

The Vinyasa Specialist

Course Excerpt

Introduction:

In this course, we will incorporate movement into the yoga asana experience. This approach to yoga will be a favorite among fitness professionals who like to teach group fitness classes.

As we already know, yoga asana is considered a form of static stretch. But there is another popular form of Hatha yoga training called Vinyasa. By definition, Vinyasa is any sequence of flowing movement that links one pose to the next and is performed in conjunction with the breath. Vinyasa is a dynamic, low-impact form of strength training, and some Vinyasas are quite aerobic. Vinyasa training will promote the following skills and understandings:

- ❖ the ability to maintain balance during movement
- ❖ adaptability to change (maintaining composure)
- ❖ body awareness in relationship to the environment
- ❖ mental preparation and mindfulness
- ❖ all movement is initiated from the body's core (center of gravity)
- ❖ ability to pay attention to detail (enhanced awareness)

The correct performance of Vinyasa requires a combination of strength, flexibility, power, precision, balance, timing, coordination, grace, and expression. With dedicated practice, you will come to the conclusion that Vinyasa (skilled movements performed in sync with the breath) is a way of practicing and developing mindfulness and effortlessness. This is not to say that Vinyasa doesn't require effort. What it means is that the most effective movement for the human body will always be the most economical (doesn't waste energy) and thus the most effortless.

Academy of Holistic Fitness

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Mind-body fitness skills that we learn in Vinyasa

◆ Concentration

Vinyasa training will improve your ability to concentrate and to focus on the task at hand. There is no time for the mind to wander or to become bored, because the body is continually moving and the mind must continue to direct the nuances of moment-to-moment placement.

◆ Confidence

Vinyasa boosts self-esteem and builds confidence. It promotes strength of character along with strength of the body. You will experience a sense of success whether you master the Vinyasa or simply perform the sequence *adequately*.

◆ Power and Precision

Vinyasa training will help your body develop power and precision. 'Power' refers to strength combined with force and effectiveness. Power is the result of control, poise, and precision of movement. 'Precision' means performing a designated action successfully and exactly. Precision is the result of distinctly correct placement. Precision is the close cousin of 'Coordination' which refers to harmonious adjustments and interactions. These two terms (Precision and Coordination) indicate performance that is accomplished according to the rules of proper form.

Movements made with precision and coordination can be described as definite, sure, distinct, and absolutely correct. Power and Precision are associated with bold moves, firm resolve, and the utmost confidence in one's ability. The antithesis of Power and Precision are hesitation, wavering, faltering, unsteadiness, uncertainty, and insecurity.

◆ Grace and Artistic Expression

Vinyasa is a form of creative expression, a movement art. Grace refers to a quality of movement that involves beauty, charm, and refinement. Creativity through expressive movement is also a wonderful and satisfying therapeutic outlet.

◆ Excellence

Excellence in Vinyasa develops through practice, repetition, greater understanding of each pose, diligent attention to proper alignment, and participating with mindfulness. The Vinyasa student must be able to 'be in the moment,' but he must also be able to think ahead – to anticipate the transition into the next pose. Excellence in Vinyasa is found through simultaneous awareness of the parts (individual poses) and the whole (how the poses are linked; how they fit together into the totality of the Vinyasa).

All of these qualities and skills will gradually produce postural changes that manifest in the students' bodies. For example, a confident individual carries himself very differently from an individual who lacks confidence.

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