



### **Suggestions for Yoga Practice:**

- Wear comfortable, loose fitting clothing (*cotton clothing allows the skin to breathe*). You may find that removing watches and jewelry make for a more comfortable practice. Bare feet are best. You will want to consider that your body will heat up during the physical movement practice, and when you stop to relax or meditate at the end your body will cool down. You may want extra clothes for the end of class (*blankets are available*).
- Practice with a light stomach and an open mind. Practice may be done one hour after a light meal and two hours after a heavy meal.
- Be patient while practicing asanas. Movements should be slow, smooth and deliberate. Yoga doesn't hurt. It is only as difficult as you make it. Yoga is meant to connect (*yug = yoke = yoga*) us to our body. Do not push your body beyond its limits. One rule – always be comfortable and discover the way your body likes to move and what your body requires in movement. If you do not like an exercise or something feels uncomfortable, stop and listen to your body. We want to relieve stress and tension, not build more.
- Practice each posture to the best of your ability – take care not to overstretch.
- Avoid holding the breath. Breathe smoothly and continuously throughout the practice. Inhale and exhale through the nose, not the mouth. Your breath can be a reference of how deep to go in a posture. If your breath gets ragged or strained, you are probably working too hard.
- Practice staying present. Your mind will wander, when it does, simply observe the distraction, and bring your attention back to what you're doing.
- Yoga is an individual experience, not a competition. Be sensitive to your own limitations and progress at your own pace. Be kind to yourself, and do not compare yourself to anyone else!
- How do I know if I'm doing it right? (*How does it feel?*)
- Allow your emotions to flow. You will find as you dive deeper into your practice, some postures will release deep rooted emotions. It is important to let these emotions flow and not try to hold them in.
- Try to practice daily. Practice your yoga beyond the classroom walls. Let these guidelines and practices extend to your life on and off the yoga mat. It's not about how much you know, but using what we know in a safe and effective way. A little practice is better than none.
- Yoga can be a tiny part of your life, or you could choose to incorporate the theories, rituals, postures, diet and philosophies of yoga into every aspect of your life. The beauty of yoga lies in its versatility allowing practitioners to creatively adapt their focus on the physical, psychological, spiritual, or a combination of the three, as each one sees fit.