

Blog on GDPR by Isabel Carter



As a Dru Yoga teacher I am often humbled by the level of trust my students place in me. They trust me with their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing; they trust me to keep them safe during class; and they trust me with their personal (and sometimes very personal) details.

It's a great privilege to be trusted in this way, so I feel it's only right that I take care of my students and their personal details to the best of my ability. It's for this reason that I am embracing the new GDPR (general data protection regulation) that comes into place on 25th May 2018.

At first glance, I must confess that I was somewhat overwhelmed by the GDPR information. However, being a good Dru Yogi, I did some breathing (3 sets of 10 kapalabhati to clear confusion and bring clarity, followed by 10 rounds of nadi shodhana to bring me back into balance and ready for action, in case you're interested!) and looked for the positives.

This is what I came up with ...

- ✓ I am proud to be a Dru Yoga teacher, part of a professional and respected organisation. I recognise GDPR as an opportunity to ensure that the service I offer my students is the best I can, upholding the values of Dru.
- ✓ By showing my students that I am GDPR compliant they can be assured that I am working to a high standard, and doing my utmost to protect their data.
- ✓ I've proved to myself that I can flow, rather resist change, and navigate my way through an enormous amount of information, honing in on what was relevant for me and my students. I found Garudasana a fabulous posture to help me pin point what was important, helping me to break the tasks down into 30 minute chunks, which I could then work on when I had a spare half hour. For me, this made the tasks less daunting and I was pleasantly surprised by how quickly I made progress.
- ✓ I have made a whole new set of friends at the ICO (Information Commissioners Office)! I've been on the phone to them so much over the last few weeks, asking for clarification and guidance, that I feel sure that I will get an invite to their Christmas party this year, ha ha. Joking apart, the ICO have been very helpful and if you get stuck give them a call on 0303 123 1113 (local call rate).

If you haven't already made a start on your GDPR, here are a few useful tips to get you started.

1. Check out the ICO's website (ico.org.uk) and their GDPR checklist. It's looks huge but once you get started you'll probably find that most of it doesn't apply to you, and it is a good starting point.
2. If in doubt, give the ICO a call – they are the people in the know!
3. Have a think about what information you keep about people. How do you protect it? What do you do with the information? Are there areas that could be improved?
4. Write out your own GDPR Statement. Include information such as what you do with student notes - how you use them, how you store and archive them, and how and when you destroy out of date notes. Mention whether or not you keep records electronically (if you do, you need to be registered with the ICO), and finally let people know how they can access the data you keep on them. Again, the ICO has guidelines and templates you can use to help you with this process.
5. If you send out e-shots or a newsletter, consider sending out an "Opt in to keep in touch" email, essential if you are emailing prospective students, rather than existing students, and / or if you send something out more than once a quarter.

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This list isn't exhaustive and every yoga business, just like every yoga teacher and student will be different, so please do keep abreast of all the latest GDPR information.

Still finding it overwhelming? There are all sorts of training opportunities available. Dru Yoga teacher Lucy Bannister is hosting some on-line training, do check it out [here](#).

I do hope this article has helped to take the edge off data protection, and given you some enthusiasm for a rather dry subject. Good luck!

Isabel

Isabel Carter is a Dru Yoga teacher trainer and provides CPD workshops in the Leeds area.

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