

What is Yoga?

Answered in
101 Bite-Sized Pieces

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For my fiancé Scott,
who encouraged me to start writing.

What is Yoga?

Answers in
101 Bite-Sized Pieces

ONE

Asking more questions than the
number of stories you tell

T W O

Taking the path of least resistance
when it serves you best

T H R E E

Noticing what you are thinking about
right now

F O U R

Noticing what you are feeling in your
body, *right now*



FIVE

Noticing your intentions – the
conscious and unconscious intentions

SIX

Being aware of the unintended
consequences of your actions – and
taking them into consideration

SEVEN

Choosing silence over
disingenuousness

E I G H T

Staying in child's pose (balasana) for ten minutes in the middle of a power yoga class

N I N E

Centering yourself in a posture that is comfortable for *you* at the beginning of a yoga class



T E N

Noticing when you are stressed –
noticing how your body behaves
when you are stressed (clenched jaw,
hunched shoulders, pursed lips)

E L E V E N

Not needing to correct other people
every time they misspeak

T W E L V E

Practicing postures that feel good

T H I R T E E N

Recognizing that you don't have the answers to everything, but someone does. Seek out people with answers to interesting questions

F O U R T E E N

Realizing when you are thinking and behaving in self absorbed way

F I F T E E N

Allowing others to express their own beliefs without needing to interject your own

SIXTEEN

Practicing postures that strengthen
your body

SEVENTEEN

Practicing postures that improve your
balance

EIGHTEEN

Becoming aware of what you
experience in your body, mind and
breath with each yoga posture

NINETEEN

Being aware of your motivations each
time you act and talk

TWENTY

Realizing that your world revolves
around you and that everyone else's
revolves around someone
else's....*theirs*

TWENTY - ONE

Letting go of the stories about
yourself that "define" you

T W E N T Y - T W O

Being aware that whatever you are
experiencing at this moment is
nothing more or less than what you
are experiencing at this moment

T W E N T Y - T H R E E

Knowing that this too, shall pass

T W E N T Y - F O U R

Substituting, “I do yoga”
with “I live yoga”

T W E N T Y - F I V E

Talking 10 deep breaths a day....so deep that they move your belly

T W E N T Y - S I X

Asana without using any mats, blocks, blankets or other props –and honoring your body completely by staying in front of your edge (staying only within a safe range of motion for your body)

T W E N T Y - S E V E N

A practice with one asana, savasana

T W E N T Y - E I G H T

Letting what you do on your yoga
mat be an extension of your yoga,
rather than a start and end point for
your practice

T W E N T Y - N I N E

Asana in bed

T H I R T Y

Adopting a mantra



THIRTY-ONE

Allowing “dead air time” in your
brain

THIRTY-TWO

Giving away a book that you covet
and haven't read in years

THIRTY-THREE

Practicing asana in a less than ideal
setting, and letting go of the
annoyances

THIRTY-FOUR

Letting go of attachment to your yoga mat, spot in the yoga studio, favorite yoga teacher, yoga music.....

THIRTY-FIVE

Being truthful and speaking hurtful truth only when necessary

THIRTY-SIX

Embracing the transition to death

THIRTY-SEVEN

Smiling as you are falling asleep,
crying as you are falling asleep

THIRTY-EIGHT

Taking a long, silent exhale instead of
snapping back with sarcasm

THIRTY-NINE

Showing up on time when someone is
waiting for you

F O R T Y

Listening more than you speak – try it
for one day

F O R T Y - O N E

Giving all of your attention to
whomever you are speaking with on
the phone (no multi tasking with
texting/twittering/watching tv, etc)

F O R T Y - T W O

Tools to help you navigate life

FORTY-THREE

Touching the earth with both hands
as a reminder that you are connected
to something greater than yourself
and that you are grounded

FORTY-FOUR

Allowing loved ones to find
happiness on their terms, without
remarks

FORTY-FIVE

Allowing loved ones to make
mistakes

FORTY-SIX

Noticing when you are holding your
breath

FORTY-SEVEN

The inner knowledge that you are OK
in this moment

FORTY-EIGHT

Understanding that the only thing we
ever really “have” is *this* moment



FORTY-NINE

Accepting that there is not a “*right*”
way to be in a posture, only a “*safe*”
way for your body

FIFTY

Noticing your ugly thoughts

FIFTY-ONE

Allowing yourself an unlimited
supply of “start-overs”

FIFTY-TWO

Sun salutations

FIFTY - THREE

Meditation

FIFTY - FOUR

Exploring sources of nourishment that
serve your physical *and* emotional
selves

FIFTY - FIVE

A set of tools to energize you

FIFTY - SIX

A set of tools to relax you

FIFTY - SEVEN

A set of tools to lead an ethical life

FIFTY - EIGHT

Accepting uncertainty

FIFTY - NINE

Framing change as a constant

SIXTY

Allowing yourself to contemplate that
whatever is on the other side of life
might be ok

SIXTY - ONE

A compliment to religion

SIXTY - TWO

Seeing the nastiness and the serenity
in a raw, rainy November day

SIXTY - THREE

That inner knowing that somehow
you will be ok again

SIXTY - FOUR

Asking for help when you need it

SIXTY-FIVE

Non-judgment of others who eat,
pray, process and look differently
from you

SIXTY-SIX

Letting non-essential tasks wait until
tomorrow, sometimes

SIXTY-SEVEN

Noticing what you are proud of, and
why

SIXTY-EIGHT

Starting over (again)

SIXTY-NINE

Letting it be OK to disappoint people
when it means doing what is right for
you

SEVENTY

Feeling the full emotions of grief,
sorrow, delight, contentment, etc.

SEVENTY - ONE

Knowing that the grief, sorrow,
delight, contentment, etc. will pass

SEVENTY - TWO

Leaning into fear, instead of pushing
it away

SEVENTY - THREE

Reading the book or magazine you
feel like reading instead of the one that
you *ought* to read

SEVENTY-FOUR

Eliminating the word "*should*" from
your vocabulary

SEVENTY-FIVE

Saying sorry, only when it is sincere

SEVENTY-SIX

Asking the universe (God) for help

SEVENTY-SEVEN

Knowing when to jump into
"solution-mode" and when to just
listen when someone else is struggling

SEVENTY-EIGHT

Recognizing the difference between
constructive self-exploration and
narcissism

SEVENTY-NINE

Noticing and letting go of your
entrenched patterns of rumination
and behavior

EIGHTY

Letting go of the wasted energy
consumed by regret and guilt

E I G H T Y - O N E

Caring about loved ones without
feeling responsible for their happiness

E I G H T Y - T W O

Knowing the difference between
being at your "edge" and behaving
recklessly

E I G H T Y - T H R E E

Trying out a new asana because it
looks like it might feel great

E I G H T Y - F O U R

Wobbling in vrikasana (tree pose)
without reciting the story of "I'm so
off balance today"

E I G H T Y - F I V E

Giving praise anytime it is
appropriate

E I G H T Y - S I X

Seeing everyone as human...full of
flaws, fears, wisdom, fun, love,
wisdom....

EIGHTY-SEVEN

Trying to forgive

EIGHTY-EIGHT

Letting peace come to you rather than
seeking it out

EIGHTY-NINE

Legs on the wall pose (viparita karani)



NINETY

Cutting emotional “cords”, both the pleasant and unpleasant, so that you are not weighed down with other people’s energy

NINETY - ONE

Giving to others, both when your life is plentiful and depleted

NINETY - TWO

Giving from the heart and not the ego

NINETY - THREE

Taking a 5 minute time-out....right
now

NINETY - FOUR

Learning something new to nourish
your soul rather than your credentials

NINETY - FIVE

Recognizing that your yoga teacher is
human and not to be treated any
differently than other person

NINETY-SIX

Not needing to *perfect* any asana....just
to *experience* each asana

NINETY-SEVEN

Starting over, and starting where you
are rather than where you think you
should be

NINETY-EIGHT.

Remembering that you can only
resolve your own demons

NINETY-NINE

Embracing *all* of yourself, but letting
go of the patterns and the stories that
no longer serve you

ONE HUNDRED

Five minutes a day of stillness, while
you are awake

ONE HUNDRED ONE

Allowing yourself
to JUST BE

For more musings, resources for yoga
instructors, yoga retreats and more
fun yoga info, please sign up for our
newsletter by googling:
Florian Yoga Companion

Namaste.



About the Author

Deborah Bernstein is a former management consultant and corporate finance executive turned yoga teacher and entrepreneur. Deborah is the founder and owner of Florian Villa, a yoga retreat center on St. John in the US Virgin Islands and the founder of Roslindale Yoga Studio in Boston, MA.

Deborah and her fiancé and co-owner of Florian Villa, Scott lead several yoga retreats a year at the villa. The couple also donates the villa and their time to host retreats for families of fallen firefighters and disabled veterans.

Deborah lives in Boston, MA and can be contacted at <http://florianyoga.blogspot.com>. She also provides business consulting services and web design to yoga studios and wellness practitioners.

