

HEALTH FITNESS FOOD MEDICATION HOME WORK NATURE RELATIONSHIPS SPIRITUALITY
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YOGA.JOURNAL.COM

yoga

JOURNAL

Invite quiet
10 poses for
turning within

Calm TO THE core

Yoga can transform
your response to stress

Open-hearted warrior:
5 ways to **stand strong**

1 pose to open
hips and shoulders

10 steps for
staying healthy
this winter

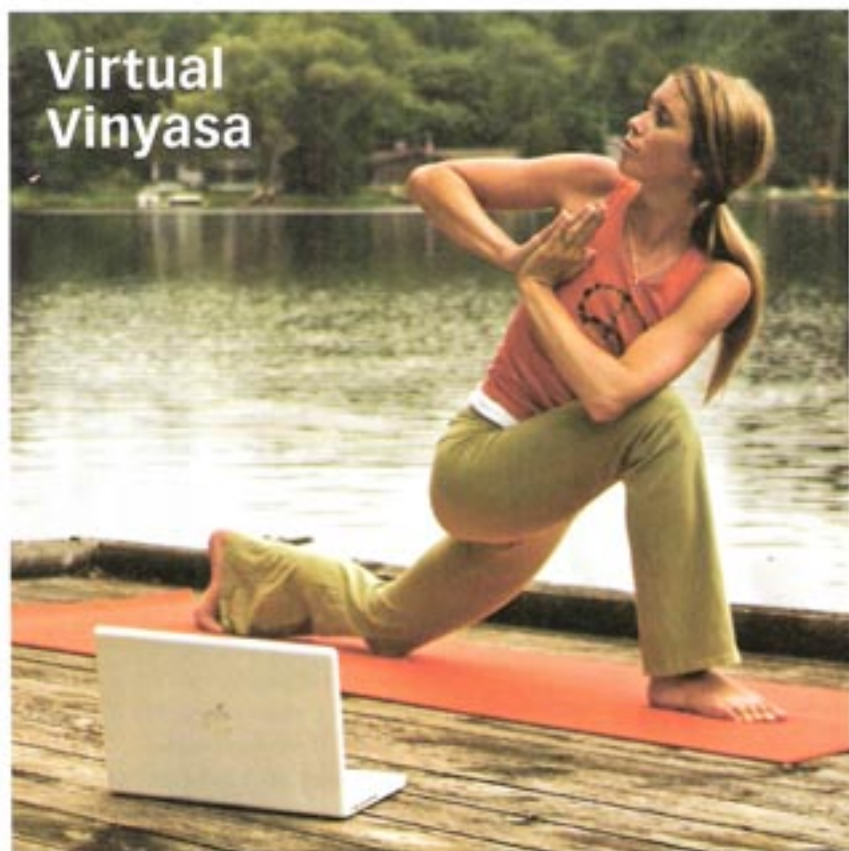
soften your heart
with devotional practice



PLUS
UNLEASH YOUR
CREATIVE SIDE



community

Virtual
Vinyasa

Expand your practice beyond the studio walls with Internet-based asana classes.

LUX LAND, A FULL-TIME MUSICIAN and mother living in Grand Rapids, Michigan, would have a hard time getting to yoga class if it weren't for modern technology. Like many of us, Land (pictured above) has a busy schedule that doesn't always jibe with that of her favorite studio. Now, thanks to the Internet, Land instead practices daily with Chaz Rough, a teacher and website developer who creates weekly podcasts and makes them available online at yogamazing.com.

"I stumbled on Chaz's site a few months ago, and I was so excited," Land says, calling the classes a "huge blessing" in her chaotic life of touring and motherhood. Recently, on a trip to Las Vegas, she set up her computer outside her Airstream trailer and practiced beneath towering red rocks and a wide, blue western sky.

Online yogis are able to do yoga whenever and wherever they can, be it in living rooms, on lawns, or, for those logging on for workplace routines, from office chairs. With just an Internet connection, a computer, and a space for a yoga mat, a yogi anywhere in the world can practice nearly any style of hatha yoga, pranayama, meditation,

OFF LINE

POLITICS & POSES Arianna Huffington, editor of the online Huffington Post, and Seane Corn, renowned vinyasa flow teacher, went to the Democratic National Convention in August and created a lounge for attendees to "unplug and recharge" with complimentary yoga, bodywork, and more.

Sara Avant Stover taught yoga to conventioners and blogged about the DNC on yogajournal.com. She wrote:

"I humbly took my place at the end of a labyrinthine line, which snaked for 1.5 miles through parking lots and fields. My peeps and I looked at one another, the same question running through our minds: 'Should we turn back?'"

"The big question. The one that we all must ask whenever called to move beyond our comfort zone and trust in a feeling even when we don't know what the outcome will be. No. We cannot turn back, we concurred.

"Something was stirring deep within us... A renewed faith in possibility. A remembrance of the power to change. An unprecedented bridging of worlds—whether that's yoga and politics, Republicans and Democrats, or the young and the elderly. Something or someone was sewing one fabric out of many threads once again."

Read more and talk about how your yoga practice affects your worldview at blogs.yogajournal.com/yogabuzz.

and more from the convenience of her own home, on her own schedule, and for a fraction of the cost of studio classes.

And it solves the problem of overcrowding. Students were being turned away from Mia Taylor's popular kriya yoga classes in Walnut Creek, California, before her husband, Steven, created the online Yoga Learning Center in 2002 to make a regular practice more accessible. Taylor's students are now able to take her class without even going to the studio. Six

years later, thousands have logged on to take one of its 60 yoga, meditation, and mind-body classes.

My Yoga Online (myyogaonline.com)—a site based in Vancouver, Canada, offers more than 100 yoga classes at five levels taught by 29 instructors. It specializes in video and audio streaming: Files are stored on remote servers and "streamed" to personal computers for one-time viewing; membership provides unlimited viewing. At yogajournal.com, as well as at

yogadownloads.com and yogamazing.com, you can find podcasts: regularly scheduled multimedia downloads that can be transferred to MP3 players.

Many sites entice viewers with free demos and streams, and primarily sell downloads of individual classes or offer membership (running around \$10 per month) for access to archived classes and regular podcasts.

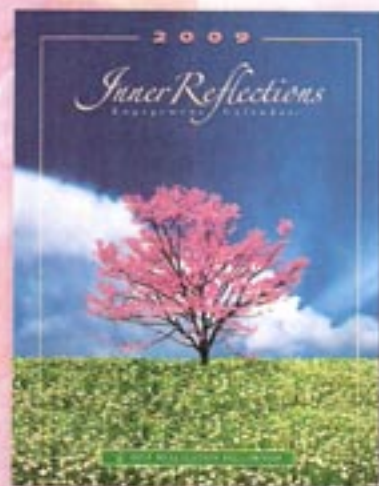
Rough's site, YogAmazing, is based in Louisville, Kentucky, and boasts more than 6.8 million downloads from iTunes since going live in 2005. Rough, the only teacher on the site, posts one free video class on his website each week and sells previous classes for \$1.99 each.

As a teacher, Rough says the virtual classroom is a blast. From sequences for cyclists to asana for fertility, more classes mean more chances for students to sample content. And teachers are able to reach more students—including those who might be too intimidated or unmotivated to go to a studio.

Nevertheless, even yogis who practice to podcasts admit that yoga on a monitor can't replace a studio class. Practicing in front of a computer also doesn't offer that sense of being in a calming, sacred space created with the specific intention of practicing yoga. Additionally, for some, practicing while plugged in is counter-intuitive, if not impossible.

The biggest drawback? "Obviously, there isn't a certified yoga instructor in your living room with you," says Yoga Learning Center's Taylor. Neesha Zollinger, an instructor for the Jackson Hole, Wyoming-based Yoga Today, which has at least 350 one-hour classes on its site, agrees: "In the studio I can see where people could use adjustments," she says. In a virtual classroom, of course, she doesn't enjoy that luxury. "As a teacher, I have to know the main tendencies of misalignment instead of being there seeing it in the pose."

Yet overall, says Zollinger, the pros of online yoga outweigh the cons. Kim Whitman, Yoga Today's executive producer, concurs. "The one thing we can all agree on is that more people practicing yoga is a good thing." BROOKE HEWES



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