

HINTS FOR HOME PRACTICE

Yoga is like everything else, the more you put into it, the more you will get out of it. Obviously you need to attend classes to learn how to practice yoga, but always remember your own personal practice is quite different from a class situation. Below are a few hints to help you establish a regular practice.

- ॐ Look at your daily routine and work out the best time for you to commit to your practice. It is no good trying to commit yourself to a morning practice if you are a late riser and that is the busiest time in your household. Traditionally yoga is practiced first thing in the morning, but often our lifestyles do not allow for us to do this
- ॐ Be flexible. If you can manage some morning and some late afternoon practices that's fine. Don't feel you have to practice at the same time every day, although this is the ideal.
- ॐ If possible set up a space in your home to practice, leaving your mat and other equipment in that area. This works well for two reasons. Firstly you don't have to look for and put out your equipment each time you decide to do some yoga. Secondly this area becomes a special and sacred place for you to spend time just for yourself.
- ॐ Practice in a quiet place of moderate temperature. Turn off the TV, radio, telephones and any other distraction. Your family and friends will soon respect that this is your time of the day.
- ॐ Keep your commitment to practice manageable. It is better to consistently practice for a few minutes each day than to do a marathon two or three hour practice one day and then nothing for the rest of the week. Students regularly ask me "how long and how often should I practice?" You have to work that out for yourself, according to your life. Start modestly, resolving to practice for a few minutes each day, for say two weeks. Then at the end of that time re-evaluate your commitment. As you practice more, attend more classes and become aware of the benefits of yoga, you will look forward to your practice.
- ॐ Don't get caught up in feelings of guilt, inadequacy, or other negative thought patterns if you miss your practice session. This is counter-productive and missing practice sessions is inevitable. Sometimes life just gets in the way of our best intentions.
- ॐ The most asked question about practice is "what do I practice? I can't remember what we did in class, or the sequencing. I'm worried I'll do something wrong". When you get home from class write down as much as you can remember from that class. You will soon have a repertoire of classes to refer to. Buy a basic book on Iyengar yoga with some suggested practice routines outlined in it. The more classes you attend, the more you will remember. Trust yourself and your body.
- ॐ Don't forget "mini-yoga" – the stretches that you can do throughout the day – twists in your office chair, stretches off the kitchen bench, observation of your posture and breath in the supermarket queue.
- ॐ Always finish your practice with relaxation (Savasana).

The harmony and balance created in your being (physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually) during the practice of yoga will stay with you during your day.

