

Yoga Practice vs Yoga Experience



Did you know that when we say the word “yoga” it means two different things entirely? The experience of yoga is different than the practice of yoga. Knowing how one works with the other helps our journey in both. The experience of yoga and the practice of yoga are different things and both are different for each person.

The Experience of Yoga

When I feel the experience of yoga, I feel like everything is perfect, like the world is just the way that it needs to be and I am a privileged guest here. When I feel yoga, I feel boundless, like my body is able, lithe, and strong. I feel like my heart is huge and sturdy enough to hold any pain.

When I experience yoga I am aware and intuitive. I am still. Sometimes the experience of yoga is subtle and fleeting, just happy and aware. Mostly, when I feel yoga, I feel like I've sourced something inside that I knew was there all along: a wellspring of creativity, love and understanding and a contentedness to just be.

The experience of yoga is about transformation, the transformation of recognizing our True Selves. It's not that our current self isn't real or true, it's that yoga helps us see the big and deep part of ourselves that doesn't change. It's about coming home and seeing ourselves in our true identity.



The Practice of Yoga

The practice of yoga is about making the conditions right in body, mind and spirit, for the experience of yoga to happen.

In our asana practice, we become stronger, more flexible, and balanced. We ease tension from muscles and set our nervous system at ease. We focus our minds and learn presence. We arrange the energy of our bodies to facilitate the mind and spirit. All these qualifiers are vital for the experience of yoga to happen but don't replace the experience of yoga.



ekapadabakasana Scott Moore
photo by Dallas Graham

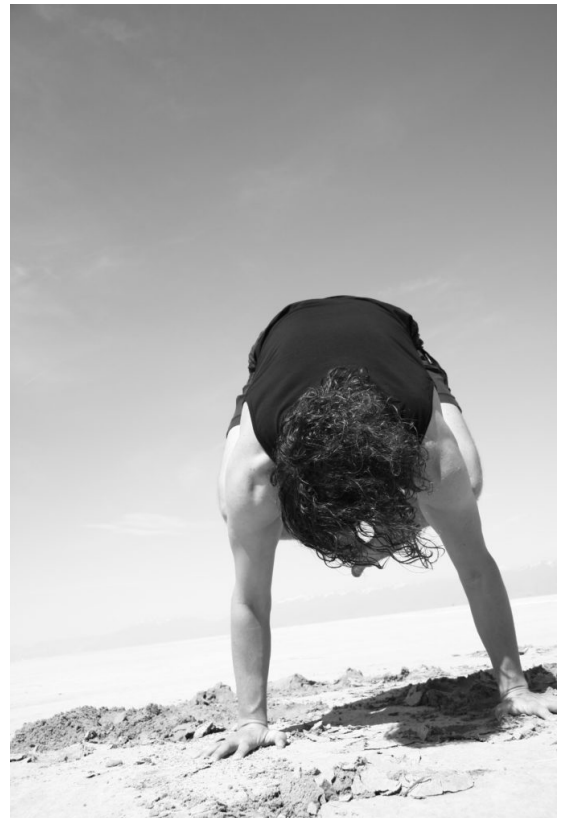
The practice of yoga may or may not immediately create the experience of yoga. In fact, it's often when we are doing something other than practicing yoga that we have the experience of yoga. That doesn't mean that we are doing anything wrong or should stop practicing. The more we practice, we find how to most effectively travel our own pathway to transformation until the path is well-worn.

Simone Weil said, " Even if our efforts of attention seem for years to be producing no result, one day a light that is in

exact proportion to them will flood the soul.”

She’s saying to keep practicing and one day it will all pay off. Often when we are least expecting it, going about our practice like any other day, we’ll find ourselves in a posture or something and suddenly everything opens up to the experience of yoga, or some sudden insight about ourselves will come flooding in. Sometimes it’s not so grand, but rather subtle and sweet, a simple feeling of contentment. Either way the more we practice, the more frequent these moments come.

I’m excited to be on this yoga journey with you. Every day I experience the value of this practice. I am a practitioner first and foremost and a teacher second and I am humbled by the privilege to walk this path next to you. I hope that through yoga you can taste of that rich experience of yoga, transformation, and experiencing your True Self.



Bakasana Scott Moore photo

by Dallas Graham

Scott Moore is a senior teacher of yoga and mindfulness in the US (New York, Salt Lake City, LA) and abroad and the author of [Practical Yoga Nidra: The 10-Step Method to Reduce Stress, Improve Sleep, and Restore Your Spirit](#). When he's not teaching or conducting retreats, or traveling to teach, he also writes for Yogi Times, Conscious Life News, Elephant Journal, Mantra Magazine, Medium, and his own [blog](#) at scottmooreyoga.com. Scott also loves to run, play the saxophone, and travel with his wife and son. Check out his [yoga retreats and trainings in places like Tuscany, France, and Hong Kong](#), his [online Yoga Nidra Course](#) and his [Yoga Teacher Mentor Program](#). Scott just moved back to Salt Lake City after living in Southern France with his family.