

YOGI WRITINGS:

My Journey in Yoga: Dayna Crandall

In January 2012, at the age of 52, I started something new. Brenda says that we should all start something new after 50 and for me, it was yoga. I remember taking yoga in high school for a P.E. class and always falling asleep in savasana, but that was the extent of my previous yoga experiences. I was a runner. I worked out with weights. I tried to stay flexible. I was a busy mom and a teacher. Then a colleague at work was singing the praises of yoga and I decided to give it a try. I'd always been kind of a "stress mess", and the thought of breathing, focus and "calming" my mind was very appealing. I had been very sick for years!

I had acute mononucleosis for two months as an adolescent and have had a compromised immune system ever since. I spent years using different antibiotics, breathing treatments and sick days from work.

I started the yoga basics at our studio and felt very brave and accomplished for walking in and signing up and continuing to attend class without knowing anyone there. Everyone was very welcoming and friendly and I immediately felt at home. I felt right away that I had stumbled onto something very special. Sometimes when you live in a small town like Visalia, I have felt that we are deprived of some of the quality offerings that you might find in a bigger city or metropolitan area. I knew after only a few classes that this was one of those times when I was going to be lucky to live in Visalia. Brenda was so incredibly knowledgeable and such an observant, natural teacher that

it was going to be a positive and enlightening small town experience.

At times, I have not been as dedicated to practicing as I would like. There are weeks, especially at the beginning and ending of the school year, that I do not practice as much as I want to. My goal is to make a home-practice space and to challenge myself daily. I now look forward to all of my extended time off because I am more consistent at attending class. I can tell right away, both physically and mentally when I have not made time for my yoga practice. Only five years ago, I had to get a monthly massage for my tight upper back and neck. Now I never even notice any tightness in my body unless I don't make it to class for a week. When I am consistent in attending class and practicing at home, my constant colds and respiratory infections have almost disappeared. I have not been really sick or had to take lengthy antibiotic treatments for the last three years. I am directly crediting this to yoga, as it is the only significant change I have made to my lifestyle. I sleep better and I am stronger and I have more positive interactions in my relationships. I can confidently say that these positive changes are due to my yoga practice as well.

I know that I have only just begun this journey and I have so much to learn. The best part is that I'm okay with that and I have made some new friends who are very supportive and encouraging in this process. I hope to continue to grow emotionally, mentally and physically through my yoga practice.



I know that I am healthier, stronger and happier for it -
who could ask for more than that?