

# YOGI WRITINGS

Dorothy Stoltzfus

Photos by Linda Martin and Joe Stoltzfus

## Yoga and Me

My first awareness of something called "Yoga" probably occurred in the 60's. My first reaction was "This is some far eastern idea that has no relevance for my life".



I was a young mother of three young children and also working with my husband in our family business. Brenda was entertaining me with her stories of "Broom Sister" a product of her imagination and creativity. So "yoga" remained on the periphery of my consciousness for years.

When Brenda moved to Three Rivers many years later she began to take yoga classes. I became curious and began asking her questions about it. I asked so many questions that she arranged a small introductory class for me and her father plus a few other interested persons. Brenda expressed her deep interest in how yoga was helping her mentally and physically. I was impressed with her persistence and discipline in practicing one and a half hours every morning. I tried to emulate her but failed

and thus did not find much benefit from it.

Several years later on a visit to Brenda I attended classes Brenda was teaching. On the way home from class in Porterville I began to become aware of how good my body felt and how relaxed and calm my mind was. It felt so wonderful that I shared how I was feeling with Brenda. She said, "Mom, you are having a yoga high".

I was amazed. From then on I began to look for a yoga Class in PA near my home. I eventually found a class in the town of Leola. The hours were good for me and my husband and I hoped to live in this area in the future (we moved here this past summer). Our teacher is a special woman who in some ways is similar to Brenda with her gentle spirit and calm demeanor.

I have been attending classes there for approximately five years. I have also found the discipline to practice at home regularly. Brenda helped me by telling me to start out with five minutes a day. I gradually found myself doing much more. I usually do forty five minutes or more five days a week in addition to weekly classes.

Doing yoga has changed my life. After a few months I began to notice that I could walk up hills without stopping to catch my breath. My legs and my lungs were getting stronger. Later I noticed that I was losing weight and that I was able to control my BP with less medication. I rarely needed a Tylenol for aches and pains in my body. I began to feel a wonderful sense of well-being.

I began to seriously practice yoga when I was seventy five years of age.

I am now seventy nine. When I get lazy and do not want to do my practice I remind myself of how much it helps me and my practice becomes easier. I'm grateful to Brenda for introducing me to the practice of yoga and for encouraging me on the way.

