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THE ONLINE BUSINESS OF

Yoga

Words: Caroline Shola Arewa

The questions many Yoga Teachers and studio owners are asking right now are; When can we re-open? How can we open? Will we even open again? I know many teachers who can't wait to get back to the studio and others tell me they will never step foot in a studio again. These are challenging times and tough questions.

All through lockdown yogis have found new ways to practice, we have gathered together online, created connection and shared the magic of yoga in totally new ways. From Bali to Brixton, even without entering the studios we love, our practice has continued. We have sipped on coconut juice and green smoothies at home, read magazines like this one, and felt uplifted in times of change.

In just a few short months things have changed forever, some studios may have re-opened, however what these times have taught us all, is that getting your yoga business online is more important than ever and has some great advantages.

So allow me to share with you some of the advantages to taking your yoga business online and some tips for exactly how you can do it.



CAROLINE SHOLA AREWA,

known as the Energy Doctor, is a leading figure in the worlds of Spirituality and Wellness. She's delivered her award-winning Energy work internationally for over 30 years. Shola is a psychologist and the author of five books, including bestsellers *Opening to Spirit* and *Energy 4 Life*. Shola is the founder of *Enlightened Entrepreneurs*; she trains and mentors Yoga Teachers, Wellness Coaches and Heart centred Entrepreneurs worldwide. Working with Shola leaves you feeling Energised and Empowered.

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ADVANTAGES

Location

As a Mentor to yoga teachers, one of the biggest complaints I constantly hear is how tiring travelling to and from classes really can be. It's stressful and energy depleting. Teachers often feel bad charging for the extra time spent travelling, yet still need to get around and it is not only time consuming, but can be exhausting too. Online, you can teach several classes a day and not have to travel at all. So the freedom it gives is a great advantage. And of course you can take classes with your favorite teachers all around the world. And students can join you from anywhere that has a good internet connection.

Recording

Students can watch several times, at their own leisure. This adds tremendous value. As a teacher you can build an archive of classes that can be replicated, or used for promotion, or bundled and offered together.

So if you are wondering whether to charge less for online classes, there is no need, unless you are really offering less value. You can certainly charge the same, then create and mention the extra value of having access to the classes to watch afterwards. You can house the classes online, privately on Youtube or on Vimeo and only your students will have access.

Increased Mindfulness

Many students enjoy online classes because they can be more attentive and focused. There are less distractions from others in the class; this allows space for simply being mindful. Some students feel self conscious and intimidated in big classes, so they actually prefer the online experience. Learning while staying in the comfort of your own home is bliss for some students of yoga.

TIPS FOR CREATING A GREAT ONLINE EXPERIENCE

It's not so hard to create your own online studio, numerous yoga teachers have been doing this for many years, some are just starting out and others, like me are still a bit camera shy, but we still get out there and do it anyway. So my first tip is start before you are ready, that's what I did. Here are some more tips to help you build your confidence.

Lighting

I am not a film production expert, but I do know you need good lighting, and daylight is the best. If you don't have lots of sunlight streaming into your room, you are going to need some professional lights. And ring lights seem to be a favorite choice. They range from little ones that clip onto your phone, for doing Facebook and Instagram Lives that promote your classes, right through to eighteen-inch ring lights that come with a stand and tripod for your phone. These are really useful, lightweight, portable lights. They are used a lot for social media. Okay, lights on and you are almost ready to go!

Camera

The cameras on your phone, laptop or tablet, are excellent these days. The quality is really high, so that is all you need. However if you do want a bit of an upgrade the Logitech HD 1080p is the one I have used. It comes highly recommended and attaches by USB. I don't use it as often now though as built in cameras really are good.

Recording studio

A good microphone is an important piece of kit, and they are inexpensive. Do a search online and find a good one for less than thirty pounds.

Backdrop

Backdrops are often forgotten, and can make all the difference when facilitating active listening that supports students in their yoga practice. Having a busy background may cause your participants to easily become distracted by stuff, and find it hard to concentrate on the yoga. Clear your space, use a blank wall, or buy a big banner with only your logo on it. You can also upload your logo to Zoom and use it as a background. If you want to look more professional, backgrounds are a way to enhance the look and feel of your online classes.

Editing software

The days of needing heavily edited, super produced, really high quality video is, in the most part over. It's not necessary. But if you want to use your videos later, maybe bundle them to offer as a separate product, then they will need to be edited. If you are using a Mac, you will have Imovie already installed. It is a bit of a learning curve, but well worth it. If this is going too far for you, ask your children or hire a freelancer. Before you know it, you will be a pro.

Whenever you choose to return to your studio, if you are well set up online, you now have another powerful way to serve your students, and they have more choices. People will always want face-to-face Yoga classes, but they will also continue to enjoy the powerful work you do in your yoga classes online.