



Common Yoga Misconceptions

Yoga and religion

Some believe that yoga is a religion that requires new age beliefs and mystical practices. Actually...

1. Yoga is not a religion, yet it is a philosophy that is compatible with all religions.
2. Yoga pre-dates Hinduism.
3. Yoga is a discipline of poses matched with breath to help bring a sense of unity to the whole self — body, mind, and spirit. Its benefits have scientific backing.
4. Some yoga teachers use the Sanskrit language while naming poses. Sanskrit is an ancient Indian language and has no religious ties.
 - a. 'Yoga' translates to 'to yoke' — meaning to yoke together the whole being: body, mind, and spirit.
5. Meditation is not a religious act — although it *can* be a form of prayer to the Higher Power that *you* serve. It's all up to the individual.
6. "Namaste" is a common greeting and closing in a yoga practice. It is a Sanskrit word that translates as "God that lives in me recognizes God that lives in you." It is a gesture to show love, respect, and an acknowledgment of a Higher Power.
7. "Om" is a sound or mantra that is often used in yogic practice, but is not required in order to practice yoga. It is difficult to directly translate, and is not tied to just one religion or region; however, some translate it as "original sound". Beyond any meaning, the vibrations that the sound creates help to relax the nervous system and bring a sense of calm to body, mind, and spirit.

The 'westernized' image of yoga

There are also misconceptions of the 'westernized' image of yoga. Please consider these.

1. Yoga pants are **not** required. Just dress comfortably.
2. Yoga is not reserved for only the fit and thin. It is accessible to *everyone*. And everyone can benefit.
3. Yoga students don't have to hold similar beliefs, tastes, and opinions. Again — it's available to everyone, and everyone is invited to stay true to themselves.

Here at Higher Power Health & Yoga, we never ask you to take part in anything that makes you uncomfortable. We want your experience to be helpful and enjoyable.

Namaste
Michelle