

So, what is Yoga Certification and Registration?

The topic of yoga certification and registration is one that confuses many – not only students, but often teachers as well. I have written this article to hopefully shed some light on this topic.

First, certification and registration are two different things. A teacher may be certified, but not necessarily registered. There are also many people who teach yoga who are neither certified nor registered.

It is up to the individual states to regulate professional requirements related to services provided to the public. In that regard, there are no states that require a yoga teacher to be certified or registered. This surprises many people and it means that it is up to the individual student to determine whether certification or registration is meaningful to them. Additionally, it is also up to the individual teacher to decide whether certification and registration is important to them as professionals serving the community.

With that in mind, there is only one recognized professional association in the US that certifies and registers yoga teachers and yoga schools. That association is the Yoga Alliance.
<http://www.yogaalliance.org>

Certification by a teacher represents a commitment by the teacher to be responsibly trained prior to teaching yoga. Registration with the Yoga Alliance represents a professional commitment by the teacher to support an organization that is committed to achieving standards and education related to yoga for those teaching yoga, or those who train the teachers.

There are many teachers that choose to be certified but do not register with the Yoga Alliance – and this does not necessarily make them less qualified to teach yoga. This is an individual teacher's choice. However, to the student seeking a qualified yoga teacher, the registered status may also serve as an additional level of comfort concerning the training and qualification. You can find out if a teacher is registered through the Yoga Alliance web site.

It may also surprise some people to know that because states do not regulate standards for yoga teachers or yoga schools, essentially anyone can choose to certify someone. The question becomes whether that certification is recognized. I have found on the Internet web sites that will offer certification for \$30-40 dollars and with little or no classroom or training experience.

That is where the Yoga Alliance comes in. The Yoga Alliance certifies the programs of yoga schools. Yoga schools that the Yoga Alliance certifies meet specific requirements and guidelines (more information may be found on their web site). Please note that a yoga school and a yoga studio are not necessarily the same thing. A yoga school may also be a yoga studio, but a yoga studio is not necessarily a yoga school. A yoga school trains teachers. A yoga studio has yoga teachers that teach classes to students.

A yoga school that has had its teacher training program certified by the Yoga Alliance is designated as RYS (Registered Yoga School). A yoga teacher that wants to be certified by the Yoga Alliance as RYT (Registered Yoga Teacher) must complete a teacher training at an RYS. The minimum training hours required to be certified by the Yoga Alliance as an RYT is 200 hours.

In summary, it is not necessary for a teacher to be an RYT to teach yoga. However, if a teacher has RYT following their name then they have completed a certified program from an RYS, and that teacher is both certified and registered to teach yoga. It is also important to note that if someone holds RYT status, they are required and committed to Continuing Education (CE) hours to maintain that status.

I hope that this helps to clarify this confusing topic. Do not hesitate to email or call if you have any questions or would like more information.

namaste'
Lamont

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