TAG: YOGATEACHERTRAINING

THE BANDHA APPROACH

April 25, 2019
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Bandhas often get overlooked in yoga. We truly need to get up close and personal (understand) our bandhas in every practice—pranayama and asana.

THE BANDHAS BENEFITS

Bandha is also known as lock or bind. Bandha is an ancient practice that is deeply rooted in the yoga tradition. Bandha is a term of Sanskrit language which means to tighten, to lock, to block. The purpose of bandhas is to lock the energy and gain control of your life force—prana. Bandhas are not only utilized to gain control of your subtle energetic system but at the same time directs this energy to various parts of the body wherever you desire the energy to go. Bandhas are sometimes first learned and engaged during practices of pranayama and kriya, however, once efficiently practiced, they can be engaged throughout the asana practices too. It is important to note that engaging bandhas to the most refined degree takes a lot of practice and often times at least ten years to fully understand their nuances.

Towards the end of the 200 hour YTTC at Bend it Like Buddha studio we learn breath retention—kumbaka with Moola Bandha which has a powerful effect of prana-life force leading more of an upward motion which activates powerful kundalini shakti.

At our classes at our yoga studio Bend it Like Buddha, along with the other 200 hour teaching courses also offer Bandha related
topics. The four main Bandhas in the body includes Moola Bandha, Jalandhara Bandha, Uddiyana Bandha and Maha Bandha. Moola Bandha is a yoga technique in which the subtle energy in the pelvic floor is activated. In Uddiyana bandha, energy is then drawn upward within the core of the body and along the spine (Makhwana and Arora, 2016). One of the famous books, in this regard, known as Moola Bandha: The Master Key has been written by Swami Buddhananda for yoga practitioners focusing on the theory and practice of Moola Bandha. Jalandhara Bandha: the throat lock, on the other hand, engages the neck muscles in order to activate and energise the 5th chakra centre-Vishuddhi. According to Kumar, Uddiyana Bandha also known as flying upward, abdominal bandha involves pulling the abdomen under the rib cage thus taking a false air to inhale and holding the breath followed by releasing the abdomen after a pause (Kumar, 2016). Maha Bandha, also recognised as the great lock, is a combination of all the three bandhas, Moola Bandha, Jalandhara Bandha and Uddiyana Bandha. Maha Bandha is associated with the activation of Maha Shakti that further results in the awakening of the Kundalani Shakti at the spine base (Makhwana and Arora, 2016).

Several scientific studies have been conducted determining the benefits of engaging bandhas. Bandhas are extremely essential for brain centres, for activating the neural pathways, the nadis, the kanda-or root of the thousands of energetic pathways and the channels through which prana streams. Bandhas are directly associated with purification, removal of blockages and toxins thus, resulting in a balanced body and mind. (Kumar, 2016). Bandhas temporarily halt the blood flow. For this reason, when released there is an increased flow of fresh blood. This does not only result in flushing away the older dead cells, at the same time, result in activating, renewing, strengthening and rejuvenating the organs. The Master Key, by Swami Buddhananda states that activating Moola Bandha taps into the great reservoirs of the body assisting in total harmony within the organism, energizing it with vitality and longevity.

Furthermore, it releases pent-up emotions, anxieties, depression and repressions. Through activating bandhas the trauma memories passed in and out of consciousness, like bubbles floating harmlessly to the surface and bursting. Besides this, engaging the bandhas also result in the development of a calm and clear mind, controlled breath while further strengthening single point concentration. Bandhas, in this way, aids in the regulation of internal systems of the body from metabolic and digestive to hormonal systems (Shankar, 2016). Furthermore, as a result of the released blockages, the energy channels are purified and the exchange of energy is improved. Most importantly, Bandhas alleviate stress as well as any other mental restlessness thus bringing about the inner balance and harmony. These practices help free the shoulders thus aligning the upper spine properly. Different studies over the years have repeatedly backed the benefits of Bandhas (Sweta et al., 2018).

Arm balances and peak postures go hand in hand with apana pranayama and bandhas. This particular class above I attended had over 10 peak postures, including 5 challenging arm balances! Yes, I totally had to engage my bandhas for all of these:)
At our yoga studio, we teach students how to isolate specific muscles of the Bandhas. Assessing each type of Bandha requires focus. Our introductory courses will be a great starting point, while sooner or later you will definitely experience such a moment when you will feel the effect that activating bandhas have in your body, especially with the advanced pranayama courses. As Moola Bandha, Jalandhara Bandha, Uddiyana Bandha have their own benefits, Maha Bandha offers the combined benefits of all the three bandhas thus regulating the entire endocrine system. Communally, the yoga bandha benefits stimulate perceptions and helps in stopping the meaningless wandering of mind.

Practicing specifically Moola Banda, the master key lock has the potential to release us from depression, anxiety and unpleasant emotions which dampen our joy in life and prevent us from living our most authentic path. Practicing daily bandhas especially the master key is a technique to open the door to freedom, joy and liberation. As sensitivity and awareness both expand, our emotional issues can be solved as well as we clearly see the root of the problem. Therefore, Moola Bandha for example is a means to cut the mental problems at the roots and so establish mental health and a greater sense of well being.

utilizing the bandhas and apana prana in an arm balance asana

REFERENCES


Everyone’s reason for practicing yoga is unique, the real challenge is mustering up the courage, carving out time to practice and if you cross the hurdles to reap the rewards of yoga, you will find it as amazing and beneficial as it is. You have made the decision, joined yoga for beginners or online yoga classes, it is difficult to imagine what will happen until you actually practice mindfully and regularly. There are many benefits to practicing yoga but did you know yoga develops intuitive abilities?

Intuition is the ability to have insight and wisdom received by an individual outside of their own intelligence, without the use of reason, logic or scientific evidence. Do you know who Patanjali was? He was considered the Einstein of Psychology and human behaviour in India because he was able to channel such ground-breaking guidelines in the 8-fold path of Ashtanga yoga. He was able to do this successfully without science. Now modern science states what Patanjali channelled intuitively thousands of years ago. That is, yoga along with meditation and pranayama (breathing techniques) has a multitude of benefits for the health and harmony of the mind, body and soul (Paniccia et al., 2018). Patanjali utilized his intuition and founded the great knowledge which we have today on this incredible practice of yoga. In yoga, intuition is considered to be developed over time through spiritual disciplines and meditation or pranayama. Your intuition are unexplained feelings you have that something is true even when you have no evidence or proof for it. Have you ever had an intuition that something was wrong and later proved to be correct? That was your gut knowing or intuition speaking to you. This special occurrence of knowledge may arrive instantly and not through the process of analysis and perceptions of the facts. Often times it happens to us when we are doing something routine such as walking to work or taking a shower. Also practicing yoga, meditation and pranayama over time results in a gradual development of intuition. This is a practice which encourages individuality and helps bring answers to important life questions. It also provides a road map leading a person to explore their inner self- their true nature and unique life path off and on the yoga mat (Sadhu, 2018).
There are many other tools that help in developing intuition. Yet meditation, pranayama and yoga are some of the best ways which helps in letting go of attachments and to discover the inner self. But how does one even begin to find this inner voice? Usually the intuitive voice is subtle, gentle and not obvious. Finding stillness within is essential in being able to listen to your intuition (Bagya et al., 2018). The key understanding of our true nature or inner self comes with learning how to widen the gap between thought to thought or still the senseless mind chatter or what Buddhists at Fo Guan Shan monastery, Taiwan call the “monkey mind”. Remember this proverb, “silence isn’t empty. It is full of answers”. One needs to develop the ability to distinguish between the noises and the voices, the voice of fear and the subtle voice of inner wisdom.

Whenever you want to understand something or to make a decision, ask for guidance from inner higher self and then experiment. The resistance, tension, built-up emotions, trauma or stress… the physical practice of yoga will burn out the stress-energy from the body accumulated through years of samskaras, which means the mental impressions, recollections or psychological imprints in Sanskrit. Different yoga vinyasas or poses on the mat for example, despite the skill level, will help in your cultivation of intuitive skills (Schiffmann, 2013).
A yoga practice re-develops the intuition ability to consider what is healthy in each moment. In today’s busy, technological world we have completely lost touch with this intuitive ability. As a person learns to turn inwards both mentally and emotionally, they start the process of cultivating the intuition, instinct and intelligence. Following one’s own path requires courage, saying no to the things that don’t serve you and confronting your own demons. Yoga helps to practice opening the chest and heart, core engagement, self-grounding, calm and slow breathing and thus, emulating a courageous yet conscious warrior on the battlefield of life.

The voice of intuition is basically our inner hidden voice, calm, collected and sure. Intuition provides confidence and courage to make such decisions which serves us, regardless of the inside and outside voices. Yoga is designed in such a way so as to prepare the body for meditation and meditation in movement is yoga. Yoga represents union and as a person progresses through yoga, one may start experiencing prolonged periods of union within and thus stronger intuition (Paniccia et al., 2018). Yoga helps a person to tune into his emotions and to develop perception. Intuition is not a result of using the logical mind or over thinking rather it is a feeling of knowing that which we don’t know. During the yoga practice, we become intuitive when our body becomes physically aligned, naturally, with our breath movements. We feel different sensations, shaky and sweaty. We begin to think if these feelings are triggered by our thoughts. In the end, we come to know
that these feelings are from our inner heart space (Sadhu, 2018). The popular Netflix movie “Innsaei” has highlighted the global journey of soul searching. This movie has shown the power of intuition by uncovering the art of connecting within today’s world of distraction, stress and disconnection. The expert in indigenous consciousness and neuroscience in the movie shows a belief that human beings use only a small fraction of their capacity that is resulting in devastating consequences. Humans must need to learn something new, discover their inner self that which will birth miracles. The intuition binds us together and without this we, as human beings lose our sense of purpose.

But how to regain intuition? Invite silence into your day, start with a short meditation or through yoga or watching the sunrise. Allow the voices in your mind to float away, do not engage with them and invite your inner voice to guide you. Connect yourself with the breath of divinity. Check within yourself, what are you thinking? How are you feeling? Feel your presence and it will make you dilute the stress and offer you the best solutions and inner wisdom of always knowing what to do next.

Intuition, meditation, yoga and other spiritual practices not only help in overcoming fear, but they also encourage self-love and love for others. At first, learning to listen to your intuition may seem strange or challenging. Listening to your intuition, however, will allow you to see and believe how our life journey and nature is being carried out in
surprising ways. How truly miraculous and incredible it is to be alive! Essentially, we are spiritual beings living a human experience through this dense, material container of the physical body...we are light warriors and destined to do great things on this beautiful planet and being in touch with our intuitive abilities will assist us and carry us through life’s challenges.

REFERENCES


HOW TO TRAVEL THE WORLD BY TEACHING YOGA

January 27, 2019 Leave a comment

The nomadic yogi lifestyle is gaining momentum. Working as a yoga instructor and travelling abroad for the same cause has never been so appealing. We have lots of examples of some yoga teachers who have managed to find ways of following their heart and pursuing their passions while travelling and working abroad as a yoga teacher. Many of them have shared their experiences as well and have inspired others that pursuing your dreams while travelling the world is possible.
If you have similar goals of teaching yoga while travelling need not to worry. This lifestyle is about surrendering to the universe, going with the flow and with a bit of research and planning it is very possible. We will tell you some of the easiest ways regarding how to start teaching yoga abroad. Going abroad for teaching yoga is an incredible experience and thus, is among the most enriching life experiences you will ever have. Before getting it all started, all you need to do is to find good yoga instructor jobs abroad through work away sites for instance and arrange something before arrival. You will find a number of opportunities in different countries, as the market for teaching yoga has started becoming more in demand especially in Bali, India and Portugal. These sites are where I started my search when I wanted to work in Portugal as a yoga teacher abroad and eventually opened my own school, Bend it like Buddha. You can find a number of jobs through different websites such as:

http://www.yogatrade.com

https://yogatrade.com/

https://www.workaway.info/

https://www.helpx.net/

Once you decide the country you would like to travel in as a yoga teacher, search for different options where you can apply for your teaching job or work away position. The growing popularity of yoga has grabbed the attention of different hostels, glamp and camp sites, hotels and 5 star famous resorts. These hotels have started offering daily yoga classes to their guests and usually they have higher margins of salary. While working there, you will have an awesome opportunity of exchange available to you. If you agreed for exchange, you will be provided with a nice room to stay and good food to eat.

In the area that you have decided to travel to, if there is a yoga retreat or 200 hour or 300 hour teacher training happening, make the most of the available opportunity and reach out to them and let them know that you will be in the area and can help teach classes for their TTC. These positions often pay well. Networking with the leaders may help you discover some future opportunities while assisting them and will help you learn more about the industry. If you have planned to stay at a hostel while travelling, let the owners of the hostel know that you are a yoga instructor and ask them to encourage arranging yoga classes for their guests.
Besides this, you will have several other options too. You can offer classes on a donation basis in a community space such as a recreation centre, music festival or vegetarian restaurant or cafe. Either you can help out from the work exchange option or you can arrange donation classes for a local charity either on the beach or a nearby park.

Erica Hartnick is among one of these yoga travellers who combined her dream of travelling all around the world. She has travelled to different countries and has connected with the people through donation-based classes and work exchange as well (Hartnick, 2013). Nikki Scott is another such yoga teacher who has completed 200-hour yoga teacher training in Goa, India and has discovered some amazing opportunities in Thailand. Bali is also among one of the best places in the world to enjoy a yoga retreat, one of the most popular places to teach and learn the art of yoga (Scott, 2017).

Travel and yoga make a perfect combination especially for the wonderful yogis that love exploring this magical vast world. A number of female yoga teachers are travelling the world and are self-sufficient by teaching yoga or/and the other body-energy work such as Reiki, Ayurveda and Thai Yoga massage and other healing modalities. We also teach these healing arts in our yoga teacher trainings in India, Bali and Portugal.

Among these yoga instructors include Caitlin Turner, Honza and Claudine Lafond and Kino MacGregor who travelled to India to pursue her dream. Another internationally known yoga girl is Rachel Brathen who also travelled far and wide to teach yoga (Sugerman, 2019). All of these female yogi-nomads are my mentors and inspiration and you too can also pursue your dreams and the nomad-yogi lifestyle.
Social media will also be a great source of meeting others working on a similar path and industries that are looking for yoga teachers. Follow what you love! Follow your heart! Please share with us what your nomad dreams are and what you are up to in this wide wide world.

References


AYURVEDA MASSAGE

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Leave a comment

WHAT IS IT AND THE BENEFITS?
Ayurveda Massage course at Bend it like Buddha Yoga-Portugal

A variety of research studies have highlighted that Ayurveda massage helps in locating and removing the ailments related to muscles, joints and ligaments. It has further been proved through scientific studies that the massage further contributes to the improvement in blood circulation and initiation of detoxification. The stimulation is often very strong, however, the effects of the massage at the very end are not only relaxing but rejuvenating. With this powerful bodywork taking place, the practice of deep yogic breathing further provides the necessary integration and amplifies the benefits. Besides this, the passive yoga stretching during the massage contributes to increasing the mobility of joints together with the flexibility of the ligaments serving as an excellent tool for rehabilitation. (Sinha, Lohith and Ashvini, 2017).
Ayurveda massage is an effective and unique form of yoga-based bodywork originating in India. Some scholars assert that Ayurveda originated in prehistoric times and that some of the concepts of Ayurveda have existed from the time of the Indus Valley Civilization or even earlier. Ayurveda developed significantly during the Vedic period and later some of the non-Vedic systems such as Buddhism and Jainism also developed medical concepts and practices that appear in the classical Ayurveda texts. The Ayurveda massage is considered as a combination of deep tissue massage and that is assisted by the yoga stretches and energy work. At our studio, Bend it like Buddha we incorporate the Ayurveda massage, energy work and breath work into all of our 200 hour yoga teacher trainings. This helps activate and cleanse the nadis which are energy channels and the mind and body become more balanced. Our body is a storehouse of tensions and issues that are sometimes originating from unresolved emotional trauma. Ayurveda massage also helps in relieving fatigue and awakening of the entire body and then each of the areas of the body are cleansed and refreshed through massage combined with the power of breath and stretches.

As the Ayurvedic medicine tradition consider the interaction and balance of mind, body and spirit from the internal power of the...
individual, in a similar manner, Ayurveda massage serves to relieve the pain as a preventive medicine through an increase in the circulation, stimulation and strengthening of the lymphatic system. Symptomatic relieve of stress and generation of positive emotions are also among the other benefits of Ayurveda massage. Ayurvedic massage practitioners may also suggest a variety of lifestyle changes based on the particular imbalances in a person and Dosha type. The Ayurveda massage further helps the individual to stay healthy, improving the nervous system and strengthening the immune response thus increasing the longevity together with facilitating long-term weight loss. Healthier skin together with better vision and eye health have also been proved to be the scientific benefits of Ayurveda massage (Kothainayagi and Gupta, 2018).

Stress and other toxins are accumulated in our body on regular basis and a good massage has the ability to remove these toxins. Ayurveda massage is recharging the body, making the mind soothed and relaxed. The overall sensation, in this way, is improved with the internal organs stimulated and efficiency of them is improved. Lubrication of joints, releasing muscles and calmed nerves, as a result of the massage further contributes to the mental alertness and brings an increase in the overall physical stamina of a person (Kulkami et al., 2010).

Learning 45+ massage techniques at our yoga studio in Praia da Rocha beach, Portimao Portugal

There are certain similarities between Ayurvedic massage and Ayurvedic yoga massage, however, Ayurvedic yoga massage provides additional benefits. Our yoga school is committed to delivering the highest standard of Ayurvedic yoga massage training to our students, both beginners, people with injuries and seniors are warmly welcomed to join any of our Ayurveda massage courses in Portugal, Bali or India. All our courses are suitable for beginner students.

The release of chronic stress and tension is tangible and during the Ayurveda massage the natural energy flow is restored into the body making it feel light, calm and aligned. There are practitioners that may schedule a regular Ayurveda massage treatment as a form of physical maintenance of your body thus helping you maintain good physical and mental health in a stressful world.
Ayurveda massage relaxes the body both physically and mentally while the overall result can be observed in the form of a deeper and refreshing sleep pattern, with the aging effects reduced and the emergence of a rejuvenated appearance and inner well-being.

References


So you've decided to become a yoga teacher or are considering a yoga teacher training to deepen your practice. Here, we cover all the bases: from choosing the right YTT for you to everything a new yoga instructor needs to know to get their yoga teaching career off the ground. Find the Right YTT For You. A Yogi’s Guide to Evaluating Teacher Training Programs. Should You Take a Teacher Training To Deepen Your Practice? With a wealth of trainings available today, yoga teacher mentor Barrie Risman examines how to shift the culture of yoga education consumerism and reclaim the path of engaged learning. Yoga Alliance to Require Tests in 200-Hour Teacher Trainings, More Credentials for Lead Trainers. There are new standards for registered yoga schools and teachers. Yoga Teacher Training - Review Upaya Yoga - Cecilia Westre From Norway. Upaya Yoga. Upaya Yoga. Testimonial By Students - A Fantastic Yoga Teacher Training and Life Experience! | Upaya Yoga. Upaya Yoga. Yoga Teacher Training in India. India is welcoming yogis/yoginis from all around the world to explore the rich culture of the place. Individuals interested to do yoga teacher training will find India as an ideal place. Facilities We Provide. Come and join us to deepen your yoga practice and understanding. Students joining us for yoga teacher training courses will get clean and comfy accommodations with a lively place to practice yoga & meditation. Raise your spirits to dig out your love for yoga, and offering you the talents to get confidence, master your abilities, and advance your yoga t... See more ideas about Yoga, Yoga teacher training and Yoga teacher. STRETCHY FIT Yoga Trainer on Instagram: "Wanna do me a favor? ⚫️ If you enjoy my yoga tutorials, tag one friend and invite them to follow my page and learn with us! I would be so..." 8 poses to @getstretchy in your shoulders!! #getstretchy  ⬅️ Click the link in my bio if you’re looking for online yoga training that will increase your flexibility! ⬅️ I’ve been giving back-bending tutorials these last few weeks so opening your shoulders is vital for that. ✓ Hold the stretches for a length of time. Online yoga teacher training certifications are becoming increasingly popular as our schedules get busier. Online training is a great option that gives the student everything they need to complete the training at a less expensive and more flexible rate. Online trainings also give you the freedom to utilize resources that work best for your personal practice and in most cases give you a much greater period of time to work through all the material.