

I discovered hot yoga in August of 2013 and absolutely fell in love with it. I have never considered myself a jock or even the least bit athletic, but I am definitely hooked. Hot yoga is by far the healthiest addiction I have ever indulged in.

Practicing hot yoga regularly diminishes my chronic lower back pain, regulates my ever-changing moods, and has dramatically improved my posture! As I went from a size 18 to a size 14, my body slowly but surely grew toned and stronger. I sleep better, eat better, and most importantly, behave better due to increased self-awareness. I stopped drinking alcohol completely because I don't like sweating it out in the next class. Yoga steadily holds my mind and body accountable in places where I had lost control in the past.

Sometimes I am the largest person practicing in the studio. But I hold my head high and refuse to sit down, give up, or feel intimidated. I strive to set a good example for yogis everywhere! It is NEVER too late to start practicing yoga, no matter your weight or fitness level. Like Salvador Dali said, "Have no fear of perfection - you'll never reach it." Yoga is not a competition.

I currently practice a variety of hatha yoga with 90 minute sessions at 105 degrees heat and 40% humidity. Studies show that hot yoga and regular yoga have the same benefits, but like one of my most challenging instructors said - "our sweat is like sacred prayer beads." I try to go at least three times a week to detox and release the kraken. Although I constantly struggle with my balance, on the bright side, I am quite flexible and limber.

Sometimes my whole body trembles and my breath rattles, but I push forward and persevere, breathing deeply - inhaling positivity, love, and light, and exhaling all the negativity which plagues me with anxiety and depression. A feeling of calm serenity washes over me after every class and I know that It's All Good, even when I come out of class looking like a hot mess with my hair and clothing drenched with sweat.

Yoga provides me with an opportunity to temporarily disconnect from society, disappear from the world, and most importantly, let--it--go. Some of the more contemplative poses open my blocked chakras and occasionally make me cry. It is OKAY to cry during yoga. It is just a part of the healing process. Sometimes I cry tears of frustration, heartache, or even guilt, but with every challenging posture, I release negative energy and toxins and learn to let go and move on.

And I leave class with my endorphins humming, a sense of euphoria, and a fresh perspective on life. All the little things that bothered me before suddenly melt away, and unicorns poop rainbows and flutter freely in the heavens above.

I plan on becoming a yoga instructor this year so I can heal others the way hot yoga has healed me, from the inside-out.

Namaste.