

The digital experience

The benefits of online yoga teacher training. *By Sally Parkes*

form of learning tricky at the best of times. With dyslexia, for example, the time it takes to process information tends to be slower as does the retention of the information being presented. This often leads to chunks of information not registering mentally, as well as creating a potentially stressful experience for the student. This can also be the case for students who are particularly shy (this is often synonymous with learning challenges):

Questions to ask before signing up

Once you have considered what your learning needs are, you can then research different trainings to see what is going to work for you. Here a few questions you could ask when researching online YTTs to help you get the optimum online learning experience:

- Is the training live or is it pre-recorded?
- Are questions and discussions permitted?
- Will you receive the recordings of the trainings and does access to these expire?
- Is there coursework to complete to support the online teachings?



- Is the training certified?
- Will you receive a training manual, handouts or presentations?
- Will the information in the online chat box be shared?
- Are their support groups outside of the online meetings, via Facebook or WhatsApp, for example?

There are many online YTTs out there now so take your time and always do your research. Ask for recommendations from fellow yogis as well and research your teacher trainer's credentials. And, ultimately of course, do what feels right for you.

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Over the last year so many things have changed, not least the yoga industry. We have moved from in-person classes, workshops and trainings to being able to follow our favourite teachers via the convenience of our devices in our own homes. But is this an effective way to practice and learn?

Personally, I was always resistant to learning yoga online as I felt the learning came from the energy of the experience of being with your teacher and other students. I could not imagine how this would translate online. Fast forward to 2020, however, where teachers had little choice but to move yoga online. Now, many of us have realised there are many benefits of learning and teaching digitally.

Accessibility

As a yoga teacher trainer, the main benefits my students have shared with me is that the level of accessibility online yoga offers is far greater than in-person yoga events. Reasons for this include no travel time to the venue and lower costs (not only the classes and trainings, but also costs incurred from travel

and accommodation, if on an intensive training. Also, physical accessibility to studios can be an issue for some people with limited mobility or energy levels, for example. Practicing online does not present these issues.

I have also observed that mothers who are pregnant or have new babies are also more likely to attend classes regularly because it's simply easier and less exhausting. As a result, I've had many mums join my classes and courses that would not normally be able to attend. Feedback includes that it's just too unsettling to be away from home for the length of time it would take to attend a class or training, while some students are in a different country altogether, so don't have the choice of attending in person.

More time to learn

Then, of course, there's the different ways in which we all learn new skills. We all learn in different ways and it's completely normal for some of us to learn well through auditory instruction whilst others prefer visual and kinaesthetic techniques. Some of us also have learning challenges that can make any



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