



Christina Leon

Colorized Cycling: Bringing the Benefits of Yoga to Indoor Cycling

Yoga has been around for years, but has been gaining in popularity over the past several years, and do you know why? Yoga allows people to let go of all thoughts while focusing their attention inwards. It is the one time in a person's day where it is OK to stop multi-tasking, turn off their cell phone, and be present in the moment.

Yoga is an opportunity for introspection and inner awareness. A good yoga session gives you a more positive outlook on life, a sense of balance, and a feeling of internal harmony. Greater mental performance and clarity gives you a clearer sense of priorities. Most importantly, your yoga practice is something that you do just for yourself. It is a personal affirmation that you are a worthwhile human being, worth spending time with, and worthy of being cared for.

Yoga is the practice of uniting with the Divine. All of us have different ideas of the Divine. Whatever your version – a supreme being that exists in the heavens, a Hindu goddess, a universal consciousness or whatever – yoga is a tool with which you can build a closer relationship with It, Him or Her and with yourself. Yoga is a meditative practice that can help you experience your God in your own way.

Indoor cycling has many benefits as well. Cycling is an excellent cardio-respiratory activity with benefits similar to jogging and running. Fun and motivational, it is a good alternative for those who do not like to jog or run. Some of the benefits are a decrease of body fat, increase of lean body mass, and a great weight management program – in conjunction with a well-balanced diet. Another very important benefit of indoor cycling is its rhythmic cadence and how that allows a participant to slip into brain patterns conducive to suggestibility and meditation. Unlike running or jogging, cycling is a non-weight bearing exercise and an excellent choice for cross-training, post-rehabilitation exercise and an alternative for overuse injuries. Participants can adjust their levels of intensity and degrees of resistance to match their goals and abilities.

Combining elements from both yoga and cycling creates a mind/body experience that will leave riders with a sense of peace, focus and energy. The colorized cycling program is the first and only program of its kind. The focus is on the physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual and social components of wellness. It is a complete wellness program.

Colorized cycling incorporates color-changing lighting, meditative mental focus, breath work, varying degrees of physical intensity (interval, strength, aerobic, etc), and positive affirmations to affect the mind and body.

Imagine the following description of a colorized cycling class: The experience starts in a dark room, riders are guided to close their eyes and focus on their breath. Release all thoughts, all worries and stressors they have had so far in their day. Release all anxiety about what is still to come in. All that matters is the present moment. After a warm-up period, the room turns red. Riders are guided to look at the color, "breathe-in" the color. The instructor will then give some words or phrases to focus the mind onto issues pertaining to the energy center. Affirmations that might be used in red are: "I am secure, I am grounded." Riders visualize riding through the center of the earth (earth is the element associated with the first energy center) there is heat, lava, fire. They feel the intensity in this place, feeling powerful and energized.

Each color has physical and emotional issues tied to it and can be incorporated:

- **Red** is power, grounding, security, earth and health.
- **Orange** is creativity, pleasure, connection to others and emotion.
- **Yellow** is metabolism, confidence, self esteem and drawing positive energy to oneself.
- **Green** is balance, healing, love, kindness and forgiveness.
- **Blue** is tranquility, calmness, truth, and living one's truth.
- **Violet** is meditative, inspirational, humble and tolerant.
- **White** is clean, pure, and protecting.

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The intensity of the ride varies on the instructor, but typically it is an interval ride. There are climbs, sprints, flats, and hills. The main difference physically with this type of ride is that the focus is internal, and the intensity is internal and up to each individual. In the third energy, for example, is the power-center of the body and this is typically the most physically intense part of the ride. Don't be fooled, mind/body exercise does not mean low-energy exercise. This is a physical practice that will incorporate mental, physical, emotional and spiritual components to create a complete wellness program.

Colorized cycling is the incorporation of color healing via color-changing lights, affirmations and indoor cycling to open energy through the body. Teacher training, lighting and everything you need to create this experience in your facility is available to you. **CS**

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