

# YOGI WRITINGS: Taylor Theis

## Being In My Body: A Movement Pursuit



Today I am in La Honda, California. I'm on a bit of a west coast music tour with my partner, (Robert Meade) beginning in Eugene, OR (my home for now), traveling South to attend my little brother's wedding in Santa Barbara, CA. I am sitting down, on a wooden bench, tucked away into the tree's, with the faint sound of Robert strumming his guitar to my right. I am quiet and alone, just long enough to gather my reflections and write to you all about my experience as a human/dancer/teacher of movement/graduate student/aspiring yogini.

Going on three years ago, I set off to Eugene, OR in pursuit of my Masters of Fine Arts in Dance at the University of Oregon. I am finishing my degree this year whilst teaching three courses each term in a variety of idioms. Movement is a medium that has paralleled my intellectual growth; I have been dancing since I was two years old. My mother (Debbie Theis-Phillips) was a dancer, so she invited dance to enter my life early and equipped me with the tools necessary to be consistent in my pursuit. My position in life these days is one of leadership, demonstration, and encouragement. I draw from stand-out people, whom have shaped my understanding of being a human and offering goodness.

When it comes to teaching, I daily consider the teachings of my dance instructor and mentor Susan Pallas; I am continually inspired by my first yoga instructor, whom serves as a steward of clarity and a lived-body/lived-practice through demonstration, Brenda Proudfoot. When I consider how I want to offer as a mentor, I consider my Mother's stability, for she has instilled within me a "use the sense that the good lord gave you" mantra. And when I consider how I want to offer as a humble occupant of the world, I consider my Father's kind, open-minded, easeful spirit and also his ability to grow and change, his mantra when asked, "Dad, what do you think I should do?" is met with conviction, "Sleep when you're dead!"

I am not separate from my dancing self and now I am practicing being a teacher, where my teachings are about others and less centered on my personal gain from each experience. Through my practice of being in my body, I can answer questions about my bodily experience and share them. I gather all of my history, which are the experiences gained from being in my body for 27 years, and give them away. Being a teacher of movement, allows me to articulate with language what my bodily experience is, and offer suggestions of how others may navigate their path. Accepting my history, combined with the acknowledgement that the future is uncertain, is perhaps the most intriguing thread woven into the practice of yoga (union with the divine).

I peer down at my toes, to notice their expressivity; my yoga toes are strong, articulate, and supportive. This is but a gift from my yoga practice and something that sets me apart as a dancer. My practice continues to evolve and transform, though a common thread continues to be expression through my body, with my body.

