



Catalyst Yogi

bringing the cave to you

The Safe Practice of Kundalini Yoga

Sat Nam, Welcome to Kundalini Yoga !

Here are the answers to frequently asked questions:

Is it safe to work with kundalini energy?

There is a lot of mystique, misinformation and urban myth about kundalini energy. Kundalini is energy that flows upward from the base of the spine. It is your life force and it is always flowing to some degree.

Kundalini Yoga, as taught by Yogi Bhanan, is an ancient technology that supports the safe and gradual release of this life force energy. The kriyas (yoga sets) and meditations have been practiced for thousands of years to heal the physical and energetic systems of the body.

People that report dramatic or uncomfortable kundalini releases are typically using visualization and breathing methods NOT taught by a certified teacher of Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhanan.

for more information visit: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USsEcP_NfsQ

Can I use Kundalini Yoga to heal myself?

Yes. Kundalini Yoga (KY) enhances the flow of your body's natural healing energy. KY is different from other forms of yoga in its approach to healing. Most forms of yoga practiced in the Western world, heal the physical body by working directly on the physical body through the perfection of postures.

KY teaches that the physical body is only one of ten yogic bodies. The physical body is simply the result of what is going on in the other nine bodies. By healing the other yogic bodies, the physical body naturally moves toward balance and health.

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Is Kundalini Yoga safe for someone with a serious illness?

If you are dealing with a serious medical condition approach your practice with extra care. Inform the teacher and ask for guidance. Most importantly, listen to the messages of your body and when in doubt, sit it out.

KY has a powerful and immediate detoxifying effect. Toxins in your body (including chemical therapies or street drugs) will be cleansed faster. If, as a result, you feel dizzy or nauseous, simply slow down, breathe deeply and drink water.

Remember, with Kundalini Yoga, the order of importance for your practice is:

- 1) breath
- 2) bhandas (body locks like root lock)
- 3) dristi (placement of the eyes)
- 4) posture

Therefore, sitting in the class and working breath, bhandas and dristi will bring tremendous healing energy to you even if you do NOTHING else. Never hesitate to come to class to sit, breathe and merge with the group consciousness.

What if I feel pain?

There actually can be good pain in Kundalini Yoga. Your job is to know the difference. Many of the postures in KY cause system adjustments or clear energetic blocks in the body. This can often be experienced as shaking, pain, burning or heaviness. While these can feel very intense during the posture, the sensation is gone as soon as the posture is released and you can feel energy moving freely through your body.

A great example is a posture that requires you to hold your arms up parallel to the floor for five minutes. Most people will experience intense shaking, pain, burning, sweating and heaviness and there is absolutely no risk of injury (unless you have some strange shoulder problem). This posture is adjusting the nervous system. The moment the arms are released the pain is gone and a surge of energy is felt. This is what we call a "keep up" experience.

What if I have an injury?

The most common cause of injury in yoga class is ego. This means doing postures that you know you shouldn't do because you want to look good to others. Do you have an acute injury that is causing you pain when doing normal, daily activities? If yes, come to class and use this time to breathe and meditate and to focus on your intention to heal. Do not participate in any postures that will aggravate your injury. If necessary, lie on your back or side for the entire class.

Do you have an old injury that sometimes flares up?

The most common of these would be back or knee pain. Go slowly with any postures that might trigger an old injury. For back pain this includes any type of forward bend. Ask for modifications. Don't push it. You need to learn what your body can handle and give it a chance to become stronger. Start with less and work your way up to full participation.

There are two types of pain that are never good: knee and neck. If you feel pain in either of these areas – immediately stop what you are doing and breathe long and deep. Pain in the hips is common and not a problem. These are large joints that need a bit of discomfort to loosen up.

What if I have pain, fatigue or emotion after class?

The Grinch said it best when, as his cold heart opened, he agonized, "Help, I'm having a feeling!".

Kundalini Yoga changes people. That's what makes it so powerful and that's why you love it. During the process of change – you might have a feeling. Welcome it as a sign of transformation.

Don't indulge or obsess – but accept and allow whatever is.

If you feel agitated or sad after class, remember that emotion is energy in motion (emotion). Help this energy move efficiently by drinking lots of water, breath deeply, go for a walk or listen to soothing music.

If your body feels fatigued and your mind fuzzy you are having what we sometimes refer to as an 'energy hangover'. You may have an excess of toxins that are still being eliminated. Take the same steps as you would for emotional self-care: water, breath, movement.

Having a **sadhana (daily practice)** is the best remedy. Taking time every day – preferably before doing anything else – to connect with yourself is the best thing you can do to stay stable and steady during times of change. Your sadhana can be meditation, prayer, yoga, exercise, dancing, journaling...anything. What matters is that you do it everyday.

Menstruation, Menopause and Pregnancy

During the heaviest part of your menstruation your focus should be more internal and meditative.

This is a time for resting and self-care. Use long, deep breathing instead of breath of fire. Do not use root lock or pump the navel point. Avoid inverted postures (like shoulder stand), strenuous leg lifts and back bends (like camel and bow).

During menopause, breath of fire may be too heating. If this is the case, replace with long deep breathing.

During pregnancy follow these important guidelines after the first trimester:

- do not over exert yourself
- twisting needs to be slow and gentle
- no fast or jerking movements
- no navel pumping or breath of fire
- do not practice baby pose or inverted postures
- only hold the breath as long as comfortable
- avoid forward bends after 35 weeks
- listen intently to the messages of your body and relax

You are most welcome to email:

peace@CatalystYogi.com with any specific concerns.