

To Yin or Not to Yin

By George Zarnowski of *Wind of Prana*

It is not a question but a necessity to keep our mind, body, and spirit balanced. We lead a very Yang lifestyle and practice and teach mostly Yang Yoga, but Yang without Yin is not complete and rather unhealthy. We need both Yin and Yang, in our lifestyle and in our Yoga practice. They are opposites but include each other. One would not exist without the other.

As for Yoga practice, there is bit of a Yin in Yang Yoga classes as there is bit of a Yang in Yin Yoga classes. Due to the nature of both, having some Yin in Yang is much more forgiving than mixing Yang with Yin during the Yin classes. Yin Yoga classes are practiced with muscles which were not warmed up, as we generally do not use muscles in Yin Yoga. Yin poses are held for much longer periods of time and as we stress the connective tissue, we do experience discomforts for longer periods of time too. The initial discomfort is felt in a physical layer first, but it permeates into more subtle layers of our bodies. Discomfort might generate a pain, a fear or an anxiety, or even a panic. It all depends how on the teacher prompts the students to bring the pose into their bodies and how well their students were prepared to accept the pose and to what depth.

When lead by Yin certified and experienced teacher, Yin Yoga practice awakens the Yin organs, the Yin energy, and the Yin qualities of our spirits and will provide the whole missing aspect of our existence. But if led by a teacher who does not have the knowledge of Yin principles, and the skills and wisdom of how to apply these while working with students, Yin Yoga can cause much more than a discomfort. It can cause an injury, possibly a serious and a lasting one. It can affect physical body but also emotions, with effects lasting for much longer.

Yin Yoga becomes very popular and mostly not because of its benefits but because it is a novelty in the global Yoga movement where practicing what the original yogis developed over the thousands of years is not enough anymore. Yin poses are few and this gives an impression to some teachers that learning them is enough to engage in Yin Yoga. There are also Yin Yoga courses aimed at a quick way to become certified. Our Yin Yoga certification is thorough with emphasis on its purpose, principles, techniques, connection with subtle body, especially, meridians, dantians, regulatory channels and ahimsa, not to harm the practitioners. We offer these courses periodically, so if interested, please check when the next course is scheduled, on our website: WindOfPrana.com