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WELCOME! We are so glad you're here. Congratulations for completing your first Bikram Yoga class. You have made one of the best and most important decisions of your life. As you continue to come to class, you'll quickly see why this is so.

Here are some tips to make the most of your first few classes, and your yoga practice in general. We've also included answers to the most frequently asked questions regarding Bikram's Yoga.

Also, please feel free to come to any of our teaching staff with your questions or concerns. They are certified Bikram teachers, and are graduates of Bikram's rigorous and thorough residential training program. Our teachers have many years of personal yoga experience from which to draw as well.

**Take your 2nd class within 24 hrs of your first class.** You have awakened and stimulated every system of your body; even though it seems like all you did was struggle, sweat, and strain. During your 2nd class your organs, respiratory, circulatory, digestive, and nervous system receive 2-3 times the nourishment and healing that they did in the first class. Each class builds exponentially on the next. If this seems impossible then please return to your mat as soon as you can!

**Please take at least 10 classes as close together as possible.** You'll feel like a new person physically, emotionally, and mentally if you take this step. You will feel the benefits of this yoga within just a class or two; but to really soar, you need the cumulative effect of at least 10 classes. Please come as often as you can.

**Do try to stay in the hot room.** While it's tempting to think about the cool lobby on the other side of the door, it's better for you if you can stay in the yoga room. Feel free to sit down or lie down if you feel a little dizzy or nauseated. You must honour, listen to, and take care of your body. It's perfectly okay to do only one set of a posture, or to skip a posture entirely. If you absolutely must leave the room, then make sure the teacher knows you've left, and come back again as quickly as possible.

**Focus on yourself entirely and be as still as possible between the poses.** As you build your ability to focus your mind and still your body, the heat and struggle will soon disappear. Keep your mind focused on yourself in the mirror, and keep your inner voice speaking in a positive, supportive, and encouraging fashion. In this way you'll have an exuberant class.

**Come to class fully hydrated.** There are pauses in the class where you'll be able to drink water, but you need to drink lots of water throughout the day in order to ensure that you're properly hydrated for class. If you feel head achy or over-tired during or after class, you may need to take an electrolyte supplement. Capsule electrolyte supplement can be taken before class, and many people take Emer'gen- C (drink before or after not during class).

**Don't take the class on a full stomach.** Most people find they need to leave 2 - 3 hours between their meal and the class. However, some people need to eat just a little 'something' (a grapefruit, piece of

toast, etc.) an hour or so before the class. As you practice this yoga, your own innate wisdom will emerge and guide you so that you learn to do what is right for you.

**If you've had the flu or a cold, take it easy your first class back.** Even a simple cold soothed with over the counter medicines can make you dizzy and nauseated when you return to class. Please don't push yourself to do what you did before getting sick. Lie down if you feel dizzy, do only one set if you feel weak. In this way, you'll be back to normal quickly.

**It's normal to feel emotions and even to cry, laugh, or feel anger in class sometimes.** This is very powerful yoga that works on all levels to heal us. Sometimes tears will flow as you perform an asana (posture). This means that your emotional body is releasing energy and that you are healing psychologically and emotionally. You may or may not know what the emotions are about. Certain postures may elicit flashes of memory. Again, this is a kind of cleansing and healing, and it's both normal and very positive. Don't judge the experience and don't stop because you think something is wrong. Your yoga practice is working exactly the way it's supposed to!

**Certain asanas/postures may cause unusual experiences.** Many people experience flashes of light, electrical impulses, or unusual body sensations in certain postures. These are all normal. Old injuries may also re-emerge as aches, or dull pain. We may be afraid that we are re-injuring ourselves and think we should stop coming, or come less often. The opposite is actually true. This is part of the healing process, and we will heal faster if we continue our yoga practice and, if possible, come more often. (Always check with your doctor if you have medical concerns.)

**Every class is different.** Let go of preconceived notions and experience each class like it's your first class. Your body is different every day, and it's normal for the class or certain postures to be easy one day and difficult the next. Please don't become discouraged and think that something is wrong if you have a difficult class. It's part of the process, and very soon the miserable class will be followed by one of the best classes you've ever had.

**Yoga is a practice as well as a process; it's not about doing the poses perfectly.** No one is going to judge or criticize you. Your fellow students are working much too hard to notice you. As long as you give your best effort, and attempt all of the postures correctly, you receive as much therapeutic benefit as someone who's able to do the posture with a high degree of flexibility, balance, and strength. Your instructor may, from time to time, and always in a respectful and supportive manner, offer a suggestion or an adjustment that will carry you deeper into a pose. As you continue to come to class, you will become more and more comfortable with yourself and with your yoga practice.

**Periodically we offer workshops and posture clinics providing a forum for questions, answers and exploration.** Please come and join for lively discussion and sharing. You'll have the opportunity to ask teaching staff your yoga questions and benefit from the questions that others ask. We explore avenues of this yoga more deeply than we have time for in our regular 90 minute class. We would love to see you there, and please feel free to bring your family and friends to these fun and informative events (tbd).

*Thank you for the opportunity*

*We at BYML look forward to getting to know you and your yoga practice!*

*Namaste*

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