



5 Steps to Sustaining a Meaningful Home Yoga Practice

By Natasha Sagalovsky

For some people, a daily yoga practice comes very natural and easy, these people are able to drop into their practice, cultivate their discipline, and maintain it. For others a home practice is elusive and often unsatisfactory, and because of this may fall off the way-side. The following are some tips that I have found valuable in successfully maintaining a meaningful home yoga practice.

REALIZE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN YOUR PHYSICAL WELLBEING AND YOUR HAPPINESS.

Its simple and true: Happy body, happy you. (unhappy body, a less happy you).

Yoga is a powerful and efficient way to restore and maintain wellbeing in your body, and to “purify” disturbances in your system. Even the simplest of practices can contribute to releasing deep restrictions patterns, opening up the energy lines of the body, freeing the diaphragm for a deeper breath, stimulating proper digestion and flow of lymph, balancing your nervous system, teaching your body to hold itself in a better posture and uplifting your mood by releasing pleasure supporting chemicals into your system (which in turn will boost your immune system!). What’s not to love!?

Recognize this: Your mental and emotional health are completely intertwined with state of your physical body. Once you recognize that something as simple as 20 daily minutes of yoga will contribute significantly to your happiness, you won’t skip it anymore – and the more you practice, the more committed you’ll become!



PLAN AHEAD OF TIME AND RESERVE YOUR YOGA TIME IN YOUR WEEKPLY PLANNER

This is one of the “secret teachings” – Plan your yoga time! Sit in front of your calendar at the beginning of each week and block off some time for yoga every single day for the entire week. Weather it’s class time or your home practice, mark it in your planner. By doing this you take care of several practice-sabotaging factors at once:

- a) The tendency to feel “too busy” to do your yoga: If you manage your time well and plan ahead at the beginning of the week, you will feel at ease during your yoga time knowing that

you've also made time for everything else – and vice-versa.

- b) No more haphazard planning of yoga time, which ends up never happening. If you plan for it, you will feel conscious and spacious about it throughout each day. And you will build a ritual and routine.
- c) By writing it in your calendar or planner you send a message to yourself, and to Spirit, that this is something that matters to you, generating an energetic shift that will support your regular practice.

NOURISH YOUR INSPIRATION, FIND WAYS TO TAKE IT DEEPER AND CONTINUOUSLY EVOLVING.

Fuel your inspiration for practice – to “keep your mind in the game” so to speak. Spend a little time daily, perhaps in the morning before you open up any email, to read something that inspires and nourishes your spirit, something to set the tone for the day. Another important piece here is finding a weekly or monthly class that you enjoy very much, it will bring freshness into your practice, and also take off the weight of always having to come up with what to do on your own. You will learn something new, get feedback from an experienced teacher, gain unexpected inspiration, and feed your body mind and spirit. No matter what the condition of your body may be, I guarantee you there's a yoga class in town for you. Another trick here is to listen to a talk by Swamiji (or anyone else that is inspiring you) *while* you do your yoga practice. It will keep you on the mat longer – and give you the opportunity to re-listen to those longer pre-recorded talks that you might not listen to otherwise.



Get creative, but do find ways to nourish your inspiration for your practice constantly so that you can keep your practice fresh, your body-intelligence ever evolving, and your drive alive.

DEEPLY UNDERSTAND THAT PRACTICE IS A LIFETIME ENDEAVOR, AND THERE ARE NO SUBSTITUTES.

Practice is a lifestyle, and it is a joyful one! The more you practice, the more you will love it! The day will NOT come when you are done with your yoga. This is a daily endeavor, and one that gets richer the more you invest in it. What are you waiting for?

REMEMBER THAT YOUR PRACTICE IS THE WAY YOU GIVE BACK TO YOUR GURU – AND INDEED THE WAY YOU PAY IT FORWARD AS WELL.

Take a moment to assess your current relationship to your practice. What thoughts, patterns or beliefs are preventing you from having a consistent yoga practice? Take a moment to consider that these limiting beliefs are not true. Perhaps these are even just excuses you have not realized you are telling yourself. Decide that you are interested in discovering what a daily, quality, yoga practice can do for you. Admit that something really cool may happen for you should you make these small shifts.

Our Guru strives daily for our deepest fulfillment and wellbeing – and works hard to show up with excellence in every moment. Doing our yoga practice, growing awareness, releasing tensions, elevating our offerings, and having faith is our service to our Guru, and also how we pay it forward when we show up consciously to the responsibilities in our life.

Take a step back, take a realistic look at your current routine, and make the adjustments necessary to make space to release tensions and nourish flow through your yoga. Make space for something new to enter the flow of your life. Your happiness IS your Guru's happiness and IS the happiness of your community.

I hope these tips help you enjoy a regular yoga practice that makes you and your body happy. If you would like to find a yoga class suitable for you at our studio but are unsure what class to pick, please come talk to me anytime and I will help you find a class that you might just love.

Namaste! Happy yoga-ing.
Natasha.

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