



WHAT I WISHED SOMEONE HAD TOLD ME BEFORE STARTING YOGA

By Carly Carney

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- **Even though you may have heartfelt intentions for peace and well-being in your mind and body, don't be surprised if yoga feels a bit uncomfortable.** We've spent a lot of time distracting, numbing or being outwardly busy in our relationship to our mindbody. It can feel uncomfortable, or even unpleasant, being still, moving slowly or stretching a tight or tense body.
- **Give yourself time to get to know your mind and body.** Due to responsibilities, work, defined roles, etc. many of us have neglected our minds and bodies for prolonged periods. It will take time to get to know and feel them. Remember, yoga is a process, not a destination.
- **You will need time to orient to the new words and phrases you hear in class.** Most yoga teachers use words and phrases that are kind and encouraging. It can feel unfamiliar to hear these phrases in relationship to yourself. These exact words may eventually replay in your mind outside of yoga class as reminders to be kind and gentle to yourself.
- **Don't underestimate the importance of the breath in a yoga practice.** You will hear about breathing time and time again. It is the MOST important aspect of a yoga practice.
- **The mindbody will need time, patience and space to unwind.** Many of us have spent much of our time distracted by the world around us, so moving slowly and mindfully can intensify experiences that we were not even aware that we were a part of.
- **Remember this phrase "little-by-little."** We live in a society where everything comes quickly. So we can become uncomfortable when we aren't getting results at the pace that we like. If your intention is to settle your mind, ease tightness in your body, relax or feel peaceful, remember to allow this to happen "little-by-little."
- **You're not a problem.** If you experience an active mind, aching lower back, anxiety or a tight and aging body remember that it's not a problem and is all workable. Be kind to those parts of your experience.
- **There is no such thing as doing yoga right or wrong.** Holding fancier poses does not mean someone is an advanced yogi. What makes a yogi "advanced" is cultivating respect for the body, attentive kindness to the breath and alignment with an intention.
- **Choose classes that make you feel good, not those that make you feel you should be different or better.** Try a variety of classes, styles of yoga and teachers. Trust your intuition about what is best for your mindbody.
- **Please remember that any activity that slows us down can highlight or magnify parts of our human experience that we aren't paying attention to.** One of the gifts of yoga is becoming friends with ourselves.



Beverly Yoga Center

Nurturing the mind, body and heart through yoga and meditation.

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