proud to be a part of the Tree Neutral® program. Tree Neutral offsets the number of trees consumed in the production and printing of this book by taking proactive steps such as planting trees in direct proportion to the number of trees used to print books. To learn more about Tree Neutral, please visit www.treeneutral.com. To learn more about Advantage's commitment to being a responsible steward of the environment, please visit www.advantagefamily.com/green

Advantage Media Group is a leading publisher of business, motivation, and self-help authors. Do you have a manuscript or book idea that you would like to have considered for publication? Please visit www.advantagefamily.com or call 1.866.775.1696

Contents

Foreword – 9

Introduction – 11

Lesson 1

Look for Miracles – 25

Lesson 2

Embrace the Energy Around You – 49

Lesson 3

Harness the Power of Karma – 67

Lesson 4

Surrender Your Need for Control – 83

Lesson 5

Choose to Welcome Challenges – 105

Lesson 6

Accept and Embrace the Unknown – 127

Lesson 7

Live Your Own Meaningful Life – 147

Afterword

Harmony, Joy, and Love – 161



Lesson 1

Look for Miracles

*God is not
difficult to find;
in fact, God
is impossible
to avoid, for
there is nowhere
God is not.*

—Unknown

I'm happy just talking about the magic of miracles. I have always been amazed at the constant reminders of God's miracles we see in nature. You can go to the Grand Canyon, look out over that wide expanse, and think, "How could God create that?" You can go to the plains of Africa, look at zebras and giraffes in the wild, and think, "How could all of these amazing creatures be here?" Even when you look in more "ordinary" places, like the beautiful botanical gardens in almost every American city, you see extraordinary works of art. And you think, "How can it be?"

You're witnessing miracles.



The question of how God created all the magnificence around us has fascinated me from the time I was a small child. One day, when I was little, I opened a sand dollar I had picked up on the beach. People say that the sand dollar tells the life of Jesus: The five holes on its surface represent his wounds, and breaking it open reveals five tiny doves inside. How can that be? How did God create a universe in which you can see such a thing when you pick up a shell?

The answer: It's a miracle.

When we look at miracles, including what they are and what they can do, I think it's useful to start with nature's simplicity. However, miracles occur in other places too. Women who attain success in business, women who raise families, and women who share the joys of achievement and creative expression through music and art, make miracles constantly. Childbirth itself is the ultimate miracle: The miracle of bringing a life into being. Miracles happen all the time. We just fail to see them.

*Like the
sandollar, our
days are filled
with unexpected
treasures.*

Think about shooting stars. When we see them on occasion, we say, "Oh! A Shooting star!" And we make a wish, because we've just witnessed a miracle. Yet shooting stars streak across the sky all day long. Too often, we miss them because we don't look—and when we don't look, we don't *see*. Obstacles such as judgment, greed, cynicism, jealousy, and hate blind us to the miracles in



day-to-day living. Removing those obstacles is the only way we're ever going to see our miracles.

*Miracles happen
all the time.
We just fail to
see them.*

As I took the journey of spiritual education and training, I realized all things created in the universe are created with energy, such as a tree, sunshine, or the tides. Everything we see around us is energy. My beautiful experience of writing these words to you is made up of energy. The difference between a butterfly and a tree lies in how their respective energies are expressed. The difference between you or I and the tree or the butterfly lies in our minds and in the connections our minds make in receiving and expressing energy. When our minds absorb energy, we can digest it, and we can think. Thinking is actually a form of energy.

In our everyday lives, most of us don't pay attention to energy, just as we don't see the shooting stars above us. When we begin to recognize all things around us are related to energy, we begin to change the way we think, especially the way we think in the moment. When I first became aware of energy, for example—when I learned to focus and stay in the moment of understanding that energy—the way I saw the world changed utterly. I began to realize the possibility of living in pure joy.

*Every decision I make is a choice
between a grievance and a miracle.*

– Deepak Chopra



One day, I went into a rather exclusive clothing store to buy a new dress. Within minutes of walking in, I became frustrated and disgusted. I ran a store of my own for eighteen years; I understand customer service. Yet I wasn't getting it. I couldn't see what was on sale and what wasn't, and the young woman who was supposed to be assisting me apparently couldn't care less if she waited on me or not. Since it was a very expensive store, I expected an appropriate level of customer service. My thoughts ran something like this: "Oh, for heaven's sake. I'm in a hurry. I just want a nice dress. Does this girl not understand she needs to wait on me? Is she not capable? Is she stupid? Oh, no—is she on her cell phone? She's on her cell phone. Is she too lazy to wait on me? What's the issue?" The whole experience became full of negativity and cynicism.

Now, let's imagine an entirely different experience. Suppose I'm in the same store, with the same girl on her cell phone, but I bring an entirely different energy. When I don't get my customer service, I focus on understanding. I try to realize this young woman probably has her own challenges. Maybe she's had a recent trauma, or maybe she's in college and has tests to take but no time to study. Maybe she doesn't understand how to provide good customer service because no one's really taken the time to teach her. When I look at such a situation with love and kindness, I can see it from a positive angle. I can realize there's no reason I'm not competent enough to pick out my own dress, try it on, and purchase it. That way, I can have a joyous experience. Getting a new dress should be a fun thing to do, and being able to afford it is a gift. Denying myself the full joy of the experience would be denying myself the opportunity to live in pure joy.



Most of us deny ourselves this type of opportunity on a regular basis. At the end of a hectic day, it's easy to say, "Oh my God, my house is a mess. I can't stand it. All I do is work. I don't sleep. I never have time for myself—it's always about everybody else. Why? Why am I stuck in this? I can't get the house clean. I can't make dinner. Nobody eats it anyway. Nobody's even home."

Yet you and I can make a choice—we can choose, instead, to say, "I am blessed to live in a beautiful home. My organizational skills might need to be stronger. Maybe I need to hold myself more accountable, or maybe I need to find someone to help me achieve my goals and complete my tasks. However, in this moment, I am lucky. My family is so busy and talented that we can't possibly all eat at the same time. I am blessed because we have food—and because I can be there as a mother, nurturing, guiding, and loving my children."

When we choose to master our thinking processes, we change the energy of our lives. We begin seeing all things with synchronicity. We see things as they ought to be; we create our own lives. We take responsibility for our own thinking and for the lives we have authored. We become accountable. We see things not as negative or positive, but as they are. Immediately, we remove blame. There is no blame, no anger, and no ego.

*Judgments prevent us from the good
that lies beyond appearances.*

— Wayne Dyer



Ego-based thinking is a serious impediment to living a life of faith—and we don't see miracles when we live without faith. When I refer to a "life of faith," I'm not using religious terms. Instead, I'm referring to believing in who you are, believing in the world around you, and removing your fear. Because the ego is not real, it interferes with belief and feeds fear. While the soul is real, the ego is not: It's just a fictitious creation of the mind. Suppose someone says to me, for example, "I don't like the shoes you have on." When I hear a remark like that, I have a choice. I can use ego-based thinking and take the comment personally. If I do that—if my ego overpowers me—my response is going to be negative. I'm going to fall out of the moment. However, if I make the choice to remove my ego, then I'm free of negativity. Why should I care whether that person likes my shoes or not? (Unless, of course, I've asked that person's opinion.) By dropping my ego, I can stay in the moment. I can keep faith, and I can see my miracles. I can see others and myself through love. Finally, I can see without judgment; I can use *non-judgment*.

While the soul
is real, the ego
is not: It's just a
fictitious creation
of the mind.

Practicing non-judgment is a powerful tool that assists living in a joyful state. Letting go of judgment is hard; in fact, it's still one of my biggest challenges. I'm not the only one to feel this way. I continually see other people's judgments as obstacles in the workplace. My behavior is an example of how women



can be their own worst enemies. Part of our business training includes learning to walk into a room and size everyone up; in other words, we learn to assess and judge. Yet when we start to judge, we fill our heads, minds, and bodies with *ama* (Sanskrit for gunk). If we fill our minds with this gunk, then we miss the miracles. If you're focusing on the young woman across from you who's irritating the living crap out of you—because your boss is giving his attention to *her* for the low-cut blouse she's wearing, rather than to *you* for the late hours you put in to produce that incredible project—then you can't possibly see a miracle.

In other words, when you bring judgment to the moment—when you bring gunk to your mind—you're operating from a place of insecurity and fear. You're blocking your own creativity. What's more, you're pulling in energy that prevents you from manifesting a miracle that could be going on right next to you. Perhaps that miracle is in the form of a very nice man who's thinking he'd like to take you to dinner on Friday to make up for the meal you missed while working last night.



Let's go back to the miracles found in nature: God has set a tremendous example for us. Does a bird judge? No. Does a squirrel judge? No. Does a tree judge? No. Nature does not judge. Nature is the moment.



If you can adapt the tools of nature to your own life, you can walk into a room and see other people without judgment. You can enter a situation and experience it without cynicism. You can step back and watch it, almost as if you were watching a television show, and focus on that moment. If you are faithful to nature's tools, you're not trapped by the past. In other words, you don't dwell on the fact that you spilled coffee earlier or your dog threw up on the rug. You're not distracted by the future. You clear your mind of worries about what you're going to make for supper, whether you'll be able to pick the kids up on time, whether your mate is still angry with you, and so on. Each time, the key to living in a joyful manner comes back to staying in the present.

When you live without judgment, you can experience others, and situations, with unfettered joy. When you don't bring judgment to the conference room, your co-worker in the low-cut blouse doesn't interfere with your positive experience gaining that dinner invitation. When you don't bring judgment to a clothing store, or to a college girl on her cell phone, nothing keeps you from finding a stunning dress. By the end of the week, you may find yourself wearing a stunning dress and having a wonderful dinner, instead of staying at home, fretting about the messy state of your house and life.

*A journey of a thousand miles
must begin with a single step.*

— Lao Tzu



We miss miracles in day-to-day living when we're distracted by cynicism and judgment. We miss miracles when we focus on what's wrong with our lives instead of what's right. For example, my lawsuit situation distressed me, even though it wasn't a situation I had caused or created. During my divorce, however, I made a life choice and took ownership of my decisions. I realized I was causing harm to people I loved. I had to go through life changes, move to a new community, and cope with an entirely new arena of companions and friends. Everything I had found comfort in was changed or was gone. I was in crisis.

As competent and comfortable in our spiritual training and strength as we think we might be, it is still easy to lose confidence in faith when we encounter a crisis. Every single person on the planet deals with crisis differently. What one person sees as a crisis, another may not. The drama we do or don't bring to a crisis is, in essence, the interpretation of how our minds process the experience. During my divorce, my mind processed events in a state of total chaos and fear.

In times of great sadness, it can be incredibly hard to see light and goodness. While I was divorcing my husband, I was so overwhelmed by sadness and stress I wasn't able to feel pleasure: I couldn't sing or meditate, two practices that bring me great joy. This was an awful mental place to be. I didn't want to stay in that mindset. I was acutely aware of my overwhelming sadness, but it was so big, black, and ugly. Moving out of it seemed like an enormous struggle.



In my unhappiness, simple tasks became almost impossible. My memory had always been great, but during that time I couldn't remember anything. I locked myself out of my car and house repeatedly. I struggled to make decisions, even though I'm typically a decisive person. Yet once my crisis hit, I couldn't put together an outfit or pick out furniture for my home. And I had spent years doing both of those things for a living. I pulled away from the people I loved the most, and then became incredibly angry with myself. I couldn't create any goodness for anyone else, and I certainly couldn't create it for myself. I just stopped. It was as though a big stone wall had been placed in front of me, and I'd hit it.

Guess what? When we experience great change and loss in our lives, this overwhelming sadness happens. Any catastrophic life change (including serious illness, a loved one's death, or divorce) can create this kind of behavior, which simply shuts us down. Our bodies are armed with an automatic stress response. Western medicine sometimes describes this response as "fight, flight, or freeze." This response is a natural instinct: It's a system built into our brains. When faced with a threat, we can go into battle mode and "fight," or we can run from the stimulus and take "flight." Both of these responses are designed to protect our survival: either one helps us deal with a potential threat. However, when a threat is so overwhelming that neither fight or flight is possible, the freeze response kicks in. In such cases, we're so overwhelmed by our fear we simply stop in our tracks. Fear traps us in anxiety; it stops all things. From a spiritual perspective, when we're ruled by fear-based thoughts, we're disconnected from our souls.



That's what happened to me: I was too stressed to fight or fly, so I froze. My frozen, constant stress and fear sabotaged more than my thoughts and emotions. This emotional state wreaked havoc on my body, as I discussed above. My heart rate raced, my blood

pressure spiked, and my immune system plummeted; I contracted severe diverticulitis; and I experienced five outbreaks of shingles within two years. As my health deteriorated, so did my connection with God and the universe. I had broken down in my mind and body, and I was a distant stranger to my soul.

Women operate through the soul daily; we see this in the non-judgmental ways we nurture and love our children, spouses, and friends.

When we are in crisis, we accumulate emotional poison and experience its toxic symptoms, including cynicism, depression, irritability, lack of passion or excitement, and overreaction to everyday challenges. I felt all of these toxins, and they made me sick. Only when I began to observe life from a spiritual perspective was I able to truly let go and see the wisdom of actually

giving up ego and judgment. By leading from my soul, I finally began to feel calm. I begin to heal.

I have seen many examples of this practice of leading from the soul. It's not a mysterious or foreign concept. Women operate through the soul daily; we see this in the non-judgmental ways we nurture and love our children, spouses, and friends. Please, when



When we choose to master our thinking processes, we change the energy of our lives. We begin seeing all things with synchronicity. We see things as they ought to be; we create our own lives. We take responsibility for our own thinking and for the lives we have authored.



you become aware someone has had a great change in his or her life, reach out. Send a loving card or just let that person know you are there. The few friends who made such an effort for me became my lifeline when I was low. They helped me see the best way to nurture my relationships and restore my universal connections was to nurture *myself*—and they gave me the strength to begin my process of healing.

My first spiritual challenge in starting this process was being alone after my divorce. For the first time in my life, I had an abundance of extra alone time, but I really didn't enjoy it. In fact, I was afraid of it. I had gone from high school directly into my marriage; there, other people constantly surrounded me, and I was always cooking and entertaining. My store was an active community social center, and I reveled in the company it provided. I did not want to be alone.

The answer to my fear of being alone turned out to be faith: I had to saturate myself in faith by surrounding myself with loving, positive thoughts and trusting in an energy I knew existed, even though it was something I couldn't prove or see.

My saturation took the form of daily positive meditating, prayer, and self-talk. I must share that immersing myself in the process was difficult at first: I had trouble focusing, and sometimes I cried. When that happened, I reminded myself not to use judgment or blame and not to fall prey to frustration. I had to remember that the more I meditated and prayed, the easier it would become.





Often, during this period, I meditated for several hours a day. I immersed myself in pools of white light and love, calling upon my angels and spiritual guides to reinforce my knowledge that I was not alone. I asked them to nurture me in love so I could begin to nurture the people around me again. I gained tremendous comfort from God's messengers, and, with their help, my anxiety eased. Each morning, when I woke up, I said to myself, "I believe. Help me be aware and look for miracles today. I place this day, my loved ones, and my life in the hands of the greatness of God's creativity." I also used my mantras:

- ☉ Remove negative talk and thoughts.
- ☉ Don't criticize, condemn, or complain.
- ☉ Practice non-judgment and forgiveness.
- ☉ Remove emotional poison.
- ☉ Think kind thoughts and have a generous heart.
- ☉ Know I am in partnership with the Universe and Jesus. He is with me always.



Almost immediately, my anxiety lessened, and I noticed improvements in both my physical and mental health. By practicing my faith, I was able to see the sunshine again and realize why I'd been

By practicing my faith, I was able to see the sunshine again and realize why I'd been living under such a cloud.

living under such a cloud. I realized why the wonderful experiences in my life, which had once brought me so much pleasure and fulfillment, were now bringing me pain and disappointment.

Since I was a small child, I had been conditioned to seek happiness *outside* of myself. I'd come to define myself through my community position and my possessions. As a result of these attachments, I destined myself to experience disappointment and anxiety. I couldn't be alone. However, when I removed my dependence on people, situations, and objects, I began to enjoy my solo time. At first, I couldn't believe I really enjoyed being by myself...

thinking... becoming immersed in nature, music, and divine energy. But I did.

Finally, I had begun to overcome my obstacles. With the gradual shift of my inner perspective, my own personal miracle occurred: When I was able to see through my soul, I saw I was never alone.



Transformation Tool: Meditation

Meditation is one of the most amazing processes I have discovered for cleansing the mind and the body of *ama* (gunk, like judgment and ego, that interferes with our ability to see miracles), and for enabling seeing from the soul. When you practice meditation, your anxiety melts. You don't need a Xanax, and you don't need a drink, because you've got something that's more powerful: A connection with your soul. The capacity to connect with one's soul through meditation is something within each of us. Many people have said to me, "I can't meditate." Yet they can. Meditation is something everyone can do. Everyone can meditate. All it takes is practice, and at the beginning, some patience with yourself, which is something we'd all do well to cultivate.

Initially, I trained in a form of mantra meditation that uses Sanskrit, the beautiful, 4,000-year-old language from India in which much meditation (and all yoga) is rooted. However, you don't have to use a foreign language. For practical purposes, you can use an English mantra. When you create a mantra, select a short phrase that's positive, loving, and productive. Choose something like: "My day will be beautiful."

Now, file that phrase away for a while. First, we're going to focus on silence. Find yourself a quiet space, somewhere you can be comfortable connecting with your silence. Once you reach that place, enter into your silence. Connect with it, savor it, and learn to enjoy it. At first, that may be a hard thing to do—at least,



it was for me. But now, just enjoying the silence is one of my favorite things to do.

If you cannot quiet your mind, I suggest practicing guided meditation along with one of the widely available meditation CDs. Most author-speakers help listeners quiet the mind through suggestion, eventually teaching meditation techniques without anxiety or other thoughts interrupting.

According to ancient Indian teachings, we are multifaceted human beings. Becoming connected with our mental, physical, and spiritual dimensions enables us to live with more balance and creativity. We have physical bodies comprised of matter and energy: The key to keeping those bodies healthy is making conscious choices to eliminate toxicity and maximize nourishment. Meditation helps us make better choices because it gives us the ability to hear our bodies' needs.

In addition, meditation nourishes both the subtle body and the casual body. The subtle body includes thoughts, desires, and emotions (simply put, our intellect). When our emotions and lines of communication are turbulent, we can become overwhelmed. Meditation helps us reduce this disruptive mental and emotional turbulence. In turn, the casual body is the underlying field of unconsciousness, or our soul. Seeing life through the soul helps in making choices that can bring greater fulfillment.

We spend most of our lives looking outward, believing that the sources of happiness and peace are external. Yet during medita-



tion, we find a source of happiness and peace *within*. We expand our internal reference points from the outside world to the inner soul, thereby expanding our awareness. Meditation is not about forcing the mind to be quiet; it is a process by which the quietness already in the mind is rediscovered. Behind internal self-talk is the silence of pure awareness, a silence undisturbed by thoughts of the past or the future. The silence we experience in meditation is “the gap” between our thoughts. In the gap, you take glimpses of the quiet and expand connections with the soul.

People say, “Where attention goes, energy flows.” In meditation, you begin by turning your attention to focus on your breathing. Start to take slow, deep, and even breaths; concentrate on the feeling of inhaling, then exhaling.

You’ll know you’ve mastered the meditative breathing technique of *pranayama*, which translates as “extension of the life force,” when your heart slows and you feel a profound level of relaxation throughout your body. Once that happens (and it may take a few meditation sessions), you will be ready to introduce your intention. Use your mantra. Here, we’ll use, “My day will be beautiful.” Say the mantra in your mind, slowly and rhythmically,

Meditation is not about forcing the mind to be quiet; it is a process by which the quietness already in the mind is rediscovered.



keeping the words in sync with your breathing. Then repeat your mantra over and over again.

When you first begin to practice meditation, you're going to have thoughts that interfere—sometimes hundreds, if not thousands, in each moment. When this interference happens, don't feel as though you've failed. It's part of the process. With practice, this “monkey chatter” will quiet over time. As you continue with your self-taught meditation lessons, the chatter will leave altogether. Your intention and your energy will become more intense.

A few meditation basics:

- ☸ Try to meditate in a quiet area, one that's free of disturbance. Don't try meditation during any activity.
- ☸ Always meditate sitting up. Lying down is associated with going to sleep. Sit in whatever position you find comfortable, so your attention is not drawn to your body's discomfort.
- ☸ Always close your eyes when meditating.
- ☸ Don't try to meditate for hours on end. I have found that thirty minutes, twice a day, works best for me.
- ☸ My personal preference is to use a mantra.



My instructors taught me to use mantra meditations by repeating a mantra of my choosing over and over in my mind. Choose a mantra for yourself that's short and affirmative (for example, "God has blessed me; allow me to bless others") and do the same. Repeat your mantra slowly, over and over again, as you breathe slowly and deeply, over and over.

Be patient as you practice. Remember, when you first attempt meditation, your mind may be turbulent and your body may feel restless. As you begin breathing and focusing on your mantra(s), your mind will settle and your body will feel relaxed. If you start to become restless, return your focus to your deep breathing and your mantra. Relinquish judgment, anticipation, and resistance. If you are patient with yourself, the peace will come.



Transformation Tool: Yoga

In general, I really don't like exercise; however, I adore yoga. Yoga is a magnificent bodybuilding science, but it's more than simply a form of exercise. It's a lifestyle. A way of life.

In addition to being a way of life, yoga is a philosophy and a science. It is a philosophy of honoring your body, and respecting others with kindness and love. The word *yoga* comes from

Yoga is a magnificent bodybuilding science, but it's more than simply a form of exercise. It's a lifestyle. A way of life.

Sanskrit. This word relates to the English word *yoke*; it means "to unite." Anyone can practice yoga. Its physical and mental health benefits are helpful to young and old alike. Plus, yoga is not a religion, so people of all faiths can practice it. (Traditionally, there are four forms of yoga: gyan, bhakti, karma, and raja. I focus on raja, or meditation yoga. Raja yoga helps you practice other forms of yoga with greater ease.)

The daily practice of yoga is almost a miracle within itself. Yoga is a harmonious union with spirit, mind, and body. Through my yoga practice, I realize heightened physical and spiritual well-being. When I practice yoga, the pain and

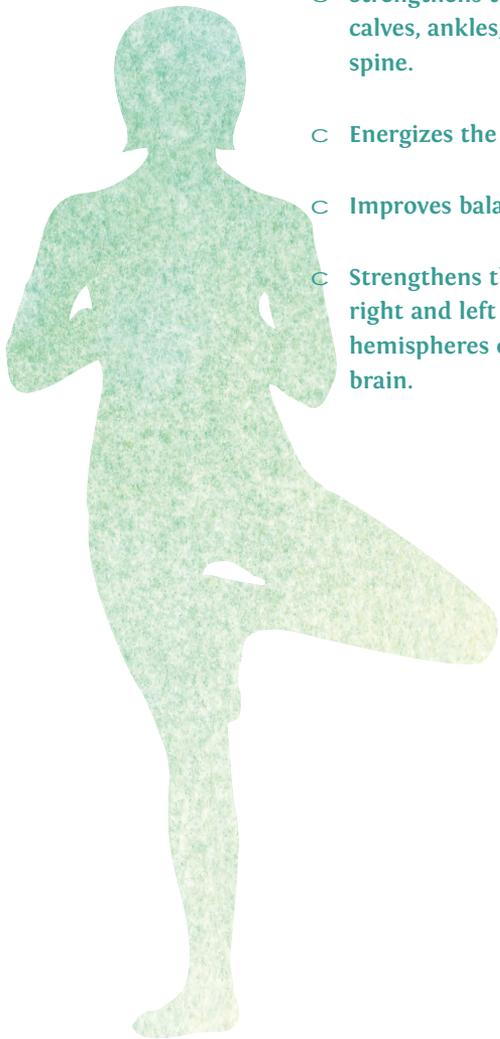
symptoms of my diverticulitis subside. I experience new awareness and inspiration, as well as a much larger mental capacity. My desires become one with the desires of nature.



I love the creativity of the process involved in doing yoga poses. I love the way yoga develops the mind and soul. I love the *asanas'* flowing movements; the cleansing sensations of slow, deep breathing; and the feeling I get as stress and judgment leave my body. In yoga, I find an island of sense and calmness, even when the world around me seems in total chaos. I also love the way yoga develops the body. Over the years, I have had many great yoga mentors and teachers who were in their late sixties and seventies. All of them had beautiful bodies. What a wonderful side effect of spiritual practice.



Yoga Exercise: *The Tree Pose*



Benefits:

- **Strengthens thighs, calves, ankles, and spine.**
- **Energizes the body.**
- **Improves balance.**
- **Strengthens the right and left hemispheres of the brain.**

To perform the pose:

Start in a standing position. Close your eyes and become aware of your own natural balance. Then open your eyes and find a spot in front of you, at about eye level, to focus on. Keep your eyes fixed on this spot throughout the exercise.

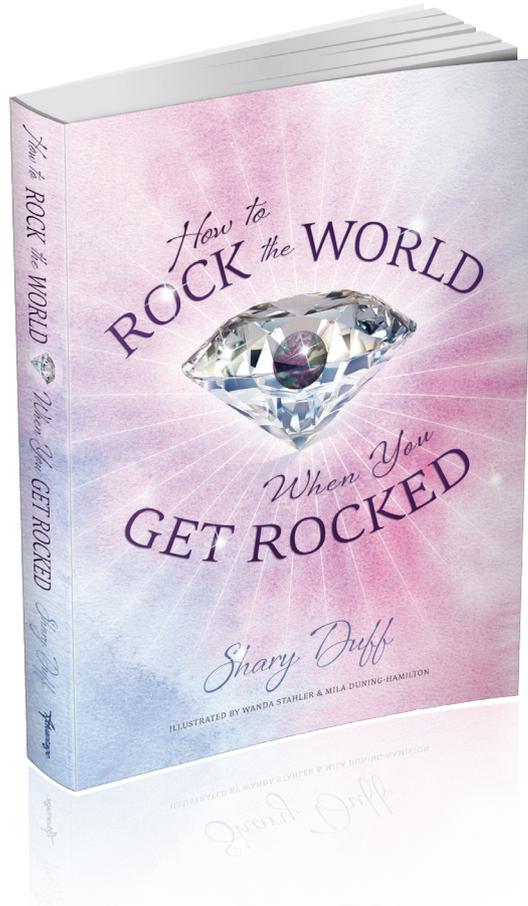
Shift your body weight to your right foot and lift the sole of your left foot to the inside of your right thigh. As you move your left leg, turn your left knee outward. Gently press the sole of your left foot into your right thigh. This pressure will assist you in keeping your balance.

Bring your palms together so your hands are centered at heart level (a movement known as “hands-to-heart”). Hold this position, focusing on your set point. Feel yourself breathing steadily in and out. Continue until you can easily maintain your balance. Slowly lower your right leg to the floor and return to your standing position.

Repeat to the other side.



*If you have enjoyed the
first chapter of the book and would like to
purchase the entire book*



Please go to Amazon.com

Buy Now
at **amazon.com.**