

How to Best Unite Body, Mind, and Spirit
By Edward L. Powe 2018

Before responding to the title of this brief essay, it would be best to explain what we mean by "body", "mind" and "spirit".

According to google, "body" is defined as: "the physical structure of a person or an animal, including the bones, flesh, and organs [this includes the brain]." The 11 organ systems of the body, as indicated by google, are the integumentary, muscular, skeletal, nervous, circulatory, lymphatic, respiratory, endocrine, urinary/excretory, reproductive, and digestive. Although each of these 11 organ systems has a unique function, each organ system also depends, directly or indirectly, on all the others. Moreover, it is very important to insure the proper functioning of these systems by staying in good health and keeping the body fit. This can be accomplished by proper exercise, diet and righteous living and is diametrically opposed to some of the well-known self-torture (ascetic) systems of India believed necessary for gaining knowledge of the self.

Mind is defined in the google search as "a set of cognitive faculties including consciousness, perception, thinking, judgement, language and memory and is usually defined as the faculty of an individual's thoughts and consciousness." The **brain** (again according to google) is part of the visible, tangible world of the body. Whereas the **mind** is part of the invisible, transcendent world of thought, feeling, attitude, belief and imagination. The **brain** is the physical organ most associated with **mind** and consciousness, but the **mind** is not confined to the **brain**.

Finally, a google search for "spirit" yields the following primary result: "the nonphysical part of a person that is the seat of emotions and character; the soul....we seek a harmony between body and spirit".

Let us now return to the question "How to best unite body, mind, and spirit and why this this union in desirable. Without the union of body and mind a human organism cannot function properly, and without the union of spirit to body and mind one has no lofty raison d'etre (i.e. reason for existence).

According to the "Upanishads"(Hindu sacred text) an individual can be compared to a horse-pulled chariot where the "soul" Is the master of the apparatus, "the body" is the chariot itself, the intellect is the charioteer, and the

mind is the reins. Moreover, the senses are the horses and the roads are the sense objects. The wise call the “soul” the enjoyer when it is united with the body, the senses and the mind.

According to [Meditation & Spiritual Life](#), pg. 112 “When we look within our chariot and see what the team-mates are doing, we will be shocked. We find that the soul is drunk; intellect, the charioteer, has fallen unconscious; the reins, the mind, have become slack; the horses, the senses, are running wild, and a great disaster awaits the chariot, the horses, and their master, unless something is done right away to bring about a new order. Our teacher tells us that owing to ignorance, our soul, the master of the chariot, has identified himself too much with the intellect, the mind, the senses and the body. He considers himself to be the enjoyer. He has forgotten his true nature.”

I believe the best way to sober the soul and develop and unite the body, mind, and spirit is through the serious practice of Capoeira de Angola, umlabalaba, and cosmic combat yoga.

Capoeira (the body developer par excellence) is an African martial art that has over the years been preserved and further developed in Brazil. This martial art not only helps promote flexibility and strength of the body but also allows the mind to control even the slightest body movements because of the necessity of making the body (and mind) synchronize with the rhythm played by accompanying musical instruments. Indeed, not only is the mind and body brought into harmony, but the art also serves as an excellent way to defend one's self from an aggressor. I was able to save myself from severe injury (and possibly death) by employing it on at least two occasions. Thus, Capoeira de Angola not only develops the body but also promotes a firm union with the mind and spirit.

Mind encompasses the ability to solve problems through cognitive processes and it is known that cognitive skills can be sharpened by solving jig-saw, puzzles, and playing mind games such as international chess and go. The game par-excellence, however, for developing cognitive skills is "umlabalaba", a Zulu board game from South Africa, which is superior to chess for many reasons (for which see [Chess vs Zulu Chess](#)). Moreover (unlike chess) it unites spirit and mind through positing a relationship between the objective of the game and the goal off life (for which see [Umlabalaba and the Meaning of Life](#)).

Finally we come to “spirit”. How does one best “develop” or perhaps better “reveal” the “spirit” on us. The best way, to my mind, to do this is by becoming a “cosmic combat warrior” which is the adoption of a system consisting of 24 principles comprised of the 8 roads of the “middle path” of Buddhism, the 8 limbs of Ashtanga yoga, and the 8 dark principles of the universe described in detail in my “Cosmic Combat Yoga” publication.

This path has led all of its adherents not only to good health, peace of mind, and visions of longevity, but also has infused them with a burning desire to help others.

Let me invite you forthwith to embark upon the path. Should you accept my invitation to become a cosmic combat warrior, the following procedure is recommended: 1) declare yourself an aspirant to warrior-hood; 2) change your bad habits to good ones by observing *yama* and *niyama*; 3) take care as to what you eat and drink; 4) get proper sleep; 5) take proper care of your eyes; 6) read appropriate books; 7) learn and practice the *yogasanas* as your body permits; 8) learn and practice *pranayama* breath control exercises; 9) learn and practice concentration and meditation; 10) strive for self-realization; and 11) after attaining complete understanding, help others realize their full potential as you have.

These are not only my recommendations but also as stated on page 25 of *Health Peace & Longevity Through Yoga*: “guidelines given by the great Siddhars and Rishis ... to attain self-realization and best serve god and humanity as well.

If you have any questions about the contents of this essay, please feel free to contact me at:

Edpowe1@hotmail.com