

YOGI WRITINGS:

Almost 15 years ago, a friend invited me to try a yoga class at Valley Yoga. It is easy for me to remember when I first started because it was a year before my husband and I adopted our daughter, Hope. She is will be 14 years old this year. I can't believe she is that old and I can't believe I have been practicing yoga at Valley Yoga and with Brenda that long! Valley Yoga would meet in a church and Brenda would bring everything in totes to the class and we would arrange our mats in a circle. She next moved to a place downtown on the second floor of an old building. Every class in the summer was "hot" yoga because the air conditioning wasn't very good. Valley Yoga has been in its current location for several years. I always have the goal of making it to a yoga class once a week. If I can't make that goal I will always try to find some time at home for a little yoga. My husband is always encouraging and when I am tired from a long day at work, he will say "go, you always feel better after practicing yoga".



When I started my yoga practice, I enjoyed the physical part of the poses. Over the years, my body has changed. I have had a frozen shoulder on each side, plantar fasciitis in a foot for some time, and added some weight. My shoulders are not as open as they used to be. My upper back is tighter than it used to be because of doing more computer work. Yoga allows me to be aware of my body and accept it for the way it is at the present time. Being a wife, mother, and a full time nurse, yoga has become important for my stress management. It gives me the opportunity to clear my mind. As soon as I sit and close my eyes, my body relaxes and I begin to quiet my mind and find peace in the chaos of life. I still enjoy the physical part of yoga but the mental distraction has become vital for managing stress. I always look forward to restorative night! I really believe yoga has given me health promoting benefits by boosting my immune system (I rarely get sick & don't have allergies) and emotional health and has kept my blood pressure down even with a family history and stressful job. I usually have no problem sleeping at night and I attribute that to yoga.

It's almost like Brenda can read my mind because her class always ends up just what my body needed on that day. I always feel better after a yoga practice. Brenda is able to guide me through the postures or asanas and adjust my body to enhance and personalize my practice. A few things I have learned from yoga: don't forget to breath, relax my throat, spread my toes, lift my inner arch, feel grounded, open my chest, and deepen my groins. I have learned that my body is not the same on each side and some days my balance is better than other days.

When I started my yoga practice, I didn't realize how it would help give me a body-mind connection and awareness. I plan on making yoga a lifelong practice, hopefully living a long and healthy life with peace of mind.

Namaste
Lynn Storseth

