

## How to find the right Yoga teacher?

I am often asked by beginners about how to evaluate a Yoga Teacher?

The following is the "CALM check list." These factors are basic criteria that your Yoga Instructor should meet before you continue on to a second Yoga class.

CALM gets its name from four main factors: Communication, Assist, Listen, and Modification. For the right Yoga teacher, you should be answering with a "yes" to all questions.

? Communication: Does your Yoga teacher talk to you, and other students, in a manner of mutual respect? Can you ask a question during class time?

Does your teacher show compassion for you and other students? Does your Yoga teacher take the time to lead you through a guided meditation or relaxation? Meditation and relaxation are major aspects of Yoga practice.

There are Yoga teachers who just want to get "their workout" done. Beware of Yoga teachers, who are so important, they don't have time for you.

Some students love this air of superiority and, unfortunately, some people love abuse. If you want to learn Yoga, you need an open line of communication with your Yoga teacher.

? Assist: Does your teacher care about your form? Will your teacher give you a verbal or physical assist during your Yoga class? Are props encouraged in your Yoga classes?

Some students never have major problems with alignment and some do, but if your teacher doesn't give verbal cues, what does that tell you?

? Listen: Does your Yoga teacher take the time to listen to your feedback? Is your teacher "in the moment" with the class?

Once in a while, there is a Yoga instructor who runs, "The-it's-all-about-me-show." You are not going to learn anything from this type of teaching. Beginners will be put at risk, trying to keep up with a seasoned Yoga teacher who doesn't explain anything.

? Modification: Does your Yoga teacher allow modifications and props? If your teacher discourages props, you are in the wrong place.

Some students will need props for life depending upon their range of motion. Just because a teacher can do a posture without props, doesn't mean every student can.

Summary: Stay away from abusive Yoga teachers, and if you are attracted to abuse, there is always professional help. Some students crave "the stern, but loving parent" types. They will push you harder, but how much pushing do you really need?

Respect is a two way street, and you deserve as much respect as your Yoga teacher does. Let common sense be your guide. You should feel good after a Yoga class, and you might even feel muscle soreness days after a vigorous class.

Make sure your Yoga teacher meets the above criteria before making a commitment.

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### About the Author

Paul Jerard, is a co-owner and the director of Yoga teacher training at Aura Wellness Center in North Providence RI. He has been a certified Master Yoga teacher since 1995. He is a master instructor of martial arts. He teaches Yoga, martial arts, and fitness to children, adults, and seniors in Providence. Recently he wrote: Is Running a Yoga Business Right for You? For Yoga students, who may be considering a new career as a Yoga teacher.