

# 20 Attributes Exam

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The 20 Attributes Exam is meant not to diagnose you or your constitution, or *dosha*, in Ayurvedic medicine. Rather, it is meant to help you delineate what things in your life are causing you harm or preventing you from realizing your best health. Circle which characteristic best suits you (i.e. cold or hot, etc.) based on how you have felt in the last week. Then, write down what circumstances in your life make you feel or answer that way

### Are you?

#### Yin/Yang

#### Circumstances in life that make you answer/feel that way

Cold/hot

\_\_\_\_\_

Heavy/light

\_\_\_\_\_

Dense/flowing

\_\_\_\_\_

Dull/sharp

\_\_\_\_\_

Smooth/rough

\_\_\_\_\_

Wet/dry

\_\_\_\_\_

Gross/subtle

\_\_\_\_\_

Static/mobile

\_\_\_\_\_

Soft/hard

\_\_\_\_\_

Cloud/clear

\_\_\_\_\_

After completing the Attributes test, identify the top 3 characteristics which you feel are responsible for most GREATLY imbalancing your health or life. Then, make a list of no more than 3 ways that you can dedicate yourself to positive change, thus eliminating the negative effect that the characteristic has on you.

### Top Three Attributes Three Positive Things You Can Do To Change the Circumstance

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

In addition, taking the Attributes test gives you have the power to choose the right yoga class for your needs. Here are some common attributes women have circled in relationship to going through menopause:

### For example:

- If you circled “hot” as an attribute, then attending yoga on the beach, or in a warm climate outdoors or indoors (i.e. hot or Bikram yoga) will not be best suited to your constitution.
- If you circled “heavy” as an attribute due to weight concerns, then going to a yoga class where only restorative yoga postures (passive) are practiced is not going to help you in weight management.

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- If you circled “dense” as an attribute, then going to a yoga class where the postures are held for long durations, instead of in flowing sequences, might not fit you best.
- If you circled “dull” as an attribute, then seek out a yoga class with flowing movement and combined breath awareness and practice – such as sun breath, which stimulates the left hemisphere and intellectual thinking.
- If you circled “rough” as an attribute, then seek out a yoga class which teaches self-massage, or Marma massage. I use Marma massage with all of my menopausal women, and recommend specific essential oils and massage oils for them to use in their daily routine to counteract the “rough” attribute that typically occurs in menopause.
- If you circled “dry” as an attribute, then choose nurturing yoga, which includes Ayurvedic practices such as Marma oil massage, essential oil baths, and elemental therapies which generally focus on the earth and water elements (the opposite elements of the menopausal condition).
- If you circled “gross” as an attribute, then you may benefit from adding an intellectual body or spiritual component to your yoga practice –which would include inspirational readings, journaling, self-reflection, and other proven ways (there is much research to support the effectiveness of self-reflection in learning) to improve cognition, memory, mental clarity, and your ability to retain information and learn.
- If you circled “static” or “cloudy” as an attribute, it can be generally tied to feelings of lethargy, depression, mental fatigue, or fog. Yoga activities do not just happen on the mat – your practice of postures, breathing, and meditation are supposed to help you find more clarity and motivation off the mat too. Look for a yoga class or teacher who can help you identify the reasons for your static, gross, or cloudy condition. I have used many methods for helping women through this – including color therapy in their home, office, or clothing, aromatherapy, yoga postures, breathing, culinary/herbal therapy, social support building, and meditation.
- If you circled “soft” as an attribute, and many women do – it could be arising from feelings of mental or physical activity decline or the feeling of inadequacy secondary to continued pressure from society for women to “do it all” as caregivers and businesswomen. The pressure to “have it all and do it all” is a universal problem. Although society gives “lip service” to women for being mothers and businesswomen, oppression still persists through gender stereotyping and discrimination, pay gaps, and lack of support and/or low pay for those caring for the young or sick.  
Remember, yoga was not originally created for women by women. It was created through a patriarchal system that is still very much in place today. Oppression of women still exists – in India and America.  
There is no system of yoga created by women, for women. But I am striving hard to change that through the creation of Professional Yoga Therapy, a form of

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medical yoga practiced by licensed medical professionals that caters to the specific needs of the individual. There are also other yoga classes taught by women who can accommodate your individual needs. It is important to stress that it is very important to work with your health care provider to find the right yoga class for you.