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I Am Just a Yoga Teacher

~Amy Cushing

I arrive early and roll out my mat. I greet wide-eyed new students with a smile and laugh with those who return week after week.

I don't wear Lululemon or Donna Karan or own a Manduka mat. Not that I wouldn't mind, there's simply no room in our family budget.

I am not skinny or incredibly bendy and I cannot float from crow to handstand to plank. But I can do each individually, slowly and mindfully, and can show you how to improve your own practice.

Is that a fat roll you see as I demonstrate parva konasana? Yes, it is a fat roll. Maybe two, in fact; a product of carrying two babies and having little time for myself these days. I'll work on getting a washboard ab or two back once they kids don't need me so much. I'm OK with it. Are you?

And wrinkles? No those aren't wrinkles, they're imprints of a life lived.

I could not care less about your pedicure. My own 10-minute home pedi isn't the best either. I'm more interested in the position of your foot.

I note your shoulder scar, your curved spine, your swollen knee---not to judge your appearance, but to give you a safe practice.

I may see and hear things that I shouldn't. And it will stay that way.

Some days I may look a bit tired, likely due from being up all night with one of my children or trying to fit 30 hours into a 24-hour day. Please, bear with me. I have arrived to give my best and I will do just that.

I may laugh at my fumbled words or missteps; it is part of who I am.

I can help you feel a little better, breathe a little easier and start you on a path to a meditation practice, but I don't wish to be your guru.

I don't have a guru. I don't want a guru.

But I have great teachers who have inspired me on my path. I hold them close to my heart and they are a part of the practice I share with you.

My yoga journey is a continuing lesson. Each day I learn more of the wisdom that encompasses yoga. I will do my best to always be a student as well as a teacher.

I am just a yoga teacher who teaches at the local studio up the street.

I may not be cover model flawless or the vision of yoga teacher perfection, but I am a teacher. And that's perfect enough for me.

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