

Home of the Appendix-Free Studio Owner

Studio Announcements

July 2nd/3rd

SCE has planned to shut off the power on July 2nd. We will not hold the 8pm class that night or the 6am class on July 3rd.

July 4th

We will have one class at 8:30am.

July 9th

We will be open July 9th. In the past, this was the only day of the year that we closed, (to honor the passing of Bikram's guru, Bishnu Charan Ghosh). We will donate the average proceeds from one day's income from the school to the Ghosh's College Trust Fund. For more info, read below.

Posture Highlight: Locust--Salabasana



"Locust continues the idea from Cobra if you want to make the spine stronger, you first have to make it longer."

Locust is our second posture in the spine-strengthening series, right after cobra, but most of beginners think of it as elbow-killing posture. Locust continues the idea from Cobra

Yogi Q&A: Nick Peukpiboon



Name: Nick Peukpiboon

Age: 36

Occupation: Industrial real estate broker

Home: Pasadena

Been doing Bikram Yoga since: June 2006.

How many times a week do you practice?

Five or six times per week when I'm not traveling.

What inspired you to start Bikram Yoga?

I used to run marathons and after I finished I'd have all these aches and pains, especially on my right ankle, which I can still see is a little off even now in Awkward pose. But yoga helped me to recover.

Why Bikram Yoga?

There were so many yoga studios around town, so I did some web research and still couldn't get any good answers. One day I went to Little India in Artesia and had a conversation with an Indian merchant. I asked him why are there so many names related to yoga and, more to the point, what's the best yoga? And this Indian merchant told me that I should always practice Bikram Yoga. I didn't know what it was and one day I was bar hopping in Downtown Fullerton and I parked my car across the street from the Bikram studio there. I took a brochure and came back the next day and I've been hooked ever since.

What are your favorite things about Bikram Yoga La Canada?

Showers--I sweat a lot and I have to shower before I go home. My fellow students--everyone is so friendly. And the teachers--the studio has a lot of characters and personalities.

When you started what was the hardest thing

Yoga And Your Health: The Seven Keys To Weight Loss With Yoga

Change Does Not Have To Be Chaotic, Hard or Dramatic: All you need to do is B.R.E.A.T.H.E.

Beliefs

Yoga helps you place attention on your beliefs and thought processes. To permanently change shape and achieve weight loss by practicing yoga also means to shift some of your thought processes and beliefs. For example: "When I eat fatty food, it goes straight to my hips" may not be as empowering as "I easily burn up all the food I eat." Some beliefs are simply self destructive -- around self-esteem or low self worth. Yoga will help you banish these -- sometimes consciously, sometimes they just go away with a regular practice. You'll also find that you may be able to do without any therapy or counseling as your yoga practice starts to establish a better and more balanced you.

Regular Practice

You'll need to practice at least three times every week. Less than this won't establish the new body patterns you need to stimulate all the other changes. Five or six yoga sessions every week will get you there super-fast! You'll experience a natural change in your "cravings, you'll find yourself doing different things -- changing your behaviors -- around "health." Your breathing will improve dramatically -- which in turn, apart from all the marvelous physiological side-effects, allows you to handle stress so much more effectively. And the less stress you have, the less tendency to be too thin or too fat.

Eating regime

It's one of those common questions, "Do I have to be vegetarian to practice Yoga?" Well no, not for most of the physical benefits that most westerners come to yoga for. There is an accepted ancient principle of yogic life called Ahimsa, which means "avoidance of injury" or,

if you want to make the spine stronger, you first have to make it longer. So in Locust, we use the legs and position of the torso, and, yes, the arms in a position that makes the elbows kill, as a way to first lengthen and then strengthen the spine.

Priority one is getting the arms straight. Not everybody can bring their elbows and wrists together, but you can at least work on getting the arms straight. See, the straighter and closer the arms the more they help you work into your spine.

They key is to think of the first two parts of the posture where you lift each leg separately, as stretching the leg in order to lift it up. In this sense, it's as important to keep the hip down and stretch the leg back and up. The hip will want to do the turnout thing, but the idea is not so much to lift the leg, as it to stretch the leg and lift it with the spine. Think of it as locked knee technology being applied yet again. As Bikram says, "Make sure your elbow and back hurt." Not that he's being mean, he just wants the upper back to do the lifting and the leg to do the stretching.

"Again, it's not the hips thighs and legs that do the lifting, it's the arms, stomach and back that do the lifting--no matter how high they get, if you think longer before stronger, you'll get quicker results.

Then when the third part comes and you go back to your long, strong cobra tail, lifting both legs is as much a function of stretching the legs back as it is lifting them up. Again, it's not the hips thighs and legs that do the lifting, it's the arms, stomach and back that do the lifting--no matter how high they get, if you think longer before stronger, you'll get quicker results.

The benefits are very similar to Cobra, in the sense that you stretch and realign the muscles of the spine, which can help alleviate sciatica and literally stretch and relax the muscles around the spine. The posture also helps internalize the idea of the Cobra tail being an extension of the spine to stretch and strengthen the spine.

Trust Fund Info

You may have heard of the passing of

about the yoga and how did you overcome it?

Well, the heat. I always have to learn to catch my breath. If I let my breath get way, I end up pretty tired after class.

What's your favorite pose why?

Locust, of course! [see pictures]. It's very challenging and I still need to learn to lock my knees and relax my shoulders. I've seen three people actually get their legs up so high in Locust they can touch their heads and I told myself that one day, I'll be able to do that. I actually have a picture of a lady doing advanced salabhasana on my computer desktop.

What's your hardest pose and why?

Eagle. My hips are very tight. I try everyday to stay at the corner of the room and tuck my leg inside. I feel like I'm going to pass out every time I do it, especially going from left to right leg.

What changes has doing this Yoga brought to your life?

Well, I rediscover myself everyday after yoga class. I'm more flexible, and I feel stronger and younger. I'm mentally refreshed and I notice I look a little better once my clothes are back once on!! My friends from college told me that I haven't changed a bit-- I think it's Bikram Yoga!

What keeps you motivated?

Two things: Just do it. I make the decision to do it everyday. And all my friends got married so I don't have as many people to hang out with after work.

Any recent breakthroughs you'd like to share?

When I started practicing Bikram Yoga and I noticed that the postures themselves are very simple. But then I'd ask myself why I couldn't do it... Well, I've re-discovered the flexibility that I thought I'd lost along the way. And second, I'm able to fit in my old clothes from college.

Any words of wisdom to new students?

Lock your knees. Half of the Bikram series relates to locking your knees, from the first breathing exercise to just about everything you do to stretch. I still learn to lock my knees. And learn to don't let your breath get away from you, learn to control it.

refraining from injuring living creatures. Since this means not killing animals for food, many pure yogis are vegetarian. But what does this have to do with eating? A vegetarian diet is likely to be more affective at helping you with weight loss and changing your shape -- so it can be an effective option. However, what is more important is a balanced diet and one which concentrates on proper food combining, namely not mixing proteins, which require a lot of acid to digest, with starches, which require a more alkaline one. Luckily, a regular yoga practice (three or more vigorous classes a week) will kick-start your metabolism and lead to quite natural changes in the foods that you desire.

You'll also become more conscious of what you eat and how it affects you as your own capacity to notice and calibrate your own body improves.

As the famous biologist, Humberto Maturana has said, nature is conservative -- it leaves behind what doesn't work and conserves what does. Change does not have to be chaotic, hard or dramatic.

With a regular practice, your body will discard "old" food behaviors and conserve those that support your emerging shape and identity.

Acceptance of Self

Along with the physical elements, Bikram Yoga can be an emotional cleansing. It teaches you to accept yourself -- emotionally. So you find yourself reacting to something during class - one day it's too hot, it's not hot enough but you got to class!!!

Regular practice can make it easier to live with yourself and the conditions you have right now. You'll stop needing to live for the future. You can become comfortable in your own skin--no matter what shape you are--then you'll find your body won't resist changes and it becomes a real pleasure. Changing your shape out of desperation is the hard way! You may not end up being the shape that the magazines think we all should be -- but you will learn to completely accept yourself and who you are.

Throw away the scales

And don't count calories, either. Muscle weighs more than fat anyway. Instead, focus on dress size and waist size changes. Notice how any previously "pudgy" areas become sleeker.

You may even notice your skin seems likes its glowing, your eyes are clearer because of better circulation

Hydration

Many of us have a liquid intake that does the reverse of keeping us well-hydrated. Drinks such as teas, coffees and sugary-soda drinks tend to leech the body of its vital water. This is even more important when practicing with a view to slimming down. You'll need to

Bishwanath (Bisu) Ghosh, (Bikram's lifelong best friend), and the son of his guru, Bishnu Charan Ghosh. Bisu continued to operate Ghosh's Yoga College, in Kolkata, after his father's Mahasamadhi (passing) in 1970. It is the club where Bikram and Rajashree, developed into the Yogis that they have become. It has been a place where many thousands have been helped by the practice of Yoga, since Bishnu Ghosh established the school in 1923. The school is now going to be passed on to, and run by Bisu's daughter, Muktamala Ghosh. You can visit their website at Ghoshsyoga.com.

Ghosh's Yoga College has been suffering, financially. A Trust Fund is being created with an account through the State Bank of India, California. The goal is to build up the Trust Fund so that it can produce enough interest to keep the Ghosh's Yoga College open and running forever. Knowing where the Yoga we practice originated and its importance to the world of Physical Culture and Yoga is important. We will also be accepting donations the day of July 9th at the studio to help increase the Trust Fund.

continuously replenish fluids lost from simply sweating -- but also those lost due to the massive physiological cleansing you will go through when breaking down fat and improving body functioning. Putting water back in your system means replacing minerals, which is where electrolyte enhancers like Emergen-C and potassium, magnesium and sodium supplements may help. Or simply putting cucumber, lemon and maybe a little sea-salt in your water. Your body (and tastebuds) will tell you what works.

Excellence

Finally, nothing will work to change your shape in your practice if you don't make an effort to be accurate in the poses and to really engage muscles fully. Develop a consciousness about your body. Work hard the right way (listen to your instructor for the fine distinctions in any pose). After all, if you are, depending on the pose, locking the knee/engaging the thighs, squeezing your butt, sucking in your stomach to engage your core muscles, then not only will this create a better pose and therefore work your physiology and internal organs as intended, it will also help to tone and slim these specific areas! Your stamina and perseverance will skyrocket--just **B.R.E.A.T.H.E!**

Special thanks to Australia's QuickFit yoga for this article.