

## Progress

Yoga tends to attract people who are self-motivated. They have a sense of adventure and are willing to try something new. They ask questions and try the recommended practices at home. This is the only way to gain benefit from yoga; it is definitely “interactive.”

How much benefit you gain from yoga depends on how much you do and how willing you are to change. This can be a little bit of a catch-22 for some people: they want to have less pain, or be less stressed out, but they also want to continue living their lives in exactly the way that created the pain and the stress!

Fortunately, yoga not only calms you down and relieves your pain; it also gives you clarity of mind that helps you make new choices about your daily living. Yoga supports you in living in harmony with your inner self. As you continue to practice, you become less conflicted, less exhausted, happier and more vivacious. You stop doing things that drain your energy and do more things that rejuvenate and energize you. You do more yoga because of all the things you do, it gives back the most.

While the poses and breathing we learn in class reliably release tensions in your body, to reap yoga's full benefits, you also need to work with your mind. Vichara – yoga's practice of self-inquiry – and meditation will do for your mind what the poses do for your body. As Swami Nirmalananda once said, “Yoga without meditation is just a sophisticated form of calisthenics”

Meditation also requires a sense of adventure, and a willingness to try something new. Check out the opportunities for meditation in May, and be looking for more throughout the summer. Make yourself new from the inside out.