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Checked In or Checked Out Yoga

Most of us are familiar with the fact that yoga is a mind body class or program but what does that mean? One of the main goals of yoga is to deepen your ability to connect with what is going on right now. We want to connect with what is going on inside our bodies, what is going on inside our breath and connect with what is going on with our feelings, emotions, thoughts and beliefs. We are trying to check inwards. This, however, is tricky. We are so used to repressing feelings, ignoring body signs, rolling along with endless trains of thought and have no idea how, where, and when to breathe. Now we come to class and have to undo that all in an hour. We try, but resort to going through the motions of the poses while our thoughts move from what was to what will be to what the person beside us is wearing...and we move into Checked Out Yoga.

Next time, instead of allowing your experience to be a Checked Out Yoga Class try Checked In instead. Make a point to try one of the following tips. Just one. See what happens and does that help you deepen your experience.

- Try to just focus on the sounds in the room to bring you into the present. Sound is strongest sensation to remind you where you are. So the next time someone coughs, groans or snores, thank them for the gift they have given you to bring you back to yoga.
- Feel what is going on inside your body when your mind wanders. Feel your feet on the ground, the weight of your limbs, the ease, the discomfort, the gift of sensation.
- Pay attention to cues and adjustments? Why did the instructor give you that cue or adjustment? What do they see that you are missing and are they correct? They may have more training, but they are not in your body. How do you FEEL after an adjustment and is it right for you at this moment in time?
- Watch how your breath changes throughout the class. Is your breath more open in the right nostril during the beginning of the class and left at the end of the class? Without thinking of why, or if it is wrong or right, just inquire, become curious and intrigued.

We have an opportunity beyond lengthening and stabilizing to learn how we move and breathe, prevent injuries, find our edge and discover our potential. Become Checked In.

Namaste,

Suzette O'Byrne

Flow Training & Yoga

Heavens Elevated Fitness - Offsite Program Director - The Glencoe Club

Yoga Alliance Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher