



Our **CONGRATULATIONS** to Greg Ormson on being recognized for his innovative work to improve the health & wellbeing of motorcyclists.

In addition to the *Yoga Magazine* article & cover, his Yoga & Leather program at *Superstition Harley-Davidson* will be presented in an upcoming issue of *HOG Magazine*.

Read more from and about YogiG at his website <https://gregoryormson.com>

from his blog..

Every yogi is the same. But every yogi has been injured in their own way. Debbie McGregor, passionate yogi and motorcyclist, was first injured at age 11. It happened in a rodeo mishap when she was locked in a cramped chute with a panicked horse. A broken back sustained in a motorcycle accident in her early 30's became major injury number two, and she suffered a broken neck in a car accident during her early 50's.

"When I read about YOGA AND LEATHER: Yoga for Bikers," she said, "I couldn't believe it; something combining my two passions, I had to come."

After her car accident, Debbie was told she'd be paralyzed from the neck down, but she resolved to walk and was determined to ride her Harley Davidson motorcycle again. She invested in physical therapy and added yoga as a daily routine. Three years after the accident, Debbie is doing yoga and motorcycling around the country. "It's unexplainable how much yoga does in the path of healing. The more I do, the more I want and the more I heal," she said.

Paul, a 79 year old retired Chicago police officer, is another dedicated rider of Harley Davidson motorcycles but new to yoga. Like Debbie, he found his way to YOGA AND LEATHER, and considers it healing balm and an island of peace.

Recently, Paul's 900 pound motorcycle tipped over and landed on his foot. He hobbled into class wearing big boots and blue

jeans, but did what he could. "I need it, it's good. I have to do it," he said. And he did.

Debbie and Paul signify the independent spirit which defines the motorcycle community. Motorcyclists want to express themselves in their own way, and bikers excel at adaptation. They ride through cold or hot, rain, dust, hail, and strong wind without windshields and roofs. Motorcyclists don't like riding in cars, and see automobiles as cages where experience on the road is sanitized and one-step removed. Bikers are strong willed and eager to wring the last drop of life from every experience.

Bikers love the journey; it's what keeps them going, and propels them onward. It even keeps them limping into a yoga class. This is my teaching community, and because I understand them, I started YOGA AND LEATHER: Yoga for Bikers.

While most yogis don't ride motorcycles, they exhibit some of the same qualities as motorcycle riders, particularly independence of thought and a willingness to move outside culturally sanctioned boxes.

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SIMILARITIES

Yoga and motorcycles may seem like an odd juxtaposition but there are similarities. Both activities require a good level of mental and physical stamina. Participants bike or do yoga because they want to, and both can lead to a sense of relaxation, wellness, and freedom.

Ideally, yogis and cyclists start by learning from qualified instructors that present the activity in sequential learning steps. It's not safe for any beginner to simply throw a leg up over a bike and drive away. But a rider, after taking a rider safety course, is a better and safer rider. In the same way, a beginner is wise to start yoga with a qualified teacher giving instructions. Like riding, this will help the yogi avoid injury and they learn the right way the first time.

Neither activity requires a religious affiliation, yet some stereotypes brand motorcyclists' as gang members, and yoga is wrongly branded as an outreach for Hinduism or a New Age religion.

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MOVING BEYOND STEREOTYPES

Both yogis and motorcyclists' have been subject to stereotypes – which is an easy way to dismiss someone as fringe or outsider. Motorcyclists typically are not doing yoga. Many believe that yoga is easy, that it's only a women's activity, or that one has to be flexible to start.

Some people believe yoga is only for women. But from its origin, and up to the early 20th Century, yoga was practiced only by men. Worldwide today, many women practice and teach yoga, and in the US about 80 percent of yoga participants are women.

Similarly, some people believe motorcycling

is only for men, even though nearly 25 percent of all riders in the US are women. Motorcycling and yoga are undergoing changes, and with these changes, stereotypes no longer apply.

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YOGA BENEFITS FOR BIKERS

(are potentially life-saving)

Improved mental focus & coordination, clarity of thought developed by balance & silence in yoga *I life & death on the bike is directly related to mental focus & clarity.*

Improved balance by practicing one-leg standing postures *I better control in tight U turns and backing.*

Improved sleep after a hard yoga practice *I no dozing while driving, deeper sleep leads to increased energy on the road.*

Improved posture *I improved back and neck comfort on rides.*

Immune system activated by massage of internal organs through poses of constriction and release *I internal organs take a pounding on the bike, and yoga's corrective is a full body massage through postures.*

Improved flexibility by bending and stretching *I pick up what you drop with no problem or pain.*

Improved strength and muscle tone through weight bearing and power postures *I for large bikes and long tours, building strength for long days on the road.*

Improved adaptability to stress by postures that place stress on the body while learning to be at ease and breathe calmly.

REMEMBER the skill of staying calm on the road – the first lesson taught in Motorcycle Safety Foundation riders' class – when facing stress.

#MotorCyclingYogiG

For the complete text of this article, go to <https://gregoryormson.com/writing/yoga-motorcyclingyogig/yoga-and-leather-at-superstition-harley-davidson-featured-on-july-cover-in-yoga-magazine/>

YOGA AND LEATHER

Yoga for Bikers

Second and Fourth Wednesdays
of the month,

October 2019 - May 2020

at 4:30 in the Eagles' Nest at

Superstition Harley-Davidson

2910 W Apache Trail,

Apache Junction, AZ. 85120

480-346-0600

Join us for a "Stretch Ride" every third Sunday morning at 10:30 We'll be taking a short ride to a park or some other natural space.

We'll do some breathing, some quiet meditation, and then 5 or 6 stretches while using our bikes as props



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