

Forward Bend

A Newsletter from
Bikram Yoga in Bend,
Oregon



BIKRAMyoga

Make your Body Smile!

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Yoga & Pain



ZAP... OUCH... OH S..T, That hurts!!! Sound familiar? At one time or another we have all been overcome with pain. Maybe it is as simple as stubbing a toe, pinching a finger or one of those nasty little paper cuts. Maybe it is much more. You're skiing and all of a sudden you hit a tree and break a leg, maybe you have flown over your handle bars on the whoops trail and whacked your head or perhaps you have experienced a car accident and have had multiple lacerations. Then there is the pain felt from losing a friend or a partner. The type of pain that hits us in the gut and hurts us in the heart. All these sensations are very real.

So what is pain? There are three basic types of (physical) pain. Somatic, visceral, and neuropathic pain. In general, somatic pain is surface pain or pain felt in the muscles or skeletal system. Visceral pain is felt in the cavities of the body and is associated with the internal organs. Neuropathic pain is generally burning or tingling sensations felt in the nervous system. There is also pain which is felt when our mind "exaggerates" the physical sensations that we are feeling. And as previously mentioned the pain felt in the body as a result of emotional feelings.

What is the message that pain sensations are giving us? The thalamus is the processor of sensory information in the brain. This is where the central nervous system sends signals from the parts of the body where "sensations" are occurring. Different sensations are going to be interrupted differently. When the interruption is that something is wrong - pain is felt. This is where we begin to determine if action is necessary to alleviate the pain. In many ways pain is good for us. It has been said that without pain we would not have survived as a species.

Often times when someone comes into class for the first time they are surprised. By the end of class and maybe for the next day - they experience pain. Perhaps you did too. Maybe you have an underlying injury of your knee or back and you feel it even more in class. There are also times when you come to class with pain - and by the end of class the pain sensations are gone. Maybe one day your hips hurt and the next day your shoulder hurts. All is perfectly normally - and can even be expected.

When we do feel pain sensations how is yoga helpful? One of the first things to remember is that it is never too late - that no matter what is going on in the body - yoga can and will benefit you. Yes, even if you just tore you ACL on the mountain, the sooner you get to class the better. You simply do what you can do - and not worry about what you can't do. You might even be in savasana the whole time and just do your breathing. This alone will help keep the healing process in a accelerated state. What if you have emotional pain? Just coming to class and focusing on your practice can

help us move through the feelings in a supported environment.

Essentially "learning to still the fluctuations of the mind" is the first aspect of yoga. And as we learn to still the mind our body tends to feel more relaxed. This helps to reduce the pain sensations that we could be feeling. Sometimes the pain sensations are gone in just one class. Sometimes it takes a little longer. As Bikram likes to say, "forget about it, don't worry about it, just do the yoga". Then by the end of class you will have a smiling happy face!



NEXT WEEK: Yoga and Back Pain; Why the latest research is saying, "think Psychological, not Physical". Just what the yogis have been saying for a very long time.

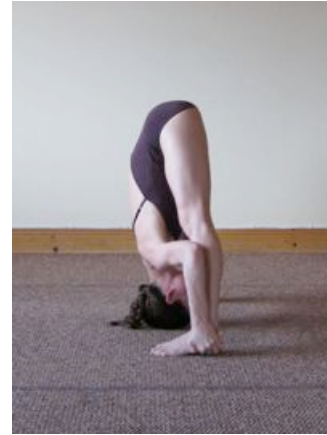
Hope to see all of you very soon in class...!!

Michael Harris, Studio Owner and Director

Posture of the Month

Standing Separate Leg Stretching Pose

**Dandayamana Bibhaktapada
Paschimotthanasana**



Sometimes it seems that everyone in Central Oregon has tight hamstrings. All the running, biking, skiing, climbing and everything we do outdoors seems to make us tight. Well this posture is one of the postures that will help you move through this "tightness". You might even feel your sciatica nerve from time to time. That will clear up too.

Due to this tightness it is important to take this posture one step at a time. The form itself is not difficult - It's just getting your muscles, nerves and spine to open up.

So how do you do that? Starting from a standing position bring your arms over your head and take a big four foot step to your right, bringing your arms down at the same time. Then especially if you are tight, slowly bend forward with a nice flat back. You may not be able to get your hands underneath your feet yet. No worries. Simply start by putting your hands on the floor in front of you - making sure your legs remain straight. This will allow those tight muscles to open up slowly. Then start working to get your hands under your heels. Eventually - before you know it - your forehead will be on the floor between your heels. Once you are there you will be stretching not only the back of your legs - you will also be opening your hips and stretching your whole spine. Then you will want to just stay in the posture.

Some of the benefits of this posture include opening and

stretching your leg muscles, tendons and your spine. It helps the functioning of most of the abdominal organs. And it similar benefits as a headstand - without doing the headstand. It invigorates the pituitary gland, the thyroid gland and even your eyes.

One of the best ways to learn more about the postures is to read Bikram's Beginning Yoga Class book. And, when you come to class everyday you will "Make Your Body Smile!"

Michael Harris, Studio Owner and Director

Student of the Month

April Student of the Month is Julie Opshal



For the past year and a half Julie has practiced Bikram Yoga at least four times a week. Julie's totally committed to maintaining her health by making time amidst her busy schedule. She works at REI and USANA (a wellness company). Julie also manages the Karma Yoga Program here at our studio.

So, why does she practice so much? Because "yoga has

assisted tremendously while trying to recover from injuries and chronic health conditions." Last year Julie suffered a back injury while snowboarding. The pain was so debilitating she could barely move. She began physical therapy and realized quickly that most of the exercises they had her doing were very similar to the postures in Bikram Yoga. Soon enough she stopped therapy and returned to Bikram Yoga where the mental clarity, emotional stability and physical benefits all became one healing process in the 90 minute class.

Recovery was a steady process with steady progress, yet she worked through much pain to make her back happy and healthy with no problems! She's even returned to her snowboarding, enjoying the fresh powder this season! Not only snowboarding, but also hiking up mountains and climbing has improved alongside her yoga practice. Bikram Yoga has provided excellent cross training and continued injury prevention.

Now taking a daily nutrition supplement, incorporating a healthy diet, and practicing Bikram Yoga "has almost completely cured her lifelong struggle with severe asthma, minor knee problems are kept in check, and colds and viruses barely creep up anymore!"

Julie has been a great help to the Bend Studio over the past year. In addition to her regular yoga practice she also helps manage the Karma Program. She makes sure there is someone here to tidy the studio, clean the showers, empty the trash, and vacuum the carpets every night of the week. Her dedication to herself and to the entire studio is much appreciated by all of the staff here at Bikram Yoga Bend!

Challenged most during class by what Bikram himself calls "the monkey mind," thoughts jumping from place to place, practicing more and more over the year has helped her feel less foggy and allowed her to approach situations with calmness and clarity. She says, "Yoga is amazing, I'm pretty sure that if we all do Bikram Yoga everyday, get a massage once in a while, and eat good food, we will most certainly live forever! :) "

Kathy Durham, Bikram Yoga Certified Teacher

OTHER NEWS:

> Still haven't signed up for the Bikram Yoga Workshop on April 12th and 13th? Jason Winn, a senior Bikram teacher will be here all weekend. On Saturday come to the beginning workshop and learn how to deepen and expand your beginning practice. Get lots of attention and get all your questions answered.



Jason in Fingerstand

Then on Sunday be prepared to go to the next level of your practice with the Advanced Series. Jason will break down this series in a step by step manner and show you the right way to do the Advanced Postures. This Sunday clinic is perfect for those who already have a regular beginning practice - can do most of the postures - and are ready for more of a challenge. Or perhaps you want to explore competition. See what it means to really challenge yourself and your practice. Check with us to see if you are ready for the Advanced Bikram Postures.

> Dinners Done Right (owned by my niece Lindsey and her boyfriend Jake) now have Take-N-Bake Dinners ready in just 5 minutes for as low as \$6.50 for dinners that feed 2 people. Call them now at 385-TIME (8463) or go to www.dinnerdoneight.com. Mention Bikram Yoga and receive 10% off your meals.

We hope to see you in class soon!!

**Michael Harris, Director
Bikram Yoga Bend, Oregon**

The Unlimited Yoga Club

***Just \$99 a Month for as much yoga
as you can do!!!***

Join Now...!!!

Yoga, Yoga and more Yoga...