

# YOGI WRITINGS: Charles Glick

## YOGA: My fitness Strategy

Photos by Kathy Prekoski

Yoga is part of my fitness strategy preparing me for lifelong fitness. Physical fitness for me consists of four main forms of exercise: Weight bearing, cardiovascular, swimming. Since beginning my practice in yoga, I have seen great improvements in both my inner core strength and flexibility. Also, my other exercise regimens have become both easier and more productive, lifting weights is more enjoyable due to the fact that my muscles are more flexible and my recovery time is faster. I am also able to do weights and weight bearing exercises more often.

Additionally, when running, biking, jogging or walking long distance I do not feel nearly as tired or taxed during and after those activities, a direct result of the increased flexibility and inner core strength that practicing yoga has allowed me to gain. Yoga in addition to greatly increasing flexibility, is unique in all forms of exercise in that many yoga poses are able to allow the joints to stretch and the strengthening of muscles that traditional weight bearing exercises are not able to reach, such as the psoas, a muscle along



the side of the spine in the lumbar region, along with the sacrum: a bone at the base of the spine.

My initial interest in yoga was started thanks to my Mom, who being a person who has a keen interest in lifelong fitness and who instilled in me an understanding of the importance of exercise as part of a successful life began telling me of the many benefits of yoga. My motivation for willing to try yoga was to see how or if yoga would enable me to better reach my lifetime goal of near optimum physical fitness.

Throughout school, elementary through high school, I was in ok overall physical health, having exercised all of my life, my flexibility however was lacking. During high school fitness testing, touching my toes although possible was painful. I began to understand the importance of flexibility. Since starting yoga touching my toes has become really easy. In addition to attending yoga classes on a regular schedule I practice yoga on my own time as part of my fitness routine.

Yoga has allowed me to become more flexible, stronger and more relaxed, when core muscles are stronger and muscles are properly stretched, the effect is often times more energy and an overall more dynamic feeling of physical fitness. I intend to continue and to learn more about yoga throughout my life. The benefits are real and yoga will make anyone who utilizes yoga better at swimming, running, weightlifting and breathing, Yoga when practiced regularly will also help to improve posture. For those who have been exercising all of their lives, Yoga will compound your fitness and other forms of exercise. For those who sometimes exercise, Yoga will give them another form of exercise upon which to improve. For those who seldom exercise, yoga is a good place to start, which I believe will turn exercise for those individuals from a burden to perhaps a gateway into better physical fitness. That is why I recommend yoga for all who are willing to try

