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Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy and Forms

Introduction:

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is widely accepted as a necessity in any professional capacity. Teachers and healthcare workers in many disciplines already engage in CPD. The principle behind CPD is that every active Shanti Yoga teacher should be engaged in a program of ongoing professional development. CPD increases the profile of SYTA members to the public as yoga teachers who maintain the highest professional standards.

To ensure quality CPD, SYTA regularly conducts its own seminars, sometimes in collaboration with other providers of quality professional education. More and more meaningful education is taking place outside the confines of traditional academic institutions and we hope that our work in wholistic education helps create new life strategies for the public. At the same time, it also offers new approaches towards self-sufficiency in the growing field of mind-body health and natural living. New courses are offered each year and we recommend that you keep yourself updated with these developments.

Yoga involves development of the whole person together with realisation of the self. We have chosen a profession which involves lifelong, ongoing studies in personal and professional development. There is a need for a continuous process of learning and updating.

The purpose of CPD is to give all yoga teachers the opportunity to update their skills and knowledge. As developments in all areas of health are rapidly expanding, a CPD program is regarded as desirable in order for yoga teachers to deliver the best Shanti Yoga service.

For this reason, and to ensure that our members are recognised as "professional" by their peers, SYTA has introduced a requirement for members to earn at least 50 CPD points per annum of membership, with evidence of CPD undertaken to be provided each year at renewal, commencing at renewal 31 August 2011.

It is important to note that many yoga teachers already engage in professional development on an on-going basis. SYTA does not wish to change this, only to formalise the process within a structure by which the diversity of yoga styles and traditions are respected and fostered while increasing the professionalism of yoga teaching generally.

Members should record their CPD activities on the attached form to be submitted at renewal as evidence of CPD undertaken.

Answers to commonly asked questions about CPD

What activities constitute CPD?

Any activity or program that develops your knowledge, experience, skill, understanding or professionalism of Shanti Yoga or yoga teaching. In short, you must be able to answer the following question with a “YES”: *Does this program or activity make me a better yoga teacher?*

How does the CPD points system work?

Points are allocated to actual hours of content, not including lunch or refreshment breaks, or other non-content time, according to the table below. However, different activities earn different points, depending on whether they are “core” to Shanti Yoga teaching, or “related” to yoga teaching. Higher points are also allocated for “contact” programs and activities compared to “non-contact” programs and activities.

How can I decide if it is core to yoga teaching or related to yoga teaching?

“Core” to yoga teaching means central to yoga or yoga teaching, including asana, pranayama, meditation, study of yogic philosophy, anatomy and physiology, and teaching techniques.

“Related” means related to yoga teaching by tradition, relevance or application, including related philosophies and spiritual practices (eg: Ayurveda and Buddhism) and related lifestyle practices (eg: yoga practices at Nirvana Wellness Retreat).

Contact and non-contact activities

Contact activities are characterised by face-to-face contact in a program or activity with specific learning objectives, for example, a workshop or seminar. However SYTA recognises that members living in rural and remote locations may not have access to contact programs and some yoga teachers may not find the programs available suitable to their training or experience. Therefore, a range of non-contact activities are also accepted as CPD such as participating in correspondence, on-line skype, video and DVD programs.

N.B: If a non-contact program offers a means of assessment, such as an exam to measure compliance, then the program may be treated as a contact program. For example, participating on an on-line or DVD course on yoga techniques for chronic lower back pain, qualifies as a “core” to yoga teaching activity but receives points at the “non-contact” level. If however, the on-line program allows participants to complete an exam and receive a certificate of completion, the program qualifies as a “contact” activity.

Can I spread the points over a period of time e.g. 3 years?

SYTA recommends that you complete your 50 hours of CPD activities each year, however, you can earn more points in one year.

Can I get points by attending another yoga teachers regular class

Attending another yoga teacher’s regular yoga or meditation class as a participant is partly personal practice and partly professional development, therefore it receives CPD points at a lower level (4 hours = 1 point) than attending a workshop or seminar which has specific learning objectives.

How will SYTA ensure that members report their CPD accurately?

The onus always remains on SYTA members to honestly and carefully report their CPD activities. Each year, SYTA will conduct a number of random audits of members’ CPD reporting. Members are expected to be able to easily substantiate the claims made on their CPD return.

Does maintaining first aid certification count towards CPD?

Maintaining a current First Aid certificate does not attract CPD points as this is already a basic requirement of membership.

Does my own yoga teaching count towards CPD?

Your own regular yoga teaching does not currently earn CPD points, however SYTA recommends 50 hours each year as being a minimum level of teaching for Full members.

Does mentoring count towards CPD?

Mentoring can be an important part of professional development. For this reason, SYTA allows the time spent being mentored to be counted as CPD. However being a mentor does not earn CPD points as this is similar to time spent teaching. Of course, mentoring records must be kept in order to claim hours of being mentored as CPD.

What if I train other teachers or run workshops or retreats?

Members who train other yoga teachers, or who are engaged in developing programs, workshops, seminars, retreats, etc, or who are involved in yoga-related research or authoring, can receive CPD points for the time they spend developing these programs provided they are logged on the CPD reporting form and the points claimed can be easily substantiated by the member if audited.

Do I have to earn CPD points if I'm not currently teaching?

Non-teaching members can maintain their membership from year to year without meeting the CPD requirement (and at a lower membership cost) by becoming an Associate member instead of a Full member. However Associate members do not have voting rights or access to SYTA insurance.

What happens if I do not have enough CPD point to renew my membership?

Membership is at four levels:

1. Benefactor
2. Full member i.e. Teacher/Supporter \$99
3. Associate: \$66
4. Friend: \$55

If at the time of renewal you have not gained enough CPD point to renew as a full teaching member, you will be granted membership at an associate level until you can provide the records of 50 CPD points. Please note that associate or friend members do not have access to SYTA insurance. To prevent having to cease teaching SYTA highly encourages you to upgrade your learning regularly.